



**PROFESSOR MARIAN GIERULA  
(1955 – 2020)**

Professor Marian Gierula was born in Bielsko Biąła. He graduated from the Technical and Mechanical Secondary School in Bielsko Biąła. From 1975 to 1979, he studied political science with a major in journalism at the Faculty of Social Sciences, the University of Silesia in Katowice. As a student, he became involved in media research. In the third year of his studies, he undertook a comprehensive media analysis of the local weekly “Kronika Bielska” between 1956 and 1976. This research paved the way for him

to take-up the position of assistant researcher in the Department of Journalism at the University of Silesia and further scientific development. Media and periodic communication became the subject of his professional work and life passion.

On 1 February 1980, he started working at the Department of Journalism at the University of Silesia, where he went through further career positions. He led the Department of Journalism from 2003 until the establishment of the Institute of Journalism and Media Communication. The birth of this Institute took place, among others, thanks to his many years of effort.

He obtained his doctoral degree in February 1988 at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Silesia. His dissertation covered the issue of local weeklies. On 22 June 2001, at the Faculty of Philology and Journalism of the Rostov State University in Rostov-on-Don in Russia, he defended his habilitation thesis based on a book written in Russian, and entitled “Polish local press 1989–2000: Typology and social functioning”.

In the academic world, Professor Marian Gierula was recognized by such qualities as openness, honesty, diligence, and enthusiasm. These features allowed him to mobilize his colleagues and students for creative scientific work. His diligence and professionalism aroused recognition in the scientific community in Poland and abroad.

Dozens of his scientific publications in Polish and Russian resulted from his empirical inquiries concerning local and regional media, as well as media

in Russia and post-Soviet countries. Such a legacy has enriched media knowledge by initial results and has permanently entered the achievements of communication and media studies.

The distinguishing features of the professional life of Marian Gierula, who has always been associated with media studies, are the extent and depth of his analyses. Media studies require a combination of both these skills within the approached research paradigm. This paradigm in scientific work for him and for the Katowice Media School, of which he was the co-creator – came to ‘time and space.’

As a leader of the Media School, he was known for inspiring and stimulating the growth of his younger colleagues. Like no other, he was able to enjoy the successes of his colleagues and pupils. Ultimately, he was a real mentor, but also a good human, an empathetic and kind person, sensitive to the needs and problems of others.

Marian Gierula’s energy was not enough for academic research. For many years he worked as an expert collaborating with the press, radio, and television editors in Silesia. He shared his in-depth knowledge of local and regional communication with state and local authorities as well as the media business. Like Irena Tetelowska or James D. Halloran (former chairman of IAMCR), he was convinced of the usefulness of research on journalism and media communication. His experience in dealing with the non-academic world confirmed that media experts could provide socially essential and useful knowledge to practitioners, i.e., editorial staff, journalists, publishers, politicians.

The world communities of media and research community have lost a reliable scholar.

*Marek Jachimowski & Damian Guzek*

UNIVERSITY OF SILESIA, KATOWICE, POLAND

*Photo by Patrycja Szostok-Nowacka*

“[...] Marian Gierula’s activity is a clear example of commitment to the idea of a European scholar who is a member of an informal ‘republic of scholarship’ and to strengthening transborder exchange of contemporary knowledge [...]”

*Aleksander Koroczenski*

BELGORD STATE UNIVERSITY, RUSSIA

“[...] I think that it was his unique feature: He was able to attract people and incorporate them into his inner-circle. We thought we still had a lot of time and that it was just the beginning of our long-term friendship. We thought that we had time for projects, cooperation, visits... We say that some people have a light-weight hand: they are able to finish everything what they start [...]”

*Marina Bierieznaja*

SAINT PETERSBURG UNIVERSITY, RUSSIA

“[...] Meticulousness and accuracy – none of these features reflects him completely. I mean that in his work, he did not miss any details and he accepted all the duties. [...]”

*Sergiej Korkonosenko*

SAINT PETERSBURG UNIVERSITY, RUSSIA

“[...] Marian always gave important conceptual lectures that inspired debates not only during the conference sessions but also long after those sessions. His ability to integrate the audience was noted during his first presentation [...]”

*Aleksander Ostaszewskij*

UNIVERSITY IN KRASNODAR