

PROFESSOR JANINA JÓŹWIAK  
– RENAISSANCE WOMAN

Records of tribute messages following the death of Professor Janina Józwiak, published on several pages of the *Gazeta SGH* monthly of September 2016, give a close and comprehensive look at her personality. Their authors range from the President of Poland, through rectors of universities, including the one that Professor Józwiak herself headed for two terms at the end of the 20th century, to her closest collaborators, both independent and those who remained her students till the end, members of various bodies and corporations in Poland and in Europe, in which she was actively involved, a group of close friends from the Warsaw School of Economics and other scientific centres, the clergy. In all those tributes, Professor Józwiak appears as a remarkable person, gifted with exceptional kindness and ability to put people together, hard and efficient worker in every area, including scientific research and its organization, reforming the higher education sector, teaching demography and related disciplines to young people. *It is hard to believe that all those activities and achievements are the work of one person, no matter how hard-working she was. And I can assure that I have listed only the most important ones*, Professor Irena E. Kotowska writes in her tribute to Janina Józwiak. *I was lucky to cooperate and accompany Professor Józwiak in her development*, she adds. All undisputable merits and virtues of the late professor can be encapsulated in just a few words – she was the genuine Renaissance Woman of our time.

Most tributes published in *Gazeta SGH* regard the period when Professor Józwiak's versatile professional career and scientific activity were in full swing. I would like, however, to recall a bit earlier time, that is the final several years of the People's Republic of Poland, which shaped Professor Józwiak's personality and areas of interest. It was the time when the Polish demographics community carried out research in local scientific centres and implemented joint inter-university ventures within the so-called Key Problems (Problemy Węzłowe, P.W.) or the Central Programme of Basic Research (Centralny Program Badań Podstawowych, C.P.B.P.). In the second half of the 1970s, the population issues were studied under the Key Problem 11.5 entitled *Optimization of Structures and Demographic Processes in Polish People's Republic*. The next edition of the same Key Problem 11.5, implemented and financed in the first half of the 1980s, was entitled *Demographic Processes and Socio-Economic Development of Poland*. Following

the reorganization of the scientific research sector in Poland in the second half of the 1980s, the demographic issues were placed in the Central Programme of Basic Research 09.1 entitled *Demographic Determinants of Socio-Economic Development of Poland*. The Faculty of Statistics and Demography at SGPiS (now the Warsaw School of Economics) became the coordinating centre of the studies carried out within the above mentioned key problems on the national level. Professor Jerzy Z. Holzer, head of the above mentioned faculty, supervised subsequent editions of the Key Problem 11.5 and the Central Programme of Basic Research 09.1 projects. Thematic groups were separated in the next editions and within the groups – topics and research tasks were developed and performed by demographers in all scientific centres in Poland. One of the durable successes of the then undertaken research was the publication of several dozen monographs.

I remember Professor Józwiak from that time as an active and straightforward participant of seminars summing up the stages of research in particular themes and thematic groups, national and international conferences documenting the results of work in the Key Problems. I also remember her own works (e.g. *Mathematical models of population*, 1985) and the works she co-written or co-edited (e.g. *Usefulness of demographic modelling*, 1991). They encouraged me, a person implicated in population issues but having a degree in humanities only, to learn about a wide range of quantitative methods and tools for analysing demographic processes and phenomena.

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