

EDITORIAL

The journal *Polish Polar Research* – a vivid record of the Polish and international bi-Polar scientific activity

The Polar activity under the Polish national flag dates back to the participation by Poland in the IInd Polar Year, 1932–1933. A 5-man scientific team worked then during the Arctic summer, reduced to 3 men during the overwintering time, on Björnöya (Bear Island), the southernmost island of the Svalbard Archipelago. Three more scientific and one sportive Polish expeditions to Spitsbergen – the main island of the archipelago followed, in 1934, 1936 and 1938, and one scientific expedition to West Greenland, in 1937.

In 1956, Poland joined the scientific programme of the IIIrd International Geophysical Year (IGY), 1957–1958. In 1957, the Polar Station of the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAS) was erected at Isbjörnhamna, northern coast of Hornsund fjord, south Spitsbergen. On the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Station (1957–2007), at the beginning of the International Polar Year (2007–2008), the Station was given the name of Professor Stanisław Siedlecki – the IIIrd IGY expeditions leader and founder of the Station.

In the years 1956–1962, there were six summer expeditions and one overwintering (in 1957/8) at the Station. Then, there was a break in the Station's activity until 1970, when summer expeditions were resumed. Since 1978, following a thorough renovation, the Station serves the Polish and international scientific teams on a year-round basis.

In the 1980's and 1990's, the Polish scientific activity in Svalbard considerably expanded, areally including, *i.a.*: the Oscar II Land (The M. Copernicus University, Toruń, base at Kaffiöyra), the Nordenskjöld Land (The Warsaw University summer expeditions), the Billefjorden area (The A. Mickiewicz University, Poznań, summer expeditions to Petuniabukta), the Billefjorden area (The M. Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin, summer expeditions to Calypsobyen), the oceanographical expeditions to Spitsbergen fjords (by Marine Academies in Szczecin and Gdynia and the Institute of Oceanology, PAS, in Sopot), *etc.* Simultaneously, joint international geophysical expeditions including scientific teams from Poland and other countries (*e.g.*, Polish-Norwegian-German seismic sounding of the Greenland Sea bottom offshore Spitsbergen; Polish-American palaeomagnetic studies of Mesozoic dolerites on Spitsbergen), contributed to fast expanding scientific knowledge of the area. As a result, numerous scientific papers, and several monographs, pertaining to the Arctic research, have appeared in many Polish and foreign specialist journals.

The Polish scientific research in East Antarctica had started already in 1959, thanks to the agreement between the Polish and the Russian Academies of Sciences. The former Soviet Station *Oasis* (at Bunger Hills) was handed over to the Polish Academy of Sciences. It was renamed the *Antoni B. Dobrowolski* Station in honour of the Polish member of the famous Belgian Antarctic Expedition (1897–1899), in *Belgica*, under Captain Adrien de Gerlache de Gomery. Unfortunately, for various reasons, regular research work at the *Dobrowolski* Station could not be continued for two decades until 1979, when the second summer expedition was sent there.

Meanwhile, following two marine-biological expeditions to West Antarctica (1975, 1976), organized jointly by the Polish Academy of Sciences and the Marine Fishery High School in Gdynia, a new Polish Antarctic Station was opened in 1977, on King George Island (South Shetland Islands, West Antarctica). It was given the name of Professor Henryk Arctowski, geologist-geophysicist and scientific leader of the above mentioned *Belgica* Antarctic expedition. Since then, the *Arctowski* Station continues its scientific work (mainly in biology, ecology, geology and palaeontology) on a year-round basis. Geophysical and geological survey along the west coast of Antarctic Peninsula by four marine expeditions of the Polish Academy of Sciences soon followed (1979–1991).

The fast increasing Polish scientific activity in the Arctic and the Antarctic since 1956, called for creation of a special English-language bi-polar journal in order to publish and disseminate the results of scientific research both among the Polish readers and at an international forum. This was done in 1980, when the *Polish Polar Research* came into being under auspices of the Polish Committee on Polar Research of the Presidium of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

During its 28-year long history, the scientific journal *Polish Polar Research* successfully overcame some reefs that had appeared along its sailing route. Nowadays, with good typographic shape and paper quality, with its on-line supplement, the journal is a well known member of the scientific journals family, its papers being refereed by specialists of international renown. Since 1996, it has been ranked with the Impact Factor between 0.108 and 0.348, and in 2008, it was included in the Science Citation Index Expanded.

Thanks to dedicated work of its team of Editors, Professors Andrzej Gaździcki (Earth Sciences) and Krzysztof Jażdżewski (Biological Sciences) in particular, and a flow of good research articles written by Polish and foreign authors (*e.g.*, from Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Korea, Norway, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and USA), our bi-polar journal *Polish Polar Research* has achieved a good international status. The Polish Polar community is grateful for this.

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