



Stefan Barbacki

1903-1979

Four years ago we celebrated the 50th anniversary of Professor Dr. Stefan Barbacki's scientific activities. We cannot believe that he is no more amongst us. Right to the very last he worked at the Institute of Plant Genetics, Polish Academy of Sciences at Poznań. He was Editor-in-Chief of the journal 'Genetica Polonica' and Co-Editor of 'Theoretical and Applied Genetics'.

Stefan Barbacki was born in Wieliczka on 11th September 1903, and was educated in Kraków. He graduated from secondary classic school in 1921, completed his studies at the Jagiellonian University Philosophical Faculty in Kraków with a Master's Degree in 1925 and a Doctor's Degree in agriculture in 1929, his special field of interest being plant genetics and breeding. He considered himself a pupil of Professor E. Załęski. He started his professional career as a research worker at the Plant Genetics and Breeding Department of PINGW, Puławy (1925-1945).

During this period his main interest was focused on problems concerning genetics and breeding in connection with transgression of crude protein in barley grain as well as the application of statistical methods in field experimental works.

He got a Fellowship of the Rockefeller Foundation at the University of London where he was attached to Professor R.A. Fisher at the Galton Laboratory from 1935-1936. They worked together on statistical methods and published a paper 'A Test of the Supposed Precision of Systematic Arrangements' (1936). In 1945 Professor Barbacki obtained his habilitation on the basis of the work 'Further Studies on Inheritance and Variability of Nitrogen Content in the Grain of Barley'. He received the title of Associate Professor in 1945, and became Professor in 1948 at the University of Poznań.

Following the Second World War, when the devastated western part of Poland had to be reconstructed, he became deeply involved in organising the scientific life and plant breeding in this region. He was one of the organizers and, from the opening in 1945 until 1951, Director of the State Plant Breeding Establishments (PZHR) for Western Poland. From 1951-1965 he was Director of the Plant Breeding and Acclimatization Institute for Western Poland as well as Director of

the Institute of Plant Nutrition and Soil Sciences. Besides these functions, he founded 18 experimental and plant breeding stations.

At the same time he held the post of Dean of the Agricultural Faculty of the Poznań University (1948-1951) and vice-chancellor of the Agricultural Academy of Poznań. He was the Head of the Chair of Agricultural Experimentation and Biometrics of the Poznań University, Head of the Chair of Plant Genetics and Breeding, Agricultural Academy of Poznań (1951-1970) as well as an initiator and, from the opening in 1955 until 1967, also Director of the Applied Biology Institute of the Agricultural Academy of Poznań. Barbacki was also initiator and, from its opening in 1955 until 1974 – when he retired –, Director of the Institute of Plant Genetics of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Poznań. On his retirement in 1974 Professor Ignacy Wiatroszak succeeded him as Director of IPG PAS in Poznań, whereas he himself became a Consultant Professor.

In the years 1948-1970 Professor Barbacki's scientific interest was concentrated on genetics and breeding of papilionaceous plants useful on light soil (*Lupinus* sp. and *Vicia* sp.). For his works on genetics and breeding of lupine he won a National Scientific Prize in 1950. 1970-1979 he reverted to the genetical transgression in plants and in 1979 synthesized his ideas in his last printed paper.

Professor Barbacki also devoted much time to editorial work. From 1938 to 1939 he was an active organizer, and from 1945 to 1947 Editor-in-Chief, of the journal 'Przegląd Doświadczalnictwa Rolniczego' (Review of Agricultural Experimentation). In 1960 he founded a scientific journal 'Genetica Polonica' and was right to the last its Editor-in-Chief. From 1963 onwards he worked in the Editorial Board of 'Der Züchter', and from 1968 onwards as Co-Editor of 'Theoretical and Applied Genetics'.

His scientific and teaching activities during his lifetime earned him great success. He wrote about 170 scientific papers. He educated 42 doctors. Twelve of them are today professors and heads of various scientific centres. He participated in many scientific congresses and meetings and travelled to famous institutes of agriculture and breeding stations in many countries of Europe, China, United States of America and Canada.

For many years Professor Barbacki was an active member of several Polish and foreign scientific societies. In 1952 he was elected a corresponding member, in 1964 a member and from 1966 to 1968 a member of the Presidium of the Polish Academy of Sciences. He was a member (1946), Vice-President (1958-1961) and President (1961-1970) of the Poznań Scientific Society – and since then its Honorary Member. He was an active member of the 'Copernicus Society' (from 1946 onwards) and Chairman of the Poznań Section (1955-1965) as well as a member (from 1926 onwards) of the Polish Botanical Society. He was one of the founders of the Genetical Society, Vice-President (1966-1977) and Chairman of the Poznań Section (1966-1973), and from 1969 onwards an Honorary Member.

The Polish Government – in recognition of Barbacki's valuable contribution to science – awarded him the Golden Cross of Merit (1951), the Officer's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta (1954), Commander's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta (1969), Medal of X and XXX Years of People's Poland, Honorary Golden Medal of Poznań City (1959) amongst others.

Professor Dr. Stefan Barbacki left the ranks of geneticists and breeders on July 30th, 1979. His profound knowledge and scientific achievements, his hard work and his unique friendliness towards his closest colleagues earned him the deep respect and affection of all those who worked with him in his last days.

G. Kurhánska (Poznań)