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Title: Professor Andrzej Lasota

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PROFESSOR ANDRZEJ LASOTA

My first memory of Professor Andrzej Lasota is from late seventies of the previous century. I have just graduated and Professor Lasota has come to the University of Silesia from Cracow. He decided to join Polish Mathematical Society (PTM), the Upper Silesian Branch, and so he was asked to give a speech before the local mathematicians. Actually, he was a member of the PTM, but in Cracow, and this was simply a change of branch. At about the same time, I decided to enter the PTM, and was also asked to give an introductory talk. We met outside the lecture room and then I saw Lasota for the first time.

Then I was attending his lectures on ergodic theory. The lectures were addressed to students while I was a young assistant, but many of our colleagues were coming to Lasota's lectures. They were so good, and so "juicy" that it was a real pleasure to listen and to take notes. I am still keeping mine, but they can only hardly reflect the ambiance. Professor was not only an illustrious mathematician but also an eminent humanist. He would tell us "tales" illustrating in a metaphorical way the ideas he wanted to propagate. I remember for instance the tale of a king who wanted to hear explanation of his dream. The dream was about the trees in a forest and a magnificent oak in the middle. In the dream all the trees started to fall down, and the oak felt at the end. The first fortune teller told the king that his dream was terrible and meant that, first all, of his subjects would die and his majesty would follow. Of course, he was decapitated because the king found his explanation wrong. Then came the second and said: "This is a very good prophecy, your Highness. It means that you will not die before all your people vanish. Enjoy!"

My last memory is from the year 2006, and more exactly from December, only a couple of weeks before he untimely passed away. I served as Dean of the Faculty of Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry. Lasota came to my office with the letter to the Chancellor of the University in which he was asking for the prolongation of his employment. In the letter he wrote among others: "I would be genuinely happy to continue working at our University." Unfortunately, as I wrote above, that was not meant to be. Andrzej Lasota died on December 28, 2006.

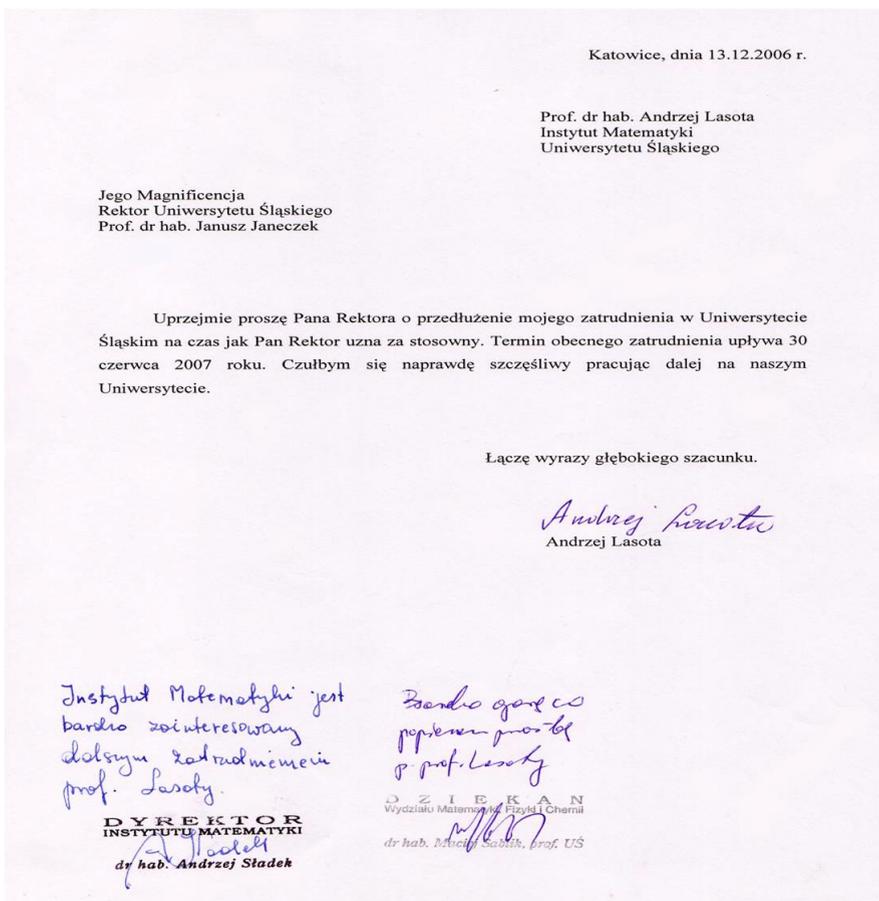


Photo 49. A scan of the letter to the Chancellor of the University;
on the right – translation of the document

Katowice, 13.12.2006

Professor Andrzej Lasota
Institute of Mathematics
University of Silesia

His Magnificence
Chancellor of the University of Silesia
Professor Janusz Janeczek

I would like to kindly request an extension of my contract at the University of Silesia for a time period deemed suitable by the Chancellor. My current employment ends on 30th June 2007. I would be genuinely happy to continue working at our University.

With kindest regards,
Andrzej Lasota

The Institute of Mathematics is very interested in extending the employment of Professor Lasota.

Professor Andrzej Śladek
Director of the Institute of Mathematics
University of Silesia

I thoroughly support Professor Lasota's request.

Professor Maciej Sablik
Dean of the Faculty of Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry
University of Silesia