

PROFESSOR LESŁAW PRZYWARA

1943 – 2004

Two years ago, in September 2003, at the closing session of the XI International Conference on Plant Embryology in Brno, Professor Lesław Przywara invited all the participants to Cracow for the next meeting. In early spring 2004, filled with hope, he began to organize the XII International Conference on Plant Embryology in Cracow. He prepared the first announcement. His strength failing, still he believed he would prevail in his unequal battle with illness. He continued his research, looked forward, and tried to enjoy life. We also believed that his passion for life and work, and his quiet strength, would carry the day. Sadly, Professor Przywara died on June 29, 2004.

His ashes are deposited in the family grave at the Salvator Cemetery, on a hill near the Kościuszko Mound. From this place there is an unforgettable view of old Cracow's historic buildings and church towers – a view he loved. The cemetery is also close to the limestone cliffs where Professor Przywara spent many hours climbing from early spring till late autumn – the other object, besides science, of his enthusiasm.

Lesław Przywara was born in Lvov on October 5, 1943. He spent only the first two years of his life there. His family moved to Cracow, where he attended school and married Emilia née Kowalczyk. Their son Mikołaj was his pride.

His higher education and scientific career were bound up with the Jagiellonian University, especially with the Faculty of Biology and Earth Sciences. Under the guidance of Professor Eugenia Pogan, he began his adventure with botany in the Department of Plant Cytology and Embryology. He graduated from the Jagiellonian University in 1966, obtaining a Master of Science degree on the basis of his thesis "Cytotaxonomic studies on mountain populations of *Lotus corniculatus* L." In 1972 he earned his doctorate with the thesis "Biosystematic studies on *Leucanthemum vulgare* L. *sensu lato* from Poland." In 1983 he completed the habilitation procedure (roughly equivalent to a D.Sc.) on the basis of the monograph "Biosystematic studies on Series *Palustres* M. Pop. of the genus *Myosotis* L." He was named professor in 1993, and achieved Poland's highest academic position, professor *ordinarius*, in 2000.

For thirteen years, from 1991, Professor Przywara was head of the Department of Plant Cytology and Embryology in the Institute of Botany of the Jagiellonian University. He was Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Biology and Earth Sciences (1990–1996), Coordinator of the CEEPUS HR-12 International Exchange Program (1996–1998), and Chairman of the Scientific Council of the Institute of Botany of the Jagiellonian University (1999–2004). Professor Przywara was a member of the Editorial Board of *Acta Biologica Cracoviensis Series Botanica*. He worked on the journal to the very end.

Professor Przywara's professional life took him to far corners of the globe and brought him into regular contact with other leading botanists. His positions included assistant researcher in the Department of Plant Breeding of the Agriculture University in Cracow (1967), researcher in the Polish Academy of Sciences (1968), visiting scientist in the Biology Department of the University of Wisconsin/Stevens Point, U.S.A. (1983–1984), visiting scientist in the Grasslands Division, DSIR, Palmerston North, New Zealand (1985–1988), visiting scientist in the Department of Plant Cytology and Morphology of the Agricultural University, Wageningen, the Netherlands (1994), and research associate in the Department of Botany of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, U.S.A. (1984). He also worked for shorter periods at universities in France, Great Britain, Italy, Spain and Slovenia.

He published 168 papers in plant karyology, biosystematics, experimental embryology and tissue culture, including original papers, monographs, review articles, book reviews, conference abstracts and book translations, and also wrote a number of expert reports for different agencies.

Professor Przywara was a member of Polish and international professional societies including the Polish Botanical Society, Biological Commission of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Polish Genetics Society, Polish Society for Cell Biology, European Cell Biology Organisation, European Developmental Biology Organisation, New Zealand Botanical Society, and New York Academy of Sciences.



Cliffs near Cracow, 1967,
before the climbing begins.

Lesław Przywara
and his son Mikołaj
in the hills of New Zealand,
1986.



Palmerston North, New Zealand, 1986.



Cliffs near Cracow, 2001.



Lesław Przywara and his wife Emilia in the hills of New Zealand, 1987.



Presidential Mansion, Warsaw, 1998.
President Aleksander Kwaśniewski confers
a professorship on Lesław Przywara.



Modlnica near Cracow, 1999. Conference reception
(IX International Conference on Plant Embryology in Cracow).
From left: Prof. Elżbieta Kuta, Dr. Lucrecia Herr,
Prof. John Herr Jr., Prof. Lesław Przywara, Prof. Mauro Cresti.

Zest for life!
At right: Prof. Zbigniew Mirek.



Modlnica near Cracow, 1999.
Conference reception (IX International
Conference on Plant Embryology in Cracow).
From left: Prof. Maria Charzyńska,
Dr. Jerzy Bohdanowicz, Prof. Romana Czapik;
below: Prof. Józef Bednara, Prof. Lesław Przywara.



Collegium Novum of the Jagiellonian University, 2003.
Professor Przywara with a group of his students. From the left:
Dr. Grzegorz Góralski, Dr. Halina Ślesak, Dr. Wojciech Hąldaś,
Prof. Lesław Przywara, Dr. Krystyna Musiał, Dr. Marzena Popielarska.

Professor Przywara was honored with the Polish Ministry of Science and Technology Award and the Jagiellonian University Award, and he received fellowships or associateships from the University of Wisconsin/Stevens Point, the University of Wisconsin at Madison, and the National Research Advisory Council of New Zealand.

He received Polish and international grants for projects including "In vitro induction of haploid plants from unpollinated ovules of kiwifruit" (1988) from the New Zealand Kiwifruit Authority, "Karyology of Polish bryophytes" (1989) from the Polish Academy of Sciences, and "Induction of parthenogenesis through the use of lethally irradiated pollen" (1990) from the Polish Ministry of Education. For the Polish State Committee for Scientific Research his projects included "Interspecific hybridization in the genus *Trifolium* L." (1994), "Androgenesis in wheat – histological and cytological studies on plant regeneration" (2001) and "Influence of carbohydrates on embryo development, callus production and regeneration in vitro in selected rape (*Brassica napus* L.) cultivars" (2001).

Professor Przywara was an energetic and skilled organizer. In the Department of Plant Cytology and Embryology he organized the laboratory of in vitro culture. He was chairperson or scientific committee member of several Polish and international conferences: the XXII Conference on Embryology, "Plants, Animals, Humans," in Osieczany, Poland (1997); the IX International Conference of Plant Embryologists in Cracow, Poland (1999); the XXIV Conference on Embryology, "Plants, Animals, Humans," in Podlesice, Poland (2000); and the X International Conference on Plant Embryology, "From Gametes to Embryos," in Nitra, Slovakia (2001).

Professor Przywara prepared many young people for their scientific careers. He taught courses in the cytology of bryophytes, experimental embryology, general botany, plant evolution and speciation, plant embryology, and plant cell and tissue culture. His in vitro laboratory attracted many talented students, who later joined the staff of the Department of Plant Cytology and Embryology and became his junior colleagues.

One year after Professor Przywara's death, this current volume of *Acta Biologica Cracoviensia Series Botanica* gives testimony to the esteem and admiration in which the late Professor Przywara was held, with thirty contributions by scientists from all over the world who accepted our invitation to participate in this memorial volume. It also continues his legacy, with papers by scientists he mentored. Professor Przywara passed away at the height of his powers, in the midst of research and large projects. A man whose achievements and personality contributed so much to Polish science is gone, but the lines of research he began remain a living element of our Department's activity.

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