

EULOGY

Professor dr. MIRCEA CUCUIANU

In deep sorrow we express our regrets for the loss of Professor dr. Mircea Cucuianu, one of the remarkable personalities of the medical academic staff, who passed away on December 6th 2017. Professor Cucuianu was the founder of Clinical Biochemistry teaching program in Romania, member of the Academy of Medical Sciences and corresponding member of Romanian Academy.

Mircea Cucuianu was born on June 22nd 1928 in Sibiu, Romania. He graduated the University of Medicine and Pharmacy in ClujNapoca in 1953 and started working as an assistant professor at the Pathophysiology Department in Faculty of Medicine. In 1966 he sustained his PhD thesis. Since then he successively obtained the academic and professional degrees leading to the position of Professor (1981) and of senior consultant in laboratory medicine. He initiated teaching in Clinical Biochemistry in Romania in 1971, publishing volumes in Romanian in the fields of clinical biochemistry (1977, 1979, 1991, 1998, 2002, 2003) and haemostasis (1983, 1984, 1999).

His academic education was completed by fellowships abroad, as a WHO trainee at Mc Master University Hamilton, Canada (1968-1969), at the University of Leeds (1975), at the University of Davis, California (1985). It is worth mentioning that during many decades, the political context in Romania was unfavorable to the opening towards the occidental countries, and the access to scientific information was very difficult. In spite of this dark historical period, Professor Cucuianu struggled to stay connected with fellow scientists from abroad, who supported and appreciated his work. He was a hard working person, meticulous, organized and an enemy of procrastination. He had the vision of both a clinician and laboratory specialist, and the results he published several decades ago, based upon clinical hypothesis are nowadays confirmed through sophisticated techniques. His research interests pointed mainly to the metabolic syndrome and haemostasis abnormalities. His scientific work (over 70 ISI publications, over 600 citations) resulted in articles published in prestigious journals, such as *Thrombosis Research*, *Clinica Chemica Acta*, *Thrombosis and Haemostasis*. His original contribution consists mainly in providing evidence in favour of a relationship between metabolic risk factors, enhanced hepatic protein synthesis and a prothrombotic tendency, and detecting and describing for the first time in Romania some genetic abnormalities of hemostasis.

As a recognition of his activity, he was granted Constantin Miclescu Award of the Romanian Academy in 1993 and the Iuliu Hațieganu award of the University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Cluj Napoca in 1996. He was a member of the Academy of Medical Sciences since 1993 and corresponding member of the Romanian Academy since 2014.

Professor Cucuianu was the head of the Laboratory of the County Hospital in Cluj Napoca, being appreciated and respected by all his coworkers. He considered the laboratory as a tool for the clinicians, with whom he collaborated, giving them suggestions about interpreting laboratory results. At a time when automated analysers and standardized reagent kits were not available, he endeavoured to improve routine activity in clinical laboratories by progressively introducing new techniques such as electrophoresis of serum proteins and lipoproteins (1954), colorimetric assessment of plasma fibrinogen (1960) of free fatty acids (1966), serum cholinesterase activity, gamma-glutamyl transferase (1970), fibrin stabilizing factor XIII (1973), the dilute blood clot lysis time (1979), platelet adhesiveness and aggregability (1983), von Willebrand factor (1980).

He was a remarkable teacher, having trained many generations of medical students and laboratory specialists. He was generous with his time and knowledge, which he shared with his students and colleagues. He was a charismatic speaker; his lectures were always articulate, up-to date, and adapted to the audience. As a person he was very modest, always available to give professional advice. He had high values and a strong sense of duty, being totally committed to his work. Besides his scientific education, he had a solid background in humanities (literature, art, foreign languages) and was very witty, with a great sense of humour, which added a unique touch to his lectures

He was a role-model and a respected and beloved mentor for many generations of medical students, PhD fellows and residents in laboratory medicine.

Professor Cucuianu will be sorely missed by all of us who loved him and appreciated his teaching talent, his passion and generosity in sharing his time, knowledge and professional expertise.

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