

Angelo Maria Maffucci

100 years from his death

Translated from the Italian by Benjamin De Maio Montalbano

On November 22, 2003, the Assessore [Counselor] for Socio-Cultural activities of the Commune of Calitri, professor Giuseppe Galgano organized a conference with the theme "**The topicality of the scientific thought of Angelo Maria Mafucci,**" in order to remember the illustrious scientist, who was born in

Angelo Maria Mafucci graduated in Medicine from the University of Naples in 1872. In 1873 he was awarded the Medal of Merit of the first degree for his active participation in the struggle against Cholera at San Maria del Popolo, hospital for the Incurable. In 1875, he was an *Assistente* [Assistant lecturer] at

texts for the "Mafucci Syndrome," characterized by a benign tumor of the bone, generally only on small bones and joints. His major contribution to the development of medicine came from his studies of Tuberculosis. The discovery (1890) of the different Tuberculosis bacilli (human, bovine, bird, and cold blooded animals.)



Calitri on October 17, 1845, on the occasion of the centenary of his death, which took place in Pisa on November 24, 1903. The conference, in addition to remembering Mafucci the person, aimed at recovering the historical memory of our community, which must not be seen as a useless, nostalgic, and improbable rethinking of a past and unique world, but as a means to understand the present and to build a future with reinforced roots. The notice that accompanied the conference is "To live in the present, strengthened by the past, while thinking about the future."

the Istituto di Anatomia Patologica [Institute of pathological anatomy] of the University of Naples, headed by Professor Otto W. Schrön. In 1882 he won the competition for the Chair of General Pathology at the University of Messina, but he never went there because it lacked a laboratory and equipment. In 1883, he was professor of Pathological Anatomy at the University of Catania, but, in 1884, he moved to the University of Pisa where he was Professor of Pathologic Anatomy. He founded the department and started his experimental research. Angelo Maria Mafucci is remembered in the medical

is due to Mafucci. In fact, Koch himself, who was impressed by the size, by the experimental research, and by the scientific rigor of Mafucci's studies on poultry and cows, announced to the Congress on Tuberculosis held in London in July 1901, the difference between human Tuberculosis and bovine Tuberculosis, thus disproving his own affirmations and he called Mafucci to the Vice-Presidency of the Congress on Tuberculosis that was held in Berlin in 1902. **A.M. Mafucci was the pioneer and the true father of vaccination against Tuberculosis,** in fact, his research and experiments gave

Dr. Calmette and the French scholars of the Pasteur Institute the propaedeutics [the introductory work], the theoretical bases (the non uniqueness of the Tuberculosis Bacillus,) and the experimental hypotheses that lead to the formulation of the Calmette-Guérin Bacillus.

His work ranks with the cultural vein of the then emerging social medicine that



Figure 1 Plaque in honor of A. M. Mafucci

supported the need for intervention aimed at making available to the disadvantaged social classes healthy localities (with sea air and sea bathing) where they can receive care. The example of the Palazzo delle Muse [Palace of the Muses] of Vareggio (whose name derives from the fact that the funds for its construction were gathered among "The Cultivators of the Fine Arts") is among the many that are representative of this tradition, and this tradition lives in Italy, above all in Tuscany. Mafucci maintained these positions even at the international level when he was called to become part, in 1901, of the Board of Directors of the International Constituent Assembly for the struggle against tuberculosis. As a scientist, but above all as an educated and intelligent person, he understood that it is not sufficient to know and to be cogni-

zant of things, but the dissemination of same in a form that is understandable to most people, without alarming them and with judgment, is important. He anticipated what the legislature only in the last ten years has recognized as particularly important, and he did this about a century ago. He recognized the importance of Information and Training. Angelo Maria Mafucci was a regular member of the Accademia dei Lincei for Pathology.

The conference was held in the hall of the Istituto Tecnico Commerciale "AM MAFFUCCI" in Calitri on November 22, 2003. The meeting was introduced by Dr. Fulvio Sellitto in the presence of Luigi Nicolais, University Assessore for scientific research, technological innovation and new economy of the Campania Region, in the presence of the president of the Ordine dei Medici [Medical Fraternity] of the Province of Avellino, Dr. Antonio D'Avanzo, and in the presence of the Mayor of Calitri, Professor Vito Marchitto. The scientific Session was moderated by Doctor Luigi Tornillo, Medical Director of the Regional Oncology Hospital of Rionero in Vulture — and the Institute of Pathology at the University of Basilea. Also moderating was professor Raffaella Vecchione, Professor of Pathological Anatomy at Frederick II University in Naples. The following reports were presented:

• **Medicine in Italy in the second half of the nineteenth century and prominent Irpinians; edited by Dr. Fulvio Sellitto.**

• **Tuberculosis at the time of Angelo Maria Mafucci; edited by Professor Baroukh Maurice Assael.** (Associate professor of Pediatrics at the University of Milan–Veneto Regional Center Director for Cystic Fibrosis.)

• **Vaccination against Tuberculosis; edited by Professor Ernesto Catena** (Director of the Cardio Thoracic and Respiratory Sciences Department of the University degli Studi di Naples.)

• **Angelo Maria Mafucci in Pisa from 1884 to 1903; edited by Professor Generoso Bevilacqua**

(Director of the Pathological Anatomy and molecular and ultra-structural Diagnostic division of the University of Pisa.)

• **Medicine, Health, and Humanity in the Twentieth Century; edited by Professor Giorgio Cosmacini**

(Professor of the History of Medicine and Health at the Università Vita Salute of the Saint Raffaele Scientific Hospital Institute in Milan.)

The reports are collected in the Articles: **"Angelo Maria Mafucci, Doctor and Scientist"** Published by Sellino Editore.

A limited amount of numbered commemorative postcards have been printed. A special stamp cancellation for the day of November 22 has been issued by the post office. The issuing of a commemorative stamp has been requested from the Ministero delle Poste e Telecomunicazioni.[Post Office] The Conference has been filmed by the provincial broadcaster Channel 58 and was aired on November 28 of last year by "TG2 Salute." [TG2-Health] Professor Generoso Bevilacqua announced that — during 2004 — the University of Pisa will organize an international conference in commemoration of the 110 years of the Department of Pathological Anatomy founded by Angelo Maria Mafucci.

Giuseppe Galgano

**TRANSLATION OF PLAQUE
INSCRIPTION**
OF HUMBLE ORIGIN,
ANGELO MARIA MAFUCCI
WAS BORN ON
OCTOBER 17, 1845,
BUT, WITH INDOMITABLE
WILL, HE SUMMONED UP THE
COURAGE TO SHINE THE EX-
QUISITE LIGHT OF HIS
THOUGHT THROUGH THE UNI-
VERSITIES OF CATANIA AND
PISA INTO THE DEPTHS OF
HIS BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH,
WHICH WAS PREMATURELY
SHORTENED BY HIS DEATH ON
NOVEMBER 24, 1903.
THE CITY OF HIS BIRTH
CONSECRATES TO HIM THE
NAME INTEMERATO [UPRIGHT]
AS SYMBOL OF HIS GOODNESS
AND PURITY, BECAUSE THE
HIGH MERITS OF THE
ILLUSTRIOUS SCIENTIST
INSPIRED ADMIRERS AND FOL-
LOWERS AMONG THE COMING
GENERATIONS.
SEPTEMBER 1922