



A PIOUS TRIBUTE, TO OUR MENTOR, PROFESSOR DR. MIRCEA ANGELESCU

It has been one year since the passing away of **Professor Dr. Mircea Angelescu**, the scientific and spiritual mentor of several generations of Romanian infectious diseases physicians.

In 2010, the 6th edition of the *Scientific Days of the National Institute for Infectious Diseases "Prof. Dr. Matei Balș"* honored the memory of Professor Mircea Angelescu who, through his illustrious personality and his eminent career, has constantly and decisively contributed to the development and the recognition of the Infectious Diseases Specialty and School in Romania, both on national and on international level.

Professor Mircea Angelescu has dedicated his entire life and creative energy to the hospital in which he worked for 60 years, profoundly influencing the destiny and the development of the *National Institute for Infectious Diseases "Prof. Dr. Matei Balș"* from Bucharest. Thus, his passing away on the 5th of May 2010, after a long anguish, has left all his disciples to face a profound pain and grief.

For the younger generations of infectious diseases physicians which shall read this issue of *Therapeutics, Pharmacology and Clinical Toxicology*, we consider that it is useful and instructive to present the career and the personality of Professor Mircea Angelescu, together with certain scientific subjects approached several years back by the Professor, which continue to be as up to date as ever.

Professor Mircea Angelescu was born on December 11, 1923 in Râmnicu Vâlcea, in a family of distinguished intellectuals. He graduated from the Faculty of Medicine in Bucharest in 1947, becoming *Doctor of Philosophy in Medicine and surgery* after only 2 years. During 1944 - 1949 he passed the exams for externship and internship, developing under illustrious professor such as: Francisc Reiner, George Emil Palade, Daniel Danielopolu, N. Ionescu-Sisești, Ion Bruckner, Matei Gh. Balș and others. In 1950, the young physician Mircea Angelescu chose to begin a career in the Infectious Diseases specialty, at the Colentina Hospital, being certified as specialist physician in 1957, primary physician in 1960 and chief of department in 1973.

The university career of Professor Mircea Angelescu began in 1949 when he was admitted as junior assistant lecturer and the "Colentina" Infectious Diseases Clinic I, and subsequently became assistance lecturer (1950), lecturer (1963), assistant professor (1973), professor (1990) and consulting professor (1994-2010). During 1985-1993, Professor Mircea Angelescu was Chief of the Infectious Diseases Clinic I - "Colentina" Hospital, which developed in 1999 into the National Institute for Infectious Diseases "Prof. Dr. Matei Balș"; during 1990-1993 he was Chief of the Department for "Infectious and Tropical Diseases" of the "Carol Davila" University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Bucharest.

Professor Mircea Angelescu displayed an impressive scientific activity having published over 350 papers, out of which over 50 published abroad or presented at international congresses: Milano (1964), Moscow (1967), Athens (1970), Sofia (1972), Warsaw (1973), Surabaya - Indonesia (1973), Jerusalem (1992), Indianapolis - USA (1993), Stockholm (1993), Budapest (1993), Paris (1994) etc.

The scientific and research domains which governed Professor Mircea Angelescu's activity were: *The clinical and laboratory study of antibiotics, Systemic bacterial infections, Antibiotherapy, Acute and chronic hepatitis of viral etiology.*

Within the medical and academic community, Professor Mircea Angelescu has been and shall remain known as founding father of Romania's modern Antibiotherapy, having contributed constantly and decisively during the past decades to the shaping of generations of all-specialty physicians regarding the rational use of antibiotics. He wrote 8 monographs as first authors and over 30 monograph chapters on this subject, most of them published at the Medical Publishing house.

Among the monographs written by professor Mircea Angelescu, we would like to mention: *Manual of epidemiology and infectious diseases* (1955), *The infectious diseases nurse's book* (1958), *Infectious diseases* (translated into Russian) (1960), *Acute bacterial infections* (1969), *The rational use of antibiotics* (1976),

Practical antibiotherapy guide (1988), *Antibiotic therapy* (1988), *Annals of the Institute for Infectious Diseases "Matei Balș," volumes I and II* (2002 – 2003), *The Angelescu Guide – Antimicrobial therapy* (2005), *The 7 sins in antibiotherapy* (2008).

The outstanding medical, teaching and scientific activity of Professor Mircea Angelescu was recognized in 1993 through his designation as permanent member of the *Academy for Medical Sciences* and through numerous international distinctions: *Diplomat of Interregional Training Course of Cholera Control* (WHO scholar, Surabaya, Indonesia 1973), Vice-president of the *European Society of Chemotherapy – Infectious Diseases* (din 1992); honorific professor of the *Indianapolis University –USA* (1993).

For his whole medical and scientific activity, Professor Mircea Angelescu was distinguished twice with the Order "*For Merit in Commander Rank*," in 2000 and in 2010, just before his passing away.

The younger generations of infectious diseases physicians know little about the fact that Professor Mircea Angelescu was a founding member of the *Romanian Society of Writer and Journalist Medics* and member of the *UIMEM (Union Mondiale des Écrivains Médecins)*, displaying a rich belletristic writing activity. In 1964 he published the book *Medics-writers, writers–medics*, prefaced by Tudor Vianu himself. In 2007, he published the memoirs of his mentor, Professor Matei Balș: Skimming through the note books of Professor Matei Balș. In 2008, he published *Olden writings* (volume I), *Olden writings* (volume II) – *Tourism in the "Golden Age". Travel journals*.

Few of the people who were acquainted with the Professor know that he also published numerous essays, poems, short prose, epigrams, theatrical plays, parodies and memorialistic papers. Surely, everyone who has met him knows that the Professor was a man of the arts, culture, history, theater and that he was blessed with a refined sense of humor.

The spiritual wealth and the artistic side of Professor Mircea Angelescu and of his distinguished wife (Mrs. Angela Angelescu) were remarked and appreciated over time by prominent figures of the Romanian literature, theater and film, such as: Marin Sorescu, Ștefan Iordache, Mitică Popescu, Amza Pellea, Ion Caramitru, Dinu Săraru, Oana Pellea. The existing manuscripts and the stories of Professor Angelescu recall the fact that his family played an important role in promoting the Romanian theatrical movement.

In the second part of this paper we shall try to address Professor Mircea Angelescu from the perspective of his disciples, which had the great privilege of having him as teacher and mentor ever since studentship. We were all absolutely fascinated by his Infectious Disease lectures in the 6th year of medical school and by the medical rounds which we performed by his side, which were real lessons, not only in clinical medicine but also in morality, arts and literature. We hold dear Professor Angelescu's lectures, whose profile can be perceived in the lectures we present to our students today. Professor Angelescu had the most pleasant manner of teaching students the differential diagnosis of eruptive diseases, using a short poem:

*"Erupție plus angină egal scarlatină,
Erupția cu catar egal pojar,
Erupție plus adenopatie rubeolă trebuie să fie
Erupție cu vezicule e varicelă, bibicule!"*

("Eruption plus angina equals scarlatina
Eruption with coryza equals measles
Eruption and adenopathy, rubella it must be
Eruption with vesicles, its chicken pox, I tell you!")

This poem has been passed on from generation to generation through the Professor's disciples on to today's students.

Professor Angelescu, through his personality and spirit, has decisively marked our professional destiny, many of us choosing Infectious Diseases as specialty after having had the privilege of being Professor Angelescu's students, interns or residents. It was back in our studentship that we started the life-long process of learning from our mentor the thoroughness of research work and of scientific creation and we learned to understand and love the art of medical writing.

Professor Angelescu has always had the talent of selecting, encouraging, supporting and promoting young doctors with teaching skills, continually creating clusters of valuable, dynamic, competitive, creative physicians which transmitted over the course of years and of generations the cultural, scientific and human values learned from their mentor.

In the medical and the Academic world, it is well known that Professor Angelescu was one of the main figures that carried on the prestigious School of Infectious Diseases Colentina, founded back in 1892 by Dr. Calistrat Grozovici and continued by Professor Matei Balș and by other illustrious professors.

Around Professor Mircea Angelescu's persona and under his direct supervision, a modern, valuable and strong school of Infectious Diseases was shaped and developed, renowned both nationally and internationally.

The school created by Professor Angelescu performed remarkably during the past decade, and this can be seen in the accomplishments of the National Institute for Infectious Diseases "Prof. Dr. Matei Balș", managed by Professor Dr. Adrian Streinu-Cercel, and, since 2009, in the undertakings of the European Academy of HIV/AIDS and Infectious Diseases.

Professor Angelescu vouched for six decades of continuity, durability, progress and prestige of the School of Infectious Diseases, in its long course from the Colentina Hospital towards the National Institute for Infectious Diseases "Prof. Dr. Matei Balș" and the European Academy of HIV/AIDS and Infectious Diseases. After 1994, when he became consulting professor, Dr. Mircea Angelescu continued his role as scientific mentor with the same passion, perseverance and devotion, up to the age of 87 years, up until his last weeks of existence. He coordinated over 25 PhD theses, all of them being extremely valued and appreciated. He wrote and signed the last PhD essay on his hospital bed, without being able to honor the public presentation with his presence. He organized and moderated numerous scientific interdisciplinary symposiums, often conferring the recognition of the Academy of Medical Sciences. Acting as father of modern antibiotherapy, Professor Angelescu had been continually invited, up to his last year of existence, to hold lectures on antibiotic treatment at numerous national congresses and conferences for other medical and surgical specialties, his speeches always gathering a large number of listeners.

Professor Angelescu, together with the deceased Professor Emanoil Manolescu, were the main founders and supporters of a medical journal distinguished through a lengthy tradition, having appeared quarterly for almost 2 decades, with a continued success in the Romanian medical world due to the quality, originality and state-of-the-art character of its articles. Of course, we are talking about the journal *Therapeutics, Pharmacology and Clinical Toxicology*, which is currently recognized as CNCSIS B+ and indexed in 3 international databases. For most of its devoted readers, the name of this journal was and continues to be associated with the name of Professor Angelescu. During 1994-2008, he was chief editor for this journal, being the one who maintained the publication's scientific quality standards at high levels.

Since 2008, Professor Angelescu named Professor Adrian Streinu-Cercel as chief editor, but continued to be actively involved in selecting and reviewing the articles submitted for publication up to his last weeks of life, probably finding alleviation in the world of writing and science, arts which he loved so much.

Also, most of Professor Angelescu's disciples have performed their apprenticeship in medical writing with *Therapeutics, Pharmacology and Clinical Toxicology* and have developed and perfected their skills for writing quality scientific articles under his supervision. In the beginning of the '90s, under the guidance of Professor Angelescu, I was handwriting the first articles for the journal *Therapeutics, Pharmacology and Clinical Toxicology*; after giving in a manuscript, I would receive it back from review marked in red in order to rewrite it, until the article would eventually become impeccable both editorially and scientifically. This way, we mastered the art of medical writing and we learned to hold it dear. Thus, due to the fact that we were disciples of Profesor Angelescu, we managed to gather a remarkable number of publications.

We cannot conclude this homage without stressing on the fact that Professor Mircea Angelescu was not only our teacher and mentor, he also impressed and surrounded us with his spiritual warmth, his generosity, modesty and fatherly companionship.

On December 11th 2011, Professor Mircea Angelescu would have turned 88 years old, a venerable age. He shall eternally rest in our souls and we hold unending gratitude.

In the name of all disciples of the regretted Professor Dr. Mircea Angelescu,

Prof. Dr. Adrian Streinu-Cercel
Conf. Dr. Victoria Aramă

April 22, 2011



Prof. Mircea Angelescu văzut de Marin Sorescu (1987)