

INTRODUCTION

Celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Polish Geographical Society (1918–2018) allows for making attempts at summarising research achievements to date in the field of geography of industry and services, as well as for proposing syntheses of previous research results. We assume that they facilitate a more and more precise recognition of changes in the spatial structure of industry and the dynamics and functional changes of enterprises as its basic elements.

In the process of development of geography of industry, as in other scientific disciplines, visible are successive stages associated with the strive for a deeper understanding of processes governing the functioning of enterprises as basic elements of more complex spatio-sectional structures of industry. Among them we would like to emphasise the following: description of the object of study, explaining the process of its location and development, developing the concept of model approach, determining development goals, verifying adopted hypotheses, predicting further directions of changes, and building a theory.

Proposals for further development and undertaking new research themes should refer to the changing conditions caused by the growing technological, social, economic, and cultural progress. It should be taken into account that said processes occur in varied conditions which may affect polarisation in terms of the level of development in spatial structure of industry or the balancing of existing disparities.

We assume that learning about the complex processes of development and functional transformations of industries, as well as spatial structure of industry constitutes an important premise for controlling economic changes in order to systematically raise the level and the quality of life of the society. Balanced management of changes is the more effective, the more it is based on accurately justified claims concerning the variability of intensification of factors influencing changes in the socio-economic and cultural potential.

Apart from epistemological problems, development of geography of industry is associated largely with the possibility of applying its research results in economic practice. This is done mainly through providing patterns theoretically justified and empirically verified that will allow for making rational decisions, realising certain objectives of economic and spatial policy, evaluating said objectives, and the possibility of predicting future transformation processes.

In reference to the above-mentioned, the present volume contains works relating to attempts at determining the directions of research in the field of geography of industry and services.

Papers presented study the issues of the shaping of industrial and services enterprises, sample results of empirical research, public statistics resources, and new research concepts in the field of geography of industry.

Academic identity of scholars representing specific scientific disciplines plays an important role in works on the location of business entities. To varying degrees said disciplines put emphasis on determining the complexity of conditions in locating business entities, their competitiveness, and the needs of economic practice (K. Kuciński). Of great significance is also research on behaviours of large business entities in geographic space. In this contexts, three main trends related to world research were presented: transformational-globalisation, localisation, and behavioural (P. Śleszyński). They are related to the behaviour of international enterprises which influences processes of internationalisation of production and expansion to foreign markets (A. Tobolska). This is also illustrated by research on global corporations (W. Kilar).

In Polish literature on the subject, research issues of geography of industry undergo certain changes. They are mostly connected with processes of technological development of industry and changes in managing economy reflected by the transition from centrally controlled economy to market economy (T. Rachwał). Varied development conditions affect different investment attractiveness of economic activity and lead to increasing polarisation processes (H. Godlewska-Majkowska). It was noted that analysis of individual sectors of economy requires new and often different research methods, as indicated by research on the development and functions related to maritime industries (P. Czaplński).

Construction industry plays an important role in the study of processes of economic development. This is evidenced by an analysis of research directions in geography of construction. Special attention was paid to issues of construction and assembly production and investment processes (T. Marszał, A. Ogrodowczyk). In market economy the development of entrepreneurship significantly influences the dynamics of socio-economic development in spatial systems of different scale. This is suggested by intensive research, particularly in the period of implementation of market economy rules. It was emphasised that said issue is of interdisciplinary character and among it significant are research results achieved in the field of geography of industry (T. Rachwał). Intensifying technological progress changes economic structures by lessening the importance of industry in favour of developing service activity. The growing importance of the sector in national economic entail more dynamic research into geography of services which exhibits increasingly closer ties with geography of industry (J. Dominiak).

Subsequent works present the results of undertaking new research themes. They include multiplier effects resulting from the relationship between industry and its surroundings (K. Wiedermann), changes in spatial structure of intensively developing automotive industry (B. Domański, K. Gwosdz), and changes in spatial structure of innovation of Polish industry (P. Brezdeń). Also presented was a literature review on the topic of geographic proximity, its subjective and objective measuring (G. Micek), as well as public statistics resources as the source of information for studies in geography of industry (W. Gierańczyk, M. Ryczkowski).

Assuming there is a need for a synthesis of previous research in order to formulate general theory of geography of industry, a new, holistic concept of research into the functioning and development of industrial enterprise and spatial structure of industry was presented. The concept takes into consideration various relationships relating to: conditions of business in geographical space, impact on changing its potential of economic development rules, functional diversification of industrial enterprises in spatial structure of industry, competition between different spatial systems,

category of market environment, and relations between power elites and types of policies (Z. Ziło).

We are aware of the fact that the content of various articles is open to question. Therefore, we encourage you to express your views and to further develop research issues of geography of industry and services, including presenting theoretical approach leading to the formulation of general theories on the functioning and development of industrial enterprises, as well as industry and services sectors in spatial systems of different scale.

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