

# In memoriam of Cecilia Laluze (1940 - 2023)

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In 2019 Professor Cecilia Laluze, then serving as an emeritus professor since 2010, joined the Institute of Chemistry of Araraquara (IQAr) for the last time. The COVID-19 pandemic prevented face-to-face encounters at the university until 2021. We met again sometime later, when Cecilia was already diagnosed with colon cancer followed by a stroke, both of which left her with numerous sequels. Native from Birigui (SP), Cecilia passed away on May 23 at the age of 83 in Araçatuba (SP), to where was transferred at the end of 2022 and remained for a few months until her passing, closely accompanied by a few relatives.

Laluze was part of the first IQAr's graduating chemistry class with both bachelor and teacher degrees from the former Chemistry Department in the Faculty of Science and Letters of Araraquara (FCLAr), in 1964 and 1965 respectively, standing out as one of the top students. As a third-year undergraduate student, Cecilia was already collaborating in the Biochemistry Laboratory, assisting the practical classes under the supervision of the Biochemistry Professor Rubens Molinari. In 1965, Laluze started her teaching career, as an assistant professor, and in 1973, she completed her PhD in the same institution. In 1976, the creation of UNESP led to an academic and administrative reorganization of the university, resulting in the establishment of IQAr in 1977, where Cecilia became a professor in the Biochemistry Department. She was a pioneer in the research area of Applied Microbiology.

Laluze dedicated almost her entire life to the Institute of Chemistry both as a teacher and researcher; the Institute of Chemistry was her second home. As a result of her outstanding

work capacity and ease in establishing scientific interactions, she established many collaborations throughout her academic career, in Brazil and other countries. She was the first woman from IQAr to carry out a Postdoctoral Internship abroad, first at the Faculty of Medicine in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1980, and later at the University of Colorado, USA, from 1981 to 1982. Always in pursuit of knowledge and scientific improvement, she participated in numerous national and international conferences, presented lectures, and received several awards and honorable mentions. She was the first woman to become a Full Professor at IQAr. At a time when research in the field of Technology was still embryonic at UNESP, Cecilia coordinated, in the 1980s, a project sponsored by the Banco do Brasil Foundation, in collaboration with some department colleagues, aimed at developing improved yeast strains for the alcoholic fermentation process. At that time, the National Ethanol Program (Proálcool) was created, and the project under her coordination significantly impacted the academic community. From then on, her research activities were concentrated on projects related to Applied Microbiology including a partnership with the Biotechnology Center of Fleischmann & Royal. She became a reference researcher in alcoholic fermentation, and the results of her work were recognized by the scientific community.

The entire Institute of Chemistry body in Araraquara immensely appreciates her scientific legacy and dedication to the development of science and technology in Brazil.

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