

INTRODUCTION

The progress of the social-economic and cultural development in the years of economic system transformations, and the impulses from the international environment influence the conditions of formation of industrial spatial structures of varied scale, from country industry, to regional industrial structures, industrial areas and centres, to particular industrial enterprises. This necessitates constant improvement of methods of research into industrial structures shaping in the country's economic space. As a result of Polish economy's opening to and gradual integration with the European economy, increase in the inflow of external developmental factors, and generation of internal factors, a significant role is played by diagnostic studies that account for these complex processes.

Thus, the object of our discussion are the research issues in industrial geography. It must be mentioned that these questions were also examined by earlier works of the Polish Geographical Society's Committee for Industrial Geography, but it seems reasonable to return to the subject, because of intense changes in this field. For we assume that perfecting the research methodology in the field of industrial geography, as in other geographical subfields, in view of quick-changing international and domestic conditions, must be a constant element of scientific investigation, and monitoring this process should be elementary in creating a vision of the country's industrial space in subsequent developmental strategies.

Particular papers in this volume belong to this main research stream; their authors refer to selected issues within this important topic area. Z. Ziolo sketches the concepts of research problems in the research of industrial spatial structure; the author puts the greatest emphasis on the necessity of building a theory of industrial structure. He examines such possibilities against the background of other formal sciences and methodological approaches, and against his own theory of geographical space. The author assumes that the chief aim of industrial geography ought to be the discovery of regularities in the industrial spatial structure, which would form the basis of its theory. He proposes a model of change in socio-economic structures, in which he assumes that an important role in the process of change is played by particular elements (emerging, developing, stagnating, disappearing and vanished).

Industrial spatial structure is shaped in strong connections with global systems. This subject is discussed by W. Gierańczyk, who shows the change in spatial systems of industrial activity and the change of roles played by industrial districts as forms of industry concentration, against the changing conditions in the 20th and 21st centuries. She proposes to develop studies in industrial geography in the convention of diagnosis, taking into account multi-measurement approaches – particularly valuable – to the dynamics of this sector of economy. The attempt made in the paper is verified on the example of the behaviour of industry in the Kujawsko-pomorskie voivodship.

Industrial spatial structure is also shaped under influence of changing network relations. This problem is discussed by M. Paszkowski, who assumes that network relations describe dependencies between various economic subjects that appear in geographical space. Basing on the global dependencies, he claims that it is frequently difficult to identify the created worth with a particular space location. According to the author, special characteristics in this

respect can be attributed to modern industries, especially the corporations of the IT sector, the majority of which are international.

Industrial geography is not an isolated field of science, but is interrelated with other sciences, especially with economy. This issue is focused on in the paper of P. Czapliński, who analyses the industrial research problems in geographical research in comparison with economic sciences. The author indicates certain common areas, and different approaches in both disciplines, which enables a more precise recognition of processes that shape the spatial structure of industry.

The elementary role in the shaping of industrial spatial industry is played by industrial enterprises, which must be treated as its basic elements. This idea is referred to in the work by T. Rachwał, who discusses the research problems in the functioning of industrial enterprises. According to the research conducted so far, internal and external conditions can be identified, which in a certain way shape the process of transformation in particular enterprises. The crucial role is ascribed to the sources of financing, which must be recognized as the basic element determining the position of enterprises on the market. The author presents a synthetic network of these problems in his analysis of a modernized questionnaire used in the examination of industrial enterprises.

The force of particular factors of location of industrial enterprises activity – mentioned by W. Gierańczyk – changes in the situation of internationalization of economy. A special role is played in this process by international environment, which determines the new place of many enterprises functioning up till now. The contemporary changes in this area require new approaches and new terminology, as well as new measures that would help us better understand the modern processes of economic activity relocation.

The activity of industrial companies, through their relation with the external environment, generates possibilities of emergence of new economic subjects, or of activation of the existing enterprises, connected with them functionally. Within this problem area, K. Wiedermann, using methods of calculating the supply and profit multiplier effects, attempts to present the possibilities of analyzing the influence of enterprises on their socio-economic environment. The author believes that the suggested method may serve to understand better the ways in which enterprises function and the influence they have on development of other subjects, with respect to the economic mechanisms.

Globalization processes affect ever larger parts of socio-economic life, hence the significance of the development of research methods and methodological approaches in this aspect. This problem area is referred to by S. Sala, who presents an outline of research problems concerning globalization processes of economic activity in socio-economic geography, in the light of selected bibliography. He pays special attention to the advantages of the systemic approach and the role of explanation and evaluation of dynamics of phenomena.

We are aware that the present volume contains selected methodological problems in industrial space research, with emphasis on the conditions connected with intensifying globalization processes. We do hope that it will provide inspiration and encouragement to further in-depth investigations into these problems.