

Obituary Professor in Ordinary Dr. hab. med. Adam Kunicki (1903–1989)

Prof. Dr. hab. med. Adam Kunicki was born in 1903 in Frysztat. He received the degree of doctor of medicine in 1928 at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. He then joined the staff of the Neurological-Psychiatric Clinic of Prof. Plitz in Kraków for two years and worked in the Department of Neurology in Łódź. In 1931 he spent a six-month neurological training period with Clovis-Vincent in Paris. In 1936 he started work in Warsaw in the first Department of Neurosurgery in Poland headed by Dr. Jerzy Choróbski. During this period he published his first paper on brain neoplasms, surgery of the hypophysis and intracranial hypotension. After the war A. Kunicki returned to Kraków and organised in 1945 the second Department of Neurosurgery in Poland. In 1948 he was appointed docent of neurosurgery and in 1951 professor at the newly organised Department and Clinic of Neurosurgery of the Medical Faculty at the Kraków University. It is here that the first centre of neuroradiology was opened, directed by Docent Dr. Spett. Furthermore Professor Kunicki organised and equipped the Laboratory of Histopathology of Neoplasms of the central nervous system, where future neuropathologists were trained. At the beginning of the '50-ies he travelled to various neurosurgical centres in the USA and Canada and to Moscow and Leningrad. The achievements of world neurosurgery which he had the opportunity to become acquainted with contributed to the development of the



Neurosurgical Clinic in Kraków which during this period achieved European standards. In recognition of his merits in the development of neurosurgery in Poland he was named Professor in Ordinary in 1956. In the '60-ies he became Chief Consultant in the field of neurosurgery and was for many years chairman of the Polish Society of Neurosurgeons. Some of his students were appointed as head of departments of neurosurgery organised at this time, and later of neurosurgical clinics in Szczecin (doc. dr. A. Liszka) and in Gdańsk (doc. dr. J. Chmielewski).

During the period of his activity at the Kraków Clinic of Neurosurgery Professor Kunicki published 51 papers presenting a wide spectrum of surgical treatments of brain and spinal cord tumours. Particularly noteworthy among these are those concerning operative treatment of pineal gland tumours, curability of subcortical glia tumour and the morphological criteria of malignancy of these neoplasms. A number of his papers dealt with the transdural modification of the Frazier operation for the treatment of neuralgia of the trigeminal nerve and more careful diagnostic techniques in neurosurgery such as: positive fractionated pneumoencephalography, ventriculography and cerebral arteriography. Professor A. Kunicki – experienced clinician and specialist in neurological semiology – never omitted a penetrating neurological analysis of each patient and always exacted the same accuracy from his assistants.

In 1970 Prof. A. Kunicki was offered the position of Director of the Medical Research Centre of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw and at the same time he was appointed head of the Department of Neurosurgery of the Academy. In the five-year research plan he included themes connected with the development and control of brain oedema in cranio-cerebral trauma and neurosurgical operations. The subject was further extended to include studies on the mechanism of control of intracranial hypertension. For the wider dissemination of the results of this research A. Kunicki appointed a Commission of Pathophysiology of Intracranial Pressure (ICP) at the Medical Division of the Academy of Sciences. Its activity led to an extended collaboration of three Polish centres and two foreign ones (the Netherlands and the USSR). The results of research of the Department of Neurosurgery of the Polish Academy of Sciences and method of ICP measurement, at first intraventricular, then supradural and finally lumbar-subarachnoid, with the use of computer technique and supplementary tests, found practical implementation in some centres at home and in the USSR. In his final period of clinical activity Prof. Kunicki was

Vicechairman of the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies, and head of the Committee of Neurosurgical Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences. He was a full member of the Polish Academy of Sciences and Honorary Chairman of the Polish Society of Neurosurgeons. He was also Corresponding Member of the working Groups on Neuropathology of the World Federation of Neurology, Honorary Member of the British, Czechoslovak and Bulgarian Societies of Neurosurgeons, Corresponding Member of the American and Italian Societies of Neurosurgeons. As professor emeritus he continued to support the clinical ICP research and the studies of the Commission on the Pathology of Intracranial Hypertension.

Prof. Kunicki received high State awards for his scientific and organisational work.

He was one of the founders of Polish neurosurgery, a talented neurosurgical operator, he educated two generations of Polish neurosurgeons, and also was a clear-sighted researcher.

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