

CAMILO DAGUM

Italo Scardovi

Camilo Dagum, one of the most prominent and noble person in the fields of Statistics and Economics died on November 5 2005 of an inescapable disease. He had just celebrated his 80th year birthday but still physically strong with great intellectual capacity for the multiple responsibilities called upon him by his prestige and fame. His scientific obligations forced him to travel all around the world, from one scientific meeting to another, in academy and university, where his contributions were always expected, admired, and discussed. During the years his work had become more intense and his projects were projected to a future where only bad luck would stop them. To read one of his pages, to discuss with him, was as to be facing a horizon of ideas and problems, of reality and propositions. Camilo Dagum had been a great mind with a great conscience; his way of living, recent and distant, is a demonstration of freedom of choice, dignity, and truth.

Camilo Dagum was born in Rosario de Lerma (Argentina) on August 11 1925. His parents were both Syrian who immigrated to Argentina not to betray their Christianity during the Ottoman Empire. He graduated Summa Cum Laude from the National University of Cordoba and got the University Gold Medal and an Honor Diploma for his excellent PhD dissertation in Econometrics. He will later be awarded many prestigious prizes when his intellectual motivations and facts of life will take him to very famous research universities such as, Princeton with Oskar Morgenstern, Paris with Francois Perroux (and later with Maurice Allais), Rome with Corrado Gini (my "first Teacher" he called him), London with Maurice Kendall, Uppsala with Herman Wold... His teaching and research career began in the University of Cordoba where since 1949 till 1966 he became a Full professor and also Dean of the Faculty of Economics until he was forced to be in exile by the military dictatorship. He became a Visiting Senior Researcher of Princeton University (1966-68) and later a Visiting Professor of Paris University (1968-69), Full Professor and Director of the Graduate studies of the University of Mexico (1969-70), Professor of the University of Iowa (1970-72) and of the University of Ottawa for the next 20 years.

In 1992 Camilo Dagum moved to Italy where he was first appointed (*per chiara fama*) by the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Milan, and in 1994 by the Faculty of Statistics of the University of Bologna where he finished his

teaching career, and remained, beyond that date, surrounded by the love and admiration of his colleagues and students. Later, our Faculty had the privilege of having his wife, Estela Bee Dagum, also appointed by *Chiara Fama* because she is well known for her contributions in Econometrics and, particularly, in Time Series Analysis.

When in July 2005 both left for their summer vacation, usually divided between Canada and Argentina, we saw Camilo disguising with gentle serenity and his familiar fine sense of humor, the first stage of a disease that will later destroy his strong body.

Camilo Dagum scientific career is full of awards and recognitions, of which we like to remember that of the College of France in 1971. The list of the professional and academic associations, national and international, as well as those journals for which he was member of the editorial committee is very long and we will limit here to quote the Honorary Doctor degrees he had received, from the University of Bologna during the celebration of the IX centenary of the university (1988), from the National University of Cordoba (1988), the University of Montpellier (1998) and the University of Naples-Parthenope in 2005. In this last occasion also his wife Estela Bee Dagum got the prestigious degree for her well known scientific works. Estela and Camilo have shared a long life, not always easy, of love and work joined by their three sons Alexander, Paul, and Leonardo, excellent researchers themselves. It is important to remember that the Honorary Doctor degree granted by the National University of Cordoba was to partially repair the offense caused twenty years earlier by the military dictatorship. In his conference, Camilo Dagum took a paragraph from the Carducian inscription in the University of Bologna and made an exemplary and courage political profile of the conditions of the people and countries of South America.

It is well known that his enlighten research has given major contributions to Mathematical Statistics and to the canons of quantitative analysis of socio-economic phenomena, contributions that range from the methodology of multivariate transvariation to the theory of model building in econometrics and social sciences, to the treatment of very complex methodological arguments in the economic inequality measurement. This latter was his great passion, he saw in his youth and later in so many parts of the world, the poverty of many and the oppressive wealth of few. Furthermore, the use of game theory in structural analysis, the axioms of the human behavior in the selection of choices was one of the most important moments in his intellectual career making Camilo Dagum one of the best known and most quoted scientist. An example is given by the book prepared in his honor in 1999 edited by D.J Slottje and published by Springer-Verlag in New York.

Camilo Dagum's scientific research, his books as well as articles and monographs are distinguished by the depth of the theoretical concepts, the originality and the completion of methodological proofs, the great vision of phenomena and problems, for the continued and persistent research for an encounter between theory and reality, of abstraction and observation. Moreover they are distinct by

his critical interest to epistemological foundations, by his attention to great past scientists, by his capacity of making of statistical methodology authentic tools for critical and ethical principles of knowledge for the investigation of new relations between life and science, between men and society.

He leaves with us his great and never betrayed intellectual and spiritual teachings. After having remembered Camilo Dagum as...” one of the leading scholars in Economics and Statistics in the 20th century – a period considered to be the Golden era for these two sciences” Samuel Kotz wrote these very significant words in his obituary, “The world and Society have lost a great man who left deep footprints on this earth”.

I had the fortune of knowing him personally, and visited him frequently during those years in which he made us the great honor of being a Full Professor of our Faculty of Statistical Sciences. From him, All- colleagues and students, have learnt a lot on science, methods, and style. Camilo always shared his knowledge with his kind attention. It is extremely rare to found in only one person so many values of culture, intellect and moral dignity.

Goodbye, Camilo, goodbye with my greatest sorrow. But you wanted me to say “see you later”.

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