

## FOREWORD

A group of scientists at the Lodz University has been dealing with Caucasian problems for some years. Historians, geographers and ethnographers have been publishing books and papers devoted to Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Dagestan and other countries of this region. The agreement on scientific cooperation which was concluded between the University of Lodz and the State University of Tbilisi enabled wide scientific contacts between scientists of the two scientific centres. Many months' scholarships, common elaboration of research themes, exchange of lecturers, participation in seminars and scientific conferences as well as short missions aimed at maintaining scientific and organizational contacts contributed to an extension of the University staff concerned with Caucasian problems.

To consolidate the scientific activity devoted to Caucasian problems an Indisciplinary Study Group was established in 1977. The Group was composed both of representatives of humanistic and of biological sciences such as: history, geography, ethnography, biology.

The Praesidium of the Group includes four professors: Ludwik Straszewicz (Chairman), Bohdan Baranowski (Vice-Chairman), Bronisława Jaworska (Vice-Chairman) and Stanisław Liszewski (Scientific Secretary). Mrs Alicja Drewniak is the secretary of the Group. The Group conducts a lively scientific activity. In November 1980 an international scientific conference on the Caucasian region was organized in Łódź. The scientists from several Polish scientific centres and Caucasian universities took part in that conference. In 1977/1978 there was arranged a cycle of public lectures on the Caucasian subjects which enjoyed great popularity with the Łódź society. The achievements of the Interdisciplinary Polish-Caucasian Study Group, the results of the above-mentioned scientific session, wide interest in the above-mentioned research expressed at the scientific conference induce us start the

publishing activity. It should be stressed that the work of our Study Group meets with the approval of the Łódź University Senate which rendered us an all-round assistance and which enabled us to publish a special series *Folia Caucasica* in the frame of the issue: *Acta Universitatis Lodziensis*.

The series which is published in English will group all the interested Polish, Caucasian and foreign research workers. We hope that our series will contribute to a better knowledge of Caucasian problems and to a still stronger consolidation of all those people who are connected with this region which can boast a such varied natural environment, ancient history, rich culture (both spiritual and material) and extremely interesting social and economic changes. We hope that our series will well serve the cause of getting acquainted with Caucasian republics and propagating knowledge about this region.

Ludwik Straszewicz