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MEMORIES OF PROFESSOR WITOLD KLONECKI

The first time I met Professor Witold Klonecki was in the early seventies. I was then a student of the third year of applied mathematics in the University of Wrocław and he conducted a seminar on applications of probability theory. In



Professor Witold Klonecki

my student's book I find also entries on other teachings carried out by doctor, and soon docent Klonecki: a lecture on mathematical statistics and seminars on statistics and experimental design. My master's thesis "Estimation of the expected value of the normal random variable under quadratic loss function" was mathematical enough to suit future work in the Statistics Section of the Institute of Mathematics of the Polish Academy of Sciences, headed by Witold Klonecki since 1970. He succeeded there Stefan Zubrzycki, a respected statistician who untimely died in 1968.

Klonecki's applied research started in 1963 with his PhD thesis on phenotypic functions, supervised by another statistician from Wrocław, Julian Perkal. His studies on population genetics were continued while he was employed in Poznań Branch of the Institute of Mathematics of the Polish Academy of Sciences and then they were extended into other important applied areas through frequent contacts and works for Jerzy Neyman from Berkeley University.

Work at the Institute of Mathematics of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Witold Klonecki built the Statistical Section of the Institute anew. His group started with graduates in applied mathematics, from the Wrocław University, who were interested in research in mathematical statistics: Stanisław Gnot,

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Andrzej Kozek, Teresa Ledwina, Marek Musiela, Tadeusz Bednarski and Roman Zmyślony. The “team” quickly achieved a considerable scientific efficiency and published papers in very good scientific journals. Klonecki helped to build our international contacts and highly valued diversity in our scientific interests. In addition, his close contacts with Jerzy Neyman let him arrange a possibility for postgraduate studies for young Polish statisticians in the Department of Statistics of the University of California in Berkeley. Among prominent visitors and lecturers of our department were Frank Hampel, a co-founder of robust methods in statistics, Willem R. van Zwet an expert in asymptotic methods, Kjell Doksum known for his work in association measures and coauthor of a valuable textbook used for years to teach statistics in mathematics departments of many excellent universities.



Staff and PhD students in statistics in the Institute of Mathematics of the Polish Academy of Sciences (Wroclaw Branch) and guests invited on the occasion of Prof. Doksum visit (most likely the year 1977). From the left side the first row: A. Kozek, S. Gnot, K. Doksum, B. Koska, J. Łukaszewicz, W. Klonecki, T. Rolski. Standing from the left: unknown name, unknown name, I. Wistuba, G. Krzykowski, J. Szrednicka, unknown name, W. Szczotka, R. Zmyślony, J. Bartoszewicz, T. Ledwina, M. Bakalarczyk, unknown name.

In the seventies and eighties the Statistics Section participated in two important scientific and organizational projects. The first one was aimed to establish regular annual conference meetings for the Polish statistical scientific community - at that time there was no permanent and sufficiently broad platform for presentation of scientific results and for convenient exchange of ideas among

the Polish “mathematical” statisticians. The second one was organization of the European Meeting of Statisticians in Wrocław in 1981. Both projects were the initiative of Witold Klonecki and they were warmly approved by the Polish statistical community. Apart from scientific benefits they were also supposed to mark a more visible place for statistics in Poland, to show an independent and rapidly developing discipline, not merely an area of probability theory applications. Mathematical statistics, on the one hand, became a proper ground for analytical verification of novel inferential procedures and on the other hand it was a rich source of interesting problems for the probability theory. Klonecki was fully aware of these good prospects for statistics.

The first annual conference on mathematical statistics was held in Wisła (a small town in southern Poland) in 1973. The meetings, initially organized by Klonecki with his group of statisticians later on were conducted by statisticians from other statistics departments. In 2013 the 39th Wisła Conference was held.

Klonecki was also very much concerned about our involvement in cooperation with other local scientific institutions. He argued that interdisciplinary data analytic problems were the best source for new ideas in statistical modeling and inference. He helped to organize cooperation with Pathophysiology Department of the Medical Academy and the Chemistry Institute of the Technical University in Wrocław.

The other area of intensive work for the Statistics Section was a doctoral study program in mathematical statistics. In its initial phase the students were very good and their research topics were mathematically advanced and diverse. As time went on the research topics offered to students narrowed while the student numbers were increasing to a degree where good advice and supervision became difficult.

In 1992 Witold Klonecki moved to the Institute of Mathematics of the Technical University in Wrocław where he held the position of a full professor since 1996 till his retirement.

Probability and Mathematical Statistics Journal (PMS). Klonecki knew that steady development of the Polish statistics was also conditioned on creation of a respected scientific journal for the mathematicians working in statistics. Since this professional group was relatively small compared to the entire mathematical community, getting sufficient institutional and financial support for the editorial initiative seemed unlikely. Klonecki came then with a proposition to create a journal specialized in both probability and mathematical statistics. It was a very good idea, specially suitable for Wrocław mathematical community, where probability and applied probability had a strong and successful tradition. Kazimierz Urbanik a prominent probabilist, then President of the University of Wrocław approved Klonecki’s initiative and made necessary

organizational steps for the journal creation. Another prominent mathematician who supported the initiative was Czesław Ryll-Nardzewski. I remember Klonecki's great satisfaction after a meeting, during one of the Wisła conferences, when he told us that his idea finally came to life. Kazimierz Urbanik was the first Editor-in-Chief of the Probability and Mathematical Statistics while Klonecki became the Co-Editor for statistics.

The image shows the front page of the PMS journal website. It is divided into two main vertical panels. The left panel is white and contains the University of Wrocław logo at the top left, followed by the text 'UNIVERSITY OF WROCLAW'. Below this is a search bar with a 'Search' button. Further down, there are links for 'Main Page', 'Contents of previous volumes', 'General Information', and 'Instructions for authors'. A section for 'Kazimierz URBANIK (1930-2005) Founder and Editor-in-Chief (1980-2005)' is followed by the 'EDITORIAL BOARD' section, which lists 'MANAGING EDITORS' (K. Bogdan, M. Musiela, J. Rosiński, W. Szczotka, W.A. Woyczyński) and 'ASSOCIATE EDITORS' (R. Bañuelos, K. Burdzy, T. Byczkowski, R. Carmona, K. Dębicki). The right panel is dark grey and features the Wrocław University of Technology logo at the top right. The journal title 'PROBABILITY AND MATHEMATICAL STATISTICS' is prominently displayed in large white letters, with 'FOUNDED BY KAZIMIERZ URBANIK' written below it.

Present front page of the PMS journal (<http://www.math.uni.wroc.pl/~pms/>)

The first few years were difficult for the new journal. The author himself could experience some of those difficulties as the secretary of the journal. The organizational work was still shaping up. Moreover, after introduction of the martial law in Poland in 1981 edition of the journal was stopped for about two years (decisions like these concerned many journals in Poland). The authors whose papers were already accepted for publication were concerned about the delays. In spite of those problems PMS was a great success of Polish probabilists and statisticians and a reason for particular satisfaction for Witold Klonecki.

S. Gnot, W. Klonecki and R. Zmyślony, <i>Best unbiased linear estimation, a coordinate free approach</i>	1 - 13
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Contents of the first issue of PMS. (<http://www.math.uni.wroc.pl/~pms/>)

The scientific work of Witold Klonecki. His first scientific contribution was closer to pure mathematics. The paper was about a uniform convergence with respect to a fundamental set of functionals and it appeared in *Colloquium Mathematicum* (Klonecki 1957). His later research work, associated exclusively with applied probability or with mathematical statistics can be divided into two periods. The first one concerned studies in population genetics and in stochastic modeling of carcinogenesis. Mathematically it was related to analysis of mixtures of Poisson distributions. This research was inspired by Jerzy Neyman with whom Klonecki had quite regular contacts. Examples of publications from that period are in Klonecki (1970, 1971, 1972).

The second large account of his research was associated with an area which Klonecki initiated and promoted in the Statistical Section of the Mathematical Institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences. It was, broadly speaking, linear models and linear methods in statistical inference. He closely cooperated there with Stanisław Gnot, Roman Zmyślony and Stefan Zontek. Special praise should be given to the results of his work carried out with Stefan Zontek as they were

published in the most respected statistical journals e.g.: Klonecki and Zontek (1988, 1992) and Farrell, Klonecki, Zontek (1989).

Klonecki published 36 scientific papers and supervised doctoral dissertations of 14 doctors. A large part of his work appeared in respected international scientific journals. He supported young and talented statisticians, and established a statistical group in the Polish Academy of Sciences that become visible as a respected research group in Europe. He was an initiator of important organizational initiatives for the Polish statistical community.

He was a modest man. His organizational achievements exceeded his professional expectations. He once told me that he had hoped to establish a research group that would be able to study scientific papers in the best statistical journals, a step necessary to understand well contemporary goals and trends in statistics and to formulate important research problems. "I never thought that their work would find its place in those journals so quickly" he said once with great content.

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