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This special double issue contains invited papers dedicated to the memory of Jerzy Łoś.

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Jerzy Łoś (1920–1998)

Jerzy Łoś died in Warsaw on June 1, 1998, at the age of 78, after suffering a serious brain stroke two years earlier.

Born in Lwów on March 22, 1920, Jerzy Łoś was awarded a master's degree in philosophy in 1947, after studies at the universities of Lwów (interrupted by World War II) and Lublin. In 1949 he received a Ph.D. in science at the University of Wrocław. He received a degree of Doctor of Science (corresponding to habilitation) in 1955, and in 1957 he was promoted to the rank of ordinary professor. In 1964 he became a member of the Polish Academy of Sciences. He served at the editorial board of "Fundamenta Mathematicae" in the years 1967–1994.

Łoś's scientific contributions were exceptionally broad and diversified. Chronologically, the main areas of his research activity were philosophy, logic, algebra, probability theory and the mathematical foundations of economics. He introduced new fundamental ideas in each of these fields. For example, in logic he was among the first ones who studied model theory. He defined the notion of ultraproduct and proved his celebrated Fundamental Theorem on Ultraproducts. Also, his conjecture on categoricity in power of countable theories, proved by M. Morley and S. Shelah (the uncountable version), fostered the development of stability theory, a major branch of model theory. In algebra he was interested in universal algebras and infinite abelian groups, he introduced the notions of a slender group and a hereditary set of generators. After a period of interest in foundations of probability theory he turned to investigating mathematical economics. Here one of his principal interests was the study of equilibria in von Neumann models of economic processes.

During his life Jerzy Łoś moved several times: first, from Lwów to Lublin, then to Wrocław, Toruń, and finally Warsaw. He was very active in each of these centers and exerted a strong influence on the development of mathematics in Poland.

Łoś's scientific achievements were recognized in the world. In 1962 he was invited to give a talk on the foundations of probability theory at the International Congress of Mathematicians in Stockholm. He was honored with several awards, and held many important positions in Polish and international scientific organizations; among other things, in 1979–1983 he served as President of the Division of Logic, Methodology and Philosophy of Science of the International Union of History and Philosophy of Science.

Ludomir Newelski, Leszek Pacholski