

In Memoriam

Professor Morten Simonsen

Professor Morten Simonsen of Denmark, one of the most prominent scientists of modern immunology, died after a protracted illness in Denmark in February 2002. For the immunological science his name will forever be connected to his discovery of Graft versus Host (GvH) reaction. This basic immunobiological phenomenon plays a very important role e.g. in transplantation, with a prominent role of the major histocompatibility complex, during leukaemia treatment and in the transfer of immunologically competent cells into an individual with decreased immunological capacity, etc.

At the beginning of 1953, he published his doctoral thesis, where he studied kidney and spleen transplants in the dog, at the University of Copenhagen. This was followed by work with chicken embryos, where mature transplanted cells reacted against immunologically non-reactive recipients.

He profoundly influenced the development of immunology in general. With his special interest in the major histocompatibility complex of rainbow trout and chicken he emphasized the importance of phylogenetic

aspects in immunology. His experiments were always immaculately guaranteed by every possible control.

His death is a special loss for the Czech immunological public. Visiting from the beginning Jaroslav Šterzl and Milan Hašek, he was one of the first visitors from the so-called "West" to young modern experimental scientists in Czechoslovakia. With his enthusiasm for new trends, he shared with them his political conviction. Later, influenced by experience and reality in the Eastern Europe, especially by the outcome of Hungarian uprising and Prague spring, he modified his radical views. He always remained a friend of Czechoslovakia and with his colleagues participated regularly in chicken immunology Hrubá Skála meetings organized by the Institute of Molecular Genetics of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. He loved Czech music and countryside and always admired the architectural treasures of Prague. Those who knew him will never forget his kind personality and remarkably clear and witty thinking.

*Jan Krejčí
Karel Hála*

Professor Vulchan Vulchanov

Professor Dr. Vulchan Hristov Vulchanov, a prominent immunologist from Bulgaria, died on 28th July 2001 in Sofia. Born on 22nd July 1920 in Yambol in Bulgaria, educated at the American College in Sofia, where he achieved the highest honours (Summa cum laudae), he studied medicine at the university of Sofia and graduated in 1945. In 1948, he joined the newly founded Institute of General Biology of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. He formed there the first laboratory for cellular immunology. Several years later he worked with professor Vladimir Markov in the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences Institute of Microbiology and also spent several months in the laboratory of Milan Hašek at the Institute for Experimental Biology and Genetics in Prague. He was interested especially in immunological processes of reproduction, such as immunogenesis, phagocytosis, etc. In 1970, he was appointed Professor at the United Centre of

Biology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. Several years later he was invited by Academician Kiril Bratanov to the Institute of Biology and Immunology of Reproduction and Development at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

Professor Vulchanov produced more than 300 scientific publications and two monographs. He became one of the founders of the International Steering Committee for Immunology and Reproduction and he was invited to act as an expert adviser to the World Health Organization on issues of the immunology of reproduction.

We remember professor Vulchanov as one of the best coworkers and friends of the Czech immunologists in the world and we can never forget his intelligence, modesty, humanity and friendship.

*Snejina Marinova
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