

Obituary

Professor Stefan Kozarski

1930 - 1996

Professor Stefan Kozarski died suddenly in his office on 19th January 1996. For the whole of his industrious working life, he was associated with the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. Here, he gained wide prominence as a scientist, teacher and administrator. Professor Kozarski commenced his geographical studies in 1950. With the submission of a thesis entitled „Recession of the last ice-sheet from the northern part of the Gniezno Pleistocene Plateau and the formation of the ice-marginal valley of the rivers Noteć and Warta”, Professor Kozarski was awarded the degree of Doctor of Natural Sciences. He obtained his post-doctoral degree on the basis of a dissertation on „The problem of the outflow way of waters from the western part of the Noteć-Warta Pradolina” (1965). In 1967, Professor Kozarski founded the Department of Geomorphology as part of the Institute of Geography and has been its Head right up to his death. This became the Quaternary Research Institute in 1981. In 1972, Professor Kozarski became assistant professor and in 1978, he became full professor of geographical sciences.



Most of his research concerned the geomorphology of NW Poland and the adjacent area of the former East Germany but, as a participant in various scientific expeditions, he also explored the forelands and marginal zones of the Sidujökull glacier in Iceland and the Hans, Gås and Werenskiöld glaciers in Spitsbergen. He investigated the subtropical karst areas of south-east China, where his interests also included glacial and periglacial problems.

A review of Professor Kozarski's scientific work readily shows how diverse his interests were. His greatest achievements were undoubtedly in the analysis of Pleistocene and modern glacial landforms and processes. Among the problems he studied were those of subglacial channels, pradolinas and drainage systems of ice-sheets, kames, the development of ice-cored moraines, deglaciation mechanisms, depositional models of the melting Vistulian ice-sheet and the marginal forms associated with it. He frequently returned to the theme of the genesis of end moraines and, in this work, repeatedly emphasised the role of the ice sheet in the formation of glaciotectonic disturbances.

In respect that glacial problems are closely related to those of the periglacial environment, he was particularly attracted to fossil dunes, periglacial deposits and the geomorphological traces of periglacial processes in young glacial areas. He also investigated the oriented permafrost depressions which are present in the proximal parts of an outwash plain, where syngenetic permafrost depressions had already melted. His explanation of these features was based upon comparative studies of contemporary landforms in Spitsbergen. These ideas were later extended to related phenomena in Great Britain, Denmark and Germany. Professor Kozarski considered that the presence of frost structures and the geomorphological traces of periglacial processes proved the existence of long-term permafrost in the Germano-Polish Lowland as recently as the Late Vistulian.

The main thrust of his investigations into aeolian landforms and deposits was directed towards an understanding of the stratigraphy and chronology of aeolian dunes and cover sands. He was the first in Poland to attempt to determine dune sand age based on palynological analysis of the terrace levels at which aeolian forms occur. He was also the first in Poland to use SEM techniques in quartz grain surface texture analysis. After a period of research aimed at the reconstruction of the outflows of fluvioglacial and fluvioperiglacial water, Professor Kozarski focused then on studies of variations in river drainage patterns. His investigations in the central part of the Warta basin revealed that braided stream systems had changed into meandering forms and that the changes in the planar geometry of the meanders were the result of climatic changes in the Late Vistulian and Holocene. He published a synopsis of the Vistulian of the Wielkopolska Lowland which extended his chronostratigraphic diagram of this cold terrace across the whole of north-western Europe.

One of the most striking features of Professor Kozarski's huge number of publications - 265 works in total - was his interdisciplinary approach to problem solving. He repeatedly emphasised that one could not fully explain events in the geological past without such an approach.

At the Adam Mickiewicz University, Professor Kozarski was an inspiring teacher and was appointed visiting professor at no less than 28 foreign universities. He presented many papers at various conferences both in Poland and abroad. He appreciated the need to present the scholastic achievements of the Poznań geographical community on the international scene and, to this end, he founded, and became Editor of „*Quaestiones Geographicae*” and „*Quaternary Studies in Poland*”. He often served as member of the editorial boards of several Polish and foreign journals, among others: „*Czasopismo Geograficzne*” (since 1974), „*Zeitschrift für Geomorphologie*” (since 1987), „*Springer Series in Physical Environment*” (since 1986).

The medals awarded by foreign universities are an expression of the recognition of Professor Kozarski's achievements. These include Medal of Université de Liège, Bronze Medal of Martin-Luther Universität - Halle/Wittenberg and Lajos Loczy Medal of the Hungarian Scientific Society. Professor Kozarski was appointed member of the New York Academy of Sciences (1980), Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina (1987), Polish Academy of Sciences (1989) and Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences (1994). He had close ties with the Polish Academy of Sciences and served on various committees, including the Committee of Geographical Sciences, the Quaternary Research Committee, the Research Committee on

Peace, the Scientific Council of the Institute of Geography and Spatial Development. He was a member of the Poznań Learned Society, Polish Geological Society and Polish Geographical Society. In 1982 he organized the Geomorphology Commission and was its president till 1991. In 1991 Professor Kozarski founded the Association of Polish Geomorphologists and had been its president till his death. He was co-founder of the International Association of Geomorphologists and had been the National Delegate since 1985.

Professor Stefan Kozarski's intense scientific, didactic and organisational activity has been a significant and lasting contribution to the growth of the Poznań geomorphological centre. In him, Polish geomorphology has lost an eminent scientist of world renown. We, his closest associates, have lost a great scientific and moral authority as well as a true, reliable friend.

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