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Honorary Members of the Polish Society of Nephrology. Part XXXIV — Professor Garabed Eknoyan

ABSTRACT

We are presenting the 34th part of our series of articles showing the figures of the honorary members of the Polish Society of Nephrology. In the previous installment, the 33rd part of the series, we presented the distinguished American nephrologist, Professor Joel Kopple. In this part, we would like to present another American scholar and nephrologist, Professor Garabed Eknoyan. Professor Eknoyan is a re-

nowned figure in the world of nephrology, a scholar and a physician with an unusually broad scope of medical as well as extra-medical interests. Professor Eknoyan has made invaluable contributions to the development of nephrology and history of this discipline.

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This publication constitutes already the 34th part of the series of publications devoted to the figures of the honorary members of the Polish Society of Nephrology. It is ten years since this series of articles published in *Forum Nefrologiczne* was initiated by the authors of this paper. In the previous part of the series, we presented the figure of Professor Joel Kopple — a distinguished, world-class American clinical nephrologist specializing particularly in nutrition disorders and disturbances in the protein metabolism in renal failure. He was a globally renowned nephrologist [1]. This issue is devoted to another American nephrologist, Professor Garabed Eknoyan. His professional interests cover a wide area including renal physiology, clinical nephrology, and renal replacement therapy. As a matter of particular importance for the authors of this article, Professor Eknoyan was also involved in the establishment and development of the International Association for the History of Nephrology.

Garabed Eknoyan was born on April 14th, 1935 in Aleppo, Syria. Aleppo is the oldest town in Syria, a beautiful place with a beautiful yet complicated history. The city was first

mentioned in historical sources as early as in 1800 BC. During the last civil war in Syria, the city and its inhabitants suffered very hard, with many people dying and some of the historic parts of the city destroyed (Fig. 1).

Professor Eknoyan studied medicine at the American University of Beirut in Lebanon, graduating in 1961. He continued his postgraduate education at his home university in Beirut as well as at the Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas, the Boston City Hospital in Boston, and, as a postdoctoral research fellow, at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas, TX, USA. Having completed his postgraduate education, Professor Eknoyan started his professional career at American hospitals. In 1966, he became the Chief of the Renal Section at the Cincinnati General Hospital. His next posts included managerial positions at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Houston, Harris County Hospital District, and the Methodist Hospital, (all in Houston). Between 1969 and 1974, Professor Eknoyan successfully pursued a medical specialty in internal medicine with a subspecialty in nephrology [2].

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His academic work was also very rich. Having started as an assistant professor at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, he moved later on to the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, where he worked as an Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor, up until he became a Distinguished Emeritus Professor in 2020. He also worked at the University of Houston College of Pharmacy and the University of Texas Health Sciences Center, both in Houston. In addition, he used to give numerous lectures worldwide. Having had the honor to listen to many speeches given by Professor Eknoyan over the last 20 years, we can say that they were always extremely interesting, characteristic, and distinctive; they were presented in an exceptionally illustrative manner and thus enjoyed great popularity. Professor Eknoyan is also a very attentive listener, often engaging in fascinating debates with other speakers.

Professor Eknoyan authored or co-authored nearly 400 papers, articles, and book chapters. His works were published in renowned medical journals such as the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, *Journal of Clinical Investigation*, *Nephron*, *New England Journal of Medicine*, *American Journal of Physiology*, *Kidney International*, *British Medical Journal*, *Journal of Nephrology*, *Journal of the American Society of Nephrology*, *Giornale Italiana di Nefrologia*, and many others [3].

The scope of Professor Eknoyan's clinical and research interests is very broad. His first article was published in 1962. His research topics include renal physiology, clinical nephrology, metabolic disorders in renal diseases, renal replacement therapy, and even certain urological problems. An important part of his publications was devoted to the history of nephrology, including his recent articles: "A forgotten chapter in the history of the renal circulation: the Josep Trueta and Homer Smith intellectu-



Figure 1. Professor Garabed Eknoyan, Taormina, Italy 2012 (photo by Janusz Ostrowski)

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CLINICAL CASE
ΚΛΙΝΙΚΗ ΠΕΡΙΠΤΩΣΗ

A historical appraisal of lupus nephritis

The understanding of lupus nephritis over the past five decades has been phenomenal. Kidney biopsy is now the gold standard for its diagnosis, evaluation and management. However, lupus nephritis is a medical entity of recent vintage. The term "lupus", derived from Latin for wolf, was introduced in the Middle Ages to label nondescript erosive skin lesions resembling wolf bites. The specific dermatologic features of lupus were characterised as a non-erosive "erythematous" butterfly rash in 1828 and termed "lupus erythematosus" in 1850. Their association with systemic manifestations was described in 1872 as "disseminated lupus erythematosus". The generic term "nephritis" was first used to describe the renal lesions of systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) in 1902. Although albuminuria and abnormal urine sediment were often noted in SLE patients, initial studies of their renal changes was limited to post-mortem studies. Clarification of the lesions of lupus nephritis came only after the introduction of kidney biopsies in the 1950s and was refined thereafter by immunofluorescent and electron microscopic studies. Subsequent studies of lupus nephritis paralleled the emerging discipline of immunology that identified autoimmunity as the cause of SLE. The varied lesions observed in lupus nephritis were classified by glomerular changes in 1975 and refined in 2003.

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Μια ιστορική ανασκόπηση της νεφρίτιδας του λύκου

Περύκλης στο τέλος του άρθρου

Key words
Collagen diseases
Lupus erythematosus
Lupus nephritis
Nephritis
Systemic lupus erythematosus

Figure 2. A copy of a publication by Prof. Garabed Eknoyan



Figure 3. Professor Garabed Eknoyan during the IAHN Congress in Milazzo, Italy, 2015 (photo by Janusz Ostrowski)

al conflict” or “A historical appraisal of lupus nephritis” from 2020. His involvement in the publication of *The Kidney in Systemic Disease* and *The Kidney* — important books edited by himself as well as by other renowned scholars such as Barry Brenner (Fig. 2) is also worth mentioning [4].

Professor Eknoyan was also a member of the scientific committees of numerous journals, including *Seminars in Nephrology*, *American Journal of Nephrology*, *Contemporary Nephrology*, *Advances in Renal Replacement Therapy*, *Advances in Chronic Kidney Diseases*, *American Journal of Kidney Diseases*, *Seminars in Dialysis*, *Clinical Nephrology*, *Nephrology Dialysis and Transplantation*, *Nephron*, *Revisita Nefrologia*, and others.

Professor Eknoyan is a member of numerous scientific organizations and associations. His activity in this field started with his membership in the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society. Notably, the Society boasts of having over 50 members who would later become Nobel Prize laureates. Other professional associations include the American Physiological Society, American Society for Artificial Internal Organs, American Society of Nephrology, International Society of Nephrology, American College of Physicians, American Heart Association, American Society of Hypertension, Richard Bright Society, European Renal Association-European Dialysis & Transplant Association (currently the European Renal Association,) and Inter-

national Association for the History of Nephrology (IAHN). It is worth emphasizing that Professor Garabed Eknoyan was the President of the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) and a prize of his name is awarded annually for the outstanding promoters of the NKF mission.

For his outstanding achievements, he was granted many awards and honorary titles, including the Award of Excellence of the American Association of Kidney Patients, Award of Exceptional Leadership of the National Kidney Foundation, Sandor Korányi medal of the Hungarian Society of Nephrology, Medicus Hippocraticus Prize of the Foundation Internationale Hippocratique, Master Clinician Lifetime Award and Alumni Distinguished Service Award from the Baylor College of Medicine, honorary membership of IAHN awarded in Milazzo, Italy in 2015, or honorary membership of the Polish Society of Nephrology awarded in 1994 (Figs. 3, 4).

As a matter of particular importance for the authors of this article, Professor Eknoyan was also involved in the establishment and continued development of the International Association for the History of Nephrology (IAHN). Garabed Eknoyan was one of the Association’s founding members as well as its President in the years 1996–1998; he has continued to be one of the association’s leaders from its origins to this day. He was present and immensely active at each of the IAHN congresses to date. He gave advice and helped in the preparation of scientific programs as well as in the publica-

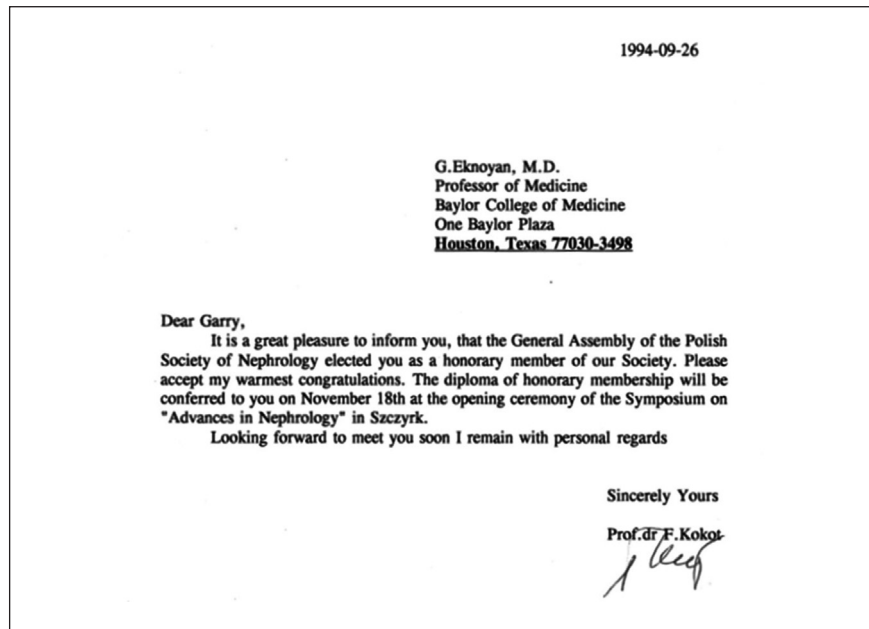


Figure 4. Copy of the letter granting the honorary membership of the PTN (from the archive of the Polish Society of Nephrology)



Figure 5. Professor Garabed Eknoyan (first from right), at the Hippocrates Museum in Larissa, Greece, 2019 (photo by Janusz Ostrowski)

tion of congress-related papers in nephrological journals (Fig. 5) [5].

In the first 2020 issue of the European Association of Professor Emeriti (EAPE) bulletin, published by another honorary member of the Polish Society of Nephrology, Professor Natale De Santo, Professor Garabed Eknoyan notified his family and friends about his total resignation from professional life and retirement following 51 years of academic activity. The announcement was a kind of recapitulation of Professor Eknoyan's achievement as

well as a message for his followers. The letter was dated January 1st, 2020. It was difficult to imagine the next IAHN Congress, which was to take place in Turkey in 2022, without the presence of our friend. It was therefore no wonder that we were very happy to see professor Eknoyan's name in the program of the 12th IAHN Congress in Istanbul, Turkey as the speaker delivering of the State-of-the-Art Lecture [6].

In conclusion, Professor Garabed Eknoyan is without any doubt a unique figure within



Figure 6. Professor Garabed Eknoyan at the IAHN Congress in Wieniec-Zdrój, Poland 2017 (photo by Janusz Ostrowski)

the medical profession, particularly in the field of nephrology. Known worldwide for his scientific and educational achievements, he is also respected for his openness, sense of humor, enormous knowledge, and experience. Professor Eknoyan visited Poland on numerous occasions, including the congresses held in Szczyrk, Katowice, Gdańsk, Toruń, Wrocław, and

Wieniec-Zdrój. He is in continuous contact with his numerous friends here (Fig. 6).

On April 14th, professor Garabed Eknoyan celebrated his birthday. On this occasion, we wish him good health and fulfillment of his plans which he outlined in his letters. We hope that we will continue to meet him during important scientific events in the future.

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