



IN MEMORY OF PROFESSOR FRANCISZEK TOMCZAK

(1932-2020)

Professor Franciszek Tomczak was born to a peasant family on 29 October 1932 in the village of Przedmieście Góry in the Lublin region.

In 1956, Franciszek Tomczak was awarded his master's degree at the Faculty of Economics and Agriculture at the Warsaw University of Life Sciences. He pursued his academic career at the Central School of Planning and Statistics (*Szkoła Główna Planowania i Statystyki* – SGPiS), where he received subsequent degrees and titles: a doctoral degree (1963), a post-doctoral degree (1972), and the title of professor (1977). From the beginning of his research work, the Professor's professional interests focused on the economics of agriculture and rural areas, the economics and organization of family farms, global agriculture, and agribusiness.

From 1979-1985, the Professor was the head of the Department of Agricultural and Food Economics at SGPiS, deputy dean of the Faculty of Economics of Production at SGPiS (one term), and a member of the SGPiS Senate (two terms). From 1981-1985, he was the dean of the Faculty of Economics of Production at SGPiS.

From 1971, Professor Franciszek Tomczak was the chair and a member of scientific committees, scientific and editorial boards of institutions, publishing houses and organizations, including: the Polish Association of Agricultural and Agribusiness Economists; the Agricultural Economics Division, the Scientific Council of

the Polish Economic Society; the Scientific Council of the Institute of Agricultural Economics; the Scientific Council of the Institute of Rural and Agricultural Development; the Council of Division V Agricultural, Forestry, and Veterinary Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences; Committee on Agricultural Economics of the Polish Academy of Sciences of the Committee for Spatial Economy and Regional Planning at the Presidium of the Polish Academy of Sciences; the Committee on Economic Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the “Polska 2000 Plus” Forecast Committee at the Presidium of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and the Scientific Council of the Union of Farmers and Agricultural Organizations.

The Professor also co-operated with the Food Economy Council (1984-1988), the Team of Consultants of the President of the Republic of Poland for Rural Development and Agriculture (2002-2005), and the Scientific and Consulting Council of the National Cooperative Council (several terms).

Following his retirement from the Warsaw School of Economics in 2006, the Professor began his research work at the Department of General Economics at the Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics – National Research Institute, where he worked until 2014.

For his achievements, Professor Franciszek Tomczak was awarded by the Minister for Science and Higher Education (1971, 1975, 1984) and the Minister for Agriculture (1977); he also received the Knight’s Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta (1977), the Officer’s Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta (1985), the Medal of the Commission of National Education (1983), the badge of honor “Meritorious Agriculture Worker” (2002), the Golden Laurel of the Polish Economic Society (2004), and the Golden Laurel of the US Department of Agriculture.

The scientific achievements of Professor Franciszek Tomczak

Professor Franciszek Tomczak was an outstanding figure in the Polish science; his works in the field of agricultural economics and rural development represent some of the most important publications in this area. The Professor demonstrated his attachment to land and agriculture throughout his life, but in a special way: by working not on agricultural land, but for this land, agriculture and the residents of rural areas. This was the purpose of his research, publications, expert, organizational, and teaching work. His life path was characterized by promotion and professional career: from a peasant’s son to the most honorable positions in the academic hierarchy.

When writing about the Professor’s achievements, a number of dimensions of these achievements need to be taken into account, in particular:

- research and publications,
- educational and popularizing work,
- training of scientific staff,
- expert and advisory roles,
- organizational activities.

Professor Franciszek Tomczak wrote over 500 publications. The most important ones include:

1. The evolution of agriculture in Poland in the period of centrally planned economy and links between agriculture and other components of the national economy. This trend includes works devoted to the economics of agricultural production, workforce management, development of services for agriculture, land management, and agribusiness.
2. The phenomenon of family farming economy, its sustainability, changeability, and adaptability. This issue is included in numerous works that pertain not only to Polish conditions, but also to agriculture in other countries.
3. Comparative analysis of agriculture in various socio-economic systems, in particular monographs on agriculture in Japan and the United States.
4. International conditions for the development of Polish agriculture and agribusiness – EU and global dimensions.
5. Agrarian policy implemented nationally and within the European Union.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the Professor's publications were among the canon of economic and agricultural literature in Poland and were widely used by students and researchers dealing with the operation and development of agriculture. The Professor authored or co-authored several textbooks and academic books dedicated to agricultural economics.

The issues of family farming economy were covered by two extensive books: one of them (edited by the Professor) was published in 1988 and the other (written by the Professor) in 2005. The latter: *Gospodarka rodzinna w rolnictwie. Uwarunkowania i mechanizmy rozwoju (Family Agricultural Economy: Mechanism and Development Determinants)*, published by the Institute of Rural and Agricultural Development of the Polish Academy of Sciences, is a synthesis of his achievements in research on family farming economy. In this work, family farming economy was analyzed against the background of the changes occurring in the world agriculture and in the global economy in general, both in spatial and historical terms, i.e. in different historical periods and different socio-economic systems. In this book, the author presented the mechanism whereby family farming economy was adapted to diverse and variable natural conditions and to equally diverse institutional and economic constraints.

Professor Franciszek Tomczak also analyzed institutional and organizational ways of adapting farms to their environment, including agricultural and rural cooperatives, machinery rings and other forms of cooperation and self-organization of farmers, helpful in confronting powerful corporations in the agricultural environment. He appreciated the role of cooperatives in this respect, lamenting in various speeches and publications the insufficient use of this organizational form of collective action in Polish agriculture.

The Professor was also interested in the evolution and importance of agribusiness and the role of agriculture in its structure. Carrying out research into farms, agriculture as a branch of the national economy, as well as agribusiness, the Professor identified and described important regularities in the operation and development of

the entire economy, not only nationally, but also globally. He profoundly and convincingly demonstrated that agriculture is not an isolated world in the economy, and agricultural economics is not only one of the varieties of sectoral economics, but also an important part of economic sciences. Therefore, the Professor was always able to reveal something interesting to representatives of general economics, specialists in micro- and macroeconomics, as well as development theory. The Professor used to present his famous charts and drawings showing the paths of agricultural evolution and organizational forms of farms, depending on the level of economic development.

The very important achievements of Professor Franciszek Tomczak, and also of Polish economic and agricultural thought, include an extensive work of his entitled: *Od rolnictwa do agrobiznesu. Transformacja gospodarki rolniczo-żywnościowej Stanów Zjednoczonych Ameryki Północnej (From Agriculture to Agribusiness. Transformation of Agri-food Economy in the USA)*, published by the Publishing House of the Warsaw School of Economics in 2004. For this book and his contribution to Polish-American scientific cooperation, the Professor was awarded a medal of the US Minister for Agriculture, presented by the ambassador of this country to Poland during a solemn ceremony.

Japanese agriculture was another model of agriculture that the Professor had the opportunity to examine in more detail. He stayed in this country three times. After a one-year visit to Kyoto (1994-1995), the Professor wrote a much needed and original work entitled *Japonia. Wieś – rolnictwo – agrobiznes (Japan. Countryside – Agriculture – Agribusiness)*, published by Key Text Publishing House in 1997. While interest in Japan, as a model of economic success, was quite common in Poland (the famous “we will build a second Japan in Poland”), interest in Japanese agriculture and knowledge thereof were negligible. The Professor’s book about Japan is an extensive work that not only contains a description of Japanese agriculture and countryside, including its history, development conditions, structural changes, and links with the other components of the economy, but also enables a better understanding of this country, its problems, peculiarities, and perspectives.

Professor Franciszek Tomczak devoted a number of his works to the importance of European integration for Polish agriculture. He was, among others, the initiator and co-author of the expert opinion of the Polish Academy of Sciences on the expected effects of EU membership for Polish agriculture, developed still before Poland joined the EU. Later, he prepared at least a dozen or so publications and expert opinions related to this issue.

Educational and organizational work at the Warsaw School of Economics

Shortly after finishing his master’s studies (1956), Professor Franciszek Tomczak took up work at the Central School of Planning and Statistics (now the Warsaw School of Economics), where he went through all levels of academic career, skillfully and successfully combining research with educational and organizational work. It is difficult to fully present the results and achievements of the Professor’s academic activity. The most important include:

- supervising more than 350 masters and 11 doctoral theses, including foreign doctoral students;
- heading the Department of Agricultural Economics and Food Economy at SGPiS for many years;
- serving as the deputy dean and dean of the Faculty of Economics of Production at SGPiS;
- developing a number of textbooks and academic books, in particular in the area of agricultural economics.

The Professor was a very demanding thesis supervisor and reviewer of various types of scientific papers, but he also devoted a lot of time and attention to his students, treating them very kindly. He believed that there was no room for mediocrity in scientific work, so he demanded a lot both from himself and from others. Following his retirement from the Warsaw School of Economics in 2006, the Professor took up research work at the Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics – National Research Institute in Warsaw. The Professor's didactic involvement at the Radom University of Technology, where he was employed from 1990-2005, is also worth mentioning. From 1977-1979, he was a lecturer in agrarian economics at the Al-Fateh University in Libya.

The development of the Professor's academic career and teaching qualifications was fostered by his long-term visits to American and Japanese universities, as well as a number of shorter stays at European universities.

Contribution to the development of the community of agricultural economists

Professor Franciszek Tomczak had an enormous influence on what was happening in the community of Polish specialists in agricultural economics, agribusiness, and rural development for almost 50 years. If we were to indicate three Polish scientists who, over the last half-century, played the greatest role in the development of economic and agricultural knowledge and had the strongest influence on the attitudes of scientists in this field, these would undoubtedly be Professor Ryszard Manteuffel, Professor Augustyn Woś, and Professor Franciszek Tomczak. What was the main contribution of Professor Franciszek Tomczak to the development of the scientific community of agricultural, rural, and agribusiness economists? One might indicate the following areas:

- very valuable publications on fundamental issues of agriculture and agribusiness development;
- an innovative approach to research into the role of agriculture and the determinants of its development, taking into account the historical heritage, system and institutional context, and external (international and global) impact;
- a significant position in the international scientific world. Even in the difficult times of communism in Poland, the Professor maintained numerous scientific contacts with foreign institutions, served his internships abroad, participated in international conferences, and was involved in the activities of international economic and agricultural organizations;

- particular emphasis should be put on his great organizational contribution to the development of the organizational forms of the community of agricultural economists. The Professor chaired the Committee of Agricultural Economics of the Polish Academy of Sciences for three terms. He was a co-founder and former president of the Polish Association of Agricultural and Agribusiness Economists (SERiA). The Professor also led for many years the Agricultural Economics Division of the Polish Economic Society. He was a member of several scientific councils and committees of the Polish Academy of Sciences, including the “Poland 2000 Plus” Forecast Committee at the Presidium of the Polish Academy of Sciences;
- the Professor was actively involved in the structures of the Polish Academy of Sciences (first as a correspondent member, then a full member of this institution);
- has always attached great importance to educating young researchers and supported environmental initiatives favoring this activity, e.g. scientific workshops for young agricultural economists, organized for over a dozen years in the Zamość region. The Professor participated in these workshops several times as a lecturer;
- as for the most apparent and perhaps the most important manifestation of the impact on the scientific community of agricultural and rural development economists, it is Professor Franciszek Tomczak’s unquestionable and long-lasting authority as a researcher, teacher, and science organizer.

Professor Franciszek Tomczak died at the age of 88 on 19 December 2020. A highly esteemed and outstanding scientist, as well as an open-hearted and kind man, passed away.

*Jerzy Wilkin, PhD, DSc, ProfTit
Kamila Tomaszewska*

The Professor’s obituary includes excerpts from the chapter *Wkład Profesora Franciszka Tomczaka w rozwój ekonomiki rolnictwa w Polsce* (*Professor Franciszek Tomczak’s Contribution to the Development of Agricultural Economics in Poland*) by professor J. Wilkin from the monograph *Znaczenie rolnictwa – perspektywa historyczna i międzynarodowa. Zbiór prac przygotowanych z okazji Jubileuszu 80-lecia Profesora Franciszka Tomczaka* (*Importance of Agriculture – Historical and International perspective. Collection of Works Prepared on the Occasion of the 80th Birthday of Professor Franciszek Tomczak*), Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics – National Research Institute, Warsaw 2013.