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Obituary

Professor Luis C. Gayotto

Edna Strauss¹

On April 22, 2004 Latin America lost a charismatic leader in Hepatology. Like Hans Popper and Kamal Ishak in the United States, Peter Scheuer and Valery Desmet in Europe, Luiz Carlos da Costa Gayotto dedicated his life to Liver Pathology and was a reference for all latinamericans.

Gayotto was Dean Professor of Pathology at the University of São Paulo, Brazil. He published around 200 scientific papers, including original studies, chapters of books, articles and reviews, in three languages English, Spanish and Portuguese. He contributed to the study of epidemiology and pathology of viral hepatitis. In terms of prevention, belonging to the first Consulting Committee of the Ministry of Health of Brazil, he developed actions to start hepatitis B vaccination, specially in the Amazon region which, according to his studies, is considered an hyperendemic area..

He graduated in Medicine in 1956 at the School of Medicine, University of São Paulo and his postgraduate training was in Digestive Surgery. Extremely interested in the correct diagnosis of his patients, curious about morphological and pathological aspects of disease, he slowly moved from surgery to pathology. Sixteen years after graduating in Medicine he went to London, for two-year training on liver pathology with Peter Scheuer, where he wrote his PhD thesis on morphometry of cholestasis.

When he returned Back to São Paulo, besides a successful academic career, he also developed many associative activities, in different phases, initiating a "Club of the Liver" in the city of São Paulo and collaborating with the Brazilian Association of Hepatology. Later he became president of the Latin American Association for the Study of the Liver. He was very active, setting up epidemiological surveys, trying to connect the different countries and enhance good research programs, based on our reality. Due to his leadership and ability to aggregate people, he was chosen to be the first physician in Latin America to serve as President of the International Association for the Study of the Liver (IASL).



Many years of clinical practice made Gayotto a pathologist particularly involved with the search of clinical data that could better explain the histopathological findings. He would call the physician in order to discuss the patient's diagnosis. He was always available to review difficult cases, becoming a reference for Brazil and abroad. Extremely concerned about improving the level of research in Latin America, he was a leader, fostering young investigators to merge deep in the different fields of Hepatology.

Gayotto was a master in the art of making friends. Although having abilities to argue with propriety, he also used to listen with attention and interest. Besides all his professional merits, he had an honest character, being generous and loyal, the friend one could count on. He was married to Maria Leonor, had four children and seven grandchildren and was very devoted to the family. He was highly esteemed by his students, collaborators and patients. His example of moral integrity, high spirit and devotion to science will last forever in the minds and hearts of those who had the privilege of knowing him.

¹ Assistant Professor.