

IN MEMORIAM

PROFESSOR ZBIGNIEW (BOB) KABATA
(1924 – 2014)



Fig. 1. Zbigniew Kabata during World War II. (Courtesy of Dr David I. Gibson)



Fig. 2. Prof. Zbigniew Kabata in 1982 at ICOPA V in Toronto, Canada. (Photo by Dr David I. Gibson)

Professor Zbigniew (Bob) Kabata, renowned, highly respected Polish and Canadian parasitologist died on 4th July 2014 in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, at the age of 90. He is best known as one of the distinguished pioneers in the fields of fish parasitology and fish diseases. Like the rest of the parasitological community, we too grieve at his passing and will miss his wise counsel on the Editorial Board of *Acta Parasitologica*, where he served for many years. When reviewing manuscripts for publication, his expertise in parasitology was legendary and his guidance, constructive comments, meticulous attention to detail and his goodwill were always greatly appreciated by authors and our Editorial Board. As few before him, he was a scholar extraordinaire with a rich, multifaceted personal history: Polish war hero, outstanding intellectual, famous poet, writer, translator, scientific administrator – and above all – eminent parasitologist.

Prof. Kabata was born March 17, 1924 in the Carpathian town of Jaremcze (Yaramche), previously in Poland, now in Western Ukraine since World War II. With the invasion of Poland by Germany in 1939, he left school, the Marshal Józef Piłsudski Military Academy in Lwów (Lvov) and joined the Armia Krajowa, the Polish underground resistance (guerrilla) army. He fought the Nazis (1940–1945), became in his own words “an accomplished machine-gunner”, led raids, was cited for bravery several times and wrote patriotic poems and

partisan songs. Years later (1964) in Aberdeen, Scotland, he was to write his most famous poem “Paying Tribute to the Underground Army”; it can be found engraved on memorials and plaques throughout Poland. Poland’s highest decoration, Grand Commander (with star) of the Order of Polonia Restituta was presented to him (1996) for his heroism and distinguished war record that included: Partisan Cross, War Order of Virtuti Militari (Class V), Home (Underground) Army Cross, Cross of Valour (twice), Polish Army 1939–1945 War Medal (two bars), Gold Medal for Contributions to the Defensiveness of the Country, Medal Pro Memoria and Polish Armed Forces Gold Medal.

After the Soviet invasion of Poland, he escaped to Italy, rejoined the Free Polish Force with the British 8th army and after the war moved to England (1946). After 6 months of vocational training in marine fisheries he became a deck-hand on a North Sea trawler out of Aberdeen. As a deep-sea fisherman he became fascinated with the science of marine fisheries, an area of study that he would pursue the rest of his life.

He subsequently enrolled in the University of Aberdeen, Department of Zoology (1951) and graduated (1955) with 1-st Class Honours BSc in Zoology. Shortly thereafter in Aberdeen he joined Scotland’s Marine Laboratory (Scottish Department of Agriculture and Fisheries) as parasitologist and founded the Parasitology Unit. He was awarded the Ph.D from

the University of Aberdeen in 1959 and later the D.Sc in 1966 in recognition of his considerable contributions to the taxonomy of parasitic Copepoda and his pioneering studies on parasites as biological tags. In 1967 he was recruited by Leo Margolis to head the Parasitology Laboratory at the Pacific Biological Station at Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada where he was to remain until his retirement in 1989 as Senior Scientist. At the Biological Station he headed the Marine Fisheries Division (1975–1985) and also served as chairman of the station Research Advisory Council (1974–1983). From 1977 until his retirement he was a consultant for fish health projects in South–East Asia. Though officially retired he continued to come to his lab even into 2014. A 29 min video film of *Kabata: Evolution of a Scientist*, produced by Langley in 2001, documents his life and has interviews with Dr Kabata. It can be viewed at www.science.gc.ca. He married an Irish physician, Mary Ann Montgomery, in 1953; they have a daughter Marta and son Andrzej.

As a parasitologist, he is recognized internationally as the foremost expert on parasitic Copepoda. He has 159 refereed scientific publications, in four languages, that include his classic book *Parasitic Copepoda of British Fishes* (1979; 720 pp.; 2031 figures), with an extensive general introduction to parasitic Copepoda, and books, *Crustaceans as Enemies of Fishes* (1970: 171 pp.) and *Parasites and Diseases of Fishes Cultured in the Tropics* (1985; 315 pp.). He has described over 20 new genera and over 100 new species. He has been honoured by having some 23 parasites, mostly copepods but including some helminths and Myxozoa, named after him. He was elected founding president of the world Association of Copepodologists (1984–1987). Early in his career he translated two important Russian books: (1961) Dogiel V.A., Petrushevski, G. and Polyanski Yu.I., *Parasitology of Fishes* and (1964), Dogiel V.A. *General Parasitology*. Both translations have had considerable impact outside of the U.S.S.R by opening up the extensive Russian literature and stimulating more interest in the ecological aspects of host-parasite relationships. No less significant is his pioneering research on use of parasites as biological tags for fish stock identification, a technique that has since greatly influenced marine fisheries management. He has received many honours for his scientific contributions, among them: Wardle Medal from the Parasitology Section of the Canadian Society of Zoologists (1977), Konstanty Janicki Medal from the Polish Parasitological Society (1984), K. Demel Medal from the Sea Fisheries Institute, Gdynia, Poland (1998), the first to be recognized for an Eminent Parasitologist Award from the American Society of Parasitologists (2004) and the Order of Canada (2008). He was awarded honorary memberships in the British Parasitological Society, Polish Parasitological Society, Canadian Zoological Society and Parasitological Society of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Dr Kabata has served on the editorial boards of other journals, including: *Journal of Crustacean Biology*, *Journal of Parasitology*, *Systematic Parasitology*, *Canadian Journal of Zoology* and *Acta Ichthyologica et Piscatoria*. Because of his meticulous scientific work and knowledge of Greek and Latin, he served from 1984 to 1999 as a Commissioner with the International

Commission on Zoological Nomenclature. He has two honorary degrees, D.Sc from The Faculty Marine Fisheries and Food Technology of the Academy of Agriculture in Szczecin, Poland (1993) and D. Litt from Malaspina University-College, Nanaimo, British Columbia (2002). He is the first person to receive the Immigrant Achievement Award from the Canadian Bar Association, Immigration Branch (2002).

Some of his literary activities include prize winning articles of his war experiences in the Polish Daily (London), BBC and Radio Free Europe broadcasts of his stories and poems, and two books in Polish (1993), one of his poems (*Verses*) the other, *Harvest of the Deep*, of early experiences as a deep-sea fisherman out of Aberdeen.

Professor Zbigniew (Bob) Kabata was that rare renaissance man who impressed colleagues, friends and students with his personality, wisdom and goodwill and with his genuine enthusiasm for scientific endeavour. He was a deeply thoughtful, humble, and wise person who loved to share his experiences with younger scientists; he enriched the lives of everyone he met. His passing is a huge loss to Polish, European, East Asian and North American parasitological communities.

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