

In memoriam

Professor Marek P. Dąbrowski, MD, PhD, was born 10 January 1938 in Lwów, Poland. He graduated from Tadeusz Reytan Secondary School in 1955. In 1962 he received his diploma from the Medical Department of the Medical University in Warsaw.

Interested in the homeostasis mechanisms, he focused his attention mainly on the clinical disciplines associated with physiological basis of medical procedures: internal medicine with endocrinology and neurology, and from the fundamental biological disciplines – histology with embryology, as well as physiology and pathophysiology. The above interests helped to shape his subsequent professional development. He was a visionary in immunology. Immunology in the 1960s, through the discovery of the role of the thymus, subpopulations of T and B lymphocytes as well as the immunological cellular response mechanisms, radically reshaped the traditional view of the immunological system. Aside from its defensive role through the humoral mechanisms, the newly discovered functions began to emerge in our understanding of the immunological system. Immunological tolerance, recognition of organism's own tissues and destruction of the hostile ones, cooperation between individual cells, aid in the blood production process, multihormonal disorders after thymectomy – they all pointed to the homeostatic role of the immunological system and its functional relation to both nervous and hormonal systems.

In 1969 he received his PhD in the Military Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology for his thesis on role of thymus in polyarthritis. The results of his work, indicating the dependency of the cellular immunological response on the thymus as well as its influence on the pace of cellular proliferation of the lymphocytes, inspired further research.

The above research based upon the system of synchronized growth of lymphocytes devised by J. Steffen and A. Michałowski constituted the basis for his postdoctoral dissertation *Renewal of cellular response (reactive T lymphocyte type) in the lymphoidal population deprived of the influence of the thymus*. In 1975 he received the title of professor *con venia legendi* specializing in immunology.

The above period had been decisive for his later work – it specified his interests and led to his further scientific independence. Frequent contacts with globally renowned immunologists, his proficiency in the English language and new scientific methods (above all the system of microculture technique for human lymphocyte culture) created the conditions for the broadening of his field of research from



experimental immunology to the clinical approach.

In 1976 professor Dąbrowski changed his place of work from the Institute of Pathophysiology (which was more theoretically oriented) to the Immunological Department in the Institute of Infectious and Parasitic Diseases of the Medical University in Warsaw (representing clinical approach to research), where he created the Laboratory of Cellular Immunology from scratch. He then devised a system of immunological monitoring for the purpose of treat-

ment results verification. The innovative character of the method consisted in the ability of simultaneous assessment of immunological competence of T lymphocytes and immunogenous activity of the monocytes. In September 1980 he founded (with his co-workers from the Institute) the NSZZ Solidarność Circle of the Workers of Science, Technology and Education, later renamed No. 604 NSZZ Solidarność Circle, and was elected its first chairman.

During the years of 1981–1984, after the first free elections in Poland, he was elected dean responsible for students' education at the Medical University in Warsaw. The need for practical applications stemming from the advancements in the field of immunology, up to date until today, results from its interdisciplinary character in terms of various medical specializations and introduces important elements of integration into those fields.

By the end of 1987 professor Dąbrowski had established Immunological Department together with the Immunodeficiency Clinic of the Central Teaching Hospital of the Ministry of the Interior and Administration in Warsaw which he headed until the end of April 1999. In the same year, he went on to work at the Military Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology in Warsaw (Department of Microwave Safety). The research profile of the Institute entailed a broad spectrum of biological influences of electromagnetic fields, with a special focus on the influence of microwaves (cell phones, radar, radiolocation) on the defensive and regenerative functions of the immunological system. In 2009 Marek Dąbrowski received the title of professor from the President of Poland. In April 2010 he was elected to serve as Assistant Director for Scientific Research in the Military Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology.

Professor was an advisor for 5 finished doctoral dissertations, and a reviewer and member of the examination panel for 12 doctoral dissertations and one postdoctoral dissertation. Apart from the membership in the Polish Socie-

ty of Experimental and Clinical Immunology, he was a member of the Polish Medical Association, the Polish Society for Atherosclerosis Research, the Polish Radiation Research Society and an honorary member of Jeremi Czaplicki Association of Thymotherapy in Poland.

He was the author and co-author of more than 200 original papers and 3 monographies, among other, *Immunoregulatory role of the thymus*, CRC Press (Boca Raton, FL.), edited in 1990. The two books published by him in the Sanmedia Press in Warsaw in 1994, entitled *Immunological System – Your Private Doctor* and *Thymus, Immunity, Health* edited by Trangunum in 2006, became the Polish “echoes” of the above-mentioned first monography. The concept of the above works was to present in a way accessible to practitioners the role of the immunological system in the organism in line with the state-of-the-art knowledge on the subject, as well as to show the conditions, including

therapeutic process, in which this system can correctly perform its functions.

Professor Marek Dąbrowski had broad personal interests. He actively practiced sports such as skiing and tennis as well as shooting and hunting. In his spare time he did DIY (wood), painted (pastels), played the piano and wrote short stories and poetry.

On 9 August a Renaissance man passed away, an erudite, but most of all a doctor and a great friend. It is difficult to speak of him in the past tense for he still is, and will remain, in the memory of all those who had met him.

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