



## **View. Theories and Practices of Visual Culture**

**title:**

Re-Membering Bodies in Black Ecologies: Elżbieta Łapczyńska's Bestiariusz nowohucki

**author:**

Mateusz Borowski

**source:**

View. Theories and Practices of Visual Culture 40 (2024)

**URL:**

<https://www.pismowidok.org/en/archive/2024/40-black-ecologies/re-membering-bodies-in-black-ecologies>

**doi:**

<https://doi.org/10.36854/widok/2024.40.2993>

**publisher:**

Widok. Foundation for Visual Culture

**affiliation:**

SWPS University

University of Warsaw

**keywords:**

speculative fabulation; re-membering; Nowa Huta; black ecology, green humanities

**abstract:**

The article offers a close reading of Elżbieta Łapczyńska's *Bestiariusz nowohucki* (2020), a collection of short stories set in the time of the construction of Nowa Huta, an industrial district of Kraków, built in the early 1950s as a socialist new city. The interpretation is set in the context of the problems raised today by environmental humanities, which seek ways of stepping outside the binary of natural and civilizational forces, in search of ways of recounting the past which open up futures beyond the myth of return to pristine nature. The article posits that in Łapczyńska's collection *Nowa Huta* is depicted as a black ecology, defined by the philosopher Levi R. Bryant as a speculative view of relationships between entities composing environment that decenters human perspective and invites an exploration of how "societies are themselves ecologies ... embedded in the broader ecologies of the natural world". With reference to Karen Barad's notion of re-membering, the article identifies in the literary material in question an attempt at representing the past of Nowa Huta as a black ecology in terms of a non-human memory, that questions the linearity of time as a basis of post-apocalyptic narratives. This problem is approached from a doubly situated perspective: the interpretation of *Bestiariusz nowohucki* is set in the context of the current ecological predicament in Nowa Huta and the author's experiences of growing up in the area in the 1980s, in times of both political unrest and ecological emergency.

**Mateusz Borowski** - Mateusz Borowski is a Professor at the Department for Performativity Studies at the Jagiellonian University, Kraków. He holds a PhD from Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz, Germany and the Jagiellonian University. Currently his main areas of interest are green humanities, counterfactual discourses and speculative fabulations in the context of climate change. He published, among others, *Strategie zapominania. Pamięć i kultura cyfrowa* (Strategies of Forgetting: Memory and Cyberculture, 2015) and, with Małgorzata Sugiera, *Sztuczne Natury. Performanse technonauki i sztuki* (Artificial Natures. Performances of Technoscience and Arts, 2017). He is currently Principal Investigator in the OPUS 22 research project *After Climate Crisis. Non-Scalable Survival Strategies in Speculative Fabulations of the Last Two Decades (2022-2026)* funded by the Polish National Science Center.

## **Re-Membering Bodies in Black Ecologies:** **Elżbieta Łapczyńska's Bestiariusz nowohucki**

### **From Black Legend to Black Ecology**

Nowa Huta, a post-industrial district in the northeast of Kraków, Poland's second largest city and its historical capital, has recently become a stage of a curious conflict between ecological organizations, city council officials, and researchers from the local AGH University of Science and Technology. The environmental project "Sadzimy Las dla Krakowian" (We Plant a Forest for Cracovians), an activist initiative financed with participatory budgeting, was cancelled on March 20, 2024, three days before its planned implementation date. The fact that Zarząd Zieleni Miejskiej (Municipal Greenspace Authority), the institution responsible for the management of the city's green areas, failed to provide comprehensive assessment of the toxicity of the terrain on the Nowa Huta outskirts intended for reforestation constituted the immediate reason for the cancellation that the project initiators gave in their explanatory press statement.<sup>1</sup> The intervention of Professor Mariusz Czop, an AGH University geologist, hydrogeologist, and expert in the history of the area's ecological destruction, revealed that by granting permission for the action, the municipal authorities disregarded the results of extensive research into soil's magnetization and toxicity, particularly the examination of soils from that area performed by scientists from local universities in 2004 and 2018.<sup>2</sup> For this reason, 4,000 trees were to be planted in the vicinity of "a ticking ecological bomb"—an unsecured metallurgical ash dump existing since 1952 on the perimeter of Tadeusz Sendzimir Steelworks (formerly Vladimir Lenin Steelworks) which had operated until 2019 when the last blast furnace was extinguished. For over seventy years, the metallic

ash, dispersed by wind and carried by underground waters, has been spreading around. As a result, local soil and water basins currently have a high concentration of heavy metals, primarily copper, chromium, lead, and zinc. This concentration probably continues to grow.<sup>3</sup> Scholars have gathered scientifically sanctioned knowledge about toxicity of the ground in the area at least since 1995, when *Atlas geochemiczny Krakowa i okolic*<sup>4</sup> (Geochemical Atlas of Cracow and Its Environs) was published, indicating the extent of the ecological destruction due to heavy industry operating there from the mid-1950s. Despite the fact that consecutive studies conducted by local university researchers over the next two decades corroborated these findings, the municipal authorities have disregarded them to this day, insisting in their official statements that the industrial waste does not migrate, and the land is safe for all its human and non-human inhabitants.<sup>5</sup> The case of the project "Sadzimy Las dla Krakowian" did not differ. Although the organizers cancelled it, withdrawing the initiative from the participatory budget, the Municipal Greenspace Authority decided to carry out the planting, financing it from its own resources.<sup>6</sup>

The story of this initiative very clearly demonstrates that the political considerations trump science when it comes to decisions that might negatively impact the image of the official institutions responsible for the inhabitants' well-being and the city's environment. In this particular instance, scientists raised concerns about the safety of the planters (including children groups) who would have direct contact with the toxic soil. Moreover, as the organizers mentioned in a press release explaining the reason for their withdrawal, the future forest on unexamined soil could pose danger for both the strollers and the municipal foresters managing this terrain, who could be potentially exposed to substances causing "cancer and other serious illnesses, the increase of the number of stillbirths and even higher mortality, particularly among children."<sup>7</sup> However,

the case had reverberations beyond the well-being of the relatively small group of action participants. The municipal authorities' recognition of valid scientific findings would significantly hamper the plan for greening the city and its surrounding area, necessitate further, large-scale studies, and possibly create a set of administrative problems in addition to the ongoing, considerable predicament caused by smog and air pollution in the city. Moreover, declaring the site around the steelworks an ecological disaster area would most probably negatively impact the gentrification of Nowa Huta, a district which for decades since its establishment has been inhabited largely by steelworks workers. According to the so-called "black legend" of the Nowa Huta origins,<sup>8</sup> the general public and daily press in the latter half of the 1950s considered this district backward, poor, unsafe for the outsiders, and therefore inferior to more central areas of Kraków. Such an image lasted until quite recently, and even in 2006, the right-wing government referred to cases of Nowa Huta murders to justify the planned tightening of criminal law.<sup>9</sup> Today, however, the image of the district is changing, not least due to comparatively inexpensive housing that draws younger people and growing tourist infrastructure around places such as the steelworks, now a historical monument to the socialist era. The reforestation of the toxic post-industrial wasteland in Nowa Huta, part of the effort to gentrify the district with no regard to local inhabitants' safety, exemplifies the dangerous consequences of identifying ecology with landscape greening, which Jeffrey Jerome Cohen warns against in his introduction to the volume *Prismatic Ecology: Ecotheory Beyond Green* (2013).<sup>10</sup>

As he rightly points out, "[g]reen dominates our thinking about ecology like no other, as if the color was the only organic hue, a blazon for nature itself."<sup>11</sup> Indeed, popular culture, as well as conservationist pamphlets and official policies identify green ecologies—the prime example of which is a lush, emerald

forest—with abundance of nature as an antidote to the destruction wrought by civilizational forces, industrialization, and extractivism upon landscapes. Cohen argues that for this reason, in our environmentally-oriented popular imaginary, green “has become a synonym for sustainability”<sup>12</sup> and the biosphere’s ability to heal from even the most damaging occurrences. However, as he reminds us, green ecology, as the opposite of natural systems’ disruption due to civilizational development, simultaneously rehearses the antinomy between nature and culture—the binary which sanctions various concepts of human stewardship and management of natural resources. Today, over ten years after the volume’s publication, when the effects of anthropogenic climate change and environmental predicaments intensify despite efforts to alleviate them, sustaining the myth of human control over nature seems even more pernicious. In a worst-case scenario, it can make us misdirect our efforts and resources, putting humans and non-humans at an even greater risk. With reference to “Sadzimy Las dla Krakowian,” one can attempt to answer Cohen’s question “of exactly what mode of being we are attempting to sustain, and at what environmental cost.”<sup>13</sup> In Nowa Huta, prioritization of green ecology has come at the price of both exposing a group of ecologically minded action participants to danger and erasing the entangled histories of environmental destruction of humans and more-than-humans with the district’s political and social past. Perhaps this case proves that we need such ways of representing ecological relations and reading and understanding cultural narratives and imagery that would no longer offer an easy way out of the environmental predicament by returning to the pristine nature.<sup>14</sup> Giving up our faith in green ecologies’ healing powers will certainly result in less optimistic accounts of the future, but maybe these accounts will prepare us better for the current era of catastrophic disturbances beyond our control.

In other words, we need narrative, performative, or

representational forms and conventions that would reach to the past(s) of extractivist regimes to open up other worlds beyond the narratives of post-apocalyptic future. For the case study in this article, I have chosen a single example of such a literary form—a collection of short stories entitled *Bestiariusz nowohucki* (The Nowa Huta Bestiary, 2020) by Polish author Elżbieta Łapczyńska.<sup>15</sup> Her prose debut received awards and nominations for several prestigious domestic awards. As Łapczyńska stated, for the most part, she wrote it in the library.<sup>16</sup> The documentary and literary material that she extensively examined in preparation for writing concerned the building of Nowa Huta, hailed by the Polish authorities as the model socialist city in the late 1940s. A flagship project of the Six-Year Plan to strengthen the heavy industry sector in the People's Republic of Poland from 1950 to 1955, it primarily included a construction of Vladimir Lenin Steelworks and a neighboring residential area for the workers recruited from nearby villages. This moment in between two worlds and social formations provides ample material for a literary account that demonstrates how a prospective vision of a hopeful future sanctions colonial methods of harnessing natural resources and local population, as well as an elision of the traces of pre-war past, both in the land and the bodies and psyches of the incoming people. For reasons that I hope to explain further on, I argue that the book steers clear of the antinomy of nature and culture typical for green ecology, despite setting individual life stories against the background of a great industrial project involving the disturbance of the extant ecosystem. Instead, this collection depicts Nowa Huta as black ecology. In his contribution to *Prismatic Ecology*, American philosopher Levi R. Bryant defines this term as a speculative view of relationships between entities composing environment that decenters human perspective and invites an exploration of how "societies are themselves ecologies ... embedded in the broader ecologies of the natural world."<sup>17</sup>



For Bryant, the times of ongoing ecological and economic catastrophes necessitate giving up the hope that we can design our future and re-establish natural equilibrium. To replace such teleological narratives, he proposes that we think about human history as made “in alliances with other entities such as the tools we use or the features of the natural world.”<sup>18</sup> However, this requires us to take into account that these alliances constantly transform, bringing about unplanned, surprising changes of all entities, both biological and technological, entangled within ecologies on various temporal and spatial scales. In this view of ecology, black denotes despair and anguish of going through the current predicament, when entire populations around the world suffer the consequences of environmental disasters. Due to its nonreflective nature, black also symbolizes all things barely visible or detectable, but still organizing relationships within ecologies, like chemicals circulating between land, infrastructure, and bodies. Thus, black ecology not only makes space for what cannot be seen, foreseen, and managed but also, by the same token, brings hope that comes from giving up the myth of human control and stewardship—the hope that some of those interactions might lead to unexpected results that will prove more favorable to our survival. Bryant argues that this necessitates foregoing the anthropocentric perspective and human exceptionalism to see the trans-corporeality of dynamically interacting bodies making up black ecology. Nevertheless, thinking about post-industrial and post-extractivist landscapes as black ecologies requires speculative narrative and representational forms that sidestep the dichotomy between human history and the history of biological, geological, and technological systems to consider interrelated and interacting black entities.

In the following paragraphs, I take a closer look at *Bestiariusz nowohucki* as such a narrative form. Łapczyńska tells the story of

Nowa Huta's construction in a way that significantly differs from social historians' works of the period. What distinguishes her book is its very form—a bestiary, or a collection of descriptions of beasts, often accompanied by moral lessons. Łapczyńska repurposes this medieval convention. Instead of giving voice to the prototypical representatives of the era, she introduces perspectives of those who conformed neither to the rules imposed by the official power nor to the demands of the local society establishing itself around the construction site. Instead of presenting a great industrial project in terms of a conflict between cultural and natural forces, she chooses to blur the distinction between the two. Instead of narrating history as a purely human affair, she introduces inhuman and more-than-human perspectives on the past, imagining ways of recounting it beyond causal narratives. Instead of creating characters who as fully formed subjects provide an account of what happened then and there, she puts bodies in the foreground: formed, reformed, and deformed by more-than-human powers operating in the environment subjected to intense exploitation. Reading *Bestiariusz nowohucki*, I demonstrate how the past mobilized from this perspective invites a reconsideration of a topic that remains relevant even today, in time of the ongoing catastrophe(s): how natural-cultural environments, changed by humans but not controlled by them, shape their own futures, indifferent to the designs and plans of our species.

## Re-Membering Bodies

From my personal perspective, analyzing scholarly and journalistic accounts of the controversy around the Nowa Huta reforestation project seems a strange, nearly uncanny experience in 2024. Born in 1978, I spent my infancy and early childhood in the district, not more than six kilometers from the ash dump near the steelworks. A considerable political unrest in this decade, a dire economic crisis, a wave of strikes and

a resulting declaration of martial law on December 13, 1980—all that played out against the background of an environmental emergency, by that time downplayed by the official authorities.<sup>19</sup> Reading older and more recent publications assessing the environmental damage to the area, I willy-nilly compare them to my own fragmentary, deeply unreliable memories overlaid with stories of those events heard from family members throughout the years. If they ever expressed any concerns about health hazards related to life in the vicinity of the industrial complex, they only mentioned airborne pollution, visibly materializing as thick greyish fumes constantly emitted from the steelworks chimneys. Even after the publication of the abovementioned geochemical atlas of the region in the mid-1995, the question of soil and water toxicity entered neither the public discourse nor discussions among my friends and neighbors at the time. The gradual closing down of the steelworks' sections from the 1990s onward and the resulting reduction of chemical compound levels in the air was welcomed as a change for the better and a promise of a cleaner and greener future. However, now, because of my current academic interests, which include interdisciplinary approaches to pollution and waste studies focusing on long-term ecological effects of pollutant accumulation in the environment worldwide, I cannot help but disbelieve all the narratives that separate the district's past from its cleaner future. After all, among my close and distant family members and friends who lived in Nowa Huta in times of this muted ecological catastrophe, the incidence of cancers, pulmonary disorders, autoimmune diseases, and allergies proved quite high, even long after they left the district. It seems curious that although I moved to the central area of Kraków in 1989 and have lived there ever since, my body, which grew and developed in this black ecology, still carries the mark of that environment on cellular and genetic levels; a mark which possibly still has and will have a detrimental impact on my health

in ways which I cannot foresee or pre-empt. In other words, until today, the highly polluted environment in Nowa Huta has continued to influence my body, although I have not visited the place for the last thirty-five years.

Because of this personal experience, I perfectly understand Karen Barad when she argues that all accounts of the Anthropocene origins that envision time as a linear succession of the past, present, and future are inadequate for the current era of global environmental catastrophes.<sup>20</sup> In a sense, despite the spatial and temporal distance, I never fully got out of that black ecology which I originate from and which keeps shaping my body's biological make-up in many ways. Perhaps for this reason, thinking about the past and present of Nowa Huta, I have become interested in the "tracing of entanglements of violent histories of colonialism"<sup>21</sup> rather than in green ecology's consolatory visions. For the same reason, it seems clear to me why Barad, looking for a formula to capture how the effects of ecological disasters linger in bodies across time, calls for "embodied practices of re-membering."<sup>22</sup> The hyphenation of the last word suggests that such practices should not only show that bodies are composed of a variety of members—agents, biotic or not, acting on various temporal and spatial scales. They should also demonstrate how interactions between these agents create "new possible histories by which time-beings might find ways to endure,"<sup>23</sup> without the promise of breaking entirely free from the past. Therefore, from among the numerous literary accounts of the district's past, I have chosen *Bestiariusz nowohucki*—a textual form that, in my interpretation, traces the entanglement of violent histories within this particular black ecology.

The book draws on extensive research but barely mentions the major political events and social upheavals of the era. Readers will learn neither about the intricacies of the implementation of the Six-Year Plan nor the complex negotiations between Tadeusz Ptaszycycki, the architect responsible for the plan of the new

settlement, with officials who wanted it to be “the first socialist city,” modelled on Komsomolsk and Magnitogorsk, built in the 1930s in the Soviet Union as part of the Stalinist industrialization.<sup>24</sup>

Łapczyńska does not discuss other events of local significance, such as the annexation of Nowa Huta to Kraków in 1951 and the construction of a tram connection to the city center the following year.<sup>25</sup> She does not refer to the growing dissatisfaction of workers who, by the mid-1950s, experienced more and more difficulties in meeting the required level of productivity due to shortage of supplies.<sup>26</sup> Łapczyńska does not even point to perhaps the most momentous sociopolitical change of the time—the Thaw, a relaxation of the soviet regime following Joseph Stalin’s death on March 5, 1953. Already this disregard for the significant events in the country and Nowa Huta in the 1950s testifies to the fact that *Bestiariusz nowohucki*, although set in a specified period and place, is not concerned with situating fictional characters’ individual biographies against the background of large-scale historical processes. Such a formal trait characterizes historical fiction which, in a retrospective manner, introduces a temporal distance to the narrated individual fates to highlight the encompassing political and environmental processes.<sup>27</sup> Contrary to that, *Bestiariusz nowohucki* does not consist of stories *about* the past but rather *from* the past, recounted at the moment when the events were taking place, without the benefit of the hindsight that usually allows one to understand the past within a larger sociopolitical context. A significant detail testifies to this: each short story in the volume ends with bracketed dates as if to indicate that Łapczyńska wrote it in a specific year or a few years’ period in the 1950s. Described with realist attention to detail and psychological nuance, the stories in *Bestiariusz nowohucki* make up a panorama of everyday life—as it could have been but simultaneously one that seems manifestly imaginary. Therefore, what is the relationship between the narratives

about the past that Łapczyńska read during her library research and her stories from the past about the Nowa Huta origins?

We can answer this question with reference to an important editorial detail. Right after the title page, the reader finds the district's schematic map from the period, when its areas and boulevards did not have names but codes composed of letters and numbers. Only the steelworks (Kombinat) are marked on Nowa Huta's north-eastern outskirts. This blueprint in the shape of a half-octagon with five streets converging in the center provides little guidance for those who would like to pinpoint the narrated events to a specific location. Indeed, some of the characters mention the codes on the map, but they mainly use the names of areas and buildings that the community itself came up with; names such as Meksyk and Tajwan (residential quarters called this way because of their distance from the center) or Nocnica (female workers' hotel). The map does not feature spots significant for social life, such as the Gigant restaurant next to the post office or the cemetery located between blocks of flats. In the official cartographic representation, a bird's-eye view of the district stands in stark contrast with the point of view of each narrator, who, from a unique located, horizontal, and embodied perspective, sees the surrounding landscape of a gigantic construction site, moving through it and imbuing it with values and meanings. This tension between the symbolic representation of a real location and the way in which fictional characters perceive it and turn it into their living space makes for the speculative character of Łapczyńska's prose. The blueprint of the district, a metonymy of other documents and archival materials, provides only a major framework for the narratives—a contour filled with life stories that could have happened, but even if they had, they would never have made it to the official records. Written in the speculative mode, they undermine the distinction between the factual and the fictional, creating a world in a speculative mode—a world that could have existed and can

change our relationship with this area's past.

The narrative convention of a bestiary proves subservient to this goal. As Debra Hassig explains, medieval bestiaries did not aim to teach about nature, but the animals depicted in them “represent[ed] specific types of human beings, some good and some evil.”<sup>28</sup> Teaching the reader a moral lesson, which flourished before the onset of the modern scientific paradigm, featured domestic and wild animals side by side with fictional and mythological creatures. In her article “Did Imaginary Animals Exist?” Pamela Gravestock stresses that from today's perspective, it is futile to read medieval bestiaries in a rationalist manner, tracing the distortions of the empirical knowledge and sifting myth from science. As she argues, even if their creators depicted familiar animals, they did not draw or describe them from nature. Irrespective of whether they envisaged real or imaginary beasts, they “worked from written descriptions and from pictorial models”<sup>29</sup> well-known in their time, with no regard to the distinction between the imaginary and the empirically verifiable. Gravestock hypothesizes that the authors of medieval bestiaries viewed “the question as to whether or not they actually existed as irrelevant.”<sup>30</sup> What mattered for them was the didactic purpose that they served and the rhetorical impact on readers—in short, their performative function rather than their fictionality or reality. Clearly, the medieval genre manifestly operated in a speculative, “as if” mode, which, nevertheless, did not undercut but even intensified its influence on readers' imagination.

To a significant extent, Łapczyńska's collection follows the bestiary tradition because it portrays its characters on the basis of other textual and visual sources—the only traces of the past available. However, contrary to this tradition, she does not aim for a clear didactic message. She rather tries to make readers relate to the seemingly well-known past through a defamiliarizing lens. She creates beast-like characters whose

anatomical quirks, peculiarities of the cognitive apparatus, or bodily dysfunctions allow them to perceive their environment in an unusual way: a man living in a constant fear of a stroke that killed his entire family; two girls who grew up together and developed a synesthetic perception, thus communicating in the language of colors; a man with eyes so insensitive that he can stare straight into the fumes from the blast furnace and is therefore anointed as the district's prophet. No wonder that these narrators do not conform to the norms of the community and consequently end up on its margins as those who are no longer entirely human but rather more-than-human, permeated by forces that a great industrial project unleashed when it broke the earth. These narrators do not constitute fully formed, self-aware subjects but perceiving, impressionable bodies reacting to forces and flows of energy and matter. By highlighting their unusual corporeality, Łapczyńska brings to the foreground the material, sensual, and situated manner in which they experience and know their environment, trying to orient themselves in a world which restlessly forges its future.

By way of example, I would like to take a closer look at the first story in the collection, entitled "O tym, jak ptak z ludzką głową nawiedził Emila" (How a Bird with a Human Head Haunted Emil). It demonstrates the way in which Łapczyńska speculatively uncovers "rich worlds hidden under the code"<sup>31</sup> that represent sections of Nowa Huta's residential area, as the narrator puts it. The story starts on the day of an official celebration of a significant step in the construction of the steelworks—the start-up of the first blast furnace in 1954. Feted by the gathered crowd as the opening of a new era, this historic moment when molten pig iron as "an orange stream cut the world in half" marks a lamentable break in the life of Emil, the narrator and protagonist of the story. The joinery shop at the construction site where he works as a carpenter closes down because the production of steel becomes the sole purpose of the works.



Moved from one section of the steelworks to another as a mechanic of the lowest rank, he transforms into “a shadow of nobody.” For this reason, he attempts to resist the coming of the future world in which he will turn into a cog in the industrial machine. To no avail. The story thematizes the experience of being forcibly drawn into the new world. It shows a unique viewpoint of the one who holds on to the memory of his past life and thus tries not to get swept away by dehumanizing forces of socialist progress. Emil’s tale of the three years following the steelworks’ opening provides a framework for introducing the interconnected themes of the entire collection, which depicts Nowa Huta as black ecology.

The first of these themes is the blurring of categorical boundaries between industrial infrastructure and the natural landscape. On the one hand, for the narrator, the steelworks resemble a growing organic ecosystem living off of natural resources, taking over one hectare of the ground after another. “Foundations sucked juices from the earth, concrete filtered them, and steel rods drank and injected them into walls. Cranes like skeletons of birds,” the narrator tells us observing the construction site from afar. From the inside, the halls seem equally animated to him, with “walls delicately moving their limbs ... steel carapaces melted together and setting each other in motion.” Emil describes the great achievement of industrial design as a raging monster, subjugating and molding human bodies that toil within its entrails. On the other hand, other forces come to the fore in Emil’s story—those of the broken and exploited earth, which turns into deep, sticky mud, covering the entire ground of the erected settlement, staining shoes, clothes, and faces, and hindering the transport of humans and gods. In this respect, Łapczyńska relies on historical accounts which depict the then Nowa Huta as a place covered ankle-deep in mud, which significantly shaped inhabitants’ everyday life, slowing down construction, interfering with people’s daily

activities, and even dictating fashion, since rubber boots seemed the only sensible footwear in this environment.<sup>32</sup> In Emil's story, Nowa Huta—a city “grown over with mud,”<sup>33</sup> with monstrous steelworks raging nearby, taken over in equal measure by earthly elements and forces of industrialization—becomes black ecology. Created by humans but indifferent to their fates, it decisively shapes and molds their bodies forced to attune themselves to the rhythms of work imposed by the industrial colossus.

Łapczyńska brings the trans-corporeality of the bodies making up this environment to the foreground right at the beginning of the story, during the celebratory opening of the furnace. Despite festive moods, Emil does not share this general enthusiasm. His mind involuntarily recalls his colleague from the joinery workshop, a woman named only with the letter “I.,” whom he secretly fancied and exchanged short letters with during their shifts. As he describes her, working in the vicinity of the tumultuous construction site, “[s]he was one big quake,”<sup>34</sup> as if “someone messed with her power unit, and some electric impulse constantly energized her, which she yielded to with wide open eyes of a fish washed ashore.” Later, when he enters one of the great halls in the steelworks, he observes workers who seem to be “permeated to the core by waves from the machine,”<sup>35</sup> an irresistible vibration that synchronizes all organic movement within the perimeter of the compound and resounds outside its fence. Obviously, the way in which Emil perceives his colleagues as attuned to the machine reflects his own fear of sharing their fate. As he confesses, he feels summoned by the steelworks, “its machinery wanting to draw [him] in its iron mangle and spit [him] out into nothingness.”<sup>36</sup> In the final passages of his story, he still declares: “From within the rollers, the future emerged piece by piece. I resisted it.”<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, as he recounts, next day he lets the morning mists guide him to the verge of a scarp beyond which the thick fog looks like a surface of a white lake.

Emil jumps into it, hoping to find I., his lost partner, in its depth. However, nature does not offer him salvation from the industrial machinery. Not only does he fall on a tree growing somewhere in the white deep but also loses a note from I., the last material remnant connecting him with the past. Thus, he must ultimately come to terms with the fact that “above the mangle, there was only one daytime. It was called forever.”<sup>38</sup> In this way, he admits his final surrender.

In one aspect, Emil, whose story opens the volume, resembles all the other narrators. It is their bodies that bear the traces of the interactions within the natural-cultural, rapidly industrialized environment. As Łapczyńska shows, these interactions that dehumanize people can either have a detrimental effect or allow one to veer from the imposed state policies and regulations. We can see the former in the fate of Juliusz Poważny,<sup>39</sup> a compulsory masturbator punished for his moral offences by becoming a subject in an electromagnetic experiment which turns him into a living corpse. Łapczyńska very clearly emphasizes that Juliusz’s unrestrained sexuality, his aggressiveness in prison, and his unprecedented endurance during the laboratory trials are just various manifestations of the same unwieldy bodily energy that the official power wants to channel and use to build the district. Łapczyńska introduces two figures who reappear in all stories as embodiments of those controlling instances. One of them, doctor Szpigel, both a medicine man and engineer, subjects the district’s unruly inhabitants to various experiments that take their souls away. The other one, the Hairdresser, chooses hairstyles for his clients and thus endows them with a social rank. Although both inspire awe among the local inhabitants, their efforts at harnessing the energy flows within the environment come to naught, even if they lead to escalations of violence in the district. To show that those surprising interactions within black ecology may provide

opportunities for resistance to exploitation and harm, Łapczyńska includes a story about a group of female workers who take arsenic in a collective act of defiance against deeply patriarchal societal norms.<sup>40</sup> I believe that the author deliberately chose this particular substance, both a poison and a medicine made from ore, which symbolically and materially connects the female workers with earth, simultaneously offering them an experience of regaining control over their bodies. Clearly, in Nowa Huta as black ecology, there is no hope for a salvatory return to the state of nature. However, bodies' surprising attunements with the environment may create chances for sidestepping oppressive regimes. Still, this conclusion, leads to another question, which I will try to answer in the final section: how and to what effect those re-membering bodies mediate the past of black ecologies?

## Geo-Neuro-Biographies

Read from this perspective, Łapczyńska's stories demonstrate what Barad tries to express in more general and abstract terms: "Land is not property or territory; it is a time-being marked by its own wounds and vitality, a layered material geo-neuro-biography of bones and bodies, ashes and earth, where death and life meet."<sup>41</sup> We can read *Bestiariusz nowohucki* as a collection of such geo-neuro-biographies. As Emil's story shows, bodies (including their perceptual apparatus and the affective sphere) and land (with all its natural-cultural-technological infrastructure) become one. As I have tried to demonstrate, by recounting the Nowa Huta origins from this perspective, Łapczyńska captures the non-linearity of time and the simultaneity of different lifeworlds as they unfold for the narrators. Thus, we can say that her prose describes the past outside the anthropocentric concept of memory as a reconstruction of the past from the present perspective. If *Bestiariusz nowohucki* seeks to re-establish the relationship

with the origins of Nowa Huta's black ecology, it envisions re-membering "not merely a subjective capacity of the human mind; rather 'human' and 'mind' are part of the landtimescape—spacetime mattering—of the world."<sup>42</sup> In other words, the protagonists materialize momentarily out of the land's entanglements with human-induced environmental processes. Nothing exemplifies this better than the collection's last story, "O tym, jak Huta zyskała proroka" (How Huta Gained a Prophet).<sup>43</sup>

The fate of Manteja, the protagonist and narrator, a migrant worker from a nearby village, provides an account of social mobility at the cost of cutting personal ties with the past. Orphaned in his early childhood, this farmhand initially ends up on the bottom rung of Nowa Huta's social ladder. His colleagues despise and abuse him. Łapczyńska refers to the actual historical politics of the period, when the official propaganda disseminated the rhetoric of progress, erasing or rewriting the collective memory of the rural population that lived in the area prior to the construction of the steelworks.<sup>44</sup> Manteja's story starts in 1951, at the moment when "the place was rid of the indigenous, not yet occupied by the new ones."<sup>45</sup> He learns about it when his superiors deem him unqualified and assign him to work as a digger at an archeological site discovered in the early stages of district planning. There, his task is to carefully unearth and remove skeletons of former inhabitants to prepare the ground for construction. In this story, Łapczyńska entangles the violent histories of the land and the people, "bones and bodies," into a single geo-neuro-biography, situated at the zero point in the land's history which also functions as a zero point in the life of the protagonist. Notably, in the first paragraph, Manteja announces that he even lost his name upon arrival in Nowa Huta. Perhaps because of his lack of identity, coupled with the ability to look into the thickest fumes, the Hairdresser decides that Manteja will prove useful in a rising city obsessed with its future. The Hairdresser turns the digger into a prophet who tells

the district's future when staring into smoke. Having predicted the successes or failures of small endeavors, Manteja is finally asked to look into the fumes from the first blast furnace during the opening ceremony. Nevertheless, instead of a vision of bright future, he sees a swollen, disfigured face of a woman in the thick vapors, which embodies the earth announcing its imminent revenge on those who have abused it. However, Łapczyńska makes it quite clear that the voice that Manteja hears does not belong to the personified forces of nature, or a local version of Gaia. After all, the face in the fumes is that of Lena, a girl whose rape he witnessed on a night prior to the ceremony. No wonder that the story ends with Manteja hit with a stone, driven off the podium, and losing his privileged status. His prophecy ends with the broken earth declaring: "from now on it is me who produces the New Man."<sup>46</sup> Therefore, what he sees as the future constitutes a continuation of the land's and bodies' violent subjugation, which he experienced first-hand in the newly built district. Still, his vision also suggests that the effects of this violation will endure, linger, and persist in bodies despite all efforts to erase the past.

By re-membering Nowa Huta's inhabitants as bodies in black ecology, Łapczyńska comes up with a literary form which shows how human civilization remains embedded in large-scale geologic and climatic systems operating beyond human control and within temporalities outside human grasp. In this respect, we can read *Bestiariusz nowohucki* as one of those narratives about past catastrophes that sidestep the belief in the fundamental rift between humans and nature which fuels the vision of the future as green ecology. Australian philosopher Claire Colebrook called for this type of narratives in her article entitled "Anti-Catastrophic Time" (2017).<sup>47</sup> As she argues, today's post-apocalyptic culture envisages the future as one of the alternatives: 1) the inevitable doom of civilization that keeps on going along the path of unrestrained technoscientific

advancement and exploitation of natural resources, or 2) salvation by way of taking a “step back in time” and returning to a pre-modern, “quasi-indigenous” sociality outside the historical progress to re-establish the reign of universal humanity.<sup>48</sup> Although seemingly quite different, these two scenarios share the same foundational premise that what inevitably lies ahead of us is some version of the past—either the pre-modern European social formations or pre-colonial indigenous communities living in harmony with nature. Colebrook claims that both these narratives present themselves as the only alternatives, effectively blocking other kinds of imaginaries—“all the silenced, fugitive, submerged, un-lived but imagined futures that are not those of man and world.”<sup>49</sup> She does not state it explicitly, but she seems to suggest that in order to see a livable future beyond those post-apocalyptic scenarios, one must change the dominant ways of relating to the past to uncover other possibilities for livable futures. After all, humans are “archivally dependent: who they are is not given in an unfolding of relations among life, but in a dynamic and trans-individual relation to the archive,” as Colebrook states, referring to Bernard Stiegler’s philosophy.<sup>50</sup> Thanks to this ability to creatively reinterpret and repurpose traces of the past, humans can open new vistas onto a formerly unthought-of future. Although Colebrook finds inspiration in Stiegler’s work, she questions whether, in times of great uncertainty about the future, the unified “we” of humanity proposed by Stiegler can still cherish the belief that it can collectively create a livable future for itself by using the wisdom found in the archive. Rather than assuming that humans can control what lies ahead, she advocates for a vision of a non-linear future that encompasses multiple timelines, some of which lead to worlds beyond human hopes and interests. By imagining such an inhuman time, Colebrook does not merely want to warn us against blind optimism that could make us even more prone to unforeseeable dangers. Drawing on Eduardo Viveiros de

Castro's philosophy of perspectivism, she envisions narratives that depict a world in which multiple times co-exist, each creating different relations between beings. According to Colebrook, a "world without the self-possessed 'I' in command of his or her own future, fully comprehending the archive, and attuned to every aspect of the globe would not be catastrophic."<sup>51</sup> In *Bestiariusz nowohucki*, this self-possessed I gives way to geo-neuro-biographies, or tales of the endurance of bodies that constitute black ecology, extending not only in space but also in time, with no regard to any historical caesuras or efforts to sever ties with the past. Perhaps by offering hope without certainty, these stories present a much more adequate way to establish a relationship with the extractivist past in the context of the current environmental crisis—a past that continues to materialize in unexpected ways for locally situated communities.

**The article is an output of the research project "Normality under uncertainty. Praxeological approach in research on the (re)production of 'normal' urban life", funded by the National Science Centre, Poland under grant no. 2021/41/B/HS6/02718. This research was funded in whole or in part by the National Science Centre, Poland, grant no. 2021/41/B/HS6/02718. For the purpose of Open Access, the author has applied a CC-BY public copyright licence to any Author Accepted Manuscript (AAM) version arising from this submission.**



- 1 Piotr Rąpalski, "Kraków. Wycofują się z akcji sadzenia 4000 drzew," *Gazeta Krakowska*, March 20, 2024, accessed March 20, 2024, <https://gazetakrakowska.pl/krakow-wycofuja-sie-z-akcji-sadzenia-4000-drzew-ta-zaplanowano-przy-niebezpiecznym-skladowisku-odpadow-w-nowej-hucie/ar/c1-18399025>.
- 2 Przemysław Błaszczuk, "Toksyczne substancje w glebie w rejonie huty," *RMF*, September 23, 2019, accessed March 20, 2024, [https://www.rmf24.pl/fakty/polska/news-toksyczne-substancje-w-glebie-w-rejonie-huty-wiedziano-o-tym,nld,3218968#crp\\_state=1](https://www.rmf24.pl/fakty/polska/news-toksyczne-substancje-w-glebie-w-rejonie-huty-wiedziano-o-tym,nld,3218968#crp_state=1).
- 3 Przemysław Błaszczuk, "Tereny przy składowiskach huty skażone. Zaskakująca publikacja naukowców," *RMF*, June 23, 2012, accessed March 20, 2024 [https://www.rmf24.pl/fakty/polska/news-tereny-przy-skladowiskach-huty-skazone-zaskakujaca-publicakj,nld,5312880#crp\\_state=1](https://www.rmf24.pl/fakty/polska/news-tereny-przy-skladowiskach-huty-skazone-zaskakujaca-publicakj,nld,5312880#crp_state=1).
- 4 Józef Lis and Anna Pasieczna, *Atlas geochemiczny Krakowa i okolic* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1995), accessed March 20, 2024, [https://mapgeochem.pgi.gov.pl/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Krakow\\_pl\\_comp.pdf](https://mapgeochem.pgi.gov.pl/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Krakow_pl_comp.pdf).
- 5 "Inspektorat Ochrony Środowiska: składowisko odpadów w Nowej Hucie nie ma wpływu na środowisko," *Housemarket*, October 8, 2019, accessed May 20, 2024, [https://www.housemarket.pl/rynek\\_mieszkaniowy/101/inspektorat\\_ochrony\\_srodowiska\\_skladowisko\\_odpadow\\_w\\_nowej\\_hucie\\_nie\\_ma\\_wplywu\\_na\\_srodowisko,20142.html](https://www.housemarket.pl/rynek_mieszkaniowy/101/inspektorat_ochrony_srodowiska_skladowisko_odpadow_w_nowej_hucie_nie_ma_wplywu_na_srodowisko,20142.html).
- 6 Ola Sobczak, "Inicjatorzy akcji 'Sadzimy las dla Krakowian' wycofują się ze współpracy z miastem. ZZM nie odwołuje wydarzenia," *Radio Kraków*, March 21, 2024, accessed May 20, 2024, <https://www.radiokrakow.pl/aktualnosci/krakow/inicjatorzy-akcji-sadzimy-las-dla-krakowian-wycofuja-sie-ze-wspolpracy-z-miastem-w-tle-bomba-ekologiczna/>.
- 7 Piotr Rąpalski, "Kraków. Wycofują się z akcji sadzenia 4000 drzew."
- 8 Monika Golonka-Czajkowska, *Nowe miasto nowych ludzi. Mitologie nowohuckie* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2013), 301–23.
- 9 Golonka-Czajkowska, *Nowe miasto nowych ludzi*, 302.
- 10 Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, "Introduction: Ecology's Rainbow," in *Prismatic Ecology: Ecotheory Beyond Green*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), xv–xxxv.

- 11 Cohen, "Introduction," xix.
- 12 Cohen, "Introduction," xx.
- 13 Cohen, "Introduction."
- 14 Cohen, "Introduction."
- 15 Elżbieta Łapczyńska, *Bestiariusz nowohucki* (Stronie Śląskie: Biuro Literackie, 2020), Kindle.
- 16 "Bedside Table #70: Elżbieta Łapczyńska: You Prepare for Your Debut All Your Reading Life," The Polish Book Institute, December 23, 2021, accessed May 12, 2024, <https://instytutksiazki.pl/en/news,2,bedside-table-70-elzbieta-lapczynska-you-prepare-for-your-debut-all-your-reading-life,7103.html>.
- 17 Levi R. Bryant, "Black," in *Prismatic Ecology*, 294.
- 18 Bryant, "Black," 295.
- 19 Ewelina Szpak, "On the Verge of an Ecological Catastrophe: The Communist Modernization of Eastern Europe," Polish History, accessed May 20, 2024, <https://polishhistory.pl/on-the-verge-of-an-ecological-catastrophe-the-communist-modernization-of-eastern-europe/>; Ewelina Szpak, "Industrialization: The Environmental End of Old Kraków?" in *Krakow: An Ecobiography*, eds. Adam Izdebski, Rafał Szmytka (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press 2021), 140.
- 20 Karen Barad, "Troubling Time/s and Ecologies of Nothingness: Re-Turning, Re-Membering, and Facing the Incalculable," *New Formations*, no. 92 (2017): 56–86, accessed May 10, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.3898/NEWF:92.05.2017>.
- 21 Barad, "Troubling Time/s," 62.
- 22 Barad, "Troubling Time/s," 63.
- 23 Barad, "Troubling Time/s."
- 24 Katherine Lebow, *Unfinished Utopia: Nowa Huta, Stalinism, and Polish Society, 1949–1956* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2013), 29–30.
- 25 Lebow, *Unfinished Utopia*, 40.

- 26 Jacek Purchla, "Nowa Huta jako problem badawczy," in *Narodziny Nowej Huty: materiały sesji naukowej odbytej 25 kwietnia 1998 roku*, ed. J. M. Małecki (Kraków: Towarzystwo Miłośników Historii i Zabytków Krakowa, 1999), 7–14.
- 27 Lois Parkinson Zamora, *The Usable Past: The Imagination of History in Recent Fiction of the Americas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 1–14.
- 28 Debra Hassig, *Medieval Bestiaries: Text, Image, Ideology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), xviii.
- 29 Pamela Gravestock, "Did Imaginary Animals Exist?" in *The Mark of the Beast: The Medieval Bestiary in Art, Life and Literature*, ed. Debra Hassig (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1999), 120.
- 30 Gravestock, "Did Imaginary Animals Exist?" 130.
- 31 Łapczyńska, "O tym, jak ptak z ludzką głową nawiedził Emila," in *Bestiariusz nowohucki*, Kindle.
- 32 Lebow, *Unfinished Utopia*, 37. Lebow suggests that the omnipresence of mud testified to the fact that the choice of this location as a construction site resulted from ideological demands rather than a rational calculation, because the terrain rich in loess soil, although great for agriculture, did not make a good construction site.
- 33 Łapczyńska, "O tym, jak ptak z ludzką głową nawiedził Emila."
- 34 Łapczyńska, "O tym, jak ptak z ludzką głową nawiedził Emila."
- 35 Łapczyńska, "O tym, jak ptak z ludzką głową nawiedził Emila."
- 36 Łapczyńska, "O tym, jak ptak z ludzką głową nawiedził Emila."
- 37 Łapczyńska, "O tym, jak ptak z ludzką głową nawiedził Emila."
- 38 Łapczyńska, "O tym, jak ptak z ludzką głową nawiedził Emila."
- 39 Łapczyńska, "O tym, jak Samson ożywał w Obieckie 71," in *Bestiariusz nowohucki*, Kindle.
- 40 Łapczyńska, "O tym, jak arseniczki pożegnały śmierć," in *Bestiariusz nowohucki*, Kindle.
- 41 Barad, "Troubling Time/s," 83.
- 42 Barad, "Troubling Time/s," 84.
- 43 Łapczyńska, "O tym, jak Huta zyskała proroka," in *Bestiariusz nowohucki*, Kindle.

- 44 Katarzyna Trzeciak, "Poza formę miasta idealnego. Przeobrażenia nowohuckich materialności," *Śląskie Studia Polonistyczne*, no. 2 (2018): 41–58, accessed May 11, 2024, <https://journals.us.edu.pl/index.php/SSP/article/view/8797>.
- 45 Łapczyńska, "O tym, jak Huta zyskała proroka."
- 46 Łapczyńska, "O tym, jak Huta zyskała proroka."
- 47 Claire Colebrook, "Anti-Catastrophic Time," *New Formations*, no. 92 (2017): 102–19.
- 48 Colebrook, "Anti-Catastrophic Time," 105.
- 49 Colebrook, "Anti-Catastrophic Time," 108.
- 50 Colebrook, "Anti-Catastrophic Time," 114.
- 51 Colebrook, "Anti-Catastrophic Time," 113.

## Bibliography

Barad, Karen. "Troubling Time/s and Ecologies of Nothingness: Re-Turning, Re-Membering, and Facing the Incalculable." *New Formations*, no. 92 (2017): 56–86. Accessed May 10, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.3898/NEWF:92.05.2017>.

"Bedside Table #70: Elżbieta Łapczyńska: You Prepare for Your Debut All Your Reading Life." The Polish Book Institute. December 23, 2021. Accessed May 12, 2024. <https://instytutksiazki.pl/en/news,2,bedside-table-70-elzbieta-lapczynska-you-prepare-for-your-debut-all-your-reading-life,7103.html>.

Błaszczyk, Przemysław. "Toksyczne substancje w glebie w rejonie huty." RMF. September 23, 2019. Accessed March 20, 2024. [https://www.rmfm24.pl/fakty/polska/news-toksyczne-substancje-w-glebie-w-rejonie-huty-wiedziano-o-tym,nld,3218968#crp\\_state=1](https://www.rmfm24.pl/fakty/polska/news-toksyczne-substancje-w-glebie-w-rejonie-huty-wiedziano-o-tym,nld,3218968#crp_state=1).

Błaszczyk, Przemysław. "Tereny przy składowiskach huty skażone. Zaskakująca publikacja naukowców." RMF. June 23, 2012. Accessed March 20, 2024. [https://www.rmfm24.pl/fakty/polska/news-tereny-przy-skladowiskach-huty-skazone-zaskakujaca-publicacja,nld,5312880#crp\\_state=1](https://www.rmfm24.pl/fakty/polska/news-tereny-przy-skladowiskach-huty-skazone-zaskakujaca-publicacja,nld,5312880#crp_state=1).

Błaszczyk, Przemysław. "Magnezem z lodówki zrobił więcej niż urzędnicy przez kilka lat. 'Tykająca bomba'." Smog Lab. April 10, 2024. Accessed May 20, 2024. <https://smoglab.pl/magnezem-z-lodowki-zrobil-wiecej-niz-urzednicy/>.

Bryant, Levi R. "Black." In *Prismatic Ecology: Ecotheory Beyond Green*, edited by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, 290–310. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013.

Cohen, Jeffrey Jerome. "Introduction: Ecology's Rainbow." In *Prismatic Ecology: Ecotheory Beyond Green*, edited by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, xv–xxxv. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013.

Colebrook, Claire. "Anti-Catastrophic Time." *New Formations*, no. 92 (2017):

102–19.

Golonka-Czajkowska, Monika. *Nowe miasto nowych ludzi. Mitologie nowohuckie*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2013.

Gravestock, Pamela. "Did Imaginary Animals Exist?" In *The Mark of the Beast: The Medieval Bestiary in Art, Life and Literature*, edited by Debra Hassig, 119–39. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1999.

Hassig, Debra. *Medieval Bestiaries: Text, Image, Ideology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

"Inspektorat Ochrony Środowiska: składowisko odpadów w Nowej Hucie nie ma wpływu na środowisko." Housemarket. October 8, 2019. Accessed May 20, 2024. [https://www.housemarket.pl/rynek\\_mieszkaniowy/etc..](https://www.housemarket.pl/rynek_mieszkaniowy/etc..)

Lebow, Katherine. *Unfinished Utopia: Nowa Huta, Stalinism, and Polish Society, 1949–1956*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2013.

Lis, Józef, and Anna Pasieczna. *Atlas geochemiczny Krakowa i okolic*. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1995. Accessed March 20, 2024. [https://mapgeochem.pgi.gov.pl/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Krakow\\_pl\\_comp.pdf](https://mapgeochem.pgi.gov.pl/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Krakow_pl_comp.pdf).

Łapczyńska, Elżbieta. *Bestiariusz nowohucki*. Kindle. Stronie Śląskie: Biuro Literackie, 2020.

Purchla, Jacek. "Nowa Huta jako problem badawczy." In *Narodziny Nowej Huty: materiały sesji naukowej odbytej 25 kwietnia 1998 roku*, edited by J. M. Małecki, 7–14. Kraków: Towarzystwo Miłośników Historii i Zabytków Krakowa, 1999.

Rępański, Piotr. "Kraków. Wycofują się z akcji sadzenia 4000 drzew." *Gazeta Krakowska*. March 20, 2024. Accessed May 20, 2024. <https://gazetakrakowska.pl/krakow-wycofuja-sie-z-akcji-sadzenia-4000-drzew-ta-zaplanowano-przy-niebezpiecznym-skladowisku-odpadow-w-nowej-hucie/ar/c1-18399025>.

Sobczak, Ola. "Inicjatorzy akcji 'Sadzimy las dla Krakowian' wycofują się ze współpracy z miastem. ZZM nie odwołuje wydarzenia." *Radio Kraków*. March

21, 2024. Accessed May 20, 2024.

<https://www.radiokrakow.pl/aktualnosci/krakow/inicjatorzy-akcji-sadzimy-las-dla-krakowian-wycofuja-sie-ze-wspolpracy-z-miastem-w-tle-bomba-ekologiczna/>.

Szpak, Ewelina. "On the Verge of an Ecological Catastrophe: The Communist Modernization of Eastern Europe." *Polish History*. Accessed May 20, 2024.

<https://polishhistory.pl/on-the-verge-of-an-ecological-catastrophe-the-communist-modernization-of-eastern-europe/>.

Szpak, Ewelina. "Industrialization: The Environmental End of Old Kraków?" In *Krakow: An Ecobiography*, edited by Adam Izdebski and Rafał Szmytka, 132–46. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2021.

Trzeciak, Katarzyna. "Poza formą miasta idealnego. Przeobrażenia nowohuckich materialności." *Śląskie Studia Polonistyczne*, no. 2 (2018): 41–58. Accessed May 11, 2024.

<https://journals.us.edu.pl/index.php/SSP/article/view/8797>.

Zamora, Lois Parkinson. *The Usable Past: The Imagination of History in Recent Fiction of the Americas*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.