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PREFACE

The fact that water is indispensable to human life is such an obvious truth that to mention it seems to be a truism. However, we decided to devote fascicle XXIV in the 'Fasciculi Archaeologiae Historicae' series to a few aspects connected with the issue of water supply. The present fascicle contains a number of papers written by Polish archaeologists and historians dealing with the ways of providing Polish medieval and modern-times towns with water, carrying sewage away, fishing as well as fish consumption in antiquity, Byzantium and the Middle Ages.

Water had always been the best, most convenient and cheapest way to travel, and also, probably most importantly, to ship goods, particularly in large quantities. At the same time, bodies of water constituted an obstacle to travelling or war expeditions. However, once the water had frozen, they

turned into convenient roads. A few papers included in this publication deal with these aspects of the water issue.

We realize that a subject being at the centre of attention of numerous archaeologists and historians can only be touched upon in such a small fascicle. We hope, however, to attract the interest of our readers.

While the fascicle was in preparation, Professor Andrzej Abramowicz, a member of the editorial collegium since the beginnings of the series 'Fasciculi Archaeologiae Historicae' in 1986, passed away. This volume is dedicated to him.

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(translated by Zuzanna Poklewska-Parra)

