

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

This volume contains largely the papers submitted to the conference programme of the international Symposium on Loess organized in Poland, 1985. The first international Symposium on Loess under the auspices of the International Union for Quaternary Research (INQUA) was held in Lublin in 1961, shortly before the Vth Congress of the organization in Poland. The organizer of this Symposium was Professor Adam Malicki of Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin. The Symposium initiated permanent international cooperation in loess investigations. During the Vth INQUA Congress in Poland a new Subcommission on Loess Stratigraphy was formed by the main Commission on Stratigraphy. The chairman of this new subcommission was Professor Julius Fink from Vienna. Since 1969 it has become a separate Commission on Loess of INQUA. It still exists and has a wide range of activities, the evidence of which is a great number of international conferences organized under the auspices of this Commission. In 1985, three such conferences were held: 1) "Conference Session on Loess" during the 1st International Conference on Geomorphology, September, England; 2) "International Symposium: Problems of the Stratigraphy and Paleogeography of Loesses", September, Poland; 3) "International Symposium on Loess Research in China", October, China.

International Symposium on Loess in September 1985, i.e. the second one in Poland, was organized by the Committee of Quaternary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences and Maria Curie-Skłodowska University (UMCS) in Lublin. The executive team of the Organizing Committee of this Symposium consisted mainly of the scientists of the Department of Physical Geography UMCS under the leadership of Professor Henryk Maruszczak. The following publications for the Symposium participants were prepared: "Guide-book of the international symposium..." and "Abstracts of the papers of the international symposium: Problems of the Stratigraphy and Paleogeography of Loesses", published by the UMCS, Lublin.

The present volume of Annales UMCS contains 9 papers submitted by foreign authors, and 7 by Polish authors. These papers are divided

into three informal problem groups (not specified in the table of contents), which can be defined as follows: I. Problems of stratigraphy and paleogeography of loesses in Eurasia — 5 papers presenting the latest results of the investigations carried out in the eastern part of Central Europe, in East Europe and in Central Asia; II. Natural conditions of loess accumulation during the last glaciation in East Europe — 3 papers; III. Selected problems of lithology, stratigraphy and paleogeography of loesses — papers referring mainly to the area of SE Poland (6 papers), to the central part of Russia (1 paper) and to East Slovakia (1 paper).

All papers are published in English, with short abstracts in Polish and Russian. Therefore, we hope that it will be helpful in stimulating discussion and international exchange of opinions in the field defined by the theme of our Symposium '85, and by the title of this volume. The problems of stratigraphy and paleogeography of loesses are interesting not only to many specialists in the field of natural sciences, but also for archaeologists who investigate the development of paleolithic cultures, with a particular emphasis on the relationship between man and the natural environment.

Henryk Maruszczak