

POLISH POLAR RESEARCH	20	1	77–78	1999
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CHRONICLE

Centennial of participation of H. Arctowski and A. B. Dobrowolski in the *Belgica* Antarctic Expedition (1897–1899)

On 16–17 September 1998 was held in the Staszic Palace in Warszawa, the annual XXV International Polar Symposium organized jointly by the Committee on Polar Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Geophysics of the Polish Academy of Sciences and the Polar Club of the Polish Geographical Society.

That Symposium has marked the culmination of the 3 years celebrations in Poland of the participation of Professors H. Arctowski and A. B. Dobrowolski in the *Belgica* Expedition to Antarctica.

It was attended by more than 130 polar researchers from Poland and from abroad, including guests from Russia (4), Belgium (2), the United States (2), Norway (2), the Ukraine (2), the Czech Republic (2), France (1), the Netherlands (1), and Germany (1).

The Plenary Solemn Session has started with the welcome address by Dr. Seweryn Maciej Zalewski, Scientific Secretary of the Committee on Polar Research, who greeted the guests on behalf of the Organizing Committee. Then, the Symposium was formally opened by Professor Krzysztof Birkenmajer, Chairman of the Committee on Polar Research, who presented the achievements of H. Arctowski and A.B. Dobrowolski against the background of the Polish polar research results. He was followed by a number of speakers who have in their addresses referred to the celebrated anniversary of the Belgian Antarctic Expedition, linking it with the present successes in polar research.

The first honorary speaker, Baron Gaston de Gerlache de Gomery, son of the leader of the *Belgica* Expedition, referring to his long standing cooperation with Polish polar researchers, expressed satisfaction on having an opportunity to participate in that commemorative activity being organized for the centennial of that expedition. Recalling his recent visit to the *Arctowski* Station, he has concluded: "I can assure you that your base being rebuilt, is now a very modern and important Antarctic station, of which you can be proud."

Further guest speakers taking the floor were: Their Excellencies the Ambassadors of Belgium and Rumania in Poland; Dr. Carol Williams, representative of the European Science Foundation and Professor Peter-Noel Webb from the Ohio State University (Columbus).

Next were read letters of congratulations and best wishes to the Symposium, received among other from: Professor Leszek Kuźnicki, President of the Polish Academy of Sciences; His Eminence Cardinal Józef Glemp, Primate of Poland; Professor Andrzej Wiszniewski, Chairman of the State Committee for Scientific Research and from the staff of Polish polar stations operating the Arctic and Antarctic.

The Plenary Solemn Session was concluded with the delivery of papers concentrating on the impact of scientific achievements by Professors H. Arctowski and A.B. Dobrowolski on the subsequent Polish polar investigations. Following were the titles of papers and the names of their authors: *The First Polish Expedition to Antarctica 1958–1959* by Seweryn Maciej Zalewski; *One hundred years after the Belgica Expedition* by Stanisław Rakusa-Suszczewski; *Polish Antarctic Marine Research expeditions* by Krzysztof Jazdzewski; and *H. Arctowski and A.B. Dobrowolski Polish members of the Belgica Antarctic Expedition (1897–1899)* by Jacek Machowski.

The Plenary Solemn Session was followed by the regular proceedings of the XXV International Polar Symposium, held in three sections, where Polish and foreign scholars have presented their papers covering a wide spectrum of topics in different disciplines of polar sciences. In the Section of Earth Sciences, chaired by Professors K. Birkenmajer and K. Pękala 18 papers were presented. In the Section of Biological Sciences, chaired by Dr K. Opaliński 7 reports and communications were submitted. In the Section of Humanistic and Social Sciences, chaired by Professor J. Machowski 8 papers were delivered.

During the Symposium 15 posters containing large scale illustrations, photograms, drawings, maps, diagrams *etc.* from the Arctic and Antarctic regions were displayed by Polish and foreign authors. The Symposium was accompanied by a number of cultural and artistic events, like the exhibition of paintings by Iwo Birkenmajer who presented impressive polar landscapes, an exhibition of artistic photos and slides made in polar regions by several authors (K. Salwicka, P. Ciaputa, R. Czajkowski, K. Skóra, W. Bart, G. Soszka, T.J. Kowalski and S.M. Zalewski, and an exhibition of awarded paintings and drawings on polar themes, selected out of 300 works received from Polish children in response to a competition organized by the National Museum in Szczecin. In the Palace Halls, Polish and foreign publishing houses were displaying and selling their publications, maps *etc.* concerning polar regions and problems. To the participants of the Symposium, there were made available also: a volume of Conference Materials containing 59 abstracts, the sixth volume of *Polar Bulletin*, special commemorative medals and post-cards impressed on the occasion of the *Belgica* centennial.

On the first evening, a traditional social party took place in the PAN-CLUB, gathering members of the Polish polar community, their foreign guests and representatives of the scientific circles.

On the second day, meetings of the specialized commissions of the Committee on Polar Research were held and the annual Plenary Meeting of the Polar Club was convened. At that meeting it was decided that the next, XXVI Polar Symposium will meet on 18–20 June 1999 in Lublin to mark the 25th anniversary of the Polar Club and to discuss the topic *Polish polar research – its present state and perspectives*, while the XXVII Polar Symposium in the year 2000 will take place in Toruń.

In effect of the 3 years (1997–1999) celebrations in Poland to commemorate the centennial of participation of H. Arctowski and A.B. Dobrowolski in the *Belgica* Antarctic Expedition, a number of interesting publications, some also in English, have appeared.*

Jacek MACHOWSKI

* Among them: **Polish Polar Studies**, 25th International Polar Symposium. The 100th anniversary of Prof. Henryk Arctowski's and Antoni Bolesław Dobrowolski's participation in the *Belgica* Expedition to the Antarctica in 1897–1899, edited by Piotr Głowacki and Jacek Bednarek, Warszawa 1998. Also a special issue of **Polish Polar Research** (Vol. 19, No. 1–2, 1998) on Centennial of participation of H. Arctowski and A.B. Dobrowolski in the *Belgica* Expedition to West Antarctica (1897–1899).

25th International Polar Symposium, Warszawa 1998

- 1–2. Opening of the plenary session – speech delivered by Baron Gaston de Gerlache de Gomery, Chairman of the Belgian National Committee on Antarctic Research and Professor Peter-Noel Webb from the Byrd Polar Research Center and Department of Geological Sciences, Ohio State University.
3. Praesidium of 25th International Polar Symposium (from the left: Professor Krzysztof Birkenmajer and Dr S. Maciej Zalewski).
4. Plenary meeting hall.
5. Opening of the social party.
6. The social party – discussing: Dr Carol A. Williams, Secretary of European Committee on Marine and Polar Science (ESF) and Professor Peter-Noel Webb, Ohio State University.

Photos by Halina Giżewska



