



Weronika Trojnar-Tokarska (1947–2008)

Professor Weronika Trojnar-Tokarska, a gifted neurophysiologist, member of the Polish Neuroscience Society and a friend of the Nencki Institute passed away on August 13, 2008 after a long illness. Few of us knew that she was struggling with a serious disease for years – she was extremely brave and courageous, hardworking, never complaining and always ready for scientific discussion until her last days.

Nika (as friends used to call her) was born in Przemyśl on May 14, 1947. She completed her MA degree at the Department of Biology of the Lublin University in 1971 and shortly thereafter she started working at the Department of Physiology of the Lublin Medical Academy (now University). Two years later she moved to the Gdańsk Medical Academy where in 1977 she earned her PhD under supervision of Professor Jerzy Cytawa. After ten years of very fruitful research at the Medical Academy, Nika joined the Department of Animal Physiology of the Gdańsk University, where in 1991 she created the Laboratory of Neurophysiology that she headed successfully until her last days.

Neuroscience was her passion from the very beginning of her scientific career. Her scientific interests included, among others, the central control of food intake, the role of reinforcement in appetitive instrumental conditioning, mechanisms of reward, functional organization of mesolimbic system, brainstem control of the hippocampal theta rhythm, mechanisms of restitution of function after brain damage and lately the central regulation of cellular immune responses. Nika was always open to new scientific challenges and always tried to solve them with a multidisciplinary approach. The range of methods used in her laboratory was spectacular, embracing electrolytic and chemical lesions, electrical stimulation, intragastric infusions, microinjections into various brain structures, EEG recording in freely moving animals together with numerous behavioral paradigms as well as biochemical and immunocytochemical techniques.

In the years 1988–1992 she worked in the Center for Studies in Behavioral Neurobiology, Concordia University, Canada, where she started her investigations of the mechanisms of drug addiction. She continued them in Poland, making her one of the first Polish neuroscientist working on that problem. Altogether Professor Trojnar-Tokarska was the author of over 60 original experimental papers, most of them published in highly recognized international journals. Many of her notable papers were published in the *Acta Neurobiologiae Experimentalis*. She promoted five doctoral theses and unfortunately did not have time to finish promotion of the next five. Nika will be remembered as an excellent scientist and leader, distinguished academic teacher and a person of fascinating and strong personality.

Jolanta Zagrodzka
Krzysztof Turlejski

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