Laudatio

Prof. Dr. med. Prof. h.c. Constantin E. Orfanos was born in Crete on the 28th of June 1936. He received his school education at the gymnasium in Athens and moved to Austria to study medicine at the University of Innsbruck. After the 'physicum' he continued his medical graduation at the Medical Faculty in Düsseldorf and received his doctor's degree with the best exam 'summa cum laude' at the age of 24 years. His doctoral thesis was dedicated to the topic 'Spectrophotometric studies on the proteolytic activity of human plasma' with which he received the predicate 'magna cum laude'.

His basic research was mainly influenced by Prof. Ruska for whom he was an assistant at the Institute of Biophysics and Electron Microscopy at the same university. In 1963, he moved to the Department of Dermatology at the Düsseldorf clinics under Prof. Greither and was in particular a close co-worker of Prof. Günther Stüttgen – his 'Doktorvater'. In 1964, he was offered a position at the Dermato-Venereological Department of the University of Cologne under Prof. Dr. Steigleder, was board certified in 1967 for Dermatology and Venereology, and finalized his habilitation with the position of docent in 1976 with the important research work on 'Ultrastructural

Studies on the Orthology and Pathology of the Epidermis Cell by Electron Microscopy'.

He was a research fellow at Boston University with Prof. Lever. Later, he received the 'Oskar Gans Award', the most important research award in the German-speaking countries.

In 1978, he was offered the chair at the Department of Dermatology and Venereology at the Free University of Berlin.

Dermatopharmacology is one of his preferred scientific and clinical topics. Prof. Orfanos introduced retinoid therapy of psoriasis in 1972 followed by a plethora of studies and reviews in the field of dermatology. He was one of the first to report the successful use of antiviral drugs in the treatment of herpes zoster infections in 1977. With increasing incidence of HIV infections and AIDS at the beginning of the 1980s, he focussed his interest on the treatment of Kaposi's sarcoma and other HIV-related dermatoses. In dermatology, new therapeutic strategies against melanoma and cutaneous lymphoma were developed under his guidance in the late 1980s and early 1990s. All his experiences in dermatotherapy were summarized in the textbook *Therapie der Hautkrankheiten* published in 1995 together with his co-worker C. Garbe.

The second edition has just appeared. In the last decade, he forced his efforts in bringing together basic research and the clinic. In this respect, the Teupitz Colloquium was initiated in 1998. In this annual meeting of basic researchers and clinicians, the most relevant and newest data and developments in a specific area of molecular dermatology are discussed. It started with the 1st Colloquium 'Sphingolipids and epithelial homeostasis: Metabolism, signalling and barrier function' and continued in 1999 with 'Macrophages in anti-inflammation: Molecular mechanisms,

apoptosis, and tolerance induction'. In the year 2000, the main topic was 'Basis research in endocrine dermatology' and is focussed on in this year's topic 'Free radicals and skin. Aging, carcinogenesis'.

This issue of *Skin Pharmacology and Applied Skin Physiology* is a dedication and contains several papers from most of his scholars, who would like to honour Prof. Orfanos in this way.

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