

Our news

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THE GREEK HAEMOPHILIA SOCIETY (SPEA)
JULY – SEPTEMBER 2020

VASILIKI-AIKATERINI (TITIKA) MANDALAKI (1929-2020)

A final farewell to the scientist,
the woman, our “Mum”



Ο Αιμίλιος μας μαθαίνει για την αιμορροφιλία

Έχω πολλές ιδέες για να περνάμε ευχάριστα τον χρόνο μας στο σπίτι! Μπορείτε να τις δείτε στο κανάλι μου στο YouTube!



Ο Αιμίλιος πρωταγωνιστεί σε μια σειρά 8 επεισοδίων, όπου προτείνει στα παιδιά διασκεδαστικές και εκπαιδευτικές δραστηριότητες για να αξιοποιούν δημιουργικά τον χρόνο τους στο σπίτι:

- ▶ 1º: Μαθαίνουμε τους κανόνες υγιεινής
- ▶ 2º: Μαθαίνουμε χρήσιμες δραστηριότητες
- ▶ 3º: Πώς να περιηγούμαστε στο διαδίκτυο με ασφάλεια
- ▶ 4º: Διασκεδάζουμε και μαθαίνουμε στο διαδίκτυο
- ▶ 5º: Μαγειρεύουμε σπιτικά σνακ μαζί με τη μαμά
- ▶ 6º: Οργανώνουμε μια διασκεδαστική οικογενειακή βραδιά
- ▶ 7º: Φροντίζουμε το σώμα μας κάνοντας γυμναστική
- ▶ 8º: Φροντίζουμε σωστά το κατοικίδιό μας



Δείτε τα videos στο YouTube

SCAN ME

Υπό την αιγίδα:



Πρωτοβουλία:



www.hemilios.gr



Passion!

For me, Titika Mandalaki epitomises exactly what the title is about. She was a person passionate about her science, about her patients, about the matters of common relevance; rather, about life itself.

My engagement in this special issue of our magazine, which could not but be entirely dedicated to her memory as a minimum tribute to her, allowed me to immerse myself even deeper in the history of haemophilia in Greece; and how could it not, since I met and (repeatedly) talked to people in Titika's inner circle, both personal and professional. But beyond that, I came even closer to this great person.

I remember her being strict but with humour, sweet and completely focused. I was lucky enough to have seen her in action and was also honoured to have been admitted to her house after she had retired from active duty. Of course, this last phrase is probably unfitting to her, since she sought to be (and was) active even at her advanced age. The spiritual clarity which characterised her and her outstanding memory, turned her stories about the history of haemophilia and blood donation in Greece into enjoyable afternoons on Lycabettus Street. Many a time Panagiotis, Gogo, Maria and I wanted to record them, but we failed to do so...

Each of the texts you will read are unique; however, I would like to highlight those written by her own "children", the patients with

haemophilia themselves. They are the ones I identify most with, being a haemophiliac myself. Yet, apart from the way they "speak" to the soul of people with haemophilia, they are equally important for non-patients. This is because anyone can easily understand the way a doctor's function should be served and how important scientists are for a patient's life.

Titika Mandalaki saved lives and gave them the opportunity to have quality, while helping people in the patients' environment to stand on their own two feet and achieve mental balance, courage and pride. The incredible circumstance of not being able to say goodbye as befits her, in the divine right of the pandemic, is a small inconvenience to our soul, which will be restored in the near future, coronavirus permitting.

I would like to thank her family for their substantial contribution to this issue, and particularly her son, George Giannitsiotis, but also all those who wrote and contributed to this publication.

The entire Board of Directors of the Greek Haemophilia Society (SPEA) pay due homage to her, stressing that she will NEVER be forgotten by the Greek Haemophilia community.

Alexis Perdikis

Editor – General Secretary of Greek Haemophilia Society (SPEA)

Articles in this dedicated issue were written by:

- **George Giannitsiotis** - Son of Titika Mandalaki
- **Dimitris Antoniadis** - Person with haemophilia
- **Sofia Aroni-Vourna** - Paediatrician, 1st Paediatric University Clinic of Athens, Founder and Director of Haemophilia Centre for Children and Adolescents, Children's Hospital "Agia Sophia", Athens (1975-2008)
- **Renia Gialeraki** - Associate Professor of Biochemistry-Haemostasis Disorders, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens Medical School... but above all, her student
- **Kostas Grigoriadis** - Former Chairman, General Secretary and active Member of Board of Greek Haemophilia Society (SPEA)
- **Litsa Hatzinikolaou-Tyriakidou** - Former Secretary of Haemophilia Centre, Laiko General Hospital (1984-1998)
- **George Gr. Kampouroglou** - Orthopedic Surgeon, Emeritus Professor of Athens University
- **Anastasia Karafoulidou** - Internist – Haematologist, Former Director of Blood Transfusion Centre and Haemophilia Centre, Laiko General Hospital (1998-2008)
- **Panagiotis Karkanis** - Member of SPEA, former President (2012-2014)
- **Dr. Calliope Louizou** - M.D. Haematologist
- **John Meletis** - MD, PhD Emeritus Professor of Hematology and Medicine, University of Athens Medical School
- **Maria Mylona** - MD, PhD Internist, 2nd Attending Physician of National Health System, 1st Preparatory Internal Medicine Clinic of Laiko General Hospital
- **George Patoulis** - Regional Governor of Attica, President of Medical Association of Athens
- **Platon Peristeris** - Former President of SPEA
- **Jenny Pittadaki** - Educationalist, Senior Volunteer Nurse of Hellenic Red Cross, Member of SPEA, Ex. Official Delegate of SPEA to WFH/EHC
- **Eteoklis Pokas** - Former President of SPEA
- **Nikolaos Skaloubakas** - Biochemist, Former Director of National Blood Transfusion and Blood Product Centre, General Hospital of Nikaia
- **Thodoris Tachtaras** - Member of SPEA
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in memoriam

Screenshots of her life



T. Mandalaki and C. Louizou at the International Haemophilia Conference, Stockholm (1983)



Titika Mandalaki at the 4th Mediterranean Conference on Thromboembolic Disease, Panteion University (2-6/5/1976)



T. Mandalaki and F. Fessas at the 4th Mediterranean Conference on Thromboembolic Disease, Panteion University (2-6/5/1976)



T. Mandalaki at the Interbalkan Conference organised by the Balkan Medical Union "Health-Friendship", Heraklion, Crete (1975)

Titika Mandalaki (left) at the Hippocratic Hospital – Haematology Laboratory of the 2nd Internal Medicine Clinic. On the right, in the foreground, is Prof. Arkagathos Goutas. Behind him is Elias Politis (1955)





The 1st vehicle – Mobile Blood Collection Unit, donated by France to Greece, thanks to T. Mandalaki's efforts during her postgraduate training in Paris (1962). From right to left: Tsinganou, Adamopoulou (nurses at the Hippocratic Hospital Blood Transfusion Service), Mandalaki. The fourth person has not been identified (1963)



And. Maratheftis and T. Mandalaki at the 3rd Pancyprian Haemophilia Conference (27/10/1985)



C. Louizou, T. Mandalaki, K. Voulis, J. Pittadaki at the International Haemophilia Conference, Stockholm (1983)



Photo taken on an excursion organised by SPEA



With her husband, Tasos Giannitsiotis, in the summer of 1975, in Keratokampos, Crete



1998, at SPEA's event to celebrate the new year

Hard to say “goodbye”

The Greek Haemophiliacs’ Mother is gone

By George Giannitsiotis

My mother, Vasiliki-Aikaterini (Titika) Mandalaki, daughter of doctor Manos Mandalakis and dentist Evangelia (née Papakyriakou), was born in Athens on 30/7/1929. After losing her father (1947), she studied at the Medical School of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, where she was awarded a Degree, a PhD and a Lectorship.

From the beginning of her career as a doctor, she engaged in Haematology, Haemostasis and Haemophilia. A pioneer in the research and treatment of thromboembolic disease, she introduced the anticoagulant therapy in Greece, which saves the lives of thousands of people every day. Equally pioneering in the research for the treatment of haemorrhagic disorders (Haemophilia), she “adopted” people with Haemophilia ever since the preparation of her doctoral thesis and her specialization in Haematology (Hippocratic Hospital of Athens, in the 1950s, under the guidance of the late Professor Arkagathos Goutas) until the very end.



Titika Mandalaki with her husband, Tasos Giannitsiotis

“Upon starting her specialisation at Goutas Clinic (1954), my mother became involved with a group of patients with Haemophilia – a hereditary disorder caused by lack of a coagulation protein-factor in their blood plasma. Her medical career remained inextricably linked with people with Haemophilia, whom she undertook as helpless patients (usually dying from bleeding, as in those days –in the 1950s– science had not yet discovered effective ways to stop bleeding) and took their healthcare to levels similar to those in pioneering then countries (i.e. France, Scandinavian countries, Britain, Australia, Canada).

Giannis Triantafyllou wrote about my mother in his book “Haemophilia”: she is the doctor in his story “the brick” which, together with “grandmother’s egg” must be taught in schools in relation to Disability and how we, “healthy” people, treat People with Disabilities (PWD), as John preferred to call them¹. I would like to add here the confession of his namesake, Giannis B., in the workshop he maintained on Apostolou Pavlou Street (behind Vardaris), one of the many nights he stayed longer than usual so that I would not loiter in the (frozen winter) streets until the time the coach to Asiros Camp would depart from Agias Irinis Street:

– I owe it to our Mum who helped us and thus I was able to work, provide for my family and did not become a beggar!”²

In addition to the above and to the establishment of the first organized Haemophilia Centre in Greece at the Blood Transfusion Centre of the Laiko General Hospital of Athens, Titika Mandalaki also contributed (assisted by her mother, Lina Mandalaki) to the psychosocial support of people with Haemophilia, both

pioneering the establishment of the Greek Hemophilia Society - SPEA (early 1960s) and offering them a “big hug” in her home at the time of their social stigmatisation.³

Alongside people with Haemophilia, Titika Mandalaki dedicated her life to the cause of “Voluntary Blood Donation”, at first in the Blood Transfusion Centre of the Hippocratic Hospital, then as Director of the 2nd Regional Blood Transfusion Centre (Laiko General Hospital, 1972-1997), and as representative of Greece in Expert Committees on Blood Donation at the Council of Europe and the European Union. Her research work gained international recognition in all areas.

She was a founding member of the Hellenic Society of Haematology, the Ligua Mediterranea Against Thromboembolic Disease, the World Federation of Hemophilia and the National Centre for Infectious Disease Control (now EODY – National Public Health Organisation). She participated in numerous international conferences, while she chaired the organising committee of the 4th International Congress of Thromboembolic Disease of the Ligua Mediterranea (Athens, 2-6/5/1976), and the XX World Congress of Haemophilia (Athens, 12-17/10/1992).

She was blessed to start a family with the late doctor Tasos Giannitsiotis (1930-2014) and have two children, Efthymia (Emi) Giannitsiotis (Internist-Infectious Disease Specialist) and George Giannitsiotis, and two grandchildren, Margarita and Anastasia.

She passed on peacefully in her home on 8/4/2020.

Farewell, our beloved mother.

Notes

¹ Giannis Triantafyllou, “Haemophilia-blood-blood donation: a relationship for life”, Athens 2006, pp.12-15

² G. Giannitsiotis, “Chronicle of a living room” (unpublished)

³ “As the late Giannis Triantafyllou (1950-2011) confessed to me, the fact that my grandmother



**Vasiliki-Aikaterini
(Titika) Mandalaki
(1929-2020)**

She was born in Athens. Her father was doctor Manos Mandalakis (1894-1947), a pioneer of Rheumatology and inspirer of the use of thermal springs in Greece, and her mother dentist Lina Mandalaki (1902-1991). She graduated from the Medical School of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and specialised in Internal Medicine and Haematology. Her Professors were Arkagathos Goutas (1895-1982) and Hippocrates Tseveris (1916-1994). She further specialised in Haemostasis and its Disorders in France and England, alongside the great professors Jean-Pierre Soullier (1915-2003) and Rosemary Peyton Biggs (1921-2001). Her doctoral thesis (1956) was entitled "Contribution to the Study of Haemophilia" and her lectorship thesis (1965) "Experimental study on the behaviour of factor XIII (F.S.F.) in various pathological conditions".

In 1971 she undertook the management of the 2nd Regional Blood Transfusion Centre at the Laiko General Hospital of Athens, succeeding its founder Mike Paidousis (1906-1974) and served that position with a high sense of duty until her retirement in 1996.

During that time, she engaged in a full range of Blood Donation activities: the establishment and development of a Haemophilia Centre; the creation of a plasmapheresis unit; a centre for the study of congenital and acquired haemostasis disorders; an investigation unit for questionable paternity; a unit for monitoring anticoagulant treatment. During her tenure (1995), the 2nd Regional Blood Centre was declared a "National Reference Centre for Haemorrhagic Disorders".

As far as her managerial skills were concerned, she was a pioneer in the application of voluntary blood donation in Greece; was a representative of Greece in Expert Commit-

tees on Blood Donation at the Council of Europe and the European Union for many years; prepared the law 1820/1988 for the Organisation of Blood Banks in Greece, in collaboration with the political leadership at the time and distinguished colleagues; was a founding member and Chairperson of the Hellenic Society of Haematology, a founding member and representative of Greece in the Ligua Mediterranea Against Thromboembolic Disease; was a founding member and President of the Hellenic Society for the Treatment of Thromboembolic Disease; was a pioneer and founding member of the Greek Hemophilia Society (SPEA); was a member of the examination committee for awarding the speciality of Haematology.

She chaired the Organising and Scientific Committees in dozens of national and international conferences, including: 4th International Congress of Thromboembolic Disease of the Ligua Mediterranea (Athens, 2-6/5/1976), and XX World Congress of Haemophilia (Athens, 12-17/10/1992).

As far as her research work is concerned, she developed partnerships with numerous international centres and organisations, including: EUROPEAN CONCERTED ACTION ON THROMBOSIS (ECAT), WORLD FEDERATION OF HEMOPHILIA (WFH), INTERNATIONAL STUDY GROUP FOR ANTICOAGULANT CONTROL, EUROPEAN CONCERTED ACTION ON ANTICOAGULATION, CENTRE NATIONAL TRANSFUSION SANGUINE FR, EUROPEAN THROMBOSIS RESEARCH ORGANISATION (ETRO), GAUBIUS LABORATORIUM LEIDEN, NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE USA, EUROSIDA, NATIONAL REFERENCE LABORATORY FOR ANTICOAGULANT REAGENTS AND CONTROLS UK, DEPT OF HEMATOLOGY AND HEMOSTASIS UNIVERSITY OF LEIDEN NL. These and many other collaborations resulted in the publication of dozens of scientific articles in Greek and international journals, as well as in making hundreds of announcements in Greek and international conferences.

Her teaching work was particularly important, since she taught many haematologists and other specialists, as her perception of the interdisciplinarity of her subject matter led her to inspire other health scientists to fall in love with and serve Haemostasis and Blood Donation. She made a constant and substantial contribution to the Postgraduate courses of the Hellenic Society of Haematology, as well as to lectures and the organization of round-table discussions within the framework of conferences organised by the Hellenic Society of Haematology and Panhellenic Medical Conferences. She supervised the preparation and writing of dozens of doctoral theses. At the same time, she was a teacher at the School of Visiting Nurses for several years, and treated with special care and attention the nursing and other staff of Blood Banks, recognizing the critical role and responsibilities they undertake.

Her great love were the patients with Haemophilia who, by losing her, lost their "Mum". It was she who took them out of the isolation and stigmatisation of their disease –which is also accompanied by physical disability, due to haemarthrosis– and integrated them into society, cared for their education and vocational rehabilitation, introduced the most modern methods of treating Haemophilia, stood by them when they were faced with the nightmare of HIV and HCV transmission from blood derivatives that were necessary for their treatment, and finally introduced techniques of birth control and prenatal diagnosis, so that women in families with Haemophilia have the opportunity of family planning.

She was married to internist-gastroenterologist Anastasios (Tasos) Giannitsiotis (1930-2014) and has left behind two brilliant children: Efthymia (Emi), an internist-infectious disease specialist, and George, a political scientist-internationalist, as well as her granddaughters Margarita, a medical student herself, and Anastasia, a philosophy student.

opened her living room to them (who were stigmatized and treated with prejudice and exclusion by the Greek society at the time) was of great importance. In his dedication in the reprint of his book 'Haemophilia' he writes specifically:

'To my beloved George

I must say that in addition to the Gift of Life that is directly linked to the 'Mum' of most Haemophiliacs of my generation, both my Spiritual

development and my good course in life are partly due to the steady feelings I drew from the Love and warmth I found in your parents' home. This is like a little testimony to accompany the DEDICATION of this book, which is part of my multifaceted, long-standing and Optimistic personal Struggle in life.

With much Love and appreciation'."

(G. Giannitsiotis, "Chronicle of a living room")

The Grande Dame of Blood Donation and Haemophilia in Greece



By Calliope Louizou

On 8 April 2020, Haematologist Professor Titika Mandalaki-Giannitsioti passed on, having devoted her life and work to two major areas of Medical Science: the organization of Blood Donation in our country on the one hand, and the field of Congenital Haemorrhagic Disorders on the other.

Titika Mandalaki was a leading figure in the research of Haemostasis and the treatment of Haemorrhagic Disorders. Not only was she a unique researcher and scientist, she was also a unique person. She was characterised by simplicity, affability, modesty, love for her work and her associates and colleagues – Greek or foreigner– who fought in the same field as her.

It is not surprising that Greek Haemophiliacs refer to her as their “Mum”, acknowledging her support to them and their families, which she offered with so much affection. At the same time, her efforts to improve their medical and psychosocial treatment were endless.

I would like to give a brief account of certain events that played a significant and decisive role in the progress of treating Haemorrhagic

Disorders in our country, which had always been supported by Titika Mandalaki.

In October 1961, the First Haemophilia Station was created in our country at the Hippocratic Hospital of Athens, with the late Hippocrates Tsevrenis as its director and Titika Mandalaki as his close associate. The Station then provided the precious “recent anti-haemophilic plasma”, rich in factors VIII (F. VIII) and IX (F. IX) for the treatment of Haemophilia patients.

In 1971, she undertook the management of the 2nd Regional Blood Transfusion Centre of Athens at the Laiko General Hospital, succeeding its founder and creator, Mikes Paidousis, and hence was established the Haemophilia Centre at the Laiko General Hospital under her own management, later to become the National Haemophilia Reference Centre in Greece. At that time, cryoprecipitate in dry form was also starting to become available for the treatment of people with Haemophilia besides plasma, which was then prepared by the Blood Transfusion and Blood Product Centre of Piraeus, under the management of the late Ilias Politis.

Throughout her long career in the treatment of Haemophilia patients, Titika Mandalaki had a close supporter and collaborator, the Greek Haemophilia Society (SPEA), which was actually established by her. Her constant struggles and efforts towards the Ministry of Health and Welfare, with the support of SPEA, have hitherto managed to maintain all the achievements for which our country is proud of and the Greek Haemophiliacs

“happy”, as she used to say at every opportunity.

I could not fail to emphasize her huge contribution to the treatment of AIDS, for which she was honoured by the Hellenic Society for the Study and Treatment of AIDS. Both Greek Haemophiliacs and doctors dealing with Haemophilia in Greece and abroad today pay tribute to the memory of this great scientist and Grande Dame.

Titika Mandalaki was also a person who, in her scientific capacity as haematologist, **always stood by the patient, making her own mark on the way she viewed the relationship between a patient and a doctor.** Titika Mandalaki is an example and perhaps a unique model of close relationship, mutual trust and assistance between a doctor and a patient.

The legacy she left to her successors is an onerous duty.

It is with great emotion that, with this small reference to her work today, I say goodbye to my director and my teacher, and thank her from the bottom of my heart for our excellent cooperation and for her ever valuable and decisive contribution to every difficulty I faced. I thank her for inspiring me with the love for people with Haemophilia and the love for the ideals of Voluntary Blood Donation, which she served throughout her tenure and supported with all her might.

We will always remember her with love.

Farewell, our Titika.
Rest in Peace.



At the International Haemophilia Conference, Athens 1992

A Farewell to Doctor Titika Mandalaki



By Anastasia Karafoulidou

A few months ago, the Greek Haemophilia community said goodbye to Doctor Titika Mandalaki with respect and gratitude – from a distance, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Titika Mandalaki was the doctor who quickly realised the true dimensions of the problem faced by patients with Haemophilia in the country in late 1960s, **highlighted it as a life goal and tried to tackle it.**

She was a diligent, persistent, careful and visionary scientist. Following the international scientific developments, she struggled to locate, study, organise and train patients with Haemophilia in the country.

In 1972, she established a centre for monitoring and treating patients with Haemophilia and congenital haemorrhagic disorders at the Laiko General Hospital of Athens, where she was the director of Blood Transfusion Centre, and gradually managed to register the majority of patients carrying the disease in the country.

Through her **constant work, effort and perseverance**, she managed to instil her interest

into her associates. She also managed to inspire and enlist the collaboration of colleagues of other specialties, such as orthopaedists, dentists, surgeons, neurologists, psychiatrists as well as physiotherapists, so that they would be aware of and able to deal with the particular multiple problems of the disease.

Her scientific team not only systematically followed and participated in scientific developments worldwide, but also secured international collaborations, while both herself and her colleagues had an active presence in international scientific events.

She helped patients to get organised and become aware of their peculiarity and of their disease, to claim their rights and at the same time to join the international community of Haemophilia patients.

Titika Mandalaki was the person who believed in her vision and tried with all her means to make it happen. **Doctors, biologists, chemists, nurses, technologists, and volunteers believed in this struggle and worked with her.** The baton has been handed over to those who

followed. Today, the Greek Haemophilia community has gained recognition. Scientific performance has been acknowledged worldwide, and through this all viral difficulties that arose at the end of the 20th century have been addressed. We are proceeding by applying all modern methods of treatment of the disease, from prevention and prenatal testing, to modern treatments, motor recovery, and of course the treatment of viral infections.

Alongside the scientists who devotedly continue their work, there is an active, informed, hard-working society of haemophiliacs, which strives to facilitate the work of scientists, improve the lives of sufferers and contain the disease.

The vision of the person who started this titanic work through hardships and nightmarish traps (viral infections) has taken shape! Titika Mandalaki **BELONGS** to the lucky pioneers whose goal was achieved, took root, bore fruit and continues its upward course.

This is the story of the unyielding human spirit!

Titika Mandalaki BELONGS to the lucky pioneers whose goal was achieved, took root, bore fruit and continues its upward course

An example of devotion



By Platon Peristeris

My contribution is poor and short, and would not dare to highlight the charismatic personality of Titika Mandalaki; our doctor; our supporter doctor; our guide doctor; a fighter doctor. It is just a humble tribute to this woman.

I will always remember **her enthusiasm, her dynamism and strength, her unrivalled interest in our well-being**, as well as her great contribution not only to the treatment of people with Haemophilia, but also her unequalled support in the establishment, the operation and the claims of our Society. Her creativity, optimism and smiling stubbornness in the face of hardships have always been an inspiration and a driving force to all of us.

From Hippocratic Hospital to Laiko General Hospital, she would always be there in the hall or in the office, holding the famous “paper-accordion” in her hands, listening, guiding, supervising. Strict when needed, good-natured and smiling at other times. Moved and modest when we talked about her at the Society’s events.

She will always be remembered as a shining example of a fighter, a guide and a model of devotion.

Curt
Αιμορροφιλία

Amy
Ανεπάρκεια
Αυξητικής
Ορμόνης

Cynthia
Νόσος Gaucher

Είμαστε ΕΔΩ

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Rare Disease

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Πεποίθησή μας είναι ότι ο μοναδικός δρόμος για την επίτευξη αυτού του στόχου είναι να εργαζόμαστε **ΜΑΖΙ**.

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Παραπομπές:

1. Rare Disease: facts and statistics. <http://globalgenet.org/rare-diseases-facts-statistics> (Πρόσβαση 1 Ιουνίου 2018)



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... Above all, her student



By Renia Gialeraki

I remember her...

- being uninterested the first day I started my work, because she was working in the lab and she could not stop
- deciding a month later to send me to Scotland and Wales to train in new techniques alongside sacred monsters of Haemophilia, the beginning of my initiation into the world of haemostasis disorders, which continues to this day
- taking the initiative, together with Popi Louizou and Kostas Markakis, to establish a plasmapheresis department, which has been handling many and difficult incidents ever since
- being excited when the structure of factors FVIII, FIX was revealed and recognizing their significant contribution to the future of haemophilia
- opening the dance with the President of the Council of Europe at the Blood Donation Conference
- vigorously defending voluntary blood donation
- fighting to offer haemophiliacs the opportunities for social inclusion and vocational rehabilitation
- informing haemophiliacs about the turmoil of factor contamination and the possibility of HIV transmission, with courage, simple words and scientific competence, in the Amphitheatre of the Laiko General Hospital
- calling me while I was on maternity leave and asking me to return urgently, because the first HIV test had come from America and we had to test all staff and patients
- travelling all over the world and collaborating with other experts in the Council of Europe in order to submit her own recom-

mendations about the legislation on Blood Donation in Greece

- being self-sarcastic when admitting she was unable to boil a single egg
- holding the patients' hand until the very last minute
- rushing out of the operating room to measure factors
- organising the Mediterranean Union for Thromboembolic Disease and its Greek Department by launching a cooperation between different specialties
- getting excited when we got the opportunity to test carriers and run prenatal testing for Haemophilia
- asking all of us to meet during the breaks of international conferences and tell her what we had each learnt at the meeting we attended (once, Costas and I dared to skip a meeting and she figured us out)
- standing by X (he knows who I am referring to) when he needed to have a tooth extracted and was afraid to be given a factor
- organizing international conferences, after endless hours of preparation, exasperation, redefinition of the programme, monitoring of every detail, and finally succeeding with commendable success
- being persistent when things were getting tough and managing to meet the challenges in collaboration with experts in Greece and all over the world
- scolding me and Katerina Tsoukala for entering the New York subway, because she was afraid that something bad could have happened to us
- actively participating in international scientific conferences and bringing us in contact with pioneers from all over the world, opening doors for creative thinking

and channels of cooperation

- implementing innovative immunotolerance methods for patients with antibodies
- monitoring and co-paving the way for developments, and implementing the respective new applications in the operation of our Department
- trying to overcome the reservations imposed by her conservative upbringing, and informing the first gay couple of blood donors who were found positive for HIV
- informing about the results of paternity expertise, which often hid unpleasant surprises for those involved
- mourning the loss of each of her "children" and supporting their family, which was also her own
- being unconcerned about everyday things, so much so that we needed to remind her, before every conference, that she had to think about what to wear
- preparing her speech for a conference feeling nervous every time as if it were her first one and working on every detail
- speaking respectfully of her teachers
- laughing her heart out when I told her several years later that I first met her the day I was born, because it was she (a young doctor with thick glasses, as my father had described her) who had checked the blood group of a new-born baby whose mother was rhesus negative
-

I remember so many things that the 600 words that Alexis has asked me to write would not suffice. I feel grateful that I met her and with her I was initiated into the world of goal commitment and constant pursuit, which is the basic tool for us to become better people.

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This small, great place is grateful to you



By Katerina Tsoukala

My dear "Mum",

What can I say or what can I write about you...? It will be so little, so small in consideration of what YOU did for Blood Donation, for Haemophilia, for Thrombophilia, for volunteerism, but mainly for the worldwide promotion of our country with your enormous work, under the very difficult conditions and with the very limited resources at the time.

Who can forget that YOU laid the foundations for the legislation of free, voluntary, unpaid blood donation in Greece? Who can challenge YOUR passion for Haemophilia, Haemorrhagic Disorders and Thrombophilia? Who implemented their clinical, laboratory

–and later genetic and molecular– diagnosis? **Who would not bow before Titika?**

From Japan to America and from Canada to Australia, everyone would hug and kiss Titika!

You also opened doors for us, your "DAUGHTERS" –as you used to call us–, to fly all over the world to learn and bring back new knowledge and pioneering techniques. But above all, you wanted us to come back being praised for the teamwork at the Blood Transfusion Department of the Laiko General Hospital of Athens. You felt proud of us, you took pride in every step we took, you were anxious about every start and every effort we made. You supported us in our difficulties, and in every mishap we had you

used to say: "Tomorrow, we'll start over again!".

My dear "Mum", I personally thank you for what you have taught me. Thank you for everything you offered me all those 30 years we were together. Thank you for the profound, lifelong love you have implanted in me for Blood Donation and the values of life. Thank you for teaching me that every good, every great and every possible deed is contingent on teamwork; and that our Blood Donation will only progress if we are united like a strong fist. You would always end up by saying "We only have one goal: to save human lives!"

Rest in Peace. This small, great place is grateful to you.

Farewell, "Mum"



By Panagiota Tsampouka

It is with great sorrow, profound love and infinite gratitude that I say goodbye to the wonderful "Mum" of the 2nd Regional Blood Transfusion Centre of Athens.

We all called her "Mum", because she was exactly that to us all, patients and members of staff.

She protected us, she guided us, she taught

us, she embraced us, she taught us to love, to respect, to always work as a team, to rejoice together in the happy times, to hold hand in hand in the difficult times and losses.

Smart, strong, charismatic, elusive.

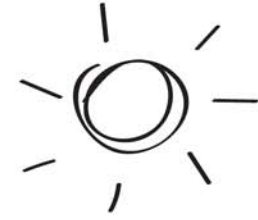
I thank her from the bottom of my heart for entrusting me with the position of Chief Nurse

in all the areas she was responsible for as a manager. I thank her for giving me the satisfaction of being useful to society in the field I have chosen to work in.

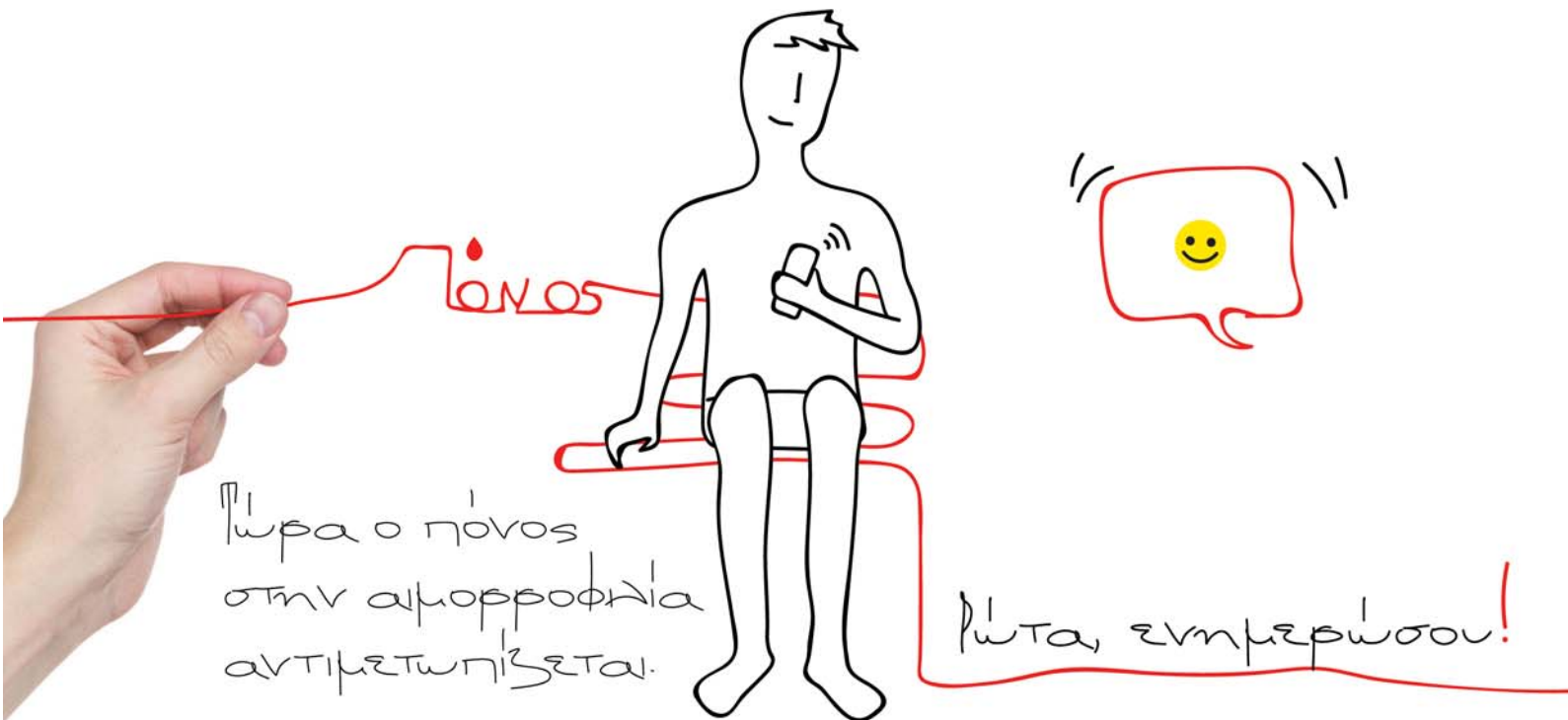
My dear "Mum", I say goodbye to you with love and sorrow.

Farewell. Rest in Peace.

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Με την ευγενική
χορηγία της



Farewell to my Honourable Teacher and Friend



By John Meletis

Professor Titika Mandalaki's life cycle concluded peacefully in the warm embrace of her own family. The event took place during the days of our mandatory confinement (due to the COVID-19 pandemic) and we were unable to accompany her on her last trip. These moments bring to mind tender circles of memories, of people who knew her, who lived and worked with her.

I was lucky to have been trained at the Laiko General Hospital in the 1st Internal Medicine Clinic of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and at the Blood Transfusion Centre, which was run by the late Titika Mandalaki. I worked with her for many years. Throughout my medical life, ever since I was a junior doctor and until I became a Professor, **I had the pleasure, luck and happiness to come very close to her high academic and clinical conscientiousness and her rare and enviable social contribution.**

It is difficult to describe her multifarious personality in words, who in my youth seemed divinely surreal. Hardworking, methodical, systematic, particularly intelligent, unselfish, noble, approachable, with misinterpreted

modesty and unparalleled ethos, she honoured the Laiko General Hospital, Haematology, Blood Donation and the entire Medical Community with her presence.

Student-physician training, patient care and scientific research were three of her successful goals. She was one of the founders of Clinical Haematology and Blood Donation in Greece, while her original and quality research work earned the country international scientific recognition early on. Her calm power, dedication to duty, enlightened presence and convincing speech allowed her to enjoy the appreciation and respect of her friends and associates, as well as of the entire scientific community in other fields. She was a source of inspiration and became a magnet for several gifted young scientists, who will later staff University and non-University scientific positions in Greece and abroad.

Her contribution to the field of Blood Donation and particularly to the care of patients with Haemophilia was unique and unprecedented. Her engagement and dedication was more than motherly, while she conveyed and imparted that faith of hers to all Blood Transfusion Centre staff, and

especially to my devoted dear Friends: Popi and Jenny, but also to the entire Centre Staff, who continued and still continue this rare and magnificent work of hers.

We, who were lucky enough to meet her and have her as our Teacher and Friend, will hold her as an example of hard work, dedication and self-denial, will remain attached to her principles and will remember her with love and reminiscence in the days she was active and energetic.

Doctor, Researcher, Teacher, Spiritual Mother to many, Professor Titika Mandalaki biologically passed on. **Her work, though, whether in the form of written texts or as scientific and humanitarian ideas, will remain in eternity.** I will never forget her trust, her love and the admonitions she gave me while we were talking on the phone on St Catherine's Day –her name day– after her retirement, when she would take the opportunity to express her love, her thoughts on Medicine, on Haematology and the current moral and social issues.

For my love and the affection with which she inspired me for Haematology, together with my other Mentor, Phaedon Fessas, I dedicate the adjacent poem to her.

My heartfelt condolences to her family and the entire Family of Haematology. MAY SHE REST IN PEACE.

Farewell, my dear Teacher and Friend...!

She was a source of inspiration and became a magnet for several gifted young scientists, who will later staff University and non-University scientific positions in Greece and abroad

08/04/2020, The end of a unique Human being!

The day Titika Mandalaki left us for ever



By Jenny Pittadaki

LADY... DOMINANT
My Beauteous Lady...!
Goddess of my thoughts!
You robbed me of my youth,
with your seduction tricks!
The earlier horizons of my dreams,
you twisted, changed, finished
bringing me gradually closer to you!
You blended my dreams, it seems,
entirely with You!
My cherished blue of the sea,
you turned it suddenly into red of lust
a companion in your wondrous splendour!
My dream white of snow,
you turned it into purple in my eyes and my bosom!
The sun, the moon, the stars and my galaxies,
you turned them, oh witch..., into red, white and platelets!
But the colours were not lost, my Lady,
neither in my mind, nor in my soul!
You intoxicated me... you inspired me... you made me passionate...
"You" ... Hippocrates's Daughter!
I shall thank you forever, each and every day,
as you, in the turmoil of life,
in the mountain of sickness,
in the sorrows, joys, anguish, deliverance,
brought me closer to life and hope!
You offered me endless journeys far away,
you made my little dreams grow big
you gave me faith, hope, bittersweetness, strength
you breathed the breath of life into me and made me a "Man"
you christened me and made me "Passion"!
You were worthy of it...
I would start all over again tied up with you,
Because it is with you I lived,
uniquely with you I want to live... and finish!
I shall hold you an eternal dream in my heart...
I shall have you as a star and guide...
EVEN IF I STAY ALONE...!

*[From the collection "The Lacking and the Hermit"
Nereus Publishing, 4th Edition, Athens 2017]*

It is very difficult for me to express in words what you mean to me, Titika.

Ever since 1972, when my mother was being treated for a blood disease at the Laiko General Hospital, I came close to you, through your constant and daily presence next to her.

The close communication with you throughout her hospitalization, gave me the opportunity to feel your passion for the advancement of Blood Donation in our country, as well as your undivided interest in Greek people with Haemophilia whom you treated with so much affection, not only as their doctor but also as their "Mother".

I responded immediately to your call for my voluntary contribution as a volunteer nurse of the Hellenic Red Cross, in your effort to recruit Volunteer Blood Donors, without yet realising that your own passion and dedication to treating Haemophilia in Greece would change my own goal and attitude to life.

Since 1975, I remained a close partner and friend of yours on **our shared journey of offering, which was full of trials and joys that only come when they can be shared.** As a result, you made me feel as if people with Haemophilia were my own siblings or children.

It was a great honour for me to have been considered among your partners. With your help and great confidence, I initially accompanied you on the difficult path of treating Haemophilia in Greece, and later as a Board member of the Greek Hemophilia Society (SPEA).

It is time for words and memories now. What is left are the traces of your presence in the souls of each one of us. In my soul, there will always be a corner with your name tied in with a thousand memories, and with your image of fighting for increasingly militant claims for the Greek people with Haemophilia.

Farewell, Titika!

My own “mother”

By Litsa Hatzinikolaou-Tyriakidou

When I was asked to write a few words about Titika Mandalaki, “my Mum”, I thought it would be difficult for me to put down in writing my thoughts and feelings, in just a few lines, about a person who filled my own life for over forty years.

Our relationship with Titika Mandalaki began many years ago, when my father, who maintained a close friendship with the whole family, used to take me as a child to Titika’s office on Agiou Konstantinou Street, in Omonia, to be examined (she was treating me for rheumatic fever which was afflicting me throughout childhood and adolescence).

The years passed; I grew up; I studied; I got married; I became a mother and life brought me to the Blood Transfusion Centre at the Laiko General Hospital in April 1983. It was the moment that defined my later life and connected it with the person and doctor Titika Mandalaki. I became “her Litsa”, her secretary, the Haemophilia Centre secretary, the Blood Transfusion Centre secretary. And this Blood Transfusion – Haemophilia Centre became for me my second home, a school of love and a source of offering, compassion, altruism, always under the guidance of our

“Mum”, Titika Mandalaki.

During this term of my service at the Blood Transfusion Centre and until her retirement from the department in 1997, I was by her side. I learned how to love “her children”, the patients with Haemophilia, whom she knew all by their first names: Giannis, Andreas, Ilias, Eteoklis, Panagiotakis (whom his grandmother brought for treatment on her back and whose photo I still carry in my wallet), George, Kostas, Alexis, Iakovos, Alexandros and everyone else. I learnt to share her stress in her effort to relieve them, to offer them the best possible quality of life. I saw her always being informed about the new treatments that would protect them and take them off the sidelines to make them feel useful in society. She improved their quality of life. She was happy with their successes and was proud every time “her children” achieved their goals. She suffered for each one of them, she was disappointed when things were not going well and she used to cry, yes cry, when one of her “children” passed. I remember her agony, her fear and her panic when that AIDS plague broke out. She was scared. She was scared for “her

children”; but she was armed with love, determination and patience and managed to do a lot.

“Our Mum” was a doctor with a HUMAN face who liked to offer. She generously offered love, affection, devotion and knowledge to everyone around her. As for me, I was blessed to have had her in my life.

With her own attitude to life, she made me a better person. She taught me the value of living every moment in **our lives, that material things have absolutely no value, but our wealth is our knowledge and what comes out of our heart**; she taught me to love people, to bend over the sick; she taught me that the sick, the afflicted, the tormented and those around them need understanding and love. Only love. And that is what “our Mum” did. She spread her wings and put us all underneath. She did not single out doctors, scientific staff, nurses, administrative and support staff, or patients. She generously gave us all the moral and material means to continue on the path she showed us. For me, she was “my Mum”.

I respectfully say goodbye to her and thank her for what she did for me.

I apologise to her for not drinking together that coffee she always wanted. We did not make it.

Farewell, Mum; I will always love you.

“Our Mum” was a doctor with a HUMAN face who liked to offer. She generously offered love, affection, devotion and knowledge to everyone around her. As for me, I was blessed to have had her in my life

Your Litsa

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Ο Λεάνδρος πάσχει από αιμορροφιλία Α. Δίπλα του είναι οι γονείς του.



Στις 17 Απριλίου 2020, τιμούμε την Παγκόσμια Ημέρα Αιμορροφιλίας για 30^η φορά. Είναι μια ευκαιρία για όλους να συμμετέχουν στην κοινότητα της αιμορροφιλίας. Τα άτομα που πάσχουν από αιμορροφιλία, οι φροντιστές τους, οι φίλοι τους, οι συγγενείς τους, οι θεραπευτές τους, οι εταίροι στη βιομηχανία. Όλοι. Πώς μπορείτε να συμμετέχετε; Καλέστε το τοπικό παράρτημα. Μιλήστε με ένα μέλος της κοινότητας. Γιατί; Επειδή πρέπει όλοι να μείνουμε ενωμένοι για να διαμορφώσουμε το μέλλον των σπάνιων αιματολογικών διαταραχών.

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That was Titika



By George Gr. Kampouroglou

Titika Mandalaki was the Doctor whom those who happened to meet and experience up close are NOT going to forget. The reason is self-evident.

Titika embraced the deep meanings of Medicine early on, and she studied in order to offer and support those who would be in need of and seek her medical help/support. These were not just a few, but far too many; almost innumerable. Among them were many children with haemorrhagic predisposition, which in medicine constitutes a serious nosologic disease-entity, Haemophilia. Titika Mandalaki was born in 1929 in Athens. Her parents came from a medical family and she was the only child. Her father was a doctor from Crete and her mother was a dentist. Both of her parents were well-known in the medical and social circles and thus offered Titika the most appropriate conditions and opportunities for her to **embrace the concepts of medical care in the social field**. This resulted in her graduation from the Medical School of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens in 1954. Without delay, she started her specialty in the Internal Medicine Clinic of the University of Athens at the Hippocratic Hospital, whose director was the late Professor Arkagathos Goutas, who, apart from knowledge in medicine, he also instilled her

with the deep meanings of the medical function which contribute irrevocably to her further improvement in social behaviour. It was thus that Titika acquired the specialty of Internal Medicine and a specialization in Haematology, furthering it with her post-graduate training in London, Paris and Switzerland. At the same time, she completed her thesis on "Haemorrhagic disposition in children" and wrote several scientific papers which she announced at medical conferences, **thus establishing herself in the international scientific field**, whereby she was able to exchange thoughts and ideas on various issues of her specialty by developing friendly relations with important haematologists. It is worth noting that throughout her scientific activity, besides her zeal and diligence, she also demonstrated deep feelings of affection and love for her patients, which lead her to embrace, treat and protect many children who suffered from Haemophilia, a disease which until that time was incurable. In this way, Titika began to gain recognition in the field of Haematology and particularly in that of Haemophilia, **which resulted in her rightly being given the title of the "Mother" of haemophiliac children**. She affectionately took care of them, constantly advised them, but was very strict whenever

they did not follow the established rules that had actually been established to that effect: in order to avoid muscle haematomas, haemarthrosis, and even fractures, which subsequently led to related disabilities.

In 1971, Titika undertook the management of the Blood Transfusion Centre at the Laiko General Hospital of Athens. She retained that position until her retirement. Her tenure at the Laiko General Hospital coincided with my own tenure as the director of the Orthopaedic Clinic, where our collaboration began, due to the multiple orthopaedic problems experienced by haemophiliac patients in their musculoskeletal system.

That collaboration lasted for 15 years (1971-1986), until I was forced to resign from my position as was required by the National Health System. But my associates and later successors continued to work with her as usual.

What should be emphasised, however, was our constructive collaboration, **which made me admire her strong character, her self-control and her self-confidence when she had to make decisions, her knowledge, and above all her affection but also her pain when a haemophiliac child had to face a serious problem or when his life was in danger**.

Titika was able to win over fellow doctors, parents or guardians of haemophiliac children, as well as those children themselves, by dint of her kind nature. She was also capable of frequently presenting her

Titika was able to win over fellow doctors, parents or guardians of haemophiliac children, as well as those children themselves, by dint of her kind nature

My last goodbye to Titika Mandalaki

By Nikolaos Skaloumbakas

constructive work at conferences or conventions which allowed her to consistently establish herself in the scientific field of Haematology.

I specifically remember a two-day convention held in Malmö, Sweden, where we also participated with a few (30-35) other doctors of various specialties from different countries. The theme of the convention, if I remember well (about 40 years have passed since then) was "The problems of haemophilic patients and the prospects of resolving them".

At the convention, I was impressed (as much as I can remember) by Titika Mandalaki's presentation and discussion. She stressed our view concerning the treatment of injury and its effects on haemophilic patients. The conclusion focused on successful prophylaxis-protection and timely correct diagnosis, as opposed to any treatment, which, no matter how successful, would be equally likely to have traumatic effects with similar future consequences. As they can gradually aggravate mobility problems, they must be treated as quickly as possible, even surgically.

Before I conclude this short biography of Titika, I should also have to mention her excellent husband, the late Tasos Giannitsiotis, a very wise gastroenterologist who acquired the title of philosopher doctor, and on the other hand her children, Emmy and George, who, following in the footsteps of their parents, have already achieved social maturity, which is also necessary in order to embrace the principles of virtue and act with such principles to ensure a better future.

Our dear Titika,

Your arrival in this world was a divine gift, but your passing was the most painful blow to the hearts of your friends and old associates.

I met Titika many years ago, when she was an attending physician at the Blood Transfusion Centre of the Hippocratic Hospital and I was an attending physician and close collaborator of the late Elias Politis, director of the National Blood Transfusion and Blood Product Centre at the General State Hospital of Nikaia, Piraeus. Since then, an excellent collaboration in the field of blood donation began. The late Elias Politis also contributed to this, talking to me about the great scientific personality of Titika, who in the meantime had taken over the management of the Blood Transfusion Centre of the Laiko Hospital.

The cooperation between our Centre and the Blood Transfusion Centre of the Laiko Hospital was excellent, contributing together with the other Centres to the maximum fulfilment of the purposes of blood donation, such as voluntary blood donation and preparation of blood derivatives. This is entirely due to our greatest haematologist of all times, Elias Politis.

During our collaboration, I often noticed the particular weakness and care that Titika showed for people with Haemophilia. In fact, when we started producing blood derivatives, she repeatedly asked us to expedite the preparation of coagulation products. She was present at every event involving people with Haemophilia.

Her scientific training in Haematology was enormous and internationally recognized, as evidenced by her regular invitation to international conferences. It is particularly important that Titika contributed to the greatest extent to the continuation the National Blood Transfusion and Blood Product Centre. By virtue of a ministerial order, she came to our Centre together with the attending physician of the Blood Transfusion Centre at the Laiko General Hospital, Ms. Popi Loizou, in order to provide her support, following Elias Politis's self-sacrifice on the altar of responsibility.

Their contribution was decisive, because at that time all of us who worked at the Centre had literally collapsed. With her vast experience and knowledge, she managed to help us recover and gave us the courage to continue our work. Her love for blood donation was so great that, after her retirement, she continued to offer her services to the National Organisation for Medicines as chairperson of the Organic Product Control Committee. Moreover, she was also appointed chairperson of the board of the National Blood Transfusion and Blood Product Centre, after its relocation from the General State Hospital of Nikaia to the area of Thrakomakedones. **In general, her contribution to the work of Blood Donation was so important, that it will remain indelible over the years.**

I am very sorry, Titika, that I could not be there to say goodbye to you; say my last goodbye and thank you for all that you offered to Blood Donation and to your friend Skaloumbakas, as you preferred to call me.

Farewell!

A farewell to Titika



By Sofia Aroni

Titika Mandalaki: a priestess of Blood Donation and Haemophilia!

Her career began at the 2nd Internal Medicine Clinic of the Hippocratic Hospital, under the guidance of the late Professor Arkagathos Goutas, whom she never forgot and always mentioned in her reports. In 1966, she acquired the specialty of Haematology alongside another titan, the late Professor of Haematology Hippocrates Tsevrenis, who had already established the first Haemophilia Centre at the Hippocratic Hospital of Athens. Management of that Centre was undertaken by Titika Mandalaki, who was later trained in Haematology Centres in Zurich and Paris. In 1971, she undertook the management of the Blood Transfusion Centre at the Laiko Hospital, making it the largest Haemophilia Centre in Greece, since many of her patients followed her from the Hippocratic Hospital to her new position, thus her name was inextricably linked with Haemophilia. She quickly became a Lecturer at the University of Athens, having written a thesis on "Haemorrhagic Disorders".

Titika Mandalaki was one of the founding members of the Hellenic Society of Haematology and its President during the period 1986-1988. Throughout her scientific career, she was a founding and active member of many Greek and international scientific societies, and an organizer of Greek and international scientific conferences. Her teaching work to medical students, specialising and specialised haematologists and visiting sisters was important, while her research work was also rich with publications and announcements in Greek and

foreign medical journals.

A dynamic, militant, restless, tireless person, she participated in the establishment of the Greek Hemophilia Society (SPEA) alongside two other prominent figures at the time, Hippocrates Tsevrenis and Elias Politis. In the same year, the society joined the World Federation of Hemophilia (WFH) and in 1989 it became a member of the European Haemophilia Consortium (EHC). Throughout her career, Titika Mandalaki was exclusively by and behind the society's works, which was her own undisputed kingdom. Titika Mandalaki was smart, with special and broad training, sweet, approachable, mellifluous, kind, witty but also caustic when needed, she used to listen to the patient and she would become fierce to defend his rights. She had an amazing memory and had photographed her entire life, the people she met, the battles she fought, the incidents she experienced! In the conference rooms, she always took a seat in the front row of the amphitheatre, like a good student, and listened to the speakers reverentially! It was as if she were recording! She had everyone's approval and recognition. All her contemporaries, but also those who were close to her, called her "Titika", because they felt her as their own! She would win everyone over from the first meeting! She was one of the few doctors who made Greece famous abroad for her own scientific work! **She was the ambassador of Greece worldwide and the mother of haemophiliacs nationwide!**

However, she believed and had confidence in her own instinct, in her own feelings, in her own good intentions, and she was very reluctant, sceptical and reserved with every

newcomer in the field, until she got to know them well and made sure they cared for the sick and worked for their good! As long as she was around, haemostasis and haemophilia always had their place in the educational programmes of the Society of Haematology.

It took a few years for her to accept me but, eventually, we became particularly connected in the amphitheatres of the minor haemophilia and haemostasis conferences. Many evenings, we would chat for hours, while taking our dinner at a restaurant at the end of a tiring conference day. She was inexhaustible! **She was a treasure trove of knowledge and experience.** For me, she was always "Ms. Mandalaki", the one who regulated things in Blood Donation and Haemostasis, the one who stood by the Greek Hemophilia Society for decades! Yet, now... I will say 'goodbye' to "Titika of my youth", I will wish her to rest in peace and may we meet again in another world better than this. Her passing coincided with the coronavirus pandemic, thus people did not have the opportunity to honour her with a ceremony worthy of her importance. Instead, we shall see her off to her final resting place through the magazine published by the society she supported with so much passion and perseverance.

I extend my sincerest condolences to her children and grandchildren; may they be healthy and always remember her with love and pride!

Until we meet again, Titika!

PS: Titika Mandalaki cannot fit in just 600 words! Excuse me!



Better Health, Brighter Future



Αγωνιζόμαστε διαρκώς για μια καλύτερη υγεία

Η Takeda είναι μία βιο-φαρμακευτική εταιρεία με ηγετική θέση παγκοσμίως και με έδρα την Ιαπωνία, έχοντας ως βάση σταθερές αξίες και προσανατολισμό στην Έρευνα και Ανάπτυξη.

Οι προσπάθειές μας για Έρευνα και Ανάπτυξη επικεντρώνονται σε τέσσερις θεραπευτικούς τομείς - την Ογκολογία, τη Γαστρεντερολογία, τη Νευρολογία και τις Σπάνιες Νόσους, καθώς και σε επενδύσεις που στοχεύουν στα Παράγωγα Αίματος και στα Εμβόλια.

Δεσμευόμαστε να βελτιώνουμε την ποιότητα ζωής των ασθενών αναπτύσσοντας υψηλής καινοτομίας φάρμακα που διατίθενται σε περίπου 80 χώρες και γεωγραφικές περιοχές παγκοσμίως.

Παραμένουμε προσηλωμένοι στις βασικές μας αξίες: Ακεραιότητα, Αμεροληψία, Εντιμότητα και Επιμονή, θέτοντας πάντα τους ασθενείς στο επίκεντρο της προσπάθειάς μας. Προσβλέπουμε να προσφέρουμε Καλύτερη Υγεία και ένα πιο Λαμπρό Μέλλον στους ασθενείς σε όλο τον κόσμο.

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“My lady, welcome!”



By Maria Mylona

The first exchange together with the first smile and the diagnosis, welcoming me in a small room at the Laiko General Hospital in 1988, after the first incident.

I needed no more to entrust you with my life, my dear Titika Mandalaki.

I needed no more to follow you in the painstaking albeit wonderful world of Medicine, which you served so proudly, masterfully honouring the Hippocratic oath close to each and every one of us individually, listening to the physical pain and touching our soul.

Daughter of two great doctors, you were to everyone –but also to me personally– a **precious, witty, noble, generous, special, tireless, model Doctor and human, teacher and fighter**; when you unfolded the history of Medical Athens so vividly in each of our meetings, all the while making your own contribution to it with both your actions and research...

And you did more than that... You gave substance to the rarity of our disease; you inspired and promoted the establishment of the Greek Hemophilia Society; you supported it; you supported us thereto, not only the patients, but also our mothers, daughters, families... Unpretentious, passionately assertive and a strident advocate in the struggles with the

state to seek recognition of self-evident matters, for the fight against stigmatisation, while being such a loving mother to us with anything that hurt and wounded us...

At the same time, you were the woman I admired for being more than a scientist; mother of two wonderful children, whom you may have been deprived of sometimes; who longed to hold her husband's hand after decades of living together and to dream of a better world, still possible...

You were a hug and at the same time a pounding of the table; the tickling on the soles of our feet, to go further than what the body prevented.

I endorse the words of Manolis Spanakis, your favourite Publisher of the *“Echo of Viannos”*, when he marked the day of your departing: *“Her body ‘fell asleep’. Because everything else (soul, emotions and virtues) is (and will be) here, present. After all, she was invariably a present-tense person: I give, I gift, I heal, I donate, I smile, I judge, I love, and hundreds more verbs of substance and offer”*.

A “thank you” from all of us would seem insufficient now...

You will always be a member of our family, our amulet and the voice to move forward, even when we are in pain, even though a body we did not choose is

fighting us...

We are proud and rich because you were a part of our lives, which you enlightened ever so generously!

Let Emmy, George and your grandchildren find solace in our thoughts...

Farewell, Cretan daughter; Viannos may have lost you today, but heaven has won you over...

Rest in Peace, even from where we are standing; we mentally light the candle flame and think that

“Perhaps when you think that everything is finished,

it starts all over again, around the fire,

that was smouldering, despite the rain,

despite the don'ts imposed by the body.

When you turn the page, a new scene unveils itself;

one of a sacrifice, that hurt;

one of history,

that was named the past; one of the present,

that handed the reins over to the dream.

Perhaps when you think that everything is finished, it starts all over again.”

στίξη η [stiksi]: Η χρησιμοποίηση ειδικών σημαδιών στο γραπτό λόγο, που μας δείχνουν πού και πόσο πρέπει να σταματήσουμε και πώς πρέπει να χρωματίσουμε τη φωνή μας, για να αποδώσουμε σωστά το νόημα:

Σημεία στίξης, η τελεία (.), η επάνω / άνω τελεία (·), το κόμμα (,), το ερωτηματικό (;), το θαυμαστικό (!), η διπλή τελεία (:)

Η τελεία στιγμή ή απλώς τελεία (.)· σημειώνεται εκεί όπου τελειώνει περίοδος, δηλ. τμήμα του λόγου που περιέχει ένα ακέραιο νόημα.

πήξη η [piksi]: η μεταβολή ενός υγρού, ρευστού σώματος σε στερεό.



Σημεία Στίξης

Καμπάνια ενημέρωσης για την αιμορροφιλία

**Τα ερωτηματικά
είναι πολλά.**

Γιατί;

**Πώς θα τα καταφέρω;
Θα μπορέσω να έχω
φυσιολογική ζωή;**



Η απάντηση είναι μία!

**Ναι! Θα τα καταφέρεις!
Μπορείς να έχεις μια
φυσιολογική ζωή!**



Τελεία.

**Ενημερώσου. Ρώτα τον γιατρό σου
πώς μπορείς να βάλεις μια τελεία
στα ερωτηματικά. Ρώτα πώς θα μπορέσεις
να θαυμάσεις τη ζωή όπως σου αξίζει!**

Mum...



By Eteoklis Pokas

It was the morning of 8 April 2020... I got a call from Evi... I have bad news... Mandalaki died... I made a call to Volos: "Kostas, Mum is gone". A few heavy words, pain, tears... Yes, we were aware of her failing health, but the news of her passing froze us, hurt us! We, elderly people, had two mothers: our biological one and a second one, the deceased. We only called her "Mum" amongst us: I talked to Mum; Mum wants you, go; Mum told me... At some point, her health deteriorated. She was admitted to Attiko Hospital. I went to wish her well. Outside the room, I spoke to George: "George, do you know what your mum means to us?" "Of course; I know I have many siblings; she regards you all as her children!" Indeed, he said it all in just one sentence. In recent years, doctors and health professionals have been talking about patients' quality of life. **Mum had put that into practice ever since the 1960s.** That is, to receive the best possible care, the best possible attention at all levels! She had taken care of me ever since I was

a young boy. I have reached the age of 58; that is care for more than half a century! At one point, when I was a 22-23-year-old student, she told me: "You'll get involved with the Society – her great love. You can help." "But..." I muttered, "I don't know any of that." "You'll do as I say." "Okay." I said. I thought: "I'll go just for a few months and then I'll quit." Eventually, I was involved with it for about 25 years, helping as much as I could. I thus had the blessing, due to the very frequent collaboration with her, **to have a first-hand experience of the greatness of her soul and her undivided interest in all of us!** I contacted George to offer my condolences. Among other things, he told me: "Will you miss her shouting at you?" "Yes, I'll miss that!" She was shouting at us, but it did not bother us because we knew she did it out of love. Besides, after her shouting, there came her admonitions: "Why did you do that, my child?" But then, she was not only shouting **at us**, but also **for us**. I had often witnessed her shouting at politicians, government officials, doctors and associates. She always claimed the best for her children, for us!

She would always ask me: "How is your wife doing? The child? How are things at work? I learned that the one or the other fellow is not well; find out how he is doing and see what you can do for him." She would often call me lately. "When are you going to come?" "I'll talk to Maria to see when she's off duty and we will come." We visited her. She welcomed us with great joy! She offered us liqueur, sweets, she was holding our hands and talking to us! A torrent! She even had memories from the German occupation! Of people and events. Lots of conversations. We were very happy and would leave with a sweet taste. We wondered "But how can she remember all that?" On leaving, I used to say in the elevator: "Maria, we have to record all that; it's our living history." She would agree, but we never did; unfortunately! However, these words are still alive in our thinking. After a while, the phone would ring again: "When are you coming?" "Yes, we're coming...". I wish we had come more often, to hear more. Those moments are so precious to me, though! They will be indelibly imprinted on my mind for the rest of my life! I lost my biological mum several years ago; in April... Now, I am losing my second mum; in April... Yet, I am sure that even where you went –in Upper Jerusalem– you will still care about us!



2000, at SPEA's event to celebrate the new year; during the presidency of Eteoklis Pokas

Rest in Peace, Mum; I will remember you with gratitude and love forever!

To our unforgettable “Mum”

By Kostas Grigoriadis

The richness of the Greek language is enormous in words and concepts. And yet, it is very difficult for me to describe what Titika Mandalaki, my second non-biologically “mother” means to me in its entirety.

As a... chronologically old patient with Haemophilia, my life has been inextricably linked with Titika Mandalaki’s offer since birth from a medical but also a human point of view.

Everything, to a superlative degree!

I hold everything in my memory, imprinted like a movie, particularly when I first set foot at the Haemophilia Centre of the Laiko General Hospital, my second... home.

It was there where, with her own care and the meagre medical supplies, plasma, Novalgin and ice (the old fellows know), we struggled, and we have succeeded until today, now that conditions for the disease are better in every way. But these things did not happen by themselves.

Our “Mum” was there for us every time we would need her, when we were in pain, to

give us our medicine, her courage, her love, always with that smile on her face that never left her lips.

She suffered a lot with us, she was happy for us all, but I am sure she also cried for us all. **She raised a heavy cross together with us**, not only for Haemophilia itself, but also for the consequential illnesses that developed during its treatment.

She was alone in managing something scary and incurable that would decimate our small community; in finding the right way to talk to parents, so that they would stand strong next to their children. She saw children she raised herself perish, and at the same time she found a way to cheer us up and kept fighting for us.

However, Titika Mandalaki did not adhere to medicine alone; **a deeply democratic and ideological humanist like her** could not but teach us that no one could achieve anything in their life alone, except through collective struggle and assertion.

Thus, the foundations were laid for the idea of establishing a society of haemophiliacs,

whereby, with the assistance of some other militant and pioneering haemophiliacs, the Greek Hemophilia Society (SPEA) was founded in the difficult times of mid-1960s.

Still though, our “Mum” stood out for something else, equally great: she formed groups of doctors, nurses and volunteers around her and instilled them with her own vision. All of them embraced her vision, so as to make the lives of people with Haemophilia better.

The baton of her own offer is being handed over to doctors and even nursing staff one after the other, so that we may receive the best care at any time of the day about anything that concerns us.

We all learned from her to be strong and fight.

And we, all patients with Haemophilia, shall continue to do this until the very end, holding her compass and keeping her memory and vision alive.

I personally keep trying every day, “Mum”.

People leave; their memory and their work remain

By Dimitris Antoniadis

Titika Mandalaki will never be forgotten. Important moments are connected with her; memories indelibly engraved and characterized by her presence and her attitude to life she showed whenever we met: both social and medical; at the hospital, at SPEA, at her home.

A doctor I never merely regarded as such. Her words were heartfelt, supportive,

imposing and, when the circumstances demanded it, dynamic and witty.

She always had a hug to offer me; a piece of advice to protect me; courage to offer me in the difficult moments; a helping hand to extend to my problems; stories to tell me. Her love for her “children” at the Laiko Hospital centre, her interest in our problems, the pioneering organisation of the centre, her

utmost sense of responsibility and solidarity, her seriousness and straightforwardness, her guidance, her selfless offer, were but a few of her many qualities.

A GREAT WOMAN. UNFORGETTABLE.

We owe you a lot.

Farewell!

Titika Mandalaki as I knew her

By Thodoris Tachtaras

It happens in life to meet people who not only leave their mark on you, but through their life and work guide you on a course whereby at the end of your life, when you take stock of your life, you appreciate their contribution towards shaping your own path. A course characterised by humanity, selfless offering, solidarity, material and spiritual support.

Such people are not only politicians and intellectuals, philosophers and thinkers; people who are trying to answer fundamental questions in life. Amongst us, there are ordinary, everyday people who, through their individual and collective action, prove to be more effective than the people of theory.

One look at them is enough to set you on a similar course destined for a higher purpose. It is about a person like that that I want to talk to you about today; a person who contributed so much to the science she served, i.e. medicine, but also through this to all those people science is aiming at: patients.

Already, her scientific training and contribution to the advancement of science in the field she dealt with are enough to rank her very high in the long list of people who preceded her or followed in the next years. However, that image would lack the special trace elements that complement an already important depiction and make it a really perfect image: the humanitarian elements.

Because Titika Mandalaki was not only an accomplished doctor, she was a complete person. It was only recently and after her loss when I learned from a magazine article published in her own hometown about her life before I met her; her life in her hometown. I was not surprised by what

I read, because I understood that this is how it should have been. I was surprised by her many interests.

I met her in the late 1960s, when I was a teenager and moved to Athens. It was a volatile period, when knowledge about Haemophilia was limited. The patients' relatives were also inadequately informed, being either unaware of the severity of the disease or treating it in the wrong way. Having a haemophiliac brother myself (whose case was reported as severe), I experienced the blurred image created by ignorance around key issues in dealing with the disease. I saw my brother's life being in danger on several occasions in the 1950s, owing to provincial doctors' practices, which contrasted with those later considered essential and necessary. Later, when I had the opportunity to meet more patients, particularly those living in the countryside, I realised the generality of the problem.

In the face of this "biblical" chaos, Titika Mandalaki's presence was considered a catalyst. Although I was indirectly concerned more or less with the problem and the working hours at that time were many, I could not miss the titanic effort that began in those years. The effort to put things in order could only be compared to what is described in the first chapters of the "Book of Genesis": where order was created out of chaos in just a few days. Yet, here it took years and actually without divine intervention. My brother was one of the first to believe in her abilities, her moral integrity and the humanitarian dimension she gave to that struggle. I was thus daily apprised of the results of that effort. **It was a struggle in which many patients were mobilized, as well as many members of**

the nursing staff and other people, inspired by Titika Mandalaki's example. Unfortunately, there were a few people (even among patients) who tried to lead things astray using various fair or unfair practices, thus unknowingly serving selfish interests. I consider this little parenthetical remark as necessary, so that we can all appreciate the struggle that was then waged in those adverse conditions. I will always remember, even in those difficult times, the smiling face of a gentle but, when circumstances demanded it, militant person.

The years passed; everything changed for the better. The creation of a special Haemophilia department initially at the Hippocratic Hospital and later at the Laiko Hospital, the establishment of the Greek Hemophilia Society, the cooperation with similar societies abroad and the participation in conferences were all achievements of a collective effort, but as it is also the case with the members of the human body, a mind is required.

I cannot elaborate more due to lack of space, and I think I have already exceeded it. Yet, I would consider it a very serious omission not to talk about Titika Mandalaki "behind the scenes": the wonderful and sweet mother, with an excellent husband, Tasos Giannitsiotis, who helped her discreetly in her efforts; her entire family, who always kept their door open to people with Haemophilia, literally around the clock.

I want to close by quoting one of my personal experiences which emphatically demonstrates her candid willingness to offer. It happened in July 1970. The tragic picture of my family, which was the result of constant financial hardships, the great problems from my brother's illness who "lived" in the wards of the Hippocratic Hospital for many years, and my father's severe stroke, was further aggravated that

Amongst us, there are ordinary, everyday people who, through their individual and collective action, prove to be more effective than the people of theory

year by another blow, while I was doing my military service at the time: my mother, the only person capable of minimally providing for her family, fell victim to an accident one afternoon. Late in the evening, as soon as

they were informed of the incident, Tasos Giannitsiotis, together with Titika Mandalaki, transported her to a hospital in Athens, on a lightning trip in their legendary Citroën 2CV.

That was what I meant when I said before that one look at them is enough to set you on a similar course destined for a higher purpose. This is the greatest offer of such people like Titika Mandalaki.

To our doctor...



By Panagiotis Karkanis

Our beloved doctor, mother, protector and friend left us and went down in history. Her work is enormous, her name is well known in Greece and abroad. She loved her science and worked hard for many hours, while showing a great love for man, combining these two characteristics in a unique way. I remember her, when I was still a little child and came to Laiko General Hospital for the

first time, with her all-white hair, the unfading smile, the calm voice and the reassuring tap on the back that gave us all so much courage. I was fortunate enough to learn the whole history of Haemophilia from her own lips, when she used to invite me to her home and ask me to inform her of the progress of the society, which was her other great love. Even when she retired,

she wanted to offer. That was when I first realized how active and militant she was, and how much love she had for us. In closing, I cannot imagine what our life would be like without our doctor, Titika Mandalaki.

We all owe her a lot, even our lives. But the most important thing is that she taught us how to be assertive and how to survive.

She honoured the medical function as few people have



By George Patoulis

Titika Mandalaki-Giannitsioti's passing has been a great loss for the scientific world. She was a multifarious personality who served the medical function with passion, consistency and dedication, but also a rare amalgam of an accomplished scientist and selfless person, guided by a single compass in life: her contribution to society as a whole. Besides, her educational and research work has received international recognition, making our country proud of it. Her contribution to the fields of Blood Donation and

Haemophilia, particularly through her duties at the Hellenic Society of Haematology, of which she was a founding member and where she also served as President, is the valuable legacy she leaves to the younger generations. Apart from her scientific competence and accomplishments, however, we shall remember Titika Mandalaki **for her insatiable "thirst" to contribute to society as a whole, honouring the medical function as few people have.**

As a doctor, I want to express my infinite respect for her work and personality. **Her course and life serve as a model for all of us.** Particularly at this time, when the international community is struggling to defeat the pandemic and is trying to heal its wounds, the importance of medical practice has emerged as never before. Titika Mandalaki served it well and will never be forgotten. All of us are deeply grieved by her loss. We have become poorer.

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