

## Professor Aleksandra Krygier-Stojałowska (1923–2015)

The Polish Histochemical and Cytochemical Society suffered last year the loss of a most esteemed member, Professor Aleksandra Krygier-Stojałowska, who passed away on November 17, 2015. From the Society's very beginning, Professor Krygier-Stojałowska left a discernible impression on its prestige. As a member of the Society's leadership, she contributed creatively to all domains of its activities by participating in the teaching of modern histochemical techniques, writing handbooks on histochemical methods, being active in the leadership of the Society, organizing symposia and congresses, and representing the Society to the international scientific community.

Aleksandra Krygier-Stojałowska was born on October 3, 1923 in Ryczywół, Wielkopolska. She belonged to the generation whose high school graduation had to wait for the end of the Second World War. She thus began her higher education in 1946 at the Medical Faculty of Poznań University. However, her research interest in cell pathology led her to move in 1951 to Szczecin, to join the research group of Professor Kazimierz Stojałowski at the Department of Pathological Anatomy, Pomeranian Academy of Medicine (PAM; now the Pomeranian Medical University). After her graduation in 1952, she continued her research and professional activity in the field of histopathology at PAM. In 1956, the PAM medical faculty granted her the degree of *candidate of sciences* for her thesis '*Nucleic acids in some tumors of the peripheral nerve system (neuroblastoma, malignant neurilemmoma)*'. In 1959, she received a doctor's degree (PhD) *summa cum laude*. In the same year, she completed a specialization in pathological anatomy. In 1961, having completed the habilitation procedure on the basis of her thesis, '*Cytochemical and cytophotometric investigations of fibroblasts in cell culture*', she received the Docent degree (*venia legendi*). She



received the scientific title of professor in 1972 and the title of ordinary professor in 1989.

Professor Krygier-Stojałowska attended external research training in Germany. She was the first Polish researcher after the Second World War to be awarded the von Humboldt Foundation Fellowship at Johann Wolfgang Goethe University, Frankfurt (1959). Later, in 1973, she received a fellowship for a research visit to the Ludwig Aschoff Pathological Institute at the University of Freiburg, chaired by the famous European

pathologist Professor Walter Sandritter. She later maintained research cooperation with him; her work with the team there proved to be extremely profitable for her research experience and led to an increase in her output of valuable publications. This methodological experience was helpful when she organized the cytophotometric laboratory at her home institution and began research with a cytophotometer that she had constructed herself. For many years, Professor Krygier-Stojałowska's laboratory and her cytophotometer served for the education and training of young researchers from Poland and other countries.

The scientific output of Professor Krygier-Stojałowska consists of over two hundred publications on the pathology of connective tissues and the hemopoietic system, mechanisms of cancer cell proliferation and, especially, the methodology of cytochemical and photocytometric approaches in research. She gladly shared her broad knowledge and experience in teaching younger coworkers and students. She oversaw twelve doctorates and one habilitation (*venia legendi*). From the time of her medical studies, she lectured medical students and took care of postgraduates specializing in the field of pathomorphology.

Crucial attention should be paid to Professor Krygier-Stojałowska's engagement in organizing scientific and academic life. She performed many important

roles in her home medical school and in scientific societies. At the Pomeranian Academy of Medicine, she was the founder and head of the Department of Cell Pathology, where she remained in charge until her retirement (1983–1994). She also acted as the Academy's vice-president for scientific affairs (1975–1981), director of the Institute of Pathology (1986–1993), and vice-director of the Biostructure Institute (1970–1986). Moreover, for a number of decades, she was a member of the Committee for Cell Pathophysiology of the Polish Academy of Sciences, where she conducted committee work on cell proliferation, differentiation, and culture. She was also an active member of the Polish Society of Pathologists and the Szczecin Scientific Society.

Professor Krygier-Stojałowska was closely engaged with the Polish Histochemical and Cytochemical Society. She participated in the efforts of the group of scientists that resulted in the establishment of the Society in 1961. From the beginning, she took part in teaching courses of theoretical and applied histochemistry, and served as coeditor and coauthor of two editions of *Histochemical Techniques* (1963–64 and 1975) — the first Polish book in this scientific domain. Within the Society, she performed the functions of President (1976–1983), Vice-President (1964–1967 and 1983–1989) and, for many years, Member of the Board. For some decades she also acted as editorial board member of *Folia Histochemica et Cytobiologica*, the scientific journal of the Society. She invited prominent scientists to participate in the histochemical symposia that she organized on cell and tissue degeneration and atrophy (1968), cytochemistry of proliferation (1978), and Virchow's cellular pathology (1993). Moreover, she was active in the scientific

boards of almost all local and international conferences of the Society. As member of the committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences, she strongly supported the development of the cell and tissue culture section of the Society and, especially, the organization and program of two international congresses run by this section (in 1991 and 1997).

Professor Krygier-Stojałowska was distinguished by her own university, scientific institutions and societies, and state authorities. The Polish Histochemical and Cytochemical Society conferred on her the distinction of Honorary Member in 1995, and in 2001 awarded her the *Bene Meritus* title. She also received a medal on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Polish Academy of Sciences and was four times awarded by the Minister of Health and Welfare for her scientific and academic achievements. The Polish state honored her with the Knight's and Officer's Crosses of the Order of Polonia Restituta, the Gold Cross of Merit, and the Medal of the National Education Commission.

Finally, it should be mentioned that Professor Aleksandra Krygier-Stojałowska filled a prominent position in the history of Polish pathomorphology, cytometry, and histochemistry. We undersigned feel obliged to express, on behalf of the Polish histochemical community, our deep appreciation and sincere thanks for her significant efforts in the establishment and development of the Polish Histochemical and Cytochemical Society and for her valuable contribution to the progress of Polish histochemists in the biological sciences, and especially, for the development of the quantitative cytochemistry of nucleic acids. Her life, as well as her scientific and academic activities, may serve as a guide to future generations of researchers.

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