In Memoriam

Renato Locchi †

Prof. Renato Locchi, the most internationally renowned anatomist of Latin America and a prestigious member of the editorial board of Acta Anatomica since inception, died on May 21, 1978.

He was born on May 7, 1896 in São Paulo, Brazil, at which University he graduated in pharmacy (1916) and in medicine (1924). He was a disciple of Professor Alfonso Bovero, who had moved from the University of Turin, Italy, to be the founding chairman of the Department of Anatomy at the University of São Paulo Medical School.

Dr. Locchi defended his inaugural thesis in 1925 and was awarded a PhD in Anatomy (Privat Dozent) in 1936, both summa cum laude. He was a brilliant lecturer and a prominent scientist, as well as a wise administrator, which he demonstrated as director of the Department of Anatomy (1937-1955), where he succeeded Prof. Bovero, and as dean of the medical school (1947-1950).

His highly productive scientific career was devoted mainly to human anatomy, especially surgical and ethnic anatomy, and to comparative anatomy, focusing particularly on Xenarthra. Among his outstanding contributions, it should be emphasized that he pioneered cineradiological studies of deglutition in man. Most of the present chairmen of the Department of Anatomy and many anatomists in Brazil were trained by Prof. Locchi.

After retiring as chairman and professor of anatomy at the University of São Paulo Faculty of
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Medicine he was awarded the title of emeritus and the same occurred after he retired at the Federal School of Medicine of São Paulo, where he had been chairman from 1960 to 1968. Prof. Locchi was visiting professor and acting chairman of the Department of Anatomy, sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation, at the Federal University of Minas Gerais in Belo Horizonte, in 1957. His contributions were so prominent that this institution awarded him the title of professor honoris causa in 1963. In 1958, he took over the chairmanship of the Department of Anatomy at the Catholic University of São Paulo, in Sorocaba. In 1966, the Pan American Health Organization appointed Prof. Locchi as the first director of the Regional Library of Medicine for Latin America. Prof. Locchi was a member of the ‘Deutsche Anatomische Gesellschaft’, ‘Association des Anatomistes’, ‘Società Italiana di Anatomia’ (founder), ‘Sociedade Luso-Brasileira de Anatomia’, Brazilian Society of Anatomy (founding president). He was honorary member of the Pan American Association of Anatomy and a member of the International Organizing Committees of the Fourth International Symposium on the Morphological Sciences (Toledo, Ohio, USA, 1979) and XI International Congress of Anatomy (Mexico City, 1980). Prof. Locchi, succeeding his beloved Prof. Bovero, carried on in Brazil the tradition of strong leadership of the great Anatomical School of Turin, which included outstanding anatomists as Luigi Rolando and Carlo Giacomini, among the several other illustrious names. All of us, who had the opportunity to work with Prof. Locchi will always remember him for his charming, modest, and wise personality, keen inquisitive mind, contagious enthusiasm for scientific research in the anatomical sciences, and as a paradigm of excellence in academic life. Liberato J. A. DiDio Toledo, Ohio, USA