

Momir Macanović (1938-2007)



The news of the death of dr. Momir Macanović deeply moved many who had the honour to know this quiet intellectual, a dedicated and extremely capable research physician. Nephrology has lost a supreme expert and scientist, his many pupils, co-workers and friends have lost a great teacher, an inspirational role model and faithful friend, his family has lost a husband and father, and his many patients around the world have lost a doctor whom they remember with gratitude, not only for his expert help, but also the care expressed by his human qualities.

Momir Macanović was born on 2nd January 1938 in Sarajevo, where he attended elementary school, high school, the medical faculty, post-graduate studies and specialized in internal medicine. He took his doctorate in London, where he was a student from 1970 to 1973 as a post-graduate at the *Royal Postgraduate Medical School (Hammersmith Hospital, Renal Unit)*. On his return to Sarajevo, he worked at the medical faculty as an assistant, docent and professor of internal medicine, and from 1985 to 1988 he was the dean of that faculty. The exceptional good intentions of two persons need to be emphasized for the success of his professional and scientific career – that is, prof. dr Enisa Bašagić, the then head of the nephrology department, and prof. dr Ante Lovrinčević, a radiologist at the medical faculty in Sarajevo. Dr. Macanović held two more functions in the health service of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina: he was president of the Committee (minister) for health from 1987 to 1991, and director of the Institute for Nephrology from 1990 to 1992.

Dr. Macanović lived for ten years before the war in London and Paris, conducting immunological research with the famous scientists P. J. Lachman and Prof. G. Richet. The research projects he worked on with his co-workers in Sarajevo were financed by the *National Institute of Health (Bethesda) INSERM U 64 (Hospital Tenon, Paris)* and the *Commission of the European Communities (Joint Research Centre)*. Whether alone or with co-workers, he published more than a hundred publications in international journals and monographs. He was one of the few Yugoslav researchers who had his research published in *The Lancet*. It was no particular surprise when this prestigious medical journal published his articles written together with English scientists but his particular success was the research paper that came to that journal from Sarajevo. Other well-known journals which also published papers by dr. Macanović and

his co-workers were: *British Medical Journal*, *Clinical Experimental Immunology*, *Journal of Immunology*, *Kidney International* and the well-known Zagreb journal *Periodicum Biologorum* which was at that time edited by Nikša Alegretti.

Dr. Macanović as a humanist physician did not believe that the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina would last or that it would prevent him publishing his work. Each day he would go to his clinic, despite the snipers threatening from both sides of the Miljacka. However, once when he was crossing the bridge to get to work he was wounded, and he decided to leave his native city. This great expert could not stay in Belgrade and Novi Sad. It is not easy without a home or furniture at the wrong time, even if he could find regular work in the new setting. So his friends advised him to seek refuge abroad. An additional difficulty was the order forbidding refugees finding employed in Serbia.

Dr. Macanović was helped by an English colleague, who offered him the position of Senior Research Associate at Cambridge. In England Dr. Macanović began his struggle to survive, he took the exams he needed to work as a nephrologist in Britain. First he worked in Dorchester, and then went to the United Arab Emirates. However, in February 2007 illness forced him to return to London, to his sons, where he died two months later. His body was cremated on 2nd May 2007 in England.

All the troubles encountered by a refugee at an advanced age, in a foreign country, did not put a stop to the professional and research work of this exceptional and dedicated scientist. Dr. Macanović continued to publish his research and pass on his enormous clinical experience in nephrology and immunology. In that period he published ten professional papers in journals. Several chapters in various monographs (of which the one on the system of complements in kidney diseases should be emphasized in particular and the book *Manual of Nephrology: Drug Therapy and Therapeutic Protocols in Renal Diseases*). This book (ISBN-13:9781581125160), published in 2004, contains protocols and instructions founded on clinical evidence, and when there is none, other available evidence is used or personal experience.

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