

## In Memoriam

Just on preparing this book for printing reached us the sad news — Professor Prof. h.c., Dr. Dr. h.c. Walter L. Kubiëna, the founder of soil micromorphology and the micromorphological soil science school, has passed away from among us for ever. In his person has left us, so suddenly, one of the greatest soil experts of our time, who has devoted his whole laborious and abundant life unsparingly to science, and particularly to the cognition of soils forming under different bio-ecologic conditions, thereby basing on modern research methods.

Professor Kubiëna's name is well known to the whole world's soil scientists not only for his magnificent scientific achievements in soil knowledge and soil micromorphology, but also for his unexhausted energy, his



Professor Dr. Walter L. Kubiëna (30.6.1897—28.12.1970)

enthusiasm, his exceptional researching ability, his original methods and scientific conceptions.

Professor Kubiëna has much travelled, and knowing a great many languages lectured in various European and American universities. He visited all continents, including the Arctic and Antarctic, examining the soils of all climatic zones, from the tropic and subtropic ones through the moderate, as far as the polar ones, taking part almost in all international soil science congresses and conferences in very active manner. He participated too, in all three International Working-Meetings on Soil Micromorphology, presiding them as all micromorphologists' moral leader, with his personality and tactfulness awoking an atmosphere of creative work based on sincere scientific opinion exchange and mutual understanding.

Professor Kubiëna's scientific interests were large and many-sided. His interests turned, however, mainly to micromorphological research methods and their application to soil science and related domains. That is why the soil micromorphology was his scientific life's essential contents, and the microscope, as well in field as in laboratory, the fundamental tool in his soil science studies.

Professor Kubiëna has educated in soil micromorphology a great many of scientific workers of the world's various countries. As the result of his uncommon scientific activity Professor Kubiëna has left us his magnificent legacy of six handbooks and more than hundred scientific articles, all containing original thoughts and conceptions based on rich research material, thus bringing new elements to soil science and relative domains schooling. From among the handbooks a special attention is to be paid to such works as *Micropedology* (1938), being the classic pioneer work in soil micromorphology; *Entwicklungslehre des Bodens* (1948); *The Soils of Europe* (1952); *Micromorphological Features of Soil Geography* (1970), where he explained his scientific opinions on many problems concerning the property, genesis, evolution, and systematics of soils formed in various environmental conditions, substantiating them in many cases by special field investigation results and micromorphological laboratory methods. Among numerous reports printed in various periodicals there are found, too, those on micromorphological subjects, many having fundamental methodical importance, what is to be specially stressed here.

The late Professor was many a time honoured with different distinctions and dignities, therein, too, with the membership of several foreign scientific societies. In 1968 he became the Honorary Member of the International Society of Soil Science. Undoubtedly, many honours still stood open to him in future. Alas, the merciless death cut that fully creative life on the 28th of December, 1970, in his home at Klagenfurt, Austria.

The rich result of Professor Kubiëna's work in form of numerous outstanding books and scientific papers will still serve a long time for valuing

and understanding of many soil-forming phenomena, thus inspiring new thoughts not only concerning soil micromorphology, but soil science in general as well.

The memory of this great unforgettable scientist, soil researcher and remarkable teacher, will certainly long remain not only in the hearts of all those who had co-worked with him and have known him personally, but also of those who from his ideas will draw new thoughts for their scientific works.

Working-Group  
on Soil Micromorphology  
of the International Society  
of Soil Science