



Professor Zbigniew Szczurek

13.04.1924–15.01.2006

Professor Zbigniew Szczurek was born on 13th of April, 1924 in Zagórze. He lived with his family in Chorzów. In August and at the beginning of September 1939 he was on duty in the Scout Emergency Station in Chorzów. On the 3rd of September his family left Chorzów. They went to Jaworzno. The Occupation period was for Zbigniew Szczurek a conspiracy time (under the name “Kruk” – “Crow”). He was arrested by the Gestapo and sent for enforced labour to today’s Kędzierzyn. After the liberation his family returned to Chorzów. On 13th April, 1945, on the day of his birthday, Zbigniew was enrolled into the army. He completed the two-year service finished with the lieutenant rank in March 1947 and resumed the interrupted study at the secondary school and college for adults in Chorzów. After he got the Certificate of General Education, in 1948, he began the study at the newly founded Medical Academy in Rokitnica Bytomska. He graduated with the Diploma No 85 and, since 1st February 1954, he got associated with the Chair and Department of Pathological Anatomy in Zabrze. He was faithful to this institution more than 51 years.

These are the following stages of his professional and research career: 1954 – assistant deputy and assistant, 1956 – senior assistant, 1957 – the first degree of specialization in pathological anatomy, 1960 –

the second degree of specialization in pathological anatomy, 1964 – defended his doctor's thesis (“Pathomorphology of great endocrine glands in experimental radiation-induced disease in rabbits”) and was granted the title of Doctor of Medicine and was nominated a tutor, 1974 – habilitation (“Experimental pathomorphotic studies on toxicity and pathomechanism of 0-diamethyl-0-1 [2,4,-diachlorophenyl] 2-bromovinyl phosphate – IPO 62, new pesticide agent produced in Poland”), 1975 – nominated an assistant professor, 1986 – was granted a position of a vice-dean of the Medical Faculty in Zabrze, and in the same year, after prof. Witold Niepołomski's retirement – he was nominated the Head of the 1st Chair and Department of Pathomorphology, in the years 1987–1990 held a position of the Dean of the Medical Faculty in Zabrze. In 1987 he was granted the title of an associate professor and in 1993 a professor.

The most important achievements of that period were the methods of morphometric examinations of bone tissue (1976) and intraoperative cytology of tumours by imprint method (1985) introduced in Poland for the first time.

While he was the Head of the 1st Chair and Department of Pathomorphology in Zabrze he enlarged and improved the range of research and diagnostic activities, which included a foundation of clinical cytology workshop, fine needle aspiration biopsy studies and immunohistochemistry studies and finally, installation of computer network and computer registration of morphological examinations.

He retired from work on 30th September, 1994, however, on 1st October, 1994 – on his first day of retirement, he arrived to work, as the day before, he only changed the offices. For the next 8 years, every day, he performed diagnostic examinations, consultations, lectured for students, examined students and doctors for specializations, he took care of the assistants doing researches for their doctor's theses, and most of all, of a number of young pathomorphologists who required sound training and afterward, help in their independent diagnostic work. In the years 1998–2000, Professor became our Head, but this time as a Curator of Pathomorphology Department.

In the early 90s, the last great pathomorphologic adventure of Professor Szczurek was born – biomaterials. This adventure was bearing fruit, not only at our University, in the form of numerous doctor's theses and habilitations. Without Professor's help they could not be completed.

In 1958 he became a member and founder of the Polish Society of Anatomopathologists (now Polish Society of Pathologists) and for over 30 years he was a member of the Board of the Silesian Branch: treasurer, secretary and chairman for 3 tenures and a member of the Head Board.

In the 70s and 80s of the previous century, he was the first provincial pathomorphology specialist for the provinces of Bielsko-Biała and Częstochowa. In 1978, he founded the first histopathology workshop at the Province Oncological Out-patient Clinic in Bielsko-Biała. Further, in the years 1995–1998, he was the regional pathomorphology specialist for the provinces of Bielsko-Biała, Częstochowa, Katowice and Opole.

Apart from the functions listed above he was, for almost 20 years from 1964 to 1983, a supervisor of the Student's Scientific Society at our Department and in 1977 he was an organizer of the First (so far the only one) Polish (but it turned out international) Meeting of Pathomorphological Circles of Student's Scientific Societies.

One more aspect of his activities should be mentioned here. We all know the family of Professor Szczurek. But, he also is the father to the scientific family. The word “family” has been used here on purpose, because of the special atmosphere created by Professor in the Department. This family consists of three generations educated by Professor and His disciples, over 40 specialists of 1st and 2nd degree in pathomorphology, 25 Doctors of Medicine and 1 assistant professor – namely, Zabrze school of pathomorphology of professor Zbigniew Szczurek.

Professor Zbigniew Szczurek died in Zabrze on 15th of January, 2006 and was buried at the St. Andrew's church cemetery.

What does professor Zbigniew Szczurek mean to us, his disciples, friends and colleagues?

The memorable Dean, who after “poor” years implanted new impulse into the Faculty of Medicine in Zabrze and pushed his assistants, lecturers and their superiors into preparing and defending the unprecedented number of doctor's theses and habilitations. This, lasting till now, run of good, was begun in the 80s of the previous century.

The Head of the Chair, where one worked with friends from dawn to dusk, not only because he had to, but because he wanted to. The Head of the Chair where the door was always open, and still is open to all the doctors who study, prepare for specialization or do research work.

Wonderful pathologist, diagnostician and research worker, whom we admire for his sound knowledge and experience, for accuracy in diagnosing, for setting right research aims and consequence in following the ideas.

Academic tutor and a friend of students, teaching morphological principles of medical procedures for almost half a century.

A lover of Latin language who made the language of Cicero for us one of the links among yesterday, today and tomorrow of medicine in this technical world of the 21st century.

An instigator and organizer of weekend trips of the people from Silesian Pathomorphology Departments in the Beskidy Mountains, which we recall a bit moved.

An eager tourist, with whom we reached not only peaks of the Beskidy, but also peaks of the Alps.

For decades, unequalled dancer at all banquets and balls, parties at congresses and meetings.

Most of all, he was and will remain our Teacher, guide and unmatched educator leading into the world of pathology three generations of Silesian pathomorphologists – our Master.

The man of great heart...

For all those years together: Thank You Professor!

Daniel Sabat M.D. on behalf of
disciples and colleagues from the Chair and Department of Pathomorphology in Zabrze
and members of the Silesian Branch of Polish Society of Pathologists

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