

Professor Nicolau van Uden (1921-1991) was born in Holland and became a naturalised Portuguese citizen. His first degree was in medicine (University of Vienna, Austria), and he obtained his doctorate in Biology at the University of Coimbra, Portugal, and the “Agregação” in Microbiology at the New University of Lisbon. He directed the Department of Microbiology of the Gulbenkian Institute of Science, Oeiras, Portugal, where he was also the Head of “Estudos Avançados de Oeiras”, a program of intensive international courses and workshops in biology which ran from 1969 to 1990. He was the first Professor of Microbiology (1979-1991) and the Director of a MSc in Biotechnology in the Faculty of Sciences and Technology of the New University of Lisbon.

He was a member of the editorial boards of *Yeast*, *Antonie van Leeuwenhoek*, *Mikosen*, *Microbiología* (Spain) and *Ciência Biológica* (Portugal), represented Portugal in councils and panels of NATO, the EU, the European Federation of Biotechnology, the International Union of Microbiological Societies and the Academies of Sciences of the U.S.A and of the Armenian Republic, participated in scientific task forces in Mozambique and the United Arab Emirates, and organized several monographical courses in Portugal and abroad, scientific meetings and symposia. He was Honorary member of the Spanish Societies of Microbiology and Biochemistry (in addition to the Portuguese Society of Biochemistry) and *Doctor honoris causa* of the University of the Orange Free State (Bloemfontein. R.S.A.).

In his research work, yeasts constituted the biological material. The research focused on ecology, systematics, bioenergetics, transport and biotechnology, and led to 21 review papers, 125 research articles and 1 book. A yeast culture collection of over 2000 strains representing around 450 species was a by-product of this research and is now the “Portuguese Yeast Culture Collection - PYCC” integrated in an European network of microbial databases and culture collections. His most recent research interests included the application of molecular biology to yeast systematics, the regulation of membrane transport in yeasts, and the effects of ethanol and other fermentation end-products on yeast performance. He was the scientific mentor of a new generation of zymologists and is the inspiring figure behind the organisation of an annual national workshop, since 1993, on the biology of yeasts.