

## IN MEMORY

### Tatiana Bocheńska

April 23, 1934 – April 28, 2004



On the 28<sup>th</sup> of April, 2004, the scientific community in Wrocław experienced a painful loss: Professor Tatiana Bocheńska of the Institute of Geological Sciences of Wrocław University died in a tragic accident. Her early and unexpected death was a sad blow to the academic circles of Wrocław and to the whole Polish hydrogeologist community.

Tatiana Bocheńska was born on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April, 1934 in Lublin, and later moved to Wrocław, where she attended school. After her secondary school graduating exam, she was accepted to the Mining Division of the Faculty of Geology in St. Petersburg, or, as it was known at that time, Leningrad. She graduated in 1956 with a Master's degree in engineering and mining geology, with hydrogeology and engineering geology as her majors. That same year, she was employed as a mining geologist in a coal mine in Upper Silesia and, afterwards, as a project-geologist in brown-coal mines in Lower Silesia. From 1965 to 1980, her professional career was connected with the Copper Research and Construction Enterprise (Zakłady Badawczo-Projektowe Miedzi) "Cuprum" in Wrocław, where she held the position of senior designer, then senior research assistant, and next senior consultant. In 1972, she became the head of the Department of Hydrogeology and Mine Dewatering in "Cuprum".

1976 saw Tatiana Bocheńska do her viva for her PhD thesis, entitled "The hydrogeological consequences of the planned mining works in the zone of the Zechstein outcrop in the vicinity of Lubin". Her PhD studies had been supervised by Prof. Janusz Bieniewski.

The main scientific interests of Dr. Bocheńska at that time included problems of applied hydrogeology, in particular connected with copper mining. During the period of her employment in "Cuprum", she worked on the filtration properties of carbonate rocks, the endangering of wa-

ter, and dewatering problems in the mines of the Legnica-Głogów Copper Region (LGOM). Her particular focus was on the dewatering of deep copper mines, and interrelationships between the water conditions in mines and the lithological and structural features of the rocks. Important issues in her work were the safety of work in copper mining and the prediction of water flow into mines in LGOM.

In 1980, Dr. Bocheńska started to work in the Institute of Geological Sciences of Wrocław University, and a new period began in her professional career; she was now an academic teacher and the head of the Department of Hydrogeology. In 2000, she initiated the establishment of two hydrogeological departments in the Institute: the Department of General Hydrogeology, and the Department of Applied Hydrogeology, and she became the head of the latter.

The Wrocław University period of her career bore fruit in the form of important scientific achievements. Her research area in the 1980s and 1990s mainly revolved around the following topics:

- the changes in hydrogeological conditions caused by mining activity;
- the prediction of groundwater flow into mines and hydrogeological damage to mines;
- the hydrogeology of the Sudetes and their foreland;
- water resources in hydrogeological systems;
- research methods of hydrogeology in mining areas;
- the role of groundwaters in the hydro-economic balance of hydrogeological basins;
- groundwater protection in areas of strong anthropopression.

In 1988, Dr. Bocheńska defended her habilitation thesis "The creation of hydrodynamic conditions in the Lubin-Głogów copper-bearing area simulated by the dewatering of mines". A year later, she was offered a tenureship, and in 1992, a professorship at the University of Wrocław.

The research achievements of Prof. Tatiana Bocheńska comprise nearly 100 publications (some co-authored) in Polish and international journals and books, and many tens of documentations, memoirs and reviews. In 1998, she published, together with her co-workers, a monograph devoted to the Cenozoic groundwater aquifers in the Lubin-Głogów area, and in 2002, another monograph on groundwater systems in the karst areas of the Sudetes. However, the undoubted top academic achievement of Professor Bocheńska is the 2<sup>nd</sup> volume of the monograph "The hydrogeology of Polish mineral deposits and water problems in mining", on which she was the coordinator and a co-author of eight chapters. In the list of her co-authored publications, there are also dictionaries of hydroecology and hydrogeology, which are very useful in teaching geology, ecology and related sciences.

Professor Bocheńska organized and actively attended many scientific conferences, including the cyclic symposia on "Recent Issues in Hydrogeology". From 1994, she took part in international conferences on the Bohemian Massif, where the results of her hydrogeological studies on hard rocks were presented by four university centers from Central European countries.

Never content to be anything other than busy, she was an active member of various commissions and boards, namely the Commission of Hydrogeology of the Committee of Geological Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the Commission of Hydrogeological Documentation in the Ministry of Environment, the Commission on the Dangers of Water in Underground Mines at the President of the High Mining Office, the Section of Engineering Geology and Mining Geophysics of the Scientific Research Committee KBN, the Editorial Board of *Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis*, "Geological and Mineralogical Studies" ("Prace Geologiczno-Mineralogiczne"), the International Association of Hydrogeologists, and the Polish Geological Society.

Her professorship, granted in 1996, and her tenured professorship, granted by the Minister of Education in 1999, confirmed her extraordinary scientific and academic achievements. The near-quarter century long academic teaching activities of Prof. Bocheńska at the Faculty of Sciences of Wrocław University were also very fruitful. Her most important lectures were on the dynamics of groundwater and on mining hydrogeology. For many years, she also led student field courses, often in her favourite mountain ranges. She was a very conscientious and demanding, but also extremely kind and friendly academic teacher.

During her time at Wrocław University, Prof. Bocheńska supervised 8 PhDs, 49 MScs and 23 undergraduate

diplomas. Her academic achievements were rewarded with many awards and medals from the University and of the State.

Professor Tatiana Bocheńska had an extremely strong personality and ability to reach goals that had seemed unrealistic. She realized her professional career step by step, obtaining successive scientific degrees, but even at the highest academic position she remained a modest person. In scientific work, she always combined her ability to use professional knowledge with enthusiasm and perseverance. A very effective organizer, she was able to gather people around her, and to them was an example to follow in showing how to teach and develop scientific careers. Always busy with her many commitments, she still found for everybody who needed her. She was very demanding to herself and to her collaborators. She had also a concrete and critical attitude to all research carried in the Department. Able to be critical of her own ideas, she was tolerant to those of different views. She was brave and very sure in her aim at her goals and, at the same time, very positive, peremptory and pragmatic. People liked her sense of humor and optimism which was the basis of her activity.

Tatiana Bocheńska was not someone who would fade into inactivity after her retirement. Just the opposite, she planned to personally continue ongoing projects and studies, in particular to complete the preparation of academic handbooks on groundwater dynamics and on mining hydrogeology. However and alas, this was not to be. She died tragically, leaving behind a group of her dedicated followers, who continue her unfinished scientific plans. She will always stay in our memories as a good, honest and friendly person. We will miss her valuable pieces of advice, true engagement in our problems, and readiness to help.

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