

MARIAN KSIĄŻKIEWICZ (1906–1981): THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH

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Twenty-five years have passed since the decease of our indispensable, exceptional Professor, Master, and a Person very intimate to his pupils and co-workers.

Professor Marian Książkiewicz passed away in Kraków on February 16, 1981, and was buried at the Rakowice Cemetery in this town. In accordance with his will no speeches were made at the funeral and the celebration proceeded in silence.

Professor M. Książkiewicz's pupils remember him still and feel his spiritual presence among us till now. This feeling was intensified during the session "In Memoriam" devoted to the 25th anniversary of Professor's death, and the 5th anniversary of the death of his favourite pupil and friend, Prof. Stanisław Dżułyński. The session was held on October, 7, 2006, in the old historic seat of the Department of Geology of the Jagiellonian University, in the Kołłątaj College, St. Anna Street 6. During this session, we were remembering the excellent, unforgettable lectures of our exceptional Teacher delivered just in this lecture hall.

Marian Książkiewicz, son of Jan and Helena née Popiel, was born in Kraków on January 22, 1906. Due to premature death of his mother and serious illness of his father, he was living in the house of his half-sister Maria Kapuścińska. After finishing secondary school in Kraków, he studied geology at the Philosophical Faculty of the Jagiellonian University in the years 1924–1928. Since 1925, he had been employed as assistant at the Department of Geology of this University, led by outstanding geologists: Prof. Władysław Szajnocha and, subsequently, Jan Nowak. In 1929 M. Książkiewicz obtained the doctor's degree on the ground of the thesis "Results of preliminary geological investigations in the Wadowice Carpathians", and in 1933 was qualified as assistant professor at the Jagiellonian University.

In 1939, he was sent by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to carry out geological investigations in Mozambique and, after the outbreak of the World War II, moved to France and joined there the Polish Army. After the defeat of France, he



Fig. 1. Prof. M. Książkiewicz during a discussion with his assistants

was evacuated to Great Britain and was serving there in Polish Armed Forces till 1943, being later employed in the Foundation of National Culture and, subsequently, in the Ministry of Education as lecturer of geology for Polish students in Birmingham.

After the end of the war, Marian Książkiewicz returned to Kraków in November 1945 and was employed in his parent Department of Geology of the Jagiellonian University, first as assistant professor. In June 1946 he was nominated ordinary professor and head of the department. During this first period of activity, M. Książkiewicz had promoted numerous geologists. The majority of them became later fellows of the Polish Academy of Sciences. In the years 1951–1957 all the departments of geosciences of the Jagiellonian



Fig. 2. Kollataj College of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, St. Anna str. 6. Historical seat of the Department of Geology; photo taken in the 1970s

University with their scientific staffs were assigned to the Academy of Mining and Metallurgy, what influenced negatively on the development of scientific studies in this field in Kraków.

In the years 1954–1960, Prof. Książkiewicz was employed additionally as the chief of the Carpathian Branch of the Polish Geological Institute, contributing significantly to splendid development of geological investigations in the Carpathians and to distinct promotion of this scientific institution.

Moreover, in the years 1970–1973 he was director of the Institute of Geological Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences. After 1973 Prof. Książkiewicz returned to his post at the Jagiellonian University to promote further pupils specializing in geology of the Carpathians, but, unfortunately, did not continue his excellent lectures.

Prof. M. Książkiewicz was elected in 1952 corresponding member of the Polish Academy of Sciences and in 1969 became its fellow.

The main scientific activity of Prof. Książkiewicz was associated with the Carpathians. Apart from geological mapping – which he considered to be the fundamental task of geologist – his studies concentrated on palaeontology, sedimentology, palaeogeography, and geodynamics.



Fig. 3. Lecture hall of the Department of Geology of the Jagiellonian University in the Kollataj College; photo taken in the 1950s

He formed a world-wide known school specializing in the sedimentation of flysch deposits, being also the initiator of pioneer ichnological studies in flysch sequences and the author of a monograph on this subject. He carried out studies on the reconstruction of the basement of the Carpathian flysch series on the basis of examination of exotic blocks and rock fragments occurring in flysch strata.

The results of his studies on litho- and biostratigraphy and tectonics of the Polish Outer Carpathians were presented in more than 140 publications and in numerous unpublished papers. He was also the author of numerous valuable geological maps of the Carpathians and of the “Palaeogeographic-Facies Atlas of the Outer Carpathians”. In the final stage of his life, Prof. Książkiewicz edited a synthetic monograph presenting his dynamic concept of tectonic evolution of the Carpathians, awarded with the highest state prize.

The international appreciation of scientific achievements and of sedimentological school formed by Prof. Książkiewicz is evidenced, for instance, by the fact that he and Prof. Dżułyński are the only Polish geologists mentioned in the fundamental monograph “The evolution of clastic sedimentology”, edited by Hakuyu Okada and Alec J. Kenyon Smith in 2005.



Fig. 4. Plate on the building of Marian Książkiewicz Collegium Geologicum in Kraków, Oleandry str. 2a, the new seat of the Department of Geology of the Jagiellonian University



Fig. 5. Commemorating plate in the hall of Marian Książkiewicz Collegium Geologicum in Kraków

Prof. Książkiewicz was an incomparable lecturer and educator of young geologists. His lectures on dynamic, historical and regional geology were very interesting and frequented by great number of students and even by experienced naturalists. He was the author of the first Polish academic handbook on “Dynamic geology”.

Apart from scientific and didactic activity, he was interested in classical music, arts and nature in the broad meaning of this word. During field work he was teaching the students not only geology, but also to recognize plants, insects and even the voices of birds. In our Institute his window-sill was a dining place for birds.



Fig. 6. Old lecture hall of the Department of Geology (cf. Fig. 3) in the Kołłątaj College during the Session “In Memoriam”, held in 2006; photo taken by W. Obcowski



Fig. 7. Participants of the Session “In Memoriam” in the courtyard of the Collegium Maius of the Jagiellonian University; photo taken by W. Obcowski

In the years 1947–1950, Prof. Książkiewicz was the member of The State Geological Council, and in the period 1963–1967 – the Main Council of the Ministry of Higher Education and the head of Geological Experts Group in this Ministry. In the years 1962–1964, he was the dean of the Faculty of Biology and Earth Sciences of the Jagiellonian University.

Prof. Książkiewicz was also engaged in social activity, being in the years 1931–1939 secretary, and in the period 1947–1951 president of the Geological Society of Poland, which distinguished him by nominating its honorary member, as did the Geological Society of London. Besides, he was honorary member of the Hungarian, Bulgarian and Slovak Geological Societies, and a corresponding member of the French Geological Society.

Prof. M. Książkiewicz was honoured with numerous decorations and distinctions, and in 1972 awarded with the Commander’s Cross “Polonia Restituta”.

Prof. M. Książkiewicz was married to Zofia Zielińska and had one daughter Małgorzata.

As already mentioned, he passed away on February 16, 1981 and was buried on February 20 at the Rakowice Cemetery in Kraków, accompanied – following his will – in solemn silence by numerous Polish and foreign pupils, co-workers, colleagues and friends.

The Institute of Geological Sciences in Kraków, to honour Prof. Książkiewicz’s memory, bestowed his name to the Collegium Geologicum in Oleandry Street 2a, and his pupils placed in its hall a commemorating plate in 1985. The name of Professor Marian Książkiewicz was also given to the Carpathian Branch of the Polish Geological Institute in Kraków.

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