

NON OMNIS MORIAR

IN MEMORIAM OF PROFESSOR MARIA HRABOWSKA (1936-2008)

ON THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF HER DEATH

Professor Maria Joanna Hrabowska was born in Poznań in 1936. She was born in the intelligentsia family with strong patriotic traditions. She studied medicine at the Medical Academy in Gdańsk in 1953-1960. Already during her studies, she started her scientific activity in the Department of Anatomical Pathology. Having graduated from the Academy she started her professional career in the Department under the leadership of Professor W. Czarnocki. She conducted didactic classes for students, continued her scientific research and at the same time she dedicated her efforts and energy to sharing her knowledge and experience in order to educate new generations of future specialists in anatomical pathology. She became a specialist in this medical specialty. In 1966, she was awarded a degree of Ph.D. on the basis of the dissertation entitled "The histopathological image of experimental mycosis treated with Natric N-succinylate derivative of perimycine" (under the Assistant Professor Henryk Kozłowski). In 1981, she was nominated the Head of the Independent Clinical Pathomorphology Laboratory in the Institute of Gynaecology and Obstetrics at the Medical Academy in Gdańsk. In 1982, she was awarded a degree of Doctor Habilitatus in medicine with her thesis entitled "Morphogenesis of ectopies of periventricular cerebral matrix of the human foetus and newborn". In 1993, the Polish Senate appointed her Professor.

Professor Hrabowska was a professional worker of the Gdańsk Medical Academy and associated with this institution for a long time.

She wrote around 100 research papers and publications in the field of pathological anatomy in gynaecology and oncology, experimental oncology and perinatal neuropathology. She was a correspondent member of the Société Française de Gynéco-Pathologie, member of the European Organization for Research and Treatment of Cancer and the Polish Society of Pathologists (in 90' being the chief of its Gdansk Branch). She cooperated closely with other scientific institutions including the Gdańsk University and the Technical University in Gdańsk. Professor Hrabowska was known for being an educator of several generations of physicians who chose to specialize in the field of gynaecology and pathomorphology, she taught and stimulated numerous student groups and young scientists



accelerating their development in medicine, directing, instructing and training, with the aim to develop their skills in a chosen research field. She took care of 12 doctors writing their doctoral dissertations in gynaecological and perinatal pathology. She reviewed numerous doctoral dissertations and three qualifying theses. She devoted lots of time to writing and reviewing medical books for students and school books to teach biology.

Another great passion, apart from her dedication to medical profession, was the idea of scout movement and engagement in volunteer activities. She joined the first scout unit already in 1947 when she was only 11. Since 1957 she was a member of an adult scout section called "Westerplatte" associated with the Gdańsk Medical Academy. At the same time she acted as a scout leader trainer of the adult female scout division in the Gdańsk area. For two decades (1960-1980) she withdrew from her engagement in the scout movement for political reasons. However, again at the end of the 1980-ies in a new reality she came back to scouting and together with other supporters co-organized the local scout organization in Gdańsk named after A. Małkowski. In 1982, she was appointed the scout leader. She was engaged in the rebirth of the national scout organization after 1989.

In 1990, she was elected the chairperson of the Chief of the Supreme Scoutmaster Court acting with the Polish Scout Organization (ZHP). She initiated the creation of the register of the repressed scouts. Professor Hrabowska deserves the credit for pioneering the health education system adopted by the Polish National Scout Organization. She reached the highest rank of proficiency and was elected the Chief Scout (Leader) of the National Scout Committee in 1996-2001.

Professor Hrabowska attended numerous international scouting events and conferences where she represented the Polish member organization in the international arena. She always adhered to the Scout Oath and Law, the principles of "Duty to God, Duty to others and Duty to self".

Moreover, Professor Hrabowska served numerous other ideas and was always involved in various projects. She was an active member of the autonomous newly-formed Independent and Self-Governing Trade Union Solidarity. She was also engaged in the activities of the Polish Legions

Organization (armed forces created in 1914 to revive the Polish state) where she was appointed the commander of the Northern Division. She continued for many years the cooperation with the Marshal Józef Piłsudski Museum in Cracow. She was also active with the Polish Episcopacy giving expert opinions as a secular expert in the field of family affairs and fertility.

For her volunteering and scientific activities she was given numerous state decorations including the Golden Medal of Merit and the Cross of the Medal of Polonia Restituta.

In 2008, she was awarded with the Officer Cross of the Medal of Polonia Restituta, for her contribution and activities aimed to gain the

independence of Poland and for the contribution paid to the veteran groups.

After a long and tiresome disease Professor Maria Hrabowska passed away on 14 July 2008 at the age of 72. The funeral liturgy was celebrated on 21 July 2008 at St. Mary's Basilica. She was buried in the cemetery in Gdynia - Witomino.

We take this opportunity to recall her as a Great Human Being, outstanding Scientist and Educator who will set the example of a medical doctor, volunteer and an exceptional person gifted with unique personal and professional values to follow.

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on behalf of members of the Polish Society of Pathologists,
Gdańsk Branch