John V. Jordanoglou

On November 28, 2014 Medicine and Pulmonology in both the Greek and the international community lost one of their important members, the Professor of the Medical School of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, John Jordanoglou. He was born in 1934 in Athens, was married twice and had three children, Vassilios, Marina-Paraskevi and Klisthenis. He graduated from the Medical School of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens in 1958 and attained his medical thesis (MD) in 1964. He specialized in internal medicine in the 2nd Propaedeutic Department of Internal Medicine, "Evangelismos" General Hospital of Athens under Professor D. Gardikas.

In 1981, he was elected Professor of Respiratory Medicine at the University of Athens Medical School and was appointed Director of the unique in Athens, at that time, Pulmonary Department of the University of Athens, based at the historic Hospital for Chest Diseases "Sotiria". In 1996, he became Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of London (FRCP), a honorable high distinction.

John Jordanoglou went to London in 1964, where he remained for about four years and had the opportunity to receive further training by such excellent teachers as, J.G. Scadding, P. Zorab, P. Stradling, P. Hugh Jones, and N. Pride.

He dealt mainly with the diseases of the chest, in both the clinical and the research setting.

His talent in major investigations has been demonstrated in several publications, including the monograph published in London for which he was awarded the enviable title of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) of the University of London. The topic of his dissertation in London was the movement of the ribs in healthy persons and patients with lung disease. With mathematical calculations, he arrived at conclusions that were opposed to the current perceptions current at that time. His results were welcomed by the prominent researcher Philip Hugh-Jones. He returned to Greece in 1967, where he presented his dissertation for professorship at the University of Athens, in 1971.

He organized and headed a fully equipped Laboratory of Lung Function at the "Evangelismos" Hospital, where a large number of patients were examined, including those who were to be operated on for chest and heart conditions. During that time, he was head of team for solving problems in the physiology and patho-physiology of breathing. At the same time, he supervised doctoral dissertations of several young doctors interning in the 2nd Propaedeutic Department. He was well-versed in physics, mathematics, and engineering, and was, therefore, in a position to investigate difficult problems of physiology of breathing using original mathematical models. Through mathematical calculations, he was able to prove that the distensibility of the lung may be determined by a simple, non-invasive method, avoiding the use of esophageal catheters. The correctness of his theory was later confirmed by its application in humans.

Another important field of his research concerns the study of flow-volume curves. By studying the flow-volume curves with a simple, rapid method, the type of functional disorder of various lung diseases can be specified.

From 1981 onwards, Professor Iordanoglou was involved in two further serious issues related to the physiology of breathing:

The early detection of dysfunction of small airways, using a sensitive index, the so-called effective time (teff) in patients with chronic obstructive lung diseases.

The non-invasive (i.e., without the need for taking a blood sample), but accurate determination of alveolar gases in groups of patients with airway obstruction, using a significant novel technique. This important technique consists

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of determining the alveolar gases with mathematical calculations based on a sample of exhaled air from the patient who is breathing tidally.

I had the good fortune to be trained by Professor Jordanoglou at the University Department of Pulmonary Medicine of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens at the "Sotiria" Hospital and I subsequently collaborated with him for many years. It is difficult to describe in words his multifaceted personality which in my youth seemed to me to be like "an English gentleman", coming out of a fairytale.

He was hard working, methodical, unselfish, gentle, and approachable, with excessive modesty, and impeccable ethics, and he honored by his presence the Medical School of Athens University and the whole Thoracic Community.

He was a source of inspiration for the many talented young scientists that he attracted. Professor Jordanoglou was the ideal type of modern pulmonologist manifesting a complete balance in clinical, laboratory and research fields.

He worked as a real, true physician according to the Hippocratic ethos.

He devoted himself with passion to the profession throughout his whole life; he wanted nothing more than to offer his services with sincerity and selflessness.

He was our "Professor", although most of us who worked with him, also considered him as a family, our "spiritual father". Indeed, as our father, he always looked after and cared for us and our families, not as a director, but as a consummate man.

Nikolaos G. Koulouris

Professor of Respiratory Medicine