

Introduction

The transformation processes in companies and the associated transformations of industrial structures belong now to leading research problems of industrial geography. They are affected by both internal conditions, connected with a specific situation in a given company and the economic policy of the state, as well as external conditions resulting from internationalisation of production, openness of world markets, technological progress and others. Bearing in mind the complex process and willing to be included into solving of such up-to-date research problems, we are attempting, within the activities of the Industrial Geography Committee of the Polish Geographic Society, to launch "Works of the Industrial Geography Committee" („Prace Komisji Geografii Przemysłu”) as a forum of experience exchange on research of transformation processes in industrial companies and their environment, as well as of tendencies to transform industrial structures in various spatial systems. We are aware that research on industrial geography meets at present a great information barrier, but it does not mean that it is to be neglected. Thus it is necessary to look for new sources of information and to work out research and analytical methods that would fit them. It is especially referred to taking new measuring instruments, describing the industrial potential of companies, their forms of spatial concentration, as well as mutual network relations. It is necessary to turn attention to new factors shaping the production size and places of its location, looking for sale markets, and also their evaluation in terms of their results of economic performance, and others.

The third volume of Works of the Industrial Geography Committee refers to this idea. It is devoted to problems of the industrial structure transformations in the implementation process of market economy rules. In this way we want to get included into the wide discussion on restructuring of the Polish economy that should be competitive and have a more and more important position in uniting Europe and the system of global economy. We also hope to increase in this way interest of junior workers of science in the research problems of industrial geography, what is becoming successful as the composition of authors in this volume shows. We will be grateful for all remarks and new proposals concerning future volumes of the Committee's works.

This volume has been opened by a dissertation by T. Strykiewicz (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań) on new theoretical and methodological orientations in industrial geography that may be used in restructuring of the Polish industry. The Author has turned a special attention to a possibility of applying the company regulation model in an analysis of its transformation process.

Z. Ziolo (Academy of Pedagogy, Krakow) has discussed the problems of branch structure and spatial concentration in leading companies in the world. He has presented branches featured by the most important concentration of capital and employees and indicated the seat places of companies' boards of directors as elements controlling these complex, transnational production structures.



Sale markets have a very important role in development of production. H. Rogacki (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań) has devoted his paper to this problem and described differentiation of provinces in their export and import activity. It is an indirect indicator of the competitiveness degree of regions and products of the Polish industry, as they affect to much extent the size of international turnovers of the Polish economy.

In the previous system of the national economy management that hardly considered economic criteria many negative decisions were taken that caused the fact that not all companies could find their place under conditions of the market economy. An interesting dissertation by B. Domański (Jagiellonian University, Krakow) has referred to it and presented a new research problem concerning transformations of post-industrial areas in the Śląskie and Małopolskie Provinces. On the places of the former location of bankrupt companies there appear new fields of activity changing the quality of the previous use of the area.

In reference to the hitherto used delimitation of industrial districts that is present in the subject literature W. Gierańczyk and A. Stańczyk (Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń) have presented a new delimitation of industrial districts under the present conditions of transition to the post-industrial phase.

In the past industry was treated as one of important factors of economic activation, especially in small towns. Under the new economic conditions the industry in towns of West Pomerania, as it is indicated in the paper by E. Rydz and I. Jażewicz (Pomeranian Academy of Pedagogy, Słupsk), gets substantially differentiated and thus their economic base is weakened. The Authors have analysed changes that occur under the influence of market transformations and privatisation processes that lead to changes in the spatial and branch structure of the industry and the size structure of enterprises. Also the paper by M. Czepczyński (University of Gdansk) has referred to the problem and analysed the transformation process in the industry of the Pomorskie Province. The problem has been approached on the example of management changes in the port and industrial areas in the agglomeration of Gdansk-Sopot-Gdynia.

Individual branches of the Polish industry increasingly have to take into consideration the competition of similar European and world structures. The paper by L. Luchter (Jagiellonian University, Krakow) has referred to the idea and analysed the deregulation process in electrical power engineering in Poland against the background of structural transformations of the sector in the countries of the European Union.

New conditions often create different possibilities for new locations and shaping of new industrial areas. The problem has been discussed by M. Wdowicka (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań) on the example of the suburban zone of Poznań. The problem, on the example of Łódź, has also been developed by J. May (University of Łódź) who has analysed the transformation dynamism of the industrial space in Łódź. The main attention has been here turned to the role of industrial plants with variable socio-economic potential, and the Author has analysed changes in behaviour of small, medium-size and large businesses.

Different conditions concerning location of industrial investments are created by special economic zones. The paper by A. Bazydło, M. Smętkowski, A. Wieloński (University of Warsaw) has been devoted to this problem. The Authors have presented the role of legal instruments connected with creation of special economic zones and their influence upon new locations in the areas where such zones operate. The suggested scheme of typology for

production activity should be stressed, as it presents the relationship between the productivity and the level of employment.

Another group of papers has covered the problems of behaviour in industrial enterprises during the transformation process of the management system. Z. Makięła (Academy of Pedagogy, Krakow) has analysed transformations in Skawińskie Zakłady Koncentratów Spożywczych (Factory of Food Concentrates in Skawina) in connection with globalisation processes occurring in the manufacturing branch of selected products of the food processing industry. A special attention has been turned to inclusion of Polish companies in the food processing industry in the structures of transnational industrial corporations.

J. Musielak (University of Szczecin) has turned attention to transformation ways in the Shipyards of Szczecin. The company has been transformed from a company that was about to get bankrupt to a worldwide leading shipbuilding company as a result of proper internal activities.

A thesis is known that modern industrial branches are the engines of the contemporary progress, but specific conditions must be met by their environment. Bearing it in mind T. Rachwał (Academy of Pedagogy, Krakow) has analysed changes in behaviour of Krakowskie Zakłady Elektroniczne „TELPOD” (Electronic Factory of Krakow “Telpod”) against the background of the Polish electronic industry. The problems have been handled in a different way at Zakłady Mięsne „Nisko” S.A. (Meat Processing Factory “Nisko”, Joint Stock Company), where some extra-economic factors have had a substantial influence upon the previous behaviour in the company. Along with changes to the management system there is a substantial change to the role of financial economy in companies. The latter has been discussed by T. Śpiewak (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Branch of Rzeszów).

Many of the contemporary companies undergoing the processes of economic transformation were formed in the distant years of the industrial phase of development. Especially in the Polish conditions of the inter-war period developing companies had initially a favourable situation for the economic growth. Later in the years of the great crisis they limited their activity. A good illustration is a paper by T. Rachwał (Academy of Pedagogy, Krakow), where the problems of shaping until 1950 of the leading factory in the confectionery industry in Krakow have been discussed.

The transformation processes in industry also affect changes in education directions at the academic level. M. Borowiec (Academy of Pedagogy, Krakow) has devoted her paper to this complex problem. She has presented changes in education at technical faculties in Poland, and against their background at the Technical University of Krakow and the Academy of Mining and Metallurgy in Krakow.

Transformation processes in economy of other dimensions occur in the scale of large states. An interesting dissertation by Z. Szot (Academy of Pedagogy, Krakow) has given expression of the problem and has been devoted to changes in the spatial organisation in the economy of the Russian Federation.

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Translated by Krzysztof Tucholski