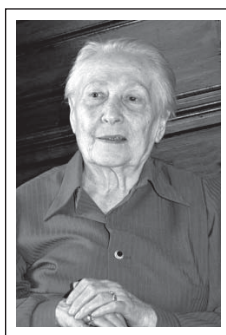


Professor Janina Sokołowska-Pituchowa — a legend in Polish anatomy (1915–2011)



Professor Janina Sokołowska-Pituchowa was born on May 9th 1915 at Dolny Żuków in the administrative district of Cieszyn. After graduating from secondary school she started her medical studies at the Polish then Jan Kazimierz University in Lwów in 1933 and qualified as a doctor in 1939 (Professor Sokołowska-Pituchowa received her diploma, when the Second World War began — in September 1939). While still studying she began working as a demonstrator for the Institute of Descriptive Anatomy in 1936, conducted then by Professor Józef Markowski, and after this as a stand-in assistant. She wrote later: “I was welcomed by Professor Markowski with great enthusiasm and none of the expected reservations. Within two years I would be entrusted with the title of Deputy Assistant at the department”. After qualifying she held the post of assistant. She worked throughout the war in the Chair of Anatomy in Lwów, until 1945. She managed to survive Nazi, Ukrainian, and Russian occupations. After being deported to Kraków she began working in the Chair of Anatomy at the Jagiellonian University as senior assistant, and after this as a tutor. In 1946 Janina Sokołowska-Pituchowa obtained a doctorate based on her thesis about renal pelvises. In 1952 she moved to the Institute of Pathomorphology, conducted by Professor Janina Kowalczykowa. She worked as a tutor there until 1961. During her work at the Institute of Pathomorphology she obtained, in 1955, her first degree of specialisation, in pathomorphology. In 1958 Professor Sokołowska obtained the degree of candidate of sciences, based on her thesis entitled “Histoformative properties of the nephroma”. In 1960 she qualified as an assistant professor in Gdańsk with her thesis entitled “The blood supply of muscles of the human upper extremity”. In 1961 she took charge of the Chair of Descriptive Anato-

my of Nicolaus Copernicus Medical Anatomy in Kraków. In 1967 Janina Sokołowska-Pituchowa was nominated associate professor, and in 1974 she became a full professor. In 1969 the professor became managing director of the newly created Biomorphological Institute. She managed the Department of Descriptive Anatomy from 1961 until her retirement in 1985. Like other anatomists in Kraków she also lectured in plastic anatomy at the Academy of Fine Arts during the years 1949–1951 and 1983–1988.

Professor Sokołowska-Pituchowa had been involved in methods of teaching since 1936 when, while still studying, she had worked as substitute to the assistant in the Chair of Normal Anatomy at the Jan Kazimierz University in Lwów. After coming to work in the Chair of Anatomy at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków she organised the teaching of the students in their first and second years of study. At the same time she lectured anatomy at the provincial Faculty of Health, for the Women’s League, organising courses for sanitary inspectors, and courses in the School for Medical Manipulators and University School for Nurses, concerned with teaching secondary level medical personnel to make up the losses sustained in the war. After taking charge of the management of the Chair of Descriptive Anatomy she updated the teaching program, making classes more clinical in character. Professor Sokołowska-Pituchowa took an active part in reforming medical education. She developed a highly regarded program of studies for the first years of medical studies. In 1965 she was nominated by the Minister of Health as a national specialist in the program of medical teaching and inculcation of the foundations of the reform of studies. In the Anatomy Department she developed new study programs for dissection classes and introduced seminars with representatives of

different clinics, bringing together information concerned with topographical and microscopic anatomy and that of living human beings. In 2002 Professor Sokołowska was invited by the current vice-rector of Jagiellonian University, then the head of the Anatomy Department, Professor Wojciech Nowak, to give an inauguration lecture for first year medical students. She conducted these lectures until 2007.

Professor Sokołowska-Pituchowa improved the manuals for students of medicine and dentistry; she also created separate manuals for pharmacy students and for the system of dissection classes. She edited the fourth edition of the manual "Human Anatomy" issued in 1983, 1988, and 1989. She was able to spread knowledge of developments in anatomy by playing a leading role in the work of the Kraków division of the Polish Anatomical Society in the years 1962–1985. She took part in all the meetings of that society in the years 1948–1989.

Professor Sokołowska took an active part in the life of the University, participating in many committees and fulfilling the role of vice-dean in the period 1962–1968. For many years she participated in the work of the commissions that qualified candidates for medical studies. Between 1954 and 1983 she edited a variety of medical periodicals — "Polish Pathology", "Acta Medica Polonia", and "Folia Morphologica" — as medical secretary and a member of the Editorial Board. Between 1953 and 2001 she lectured and gave classes on anat-

omy for students at the Centre for Professional Schooling, which educated blind masseurs as secondary medical personnel. At that centre she organised the anatomical office and developed a manual in Braille for the students.

The scientific interests of Professor Sokołowska were centred in a few areas, mainly in normal and pathological organogenesis, angiology, and the history of medicine. Professor Janina Sokołowska-Pituchowa was the author of over 100 original articles and 28 university manuals for students. In 2002 she published a monograph on the 400th anniversary of the Anatomy Department in Kraków. Her last article in "Folia Morphologica" appeared in 2007 and was dedicated to Professor Józef Markowski. She also corrected all manuals for anatomy edited by Professor Andrzej Skawina. Professor Sokołowska conferred doctor's degrees on twenty doctors and habilitated two of her assistants.

Professor Janina Sokołowska-Pituchowa died on October 13th 2011 in Kraków. She was buried in a family grave in the old cemetery in Jarosław.

We will all certainly remember Professor Sokołowska-Pituchowa as a leader, as a renowned expert in many anatomical fields, as a hard working scientist and teacher, but, above all, as a wonderful, extraordinary humanitarian. Her spirit for acquiring knowledge and teaching medical students never wavered. She remained a great Professor of Anatomy until her last days, an achievement which we should all commemorate. Non omnis moria!

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