

## IN MEMORY OF PROFESSOR PAOLO PREZIOSI

The passing of Professor Paolo Preziosi has led to a unanimous feeling of regret, deep sadness and gratitude in the national and international scientific community, particularly in pharmacology. The reasons for this sentiment perceived by all lying in the ability of Professor Preziosi to have dedicated all his human, scientific and academic energies to the growth of Pharmacology at a national and international level. Born in Avellino in 1931, at a little less than 15 years he obtained the high school diploma in classical studies, at just over 20 years, in 1952, he obtained the degree in Medicine and Surgery at the University of Naples under the guidance of his Master Leonardo Donatelli with full marks and praise. In 1958 and 1960 he spent a fruitful period of research at the Institute directed by the Nobel Prize winner C. F. Heymans of the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery of the University of Ghent, Belgium. In 1965, at the age of only 34, he was called to hold the Chair of Full Professor of Pharmacology in the then only Faculty of Medicine and Surgery of the University of Naples. In 1972 he was one of the creators of the foundation of the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery of the Federico II University in the Cangiani Chapel, becoming the holder of the chair of Pharmacology. Here he founded an enthusiastic school of researchers and teachers and a division of Pharmacology engaged in research, teaching and clinical assistance. In fact, the students of this School, founded by Professor Preziosi, continued this task, learned from him, in numerous other Italian universities. In 1979, he was unanimously called to hold the chair of Pharmacology in the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery of Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Rome and the adjoining Gemelli General Hospital, where again and with fervour and tenacity he created a group of enthusiastic and valid researchers and professors who today occupy prestigious academic roles in various national universities. As evidence of this innate ability in training researchers and university teachers and therefore "to do school", Professor Preziosi counts among his direct and second-generation students, the presence, as full professors, in 16 national universities. This commitment did not prevent him from supporting and encouraging Italian teachers from other locations and national schools in the continuation of their scientific and career activities. In 2008, the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore awarded him the honour of Professor Emeritus in recognition of his worthy activity.

The scientific interest of Professor Preziosi has consistently focused over the years, always in collaboration with his students, in the field of Neuroendocrine Pharmacology with particular regard to the hypothalamic control of the pituitary-adrenal axis and therefore to Neuropharmacology, Toxicology and Neuroscience, contributing to the clarification of the mechanisms of release of catecholamines by drugs in the peripheral and central nervous system. The results of this constant scientific commitment have been published in about 500 publications in prestigious international journals.

The Professor's scientific and academic commitment has not prevented him from holding prestigious positions in relevant scientific societies. In fact, he was President of the International Union of Toxicology, Vice President of the International Society of Clinical Pharmacology, President of the Italian Society of Pharmacology, President of the Society of Pharmaceutical Sciences, and President of the Italian Society of Toxicology.

As evidence of his attention to Bioethics problems in research, it is worth mentioning his participation in the National Bioethics Committee from 1995 to 1999 and the position of President of the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery of the Università

Cattolica del Sacro Cuore. With a great spirit of service, he put his expertise at the service of the Government Medicines Regulatory Agency, first as a component of the CUF and then of the AIFA, in which he lavished his ethical qualities and scientific rigor in critical moments for Italian health.

No less relevant was his forerunner intuition at the end of the 1970s of the importance of the transferability of the results obtained in preclinical and clinical research in the world of the pharmaceutical industry, today very much felt in the scientific world, when he assumed the presidency of the Research Society of Tecnofarmaci, one of the first examples of collaboration between public research laboratories and companies.

Finally, it seems right to underline some aspects of the human profile of Professor Preziosi. To those who did not know him deeply he could appear reserved, but he hid traits of shyness and discretion. Behind this aspect instead emerged a remarkable generosity, a great human sensitivity and a high ethical and scientific rigor especially towards those young people who wanted to undertake a career in research and to whom he makes completely available his experience as a university teacher. We cannot forget the fundamental principles that as a Master he wanted to teach us such as the freedom and originality of research, dignity and respect for the human person, as well as solidarity with the weakest and humblest people.

In 2019, just one year before his death, he was awarded the "Pericles International Prize" for his high scientific merits and for his brilliant career, which in previous years had been awarded to the Nobel Prize winners Renato Dulbecco, Rita Levi Montalcini, Sir John Eccles and Sir John Vane. He continued to lavish his energies until the end of his life having agreed to serve as a senior consultant, together with the two Nobel Prize winners Thomas Sudhof of Stanford University and Aaron Ciechanover of Tel Aviv, in the project of construction in Calabria of the "Renato Dulbecco Institute ", a platform for the production of monoclonal antibodies against prionectins under the guidance of the scientist Roberto Crea of San Francisco.

The students are proud to outline his figure as Master in the belief that he can be a reference model for the new generations of pharmacologists.

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