



Aleksander Jan Ptoski

Arkadiusz Płoski (1947–2024)

Arkadiusz Płoski was born on February 5, 1947 in Kielce, into a family of Kielce lawyers. He passed his matriculation exams at the famous Stefan Żeromski High School in Kielce. He obtained his master's degree in mathematics at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin in 1970. He continued his mathematical studies as a PhD student at the branch of the Institute of Mathematics of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Kraków. In 1974, he received a PhD in mathematics based on the dissertation "On formal and convergent solutions of analytic equations" written under the supervision of Stanisław Łojasiewicz. After obtaining this title, he began working at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin. During that time he also worked at Université Paris-Sud for the academic year 1976/77 as an *assistant associé*. In 1980, for family reasons, he moved to Kielce and took up an employment at the Kielce University of Technology. In 1987, he obtained the habilitation degree from the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. The title of the habilitation dissertation was "Multiplicity and the Łojasiewicz exponent". Ten years later, in 1997, at the request of the Jagiellonian University, he obtained for his scientific, didactic and organizational achievements the highest state academic title in Poland – professor of mathematics. For his scientific achievements he was honored with many awards: Polish Mathematical Society Award for Young Mathematicians (1974) for his PhD thesis, 3rd grade Minister Awards (1974, 1988) and the Award of the Faculty of Mathematical, Physical and Chemical Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences (1987) for his habilitation thesis. Until his retirement in 2022, he worked at the Kielce University of Technology, all the time heading the Department of Mathematics.

During the difficult years of the political transformation in Poland from the communist to democratic era, he played a significant role in Kielce. After the dark night of repressive martial law, introduced by the communist authorities on 13 December 1981 and abolished in 1983, a significant change of the system occurred only in 1989. As a consequence the first free local elections took place in May 1990. As a result of these elections, Płoski was

elected the first mayor (president) of the city of Kielce (with a population of 180,000); he was a compromise candidate between the new political forces. However, his political career was short-lived. Managing a big city during the transformation period prevented him from doing mathematics, which he loved, and contributed to a serious health crisis in 1991. Saved by cardiac surgeons, he never returned to politics.

He supervised four PhDs in mathematics: of Janusz Gwoździejewicz, Andrzej Lenarcik, Mateusz Masternak and Maciej Śekalski. His specialization in mathematics was algebraic geometry and singularity theory. He is the author of one monograph, one textbook and over seventy scientific articles (they are collected on the website <https://gasiull.webs.ull.es/articles-Ploski.html>, prepared by E. R. García Barroso) and over twenty review and introduction articles (in Polish). He cooperated with many mathematical centers in Poland and abroad, mainly with University of Łódź and Jagiellonian University in Kraków. He was an active participant and organizer of the annual, local conferences on Analytic and Algebraic Geometry, organized by the Faculty of Mathematics of the University of Łódź. For this reason, the University of Łódź honored him with the *Universitatis Lodzensis Amico Medal*. His foreign contacts were very wide. He was a visiting professor in France (universities in Bordeaux, Lille and Grenoble), Spain (Universidad de La Laguna), Germany (Max Planck Institute in Bonn, University in Kaiserslautern), Italy (University of Calabria), Israel (Weizmann Institute of Science).

Arkadiusz Płoski was an exceptional person. He perfected his knowledge of foreign languages until the end of his life: he spoke French, English, Spanish, Italian and German. He knew and liked history, especially the history of Poland. He loved literature; he read French and English in the original. At meetings and conferences he drew attention with his personality. His lectures were distinguished by precision, order and clarity. He did not use new presentation techniques, remaining faithful to the blackboard and chalk, and always elegantly dressed in a classic style. Sociable, with a subtle sense of humor, he willingly participated in discussions. He always spoke elegantly, wisely and wittily. He liked and appreciated good wine. Due to his health condition, he was constantly accompanied by his wife, Hanna.

Arkadiusz Płoski died on February 8, 2024. With his passing, we have lost a mathematician, an expert in classical algebra and algebraic geometry, a scientific supervisor, a friend, a colleague, a participant in meetings and discussions and above all, a good and kind man to the world.

Tadeusz Krasieński