

## SUMMARY

PetrosKokkalis was born on 18 September 1896 in Livadia, Greece.

He studied Medicine at the Universities of Athens (1911-1913), and Medicine and Physics at the Universities of Berlin (1913-14), Zürich (1915-16) and Berne (1916-1917) where he received his medical degree and later (1919) he received the degree of Doctor of Medicine. From 1919 to 1928 he worked at the Department of Surgery in the University Hospital of Munich. Throughout this period P. Kokkalis collaborated with leading physicians of the time. In 1928 he returned to Greece where he became Professor of Surgery at the University of Athens and President of the Greek Surgical Society and served as a Director of various surgical clinics in Athens.

During the Greek-Italian war he volunteered at the forefront as a Reserved Chief Medical Officer and from this position he reorganized the Medical Service Base in Epirus with excellent results. In 1944 he participated as "Secretary of Social Welfare" in the "National Committee of National Liberation, i.e. the government lead by AlexanderSvoloswhich resulted from the elections held in Greece under conditions of NAZI occupation in April 1944. With the start of the civil war he was driven out from Athens University and soon found himself to perform surgeries under the harshest conditions in the mountains of the belligerent country. He served as Minister of Health, Welfare and Education of the "Provisional Democratic Government of Greece." In 1948 he was appointed President of the "Commission for the Help of Children" (EVOP) which was responsible for the all-round care and education of the 22,000 Greek children that were sent to the countries of Eastern Europe.

In 1955 with the completion of the work of EVOP, PetrosKokkalis settled in East Berlin in the familiar for him scientific environment of Germany, where he was appointed director of the newly-founded "Institute of Experimental Cardiovascular Surgery". He was named Professor of Surgery at Humboldt University of Berlin and in 1959 he was elected member of the German Academy of Sciences.

According to Dr. LukasTsourelis, a thoracic surgeon who studied the work of P. Kokkalis in the scientific articles of the time, Peter Kokkalis dealt with a number of innovative aspects of cardiovascular surgery and pioneered the experimental advances in thoracic transplantations.

In 1958 the young Soviet surgeon Vladimir Demikhov came to Berlin at the invitation of PetrosKokkalis. Demikhov had performed the first experimental heart transplantation in dogs already back in 1946. In the coming weeks and months the group of Professor PetrosKokkalis performed a number of experimental heart-lung transplants in animals initially with the assistance of Vladimir Demikhov and then independently. The experimental surgeries were performed in hospitals in Germany and Switzerland, were

excellent results were achieved succeeding the longest animal survival in the world (36 days after heart-transplant). These results were published widely in the medical research literature. Together with the excellent progress in the surgical aspects of Heart and Lung Transplantation Prof. Kokkalis highlighted the main issues in pathophysiology and especially those of the immune system of the recipient, which has since been the main research area for the success of transplantation.

Petros Kokkalis died in Berlin on January 15, 1962 and his body was transferred to Athens where he was buried accompanied by thousands of people.

Just six years later, on December 3, 1967, Dr Christiaan Barnard in open communication with Vladimir Demikhov performed the first heart transplantation in a human in Cape Town, South Africa.

In 1989 the International Society of Heart-Lung Transplantation honored Vladimir Demikhov for his "Pioneering Contribution to the experimental Heart-Lung Transplantation" and in 1998 Christiaan Barnard described Demikhov as the "father of heart transplantation."

The event organized on 13 March 2013 by the Greek Association of Heart-Lung Transplant Recipients under the auspices of the Hellenic Organization of Transplantations in Athens was the first historical recognition of the contribution of Professor Peter Kokkalis in the experimental development of Heart-Lung Transplantation.