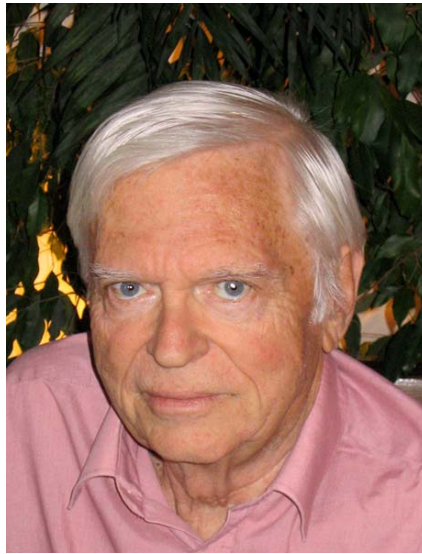


OBITUARY

Claude Kordon (1934–2008)



Claude Kordon passed away on June 2, 2008 in Paris, France at the age of 74 years. He was an outstanding individual and a leading figure in neuroendocrinology.

What was immediately striking on meeting Claude Kordon was the impressive range of his gifts, abilities and human qualities. Not only was he a great scientist, but he was a humanist, polyglot (probably because he was born and raised in Switzerland), and an extremely cultured and caring citizen involved in political and social causes, always attentive to others.

His scientific achievement was closely linked to his open and communicative mind. Thus in the past three decades, he managed to adapt the research in neuroendocrinology to the major political changes that occurred in Europe and the rest of the world. He paved the way in developing scientific collaborations with Mexico, Chile, India and Eastern European countries.

For Claude Kordon every cell in an organism was the centre of a complex network, each speaking with chemical messengers and listening with receptors to integrate brain function with the immune and endocrine systems.

Claude Kordon's name is associated with many discoveries in neuroendocrine research. His role in this field was outstanding. Among the studies in which his participation was essential we may quote:

- Studies on hypophysiotropic neuropeptides
- Implication of steroid hormones in brain functions
- Interaction between the immune and cerebral systems
- Role of monoamines and neuropeptides in pituitary functions, in reproductive behaviour, in regulation of growth and in stress responses.

He was research director in CNRS (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique), director of the INSERM (Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale) Unit 159 in Paris for 24 years, He also participated to the promotion of neuroendocrinology which culminated as Editor-in-Chief of Neuroendocrinology, a position he held for two decades. In one of his books 'The Language of Cells', his scientific philosophy is illustrated by the phrase: 'the essential condition to all innovating activity: the liberty of creation'.

We share with artists the privilege that our work remains after us. For Claude Kordon, this souvenir will continue with his family, his wonderful wife Monique, his children, grand-children and his numerous friends and former students.

Claude Kordon was an inventive, curious and open-minded mentor and science has lost one of the great masters of neuroendocrinology.

William Rostene, Secretary of the International Neuroendocrine Federation