

Juan C. Gatti, M.D., Ph.D.



The death of Professor Juan C. Gatti was unexpected when it happened at the beginning of this year. Iberolatin-american leprology loses one of the most outstanding personalities of the last decades. His professional profile covered the dermatologic and leprologic fields, being prominent in them and reaching the highest nominations.

Professor Gatti graduated in 1947 from the School of Medicine at Buenos Aires University. Three years later he obtained his Ph.D.; his thesis was entitled "Hypersensitivity to Lepromin in Reactional States of Tubercloid Leprosy." He was Joint and Associate Professor of Dermatology. His hospital career was developed at the Infectious Diseases Hospital F. J. Muñiz of Buenos Aires, where he was Director of the Leprosy Center for 25 years.

He was author and collaborator in several dermatologic and leprologic books, his *Handbook of Dermatology* being one of the traditional academic tools at the School of Medicine in Argentina. His academic scope of interest was large, nevertheless leprology held a preferential place. He was a fundamental core of the Argentine Society of Leprosy from its foundation, becoming President and Honorary President. He obtained identical nominations in the Argentine Society of Dermatology. He was the author of nearly 300 scientific papers and received awards on 14 occasions from the Argentine Societies of Leprosy and Dermatology.

He was a national and international leader in leprosy. Most of his activity was devoted to therapeutic and clinical aspects, demonstrated by attending several courses, conferences and congresses. His international activity in leprosy congresses included his participations at: Therapeutic Com-

mission of VIII International Leprosy Congress in Rio de Janeiro; IX International Leprosy Congress in London; Joint-President of Session "Therapeutic Advances" at the X International Leprosy Congress in Bergen; Member of 2nd International Leprosy Colloquy with "Therapeutic Association" in Borstel; Member of Workshop in "Epidemiology, Control and Field Therapy" at the XI International Leprosy Congress in Mexico. Recently, he was Chairman of the Workshop "Diagnosis and Clinical Aspects" of the XIII International Congress in The Hague.

His other permanent wish was evident since the beginning of his professional life: to attain a link among Iberolatinamerican dermatologists and leprologists. In 1970, he was General Secretary of the First Leprosy Meeting of South America. His attendance at these events as president, director of courses, or rapporteur was continuous until his recent death. Also of importance were his participations in several Iberolatinamerican and World Congresses of Dermatology. During the last ones in 1987, he was Chairman of the Leprosy Symposium in Madrid and Co-Chairman and Rapporteur of the Symposium in West Berlin.

Since his youth, he was strongly associated with the scientific activities of the Brazilian Societies of Dermatology and Leprosy. He developed conferences and courses at the Mexican Academy of Dermatology, at the Fontilles Sanatorium in Alicante, at Complutense University of Madrid, at the School of Medicine in Barcelona, and at the Ecuadorian Society of Dermatology as well.

Since 1949 he was a member of the International Leprosy Association and Founding Member of the Leprosy College of Endemic Countries, the Latinamerican Association of Medicine, and the Organization of Latin Speaking Dermatologists. He was also a Member of the International Society of Tropical Dermatology; and Honorary Member of the Mexican, Bolivian, Spanish and Ecuadorian Academies of Dermatology; and Corresponding Member of the Dermatology Societies of Uruguay, Nicaragua, Peru, Brazil, and Paraguay.

It is a hard task trying to sum up Dr. Gatti's excellent and fruitful profile, without omitting important aspects of his dermatologic and leprologic life. However, as one of his disciples, I would like to point out his personality, his intelligence and his considerable educational skills. We received from him innumerable teachings through his en-

trepreneurship and his team-leader profile, always a searcher for excellence for himself and for everyone who surrounded him. His last years were even more profitable for us. His image and his advice have left us with an indelible trace in our lives.

—Dra. Liliana M. Olivares