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## Book review

### **Passion for Excellence, My long life Journey into Medicine and Public life**

*Haralampos M. Moutsopoulos MD*

(Springer Biographies, October 2022)

An old friend reads, remembers and analyses. Glancing through the pages of Professor Haralampos (Harry) M. Moutsopoulos' book in which he describes his long-life journey motivated by his dreams and his hot-blooded character, I must confess that I still find him youthful, rebellious and reverently devoted to the moral values taught to him by his parents, his teachers and his social background, which formed his whole personality. Since a very early age, he learned to struggle for excellence without taking into consideration risks and cost. A passionate teacher must raise questions and doubts to his students, awaken their curiosity and sharpen their critical mind to be able to participate in fertile debates. Besides, the art of teaching is the ability to persuade, adopt and even reinforce the interlocutor's opinion. Several times, during the exciting adventure of knowledge, Professor Moutsopoulos had to cope with these principles, even though sometimes his experiences were bitter and traumatising. In those cases, his ethos and rebellious nature prevailed. Thus, with his hard work, motivated by the dreams of youth, his passion for helping the sufferer, and his investigative nature, Professor Moutsopoulos became a symbol of excellence. Always gazing upwards, overcoming obstacles, or even changing course, in order to achieve his goals and his moral standards. A multidisciplinary education, the production of new knowledge and the insistence on assimilating novelty were among his prime goals. Thanks to his education, talent and his incessant hard work, he achieved them all. His recognition worldwide as a clinician-scientist of the highest rank constituted an irrefutable fact. During his entire life, Professor Moutsopoulos never stopped pursuing scientific production and introducing young students into the dreamy world of knowledge. He never stopped teaching his students and young colleagues the sense of human and medical duty. After his education and work in renown medical centres in the USA, he repatriated to his homeland. Moutsopoulos desire to offer his help back in his homeland where he had spent his childhood. After all, our childhood is our true homeland. Neither his in-

disputable scientific prestige nor his young age could prevent the pettiness of some people. But Harry got rid of all the thorny obstacles, opened new roads, and created the background to pave new paths. There were many people who clashed with him because of his fight against the decline but he always followed his father's exhortation: "Good would always triumph". After completing the necessary reforms at the university of his hometown, he decided to undertake the arduous task of reforming the Department of Pathophysiology in the Medical School, at the University of Athens, where many years ago, he first became acquainted with medical and scientific knowledge. These new pursuits were filled with thorny obstacles, but Moutsopoulos had already become a hurdle race champion. The obstacles were overcome and his dream of reforming the national health system has been fulfilled. During his life journey, Moutsopoulos fought against corruption, favouritism, ingratitude, nepotism, and all kinds of power games. He resisted and struggled against all circumstances and, in most cases, was vindicated. In a country torn by a troubled political system, there are some few bright personalities that can really make the difference. Along his long-life journey, Harry met some charismatic people and forged collaborations with them in order to ameliorate and modernise the basic infrastructures. Professor H. Moutsopoulos reached the top of his academic and scientific career. He became a life member of the Academy of Athens holding the Chair of Medical Sciences-Immunology in Science Section. What is his legacy? Professor Moutsopoulos has set the example of a man who has defended the values of meritocracy, responsibility, and respect for the sufferer, but above all, he was the one who set the standards for the pursuit of new medical knowledge.

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