

Obituary

Obituary: Prof. Giuseppe Carlo Balboni. Ferrara 1.12.1923 – Firenze 8.9.2014

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On September 8, 2014, few days before the opening of the 68th Congress of our Society in Ancona, silently as he had spent the last years of his life, Giuseppe Carlo Balboni, Professor Emeritus of Human Anatomy at the University of Florence, passed away.

It is very sad for me to outline the complex personality of such a man, who has represented an elder brother, always generous of suggestions and advice, especially after a common anatomical militancy for more than 60 years.

He graduated in Medicine in 1947 at the age of 24 at the University of Florence and, after having served as medical officer in the army, he became specialist in Obstetrics and Gynaecology and began his brilliant academic career in the field of human Anatomy. Nevertheless, following the ideas of our common teacher Ignazio Fazzari, he always maintained a strong connection with the clinical disciplines.

His innovative morphofunctional research on human ovary and olfactory organ gave him a marked prominence in the anatomical context at both national and international level, so that he was elected President of the Italian Society of Anatomy (later Italian Society of Anatomy and Histology) from 1986 to 1993 and, in the same period, member of the directory board of the "Association des Anatomistes de Langue Français".

Giuseppe Balboni (Fig. 1) has educated several generations of MD, at first in the Medical School of the University of Sassari in the years 1962-69 and then in that of Florence where he remained till his retirement, in 2004. He was Director of the Institute of Anatomy, then Department of Human Anatomy and Histology.

The results of his scientific research have been published in the most important journals in the field of Morphology; moreover, he was coauthor of important textbooks of gross and microscopic Anatomy.



Figure 1 – Giuseppe Carlo Balboni. Ferrara, December 1, 1923 - Firenze, September 8, 2014.

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Figure 2 – A sculpture of Giuseppe Carlo Balboni in the hall of the Anatomical buildings of Florence University.

His multifaceted personality was not only devoted to the morphological disciplines, but had also ranged in the world of Sports (he was a Master of Judo) and Movement Sciences, having been the director of ISEF (High School of Physical Education) for many years, and of management, as President of the University committee for Sport and promoter of the realization of the sport structures for students. Eventually, Giuseppe Balboni was also active in graphic and sculpture arts. His original works, characterized by a geometrical symbolism, are exhibited in the hall of the Anatomical buildings in Firenze (Fig. 2), in the garden of the University Sport Center of Firenze and in other University Campus (Sassari, Lyon). He was also the author of the logo for the Committee of Anatomical Teachers and for several Congresses.

With the loss of Giuseppe Balboni an important figure has disappeared, that of a wise scientist who was able to link science and art into a global humanism always placing the Human Being, under all aspects, at the center.

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