

# Editorial

Raimundo Braz-Filho, eldest of ten siblings, was born April 19, 1935, in the municipality of Pacatuba, Ceará State.

An Agronomist who received his degree from the *Universidade do Ceará* (UFC, University of Ceará) in 1962 and his doctorate in Organic Chemistry in 1971 from the *Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro* (UFRuralRJ), Professor Raimundo Braz-Filho began his career in Science in 1960 with a scholarship from *Comissão Central de Pesquisa*, UFC, under the guidance of Professor José Wilson de Alencar, the first to receive a Master of Science from The Organic Chemistry post-graduate course of *Instituto de Química da Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro*, and thus became the first to obtain a Master's in Organic Chemistry from a Brazilian institution.

After finishing his course in Agronomy, Prof. Braz accepted the offer of Professor Manuel Mateus Ventura, Director of the Institute of Chemistry and Technology (*Instituto de Química e Tecnologia - IQT*), to stay at this Institute as Assistant Researcher for Ceará Federal University (UFC) with a fellowship from *Comissão Central de Pesquisa da UFC*. At UFC, Prof. Braz was an instructor of higher learning from 1963-1965, Assistant Professor from 1966-1971, and Associate Professor from 1971-1975. His vocation for the Natural Products Chemistry was established after a two-month course in 1963 at the National Institute for Research of the Amazon (*Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas da Amazônia - INPA*), which also enjoyed the participation of Professors Otto Richard Gottlieb and Mauro Taveira Magalhães, at that time associated with the Institute of Chemistry Agriculture (*Instituto de Química Agrícola - IQA*), where the Brazilian Natural Products Chemistry began, of the Ministry of Agriculture in Rio de Janeiro. The Master's degree in Natural Products Chemistry began to be offered in 1965 at the University of Brasília (*Universidade de Brasília - UnB*), coordinated by Prof. Otto Gottlieb. In November of that year, it was transferred to UFRuralRJ, when approximately two hundred UnB professors, in a joint action, resigned their posts, protesting arbitrary actions taken against the University by the military of the then dictatorship governing Brazil. The UFRuralRJ post-graduate course in Natural Products Chemistry began in March 1966, under the coordination of professors Otto Gottlieb and Fausto Aita Gatai, the latter a professor at UFRuralRJ. After attaining the maximum grade on his qualifying exams, Prof. Braz immediately proceeded to his doctorate, attaining this degree in 1971.

From July 1967 to March 1970, Prof. Braz was head of the Natural Products Laboratory, Chemistry Institute, University of São Paulo (*Laboratório de Produtos Naturais do Instituto de Química da Universidade de São Paulo - USP*), upon invitation by Prof. Otto Gottlieb, then professor at USP. Prof. Otto Gottlieb accepted the invitation by Prof. William Saad Hosne, then Scientific Director at FAPESP, to structure the Natural Products Chemistry at São Paulo

University (USP). After receiving his PhD, Prof. Braz returned to Federal University of Ceará where he remained until 1975 when he transferred to UFRuralRJ, as Full Professor, with the responsibility of recovering the post-graduate course in Natural Products Chemistry, which had been halted when Prof. Otto Gottlieb left. Prof. Braz retired in 1991, but stayed on at UFRuralRJ until July 1994. That same year, he accepted the invitation to be Full Professor at the Natural Products Chemistry Sector, *Universidade Estadual do Norte Fluminense* (UENF). In 2003, Professor Braz was reelected Dean of UENF, the position he holds today.

Professor Raimundo Braz-Filho has advised dozens of Master's and Doctorate candidates, who today are themselves professors in many of the Brazilian universities, is co-author of books as well as chapters of books, and of nearly three hundred scientific articles. He is a full member of The Brazilian Academy of Sciences (*Academia Brasileira de Ciências*), Professor *Emeritus* of UFRuralRJ, Professor *Honoris causa da UFC*, and was President of the Brazilian Chemical Society (*Sociedade Brasileira de Química*), 1984-86. His importance to Brazilian Science may be appraised by the following honors and distinctions he has received: *Comenda Nacional da Ordem do Mérito Científico* from Brazilian government, *Medalha Simão Mathias* from SBQ, *Medalha JBCS*, *Medalha José Bonifácio da Secretaria Regional do Rio de Janeiro* from SBQ, *Medalha Tiradentes da Assembléia Legislativa* from Rio de Janeiro State, *Retorta de Ouro do Sindicato dos Químicos e Engenheiros Químicos* from Rio de Janeiro, *Medalha Fritz Feigl* from Chemistry Institute of UFRJ and *Medalha Comemorativa dos 40 anos do Programa de Pós-Graduação de Química Orgânica* from Chemistry Institute of UFRJ.

Prof. Braz is the highest Brazilian authority in structures determination of natural organic molecules, an art which he has taught to many of his disciples, and one of the most outstanding Natural Products Chemists in the entire world.

More than any title or than any of his vast scientific production, what characterizes Prof. Braz is his simple demeanor, his ethical posture at every moment of his life as public figure, the gentle way he treats his students and friends and his unwavering defense of national sovereignty. In all of this, Professor Raimundo Braz-Filho is an example for future generations of chemists and Brazilian citizens. It is an honor for us to organize this issue of the *Journal of the Brazilian Chemical Society*, a tribute to his seventieth birthday. We are grateful to those who accepted our invitation to submit articles, although some of these articles which do not appear in this issue may be published in upcoming ones of this periodical.

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