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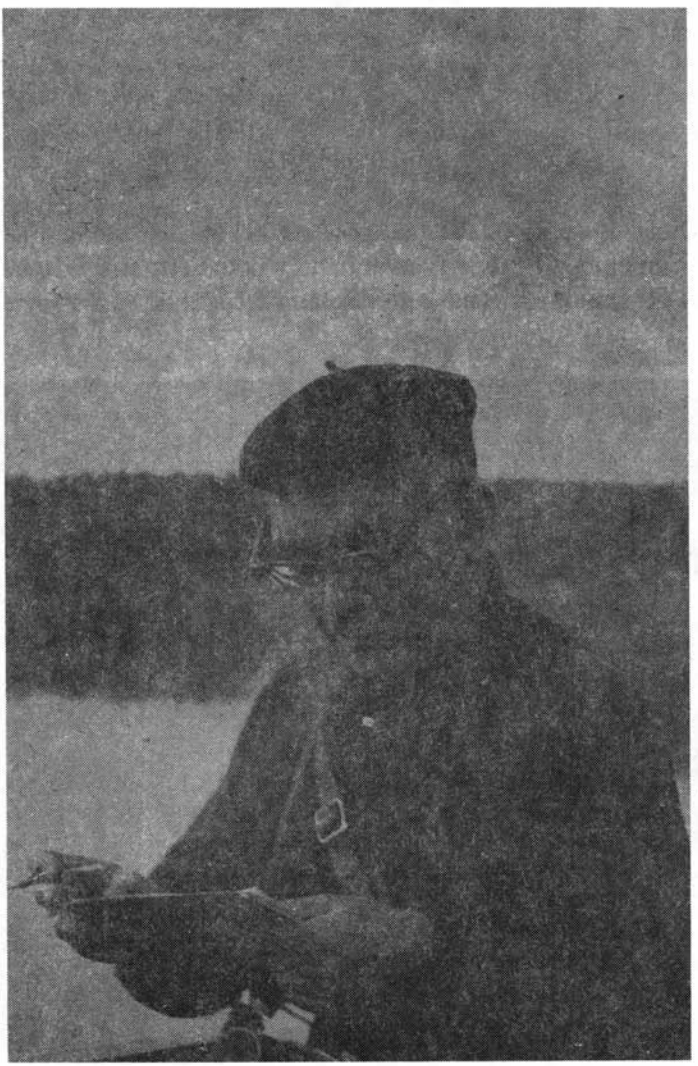
Obituary

PROF. DR JAN WALAS
(1903–1991)



Jan Walas

Professor Jan Walas was born on 23 June 1903 in Świątniki Górne near Cracow as a one of seven children of Józef and Maria née Kotarba, the owners of a small farm. After finishing in 1915 the country primary school in Świątniki he decided, despite the difficult financial situation of his family, to continue his education. During his studies in the VIth High School in Cracow (1916–1924) he earned his living by giving private lessons. In 1924–1929 he studied natural sciences at the Faculty of Philosophy of the Jagiellonian University. He attended the lectures of the outstanding botanist, the leader of the botanic school of Cracow Władysław Szafer (1886–1970), who encouraged him to deal with botany. Later, two other botanists had an influence on him, Bogumił Pawłowski (1898–1971) – the taxonomist and phytosociologist and Josias Braun-Blanquet (1884–1980) one of founders of the modern phytosociology.

Under the guidance of W. Szafer Jan Walas started phytosociological investigations in the Carpathians which resulted in his Ph.D. dissertation entitled "Roślinność Babiej Góry" ("Vegetation of Babia Góra in the Carpathian Mountains"). On 23 June 1931 he obtained the doctor degree from the Jagiellonian University.

During his university studies he acquired on 1 April 1928 the post of the assistant in the Physiographical Museum of the Polish Academy of Science and Letters, where he stayed until 30 September 1931. Afterwards he worked (from 1 October 1931 until 31 August 1939) as the senior assistant in the Botanical Institute of the Jagiellonian Univer-

Fig. 1. The Tatra Mts, Czerwone Wierchy, 1932. In the foreground, from the right: Jan Walas, Stanisława Pawłowska; in the background the first from the right: Bogumił Pawłowski.

Fig. 2. The Czywczyńskie Mts in the East Carpathians, about 1933. From the left: Stanisława Pawłowska, Jan Walas, Bogumił Pawłowski, Tadeusz Sulma.

sity, directed by Władysław Szafer. In 1933 he spent some months in Montpellier, France, where he worked under the guidance of Josias Braun–Blanquet at the Station Internationale Géobotanique Mediterranéenne et Alpine (SIGMA). He took part in many botanical excursions to France, Germany, Spain and Romania. In 1933–1936 he carried out botanical investigations in the Czywczyńskie Mountains in the Eastern Carpathians and in 1936 he worked in the Massif of Rila in Bulgaria.

In 1939 Professor J. Walas married Miss Zofia Czupryna, a teacher, and had later two daugthers. During the World War II he worked in the Botanic Garden (Botanische Anstalten) of Cracow managed by German authorities. Together with other members of the Polish staff he contributed to protection of the plant collections from complete devastation. In 1944 he was imprisoned and kept in the concentration camp at Płaszów near Cracow.

After the war Professor J. Walas worked at first at the Jagiellonian University. On 5 December 1945 he passed "the habilitation examination" and subsequently obtained on 20 August 1946 the degree of the associate professor (so-called "the habilitation") on the basis of the monograph "Wędrówki roślin górskich wzdłuż rzek tatrzańskich" ("Wandering of the plant species along the streams of the Tatra"), which was published in 1939.

Foundation in 1945 of the Mikołaj Kopernik University in Toruń became the important stage of restoration of Polish science in the post-war years. Professor J. Walas decided to move to Toruń because the post of the professor of botany was offered to him. Since 1 January 1946 he started to work there as the associate professor in the Department of Taxonomy and Plant Geography (the title of full professor he obtained on 1 February 1970). He had stayed at this school for years devoting his all mental and physi-

Fig. 3. Phytosociological investigations of the Wisła Valley, 1942. From the right: Jan Walas, Bogumił Pawłowski, Tadeusz Sulma.

cal powers to the didactic activity and taking part in the organization of scientific life in Toruń. He deserves the credit for organizing teaching of botany and starting botanical collections at the Mikołaj Kopernik University. Almost the whole generation of botanists was educated under his guidance. He promoted about 100 Masters of Sciences and about ten Doctors. As a sign of approval of his activity he was elected Deputy Dean (1951/1952–1952/1953) and Dean (1954/1955–1955/1956) of the Faculty of Biology and the Earth Sciences.

Besides the didactic and scientific activity the social work became his true passion. He was one of the organizers and the first president of the Toruń Section of the Polish Tourist and Country–Lovers' Association (PTTK) as well as the member of the Council of the Society for the Development of the Western Territories (Towarzystwo Rozwoju Ziem Zachodnich) and the member of the Provincial Council of the League for the Preservation of Nature (LOP).

After over 20 years of activity in Toruń Professor J. Walas decided to return to his maternal Jagiellonian University, where he acquired the post of the director of the Botanic Garden. He worked there since 1 February 1970 till his retirement on 30 September 1973.

Professor J. Walas died on 18 June 1991 in Cracow at age of 88 and he was buried in the Rakowice Cemetery.

Professor J. Walas' scientific output includes some 40 publications devoted to many branches of botany including floristics, taxonomy, plant geography, phytosciology and

Fig. 4. Toruń, 1966. From the right: Jan Walas, Stanisława Pawłowska, Bogumił Pawłowski.

nature conservation. The monographs dealing with the mountain plants and vegetation such as the phytosociological monograph of the Massif of Babia Góra in the Western Carpathians (1933) and phytogeographical study on the wandering of the plant species along the streams of the Tatras (1939) have become the classic publications in the Polish botanical literature. His phytosociological papers concerning the plants of other European mountains, namely the Czywczyńskie Mountains in the East Carpathians together with B. Pawłowski (1949) and the Massif of Riła in the Balkans of Bulgaria together with I. Horvat and B. Pawłowski (1937) have been highly appreciated by European botanists.

The main part of Professor J. Walas' output are floristic or phytosociological papers and contributions concerning the flora and the vegetation of different regions of Poland, e. g. Żywiec district (1936), Kruszwica (1961), Kotlina Toruńska (1969, 1973). He contributed also some taxa for "The flora of Poland", including Malvaceae and some genera from Compositae. His interest for nature protection was manifested by some works concerning the species of plant protected in Poland e.g. *Adonis vernalis* (1958), *Betula oycoviensis* (1936), *Leontopodium alpinum* (1950) or the nature reserves. The largest from this last group of works was the survey of the xerotermic reserves in the region of the Lower Vistula River (1963).

It is worth to emphasize that Professor J. Walas spent a lot of his energy for popularizing the achievements of botanical science and the ideas of the nature protection. Among his popular works the first role play such books as "Świat roślinny naszych wód i brzegów ("Plant life of our waters and watersides") (1965) or "Rośliny prawnie chronione

Fig. 5. Botanical excursion with students, May 1971. From the right: Bogumił Pawłowski, Jan Walas, Anna Pacyna, Małgorzata Kotańska; in the background from the right: Elżbieta Rejthar, Anna Drozdowicz.

("The plants protected by the law") (1965) and the second edition of this work entitled "Atlas roślin chronionych" ("Atlas of protected plants") (1973).

Professor J. Walas remains in the history of Polish botany as one of the first Polish phytosociologists, an indefatigable teacher of young botanists, a man full of good sense of humour and very friendly in relations with other people. His private passion was the art of photography; large collection of his photographs kept in the Botanical Museum at the Botanic Garden of Cracow is the precious document of scientific life of the Szafer botanic school before the World War II.

A list of the most important publications of Professor Dr Jan Walas

1932

1. Walas, J. Ponikło kraińskie (*Heleocharis carniolica* Koch.), nowoodkryty gatunek dla flory Polski ("*Heleocharis carniolica* Koch. newly discovered species for the flora of Poland"). *Sprawozdanie Komisji Fizjograficznej PAU* **66**: 61–65. Kraków (in Polish).

1933

2. ———. Zespoły roślinne Babiej Góry (Die Pflanzenassoziationen der Babia Góra). *Bulletin de l'Académie Polonaise des Sciences et des Lettres, Classe des Sciences Mathématiques et Naturelles, Sér. B: Sciences Naturelles* **1932**: 51–68. Kraków (in German).

3. ———. Roślinność Babiej Góry (Vegetation des Babia Góra-Gebietes in den Karpaten). *Państwowa Rada Ochrony Przyrody, Monografie Naukowe* **2**: 1–68 + tables I–XX + 1 map. Warszawa (in Polish).

4. ———. Szkolna wycieczka w Tatry ("School excursion to the Tatra Mountains"). *Czasopismo Przyrodnicze Ilustrowane* 7(1–3): 37–45. Łódź (in Polish).

1936

5. ———. Die Wanderungen der Alpenpflanzen längs der Tatra-Flüsse. *Comptes Rendus du IV^e* Congres des géographes et des ethnographes Slaves, pp. 152–153. Sofia.

6. ———. Drugie stanowisko brzozy ojcowskiej (*Betula oycoviensis* Bess.) w Polsce (Zweier Fundort von *Betula oycoviensis* Bess. in Polen). *Rocznik Polskiego Towarzystwa Dendrologicznego* **6**: 3–8 + tabl. I. Lwów (in Polish with German summary).

7. ———. Roślinność skalic nowotarskich i konieczność ich ochrony (La végétation des Klippes de Nowy Targ et leur protection). *Ochrona Przyrody* **16**: 43–56. Kraków (in Polish with French summary).

8. ———. Śmiertelne zranienia zwierząt spowodowane przez owoce roślin ("The deadly wounds of the animals caused by the fruits of the plants"). *Przyroda i Technika* **15**(5): 257–260. Lwów – Warszawa (in Polish).

9. ———. Szata roślinna Żywiecczyzny ("Vegetation of the Żywiec District"). *Ziemia* **1936**(1): 1–7. Warszawa (in Polish).

1937

10. Horvat I., Pawłowski B. & Walas J. Studia fitosocjologiczne nad wysokogórską roślinnością gór Riła w Bułgarii (Phytosociologische Studien über die Hochgebirgsvegetation der Riła Planina in Bulgarien). *Bulletin de l'Académie Polonaise des Sciences et des Lettres, Classe des Sciences Mathématiques et Naturelles, Sér. B: Sciences Naturelles* **1937**: 159–190 + tab. 6–7. Kraków (in German).

11. Walas J. Wpływ szronu i szadzi na roślinność ("The influence of the rime and the hoar-frost on the vegetation"). *Przyroda i Technika* **10**(16): 590–595. Lwów – Warszawa (in Polish).

1938

12. ———. Wędrówki roślin górskich wzdłuż rzek tatrzańskich (Wanderungen der Gebirgspflanzen längs der Tatra-Flüsse). *Prace Komitetu Badań Naukowych Ziem Górskich* **1**. Prace i materiały do fizjografii województwa krakowskiego i kieleckiego **3**: 1–132 + tabl. I–XII + maps I–II. Polska Akademia Umiejętności, Kraków (in Polish).

13. ———. Wędrówki roślin górskich wzdłuż rzek tatrzańskich (Wanderungen der Gebirgspflanzen längs der Tatra-Flüsse). *Bulletin de l'Académie Polonaise des Sciences et des Lettres, Classe des Sciences Mathématiques et Naturelles Sér. B: Sciences Naturelles* **1938**: 59–80 + tabl. 3–8 + mapy I–II. Kraków (in Polish with German summary).

1939

14. ———. Wędrówki roślin górskich wzdłuż rzek tatrzańskich (Wanderungen der Gebirgspflanzen längs der Tatra-Flüsse). *Sprawozdanie Komisji Fizjograficznej PAU* **72**: 1–132 + tabl. I–XII + maps I–II. Kraków (in German).

1949

15. PAWŁOWSKI B. & WALAS J. Zespoły roślin naczyniowych Gór Czywczyńskich (Les associations des plantes vasculaires des Monts de Czywczyn). *Bulletin de l'Académie Polonaise des Sciences et des Lettres, Classe des Sciences Mathématiques et Naturelles, Sér. B: Sciences Naturelles* **1948**: 117–182 + tabl. 5–18 + 1 map. Kraków (in French).

1950

16. WALAS J. Szarotka [The Edelweiss (*Leontopodium alpinum* Cass.)]. *Ochrona Przyrody* **19**: 136–151. Kraków (in Polish with English summary).

1957

17. ———. Cis (*Taxus baccata* L.) [Yew-tree (*Taxus baccata* L.)]. *Biuletyn Wojewódzkiego Komitetu Ochrony Przyrody i Zarządu Bydgoskiego Oddziału Wojewódzkiego Ligi Ochrony Przyrody* **1957**(1–3): 1 [unnumbered]. Bydgoszcz (in Polish).

1958

18. ———. Miłek wiosenny na Pomorzu ("Pheasant's eye – *Adonis vernalis* in West Pomerania"). *Biuletyn Informacyjny Wojewódzkiego Komitetu Ochrony Przyrody* **1957**(10)–**1958**(3): 11–12. Bydgoszcz (in Polish).

1959

19. ———. Malvaceae, Ślazowate. – In: W. SZAFER & B. PAWŁOWSKI (eds), *Flora polska. Rośliny naczyniowe Polski i ziem ościennych.* **8**, pp. 278–301. Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa (in Polish).

1961

20. ———. Rezerwat „Cisy staropolskie im. L. Wyczółkowskiego" w Wierzchlesie ("The L. Wyczółkowski Cisy staropolskie Nature Reserve in Wierzchlas"). 30 pp. Liga Ochrony Przyrody, Bydgoszcz (in Polish).

1963

21. ———. Aktualny stan rezerwatów roślinności kserotermicznej w obszarze Dolnej Wisły (État actuel des réserves de la végetation xérotermique dans la région de la Basse Vistule). *Ochrona Przyrody* **29**: 269–330. Kraków (in Polish with French summary).

1965

22. ———. Rośliny prawnie chronione ("Plants protected by the law"). 4 pp. [unnumbered] + 63 pls. [unnumbered]. Liga Ochrony Przyrody, Zakład Zadrzewień i Zieleni, Warszawa (in Polish).

23. ———. Świat roślinny naszych wód i ich brzegów. ("Plant life of our waters and watersides"). *Towarzystwo Naukowe w Toruniu, Prace popularnonaukowe* **6**: 1–50. Toruń (in Polish).

24. ———. Szata roślinna okolic Kruszwicy ("Vegetation in the vicinity of Kruszwica"). – In: *Kruszwica. Zarys monograficzny. Towarzystwo Naukowe w Toruniu, Prace Popularnonaukowe* **7**: 65–82. Toruń (in Polish).

1966

25. ———. Ochrona przyrody w Polsce ("Nature protection in Poland"). – In: K. STECKI (ed.), *Botanika dla wyższych szkół rolniczych*, pp. 805–816. Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa (in Polish).

26. ———. Zarys ekologii roślin ("An outline of plant ecology"). – In: K. STECKI (ed.), *Botanika dla wyższych szkół rolniczych*, pp. 659–698. Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa (in Polish).

27. ———. Zarys fitosocjologii ("An outline of phytosociology"). – In: K. STECKI (ed.), *Botanika dla wyższych szkół rolniczych*, pp. 710–730. Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa (in Polish).

28. ———. Zarys geografii roślin ("An outline of plant geography"). – In: K. STECKI (ed.), *Botanika dla wyższych szkół rolniczych*, pp. 731–762. Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa (in Polish).

29. ———. Zarys geografii roślin polskich ("An outline of plant geography in Poland"). – In: K. STECKI (ed.), *Botanika dla wyższych szkół rolniczych*, pp. 763–804. Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa (in Polish).

1967

30. ———. Świat roślinny ("Plant life"). – In: A. SWINARSKI (ed.), *Województwo Bydgoskie. Krajobraz. Dzieje. Kultura. Gospodarka*, pp. 54–60. Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Poznań (in Polish).

1969

31. ———. Szata roślinna Kotliny Toruńskiej (The vegetation cover of the Toruń Basin). *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika w Toruniu, Nauki Matematyczno-Przyrodnicze* **19**: 161–186. Toruń (in Polish with English summary).

1971

32. ———. *Adenostyles* Cass., Milosna. – In: B. PAWŁOWSKI & A. JASIEWICZ (eds), *Flora polska. Rośliny naczyniowe Polski i ziem ościennych.* **12**, pp. 304–305. Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa – Kraków (in Polish).

33. ———. *Cnicus* L., Knikus. – In: B. PAWŁOWSKI & A. JASIEWICZ (eds), *Flora polska. Rośliny naczyniowe Polski i ziem ościennych.* **12**, p. 397. Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa – Kraków (in Polish).

34. ———. *Homogyne* Cass., Podbiałek. – In: B. PAWŁOWSKI & A. JASIEWICZ (eds), *Flora polska. Rośliny naczyniowe Polski i ziem ościennych.* **12**, pp. 305–306. Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa – Kraków (in Polish).

35. ———. *Onopordum* L. (*Onopordon*), Popłoch. – In: B. PAWŁOWSKI & A. JASIEWICZ (eds), *Flora polska. Rośliny naczyniowe Polski i ziem ościennych.* **12**, pp. 390–391. Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa – Kraków (in Polish).

36. ———. *Petasites* Mill., Lepiężnik. – In: B. PAWŁOWSKI & A. JASIEWICZ (eds), *Flora polska. Rośliny naczyniowe Polski i ziem ościennych.* **12**, pp. 307–309. Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa – Kraków (in Polish).

37. ———. *Tussilago* L., Podbiał. – In: B. PAWŁOWSKI & A. JASIEWICZ (eds), *Flora polska. Rośliny naczyniowe Polski i ziem ościennych.* **12**, pp. 306–307. Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa – Kraków (in Polish).

1972

38. ———. *Jurinea* Cass., Jurinea. – In: B. PAWŁOWSKI & A. JASIEWICZ (eds), *Flora polska. Rośliny naczyniowe Polski i ziem ościennych.* **13**, pp. 28–35. Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa – Kraków (in Polish).

39. ———. Profesor Dr Władysław Szafer 23.VII.1886 – 16.XI.1970 (Professor Władysław Szafer, July 23. 1886 – November 16. 1970). *Acta Societatis Botanicorum Poloniae* **41**(1): 3–12 + 2 [unnumbered] (in Polish with English summary).

1973

40. ———. Atlas roślin chronionych (tekst) ("Atlas of protected plants"). 196 pp. Liga Ochrony Przyrody, Warszawa (in Polish).

41. ———. Szata roślinna Kotliny Toruńskiej (The vegetation cover of the Toruń Basin). *Acta Universitatis Nicolai Copernici. Geografia* **10** *Nauki Matematyczno-Przyrodnicze* **32**: 161–186 (in Polish with English summary).

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