

NON OMNIS MORIAR

IN MEMORIAM PROFESSOR ANDRZEJ ROSZKIEWICZ (27.05.1941 – 12.09.2014)

Professor Andrzej Roszkiewicz was born on 27th May 1941 in Warsaw into an academic family. In the years 1958-1964 he studied medicine at the Medical Academy of Gdansk, obtaining his MD in 1964. Already as a student he started scientific work. All his professional life was connected to his alma mater. Soon after his studies, he was employed as a scientific-didactic assistant at the Department of Anatomic Pathology (later the Department of Pathomorphology).



In 1969 he passed the first degree specialization in anatomical pathology, and in 1973 he became a fully trained pathologist. In 1970, based on the dissertation "Study of pathogenesis of tissue reactions in lymph nodes in sarcoidosis", he was awarded the degree of Doctor of Medical Sciences (promoter: Prof. Henryk Kozłowski). Soon after he organized the Laboratory of Electron Microscopy in the department, which was his scientific platform for the next years. In 1981, he was awarded the degree of Habilitated Doctor in Medical Sciences on the basis of his dissertation entitled "Ultrastructural studies on interstitial renal cells in acute post-hemorrhagic hypovolemia", and his scientific output. This dissertation was granted in 1983 by the Minister of Health and Social Affairs. In 1988 he became the head of the Department of Pathomorphology, and directed this unit until his retirement in 2002. In 1999 he received a professor tenure. For two cadencies (1993-1999), he had the position of a vice Dean of the Medical Faculty of the Medical Academy of Gdansk.

Professor Andrzej Roszkiewicz was a good academic teacher, giving very concise lectures which were easy to understand and remember almost *in extenso*. In 1993, following a modern trend, he established an immunohistochemistry laboratory and equipped the department with some laboratory and scientific facilities. The professor supervised 6 specialization residencies in pathology, promoted three PhDs, and reviewed many PhD dissertations and habilitation theses. For several years he was a pathology consultant-coordinator at the Pomeranian provincial and regional level. He was one of the organizers and a member of the Group of Diagnosis and Treatment of Malignant Pediatric Tumors in Gdansk clinical center. He was also a member of the Polish Pediatric Leukemia and Solid Tumors Group, and actively attended meetings of the Polish Bone Tumors Registry. Professor Andrzej Roszkiewicz was honored with several Medical Academy Rector's awards for scientific and didactic achievements. He was distinguished with the Gold Medal of Merit, the Knight Cross of

the Polish Revival, and a Rector's medal. From 1966 he was a member of the Polish Society of Pathologists, being for several years the chief of the Gdańsk Unit, and a member of the Main Board of PSP.

Professor Roszkiewicz was dedicated to his professional job as a doctor, always accenting the importance of the clinico-pathological cooperation in the diagnostic process. In parallel he underlined the important position

of the pathologist between the clinicians. The professor practiced close collaboration with surgeons, pediatric oncologists, and nephrologists, in the form of periodic meetings and case conferences. The main point of each case was the patient with his problems and particular disease history. The professor felt many diagnoses personally and even emotionally. He used to analyze slides while surrounded with many books and accompanied by his assistants. He loved discussions on rare microscopic images, tending to approximation and optimization of the entity recognition. When he met a complicated case, he used to buy a train ticket and send one of us with a box of slides for consultation outside of Gdańsk.

The scientific output of Professor Andrzej Roszkiewicz includes about 100 scientific articles published in Polish and international journals, numerous congress presentations and several chapters in textbooks. This output is significant: it is of great practical importance and makes a creative and valuable contribution to the progress in pathomorphology. The professor's scientific interests were wide, including experimental, basic and surgical pathology. Together with the clinical groups he conducted research in the field of oncology, surgery, pediatric oncology, dermatology, and nephrology. His preferred area was research in clinico-pathological projects, based on multimodal morphological characterization, disclosing disease pathogenesis, prognostic factors, as well as case studies of rare entities.

In the beginning, his main scientific interests covered: pathogenesis of granulomatous diseases, analysis of tissue changes in thyroid and kidney in the course of experimental hypervitaminosis A and hypercalcemia at a histological, histochemical and ultrastructural level. He confirmed that the thyroid C-cells not only regulate the calcium level in serum but also protect bones against demineralization. Another area of interest was changes in gastric mucosa and renal tubules in the course of post-hemorrhagic shock. For these he was granted with a reward of the Polish Society of Pathology and the Polish Society of Surgeons. After the habilitation, his interests

were focused mainly on different solid tumors, as well as lympho-proliferative diseases. The cooperation with clinical groups focused on connections between chromosomal aberrations, protein expression, and patients' outcome. The interdisciplinary works on breast cancer and lung cancer concerned molecular aspects involved in oncogenesis, searching for new risk factors and prognostic biomarkers. In parallel he participated in projects on experimental acute pancreatitis and neuroendocrine cells. The next field of Professor Roszkiewicz's scientific activity, shared with his wife – also a scientist – was dermatopathology. These papers were focused on eczematous dermatitis, cutaneous T-cell lymphomas, lymphomatoid papulosis, Kaposi's sarcoma, and melanoma. The professor wrote several book chapters, elaborating standards in diagnostics and therapy of renal diseases, the principles of cooperation between the surgeon and pathologist, evaluation of the sentinel node, and diagnostic methods in pediatric bone small round cell tumors.

People who met Professor Roszkiewicz admired his personal features such as generosity and cordiality. The professor had a happy family with his wife Jadwiga and daughter Magdalena (both dermatologists), and he had two grandchildren. He loved to spend free time at his ranch outside the city with his family and friends. He used to read a lot, especially historical and geographical books. He was interested in Polish and international politics as well. He was principled, but modest, well-trusted, thoughtful, and respectful towards his masters and older colleagues. As the chief of the department, he was a kind manager to his staff, and a responsible advisor with extensive life and professional experience. He used to give many scientific ideas to resolve for young doctors. He had a pleasant and good sense of humor. One of his funny mottos was that the most important thing in a young scientist's life is not having help, but having no obstacles from the chief.

The professor left the academy and hospital in 2002 due to health problems. Through the next years he was interested in his department, the professional and personal life of its staff. Professor Roszkiewicz died on 12th September 2014 after a long and serious disease. He is buried at the cemetery in Gdańsk Oliwa. He will always live in our memory as a respectful chief, an inquisitive pathologist, a devoted teacher and a good man.

The professor's death is a great loss to all his colleagues from various academic centers, leaving us with a deep sense of emptiness, especially those who were privileged to become his real friends. His ability to lead dialogue, his both humanistic and scientific perception of the world, openness, loyalty and the fact that he always searched for consensus without barriers are the features we will never forget. He was always kind, warm, but also forthright in opinions

whenever we discussed all scientific, professional or personal matters.

The emptiness that appeared after his demise seems now impossible to fill, but soon the colourful leaves of oblivion will start to fall down, the leaves of autumn that come after the sunny days of his life. Although he is not personally with us anymore, he has begun his new life already inside us, in our thoughts, hearts and memory...

Let the memory last till we meet again free of the ordinary everyday concerns.

Hail to his memory.

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*The photography of Prof. A. Roszkiewicz
was made by Prof. A. Kurnatowski.*