

Obituary

JEAN-PIERRE MACQUET, 1943-1984

THE UNTIMELY death of Jean-Pierre Macquet on 12 February 1984, at the most productive period in his too short scientific career, deprives us of a much-valued colleague and friend.

Macquet was well known for his substantial contributions to our knowledge of the mechanism of action of platinum-based anticancer drugs. His Ph.D thesis, completed in 1975 under T. Theophanides in Montreal, focused upon the molecular bases of the interactions of platinum complexes with DNA. In 1976 Jean-Pierre set up a research group at the Laboratoire de Pharmacologie et de Toxicologie Fondamentales, CNRS, in Toulouse, which under his leadership rapidly established an enviable international reputation. In Toulouse, Macquet further elaborated the molecular pharmacology of platinum drugs in a series of distinguished contributions. Because of the severe toxic limitations of cisplatin, Jean-Pierre also initiated an extensive structure-activity programme designed to identify analogues which retained the useful antitumour properties of the parent drug but which were, so far as possible, devoid of its toxic side-effects. A major outcome of these investigations was the discovery of PHIC, a second-generation platinum complex currently undergoing clinical evaluation. Throughout these studies Jean-Pierre emphasised the importance of ligand stability as a major determinant of both antitumour activity and toxicity.

Jean-Pierre brought a sense of warm comradeship and good humour to his collaborative associations with other scientists, which were invariably productive and enjoyable. He organised a major international meeting on platinum antitumour compounds in Toulouse in 1978 and served on the organising committee of the Fourth International Symposium on Platinum Coordination Complexes in Cancer Chemotherapy, 1983. He was also a valued participant in the activities of the EORTC Pharmacokinetics and Metabolism Group. Jean-Pierre Macquet leavened his distinguished scholarship with an infectious enthusiasm for his work which was immensely stimulating to all who were honoured by his influence. His loss to anticancer drug development is profound and on behalf of the scientific community we extend sincere condolences to his wife, Odile, and children, Sonia and Vincent.

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