

Professor Leszek Ceremużyński (1932–2009): a prominent figure in Polish cardiology

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Over 10 years ago, Professor Leszek Ceremużyński (FIGURE 1), a creator and visionary of Polish cardiology, passed away in a tragic car accident.

During his 6-year presidency in the Polish Cardiac Society, he developed a modern, active, and internationally recognized organization. The annual Congress of the Polish Cardiac Society became a well-attended international event. Establishing Club 30, which gathers young, scientifically inclined Polish cardiologists with outstanding clinical skills, was one of his excellent ideas. This concept has been successfully transferred to the European Society of Cardiology (ESC) and resulted in launching a new initiative, “Cardiologists of Tomorrow,” which becomes more and more visible and productive. As the President of the Polish Cardiac Society, Professor Leszek Ceremużyński supported physicians of Polish origin beyond the Eastern borders of Poland.

For 15 years, he was the editor-in-chief of *Kardiologia Polska* (*Kardiol Pol*, *Polish Heart Journal*), the official journal of the Polish Cardiac Society. Under his direction, the journal gained impact factor (IF), sparked interest of authors and readers, and several initiatives integrating Polish cardiologists were organized.

As a member of the Congress Program Committee, the Nominating Committee, and the Task Force of the ESC Guidelines on Angina Pectoris, Professor Leszek Ceremużyński played an active role in the ESC. Thanks to his recommendations, Polish cardiology was well represented in the ESC structure. Apart from that, he was a fellow of the American College of Cardiology, as well as a honorary member of the British and Hungarian Cardiac Societies.

Professor Leszek Ceremużyński pursued innovative research with his unique contributions in the field of neurohormonal responses



FIGURE 1 Professor Leszek Ceremużyński at Grochowski Hospital, Warsaw, Poland, in 2000 (the author's private collection)

in myocardial infarction, limitation of infarct size, and sudden cardiac death prevention. His publications were cited in classic cardiology textbooks. He initiated and performed the first Polish multicenter trials (Polish Amiodarone Trial, Pol-GIK [Polish Glucose-Insulin-Potassium] Trial). He introduced multicenter trials in Poland and coordinated several key global studies in collaboration with leading research institutions, such as the Radcliffe Infirmary at Oxford University in the United Kingdom (with Professor Peter Sleight) and the Population Health Research Institute at McMaster University in Canada (with Professor Salim Yusuf) (FIGURE 2).

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FIGURE 2 Professor Leszek Ceremużyński hosting Professor Peter Sleight and Professor Salim Yusuf, with Polish investigators of the ISIS-3 (Third International Study of Infarct Survival) trial, in Warsaw, Poland, in 2000 (the author's private collection)



FIGURE 3 Professor Leszek Ceremużyński and his team at Grochowski Hospital, Warsaw, Poland, in 2001 (the author's private collection)



FIGURE 4 Professor Leszek Ceremużyński and Andrzej Budaj in the Professor's house (the author's private collection)

Forty years ago, Professor Leszek Ceremużyński established and developed an academic center, the Department of Cardiology of the Centre of Postgraduate Medical Education at the Grochowski Hospital in Warsaw. He encouraged medical students and young doctors to join the department and stimulated various fundraising activities (eg, Proclinica Foundation) to obtain modern equipment. He built an effective, well-educated, trained, and hard-working team dedicated to patients, as well as provided high-quality medical education and conducted excellent research (FIGURE 3).

We remember Professor Leszek Ceremużyński as an ambitious visionary, highly self-demanding clinician, researcher, academician, and mentor. He was an unusually creative, intellectually stimulating figure, focused on high ethical standards, innovations, and tradition.

It was a true privilege for me to learn from Professor Ceremużyński, my great mentor, and work with him for 35 years (FIGURE 4). My team and I are honored to lead and further develop our department, continuing the tradition of the Warsaw Academic School of Cardiology, which shaped Professor Leszek Ceremużyński.

ARTICLE INFORMATION

CONFLICT OF INTEREST None declared.

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