



Laudation for Professor Henning Dralle

Your Magnificence, High Senate,
Venerable Doctor, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is with great honour and pleasure that I present the figure of such an eminent scientist, great surgeon-practitioner, Professor Henning Dralle, on whom the Senate of the Jagiellonian University, having agreed to the initiative of the Faculty of Medicine, Medical College, and in the light of explicitly positive reviews adopted by the High Senates of the Medical University of Warsaw and the Medical University of Łódź, decided to bestow a degree of Doctor Honoris Causa.

The conferral of this dignity is a token of acknowledgement on the part of our environment for Professor Henning Dralle's great contribution to the development of science, in particular – the development of uniform surgical treatment of endocrine disorders, his contribution to the development of Polish and Kraków surgery, including the development of modern endocrine surgery in Kraków, and in recognition of Professor Henning Dralle's efforts to involve our Polish surgeons in international, across-centre studies focused on optimising the quality of surgical treatment of endocrine disorders, as well as the promotion of Kraków and the Jagiellonian University by entrusting them with the organisation of extremely prestigious scientific congresses of Europe-wide and worldwide importance.

Most of us present here, perfectly know scientific and managerial activities of Professor Dralle, but let me briefly remind the most important aspects of his achievements, as for many years he was my mentor and, I dare say, also my friend.

Professor Henning Dralle was born in 1950 in Lower Saxony in Germany. He was brought up in a family of doctors – his grandfather was a veterinary doctor and his father was a surgeon, which, with no doubt, influenced Professor Dralle's career choices. Although the father and the son never had the opportunity to work together, and as a young doctor Henning Dralle did



not learn surgical techniques from his father, he obtained something much more precious from his parent – a deep faith in the significance of bringing relief to the patient and a sense of responsibility for his future. Henning Dralle graduated from the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Heidelberg in 1976, whereas in 1977 he obtained the right to practice as a doctor and started work in the University Medical Center in Hamburg. In 1979 he began his specialisation in the area of general surgery in the Hannover Medical School under the supervision of Professor Rudolf Pilchmayr. As fate would have it, at the beginning of his professional life he worked under the supervision of a world-format pioneer of liver transplantation in Germany, the master in his field, who was a second figure after his father shaping the ethos of surgeon and researcher in the young Professor Dralle. He completed his specialisation in 1985 by becoming a specialist in general surgery. In his further professional work under the supervision of Professor Pilchmayr he focused on abdominal surgery, oncologic and endocrine surgery as well as liver and kidney transplantation. In 1986 he obtained habilitation and in 1990 he was granted the title of extraordinary professor, and since 1994 he has been a full professor of surgery and has performed the function of the head of the Department of General, Visceral and Vascular Surgery, Faculty of Medicine, Halle-Wittenberg University in Halle/Saale, Germany already with the reputation of a world-wide authority in the field of general and endocrine surgery. In his surgical department he has developed the discipline of endocrine surgery and has built up a strong team specialising in the field and carrying out a multi-threaded research activity from basic research, through translational research and numerous clinical studies. In 2012 he received an honorary degree from the University of Bergen in Norway.

Professor Dralle was President of the German Association of Endocrine Surgeons (CAEK) twice in the years 1997–2000, and again in 2006–2009, he was also President of the German Thyroid Association in 2005–2011, President of the International Association of Endocrine Surgeons (IAES) in 2005–2007, Secretary of the Division of Endocrine Surgery (DES) of the European Board of Surgery in 1999–2007, and President of the European



Society of Endocrine Surgeons (ESES) in 2008–2010.

At the same time, Professor Dralle is a member of several prestigious scientific associations, including: European Thyroid Association (ETA), British Association of Endocrine and Thyroid Surgeons (BAETS), International Society of Surgery (ISS). He is also a correspondent member of the American Association of Endocrine Surgeons (AAES), and a member of American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists, fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England (RCS), fellow of American College of Surgeons, and member of the European Board of Surgery – Endocrine Surgery division (FEBS-ES).

Professor Dralle has penned over 620 publications in recognised medical journals, 180 chapters in books and reviews. He published his works in the most prestigious medical journals, including the New England Journal of Medicine, Cancer Research, Cancer, Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism, Thyroid, Annals of Surgery, Surgery, and the World Journal of Surgery. Professor Dralle's Hirsch index is 55, and the total number of citations exceeds 12,500 (according to ISI Web of Knowledge Core Collection – as of 30 June 2015).

Professor Dralle is the editor-in-chief of Der Chirurg magazine, co-editor of Langenbeck's Archives of Surgery and a member of several editorial boards in recognized international surgical journals in the British Journal of Surgery and the Polish Surgical Review.

The main scientific interests of Professor Dralle include clinical and translational research in the field of endocrine surgery: thyroid, parathyroid, and adrenal diseases as well as neuroendocrine tumours. His publications fall into several leading thematic areas covering issues of thyroid immunohistochemistry, xeno-transplantation of endocrine tumors in an experimental model, molecular biology of thyroid and other endocrine neoplasms, surgery of multiple endocrine neoplasia type 1 and type 2, surgery of paraganglioma syndroms, surgery of thyroid cancer, including medullary thyroid cancer, as well as surgery of neuroendocrine pancreatic tumors. Recently, a lot of attention has been paid to Professor Dralle's



projects related to the assessment of the quality of surgical treatment of thyroid diseases with the use of modern technology in the quality control and optimisation of treatment results (intraoperative neural monitoring of pharyngeal nerves).

As a globally acknowledged authority in the field of general and endocrine surgery, Professor Henning Dralle was a member of expert groups developing guidelines for the diagnosis and surgical treatment of benign goitre (CAEK), thyroid cancer (ATA), medullary thyroid cancer (AACE), the application of intraoperative neural monitoring in thyroid and parathyroid surgical treatment (INMSG), as well procedures involving the cases of postoperative hypoparathyroidism (AACE).

Since the 1990s, thanks to Professor Henning Dralle's efforts, numerous young Polish surgeons and professors, including those from Kraków, were trained under his supervision in the General, Visceral and Vascular Surgery, Medical Faculty, University of Halle-Wittenberg, Halle/Saale in Germany within the scope of widely understood endocrine surgery, including surgical therapy of non cancer diseases, as well as endocrine oncology of thyroid, parathyroid, adrenal and neuroendocrine tumours of the gastrointestinal tract, including minimally invasive open techniques, as well as endoscopic and laparoscopic techniques at a level that in the Polish conditions was unattainable at that time. Professor Henning Dralle's scientific cooperation with the Jagiellonian University – III Chair of Surgery of the Jagiellonian University, Medical College has lasted for 20 years and enabled the implementation of completely innovative techniques in Kraków surgeons' everyday work.

Professor Henning Dralle inspired the establishment of the European Society of Endocrine Surgeons (ESES), whose Second Congress took place on 18 – 20 May 2006 in Kraków. Held at the Jagiellonian University, this prestigious meeting attracted more than 250 surgeons from around the world. A special ceremony featured the conferral of the dignity and honour of the ESES Honorary Member on two world-renowned surgeons: Professor Norman W. Thompson from Ann Arbor, USA and Professor Malcolm



H. Wheeler from Cardiff, UK. Since that time the significance of the Krakow's centre systematically grew in the international arena of endocrine surgery owing to networking and opportunities to conduct innovative clinical research. Thanks to the initiative, efforts and support from Professor Henning Dralle, Polish surgeons work, also as managers, in international research groups and are involved in international projects aiming at the unification of rules and optimising results of surgical treatment of endocrine disorders (e.g. in PETS 2 research conducted in 2010–2013). They also perform the functions of board members of research groups and scientific associations (INMSG, ESES, ETA-CRN). In 2006 Professor Henning Dralle contributed to the setting up of the International Neural Monitoring Study Group (INMSG) in thyroid and parathyroid surgery. He did it together with the Kraków surgeons, members of the Group's Committee. The project has resulted in the unification of intraoperative neural monitoring in thyroid surgery and the publication of international guidelines on the subject (Laryngoscope 2011; 121 suppl 1: PP1-16 and 2013; 123 suppl 4: PP1-14). This in turn enabled many medical centres around the world to implement a consistent model of the quality assessment of surgical treatment of thyroid and parathyroid diseases with the use of intraoperative techniques of neural monitoring of pharyngeal nerves. It was in order to recognise the contribution made to this project by the Kraków centre, as well as thanks to the support of Professor Henning Dralle, that the team of the III Chair of Surgery, Jagiellonian University, Medical College, was entrusted with the organisation of the First World Congress on Neural Monitoring in Thyroid and Parathyroid Surgery to be held in the Auditorium Maximum of the Jagiellonian University from 17 to 19 September 2015.

Professor Henning Dralle is a great friend of the Jagiellonian University as well as the Kraków centre and Polish surgeons. In his review, the pioneer of Polish endocrine surgery Tadeusz Tołłoczko writes about Professor Henning Dralle the following words:

It is with full personal conviction that I describe Professor Dralle not only as a researcher in the field of clinical sciences but also as a surgeon



of international reputation and as a professional and an intellectual, who is sensitive to culture and art, in particular music. An obvious thing is that his personality transcends the notion and role of an expert as the “abundance of knowledge does not teach men to be wise” (Heraclitus). Ancient wise men also used to say that “one doesn't buy wisdom and knowledge in the same market”. Moreover, they knew they that it is not enough to gain expertise and wisdom, but you also need to be able to make use of this knowledge and the gained experience. Professor Henning Dralle not only possesses the knowledge but also knows how to use it; he is also willing to share this knowledge with others, including Polish surgeons, and shows a great deal of talent at this.

In recognition of his merits, Professor Henning Dralle was awarded the honorary membership of the European Society of Surgeons (ESS) during the 15th Congress of this society held on 17 – 19 November 2011 in Kraków.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that it was a great honour for me to present here the figure of Professor Henning Dralle, a renowned scientist and surgeon of a global format, as well as a friend of the Jagiellonian University.

Professor Marcin Barczyński