**GENITALIA AND INFERTILITY**

Karl Rokitansky (1804 – 1878) (Fig. 1) studied the polycystic tumors of the ovaries and described a syndrome characterized by vaginal aplasia associated with other mullerian duct abnormalities (Mayer-Rokitansky-Kuster-Hauser syndrome).

In 1889, at the age of 70, Charles Eduard Brown Sequare (1817-1894) (Fig. 2) injected himself animal sex extracts, testing their virilizing effects. Julius Tandler (1869-1938) (Fig. 3) deeply studied female reproductive system and described the effect of castration in the postpuberal age. George Nicolas Papanicolaou (1883-1962) (Fig. 4) understood the cellular and hormonal (i.e. estrogens levels) changes during female cycle.

In 1939 Adolf F.J. Butenandt (1903-1955) (Fig. 5) and Lavoslav S. Ruzicka (1887-1976) won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for the isolation of the pure, crystalline form of oestrone and androsterone. One year later, Percy Lavon Julian (1899-1975) (Fig. 6) synthesized male and female sexual hormones from vegetal stigmasterols and sitosterols, isolated from soybean oil and started producing them in industrial quantities, reducing the costs for the treatment of hormonal deficiencies.

In 1952 Carl Djerassi (1923 -) (Fig. 7) synthesized norethindrone that became part of the first successful combined oral contraceptive pill, that was for the first time administered to animals by Gregory Pincus (1903-1967).

To date, even if great chances are offered to patients by hormonal replacement therapies and assisted fertilization’s techniques, sterility continues to be a major health problem (Fig. 8) that concerns different medical fields, such as Endocrinology, Gynecology and Urology.