

THE ŁÓDŹ ATLAS

Sheet XXXVI: Piotrkowska street

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History of the street

Piotrkowska Street is the main urban planning axis of Łódź and the indisputable ‘soul and spine’ of Łódzkie Region. Its origin dates back to the rural period in Łódź’s history and it follows the route of the Trakt Piotrkowski leading from Piotrków Trybunalski through the then rural-industrial village — currently the Stare Miasto [Old Town] area and Zgierz, to Łęczycza (Rosin 1980). The street’s career is related to the 19th c. industrial development of the city and began in 1821, when Łódź received its rights as a ‘manufacturing settlement’. In 1821–1823 south of the rural Łódź — i.e. Rynek Starego Miasta [Old Town Market], the authorities of the Congress Kingdom established a clothmakers’ settlement named Nowe Miasto [New Town].

The name ‘Piotrkowska Street’ appeared in 1823 (Rynkowska 1870) and referred to the road connecting Plac Kościelny [Church Square] and Rynek Starego Miasta with the Rynek Nowego Miasta – currently Plac Wolności. In 1824–1828 south of Nowe Miasto a ‘linen-cotton’ settlement was established and named Łódka, whose main axis was Piotrkowska Street. In 1828 this name was extended to the entire length of the street connecting the cloth-making settlement of Nowe Miasto with the linen-cotton settlement Łódka, as far as the Górny Rynek [Upper Market] in the south. The process of settlement in Piotrkowska St. began in 1824. Clothmakers arriving in the city would receive plots located along Piotrkowska in the section from Rynek Nowego Miasta to Cegielniana St. (currently Jaracza St), while the cotton and linen weavers would receive plots between Dzielna St. (currently Narutowicza St.) and Górny Rynek. In 1863 the section from Rynek Nowego Miasta to Zgierska St. was renamed Nowomiejska St. and from this time on Piotrkowska has connected Nowe Miasto with today’s Plac Niepodległości. Along with the advent of a new class of industrialists – factory owners – Piotrkowska was inhabited by an industrial elite, mainly of German and Jewish origin, but also Polish doctors, lawyers, merchants, and artists. It became an exclusive street, the only one featuring technical innovations such as the first oil lamps with reflective mirrors (1835), the first electric street lights in Meyer Passage (1887), the first horse cabs and later the first electric trams (1898). It focused the cultural life of the city and hotels, restaurants and cafes operating there had patrons from all over the world. At that time the street had two shopping centres – one at the beginning, providing for Nowe Miasto and the other one at Górny Rynek providing for Łódka. It was also a street of contrasts, a clash of wealth and poverty, wooden houses of the clothmakers and weavers with small workshops, tenement houses, palaces, and monumental factories, which gave the street its individual, unique character as described in the literature by Reymont, Żeromski, Tuwim, and Sztaudynger. Apart from being the scene of the metropolitan life, flows of huge fortunes, the clash of wealth and poverty, it has always been the focal point of urban life in Łódź.

Currently the length of the street is 4.13 km, but with its old town extension, over 5 km - its width varies from 17 m in the north to 26 m in the south. The central character of the street is highlighted by the pairs of streets and walks adjoining it: Rubinstein, Schiller, ZHP and PCK, and the squares: Wolności, Katedralny (John Paul II), Reymont, and Niepodległości. It remains the number one and most important street in Łódź, it has its own foundation and promotion programmes e.g. Image, and Piotrkowska - the summer ‘salon’ of Łódź, it is a meeting place, the venue for various city ceremonies, concerts, happenings, parties and shows.

The peculiarity and attractiveness of Piotrkowska arises from the fact that it is the only street in Poland featuring ‘everything’ - from shoemakers, tailors, small grocers to large chains, offices of public administration, finance and justice, higher education institutions, hotels, restaurants, bars, cinemas, warehouses and factories, luxurious houses and churches. So everyone who comes to Łódź has to be there. Piotrkowska from the beginning of its existence has added its unique tone and atmosphere to the city.

One characteristic of its development is the maximum saturation of each building plot from the front through the outhouses on either side and at the back. The courtyards so formed – wells - frequently have connections with adjoining parallel streets. Source materials used were collected during a field inventory in August 2000

Map 1: „Functional structure” , author Renata Przewlocka

The map graphically presents and highlights the thirteen types of land use along Piotrkowska, each shaded with the suitable colour. Individual colours signify the particular function. Grey – parking areas (car parks and parking spaces); dark pink – fire brigade (facilities and stations); dark green – open space and recreational areas (parks, swimming pools, sports pitches); orange – administration and office buildings (e.g. post offices, banks); navy blue – restaurant and entertainment (large catering facilities – restaurants, cinemas); yellow – accommodation (hotels); red – large retail facilities (shops); blue – religion (churches, ecclesiastical buildings, chapels); light pink – culture and education (schools, museums, education offices, universities); brown – residential development (housing); light green – health facilities (hospitals, clinics, emergency services, doctors’ surgeries); dark purple – industrial developments (factory buildings, warehouses); light purple – ‘post-industrial’ developments, factory and warehouse buildings adapted for shopping and services, wholesalers, and crafts.

Map 2: „Location of businesses and institutions ”, author Anita Wolaniuk

In August of 2000 as many as 1030 businesses were headquartered in Piotrkowska Street, as shown in table 1.

Apart from four industrial premises (two bakeries, one printing shop, and the cotton factory ‘Eskimo’) all have service functions. The range of institutions and facilities in Piotrkowska is diverse both in the functions they fulfil and in the type and scope of their activity. These businesses include minor craft workshops, small shops and large chain stores, bars, pubs, elegant restaurants, surgeries, estate agents and legal offices, city council offices, and many metropolitan institutions e.g. the regional council, regional and appeal prosecution office, national audit office, banks, the European Integration Institute, concert hall, and a museum.

Map 3: „Shops in Piotrkowska”, and map 4: Concentration of shops author Anita Wolaniuk

Shops make up 50% of all businesses in Piotrkowska. Out of the 524 shops shown on the map – 22 are chain stores e.g. Bata, Gino Rossi, Salamander, Scholl, Ecco, Adidas, Lee Cooper, Big Star, Wrangler, Levi’s, Diesel, Jackpot, Yves Rocher, and Deni Cler. The shops’ structure is highly diversified, however clothing outlets are prevalent – garments and shoes – account for 37% of the total number of shopping facilities, nearly 10% are shops

with household articles, computers and mobile phones. The ‘other’ category includes shops selling toys, stationery, sewing accessories, military accessories, and umbrellas. Most shops are located in the section between Więckowskiego St. - Jaracza St. and Zamenhofa St. — Nawrot St., where their density exceeds 10 shops per 100 m. The shops in Piotrkowska St. are listed in table 2.

Map 5: „Gastronomy”, author Anita Wolaniuk

There are 86 catering outlets in Piotrkowska St. and another 40 in the streets parallel to it and frequently connected via courtyards with Piotrkowska St. itself. The prevalent catering outlets are pubs – 35 and restaurants – 31 which jointly account for 77% of all catering establishments. In addition, there are 16 bars, 10 pizzerias, eight cafes, four internet cafes, four areas of catering portacabins, three canteens, three traditional inns, two tearooms. In total there are three outlets per 100 m of the street’s length.

Map 6: „Tourist operators”, author Anita Wolaniuk

In Piotrkowska Street, 60 travel agents are in operation, including 3 international carriers’ offices, and in its immediate vicinity there are 22 more which, together with the three hotels, total 85 facilities. In aggregate, tourism and recreation related facilities account for 8% of all institutions; the density of travel agencies is 1.45 per 100 m, which ensures healthy competition.

Map 7: „Culture and architectural heritage”, author Anita Wolaniuk

Cultural facilities are represented by three museums, two cinemas, 16 galleries, one concert hall, seven gambling salons, and 8 other facilities, e.g.: a library, radio station, a city cultural forum, ‘Friends of Łódź’ society, cultural information centre, clubs, e.g. ‘Teachers’ Club’ and ‘Catholic Intelligentsia Club’. Architectural heritage includes the complex adjacent to Plac Wolności and Moniuszki St., listed in 1971, the town hall, 3 churches, 8 monuments, 10 mansions referred to as palaces, 18 listed town houses.

Literature:

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Table 1. LOCATION OF BUSINESSES AND INSTITUTIONS

Section of Piotrkowska St	Commer- cial	Hotels and restau- rants	Health and social care	Education and research	Finance and Insu- rance	Public admini- stration	Social, reli- gious and political organisations, and churches	Tourism and recreation	Courts and other law institutions	Other services	Crafts	Industrial	TOTAL
Pl. Wolności–Próchnika–Rewolucji 1905 r.	21	2	3	1	–	–	1	4	–	4	1	–	37
Próchnika–Rewolucji 1905 r.–Więckowskiego–Jaracza	49	5	5	3	5	–	–	6	–	19	10	–	102
Więckowskiego–Jaracza–Zielona–Narutowicza	62	8	2	1	1	–	1	7	–	12	5	–	99
Zielona–Narutowicza–6 Sierpnia–Traugutta	34	11	–	2	3	–	–	6	–	6	6	–	68
6 Sierpnia–Traugutta–Struga–Tuwima	97	32	7	5	2	–	1	12	–	33	14	3	206
Struga–Tuwima–Zamenhofa–Nawrot	80	13	9	1	5	5	2	15	–	27	8	–	165
Zamenhofa–Nawrot–Mieckiewicza–Piłsudskiego	44	13	2	1	4	1	–	4	4	12	6	–	91
Mieckiewicza–Piłsudskiego–Żwirki–Wigury	30	4	4	1	8	2	–	1	–	17	3	–	70
Żwirki–Wigury–Radwańska–Brzeźna	36	1	4	–	3	–	1	2	–	16	4	–	67
Radwańska–Brzeźna–Kostki–Tymienieckiego	25	1	–	2	1	2	1	1	–	12	1	–	46
Kostki–Tymienieckiego–Czerwona–Milionowa	18	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	–	4	2	–	31
Czerwona–Milionowa–Sieradzka	28	–	–	1	4	–	1	1	–	11	1	1	48
TOTAL	524	91	37	19	37	11	9	60	4	173	61	4	1030

Source: Own study based on a field inventory of August 2000

Table 2. SHOPS ON PIOTRKOWSKA ST.

Section of Piotrkowska St	Food	Clothes	Perfumeries	Jewellery	Computer equipment	House- hold goods	Apteki	Bookshops	Photo- graphic and opti- cal equip- ment	Other	Depart- ment stores	Mar- kets	TOTAL
Pl. Wolności–Próchnika–Rewolucji	1	10	–	2	2	1	2	2	1	–	–	–	21
Próchnika–Rewolucji–Więckowskiego–Jaracza	–	29	3	1	4	3	1	1	3	3	1	–	49
Więckowskiego–Jaracza–Zielona–Narutowicza	2	29	3	2	5	6	2	2	1	10	–	–	62
Zielona–Narutowicza–6 Sierpnia–Traugutta	–	13	1	4	3	–	1	4	3	5	–	–	34
6 Sierpnia–Traugutta–Struga–Tuwima	7	50	1	–	5	7	1	2	3	19	2	–	97
Struga–Tuwima–Zamenhofa–Nawrot	4	29	1	4	8	4	3	3	6	18	–	–	80
Zamenhofa–Nawrot–Mieckiewicza–Piłsudskiego	2	16	3	2	4	4	–	5	2	6	–	–	44
Mieckiewicza–Piłsudskiego–Żwirki–Wigury	3	8	3	2	1	3	–	2	3	3	2	–	30
Żwirki–Wigury–Radwańska–Brzeźna	2	5	–	1	3	8	2	1	–	14	–	–	36
Radwańska–Brzeźna–Kostki–Tymienieckiego	4	3	–	–	2	5	–	1	2	8	–	–	25
Kostki–Tymienieckiego–Czerwona–Milionowa	4	–	–	–	4	5	1	–	–	4	–	–	18
Czerwona–Milionowa–Sieradzka	7	1	–	2	4	6	1	–	–	6	–	1	28
TOTAL	36	193	15	20	45	52	14	23	24	96	5	1	524

Source: own study based on a field inventory carried out in August of 2000.

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