

## General Mircea Iacob - promotor of military neurosurgery activity in Romania

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General MD. Mircea Iacob, distinguished personality of Romanian military medicine and a pioneer of military Romanian neurosurgery, was born on June 7, 1922 in Craiova, Dolj county, Romania.

He attended the University of Medicine and Pharmacy from Bucharest (1941-1947) as well as the Sanitary Military Institute, where he was promoted lieutenant in November 1945 and captain medical doctor in December 1947.

After graduation he served as an intern for the 2nd Surgery Department of the Central Military Hospital under the guidance of Colonel M.D. Petre Costescu. On April 21, 1948 he defended his Ph.D thesis entitled: “Lombar sympatectomy indications”.

Thereafter he was a resident (1948-1950) and a specialist surgeon (1950-1952) at the Military Hospital from Oradea.

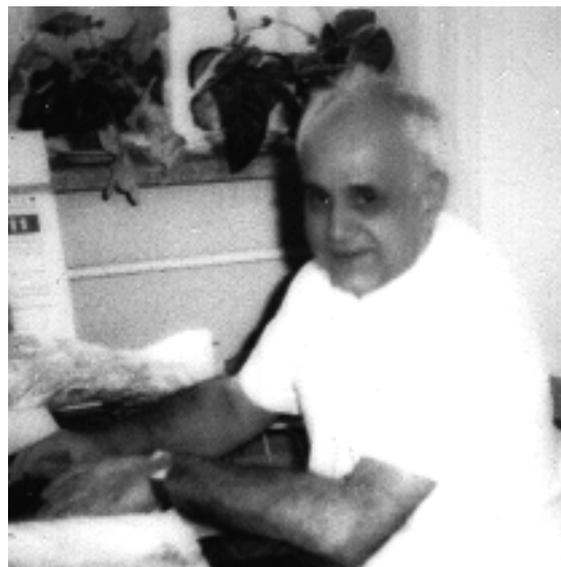
He completed his residency in neurosurgery at the Neurosurgery Clinic of Bucharest directed at that time by Ass. Prof. Arseni Constantin.

In December 1952 he was promoted major. The first neurosurgery military nucleus (hospital) with 10 beds, was inaugurated on December 15th, 1952 at the Bucharest Central Military Hospital under the supervision of Col. MD. Eugen Mareş. Here Dr. Iacob started neurosurgical

activity with cranio-cerebral and vertebro-medullary traumatology cases, lumbar disc hernia, cranioplasty; his first results were published and presented at conferences, advocating the importance of military neurosurgery even during peace times.

In August 1955 he was promoted lieutenant-colonel MD. Since 1957 the neurosurgery nucleus was augmented to 15 beds at the Second Surgery Department, directed by General MD. Gheorghe Petruşian.

In September 1959 he earned the first prize at a National Neurosurgery contest.



In August 1961 he was promoted colonel MD. The neurosurgery nucleus reached 25 beds at the Trauma and Neurosurgery Department directed by Col MD. Niculescu Gheorghe.

Between November 14th 1964 and November 14th 1965, he was granted a one-year scholarship by the World Health Organisation in functional neurosurgery and worked at the Neurosurgery Clinic of Prof. Jean Talairach at Sainte Anne Hospital, in Paris France. He was nominated "assistant étranger" at the Medical Faculty in Paris – France January 13, 1966 after submitting the thesis "Mouvements anormaux nonparkinsoniens".

January 11, 1966 – a 30 beds Neurosurgery Department is founded at the Bucharest Central Military Hospital. In 1970 this Department extended to 50 beds, directed by Colonel MD. Mircea Iacob until June 1, 1990. His co-workers (in a chronological order) were: M.D. Nicolae Dobosciuc specialist neurosurgeon, MD. Bezu Aleman and M.D. Cramer Emil.

He is the first to have introduced stereotactic neurosurgery in a neurosurgery clinic in Bucharest. As from 1969 he also started using radioactive isotopes for lesions in different functional neurosurgery pathologies.

Dr. Iacob surgical activity was presented in Romanian medical revues such as: "Revista Sanitara Militara", "Revista Neurologia, Neurochirurgia, Psihiatria", "Revista Oftalmologia" as well as in various publications from England, France and Bulgaria.

At the International Medical Military Congress held in 1973, Bucharest Romania he presented a lecture entitled: "Delayed emergency and evacuation after destination principles for cranio-cerebral and vertebro-medullary trauma during big calamities".

Starting February 2, 1974 he was appointed first degree senior neurosurgeon by the Health Ministry.

As a reward for his neurosurgical activity a new neurosurgical department was opened on December 10th, 1979 at the Central Military Hospital consisting of 65 beds, two modern surgery units – one of them prepared for stereotactic procedures with new radiological equipment able to perform telerradiographies, a neuroradiology compartment, functional investigations laboratory, post-operative rooms protected with Pb. Here he started a wide surgical activity including functional stereotactic procedures using instruments made after French technology, cerebral biopsies, micro-surgical procedures. In 1981 he also founded a curie-therapy laboratory at the Central Military Hospital for radioisotopes used in stereotactic procedures (such as  $^{198}\text{Au}$ ,  $^{192}\text{Ir}$ ).

In December 1982 he was promoted General MD.

He was also assigned member in the Romanian Science People Association – neural section in 1987.

He retired at June 1, 1990. However, he continued to offer advice for patients with various neurosurgical problems.

7 years later he passed away suddenly on April 11th, 1997 after a cerebral stroke induced by an atrial fibrillation treated for 30 years. He was buried at his wish in Craiova.

General MD. PhD Mircea Iacob had a career marked by enthusiasm for developing new methods and applying cutting-edge technology to neurosurgery. He is the author of 9 medical books, 77 papers for Romanian or foreign revues, 82 other unpublished papers; a record to be nominated docent doctor – professor.

He also devised an autostatic spraeuder for lumbar paravertebral musculature; with

assiduous efforts he made the Talairach stereotactic frames with local resources.

Throughout his scientific activity he advanced the following problems: cranio-cerebral and vertebro-medullary traumatology during peace and war, concerning emergency principles; disc hernia, functional neurosurgery, the use of radioisotopes in stereotactic procedures. He was also interested: decreasing the usage of radioisotopes on anterior pituitary in order to reduce malignant oedematous exoftalmia, evolutive acromegalia; controlling the outcome diabetic patients who also developed retinopathy, handling the evolution of malignant melanoma cerebral metastasis, breast and prostate metastasis.

Other approached subjects include the treatment for extrapyramidal illnesses, epilepsy, psychosurgery, pain surgery especially in trigeminal neuralgia, thalamic hyperpata, malignant pains; but also for interstitial radiotherapy for small, deep brain tumors.

He addressed neurosurgery problems in both editions of "Surgery in war" of 1956 and 1965 and was a coworker for the "Atlas d'anatomie stéréotaxique du t elenc ephal" under Prof. Jean Talairach supervision, published in Masson Publishing House in 1967.

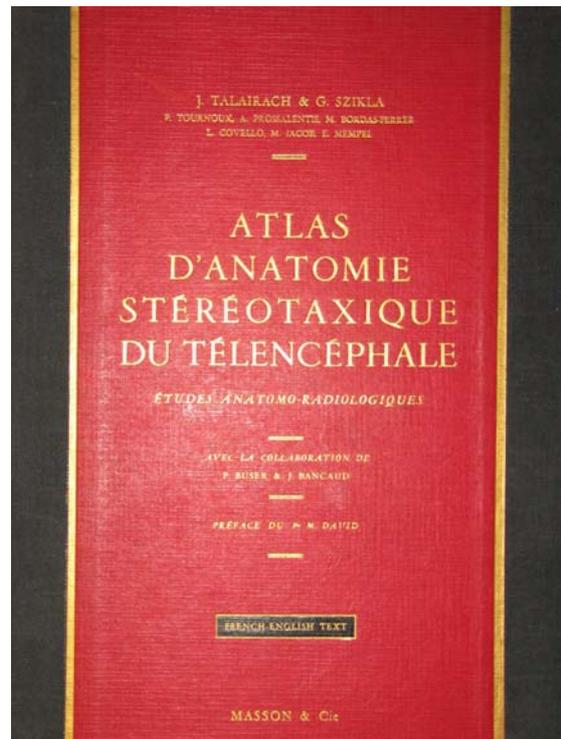
Other contributions were brought to the books of Prof. C. Arseni: "Tratat de neurologie" 1979, "Cancerul sistemului nervos" 1982, "Durerea  n cancer" 1983, "Metode de neurofiziologie clinica 1984", "Momente din istoria neurochirurgiei rom ne ti" 1988.

General MD, PhD Iacob is the first to have introduced electrocorticography, stereoelectroencephalography, stereotactic cerebral biopsies and the use of stereotactic procedures to precise metallic foreign bodies inside brain in Romania. He also took an interest in other therapeutic

approaches regarding pineal tumors, tumors in elderly the use of subarachnoidian methotrexate for meduloblastoma and ependimoma spinal spreads.

His remarkably rich didactic and social activity can be summarized as follows:

- 1946-1947 Anatomy assistant at Carol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy
- 1948-1952 secretary of the Military Medical Society Union
- 1950 professor for military MD
- 1949 he grounded the Targu Mures Military Hospital
- 1959 war surgery professor for civilian surgeons
- 1961-1974 member of the editorial board for "Revista Sanitara Militara"



**Figure 1** Atlas d'anatomie st er otaxique du t elenc ephal, under Prof. Jean Talairach supervision, with coworker Mircea Gr. Iacob, published in Masson Publishing House in 1967

- 1964-1966 member of neurosurgery commissions promoting neurosurgeons

- 1973-1990 member of the leading committee from the Neurology and Neurosurgery Society

- consultant neurosurgeon for the highest political members of the Romanian parliament

- he successfully fulfilled several medical missions in Korea, Egypt, France, Morocco, Spain and was accordingly rewarded with Romanian and foreign medals and orders.

- for his activity in the 2nd World War as sub-lieutenant MD he was granted the title "war veteran".

Distinguished pupil of Prof. C. Arseni and Prof. Jean Talairach, General Iacob Grigore Mircea has become one of the most famous and appreciated Romanian neurosurgeon and the Neurosurgery Department of Bucharest Central Military

Hospital.

Despite his cardiac illness he imposed himself a severe working discipline, tenacity, respect for all patients regardless of military or social position.

He was modest and impartial in his relation with patients, coworkers, determined and confident in different medical or social situations. He was also able to pass on his life-long passion to his son, Prof. Dr. Iacob Gabriel – Head of the Neurosurgery Department at the University Hospital.

Pioneer of military Romanian neurosurgery General MD PhD Iacob Gr. Mircea was a model of professional integrity, exceptional medical personality, with teaching and research capabilities, but most important dedicated to patients for whom he sacrificed his entire life.