



Mario Wschebor (1939-2011) – scientist, educator, humanitarian

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Abstract:

Mario Wschebor born in Montevideo, Uruguay, December 3, 1939, died in Montevideo September 16, 2011. October 31 the Senate of the Parliament of the Republic held a special session to honour Mario Wschebor for his infatigable work to reform and organize higher education, university life and research.

Mario Wschebor got a degree in Electromechanics from Universidad de la República 1963. He continued studies in probability and mathematical statistics with Pal Révész at Hungarian Academy of Science, and went to Paris for doctoral studies. His thesis 1972 dealt with covering the circle with random sets and it brought him close to statistical extremes and stochastic processes, a theme that became his main scientific area.

The years 1973-1985 was a time of oppressing military regime in Uruguay, not a country where Mario Wschebor could live and work. He had to abandon his position at the engineering faculty in Montevideo and go into exile, to Argentina and then to Venezuela 1977-1987. Scientifically, this exile formed an important cooperative period, both on site in Caracas and during repeated visits to France. A Springer Lecture Note from those years on "Aleatory surfaces – geometrical measurement of level sets" (1985) is a forerunner to his most famous scientific work, the volume "Level sets and extrema of random processes and fields" (2009), together with his former doctoral student, J-M A.

After democracy returned to Uruguay Mario Wschebor returned to Montevideo as full professor in mathematics. He became a fierce advocate of higher education reforms and was instrumental in the formation of a Faculty of Science, being Dean during many years.

He was president of "Unión Matemática de América Latina y el Caribe" 1995-2001, and a strong supporter of CIMPA, the América Latino - European organisation for promotion of mathematics research in developing countries, serving as president 2005-2009.