

# “Poplars and Cypresses” – that is the phenomenon of popularity of *Populus Italica* in the Kingdom of Poland in the 19<sup>th</sup> century

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**Abstract:** Lombardy poplar is a tree with a distinctive cypress shape, which grows very fast and has little soil requirements. The species probably originated at the turn of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century in Lombardy, where it spread via France and Germany, arriving at the territory of the Crown in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. However, it was only in the 19<sup>th</sup> century that its popularity reached its peak. The Lombardy poplar was being planted as a popular avenue plant. It was also an important part of the park complexes designed in a sentimental landscape style inspired by the work of Jean Jacques Rousseau. The article analyses the phenomenon of the popularity of poplar trees on the territory of the Kingdom of Poland in the context of the then literary and philosophical programme of the garden, whose two key sources are to be found in Arcadian literature – J. Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, J.J. Rousseau’s works such as *New Heloise* or Jacques Dellille’s *Gardens*.

**Keywords:** Lombardy poplar, Jean Jacques Rousseau, L’isle de peupliers

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## Introduction

The art of landscaping gardens and green areas has always involved the knowledge of plants: their requirements, vegetation period or duration – longevity.

Throughout the centuries, the fascination of gardeners and planners with exotic plants have become increasingly apparent. Admired for their interesting shape, way of flowering, they owed their popularity to the development of botanical research, treatises and expeditions, which helped to make them widely available in Europe.

The fashion for individual species, which were sometimes attributed medicinal and even magical properties, was also not without importance. Philosophical influences, art and poetry also had a significant impact on the popularity of “new” plant species, and sometimes also those which, because of their shape, might have imitated more noble varieties, whose vegetation was impossible in the more severe climate of Eastern Europe. Evidence of this is the phenomenon of agave (*Agave americana* L.), popular in Italian, French, and German gardens in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>1</sup>, or tulip bulbs in the 17<sup>th</sup> century Netherlands, including the most expensive plant in history – the famous *Semper Augustus tulip*<sup>2</sup>, which price was influenced by the phenomenon of *tulipomania*

1 M. Jagiełło, W. Brzezowski, *Ogrody na Śląsku*, Vol. 1 od średniowiecza do XVII wieku, Oficyna wydawnicza Politechniki Wrocławskiej, Wrocław 2014, p. 1–5.

2 Bulbs of this species at auction in Haarlem reached 6 000 guildens, which at the time was equivalent to around 1 million euro. After: <https://www.nntfi.pl/finanse-po-godzinach/tulipomania>, accessed on: August 2020.

also known as *tulip fever* [Fig. 1A] . Speculation on the price of tulip bulbs has finally led to the collapse of the market and a gigantic economic crisis that has spread across Europe.

The Baroque period was characterised by the enormous popularity of citrus trees (*Citrus limonium*, *Citrus aurantium*). [Fig. 1B] They owe their incredible career in the gardens of Europe to the expansion of Arabs in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries, who brought these trees to Europe. The particular popularity of citrus was associated with their morphological features: evergreen leaves, aroma and exotic fruits. These plants did not fit into the canon of plant matter susceptible to formation – so desirable in the Baroque, what is more, at first their bitter taste was also not appreciated<sup>3</sup>. Nevertheless, the size of orangeries and greenhouses used for storing citrus trees was an evidence of the wealth and position of a ruler, therefore the buildings used for this purpose became an obligatory element of the magnate's premises, initially larger and later even smaller ones.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century should undoubtedly be defined as the time of special popularity of another plant, the so-called Lombardy poplar or Italian poplar, popular all over Europe, especially in its central and eastern part, where climate conditions did not allow the planting of cypresses so common in paintings and poetry of that century. [Fig. 1 C]

The aim of this article is an attempt to analyse the systematics and the way in which Lombardy poplars were used in urban space, as well as the residence complexes of the Kingdom of Poland in the light of the then prevailing ideas, treaties and cult of the philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau.



**Fig. 1.** A – *Semper Augustus* tulip, [https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tulipomania], 10.07.2020, B – lemon (*Citrus Limon*) from F.E. Kohler catalogue, 1887, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lemon#/media/File:Citrus\_x\_limon\_-\_K%C3%B6hler%E2%80%93Medizinal-Pflanzen-041.jpg], 10.07.2020, C – Lombardy poplars (*Populus italica*) according to the model of I. Czartoryska (1805)

## The state of the research

When analysing archival materials and publications on the Lombardy poplar and its use in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century sentimental gardens, it should be noted that this subject has been explored by a wide range of garden creators and experienced gardeners. Botanical descriptions of this species were made by K. Kluk (1748)<sup>4</sup>, W. Giżycki

<sup>3</sup> W. Brzezowski, M. Jagiełło, *Ogrody na Śląsku*, Vol. 2 barok, Oficyna wydawnicza Politechniki Wrocławskiej, Wrocław 2017, p. 353–354.

<sup>4</sup> K. Kluk, *Dykcyonarz roślinny, w którym podług Linneusza są opisane rośliny[...]* Vol. 2, 1787, Warszawa, w Drukarni J.K. Mci i Rzeczypospolitej u XX. Scholarum Piarum, 1787.

(1827)<sup>5</sup>, J. Wyżycki (1845)<sup>6</sup>, J. Rostafiński (1913)<sup>7</sup>, W. Bugała (1968)<sup>8</sup>, and Seneta and Dolatowski (2007)<sup>9</sup>. The above-mentioned works concerned the historical and contemporary systematics and provenance of this plant. They were also often burdened with error.

The role of the Lombardy poplar in the composition of sentimental parks was described by Czartoryska (1805), while descriptions of French designs in the form of the Ermenonville garden and the *poplar island* were the subject of the famous patterns by M. Morel (1776)<sup>10</sup>, A. Thiebaut (1798)<sup>11</sup>, and A. Laborde (1808)<sup>12</sup>. On the Polish ground the above-mentioned subjects were covered by L. Majdecki (2008)<sup>13</sup>, M. Ludwisiak (2003)<sup>14</sup>, W. Piwkowski (1998)<sup>15</sup>, and K.L. Boguszewska (2017)<sup>16</sup>.

## The Lombardy poplars in the European landscape of the 19<sup>th</sup> century

Lombardy poplar is a tree with a characteristic cypress shape that has quite little soil requirements and grows very fast. The species probably appeared at the turn of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century in Lombardy, from where it spread through France and Germany, reaching the territories of the Crown in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>17</sup>.

Admired for its shape and relatively small needs, poplar became one of the most popular trees planted in the Kingdom of Poland. J. Wyżycki wrote about these trees in his herbarium in 1845:

*The pyramidal Lombardy poplar grows wild in Italy and Taurya, is characterised by its slender growth, its branches hugged to the trunk form a beautiful pyramid, which actually gave it its name*<sup>18</sup>.

There are three different species of pyramidal poplars in Europe and central, south-western and western Asia. These are: black poplar var. *italica* (*Populus nigra* cv *Italica*) commonly called pyramidal poplar, black poplar var. *usbekistanica* (*Populus usbekistanica*), and white poplar var. *pyramidal* (*Populus Bolleana Lauche*). The first two come from the black poplar (*Populus nigra* L.), the third from the white poplar (*Populus alba* L.). The *usbekistanica* black poplar reached Europe and Africa thanks to the Arabs (7<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century) and Turks (14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century). It settled in the Balkans and the countries which were the sphere of influence of the Ottoman State (Turkish Empire). The younger, Lombardy poplar was bred in northern Italy, from where it was successfully spread to Western and Central European countries. Its origins date back to the turn of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>19</sup> [Seneta, Dolatowski, p. 102], or the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>20</sup> [Bugała, 7]. Interestingly, it was

5 F.K. Giżycki, *O przyrozbudowaniu siedlisk wiejskich: rzecz zastosowana d o Polski*. Volume 2, Nakładem i drukiem N. Glucksberga, Warszawa 1827.

6 Zielnik ekonomiczno-techniczny czyli Opisanie Drzew, Krzewów i Roślin dziko rosnących w kraju, jako też przyswojonych, z pokazaniem użytku ich w Ekonomice, Rękodzielnach, Fabrykach i Medycynie domowej, z wyszczególnieniem jadowitych i szkodliwych oraz mogących służyć ku ozdobie ogrodów i mieszkańców wiejskich ułożony dla gospodarzy i gospodyń przez Józefa Gerald-Wyżyckiego Volume I, Wilno, Drukiem Józefa Zawadzkiego, 1845.

7 J. Rostafiński, *O Topoli włoskiej w Polsce = Note sur le peuplier d'Italie en Pologne*, Lwów 1913.

8 W. Bugała, *Topole piramidalne, ich pochodzenie i historia uprawy*, in: *Wszechświat pismo przyrodnicze*, no. 1, January 1968.

9 W. Seneta, J. Dolatowski, *Dendrologia Wydanie III poprawione i uzupełnione*, Wydawnictwo naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2007.

10 M. Morel, *Théorie des jardins*, A Paris: Chez Pissot, libraire, quai des Augustins, près la rue Gilles-cur, 1776.

11 Thiebaut de Berneaud, Arsenne, *Voyage a l'isle des Peupliers, par Arsenne Thiebaut...*, Paris 1798.

12 A. Laborde, *Description des nouveaux jardins de la France et de ses anciens Chateaux, meele d'observations sur la vie de la campagne et la composition des jardins: par Alexandre de la borde, les dessins par Ct. Bourgeois*, Paris 1808.

13 L. Majdecki *Historia Ogrodów od XVIII wieku do współczesności*, vol. 2, Wydawnictwo naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2008.

14 M. Ludwisiak, *Arkadia Heleny Radziwiłłowej – zagadnienie śmierci w XVIII-wiecznym ogrodzie* [in: *Acta Universitatis Lodziensis, folia historica*, 77, 2003.

15 W. Piwkowski, *Arkadia Heleny Radziwiłłowej studium historyczne*, Warszawa 1998.

16 K. Boguszewska, *Zieleń Pasów Przydrożnych w historycznej ikonografii Lublina*, [in: *Roślinność pasów przydrożnych Lublina potencjał i zagrożenia*, Redakcja Ewy Trzaskowskiej, Urząd Miasta Lublin, 2017.

17 W. Seneta, J. Dolatowski, *Dendrologia Wydanie III poprawione i uzupełnione*, Wydawnictwo naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2007.

18 J. Wyżycki, *Zielnik Ekonomiczno Techniczny* Vol. 1 i 2 Published: Vilnius 1845, p. 45.

19 W. Seneta, J. Dolatowski, *Dendrologia wydanie III*, op. cit., p. 102.

20 W. Bugała, *Topole piramidalne*, op. cit., p. 7.

planted in France in 1749 (*peuplier d'Italie*), and similarly in Germany, where it was planted along the route from Karlsruhe to Durlach.

In England, the Lombardy poplar appeared in 1758 and in North America over thirty years later. The tree came to Poland in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. According to K. Kluk [Diccyon of Plants II, 1787]

*It is possible to observe here, in our midst, a variety of this Species, which, unjustifiably, called the Willow of Wallachia by some, comes from Lombardy, Italy. It differs most in the fact that its branches are not scattered, but close to the trunk and express the Pyramid in growth. The tree is whiter in it: the bark is brighter: Leaves narrower and darker. The reproduction of it is very easy (...)*<sup>21</sup>.

## Dispute over the origin of "Polish" poplars

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was a popular and even common tree in the landscape of the Kingdom of Poland. In the country, the actual number of poplar species was discussed and disputes about the country of its origin were held. In 1827 W. Giżycki mentioned that pyramidal poplars were introduced by Jan III Sobieski:

*We owe it to him to popularise pyramidal poplars in Poland, which have been brought from the Turkish land. (...) there are some rare trees left over from these gardens, including the Western Thuias, which have grown to enormous sizes and are known as cypresses (...), which proves that these and other foreign trees can actually withstand the climate of the Podolia, Ruthenia and Cracow lands*<sup>22, 23</sup>.

In this text W. Giżycki confused the western thuja (*Thuja*) with the cypresses (*Cuperyssus*), which in the climate of the Kingdom had no *raison d'être*.

In the landscape of Krakow, Lombardy poplars appeared in 1820. During the planting of trees, poplars were imported from Bielsko where they arrived directly from Germany and were also distributed to Warsaw<sup>24</sup>.

The fervent advocate of poplar trees was Princess Anna Paulina Jabłonowska, who in Siemiatycze 'in her park and in her greenhouses [had – the author's note] all that could be obtained in Paris. Suffice it to say that apart from three domestic poplars she had six other poplars (*Populus angulata, balsamea, canadensis, italica, balsamifera*)<sup>25</sup>. Apart from Princess Jabłonowska, Izabela Czartoryska née Flemming also admired poplars. In the Wilanów garden, Lombardy poplars appeared indirectly thanks to her at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, something to which the Princess's garden treatise (1805) contributed, shaping the tastes of the then magnates.

Socio-economic measures to rebuild Polish cities after the Northern Wars were also important.

The decisions and legal acts of the *Boni Ordinis* Committee, and later the activities of individual Voivodship Committees, largely influenced the way in which the urban centres were shaped. At the request of the Committee on Internal Affairs, the possibilities of rebuilding transit roads were analysed, which later resulted in the first regulation plans for the cities.

The management of the construction investment process of the cities of the Kingdom of Poland was regulated by the Ordinance of the State Commission for Home Affairs of 30 June 1820.

In Lublin, as a result of city reconstruction carried out between 1815 and 1830, three new transport routes were created: to Lubartów, Warsaw, and Zamość<sup>26</sup>. These roads were planted with poplars (...) *this part of Poland*

21 K. Kluk, *Dykcyonarz roślinny...*, op. cit.

22 F.K. Giżycki, *O przyozdabianiu siedlisk...*, op. cit., p. 129.

23 W. Bugała, *Topole piramidalne...*, op. cit., p. 7–8.

24 J. Rostański, *O Topoli włoskiej...*, op. cit., p. 1651.

25 *Ibid.*, p. 1654.

26 N. Przesmycka, *Lublin: przeobrażenia urbanistyczne 1815–1939*, Politechnika Lubelska 2012, p. 38–40, 45–47, 54.

was soon flooded with poplars<sup>27</sup>. It is worth mentioning that *creating of poplar streets* were one of the main investment points of the Lublin Voivodeship Committee in the years 1822–1829<sup>28</sup>.

Iconography of the city of Lublin, which has been preserved in large numbers, illustrates the above activities. Apart from the *Album Lubelski* created by an art historian – illustrator A. Lerue in the years 1858–1860, which was later transferred to lithographs by J. Cegliński, A. Matuszkiewicz and Władysław Walkiewicz, oil paintings, watercolours, and city views, Nowaczyński's work presenting *The view of Lublin from the side of the Zamość route* from 1847 is also worth mentioning. Apart from the city panorama with the most important buildings in the form of the cathedral church, the Trinity Tower, the post-Franciscan church, the Dominicans and the silhouette of the castle, a part of the Zamość route planted with rows of Lombardy poplars is visible<sup>29</sup>. [Fig. 2A, B]



**Fig. 2.** A – *The view of Lublin from the side of the Zamość route* from 1847, lithography by Nowaczyński based on the drawing by A. Leurue, B – *Collegiate Church of St. Michael before the demolition of 1846–1852*, lithography by J. Cegliński based on the drawing by A. Lerue

It was similar in the Zamość Fortress of the Zamoyski Family Fee Tail, as demonstrated in L. P. Lelewel's watercolours from around 1824. The illustrations present the state of preservation of the fortress in 1821 and 1824<sup>30 31</sup> and document the design and work carried out in Zamość since 1820 under the supervision of the Directorate of the Corps of Engineers. The officers' team was then headed by General Mallet-Malletowski<sup>32</sup>. Among the thirty watercolours depicting various parts of the fortress, the illustration entitled "The View of the Town Hall" deserves special attention. "The View of the Town Hall" depicts the Town Hall of Zamość just after its reconstruction in 1823, where four Lombardy poplars were planted right opposite the front facade [Fig. 3A]. A well can be seen in the square. On other watercolours you can see that the only tree that was used was this species, immortalised at the Lublin Gate, on the walls 4,5, in the Zamość Market Square, bastion no. 2, or the view of the moat slope in front of the wall 1,2<sup>33</sup> [Fig. 2B]. This iconography confirms the actions undertaken as a part of the modernisation of the Zamość fortress in the 1820s, when the Russian government ordered the Zamość magistrate to plant a hundred Lombardy poplars in the Rynek Wielki and within the fortress walls<sup>34</sup>.

27 J. Rostafiński, *O Topoli włoskiej...*, op. cit., p. 1655.

28 G. Ciołek, *Ogrody Lublina w XIX wieku*, [in:] *Ochrona Zabytków* 7/4 (27), 1954, p. 263–270.

29 R. Bartnik, *Portret miasta Lublin w malarstwie, rysunku i grafice 1618–1939*, wydano z okazji 700-lecia nadania Lublinowi praw miejskich, Muzeum Lubelskie w Lublinie, Lublin 2017, p. 64.

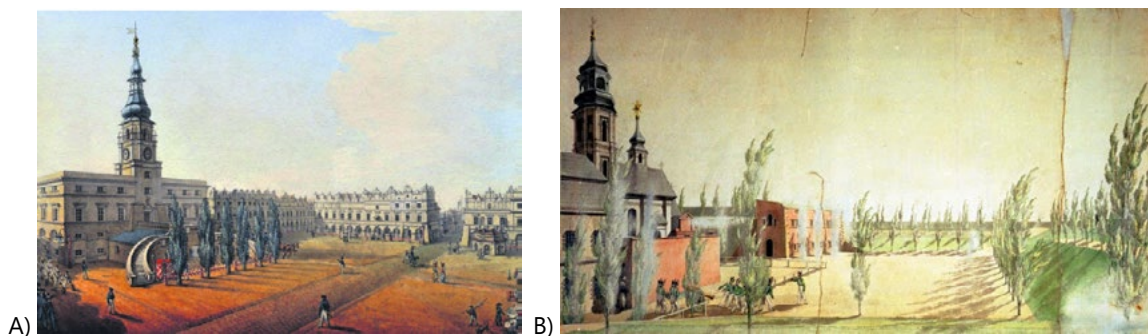
30 W. Przegon, J. Żygawski, *Kartograficzne Zamostiana*, Kraków – Zamość 2018, p. 80.

31 Przegon W., *Krajobrazy XIX-wiecznego Zamościa w akwarelach i rysunkach Jana Pawła Lelewela*, Kraków 1997, p. 25–29, 31–45.

32 J. Kowalczyk, *Zamojskie rysunki Jana Pawła Lelewela w Petersburgu*, w: *Zamojski Kwartalnik Kulturalny*, Nr 1–2 (86–87), 2006, p. 6.

33 *Ibid.*, p. 5–6, 8–9.

34 B. Sroczyńska, *Konserwatorska Teka Zamojska, Zamość w XIX wieku*, Wydawnictwa PKZ, Warszawa – Zamość 1986, p. 32.



**Fig. 3.** A – View of the Town Hall, J.P. Lelewel, B – Training ground, J.P. Lelewel 1825–1826 [http://infomaty.zamosc.pl/en/page/917/#prettyPhoto], 10.07.2020

For the needs of planting along beaten tracks and creating new parks, including the first public gardens, special poplar tree nurseries were established, one of which was located in the area of the first public garden in Lublin, which was the Saski Park<sup>35, 36, 37</sup>.

However, Lombardy poplars were not long-lived trees in our climate; their life cycle was 60–80 years. After this period of time, these trees were dying<sup>38</sup>.

## Lombardy poplars and cult of Jean Jaques Rousseau in Europe

Lombardy poplar trees, not only have grown in the Polish landscape of routes and waterfront sites of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, but have also become a symbol of the epoch of European sentimentalism and an important element of the literary and philosophical garden programme, the two key sources which should be sought in Arcadian literature – J. Milton's *Paradise Lost*, J. J. Rousseau's works such as *New Heloise* and Jacques Dellille's *Gardens*. At this time, three key themes appeared in the space of the garden in line with the philosophy of the epoch: the return to nature, the *idyllic state of happiness*, and the motif of death.<sup>39</sup> The figure of J.J. Rousseau (1712–1788) is particularly connected with the latter. The tomb of the philosopher on the poplar island (*L' île des peupliers*) in Ermenonville (1766) became a role model willingly reproduced not only in French residences such as Mereville, but also German such as Worlitz near Dessau (1769–1815) or, finally, in Polish sentimental gardens such as Helena Radziwiłłowa's Arcadia, Izabela Lubomirska's Mokotów garden, Aleksandra Potocka's Wilanów (intended from 1808), Anna Potocka's Natolin (1815), Olesin, Zofiówka na Humaniu (now within the Ukrainian borders), or finally Zwierzyniec of the Zamoyski family<sup>40</sup>. Ermenonville was inspired by the novel *New Heloise* by J.J. Rousseau. The Baroque complex was transformed over the years by Marquis Rene Girardin into a sentimental park. The leading element of the whole composition was the water system, which was an axis stretching in a north-south direction. In the centre of the park there was an island with a palace which separated the space between the river, cascade, public road, and small pond with two islands on which the Rousseau tomb and the Mayer tomb were built. The park had an irregular composition in the space, where various sentimental buildings (fisherman house, Swiss house, sailor's house or philosopher's house, etc.) and numerous elements of small garden architecture in the form of an obelisk, pavilions, ermitages, ruins, caves and cascades were situated<sup>41</sup> [Fig. 3A].

35 N. Przesmycka, *Przeobrażenia historycznych terenów zielonych Lublina do 1939 roku*, [in:] *Teka Komisji Architektury, Urbanistyki i studiów Krajobrazowych*, OL PAN, p. 157–167.

36 K. Boguszewska, *Zieleń Pasów Przydrożnych...*, op. cit., p. 52.

37 N. Przesmycka, K. Boguszewska, *Kształtowanie terenów zieleni w układzie urbanistycznym śródmieścia Lublina*, maszynopis, Lublin 2018, unpaginated.

38 W. Bugała, *Topole piramidalne*, op. cit., p. 9.

39 M. Ludwisiak, *Arkadia Heleny Radziwiłłowej – zagadnienie śmierci w XVIII-wiecznym ogrodzie* [in:] *Acta Universitatis Lodzianensis, folia historica*, 77, 2003, p. 36.

40 W. Piwkowski, *Arkadia Heleny Radziwiłłowej studium historyczne*, Warszawa 1998, p. 49–50.

41 L. Majdecki *Historia Ogrodów od XVIII wieku do współczesności*, vol. 2, Wydawnictwo naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2008, p. 140–141.

The great popularity of J.J. Rousseau's theory in the Kingdom was connected with a peculiar cult of this individual. The place of his burial soon became the goal of pilgrimages of the most powerful people of the epoch such as Bonaparte, Robespierre, Saint Juste, or the Polish aristocracy (Princess Lubomirska). The works of Rousseau, which were prohibited and listed on *index librorum prohibitorum*, were read and known in Poland. What is more, the Considerations on the Government of Poland by the philosopher, praising the democratic model of society realised in the Republic of Poland, were translated by Franciszek Karp and distributed during the Great Sejm, which significantly contributed to the philosopher's popularity in Poland<sup>42</sup>. At the same time, the fashion for collecting souvenirs connected with the life and work of J.J. Rousseau began. In Poland, Izabela Czartoryska was the leader in this field before Izabela Lubomirska or Helena Przeździecka. Princess Czartoryska had quite a large collection of souvenirs in the Gothic House in the park in Puławy<sup>43</sup>.

## *L'isle de peupliers* in the gardens of Europe

Rousseau's tomb was immortalised on various shafts and described as a model that ought to be found in every prominent sentimental garden. [Fig. 4 A,B,C] Suffice it to mention the treatise of M. Morela here *Theorie des jardins*<sup>44</sup> or *Voyage a l'isle des Peupliers*, par Arsenne Thiebaut, also translated into Polish, where the garden layout in Ermenonville and the burial place of J. J. Rousseau on a poplar island were described in detail. Noteworthy is the form of expression and a kind of convention adopted by the author idealising this place. [Fig. 3B]

*The sarcophagus in which Rousseau rests has an ancient form. It is made of limestone and was erected in a noble simplicity. Suffice it to say, making the greatest praise, this is Lesueur. The south-facing façade of the sarcophagus is decorated with an allegorical relief depicting a mother feeding her son while holding in her hand the work of Emile (...)<sup>45</sup>. I wanted to get to know in depth the details of this tomb, which I could not part with. It rested on a bed of the most beautiful greenery. **It was surrounded by beautiful italica poplars with slender trunks and silent leaves immortalising meditation and reverie in this place. Further on, cypresses and shrubs grow, creating a gloomy shadow that the sun's rays cannot penetrate.** There are no traces of lavish pride affecting visitors here, these mighty pyramids erected on the banks of the fertile Nile, which capture the memory of the oppressors of humanity. Here everything is simple, you can get to know the hand of a sensitive friendship that has borne the cost of this beautiful monument<sup>46</sup>*

or the later work by A. Laborde., *Description des nouveaux jardins de la France* from 1808 with illustrations that have become a permanent feature of the garden art.

*The island on which J.J.'s tomb is located is shaded by tall poplars, which partly cover it. There is no place more suitable for the site of this tomb, given its nature. The landscape is delightful thanks to its power, peacefulness and melancholy. Looking at the tomb where the ashes are buried (of J.J. Rousseau – author's note), mutilated many times, and foolishly immortalised by the curious, we feel the wisdom of Religion, which worships tombs above the respect of the more powerful<sup>47</sup>.*

42 M. Ludwisiak, *Postać Jana Jakuba Rousseau i jego wpływ na współczesność*, [in:] *Acta Universitatis Lodzianis*, folia historica, 81, 2007, p. 100.

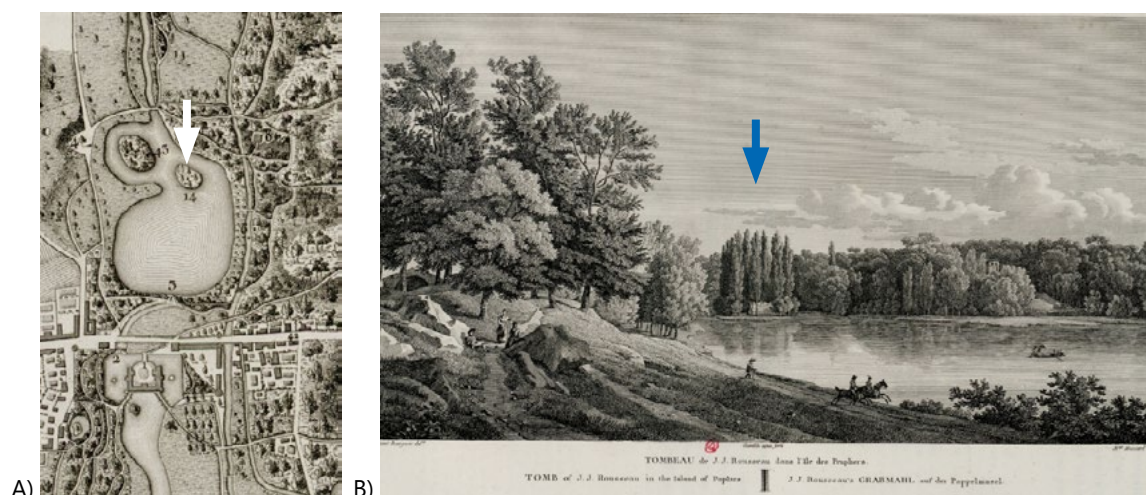
43 M. Ludwisiak, *Postać Jana Jakuba...*, op. cit., p. 102–104.

44 L. Majdecki *Historia Ogrodów...*, op. cit., p. 140.

45 Thiebaut de Berneaud, Arsenne, *Voyage a l'isle...*, op. cit., p. 62–65 – translation from French by Joanna Lampka.

46 *Ibid.*, p. 64–65.

47 Laborde A., *Description des nouveaux...*, op. cit., p. 89 – translation from French by Joanna Lampka.



**Fig. 4.** A – A part of the plan of Ermenonville by A. Laborde., [in :] *Description des nouveaux jardins de la France* from 1808, B – Fig. The tomb of J.J Rousseau on the poplar island, A. Laborde.,[in :] *Description des nouveaux jardins de la France* from 1808,[<https://bibliotheque-numerique.inha.fr/collection/item/9072-description-des-nouveaux-jardins-de-la-france-et-de-ses-anciens-chateaux->],10.06.2020



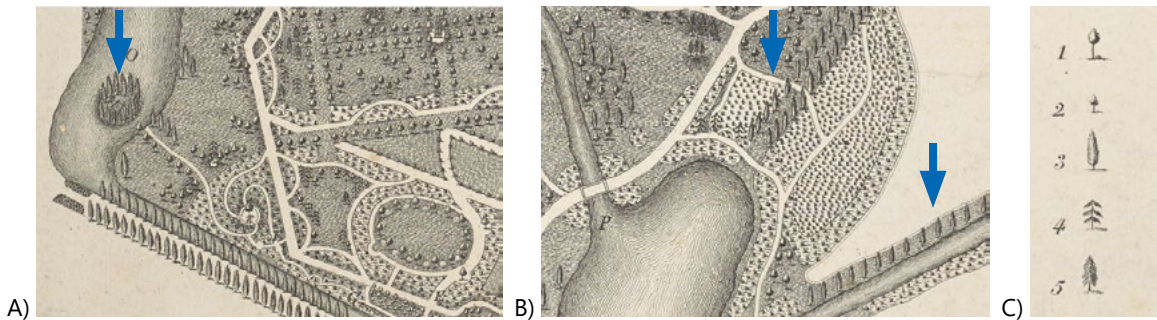
**Fig. 5.** A The tomb of Cook in Mereville, B – the view on Rambouillet Park – A. Laborde., [in :] *Description des nouveaux jardins de la France* z 1808r, [<https://bibliotheque-numerique.inha.fr/collection/item/9072-description-des-nouveaux-jardins-de-la-france-et-de-ses-anciens-chateaux->], 10.06.2020, C – *Aux ames sensibles Vue du Tombeau de J.J. Rousseau dans l'Isle des Peupliers à Ermenonville*, 1781 [<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b69505941.item>], 10.07.2020

A one of the parks based on French models is the garden complex in Worlitz. The park and the palace were built between 1769 and 1817 on the order of Leopold III, Duke of Anhalt-Dessau, designed by Friedrich Wilhelm von Erdmansdorff and Johann Friedrich Eyserbec. The canvas and the leading element of the garden composition, as in Ermenonville or Mereville, is a complex water system consisting of a lake, where a classicist palace was situated on a hill and two ponds (bigger and smaller) connected by a system of canals. The irregular coastline, bays, islands including the island with the Rousseau tomb (1782) and numerous small architecture elements in the form of caves, temples and sculptures, situated in different parts of the park and connected by viewing axes, followed the trends of the first European landscape gardens<sup>48</sup>.

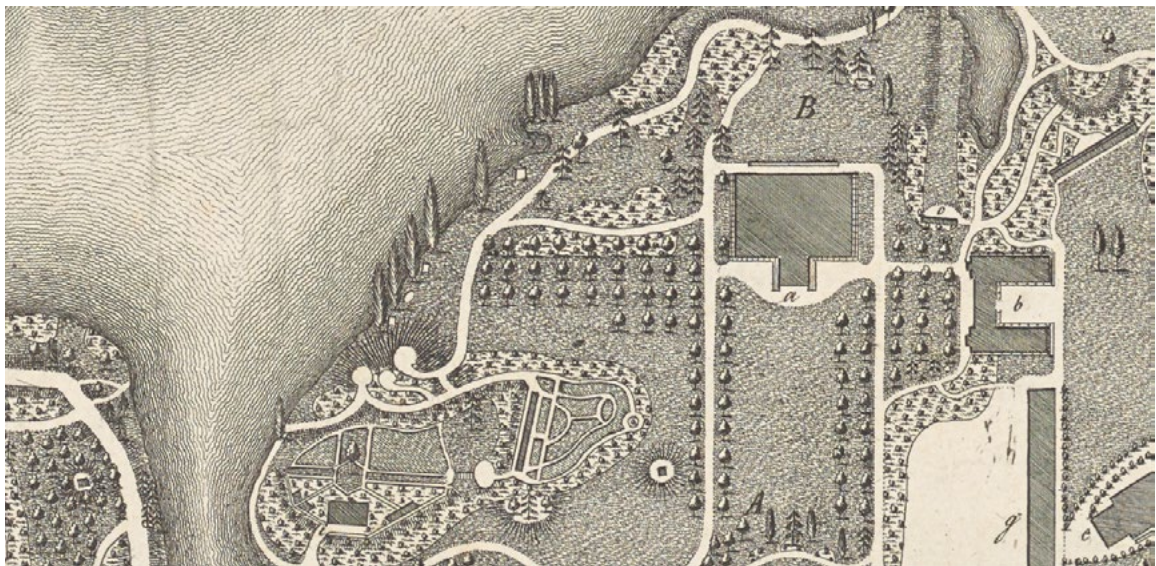
An important element of the whole garden layout was the plant matter, which complemented the rich philosophical programme of the park and became part of European trends. The garden in Worlitz is an excellent example of the use of different species of native and imported vegetation in the English style park. Among the



trees that were frequently planted in the garden in Dessau was the Lombardy poplar, which was marked with a special sign on the plan from 1784. Interestingly, on the same plan, in addition to Lombardy poplars (No. 3), non-indigenous deciduous trees (1), fruit trees (2), evergreen spruces, firs and pines (4), and heifers, yews and cedars (5) were marked with separate symbols. [Fig. 5C] The very fact that poplars were marked with a different symbol shows how valuable and desirable and at the same time fashionable they were. What is more, on the same plan we are able to analyse the arrangements and places where the tree was planted [Figures 5A,B,6]. In addition to the program element of the island with the tomb of Rousseau, poplars were used as avenue trees to mark communication routes. They were often planted individually in irregular groups or rows above the artificial canals, highlighting the viewing axes between the individual interiors of the garden.



**Fig. 6.** Parts of the park in Worlitz, A – Poplar Island, B – Poplar galleries, C – A part of the Probst legend, Israel Salomon; Neumark, Johann Christian Beschreibung des Fürstlichen Anhalt-Dessauischen Landhauses und englischen Gartens zu Wörlitz, Dessau 1788 / August RodeLeibniz-Institut für Länderkunde e.V., Leipzig, [[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Erkl%C3%A4rung\\_des\\_Grundrisses\\_des\\_Gartens\\_zu\\_W%C3%B6rlitz.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Erkl%C3%A4rung_des_Grundrisses_des_Gartens_zu_W%C3%B6rlitz.jpg)], 10.07.2020



**Fig. 7.** Closest surroundings of the palace in Worlitz, Probst, Israel Salomon; Neumark, Johann Christian Beschreibung des Fürstlichen Anhalt-Dessauischen Landhauses und englischen Gartens zu Wörlitz, Dessau 1788 / August RodeLeibniz-Institut für Länderkunde e.V., Leipzig, [[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Erkl%C3%A4rung\\_des\\_Grundrisses\\_des\\_Gartens\\_zu\\_W%C3%B6rlitz.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Erkl%C3%A4rung_des_Grundrisses_des_Gartens_zu_W%C3%B6rlitz.jpg)], 10.07.2020

In Poland, the great advocate of the planting of Lombardy poplar trees in gardens was Princess Izabela Czartoryska, who in her garden treatise *Myśli różne...* from 1805 wrote about various uses of native and foreign trees, their cultivation and composition.

In one of the chapters of *Myśli Różne...* (...) Princess warned against shaped trees, claiming that

*Unnatural things can't appeal in anything, except for those where Nature seems to be the most perfect. Forced shapes in the Trees, according to me, are disgusting: they are cut into columns, into knobs, that is to say, stretched in the Fans, they do not decorate any place. Peeled spruces, tormented Grabs, cut Linden trees, they always disfigure, never dress<sup>49</sup>.*

Admittedly, Czartoryska liked oaks the most as she wrote: *If I'm to give priority to the splendour of the Oaks; other trees also have their own beauties and uses<sup>50</sup>* so she also appreciated other trees in the space of the garden, among others poplars, which she mentioned:

*Haughty poplars, green or white, sways high. The trunk covered with knots and green wreaths is extraordinary. It is said that the domestic poplars have several species, as rowanberries, aspens, black poplars, silver poplars, and others. Lombardy poplar tree rises up pyramidically, and differs from other trees in its shape, bordering on the path, which is a great decoration of the road.<sup>51</sup> Lombardy poplar or other tree growing straight up would be ugly if it was planted crooked or bent.*

Poplar trees were also widely used in the composition of flowerbeds. Fast-growing species such as domestic green and white domestic poplars were particularly desirable. In her treatise, Princess Czartoryska presented models of poplar stands, with a strictly defined location, exposition, composition and plant matter.

*In a well-chosen place, Italica Poplar stands appear to be beautiful and planted together in large numbers make a peculiar view. Such stand is best placed on a hill, a little away from the House, or near some souvenir, stone or inscription. One should plant thirty italica Poplars together, and around them weeping willow trees. Further speaking, if there is a pond, dyke or pool, one can easily plant a wicker, and in some places the poplars.<sup>52</sup>*



**Fig. 8.** Poplar islands: A Use of the Lombardy poplar in the garden according to Princess Izabela Czartoryska, A – A poplar stand suitable for covering a monument or souvenir, B *Myśli Różne...*1805, B – an island with a sarcophagus on a church pond in Zwierzyniec (the author's photography, 2018), c – the poplar island in Arcadia, (the author's photography, 2020)

49 I. Czartoryska, *Myśli różne o sposobie zakładania ogrodów*, Wrocław 1805, p. 7.

50 *Ibid.*, p. 10.

51 *Ibid.*, p. 11.

52 I. Czartoryska, *Myśli różne o...*, op. cit., p. 32.

Poplar stands with urn-shaped monuments began to be made in various sentimental parks of the Kingdom of Poland. Suffice it to mention the gardens in Mokotów, Wilanów, Zwierzyniec, Arkadia and Zofiówka<sup>53</sup>. The rich iconography of that period shows how popular this element of garden composition was and how much it was a part of the sentimental parks' philosophical programme [Fig. 7 A, B, C].

## Summary

Today, Lombardy poplars are not often found in the landscape of cities and gardens. The low durability of this plant matter resulted in discontinuation of its use in public spaces and private parks.

The particular popularity of Lombardy poplar trees in the 19<sup>th</sup> century resulted, on the one hand, from pragmatism (very fast growth, easy multiplication of this plant). Many beaten tracts, footpaths and dykes were planted with this species. On the other hand, the use of these trees in the space of sentimental gardens, by referring to garden models, composition schemes of 'poplar islands', were the result of the prevailing philosophical currents and the posthumous cult of Jean Jacques Rousseau.

In the philosophical programme of gardens modelled after Arcadia, a mythical paradise, the motif of passing away and death was not unfamiliar. The funeral character of individual spaces was emphasized precisely by these trees, which shape was reminiscent of the slender silhouettes of cypresses, and thus the gardens of central and eastern Europe were able to acquire the esprit of southern European gardens such as Italy and southern France. The rich iconography of the various cities of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Kingdom of Poland and its Arcadian gardens is an irrefutable proof of this.

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## „Topole i Cyprysy” – czyli rzecz o fenomenie popularności *Populus Italica* w Królestwie Polskim w XIX wieku

**Streszczenie:** Topola włoska jest drzewem posiadającym charakterystyczny cyprysowaty kształt o dosyć niewielkich wymaganiach glebowych, rosnącym bardzo szybko. Prawdopodobnie gatunek ten powstał na przełomie XVII i XVIII wieku w Lombardii, skąd rozprzestrzenił się przez Francję i Niemcy, docierając do terytorium Korony w drugiej połowie XVIII wieku. Jednak dopiero w XIX wieku jej popularność osiągnęła swoje apogeum. Topola włoska sadzona była jako popularna roślina alejowa, stanowiła też ważny element założenia parkowych utrzymanych w stylu sentymentalnym inspirowanym twórczością Jean Jaques Rousseau. Artykuł analizuje fenomen popularności tego gatunku na terytorium Królestwa Polskiego w kontekście ówczesnego programu literacko – filozoficznego przestrzeni ogrodu, którego dwóch kluczowych źródeł należy szukać w literaturze arkadyjskiej – J. Milтона Raju utraconym, dziełach J.J. Rousseau takich jak Nowa Heloiza czy Ogrody Jacquesa Dellille'a.

**Słowa kluczowe:** topola włoska, Jean Jacques Rousseau, L'isle de peupliers