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### Communication Accidents During the Sixties and at the Present Time

Wypadki drogowe lat sześćdziesiątych i okresu bieżącego

Celebrating the 80th Birthday Anniversary of Professor Mieczysław Zakryś we have to recall past years we had been working together. In 1965 Professor M. Zakryś became the head of the 2nd Department of Surgery after Professor Feliks Skubiszewski had retired. The work under the authority of Professor M. Zakryś was marked by the atmosphere of excellent example and good cooperation. In those years the 2nd Department of Surgery counted over a hundred places and had been in charge three times a week and every second Sunday. In spite of overloading with clinical and educational duties we had created a few papers which after the years have not lost their meaning and seem to be worth mentioning, especially at the time of the Professor's Birthday Anniversary.

The most appropriate to approach at the moment is the paper written under the authority of Professor M. Zakryś in which I had taken part as a coworker and which was published by PTL (vol. 21, book 38; 1966): *Obrażenia odniesione w wypadkach komunikacyjnych w świetle obserwacji II Kliniki Chirurgicznej AM w Lublinie (Communication Injuries According to the Observations of the 2nd Dep. of Surgery, Medical Academy in Lublin)*. I am proud of the fact I could be one of the authors of this paper, because when I read this paper again after the years I was fully satisfied with the form and the matter.

The experience I had gained working at the side of Professor M. Zakryś (also proceeding this focus) occurred to be very helpful in the following investigations I have been doing on my own.

A great number of traumatological patients among the surgical cases in the sixties gave us inspiration to describe this matter. Undertaking this subject presently we have shaped in the same way tabular arrangement including only the staff from Dep. of Surgery from the period of 6 years, but after 20 years' interval (1985—1990). Let's compare the effects from the two periods.

It is clearly shown in Table 1 (from the previous period) that men were 4 or even 5 times more affected by accidents than women. Taking a look at the present

data (Table 1a) we can say that the percentage of women suffering from communication injuries is rising, the ratio — the number of the injured men to the number of the injured women is 2:1. Comparing the data from Tables 1 and 1a according to the age groups we can observe that the biggest differences between men and women are noticeable in the group of patients under 50. And on the contrary — in the older age groups (over 50) the number of female patients is similar to the number of male patients in both periods.

Table 1

| Age years | Women | Men | Total |
|-----------|-------|-----|-------|
| 15—20     | 13    | 50  | 63    |
| 21—50     | 28    | 206 | 234   |
| 51—60     | 13    | 25  | 37    |
| over 60   | 15    | 22  | 37    |
| Total     | 69    | 303 | 372   |

Table 1a

| Age years | Women | Men | Total |
|-----------|-------|-----|-------|
| 15—20     | 17    | 46  | 63    |
| 21—50     | 52    | 261 | 313   |
| 51—60     | 44    | 80  | 124   |
| over 60   | 51    | 66  | 117   |
| Total     | 164   | 453 | 617   |

The selection of cases cured in the subsequent years with facing of the sort of communication accident is shown in Tables 2 and 2a. Recently all the victims of the railway accidents have been sent for the treatment to the Railway Hospital and this is the reason why we cannot record them and compare with the previous period. Thus in these circumstances the most important subject to consider is the problem of the cars and motorbikes accidents. In the initial period of our observations we have recorded the rising number of motorcycle accidents victims. Recently we have seen the opposite trend which is distinctly visible in the number of cases and percentages (185 — 49.8%; 132 — 25.4%).

Tables 3 and 3a contain a specification of the injuries dividing them according to the region of the body. The total amount of the last specification is generally higher but it does contain comparing matter. The gradation of the head injuries is

Table 2

| Year  | Number of patients |             |             | Total |
|-------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------|
|       | railway            | car         | motorcycle  |       |
| 1959  | 6                  | 56          | 26          | 88    |
| 1960  | —                  | 24          | 24          | 48    |
| 1961  | 4                  | 18          | 15          | 37    |
| 1962  | 3                  | 19          | 39          | 61    |
| 1963  | 6                  | 26          | 43          | 75    |
| 1964  | 7                  | 18          | 38          | 63    |
| Total | 26 (6.9%)          | 161 (43.3%) | 185 (49.8%) | 372   |

Table 2a

| Year  | Number of patients |             |             | Total |
|-------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------|
|       | railway            | car         | motorcycle  |       |
| 1985  | —                  | 83          | 23          | 106   |
| 1986  | —                  | 83          | 19          | 102   |
| 1987  | —                  | 64          | 11          | 75    |
| 1988  | —                  | 79          | 21          | 100   |
| 1989  | —                  | 74          | 25          | 101   |
| 1990  | —                  | 102         | 33          | 135   |
| Total |                    | 485 (78.6%) | 132 (21.4%) | 617   |

also settled in the previously created distribution. The most frequent occurred slight injuries. The serious injuries make about half of the amount of the head traumas. Either formerly or in the last period they were placed on the third position among all the cases considered in this paper. Presently we come across the higher number of the chest traumas but now we hospitalize simple ribs fractures more often than we did in the former period. The leading role in our observations took the skeleton-traumas (fractures and luxations). The problem of the treatment still remains the same but nowadays there is a trend toward surgery and mobility in a short time after effecting quick recovery. In the bottom

Table 3

| Injuries                      | Specification of the injuries (372 cases)              | Number | Total |
|-------------------------------|--|--------|-------|
| Head                          | Brain concussion (commotion)                           | 43     | 82    |
|                               | Brain contusion  | 7      |       |
|                               | Fracture of the base of the skull                      | 5      |       |
|                               | Fracture of the calvaria of the skull                  | 11     |       |
|                               | Multiple injuries of the head                          | 16     |       |
| Chest                         | Fracture of the ribs                                   | 6      | 17    |
|                               | Fracture of the ribs with pneumothorax and haemothorax | 11     |       |
| Scapular arch                 | Fracture of the clavicle                               | 12     | 20    |
|                               | Luxation of the acromioclavicular joint                | 6      |       |
|                               | Fracture of the scapula                                | 2      |       |
| Upper limb                    | Fracture of the humerus                                | 9      | 23    |
|                               | Fracture of the radius and ulna                        | 14     |       |
| Pelvis                        | Fracture of the pelvis                                 | 20     | 20    |
| Lower limb                    | Fracture of the femur                                  | 29     | 109   |
|                               | Fracture of the patella                                | 10     |       |
|                               | Fracture of tibia                                      | 70     |       |
| Vertebral column              | Fracture without palsy                                 | 9      | 11    |
|                               | Fracture with the palsy                                | 2      |       |
| Multiple injuries of the body |  | 90     | 90    |
| Total                         |  |        | 372   |

Table 3a

| Injuries                      | Specification of the injuries (617 cases)              | Number | Total |
|-------------------------------|--|--------|-------|
| Head                          | Brain concussion (commotion)                           | 51     | 129   |
|                               | Brain contusion  | 19     |       |
|                               | Fracture of the base of the skull                      | 14     |       |
|                               | Fracture of the calvaria                               | 20     |       |
|                               | Multiple injuries of the head                          | 25     |       |
| Chest                         | Fracture of the ribs                                   | 49     | 68    |
|                               | Fracture of the ribs with pneumothorax and haemothorax | 19     |       |
| Scapular arch                 | Fracture of the clavicle                               | 18     | 32    |
|                               | Luxation of the acromioclavicular joint                | 5      |       |
|                               | Fracture of the scapula                                | 9      |       |
| Upper limb                    | Fracture of the humerus                                | 13     | 35    |
|                               | Fracture of the radius and ulna                        | 22     |       |
| Pelvis                        | Fracture of the pelvis                                 | 35     | 35    |
| Lower limb                    | Fracture of the femur                                  | 56     | 140   |
|                               | Fracture of the patella                                | 7      |       |
|                               | Fracture of tibia                                      | 77     |       |
| Vertebral column              | Fracture without palsy                                 | 18     | 25    |
|                               | Fracture with the palsy                                | 7      |       |
| Multiple injuries of the body |  | 153    | 153   |
| Total                         |  |        | 617   |

section of Table 3 there were settled multiple injuries (of the head, chest, abdomen, bones) occurring quite often and playing the biggest role as the therapeutic problem either now or in the past. The general mortality for the previous period was 5.9% (among 372 patients 22 died). During the last one mortality was 7.9% (among 617 patients 49 died).

The conclusions drawn from this comparison can prove that in the past, presently and also in the future the matter of communication accidents will create an important problem. The latter touch the hardest young adults which withdraws them from the top of their activity for long or even for the rest of their lives and causes a great deal of serious individual and social problems.

Ending I would like to suggest honouring Professor Mieczysław Zakryś on the occasion of His Birthday Anniversary and to ask him to put his signature under this paper.

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#### STRESZCZENIE

Praca napisana jest z okazji jubileuszu 80-lecia urodzin Profesora Mieczysława Zakryśa. Stanowi porównanie problematyki wypadkowej lat sześćdziesiątych, o których profesor pisał, i okresu bieżącego. Porównania te dowodzą, że wypadki drogowe dawniej i dzisiaj stanowią duży problem. Liczby poszkodowanych są przerażające, a straty — niepowetowane.