



Professor Włodzimierz Ptak (1928–2019)

The Member of AITE Advisory Board 1992–1997, 2006–2016

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Professor Włodzimierz Ptak was Polish immunologist, microbiologist, professor of Jagiellonian University, Kraków (Poland), and member of the Polish Academy of Sciences and the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences; he was one of the best cited Polish biologists.

Professor Włodzimierz Ptak graduated from the Faculty of Medicine of Kraków Medical Academy in 1952. Then, he was forced to join the military service (1952–1957). In 1957, he was employed in the Pathology Department of Szczecin Medical Academy. In 1962, he presented his PhD thesis in pathology. The same year he moved to Kraków and was employed in the Institute of Microbiology, Kraków Medical Academy. In 1967, he spent 9 months in the National Institute for Medical Research in London as a post-doctoral fellow of the British Council Foundation. In 1970, he became an associate professor, and in 1976, he achieved a position of the full professor. Since 1974, he was a head of the Department of Immunology at Microbiology Institute, Kraków Medical Academy, which turned into the Chair of Immunology of Jagiellonian University Medical College. He kept this position until 1999 when he retired. In the years 1974–1999, he was a visiting professor in the Department

of Immunology of Yale University (USA). He collaborated with the outstanding famous immunologist, Professor Richard K. Gershon. Cumulatively, he spent more than 7 years in the Yale University (New Haven).

His scientific main interest was the regulatory mechanism of the immune response. He was a co-author of the discovery of contra suppressor T lymphocytes and of defining the regulatory function of T γ δ lymphocytes. He was also a pioneer in research on the contact sensitivity reaction. Professor Ptak has published over 200 scientific papers in the high impact factor international scientific journals. Professor Ptak was the Vice Rector of Medical Academy of Kraków (1978–1981). In 1989, he became a member of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and in 1998, he was elected a member of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was also appointed Honorary Member of the Polish Immunological Society. He was awarded with a great number of the medals and various prestige awards. He was a member of editorial boards of many scientific journals, including *Archivum Immunologiae et Therapiae Experimentalis*.

Professor Ptak was a devoted and successful teacher of the young adepts of immunology. He has supervised ten PhD theses and five of his co-workers have become full professors. One of them is Professor Marek Zembala, and one of the best Polish immunologist, acknowledged internationally, with the impressive scientific achievements.

Professor Ptak was strongly involved in his scientific work and was active to the very end of his life. He died on 28 May 2019 in Kraków. With his passing away Polish science lost its very prominent representative. He will be remembered as an outstanding scientist and university teacher.

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