

NBP

Money Centre
in memory of Sławomir S. Skrzypek

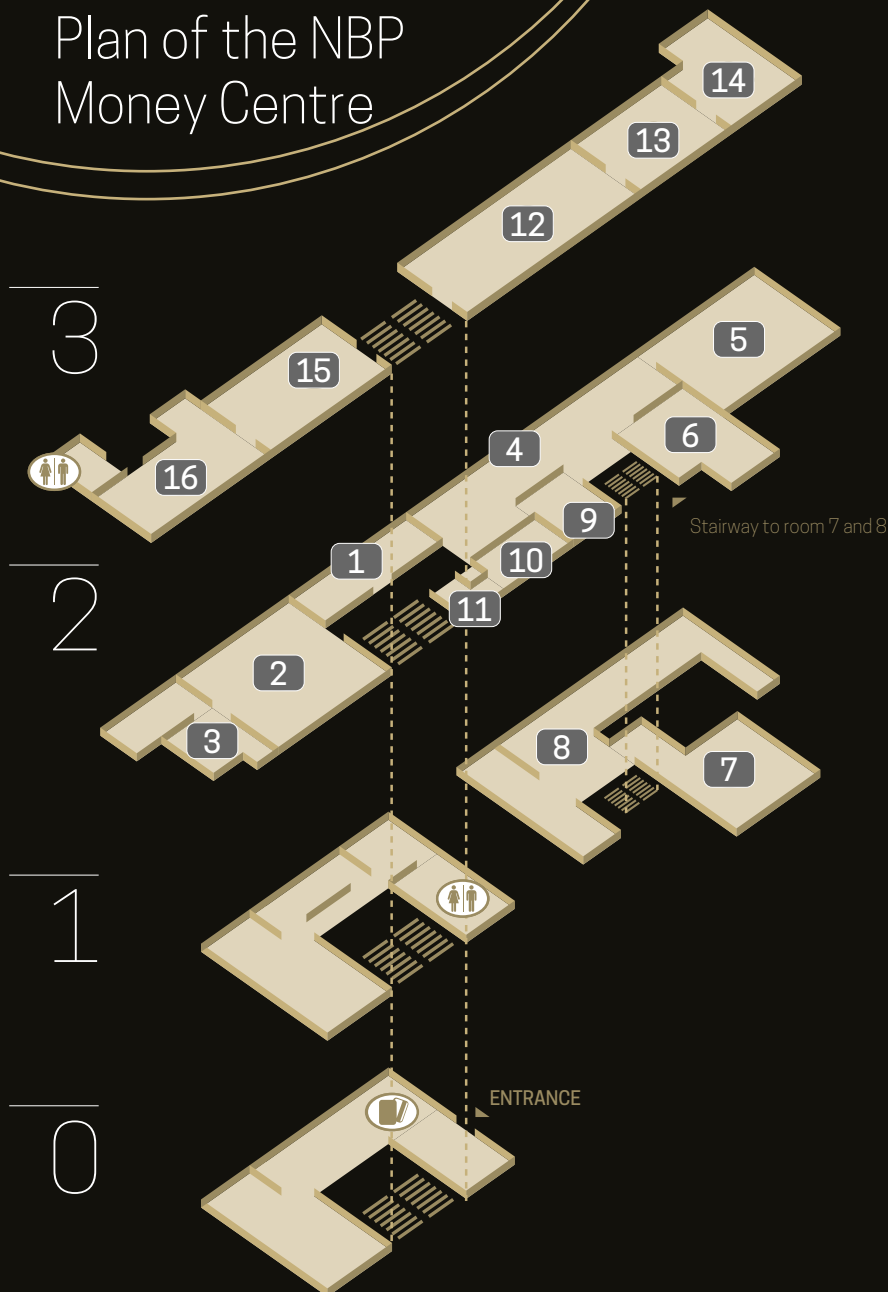
No 21
2020 Q1

Bankoteka

HISTORY • ECONOMY • EDUCATION



Plan of the NBP Money Centre




LEVEL 3

- 12** Stock Exchange and Financial Markets
- 13** Modern Payment Systems
- 14** Monetary and Economic Unions
- 15** Creator of Money and Money Production
- 16** Money in Art
-  Toilets

LEVEL 2

- 1** Encounters with Money
- 2** Antiquity-Middle Ages-Modernity
- 3** Monetary Systems
- 4** Bank Street
- 5** Central Bank
- 6** Numismatist's Study
- 9** World Wars I and II
- 10** Polish People's Republic
- 11** Fall of Communism

LEVEL 1

- 7** Laboratory of Authenticity
- 8** Vault
-  Toilets

LEVEL 0

-  Reception desk

Visit our website: www.nbp.pl/centrumpieniadza

Dear readers,

This is the 21st edition of “Bankoteka”, a magazine that has been published since 2011, when the idea of the future NBP Money Centre assumed its final shape and entered into the implementation phase. Even before we were able to invite guests to our facility, we were describing the successive stages of works on the NBP Money Centre (editions 1-6). We also organize temporary exhibitions (the first one was presented in 2013), which are always accompanied by special editions of the “Bankoteka” magazine. Since the opening of our permanent exhibition in May 2016, “Bankoteka” has been a quarterly magazine, also published in the English and Russian language versions. All the editions of the magazine can be found on the websites of NBP and the NBP Money Centre: <https://www.nbp.pl/homen.aspx?f=en/publikacje/bankoteka.html>
<https://www.cpnbp.pl/multimedia/bankoteka>

From the beginning we devoted articles in “Bankoteka” to the current activity of the NBP Money Centre and the various “treasures” included in the exhibition. The return of a part of the Polish gold reserves from England to the NBP vaults was a very important event for Narodowy Bank Polski in recent months. This was celebrated with the issuance of a gold collector coin with a face value of 100 zł, minted in the form of a gold bar. One of these unique coins was added to the exhibition presented at the NBP Money Centre. In the first article of this edition, we reveal where visitors can view this numismatic rarity.

In this edition, in the “Discovering multimedia... Let’s open the showcases” section, we present the second part of a polemical article in which the author explains why the authorship of the 18th-century pamphlet on the national bank was erroneously attributed to Andrzej Kapostas (p. 10). On this occasion, we would like to encourage all visitors touring the “Central Bank” room to become acquainted with the most important information about the pamphlet entitled “Planta ułożenia projektu banku narodowego” in which Kapostas presented the main assumptions concerning the future operation of the Polish central bank.

In our magazine we have repeatedly discussed exhibitions and the educational activities of other central banks and money museums operating under their auspices. After many years, Banque de France has opened its own educational centre, and it is certainly impressive! We would like to invite you to read our report from the Citéco – a unique place with exceptional architecture (p. 14).

The activities of the NBP Money Centre also involve the permanent expansion of the exhibitions, which is always meticulously described in the “Exhibits” section. In the “Vault” room our guests are now able to view an elaborately decorated treasure chest (p. 18). In our magazine we also frequently present new items that will become a part of the Centre’s exhibition in the future. This time we describe the history of a decorative cup gifted to the outstanding engineer, the builder of exceptional bridges in the United States, and the son of the great Polish actress Helena Modrzejewska – Rudolf Modrzejewski (known in the United States as Ralf Modjeski, based on the surname adopted by his mother) (p. 20).

In the “From the Calendar of the NBP Money Centre” section we announce the launch of a new competition for the NBP Money Centre Award for the best master’s thesis devoted to the theme of socio-economic history. The works submitted to the competition will be evaluated by the professors sitting on the NBP Money Centre Programme Board. We would also like to invite you once again for a tour of the NBP Money Centre’s exhibition. In the “Numismatist’s Study” room we present a certain type of a numismatic cabinet, known as a medal display rack. On the occasion of the Saint Nicholas Day we placed interesting exhibits in the rack, which were then discussed by our educators as part of a special tour path prepared for the Centre’s youngest guests.

Enjoy your reading

The editorial team of “Bankoteka”

Discovering multimedia... Let's open the showcases

The Return of Gold to Poland

100 zł – new gold collector coin (999.9 fine gold) **pp. 5-9**

Plans for the establishment of a National Bank – a polemical article

Clarifying the bibliography of the history of central banking in Poland – part 2 **pp. 10-12**



Gold collector coin “The Return of Gold to Poland” with a face value of 100 zł at the NBP Money Centre

On 18 December 2019 Narodowy Bank Polski put into circulation a gold collector coin “The Return of Gold to Poland” with a face value of 100 zł. In this way the Bank commemorated the repatriation of a large part of the NBP gold reserves, which have so far been kept abroad. This project also renews the pre-war tradition of storing a significant part of NBP’s gold reserves within the territory of Poland.

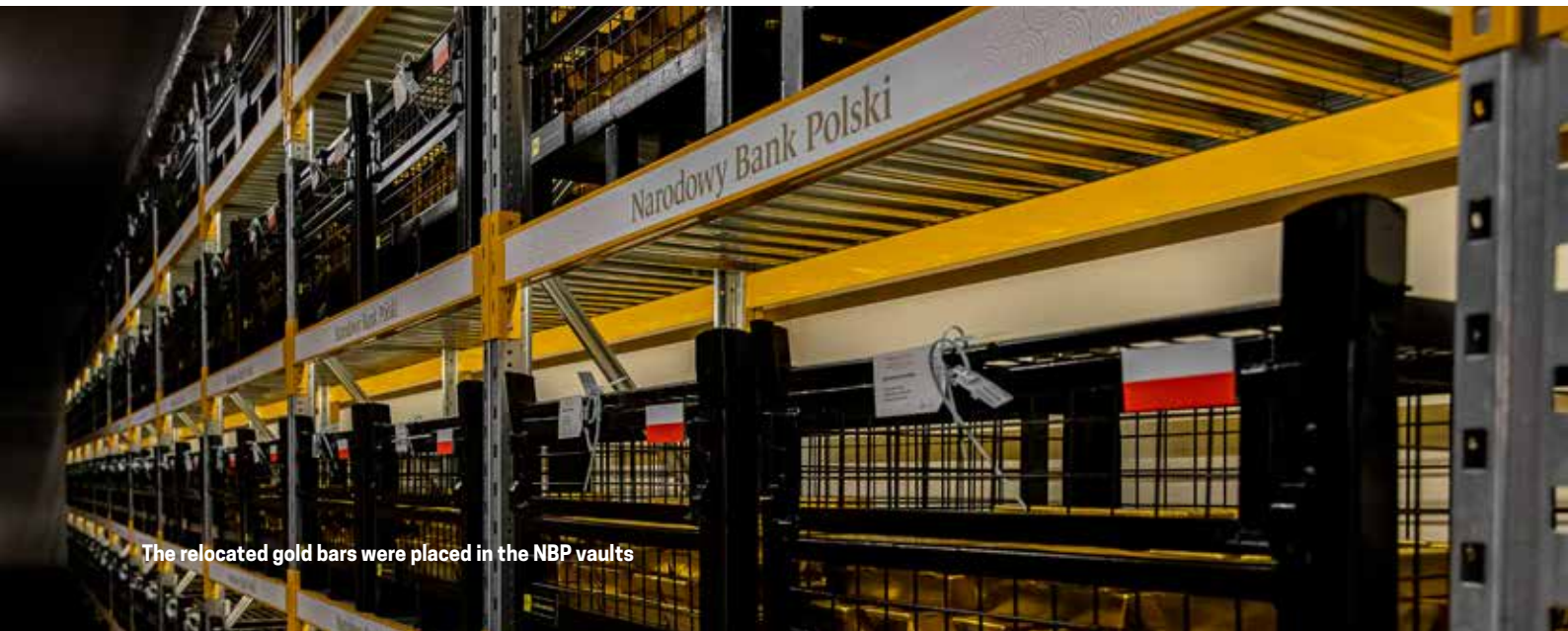
The coins minted on the occasion of the repatriation of Polish gold can be viewed in the “Vault” room at the NBP Money Centre. The coins have the shape of a traditional investment gold bar. They were minted from 999.9 fine gold and weigh 8 grammes each. The mintage volume of the new issue – up to 2019 pieces – is also symbolic and is a reference to the year in which significant reserves of NBP gold were brought back to Poland.

The repatriated gold conforms to the international standards of purity and has the form of gold bars consistent with the London Good Delivery standard. Each gold bar was checked and registered during acceptance to the vault.

The operation of transporting 100 tonnes of Polish gold was carried out without any disruptions. The gold bars were safely deposited in the NBP vaults.

The gold was transported to Poland by air. a total of eight transports were conducted, with each transport carrying one thousand bars. The transport of the gold was performed by an international company specializing in money transports, which was selected through a public procurement procedure announced by Narodowy Bank Polski.

The whole project proceeded smoothly. No events affecting the safety of the cargo or the people involved occurred during its implementation. The performance of this task involved the participation of many people representing Narodowy Bank Polski, the Polish police force, the Polish Border Guard, the airports, the airport ground handling companies, as well as the Bank of England, the transport company, and the British police.



The relocated gold bars were placed in the NBP vaults

Collector coin *Return of Gold to Poland**

Narodowy Bank Polski presently holds 228.6 tons of gold, of which 105 tons is kept in NBP vaults. In 2018–2019 NBP gold reserves increased by 125.7 tons (122%), with the purchases in 2018 amounting to 25.7 tons and another 100 tons in 2019. As a consequence of the purchases carried out in the last two years, NBP has moved up in the ranking of gold holdings from 34th to 22nd place among central banks all over the world and from 15th to 11th place in Europe, ahead of all the countries of the region. At the same time, the share of monetary gold in official reserve assets has increased to 9.1% (against 3.8% at the end of 2017).

The strategic decision to purchase gold was, among others, a result of the good economic situation and the steady increase in reserve assets. Gold is perceived as a strategic component of foreign exchange reserves, partly because it is free from loan risk defined as the possibility of issuer default, because of its decoupling from the economic policy of any single country, as well as its physical properties, such as durability and virtual indestructibility.

The significant increase in the holdings of gold was one of the reasons why the Management Board of NBP decided to have it stored in more numerous locations, with the goal of approximately half of the gold reserves, i.e. 100 tons, being stored in NBP vaults. This is the way that other central banks proceed as well.

In a symbolic sense, history may be considered to have come full circle, with Polish central bank vaults holding gold like they did in the Second Polish Republic.




The presence of a significant share of Polish gold reserves on the territory of Poland in NBP vaults has been highlighted by the issue of a special coin in the form of a gold bar.

This exceptional coin is also our homage paid to the workers of the pre-war Bank Polski SA (Bank of Poland) who, putting their lives at risk, persevered in preventing the gold holdings from being taken over by the German occupiers.

Adam Glapiński
President of Narodowy Bank Polski

Information on the issue schedule can be found
at the www.nbp.pl/coins website.

Narodowy Bank Polski
ul. Świętokrzyska 11/21
00-919 Warszawa
tel. 22 185 10 00
e-mail: listy@nbp.pl

NarodowyBankPolski 
NBPtv 
[@nbppl](https://www.instagram.com/nbppl) 

* notes from the numismatic booklet accompanying the gold collector coin with a face value of 100 zł



The "Vault" room – the gold 100 zł coin is located in safety deposit box no. 172

In the "Vault" room at the NBP Money Centre, which is the most popular part of the facility, our visitors can watch a video about gold, view the exhibition of Polish and foreign gold coins, and read more about this metallic ore on two informational boards.

Did you know that...?

- The largest gold resources on Earth are located in the oceans. In total, there are presumably 10 billion tonnes of gold hidden in marine sediments.
- The biggest gold deposits are located in South Africa, the United States, Canada and Australia. It is estimated that 165,000 tonnes of gold have been extracted throughout the history of mankind – this would be enough to form a sphere with a diameter of 27 meters.
- The price of gold on the world markets is established during the London Gold Fixing, a telephone conference of the five largest gold trading institutions: ScotiaMocatta, Barclays Capital, Deutsche Bank, HSBC and Société Générale.
- The gold deposits in Poland are estimated at approximately 100 tonnes. The last gold mine in Złoty Stok (which means "Golden Slope") was shut down in 1961. Approximately 16 tonnes of gold had been extracted there since the Middle Ages.

- Bullion coins are coins minted for investment purposes and made of precious metals (gold, silver, platinum). In Poland such coins are issued by Narodowy Bank Polski. The "Bielik" ("White-tailed eagle") bullion coins are available in the face values of 50 zł, 100 zł, 200 zł, 500 zł.

Did you know that...?

- Neolithic era gold items weighing 6 kg, which were discovered at a cemetery near Varna, are believed to be the oldest gold objects in the world.
- The 19th century gold rush in the United States began in North Carolina after Conrad Reed discovered a gold nugget weighing 8 kg.
- Gold is a very malleable metal. One gramme of gold can be beaten into a sheet with an area of one square metre or into leaves so thin that 10 thousand layers would have a thickness of just 1 millimetre.
- The basic unit of weight used in gold trade is the troy ounce, which is equivalent to 31.1035 grammes. The name comes from the French city of Troyes, which was an important commercial centre in the Middle Ages.
- In addition to its use in jewellery (the largest amount of the extracted gold is located in India in the form of jewellery), gold is also used in modern technology, precision mechanics, space technology, medicine, industrial chemistry and in consumer goods.



Educator Jakub Gisz discusses the informational board entitled "Did you know that...?" in the "Vault" room. a video about gold is displayed on the side

Another exhibition of the NBP Money Centre dedicated to gold is located in the “Stock Exchange and Financial Markets” room.

Gold tops the list of raw materials which are traded on the world's commodity exchanges.



The caption in the showcase reads as follows:
Gold – the most popular precious metal. It is traded both in the physical form and in the form of futures contracts. Approximately 33% of the gold resources are not available to investors and remain locked in the vaults of the central banks as a reserve currency.

Gold mining in the world – leaders of the ranking¹

In 2019 the World Gold Council published data according to which a total of 3,503 tonnes of gold was mined globally in 2018. The ranking of countries producing at least 100 tonnes of gold per year is as follows:

COUNTRY	PRODUCTION
China	404 tonnes
Australia	319 tonnes
Russia	297 tonnes
United States	222 tonnes
Canada	189 tonnes
Peru	158 tonnes
Indonesia	137 tonnes
Ghana	130 tonnes
South Africa	130 tonnes
Mexico	115 tonnes

The above-mentioned countries account for roughly two-thirds of global gold production.

■ Stanisław Gorący
Prepared on the basis of materials from the NBP Press Office and
the NBP Money Centre
Photo: NBP

¹ Data from 2018 – Wikipedia

Is Andrzej Kapostas really the author of the pamphlet about the national bank?

Clarifying the bibliography of the history of central banking in Poland – part 2

In the first part of the article, the author presented the current state of knowledge about the two anonymous late 18th-century pamphlets dedicated to the establishment of a central bank in Poland. The analysis of the bibliographic descriptions and the contents of the pamphlet entitled “O Banku Narodowym w Polsce ustanowić się łatwo mogącym” (On the national bank in Poland that could be easily established), which had been attributed to both Andrzej Kapostas and Kazimierz Plater, is just the beginning of the “investigation” aiming to conclusively determine its authorship.

It remains a mystery, where Estreicher learned about Kazimierz Plater's supposed authorship, as he did not mention any sources. Perhaps he received this information directly from the members of the magnate Plater family, which possessed valuable literary archives. This is very likely, considering, that in his work dedicated to the Plater family, the well-known genealogist Szymon Konarski noted that the pamphlet “O Banku Narodowym w Polsce ustanowić się łatwo mogącym” had been included in the list of works of the last Vice-Chancellor of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.¹

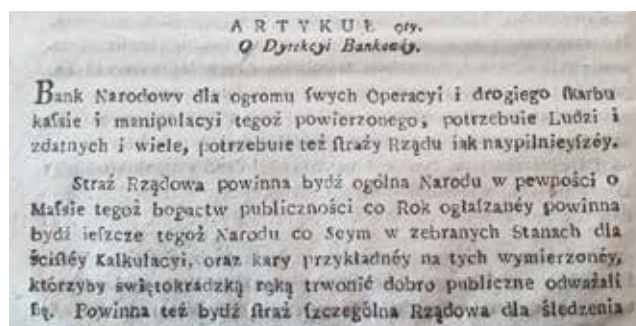
Only 4 copies of this work have been preserved to this day – in the National Library as well as the libraries of the Jagiellonian University, the Warsaw School of Economics, and the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. The National Library attributes the authorship to Andrzej Kapostas, the Library of the Jagiellonian University (the old catalogue) attributes authorship to Kazimierz Plater, and the remaining libraries do not indicate the author at all.

So, who is its real author? Important information is already contained in the work's introduction, in which the author apologizes for the possible errors in the calculations presented in writing. The author admits that as a “regular citizen”, he does not know all the “ins and outs” of the banking profession.²

According to the author, the funds for the operation of the National Bank were supposed to come from the sale of crown lands (“królewszczyzna”)

¹ Sz. Konarski, *Platerowie* [The Plater family], Paris 1967, <http://www.stow-bial.pl/pk/plater.pdf>.

² *O Banku Narodowym w Polsce ustanowić się łatwo mogącym* [On the national bank in Poland that could be easily established], p. 2–3.



Fragment of the pamphlet concerning the bank's management.
Source: Author's collection

belonging to the Monarch.³ What was supposed to be the purpose of the Bank's operations? In addition to granting loans and accepting deposits, it was supposed to conduct insurance activities, and also invest – in cooperation with entrepreneurs – in the mining industry, build manufacturing plants, and manage trade projects. The Bank's management, elected by the Sejm, was supposed to consist of a director and two assessors, and was supposed to form a part of the Treasury Commission, that is, the Polish state's administrative authority.⁴

³ T. Korzon, *Wewnętrzne dzieje za Stanisława Augusta* (1764–1794) [Internal history of Poland during the reign of King Stanisław August Poniatowski (1764–1794)], Volume III, Kraków–Warsaw 1897, p. 343.

⁴ *O Banku Narodowym w Polsce ustanowić się łatwo mogącym*, p. 23.



Kazimierz Konstanty Plater (1749–1807)

Some scholars believe that he was the author of the pamphlet entitled "O Banku Narodowym w Polsce ustanowić się łatwo mogącym" Wikipedia. Unknown author

While discussing in detail the ideas contained in the pamphlet, including the absolute prohibition on the issuance of paper money, Tadeusz Korzon summed them up in a rather merciless manner: "I believe that the author exhibited poor calculation skills and was an equally incompetent theorist in the field of economy (...), we may therefore conclude that the author was a nobleman and was likely indebted"⁵.

Even a cursory analysis of the work's content, not to mention the author's presentation of himself as a "regular citizen" who does not have much to do with banks, is sufficient to exclude Kapostas from the circle of possible authors of the pamphlet. We are thus left with only one candidate, whose

⁵ T. Korzon, op. cit., p. 344–345.

life, full of inconsistencies and sudden twists and turns, is a good example of the behaviours and choices of some representatives of the "enlightened" part of Polish society in the turbulent years preceding the collapse of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

That candidate is Kazimierz Konstanty Plater. He was a royal chamberlain, and a Sejm deputy, but he also pledged loyalty to Russia's Empress Catherine II as a delegate of the servile nobility. Although he held the office of the governor ("starosta") of Livonia, he struggled with serious debts for a very long time. He was one of the signatories of the Constitution of the 3rd of May, but he subsequently joined the Targowica Confederation. During the Grodno Sejm convened in 1793 by Russia, he tried to persuade the deputies that an armed uprising was pointless and could have unpredictable consequences. On the other hand, in April 1794 he provided material support to the Kościuszko Uprising, but towards the end of the uprising he was arrested as a former supporter of Russia.

In Kazimierz Plater's biographic note, published in Volume XXVI of the Polish Biographical Dictionary (in 1981), Professor Zofia Zielińska confirmed that he is the author of the pamphlet based on an analysis of the source materials.⁶ She also linked its publication with the author's personal ambitions. Almost throughout his entire politically active life, Plater was seeking lucrative positions, and, in this particular case, he saw himself as the director of the future bank.

Going back to the pamphlet itself, it is also worth correcting the claims found in some of the studies that it constituted a polemic with "Planta ułożenia projektu Banku Narodowego", released by Andrzej Kapostas.⁷ Plater's pamphlet was probably written at the same time as "Planta...", but was developed independently of that work. It was simply a reflection of a time when the idea of the establishment of a national bank for a brief moment became one of the main areas of interest of both the Sejm and public opinion.⁸ According to the findings of Professor Zielińska, the pamphlet was printed in February, while Kapostas presented his work in July by submitting it to the Sejm and simultaneously publishing it in the form of the well-known print, which is also preserved in the collections of Narodowy Bank Polski.⁹

⁶ Z. Zielińska, *Kazimierz Konstanty Plater herbu własnego* [Kazimierz Konstanty Plater of his own coat of arms], Internetowy Polski Słownik Biograficzny [Polish Online Biographical Dictionary], <https://www.ipsb.nina.gov.pl/a/biografia/kazimierz-konstanty-h-wlasnego-plater>

⁷ K. Łopuszyński, *Idea bankowości centralnej w ostatnich latach I Rzeczypospolitej* [The idea of central banking in the last years of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth], "Roczniki Nauk Prawnych", 2018, Volume XXVIII, No. 3, 105.

⁸ M. Sosnowska-Łozińska, *Geneza powstania i działalności Banku Polskiego w latach 1828–1885* [Origins of the establishment and operation of the Bank of Poland in the years 1828–1885], "Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego. Seria Prawnicza", Volume 53/2009, p. 181–182.

⁹ T. Korzon, op. cit., p. 338.



The "Central Bank" room – showcase with the work "Planta ułożenia projektu Banku Narodowego"
Photo: NBP

The discussed pamphlet contains no direct references to the works of the alleged adversary (which was a common practice in polemical works of the Stanisławian period). It seems that the work instead refers to the ideas contained in Michał Ossowski's work entitled "O pomnożeniu dochodów publicznych, wynalezieniu kapitału publicznego ku zasileniu nowych potrzeb Rzeczypospolitej z oszczędzeniem podatków" ("On the multiplication of public revenues and establishment of public capital, for the purpose of satisfying the new needs of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and enabling tax savings"), which was published in 1789.¹⁰

In conclusion, the work under the title "O banku narodowym w Polsce ustanowić się mającym" (On the national bank in Poland that is to be established), which had been included in bibliographies and attributed to Andrzej Kapostas, never existed in reality. The source of this

misunderstanding, which has lasted since 1872, was Roman Pilat's work devoted to the political literature from the period of the Four-Year Sejm. This non-existent pamphlet was probably "brought to life" as a result of that scholar's erroneous attribution of the authorship and distortion of the title. That mistake was then perpetuated through Karol Estreicher's entry in "Bibliografia polska" ("Polish bibliography").

However, there exists the anonymously published pamphlet entitled "O Banku Narodowym w Polsce ustanowić się łatwo mogącym" (On the national bank in Poland that could be easily established), which was written by Kazimierz Konstanty Plater and released in early 1790. This work is undoubtedly a valuable testament to the times when the issue of establishment of a central bank for the first time became the subject of debate resulting from the burning need to repair the institutions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 342.

Education

**The educational programmes and publications of Citéco
- the centre for economic education of Banque de France in Paris** pp. 14-16



Education at Citéco – the centre of economic education in Paris

The centre of economic education Citéco (la Cité de l'Économie), which was opened in Paris in June 2019, is an initiative of Banque de France. It is the first interactive museum in Europe entirely devoted to economic issues. The official mission of Citéco is described in the following way: “to enable everyone to benefit from a better understanding of economics”. Citéco is housed in the spectacularly renovated former headquarters of Banque de France. Work on the interior decorations for the facility and the renovation of the building took several years. The result of these works is a modern economic education centre and museum facility presenting both permanent and temporary exhibitions illustrating various aspects of the history of money, economy, and economic thought. Citéco covers an impressive floor area of 7,000 m², out of which 2500 m² is reserved for the permanent exhibition. The facility also includes a café, numerous conference rooms and premises intended for special events (which are rented out).

Citéco offers its own educational programme, which is currently primarily intended for young people aged 15-18 years old. The arrangement of the exhibition allows for the implementation of various scenarios for the classes (the classes

are conducted by educators from Citéco or external guides). The exhibition is divided into six parts:

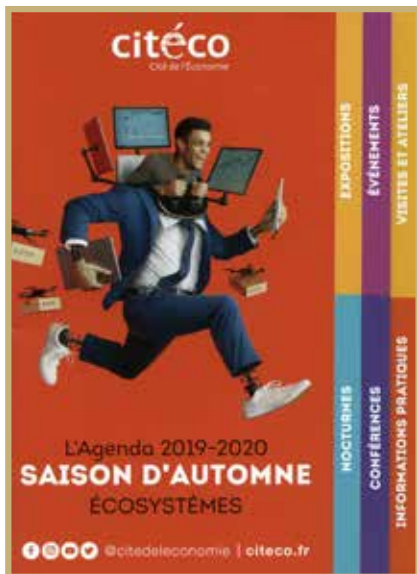
- Summary of the exhibition (an overview)
- Entities in the economy
- Markets
- Market imperfections (economic cycles, etc.)
- Regulations
- Public finance

It is worth noting that at Citéco the subject of economics is treated very broadly – as a starting point for narratives concerning the classical economic concepts and for the presentation of the wider context: the global mechanisms and economic developments, entrepreneurship, contemporary trends and issues.

One interesting element of the permanent exhibition at Citéco is the stands, where specific issues (such as economic growth) are discussed from the perspective of various entities or from the positions of experts representing differing views. In this way, the visitors get to learn about the given issue from many perspectives and individually chose the concepts they find the most convincing, or simply become acquainted with the multi-dimensional nature of a given topic. Citéco presents content in a non-clichéd



The inflation indicator – sometimes the simplest teaching aids are the best. Here visitors can “control” the level of inflation on their own. For educators this is an excellent starting point for explaining what is happening in the economy along with price changes



The Citéco folder for the 2019-2020 season with a programme of visits under the heading “Ecosystems”



The entrance stairs to the exhibition: This visually attractive multimedia presentation on the history of money is an audio-visual spectacle that will satisfy even the most demanding guests



What is remarkable about the Citéco museum is that the building's meticulously restored interiors are truly enchanting even without the multimedia items



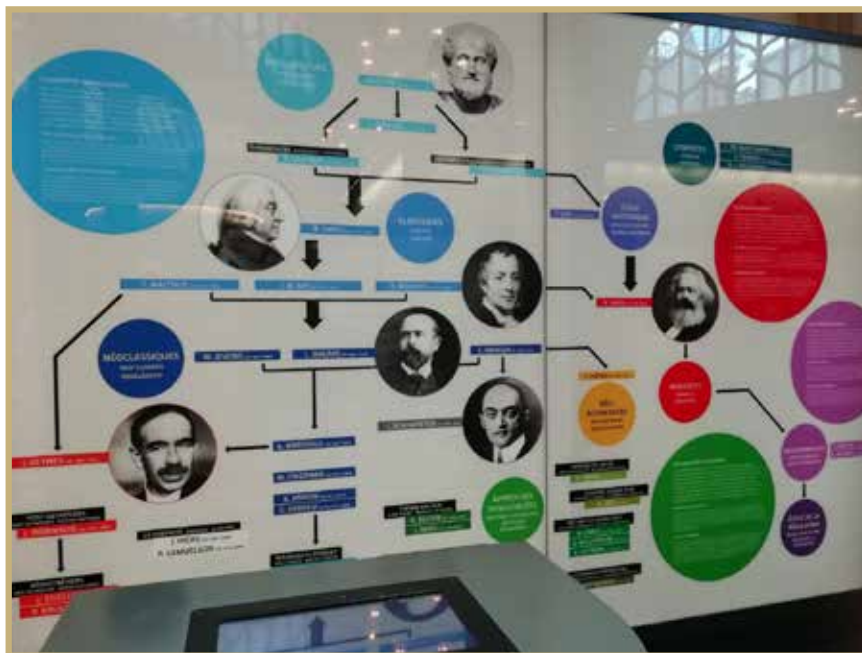
Euro coins – what goes around comes around. At the Citéco museum euro coins from different countries are placed on a rolling wheel

manner, without trying to impose a single interpretation.

Citéco is equipped with numerous multimedia devices, and the permanent exhibition is full of applications that are very attractive for the users. This is very intriguing, considering the fact that the premises were renovated in accordance with the original style of the building. As a result, elements from that historical era coexist with modern arrangements within a single space. In several locations within the exhibition the visitors can watch films prepared with the use of state-of-the-art video techniques. These materials show the economic processes in a dynamic way (combining elements of advanced computer graphics and classic video footage). Additionally, on special occasions a special 3-minute presentation showing the history of money over the centuries is displayed on the main staircase of the facility – this is basically an audio-visual multimedia spectacle. In accordance with the concept of teaching

and entertaining at the same time (“learn and have fun”) the Citéco also offers activities such as a photo booth, where the visitors can take a portrait photo and then print it out on a fancy banknote template – in this way the guests leave the facility with an original souvenir.

The central element of the permanent exhibition is a space arranged as a mini-conference room resembling the interiors known from the meetings of representatives of the United Nations or NATO. Here the participants of the educational programme can simulate an international conference of officials and “play” the role of decision-makers creating economic strategies in order to deal with global challenges such as the fight against climate change. The game teaches the students cooperation and negotiation skills, illustrates the complex mechanisms



The economists – how to best illustrate the development of economic thought? Citéco decided to use a “family tree” of well-known economists. This part of the exhibition allows the facility to illustrate how our approach to economic phenomena changed over the course of history and what schools of economic thought were created on the basis of theories of scholars identified on the visualization

of global economic interdependence, and is also a source of great satisfaction, when the participants succeed in designing solutions that are both effective and beneficial for everyone.

Citéco is also a cultural centre, always full of life and activity. This extraordinary space hosts conferences, debates, film screenings, seminars, concerts and many other events whose themes are related to the fields of economics and finance. Citéco is currently run by an association of several entities, including Banque de France, and its programme assumptions are consulted with experts – economists, scientists, financiers, as well as journalists, artists and the representatives

of non-governmental organizations. This diversity of perspectives is clearly visible in the constantly updated and evolving programme of the facility.

The publications and guides accompanying the activity of Citéco are characterized by a very attractive graphic design. They encourage the readers to visit the centre of economic education and to participate in its programmes. A visit to Citéco also allows the guests to explore the interiors of the meticulously restored 19th-century building known as Palace Gaillard, whose construction was commissioned by the banker Émile Gaillard. Today, the palace is a high-class monument of architecture and museography.



The domino effect – what is the easiest way to illustrate the bursting of a market bubble? At Citéco plastic blocks are used for this purpose. The visitors can use them to create a domino effect, which symbolically reproduces the financial crisis of 2007-2009

All tourists traveling to Paris should consider a tour of Citéco, which is located in the 17th arrondissement, in the very centre of the city. The admission ticket for individual guests costs approximately 12 euros per person, while children and youth aged 6-18 pay only 6 euros. One hour before closing time, visitors can enter the facility for half price. The centre is open every day of the week except for Mondays. It is also worth visiting the website www.citeco.fr (also available in English) in order to keep up with the offer presented by Citéco, and to view some of the digitized collections. The captions for the exhibits are presented in three languages: French, English and Spanish.

■ *Natalia Ćwik
Stanisław Gorący*

Exhibits

Postal strong box - treasure chest from the 18th century pp. 18-19

New acquisitions of the NBP Money Centre: a cup with coins pp. 20-22



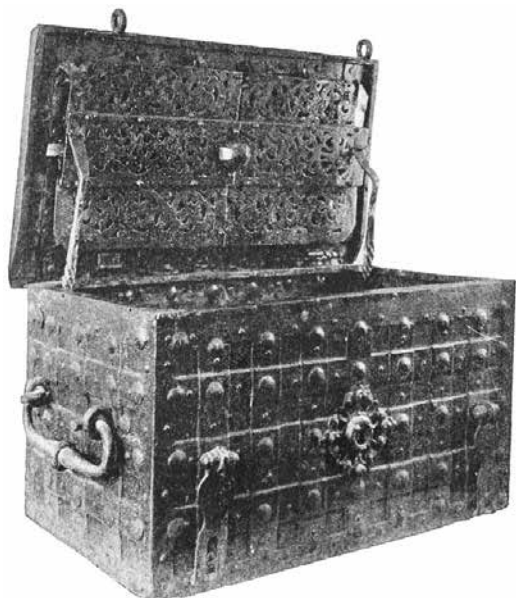
Treasure chest from the 18th century – a blacksmithing masterpiece in the collection of the NBP Money Centre

Ever since people started gathering goods that had material or emotional value for them, they had to face the problem of protecting these items from others. Treasure chests protected with simple locks were already used in ancient Egypt. In the Middle Ages people used iron-bound wooden chests that were locked using hasps and padlocks. Chests produced from wrought iron appeared in the modern era. They were characterized by increasingly intricate decorations and were better protected against robbery. In his

work “Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Old Poland” (“Encyklopedia Staropolska”), Zygmunt Gloger describes treasure chests in the following way: “[...] these were boxes made of wooden planks, bound in a dense lattice made of metal rails, with an intricate locking mechanism placed on the inner side of the lid, in the centre thereof, frequently having up to 12 strong bolts, several on each side of the box, so that the lid could not be pried open from any side with a crowbar. [...] Here we provide the drawings of two such treasure chests. One

(smaller) is located in Stelmachowo near Tykocin at the estate of Aleksander Rostworowski and contains a privilege awarded by King Jan Kazimierz, granting the Tykocin county to Stefan Czarniecki. The second, which was located in Pieczyska, is depicted on the basis of a woodcut once presented in the 19th century weekly magazine “Kłósy.”

Treasure chests were also mounted on horse-drawn carriages and postal stagecoaches and



The treasure chest from the village of Stelmachowo.
Wikisource



The treasure chest from the village of Pieczyska.
Wikisource



The "Vault" room. In the top photo we see the treasure chest in the showcase. The photo below shows a close-up view of the key and the details of the lock mechanism
NBP Collections

served as strong boxes for travellers, protecting the transported valuables and documents.

Recently, an 18th-century steel treasure chest from the collection of Narodowy Bank Polski returned from maintenance works, which provides a good occasion to write a few words about the history of the invention and development of treasure chests. We can safely say that the discussed item is a genuine

blacksmithing masterpiece. The chest, which weighs about 50 kg, was made of steel and was reinforced with iron rails. At the front there are two hasps fastened with a padlock, a dummy lock was placed between them. However, the most interesting part of the chest is the lid. The chest is locked from the outside using a massive key. The inside of the lid contains a very complex locking mechanism. Turning the key simultaneously activates

eleven bolts locking the lid around the entire perimeter of the chest. The lock mechanism is decorated with floral motifs, and in its central part the craftsman placed a large, ornamental image of a key with an engraved code of the lock opening the chest (!).

The exhibit can be viewed in the "Vault" room at the NBP Money Centre.

■ Marcin Madejski

A souvenir from a trip to Europe... Silver cup dedicated to Rudolf Modrzejewski

One of the latest acquisitions of the NBP Money Centre is a simple, silver cup, covered with engraved inscriptions and decorated with ten coins. Although its form is rather modest and does not immediately attract the eye of the visitors like some other vessels presented in the exhibition, it has a very interesting background story, which involves several puzzles and unresolved questions.

The cup was dedicated and likely also gifted to Rudolf Modrzejewski (1861-1940), the son of the famous Polish actress Helena Modrzejewska and Gustaw Zimajer. Modrzejewski was a prominent railway engineer and a pioneer in the construction of suspension bridges. He was well known for his work both in the United States and in Europe.

The vessel contains a number of engravings in Polish. They refer to various aspects of the life of Ralph Modjeski (for convenience, Modrzejewski used this simplified version of his name outside of Poland).



Rudolf Modrzejewski, known in the United States as Ralph Modjeski
Wikipedia



Silver cup decorated with 10 coins
Photo: NBP



The bottom of the cup with a coin
Photo: NBP



The foot of the cup with a coin
Photo: NBP

The body of the cup carries the following inscription: "Rudolf Modrzejewski / born on 27.01.1861 in Kraków" (some biographical sources identify Bochnia as his place of birth). Below, the inscription presents the stages of his education in Poland and at the famous road and bridge engineering school in France: "He finished lower and secondary schools in Kraków / he graduated the National School of Bridges and Highways in Paris (L'Ecole nationale des ponts et chaussées) in Paris in 1885".

After that, we can read what looks like a documentation of the beginnings of his professional career – Modrzejewski's independent engineering works, as well as his engagements as an assistant engineer and consultant engineer are listed in two columns along with dates. The list begins with the following entry: "Engineer – United States of America", and proceeds to Modrzejewski's first work: "Omaha bridge – Assistant 1885-7". After that, almost year after year, Rudolf Modrzejewski participated in the construction of railway lines ("Northern Pacific 1897") and bridges or served as a consulting engineer in a number of American cities. The list contains a total of 20 projects. Out of these listed works, his most important accomplishments include: "Thebes bridge, Miss: Ill. 1902" (although in Modrzejewski's biographies the cantilever through-truss bridge over the Mississippi River in Thebes, Illinois is dated to 1904), and "Bridge on the Mississippi River in St. Louis 1908-1910" (this entry refers to the 8-span road-rail McKinley Bridge). The list also presents functions performed by Modrzejewski ("Milwaukee Electric Railway + Sanitary

District Chicago") and his less known works ("Fireproof warehouse at the Rock Island Arsenal 1904").

The list ends with an entry that reads: "Consulting engineer of the bridge on Kentucky River 1909". However, before that there is the already mentioned entry: "Bridge on the Mississippi River in St. Louis 1908-1910". This enables us to determine, that the cup was created in 1910 or shortly after that date. Perhaps this happened in 1911, when Modrzejewski received a doctorate in engineering from the Illinois State University, and maybe even later, when he was the winner of numerous awards for his engineering and scientific works, as well as his lifetime achievements, but in that case the vessel would have probably also included objects built at a later date.

The foot of the cup, separated from the body with a delicate row of silver beads, contains personal information about Modrzejewski: "He married Felicja Benda in New York on 28.12.1885" (she was a distant cousin of his mother; Modrzejewski separated from his wife in 1916 and the couple eventually divorced in 1931). The names of their children, along with the dates and places of their birth, are listed below: "Felix Bozenta 06.08.1887 Omaha, Nebraska / Marylka Stuart Helena 22.01.1893 Chicago, Illinois / Karolek Jan Emmanuel 20.02.1897 Chicago, Illinois".

The inside of the cup's foot contains a dedication: "I offer this as a souvenir of your stay in Europe / 1903". The person offering the gift did not sign



The foot of the cup with a dedication
Photo: NBP

the dedication directly, and their initials (TMB?) are concealed in the form of a complex monogram, so their identity is not known. Was it someone from the extended Benda family, or maybe just a family friend, who was well oriented in the personal and professional life of Rudolf Modrzejewski? The fact that it is also not clear which of Modrzejewski's multiple stays in Europe became the inspiration for the vessel only adds to the confusion. In Modrzejewski's official biographies there is no mention of a trip to Europe in 1903. Instead they mainly focus on the title of the engineer of the year in the United States awarded to Modrzejewski in a public poll on the greatest American bridge builder. The date is also somewhat misleading, since it suggests that the cup was already created around the year 1903. Meanwhile, due to the lack of a signature of the goldsmith's workshop or the master goldsmith, it is impossible to determine its creator.



Benjamin Franklin Bridge – Philadelphia in the state of Pennsylvania, 1926
Wikipedia

The silver cup with a straight form, extending slightly at the top, has a height of 19 cm, a diameter of 10.5 cm, and weighs 345.2 grammes. The body is decorated with silver and gold coins (5 pieces and 4 pieces, respectively). They were all fitted with the obverse sides on the outside, so the busts depicted on the coins are visible. The gold coins were coated with silver on the obverse sides, so the whole vessel looks like a uniformly silver object.

The lower and upper row of the fitted coins mainly include silver Trojak (three grosz) coins: the trojak coin of King Sigismund the Old minted in Gdańsk in 1538, the Lithuanian trojak coin of King Stephen Báthory from 1582, and the trojak coin of King Sigismund III Vasa minted in Riga in 1595. Then, there is also the szóstak (six grosz) coin of King Sigismund III Vasa minted in Malbork in 1596 and the 1 złoty coin of the Free City of Kraków from 1835. In the bottom of the cup, there is a well preserved 6-złoty thaler coin of King Stanisław August Poniatowski from 1794. The inclusion of coins minted by kings recognized in Polish historiography as successful rulers, as well as a coin of the last king of Poland, and a coin of the city of Kraków, suggests decidedly patriotic intentions. After all, despite his American citizenship, Rudolf Modrzejewski always considered himself a Pole and emphasized his Polish origins. He also wrote his correspondence and publications in Polish.

The gold coins include a 5-dollar coin from 1836, two pieces of the 2½-dollar coin from 1866 and 1878 in the middle row, and a 15-ruble coin of Tsar Nicholas II from 1897 in the bottom row. While the use of American coins can be explained by the fact that the United States became Rudolf Modrzejewski's adopted homeland, the presence of a Russian coin is difficult to explain.

■ Eliza Walczak



The Blue Water Bridge – Port Huron in the state of Michigan, 1938
Wikipedia

From the Calendar of the NBP Money Centre

**Tour path for kids on Saint Nicholas Day
at the NBP Money Centre** pp. 24-25

**The NBP Money Centre Competition for the best master's thesis
Open lectures** pp. 26



Tour path for kids on Saint Nicholas Day at the NBP Money Centre

A special tour path entitled “Valuable, interesting, and unusual”, a magical tent at the courtyard of the NBP head office, or the Santa Claus zone - these are just some of the surprises that Narodowy Bank Polski prepared on 7 December 2019 for all guests visiting the NBP Money Centre. The event, organized on Saint Nicholas Day, included numerous creative workshops, competitions, as well as festive music concerts and Carol singing. The young visitors could also get their faces painted with festive patterns or try their best at preparing Christmas decorations. Of course, Santa Claus also made an appearance.

During the tour of the NBP Money Centre the visitors were not only able to view the new exhibits, but also to find out why an ancient Greek coin carried the image of a bee, what the relationship was between sleds and the first European banknotes, and what is unique about the Polish złoty.

The main courtyard of the NBP head office was transformed into a festive, fairy-tale land. Contests with prizes and workshops teaching kids how to prepare Christmas decorations were organized in a magical, round tent. The visitors were able to take a souvenir photo in a giant spherical Christmas tree ball, and they could also treat themselves to hot drinks and sweets available at the winter bar.



On that day the NBP Money Centre was visited by a total of 436 young guests and their carers
Photo: NBP



The Santa Claus Zone at the courtyard of the NBP head office

Photo: NBP

Numerous attractions were also prepared for the participants at NBP's main building, where a special Santa Claus Zone was created. The theatre play "Co się zdarzyło w Manko?" ("What happened in Manko?") proved to be very popular with the youngest visitors (it was presented several times), while the adult visitors especially enjoyed the exhibition of nearly 900 collector coins.

During the event, the NBP Money Centre was open from 12 a.m. to 7 p.m., the exhibitions were viewed by a total of 436 visitors.

The special tour path entitled "Valuable, interesting, and unusual" was presented 24 times (this is how many groups were created, which were cared for by 7 employees of the NBP Money Centre), while 16 educators guided the visitors through the exhibition.

■ Małgorzata Kozłowska



The medal display rack in the "Numismatist's Study" room
Photo: NBP

For the Santa Claus party the NBP Money Centre prepared a special presentation of exhibits purchased in 2018 and 2019.

The lower drawers of the old-fashioned medal display rack in the "Numismatist's Study" room proudly presented two silver vessels decorated with coins: an 18th-century beer mug and a 19th-century cup.

Above these items, the visitors could view a souvenir box containing coins and a banknote from the period of the November Uprising, and next to it a cup from the early 20th century, dedicated to Rudolf Modrzejewski.

On the top drawers the visitors could find a modern-era jewellery scale with a set of weights for coins, as well as various coins and commodity money – starting from the most unusual, such as the copper half-daler platmynt and the silver Novgorod poltina (1/2 grivna), the Bavarian thaler belonging to the category of so-called numismatic jewellery, to the small, but beautiful medieval gold florin from the Italian city of Florence. All these exhibits will be presented at the permanent exhibition of the NBP Money Centre in the "Antiquity-Middle Ages-Modernity" and "Numismatist's Study" rooms.

■ Eliza Walczak

Competition for the NBP Money Centre Award

At the initiative of the NBP Money Centre Programme Board, in 2020 NBP will organize the **first edition of the Competition for the NBP Money Centre Award for the best master's thesis devoted to the themes of socio-economic history**. This is a new initiative of Narodowy Bank Polski, which will enable us to distinguish dissertations prepared at various study courses in the fields of social sciences and humanities (history, sociology, economics, etc.). The competition will be held once a year, and the winner will receive a financial prize in the amount of PLN 10,000 (the terms and conditions of the competition also provide for the possibility of two equal prizes being awarded, in the amount of PLN 5,000 each). The works submitted to the competition will be judged by the Competition Jury consisting of members of the NBP Money Centre Programme Board.

The NBP Money Centre hopes that the competition will encourage students of Polish universities to prepare dissertations deepening the knowledge in the field of the socio-economic history of Poland and the world. After all, the NBP Money Centre's mission is to stimulate popular interest in this subject and to present the broad context of economic phenomena,

encompassing not only the economic, but also the social and the historical elements.

The schedule of the Competition for the NBP Money Centre Award will coincide with the schedule of the Competition for the NBP President's Award for the best master's thesis in the field of economic sciences (the submission of papers begins in April). The winners of both competitions will be announced at a joint gala at the end of the year.

Students of all universities in Poland (not only universities of humanities, but also economic or technical universities) who defended their dissertations during the calendar year preceding the date of announcement of the competition, that is, in the period between 01.01.2019 and 31.12.2019, are illegible to participate in the first edition of the Competition for the NBP Money Centre Award for the best master's thesis devoted to the themes of socio-economic history.

Information about the competition (the terms and conditions as well as the schedule) can be found at the websites of NBP and the NBP Money Centre.

■ *Natalia Ćwik*

Lectures at the NBP Money Centre



We invite everyone to the Thursday open lectures, held at 5 p.m. in room 129/F

■ **5 March**

“Coinage in the city of Gdańsk until 1793” („Mennictwo w Gdańsku do roku 1793”)
Dr Tomasz Olkowski
(The Museum of Gdańsk, Polish Numismatic Society)

■ **26 March**

“Upper Silesia in the first half of the 19th century – the success and costs of industrialization” („Górny Śląsk w pierwszej połowie XIX w. – sukces i koszty industrializacji”)
Dr Miłosz Skrzypek
(Institute of History, University of Silesia in Katowice)

■ *Mateusz Sora*

Bankoteka

Magazine of the Sławomir S. Skrzypek NBP Money Centre

Publisher:

Education and Publishing Department

Address:

ul. Świętokrzyska 11/21,
00-919 Warsaw
phone 22 185 25 25
centrumpieniadza@nbp.pl

Editor: Stanisław Gorący

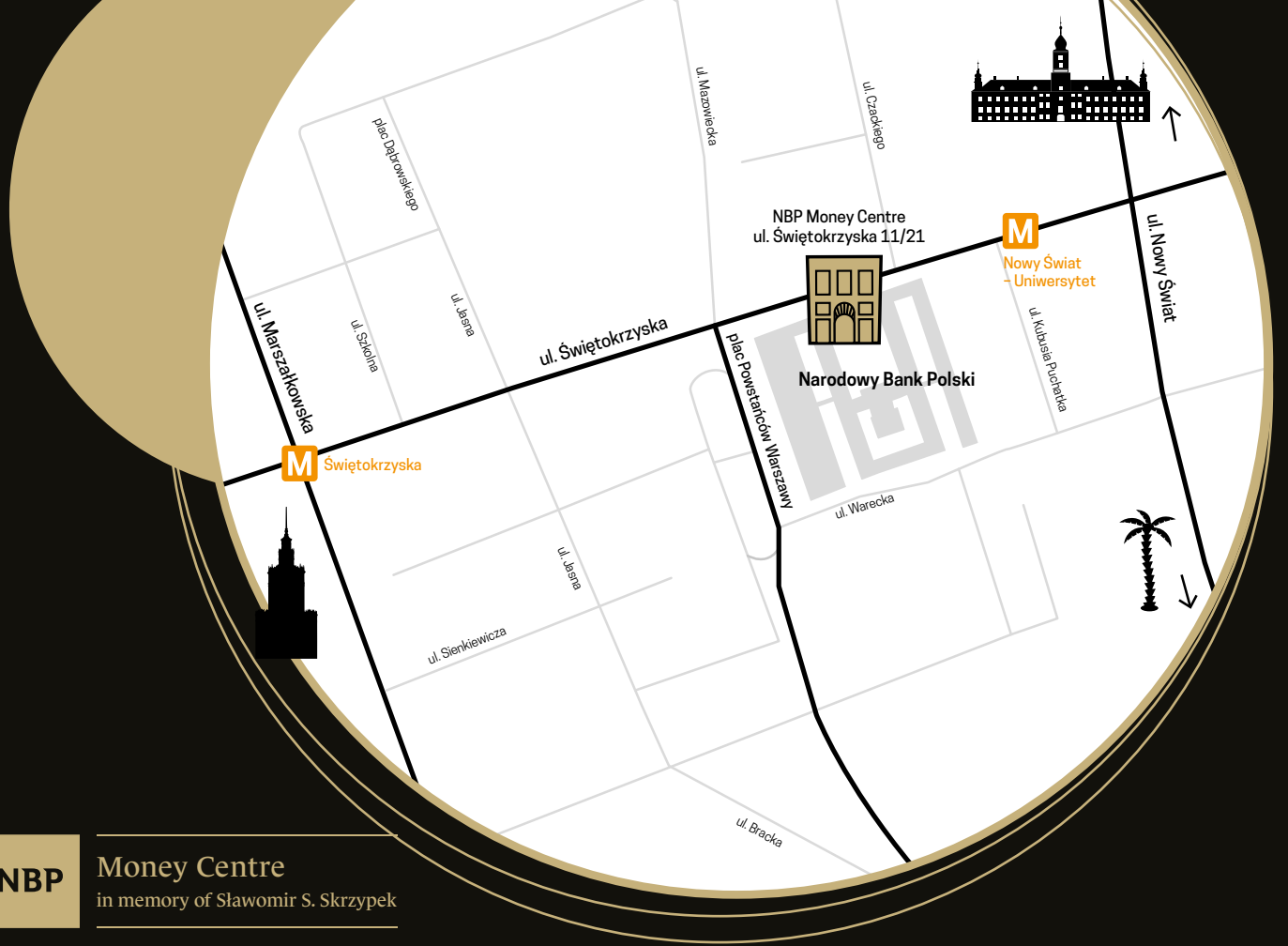
In cooperation with: Natalia Ćwik, Tomasz Kaleta, Małgorzata Kozłowska, Marcin Madejski, Antonina Marnic, Mateusz Sora, Eliza Walczak, Anna Żółkiewska

Photographs: Natalia Ćwik,

Marcin Madejski – NBP, NBP collections, Wikipedia

Graphic design:

Piotr Kotela



NBP

Money Centre

in memory of Sławomir S. Skrzypek

We invite you

Monday – Wednesday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Thursday 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Friday – Sunday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Monday – closed

ul. Świętokrzyska 11/21

00-919 Warsaw

Booking for organised group visits: (22) 185 25 25

Individual visits do not require prior booking

Free admission!

Visit our website: www.nbp.pl/centrumpieniadza

Discover the fascinating world of money!

HISTORY • ECONOMY • EDUCATION



Visit our website: www.nbp.pl/centrumpieniadza