

Giants of Science

<https://gigancinauki.pl/ge/biographies/8299,Alicja-Dorabialska.html>
21.05.2024, 00:11

Alicja Dorabialska

DORABIALSKA, Alicja (October 14, 1897, Sosnowiec - August 7, 1975, Warsaw), specialist in the field of physical chemistry. Daughter of Tomasz, the head of the local post office, and Helena Kamińska, a teacher.

In Sosnowiec, she attended the J. Siwikowa Women's Trade School, and then in Warsaw the T. Raczkowska Trade School, where in 1914 she obtained a secondary school examination certificate. Both schools were trade schools in name only. As a result, they were subordinate to the Russian Ministry of Industry and Trade, which was not interested in them at all. This made it possible to cultivate Polish tradition and culture in them. D. began her studies in physics and chemistry in 1915 in the Scientific Courses Association in Warsaw. In the same year, her father and his family were transferred to Minsk, and in 1915–18 she continued her studies in Moscow, at the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics of the Higher Women's Courses School, which had academic accreditations. After returning to Poland in 1918–22, she worked at the Department of Physical Chemistry of the Warsaw University of Technology as an assistant to professor W. Świętosławski. In 1922, she was awarded a PhD on the basis of a dissertation entitled *Thermochemical Studies on the Stereoisomerism of Ketoximes*, prepared at the University of Warsaw; her mentor was Professor W. Lampe. In 1921–34 she was the secretary of the editorial board of 'Roczniki Chemii' and in 1924–34 was also a lecturer at the University of Warsaw. In 1927, she obtained her habilitation at the Warsaw University of Technology in the field of physical chemistry. In 1925 and 1926, as well as in 1929 and 1930, she was at the Radium Institute in Paris where she worked under the direction of M. Curie-Skłodowska. Also in 1925, 1926 and 1927 she stayed at the Charles University in Prague. In 1934–40 she worked as an associate professor at the Lviv University of Technology. She was the first woman in

the history of Polish technical universities to obtain the position of a professor. The motion in this matter was approved by Marshal J. Piłsudski (it was not certain, as D. signed a protest against the Brest process of 1931–32, the marshal was alleged to say on this occasion, 'This woman has a temper'). During World War II, in 1940–45, she was in Warsaw, lecturing at secret courses of the underground Warsaw University of Technology. After the war, she took up the duties of professor at WUT. However, soon she accepted the proposal of Professor B. Stefanowski, the first rector of the Łódź University of Technology, and on June 1, 1945 she became a professor at this university. In the same year, she was entrusted with the function of dean of the chemistry department, which she held until 1951, contributing significantly to the development of the department. In 1945–68 she was the head of the Department of Physical Chemistry. D.'s scientific activity was significantly influenced by long-term cooperation with Professor W. Świątosławski and an internship in the laboratory of M. Curie-Skłodowska. She was an outstanding specialist in the field of physical chemistry, in particular radioactive elements. She constructed a special microcalorimeter to measure very small amounts of heat emitted by radioactive substances. This method was also successfully used, among others, to study allotropic changes and corrosion phenomena. She published 128 scientific papers on radiochemistry, calorimetry and chemoluminescence, including 5 books.

D. was a member (a corresponding member from 1932, an ordinary member from 1945) of TNW, admitted as a member of Scientific Association in Lviv (1935), a member (from 1947, and 1965–69 vice-president) of the Łódź Scientific Association, and an honorary member of the Chemical Polish Association (1965). From 1932 on she was also active in the Polish Association of Women with higher education. She was awarded, inter alia, with an Independence Cross and the crosses for Knight, Officer, and Commander of the Order of Polonia Restituta. She did not have her own family.

A. Dorabialska: *Jeszcze jedno życie*, Warsaw 1975; *Nie dla marnego zysku ani pustej sławy*, 'Przekrój' 1991 (special edition); B. Kurant: *Historia SITPCChem*, Warsaw 1996; *Profesorowie Politechniki Łódzkiej*, Łódź 2005; 'Orbital' 1997, No. 6 (R. Mierzecki); 'Przemysł Chemiczny' 1997, No. 10 (K. Zięborak); 'Wiadomości Chemiczne' 1977, No. 5 (J. Kroh, W. Reimschüssel).

Ludomir Ślusarski

[Previous Page](#)
[Next Page](#)