

The path to science

A. N. Zubritsky

101B, pr. Mira, Moscow, 129085, Russian Federation

For citation: Zubritsky A. N. The path to science. *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. Medicine*, 2023, vol. 18, issue 3, pp. 333–343. <https://doi.org/10.21638/spbu11.2023.308>

Alexander Nickolaevich Zubritsky is a pathologist of the highest category, a member of the European Society of Pathology, Professor. He was born on March 14, 1949 in Severo-Kurilsk, Sakhalin Region in the family of a military therapist. At age 15, worked as a hospital attendant in a pathology department of a hospital in Sverdlovsk and studied at night school for working youth. In 1974, he graduated the curative and preventive faculty of the Sverdlovsk Medical Institute. In 1974–1975, was an internship in pathological anatomy at the basis of Sverdlovsk Regional Clinical Hospital. In 1977, enrolled in correspondence postgraduate study at the Institute of Human Morphology in Moscow on a specialty “pathological anatomy” under the direction of the Hero of Socialist Labor, Lenin Prize laureate, Academician of AMS USSR Prof. A. I. Strukov. In 1990, he defended his thesis “Quantitative analysis of pathomorphological changes in the right ventricle of the heart in group of patients with chronic nonspecific pulmonary diseases” in the I. M. Sechenov Moscow Medical Academy. In 1990, he became a finalist of the Marvin I. Dunn Award for the best presentation in Cardiology at the meeting of the American College of Chest Physicians in Toronto, etc. Author of the 4 rationalization proposals and more 300 published works as sole author, including 27 books (of which 16 are in paper formats, 11 — in electronic versions), manuals and reference books.

Keywords: Alexander Nickolaevich Zubritsky, pathologist, researcher.

I am Zubritsky Alexander Nickolaevich, Russian, unaffiliated, was born 14th March, 1949 in Severo-Kurilsk, Sakhalin Region in a family of medics. My mother: Zubritskaya (Nee Chechulina) Kaleriya Andreevna (deceased), father — Zubritsky Nikolai Alexandrovich (deceased) (Fig. 1), brother: Zubritsky Viktor Nickolaevich (deceased). Common-law spouse name: Yashina Valentina Petrovna (deceased). Children: Zubritsky Vladimir Alexandrovich, Yashin Sergei Alexandrovich (Fig. 2). My father’s parents: my grandfather — Zubritsky Alexander Ivanovich (Fig. 3), my grandmother — Sophie Pavlovna Zubritskaya (Mel’nikova). My mother’s parents were: my grandfather — Andrei Grigorievich Chechulin, my grandmother — Nadezhda Alekseevna Chechulina (Semyanikova)¹.

In 1951, when I was 2 years old, my parents, my brother and I, we moved from an island Paramushir to Sverdlovsk (nowadays Ekaterinburg) where I lived as a child, teenager and a young man. It is necessary to notice that my father has been sent to Severo-Kurilsk to pass military service and has been recommended for promotion. But when the Local Command has learnt that his father was a priest, or, in other words, “pop” (in Russian),

¹ Alexander Nickolaevich Zubritsky // Prabook. World Biographical Encyclopedia. Available at: https://prabook.com/web/alexander_nickolaevich.zubritsky/3579088 (accessed: 06.05.2023).



Fig. 1. A. N. Zubritsky's parents at the 20th anniversary of the Victory over fascist Germany. 1965, Sverdlovsk



Fig. 2. A. N. Zubritsky with his children, Vladimir and Sergei (on the right), at the Red Square. 1997, Moscow

Fig. 3. Father Alexander (A. N. Zubritsky's grandfather) with the 2nd Degree Order of Saint Equal-postolic Grand Duke of Vladimir awarded by the Most Holy Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia Alexy. 1965, Sverdlovsk

they rejected a promotion politely, but immediately. Such orders and manners were everywhere in the USSR when the communist barbarians were in power!²

In 1956, I entered a secondary school No. 3. Then our family moved to the Kirov area, and the 8th class I finished in 1964 (an eight-year school No. 100).

When I have been studying at school No. 100 an incident has occurred, which damaged my blameless reputation, and exposed me and especially my dad, a military physician, a Chief Medical Officer, of the Separate Division of Armored Trains No. 57, operated

² Zubritsky Alexander Nickolaevich // Encyclopedia "Famous Scientists". Available at: <https://famous-scientists.ru/anketa/zubrickij-aleksandr-nikolaevich-14956> (accessed: 06.05.2023). (In Russian)

in 1942–1945 in the South, Kalinin, Leningrad, and Baltic fronts in the relationship and the beliefs of his father and my grandfather, which adversely affected the rest of my fate. Again and again, they casually will remember that relationship, and then “sovok” orders from time to time will tickle my nerves. For example, when I wanted to go to the congress of the European Society of Pathology, a member of which I became for the first time in 1989, poorly educated officials from the State Security Committee with whole party liability questioned the need of my travels abroad (if they can stop a creative process, which became the main goal of my scientific life)³.

So, during the regular cleaning of a class with my schoolmate Vanya Bykov we by chance have thrown a rag directly to Lenin’s portrait. The face of our class teacher, the teacher of Russian and literature, A. V. Lutoshkina, who peeped into the classroom, has covered with red strains. She regarded our act as an anti-Soviet attack. Then to us was arranged an obstruction, our parents were called to school. This all resulted in that we began to think about an imperfection of the world around us. Years passed. We have matured and in the senior classes a circle of young freethinkers was formed. Certainly, soon ubiquitous employees of the State Security Committee chalked us up as dissidents. They called us to the police inspector and tried to find out the adult instigators [1].

They even did not left us alone and when Vanya Bykov and I entered the Sverdlovsk State Medical Institute — we both have been excluded from Komsomol, our behavior was exaggerated, all the people around us were informed; that was typical for Soviet hypocrisy to fabricate visibility of public opinion, trying to dazzle, artificially create visibility of public opinion. Thanks that we have not been dismissed! [2]

That traced was pulled to my internship, then to the years of postgraduate studies, when I tried to defend my thesis that has been impeded for a long time. And than they recommended the work that least of all corresponded to my scientific interests, and also repeatedly suggested me to enter Communist Party of the Soviet Union⁴.

But let’s return to the school years. Half a year I have studied in the 9th class of a secondary school No. 43 with “Controlling and Measuring Apparatus” specialization. But, as the aspiration and draught for a long time subconsciously, and then consciously strived after medicine, namely to pathological anatomy I decided to leave a day school, to get a job as hospital attendant in Pathology Department of the City Hospital, to move to then to the evening school, to go to the medical institute, to become just pathologist, and to devote myself to the service of pathological anatomy. Therefore, in January 1965, when I was in my early 15th, I got a job as hospital attendant in the Pathology Department of the City Hospital No. 21 (Fig. 4). Simultaneously I studied at the evening school for young workers No. 8 and received a school-leaving certificate in 1967 [3].

In 1968 after successful entrance exams, I have been accepted as a student of the 1st course of the Curative and Preventive Faculty of the Day Department of the Institute, which I graduated from in 1974.

During my studies, I have been an active member of the Student Scientific Society at the Department of Pathology where I has performed scientific work entitled “Sudden death from malignant tumors”⁵.

³ Hippocrates’ children // Guberniia. 2003. October 25. P. 12. (In Russian)

⁴ Is it easy to be talented? // Kompan’on [Dubna]. 1999. June 10. P. 5. (In Russian)

⁵ Be devoted to the service of science and truth // Zarya [Taldom]. 1995. May 24. P. 2. (In Russian)



Fig. 4. Alexander Zubritsky as a Hospital Worker during an autopsy. 1965–1967, Sverdlovsk



Fig. 5. A. N. Zubritsky as an intern of the Regional Clinical Hospital No. 1 demonstrating an autopsy to the students of Sverdlovsk State Medical Institute. 1974–1975, Sverdlovsk



Fig. 6. A. N. Zubritsky in his office studying biopsy materials. 1980, Sverdlovsk



Fig. 7. A. N. Zubritsky in his office during an interview with a specific correspondent of the newspaper "Dmitrovsky Vestnik" on topic "Smoke or not smoke". On the desk is visible to the words "Thank you for your no smoking". 2005, Taldom

From 1974 to 1975, I have passed an internship on pathological anatomy on the basis of the Regional Clinical Hospital No. 1 (Fig. 5) (I struggled to receive a permission for this study, I went to Moscow and convinced officials of the Ministry of Public Health of the necessity of introduction such specialization in Sverdlovsk). So for the first time in the Institute appeared an internship on a narrow specialty for the purpose of preparation qualified pathologists! [4]

From 1975 to 1976, I was a Head of the Pathology Department of Neviyansk Central Regional Hospital, though I would like very much to remain at the Department of Pathology of the Institute.

From 1976 to 1983, I was a Head of Pathology Department of the Railway Hospital, the Chief Non-staff Pathologist of the Sverdlovsk Railway (Fig. 6).

From 1983 to 2010 I worked as a Head of Pathology Department of Taldom Central Regional Hospital⁶ (Fig. 7).

Simultaneously I have been a postgraduate student (by correspondence) in the Institute of Human Morphology in Moscow under the guidance of academician A. Strukov. By the way after correspondence acquaintance with A. Strukov in 1972, from that very moment a close and regular exchange of letters between a student of the Institute A. Zubritsky and academician A. Strukov has been lasted!

In 1990, I protected a candidate's thesis. However, after the Higher Certification Commission assertion, I have refused the candidate diploma, because I considered and continue considering that this work, despite of shortcomings, from which a thesis cannot be insured, meets the Higher Certification Commission requirements to doctoral thesis.

⁶ Smoke or not smoke? // Dmitrovsky Vestnik [Dmitrov]. 2005. February 5. P.3. (In Russian); Scientist-enthusiast from Taldom suggests an antitobacco reform // Podmoskovnye izvestiia. 2000. June 2. P.2. (In Russian)

But the most important reason of my rejection (what I have mentioned earlier) was a break of my thesis from “competent” organs, which in the different ways and methods and on various pretexts sent me to Sverdlovsk to defend my thesis, because somewhere remained a document about my pranks in the youth. Nevertheless, the question of awarding me a degree of Doctor of Medical Sciences, without re-protection, because of official circumlocution, not without participation of “competent” authorities, that is regrettable, is still “hanging in the air” [2].

In 1983, I have been compelled to leave Ekaterinburg (I was forced to do this) and since August 1983 I worked in Taldom Central Regional Hospital. Besides, my teacher A. Strukov insisted on my departure. At a new place I at once had steeped in work. For the local gossips I became a kind of a local celebrity, something like a person from a star (Figs 8–10).

My scientific activity passed in the silence of my office, and Taldom inhabitants knew very little about this aspect of a scientist-hermit's life. Once I dropped the words, — “with the Soviet prejudices I have old scores”, — that has definitively stumped local inhabitants, thereby has driven local authorities to distraction, who till now dreaming about phantoms of the past and are returning to the times that smelled as cheap sausage.

During my living in a small provincial town I “have not reddened” and “have not turned pink” at all in spite of the fact that I always occupied fundamental, rectilinear, fair and truly competent position, therefore “I do not give in to training”. It is so because of my family, and a destiny of my grandfather A. Zubritsky, well educated priest, particular. I have his photo in vestments that shows a man with clever, thin face, many features of whom I inherited. But not only a close similarity unites me with my grandfather. Constant opposition to narrow-minded people of the Russian provinces who have labels for everything, and prefer to believe that “who is not with us, is against us” unites us. Having left Ekaterinburg, I thought that the hell has ended, and I have received real freedom. But it was only my illusion! The present hell only began. In Taldom also not everything was so sweet, because the system that ruled with the so-called “competent” methods was one and the same all over the country and operated with not civilized methods in any ways [1].

I will introduce only one characteristic example [2]. In the same building with me worked (now does not work, and thanks God, has very artfully signed off, such people have such abilities) one of these “competent” persons, medico-legal expert E. Yakovenko who was engaged in my persecution since 1983. Throughout many years he constantly offended me, provoked me to different physical actions against him. In due time he said that I am not deserved to represent the Russian science abroad, and that will do so that I will not receive a residence permission and go back to Ekaterinburg, threatening with physical violence by the prisoners and so on.

It is interesting that such people get away with everything, “like water off a duck's back”, everything is allowed to them, they are always right, and they are, as they say, behind the Iron Curtain. Such people in the past years easily sent dissidents like me to the Main Control Unit of the Prison Camps, or to special psychiatric institutions, abroad, or did something so that the person died by chance. In August 1993, E. Yakovenko has provoked me once again and I have exposed him from a section hall where he impudently smoked, not paying attention to my numerous remarks, at this time I made postmortem. He dramatized falling down and receiving some easy physical injuries. Then I was sentenced according to the article 112, a part 2 of the Criminal code of the Russian Federation. But the court had fairly discharged me — at that time perestroika was in full swing.



Fig. 8. Alexander Zubritsky is making report entitled “Asiatic Center of Pathology”. 1995, Beijing



Fig. 9. Alexander Zubritsky with two the USA awards: “The World Medal of Freedom” for significant accomplishments in the field of Pathological Anatomy and “Man of Achievement”, Outstanding Contributions to Pathological Anatomy of Cor Pulmonale. 2005, Moscow



Fig. 10. A.N.Zubritsky with the USA “Gold Medal for Russia”. 2007, Moscow

It is necessary to notice that the root of all evil of this system lies in the works of classics of Marxism-Leninism. The Soviet power is the most disgusting on the earth. To Bolshevik's creatures there is no justification! In Russia it is dangerous to be an intellectual, since in Russia they don't love or respect "clever fellows", and they are not treated very well, or as spoke F. Dostoevsky, "to be succeed in Russia in the civil service, it is necessary to have some limitations of the mind". But sooner or later the lie, which is one of the heaviest sins, is revealed as abscess and liars perish, and truth conquers!

Until we get rid of the Soviet communist system we don't achieve anything! A man has the law to adhere to any belief within the law! And in no case it is not impossible to throw him into prison, or special psychiatric institutions, and even more to put to death! Only in this way, we can guarantee the construction of a civilized and law-governed state!

And in general, the decency and competence of a person must be the only measure regardless of his partisan, national, social, racial, and religious affiliation!

In 1989, I became a member of the European Society of Pathology. In this connection I would like to share some thoughts, how under certain circumstances that were not in my favor, I was lucky enough to join this Society⁷.

At the beginning of 1989, I sent two abstracts in English to Porto (Portugal), where in September would take place the 12th European Congress of Pathology. After a while, the answer had come that my abstracts were accepted and will be published in the official journal "Pathology-Research and Practice". Besides I received a proposal to join this Society.

As I remember, I was enthusiastic, but to become a member of this Society it was necessary to bring an annual payment say purely symbolical, 25 Dutch guilders. This put me in a deadlock. Why Dutch guilders? The point is that the Treasurer of the Society lived in the Netherlands. Where at that time in our "country of fools" could I get these guilders!? There was no place to take them, and no Change Office. I wrote about the situation to the Society: I want very much to become your member, but I have not money. The letter from Treasurer of this Society Professor van Haelst had soon come. I was dumbfounded. "I have paid money for you, — it is desirable to send the debt as quickly as possible!"

I felt myself yearned but nevertheless went to Moscow haunting ministerial receptions. The Ministry of Finance refused delicately: "For such purpose, there is no provision". In the Ministry of Public Health, they were plain enough: "If each expert — doctor, musician, engineer, teacher etc. — will become a member of the International Societies at public expense the country will be ruined". — "The country will be ruined from scientific stagnation, from similar rules from communistic delirium", — I wanted to tell, but kept silent. The way out nevertheless was! I was gained by a practical advice: "Send to the Treasurer of the Society an excellent book on art, published in the USSR in English. He will appreciate it, and it costs enough there". After reception of the valuable book Professor van Haelst seemed satisfied. And I thus became a member of the European Society of Pathology — the third pathologist from the USSR.

In 1990, I became a member of the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases, in 1992 — a member of the European Section of the International Society for Heart Research, in 1994 — a member of the International Society for Diagnostic Quantitative Pathology, in 1995 — an active member of the New York Academy of Scienc-

⁷ Dutch Guilders is too small but it is dear // Podmoskov'e [Moscow]. 2004. December 22. P.9. (In Russian)

es, in 2000 — a member of the Academic Council of the American Biographical Institute and simultaneously the Honorary Member of the Advisory Council of the International Biographical Center in Cambridge (England), etc. [5–8].

In 1990, I became a finalist of the Marvin I. Dunn Award for the best poster presentation in Cardiology at the Meeting of the American College of Chest Physicians in Toronto. In 1993, in Innsbruck (Austria) I have been awarded for the best answer in the “Expert Quiz” by “Pathology, Research and Practice” Editorial Board. In 2004, I received a Gold Medal “International Scientist of the Year 2004” (IBC, Cambridge). In 2005, I was awarded the World Medal of Freedom for Significant Achievements in the Field of Pathological Anatomy (ABI, USA). I received Man of Achievement Award for Outstanding Contributions to Pathological Anatomy of Cor Pulmonale (ABI, USA, 2005). In 2006, I became a Winner of the Encyclopedia “Best People of Russia” where my biography has been published in the section “Homeland glorious sons and daughters”, and I have been awarded a Commemorative Medal “The Best People of Russia”. In 2007, I received “Gold Medal for Russia” (ABI, USA), and a Diploma for Outstanding Achievements with election as the Winner of the Biographic Directory “Who is who: the Russian Edition”, etc.⁸ [9–11].

I would not like to cover completely another aspects on which they continue a frank, but hidden persecution (otherwise you will not name) as a silent terror aimed at my family and me, because it is not my task. The offensive is planned, leading me sometimes to rage and fury while “competent” people (it is still their fault) don’t know what they are doing, or rather; just do not want to be in charge! However it is impossible to live how we lived earlier. Nevertheless, a policy of lie, hypocrisy and discrimination of my family and me calms down and then flares up again. And to punch such ferro-concrete bureaucratic wall to the mere mortal is almost impossible!

By the way, chief scientist of the Department of Pathological Anatomy of Human Tumours of Russian Cancer Research Center named after N. N. Blokhin, RAMS, Academician of RAMS, Professor, Doctor of Medical Sciences Yu. N. Solov’ev wrote the following review in the preface to the book “The Dead Wall”: “The book under the name “The Dead Wall” written by A. N. Zubritsky — not unfamiliar Russian pathologist — one of leading experts in the area of pathomorphology of chronic pulmonary heart diseases, devoted to his biography is offered to attention of readers. The author selected the following construction of the book: the basic dates of his life and activity, a short sketch of his life, practical and scientific activity, the list of his publications without co-authorship, literature about him and appendices. By the way, appendices, in my opinion, are overloaded with facts, that sometimes complicate perception of the text. I am sure that scientific biography of A. N. Zubritsky — talented, but, unfortunately, unfairly not recognized person in our country till now, who devoted himself to unprecedented service for pathological anatomy, following a difficult and at the same time uncompromising course of life, will be interesting to the people who are not indifferent to the destiny of the Russian science” [1, 2].

In conclusion I still want to believe that sooner or later Russia will revive and form a civilized, law-governed state, which collapses the dead wall forever, and in such a state no Russian citizen will be ashamed, and such person as I am will be restored in violated rights and will be recognized still during lifetime! Let it be!

⁸ Gold Medal from England // Zaria [Taldom]. 2004. November 5. P.2. (In Russian); Gold Medal for Russia is to our fellow-countryman // Zaria [Taldom]. 2007. December 14. P.17. (In Russian); The citizen of the world // Kompanon [Dubna]. 2008. April 10. P.4. (In Russian)

References

1. Zubritsky A. N. The Dead Wall. *Autobiographical sketch*. Moscow, Astreia Publ., 2012, 320 p. (In Russian)
2. Zubritsky A. N. The Dead Wall. Autobiographical sketch. *Matematicheskaja morfologija. Elektronnyj matematicheskij i mediko-biologicheskij zhurnal*, 2015, vol. 14, no. 4. Available at: <http://sgma.alpha-design.ru/MMORPH/N-48.html/zubritsky/zubritsky.pdf> (accessed: 11.05.2023). (In Russian)
3. Zubritsky A. N. *Dictionary of International Biography*. Cambridge, Melrose Press Ltd., 1998, 528 p.
4. Zubritsky A. N. *Who's Who in the 21st Century: Famous Russians*. Moscow, Astreia Publ., 2001, 144 p. (In Russian)
5. Zubritsky A. N. *Great Minds of the 21st Century*. Raleigh, ABI, 2005, 319 p.
6. Zubritsky A. N. *Directory of Members. New York Academy of Sciences*. New York, Bernard C. Harris Publishing Company, 1996, 509 p.
7. Zubritsky A. N. *Who's Who in America*, vol. 2. New Providence, Marquis Who's Who, 2003, 5879 p.
8. Zubritsky A. N. *Who's Who*. Moscow, Astreia Publ., 2019, pp. 156–157. (In Russian)
9. Zubritsky A. N. *The Best People of Russia*, pt. 2, iss. 8. Moscow, Spets-adress Publ., 2006, 241 p. (In Russian)
10. Zubritsky A. N. *Who's Who in the World*. New Providence, Marquis Who's Who, 2005, 2476 p.
11. Zubritsky A. N. *Jubilee and memorable dates of Russian pathologists in three years (2019–2021)*. Moscow, Probel-2000 Publ., 2023, 660 p. (In Russian)

Received: August 8, 2023

Accepted: September 30, 2023

Author's information:

Alexander N. Zubritsky — Professor; zubr.alex2012@yandex.ru

Путь в науку

А. Н. Зубрицкий

Российская Федерация, 129085, Москва, пр. Мира, 101Б

Для цитирования: Zubritsky A. N. The path to science // Вестник Санкт-Петербургского университета. Медицина. 2023. Т. 18. Вып. 3. С. 333–343. <https://doi.org/10.21638/spbu11.2023.308>

Александр Николаевич Зубрицкий — патологоанатом высшей квалификационной категории, член Европейского общества патологии, профессор. Родился 14 марта 1949 г. в г. Северо-Курильске Сахалинской области в семье военного терапевта. В 15-летнем возрасте работал в должности санитара в патологоанатомическом отделении одной из больниц г. Свердловска и учился в вечерней школе рабочей молодежи. В 1974 г. окончил лечебно-профилактический факультет Свердловского государственного медицинского института. В 1974–1975 гг. прошел интернатуру по патологической анатомии на базе Свердловской областной клинической больницы. В 1977 г. поступил в заочную аспирантуру Института морфологии человека в Москве по специальности «Патологическая анатомия» под руководством Героя Социалистического Труда, лауреата Ленинской премии, академика Академии медицинских наук СССР профессора А. И. Струкова. В 1990 г. защитил диссертацию на тему «Количественный анализ патоморфологических изменений правого желудочка сердца в группе хронических неспецифических заболеваний легких» в Московской медицинской академии имени И. М. Сеченова. В 1990 г. награжден премией имени М. И. Данна как один из финалистов за лучшее стендовое представление по кардиологии на заседании Американской коллегии врачей-специалистов по заболеваниям грудной клетки в г. Торонто и т. д. Ав-

тор 4 рационализаторских предложений и более 300 опубликованных работ (без соавторства), в том числе 27 книг (из них 16 — в бумажном формате, 11 — в электронной версии), пособий и справочников.

Ключевые слова: Александр Николаевич Зубрицкий, патологоанатом, исследователь.

Статья поступила в редакцию 8 августа 2023 г.;
рекомендована к печати 30 сентября 2023 г.

Контактная информация:

Зубрицкий Александр Николаевич — проф.; zubr.alex2012@yandex.ru