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In 2005, we have the 18th time that the Sarton Chair is awarded. The first chair was attributed to Prof. Merton. He was one of the rare students and collaborators of George Sarton. Moreover Merton was an outstanding creative and original scientist in the history, sociology and science of science. This 18th Sarton Chair is again awarded to an intimate of Georges Sarton, but rather an indirect intimate. He is a scholar and researcher, who studied intensively the Sarton family: George, his wife Mabel Sarton and his daughter May Sarton. He got some strong direct contact and information from May Sarton, to better understand the cultural environment and “niche” of Sarton and his way of living, thinking and working. But what is even more striking, Lewis Pyenson in many ways is a character strongly mirroring George Sarton. He is a humanist, targeting to do his scientific research, including the history of science, like Sarton did, in view of supporting, stimulating the cultural and social progress of mankind.

Like it was the case with Sarton, Lewis Pyenson, sacrificed a lot to his high moral and social standards, his integrity, not compromising for the sake of personal benefits, his principles in view of stimulating progress in knowledge for the sake of creating a better mankind, a better world.

In the European-American-Asian tradition of critical knowledge development against conservative statusquo, Lewis Pyenson like Sarton choose in a way for action oriented creative innovation. The bibliometry created by Sarton was such a clear action oriented approach. So was also Sarton’s peace oriented perspective. So clearly described and synthesised already in a rather youth publication of Sarton (republished by M. Thiery in Sartoniana). In this article Sarton described the importance of the efforts in favour of antiviolence development of knowledge and human dignity in the perspective of Tolstoï. Today we probably would refer to Gandhi, although the antiviolence approach of Tolstoï goes much further even than Gandhi or Luther King. We can refer here to Sarton, mirrored by Pyenson as a philosopher, a historian, which is an initiator to scientific, cultural, social integration of knowledge for community development.

In this Sarton was probably a catalyzer of this tendency in the first half of the 20th century, but at the same time, with strong methodological orientation and with his holistic perspective, he was formulating de facto crucial targets for the 21st century.

In the same spirit and perspective, we see Lewis evolving. He organizes series of colloquia relating education and research, relating specific disciplines and interdisciplinary etc. All themes so dear to George Sarton. His engagement as scientist as well as humanist (interrelated) comes also distinctly clear in his engagement concerning the independency of the university from the military in their selection of students. This issue is still today dividing the U.S. Already in 1992 he preferred to quit as a dean rather than to execute a policy which contradicted his humanistic, scientific values. For sure, also in his scientific, historical and philosophic work Lewis is outstanding. In the first place we have his enormous relevant work on George Sarton. Besides he publishes a lot of articles and books in the domain of history of sciences. Moreover he plays in this domain an important role as manager and guard. He is member of redaction committees, of advisory committees on a lot of important journals or book series (in fact 13) related to the history of sciences.

Concerning Lewis Pyenson's work on George Sarton, we like to refer to his most recent work "The passion of Georges Sarton: A modern Marriage on its discipline". In this work, Lewis bridges Sarton's professional life and his private life.

Moreover Lewis has also paid a lot of attention to the study of Sarton's perspective of the origin of the modern scientific methods and its debt to the Islamic Culture. Sarton, together with Duhem, belongs to the first historians who have criticised the traditional but wrong view that modern science was a product of the renaissance. Both Sarton and Duhem have independently of each other recognised that scientific relevance of the Renaissance in general and Da Vinci in particular is not existent. The first modern science, which combined theoretical, mathematical description and analyses, with experiments, based on invention of new tools (through ad hoc adaptation of old ones) we found in the Islamic culture (8-12th century). Through Scholastics it generated the crucial Western Science of Copernicus, Galilei, Harvey, Colombus and so many others. The University of Padua was the pivot in which mainly under the lead of the methodology chair in the hands of a series of eminent medics, created the modern Western science tradition.

This discovery was in itself already an enormous achievement of Sarton. It is again a nice example how the so called different cultures are much deeper imbedded and interlaced with each other, not only with its Mesopotamian roots, but also in its much more recent developments. This illustrates that the cultural dialog in view of progress of humanity and its sustainability in its different dimensions are so important, as the endeavours of Tolstoj, Sarton but also Lewis Pyenson in their professional as well as personal life so courageous have illustrated again and again.