

César Arita

in memoriam



Briefly, according to technical routines and recommendations, the editorial of a journal should present relevant opinions of the publishing team or board of directors about a topic of general interest for its readership. It may also specifically focus on the sequential organization of the topics or articles chosen for a certain issue.

Exceptionally in this issue, the Dental Press Implantology journal, represented by its chief-editors, Professor Carlos Eduardo Francischone and Professor Alberto Consolaro, has offered us space to express all our sadness and grief for the sudden and unexpected passing of a learned exponent of Brazilian dentistry (Sept 14, 2012). At the age of 45, with 24 years of professional experience, at the climax of his career and his life, Professor Dr. César Augusto Arita has left us.

A list of a considerable number of renowned professors and dentists that had the privilege of contacting him or the opportunity to know César Arita would certainly reveal a natural and predictable convergence towards the same conclusion: He was a diplomat of Dentistry! A skillful supporter and disseminator of scientific knowledge. A talented speaker. A sensitive and mordant critic of unprofessional ways and improvisations in our profession. An up-to-date, pragmatic and restless thinker. A man with a refined education. A qualified holder of sophisticated culture and incontestable intelligence, always framed by a subtle and highly refined sense of humor.

Uncountable friends and close relations would be much more capable and prepared to provide details and rich reports of all that was built under Professor César Arita's influence and guidance, and that he has effectively influenced the evolution of Dentistry as a science, art and profession. In truth, it would be very easy and even bureaucratically simple to dwell on his exemplary and admirable professional resume, abundant and fully accessible in the Internet or social networks. However, the purpose of our editorial today, within the limits of only two characteristics of César Arita's profile — humility and simplicity — is to report on a fact that occurred a very short time ago, during his last class, on September 10 of this year, in the São Leopoldo Mandic School of Dentistry, in Campinas, Brazil, where he had very recently joined the faculty of the Master's and Doctorate Programs in Implantology. Without predicting, in any way, what was about to come four days later, he intuitively decided to change the direction of his class about the concepts of Occlusion, Dental Prosthesis and Oral Rehabilitation, which he knew

in depth, and drew attention to the importance of social interactions and the richness of human values, exclusively on the basis of experience and free observation, definitively leaving a great, thoughtful lesson imprinted in the memories of all the students present on that day.

At a certain moment, in the middle of his technological and cybernetic class presentation, that born teacher made an abrupt stop and, after a quiet pause of seconds, started philosophically dwelling vehemently on the topic of the intense, true and legitimate essence of human relations that had blossomed exactly there, in the classroom, from the casual meeting of colleagues of all origins, where what really mattered was the reunion of multifaceted currents of thought, responsible for the immeasurable benefits of addition and multiplication, always by means of exchanging, sharing, constructively granting the gifts of personal, human, social and scientific interchange that undoubtedly consolidates positive knowledge and solid friendship. On that day, at a certain point, Professor Arita prophesied: "... we are discussing basic concepts of occlusion in a Doctorate class... therefore, you may think: What does that have to do with my course? What am I doing here? And the simple answer is: In a broad view, any concept, any principle is part of any trajectory. When you teach your classes, you'll face a great challenge: to find a proper connection with your students. How can that connection work if we do not turn our eyes to what is simple, to what is basic? This is the key, and also the challenge! The world today and, above all, young people desire something special to catch their attention, so that they may connect to a specific topic. You have to find that, otherwise you will not be heard..."

By sheer chance and fate, this playful outburst was casually recorded by the cell phone of a doctorate student, Ariádene Cristina Pértile Rosa, as she perceived the didactic and philosophical content of that message, and her sensitive feeling made her record that moment. In the next meeting, immediately after the professor passed away, Ariádene taught the master class with fragments extracted from those insights, bringing back to mind the memories and the awareness of all in the class, in a just and emotional tribute.

How many times in our lives do we involuntarily test our real capacity to withstand hardship or great losses, no matter how old or how personally experienced? The more we can assimilate these hard, unexpected and unwanted blows that life now and then deals us, the more resistance we gain to survive and overcome them, contrary to what we might expect. For that, it is important to hold tight to the good examples left by all those that are extremely significant to us. It will certainly help us to improve and recover our strength faster in face of any possible adversity.

César Augusto Arita, as a human being, was special. Regardless of his oriental origin and his contagious happiness wherever he was, he also managed the feat of expressively “smiling” with his eyes. He had an emperor’s name, the physique and moral stature of a “great” man. Maybe to justify the captive shelter of a great heart full of goodness, as well as the strength and space to conquer and welcome endless new friends and discoveries. There was no time left...

However, it consoles us to know that he will remain among us for many years. Not physically any more, unfortunately. But in the living, germinating form of all the ideas that he sowed; in the seeds of knowledge and teachings that he planted, in the ethical position that he held, the examples and the memories that he left...

We dedicate these words and this issue of the Dental Press Implantology journal to this distinguished figure of the academic, scientific and professional circles of Brazilian dentistry, together with special and affectionate reference to his wife, Camila Arita, and his only son, Augusto Arita, equally important and fundamental living cells of his legacy.

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