

MICHAŁ SACHANBIŃSKI



On December 16, 2004, the Mineralogical Society of Poland conferred its honorary membership to Professor Michał Sachanbiński, appreciating his merits in the development of mineralogical sciences in Poland.

Michał Sachanbiński was born on January 20, 1939. In 1962 he graduated as a geologist from the Wrocław University and was employed there at the Institute of Geological Sciences (Department of Mineralogy and Petrography), where he has continued his academic career since. From the beginning of his research, scientific interest of M. Sachanbiński has been centred on mineralogy and geochemistry of igneous rocks, particularly those occurring in Lower Silesia. His major dissertations, promoting him within academic ranks, dealt just with such rocks.

The character of the scientific activity of Professor Sachanbiński has been both cognitive and applicable in practice. Working with J. Janeczek he contributed to better recognizing of Lower Silesian pegmatites and published, among others, details on several rare minerals, including stilpnomelan, the mineral identified for the first time ever in magmatic pegmatites. In 1992 he described with A. Platonov and P. Wróblewski an unknown till then in nature, green variety of quartz — prasiolite. He also devoted a lot of attention to Lower Silesian serpentinites and amphibolites and the related to them deposits of magnesite. He revealed that serpentinite quarrying might cause contamination of the environment with asbestos. In 1999 he published documentation on a unique in Poland deposit of talcum and vermicullite in Wiry. He also recorded trace amounts of platinoids in weathered ultrabasites and described an occurrence of native platinum in the nickel deposit in Szklary.

Particularly worth mentioning in research of Professor Sachanbiński is introducing rarely used methods of physics in his thorough characterizations of minerals. He utilized the photoneutron method in determination of beryllium in the rocks of the Sowie Góry block, while in co-operation with two physicists, M. Szuszkiewicz and J. Chojcan, he pioneered investigations of mineral microstructure using positron annihilation. In the years 1986–1997 he organized and chaired five international workshops, i.e. International Schools of Mineral Physics. They became an important forum in discussions on relevant subjects and contributed to development of closer ties between Polish and foreign mineralogists.

The wide scope of M. Sachanbiński's scientific interests covers also the problems of petroarcheology and gemmology. Working with J. Kaźmierczyk, an archaeologist, he

discovered in Ostrów Tumski in Wrocław one of the oldest in Europe (10th–11th century) workshops in which precious stones were polished. He published the book "Precious and ornamental stones of Lower Silesia" as well as numerous papers on mineralogy of precious stones. Particular achievements of Professor Sachanbiński noted in research on chrysoprases are focused on the reasons of their coloration and genesis of their deposits.

M. Sachanbiński merits in bringing together rank and file of Polish mineralogists should be acknowledged. He is a founding member of the Mineralogical Society of Poland, where for many years he was a Board member and Vice-President. From 1985 he has been a representative of the Mineralogical Society of Poland in the International Mineralogical Association (Commission on Museums). He is also a founding member and Vice-President of the Polish Gemmological Society. Much of his time he devoted to his Alma Mater, where he was Prorector and the Head of the Institute of Geological Sciences. At present, at the Wrocław University, he is the Head of the Mineralogical Museum as well as of the Gemmology Department that he organized himself.

M. Sachanbiński presented his scientific achievements at numerous international conferences, among others at several IMA conferences. He is the author of some 130 papers, most of which were published in renowned foreign journals, and also authored three textbooks.

It is difficult in this short laudation to enumerate all exploits of Professor Michał Sachanbiński. He belongs to a circle of most meritorious and active Polish mineralogists. The scientific passion and organization skills are combined with friendliness toward his colleagues and students, with whom he willingly shares his mineralogical and geological experience.

Witold ŻABIŃSKI