

200 lat dziejów nauk geologicznych w Warszawie

Two hundred years of geological sciences in Warsaw

SUMMARY

The study covers a period of two hundred years, from the middle of the 18th to the middle of the 20th centuries. The final fragment of the study has been published before and is not repeated here.

The beginnings of the interest in collecting geological finds date to the 17th century in Warsaw. The first institutions that were concerned with the study of minerals were established in the 18th century, which is testified to by J.F.O. Carosi's book *Reisen durch verschiedene polnische Provinzen, mineralogischen und anderen Inhalts* (1781-1784). In 1815, Stanisław Staszic published a synthetic work entitled *O ziemiorództwie Karpatów i innych gór i równin Polski* together with a geological map of Central Europe. Staszic was also responsible for establishing tertiary schools which had departments or sections of geology: Szkoła Akademiczno-Górnicza was established in 1816 (it functioned until 1817 in Kielce), and the University of Warsaw in the following year. Both those schools were closed by the Russian authorities in 1831 in reprisal for the anti-Russian November Uprising of 1830-1831. In the years 1862-1869 there was a Polish university in Warsaw, called Szkoła Główna, which was later turned into a Russian-language University of Warsaw. The latter university functioned until 1915, when the German occupation authorities polonized it.

In the second decade of the 19th century Warsaw became a significant centre of geological sciences in the country. Among the geologists active in Warsaw were G.G. Pusch (1790-1846) and L. Zejszner (1805-1817), to whom we owe the foundations of modern stratigraphy of the older bedrock. After Poles resigned from chairs of geology in the Russian-language university in Warsaw, geology and related sciences were taught by the Russians A. Lagorio (1852-1941) and W. Amalicki (1860-1917). The two scientists were founders of outstanding scientific schools: a school of mineralogy (Lagorio together with his pupils: K. Kozirowski, J. Morozewicz and Z. Weyberg) and a school of geology (Amalicki together with his pupils J. Lewiński, P. Koroniewicz and others).

In the Russian University of Warsaw, Poles had no chance of making an academic career. That is why Morozewicz (who studied the syntheses of minerals and rocks) left for St. Petersburg, and Lewiński organized a Geological Laboratory in a civic Museum of Industry and Agriculture (in 1900). In 1907 an academic learned society, Towarzystwo Naukowe Warszawskie, was formed in Warsaw, which was able to publish scientific dissertations. Thanks to the establishment of the society, the geological exploration and mapping of Polish lands was greatly accelerated; this was especially true for older bedrock and quaternary sediments. This acceleration was reflected in a series of publications entitled "Paleontologia Ziemi Polskiej" [The Palaeontology of Polish lands] (published since 1912), in monographs of the Towarzystwo Naukowe Warszawskie, in the journal "Pamiętnik Fizjograficzny" [Physiographic memoirs] and well as in other publications.

When in 1918 Poland regained its independence, specialists who had been educated in Poland and abroad (especially in Russia and Switzerland as well as in Germany and France), established chairs of geology in the new universities (in Poznań, Wilno and Warsaw). They also contributed to the establishment in 1919 of the Państwowy Instytut Geologiczny (State Institute of Geology). During the Second World War, Germans destroyed the buildings of the geological department of the Warsaw University. All of its documentation collections were irrevocably lost, including the most important one, the collection of G.G. Pusch. Those geologists who managed to survive the war, were able to reestablish the departments of Earth science at the university and other tertiary schools (especially Politechnika Warszawska, the Warsaw Technical University). It also became possible to reestablish the Państwowy Instytut Geologiczny.

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The typescript of the current text, which was written in 1967, has been preserved in family archives. The text has been prepared for publication by Z. Wójcik, with the collaboration of T. Wysoczyński.

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