

FORWORD

Warsaw is one of the oldest centre of geographical research on the Polish territory. The first attempt to establish the department of geography was made as soon as in the eighties of the 19th century but it was ninety years ago, in the 1918, when the Department of Geography was brought into existence, founded by geographers and geography enthusiasts connected to Warsaw. Yet it is not the only anniversary worth mentioning: another department – the Department of Anthropogeography – was founded seventy years ago (1938), and thirty years ago (1977) the University of Warsaw was the first university in Poland with the newly opened faculty of geography (the Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies). And last but not least the year 2008 is the hundredth anniversary of the professor Jerzy Kondracki's birth – a person of extreme merit for the Warsaw academic geography to which he dedicated all his life, working at the University over sixty years.

The jubilee of the Department of Geography's existence at the University of Warsaw is an opportunity to appraise the development of geography hitherto and to stimulate a discussion about the future of our branch in the information society era since the above mention anniversaries coincide with the 4th Forum of Polish Geographers (organized in May 2008 at the Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies of the University of Warsaw in the cooperation with Committee of the Geographical Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences). The leitmotiv of this year's forum will be the role of geography in the regional studies. This issue holds a significant position in the geographic output at the University of Warsaw, both in the framework of the physical and of the human geography.

We take the opportunity of the above mentioned jubilees to dedicate the consecutive, 40th volume to the history of the geography at the University of Warsaw and to biographies of eminent professors of the University of Warsaw together with few other research workers meritorious for the Faculty.

The present volume begins with the comprehensive chapter dedicated to the history of geography in the Warsaw research centre written by the Professor Andrzej Richling, the long-term (6 terms) Dean of the Faculty. Geography has always been multiple-nuclei in the capital city: before the World War II it developed at the Warsaw School of Economics, at the Free Polish Public University, and at the University of Warsaw; after 1945 at the

University of Warsaw, at the Warsaw School of Economics, and at the Polish Academy of Sciences. In 1918 also the first Polish Geographic Society originated in Warsaw with its still remaining seat at the Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies.

In 1939 in the two geographic departments at the University of Warsaw worked no more than eight people - the dynamic development of geography at the University was yet to take place after the World War II. Until 1939 twenty-five master's diplomas in geography were issued, as well as approximately twenty teacher's diplomas; eight doctorates and one habilitation procedure was completed. The number of research workers (202 people) was the highest at the beginning of the Faculty's existence and now has been diminished to 165 people, mostly because of reduction of the ancillary workers number. 1389 master's diplomas were issued between 1946 and 1977 and almost twice that much (3214) in the following thirty years (1977–2007). Between 1946 and 1977 forty-eight people were promoted doctorates and fifteen completed habilitation procedures. In the next thirty years the respective numbers were 147 and 46. The library collection expanded from 4,000 items in 1939 to 63,000 items in 1954 and 304,000 items in 2006.

The further part of the present volume comprises the biographies of seventeen research workers, including fourteen professors of the University of Warsaw, from Stanisław Lencewicz to the lately deceased. The turbulent history of the 20th century allowed few of them to associate in scientific terms exclusively with the geographical centre of the Warsaw University. Outstanding among them were without doubt Stanisław Lencewicz and Jerzy Kondracki, whose profiles, together with the complete lists of works, are opening the biographical part. The remaining profiles are presented in chronological order of taking up the post at the University.

The geographic research centres of Warsaw and Cracow have been bonded in a special way. Although the Warsaw academic centre was founded by the geographers associated with Warsaw, the first candidate for the unit director was the professor Ludomir Sawicki from the Jagiellonian University (however the German occupation authorities didn't approve his candidature under a pretext of his Austrian citizenship). The graduates of the Cracow *Alma Mater*, with the most eminent Stanisław Leszczycki, prevail among the professors only partially bonded with the Warsaw academic centre. Also the future professors of the Jagiellonian University worked previously at the University of Warsaw: Antoni Wrzosek, Jan Flis, and Józef Szaflarski. Bogdan Zaborski and Barbara Obrębska-Starkłowa, graduates of the University of Warsaw, were the Heads of the Cracow departments. It explains why Warsaw and Cracow are contending together for the joint organization of the consecutive regional conference of the International Geographical Union

in 2014. The capital city successfully hosted one of the International Geographical Union Congress in 1934, when tours to Cracow and the Tatra Mountains, among the others, were organized for its participants.

Accordingly to the agreed scheme, each biography contains information about the life and scientific, educational, and organizational work of our predecessors, a list of relevant bibliographic studies, and a list of chosen references from each person's scientific output. The present volume stands for an important documentary material as some information included in the reference has never been published before.

The motto of this issue is: *non omnis moriar*. We want to save the memory of those who departed, and not only their memory as scientists but also as personalities with their qualities and their shortcomings giving them a human dimension. Our wish is to hand down the knowledge about our predecessors' contribution to the development of geography to their successors, especially to the youngest generation of geographers, who will continue the development of the geographic idea in the future.

The majority of the profiles was elaborated by associates or disciples of the honoured geographers of the University of Warsaw. In some cases the compilations are based only upon other publications or upon materials provided by the families, for which the editors wishes to express sincere thanks.

Andrzej Lisowski