

## IN MEMORIAM

### Prof. dr. Florin Hălălău (1933–2007)

One year ago, the Romanian scientific community and Pathologic Anatomy lost one of their great personalities due to the premature death of Prof. dr. Florin Hălălău, a man of wide knowledge and with a special sensibility.

Born in 27 November 1933 in Bucharest, he graduated “Ion Neculce” High School and then the “Carol Davila” University of Medicine and Pharmacy (Bucharest) in 1957, with *magna cum laude*. Beginning with 1957, he has permanently improved his medical training, joining Pathologic Anatomy specialty in 1959. After graduating the postuniversity course of Pathology at “Carol Davila” University, he has worked in hospital as specialist and since 1969, in “Victor Babeş” Institute.

He has followed all hierarchic steps of scientific research: Senior Researcher III<sup>rd</sup> degree in 1973, Senior Researcher II<sup>nd</sup> degree in 1978 and first degree in 1990. In 1980, he became Senior Pathologist. In 1984, he obtained a PhD title in Medical Sciences with the thesis “Morphopathologic changes induced by nitrosoguanine action”.

From 1990 until 2004, he was the General Manager of the “Victor Babeş” Institute. In the same time with the research activity, in 1993 he became Senior Lecturer and in 1995, Professor of Pathology and the Head of Pathology desk at “Carol Davila” University. In 1995, he became also Professor of Pathology at “Titu Maiorescu” University (Bucharest) and then Head of Pathology discipline at the same university.

His main research domains included a large number of themes, presented in many research projects from the national programs, approaching difficult problems of diagnosis.

Subsequently, we shall mention papers about malignant lymphomas, tumors of the soft tissues, tumor pathology of the digestive tract and gynecologic pathology. These researches represented the bases of more than 350 scientific articles published or communicated in our country and abroad.

He also had some priorities in pathology domain: he introduced the Kiel classification for malignant lymphomas in Romanian Pathology (1975); he identified and published a particular form of basal cell carcinoma with angiomatoid stroma (1981–1982); he also has published (together with Prof. I. Moraru and Dr. D. Laky), the first cases of stromal gastrointestinal tumors (1979–1980), insisting on their heterogeneous morphologic aspects.

He published the first cases of AIDS in our country, together with Prof. Ion Moraru (1984).

He made the first immunofluorescent reactions on soft tissues, together with Grigore Ghyka (1985) and studied the morphology and the immunofluorescence of Kaposi sarcoma (1987). He introduced in medical Romanian research and in current practice the identification of genome sequences for Koch bacillus from paraffin-embedded materials using PCR (2001).

The seminars and courses of Professor Florin Hălălău attended by thousands of students from both “Carol Davila” and “Titu Maiorescu” Universities, were always known as being very clear, having a logic structure, but pleasant in the same time.

With Professor Hălălău, students have tried for their diplomas degree, new methodological approaches and clinical-anatomic correlations regarding the angiogenesis of the digestive system tumors, biomarkers in prostate carcinoma and identification of genome sequences of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* on archived formalin-fixed paraffin-embedded tissue samples.

Having him as a teacher, more than 150 pathologists studied and became specialists. Also, he has coordinated more than 20 PhD Medical candidates, who benefited of his competence and his qualities as a scientific researcher.

During the time, he wrote a series of chapters of histopathology in well-known books, such as “Pathologic Anatomy”, edited by Prof. Ioan Moraru (three volumes, 1980) and “Histopathology in Scanning”, also edited by Ioan Moraru and Nicolae Manolescu (1985). He had a significant contribution in writing of “Morphopathology Guide” (1995), “Pathologic Anatomy” (vol. I, 2003), and “Pathologic Anatomy Course” (2004).

He was coordinating editor of “Romanian Journal of Legal Medicine” and board member of “Morphology and Embryology” journal. He collaborated with prestigious institutes from Austria and Germany.



Since 1966, Professor Hălălău was member of the Normal and Pathologic Morphology Society and became vice-president of this Society in 1990. He was also member of British Society of Clinical Cytology, European Society of Pathology, Immunocytochemistry Club London. In 1993, became correspondent member of The Academy of Medical Sciences and in 1999 full member. He was president of the Romanian Division of the International Academy of Pathology since 1995 and in 2000 became member of the International Council of Societies of Pathology. He was member of Supreme Commission of Forensic Medicine and an expert of the Romanian Academy in research projects assessment.

During his scientific life, Professor Hălălău has received the “Meritul Sanitar“ medal in 1984, “Ordinul Meritul Stiintific“ in 1988, “Ordinul National pentru Merit” in 2000, the medal “Dimitrie Cantemir” from The Moldavian Academy of Sciences in 2003 and “Gold Medal for Romania” from the American Biographical Institute in 2006. He also has received “Victor Babeş” award from the Romanian Academy in 1994 for some articles about Kaposi angiosarcomatosis treated with alpha-interferon.

He was designated as “Man of the Year”, in American Biographical Institute in 2000, 2003 and 2005. His biography was published in “Who’s Who in the World”, USA, “Who’s Who in Europe” (Belgium, Romania) and “Man of Achievement”, Cambridge.

Complex personality and a man of remarkable scientific and professional probity, Professor Florin Hălălău represents a model for young doctors, who might embrace this specialty.

Carmen Ardeleanu

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