



Oswaldo Scopin de Andrade

editor-in-chief

The Dentistry genius

In all areas of knowledge, and particularly in health areas, in which Dentistry is included, there are people that stand out due to several qualities.

In the clinical sector, there are experienced professionals, who have been in the market for years and are always gifting us with cases that brilliantly describe what it is to be a dental surgeon. Many of these clinicians started in the Aesthetics area at a time when the Internet did not exist, products importation was restricted, foreign professors would not 'come clean'. To sum up, they were self-taught

professionals in the beginnings of the then 'cosmetic dentistry', and became pioneers, founded associations and institutions that are known for producing great professionals.

In the scientific sector, Brazil is a source of pride to any professional of the area, for we have centers with researchers that have changed concepts and trends all around the world. Brazilian Dentistry is known worldwide for its quality, talent and for a characteristic that I consider to be unique: it is eclectic.

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Well, we have got amazing clinicians and celebrated researchers, but... excessive vanity and self-confidence normally make things complicated!!

A few years ago, at a symposium of the area, one of the members of the Bureau - a celebrated ceramist and dentist known world-wide - reported something interesting. He had been to a congress attended by great public; he and all the other lecturers, who were more experienced, were introduced in a formal and polite way, without pomp or ceremony, what is normal and expectable of a scientific event. However, a young dentist, who was not older than 25, was introduced, almost in state of hysteria, as a 'Dentistry genius'!!!

The 'older' professor - who is a master in my and many others' opinion -, and everyone at the event waited for the lecture... and witnessed a 'youngster', who had great computer skills and was a technology expert, and, of course, had thousands of followers on social networks!

But that was all, and nothing but that! A 'Dentistry genius'!?

And, if that is all it takes to be a genius, nowadays there must be thousands of geniuses in all areas...

That is ok, though, as we may be witnessing a generation of geniuses... who will change the face of Dentistry, making it a totally new and evolved area.

For a few days that subject got stuck in my head, and I kept wondering who was, to my mind, the 'Dentistry genius'.

I started with a graduation degree followed by a postgraduate one, besides courses, hundreds of courses in Brazil and abroad... and then I found it. I found the professional who I can call a 'genius'!

Around ten years ago, I was invited to lecture on adhesive dental procedures, at University of São Paulo Dental School. It would be two lecturers, me and him... the 'genius'.

When I was invited, I felt really honored and, at the same time, tense and nervous, as I would lecture with the one who created 'Adhesive Dentistry' as we know it. And, it is important to emphasize, that AESTHETIC Dentistry only exists due to ACCESSION to the dental tissues.

Yes, my 'genius' is Nobuo Nakabayashi.

Up to that day, I had never met him. I had only seen him in very old pictures, and read the classic book he published at the end of the 90's1.

At the moment I met him, I saw a man who was almost seventy years old, short, slim, wearing simple clothes, showing serenity, slow and short movements, an oriental gentleman. We were introduced to each other and talked a little before the lecture.

I was the first one to lecture, addressing the clinical part, and after that, he told how he 'developed' the acid monomers and the processes which seem to be simple nowadays, but appeared impossible almost thirty years ago. Among many other overwhelming phrases, he emphatically mentioned during the lecture that enamel removal in a prosthetic preparation would be (and is nowadays... and has always been) harmful to the dental structure.

The event came to an end and everybody left, without selfies and autographs; just a few people remained and, by coincidence, I was the one to drive him from São Paulo to Piracicaba. He had been invited by UNICAMP Dental School in Piracicaba to give lectures

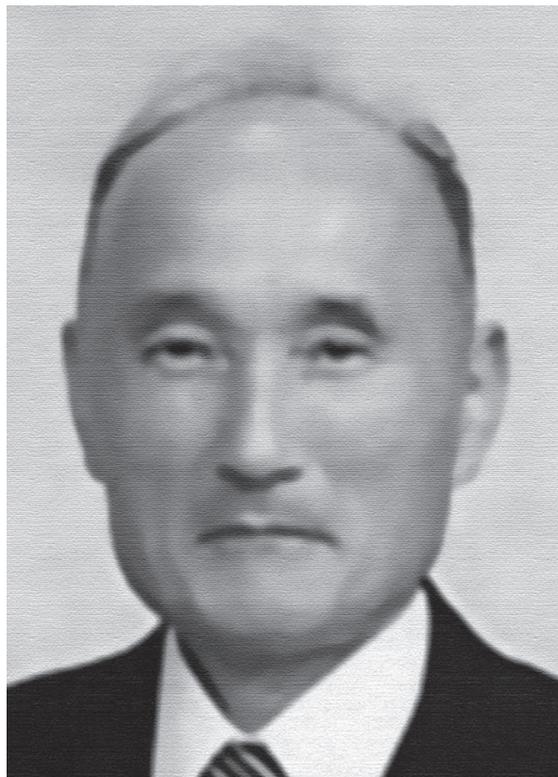
in the postgraduate program. As a matter of curiosity, he travelled to Brazil for his own account, using his retirement money.

For little more than two hours, we talked, stopped by a snack bar of a gas station, and had some coffee... Among other things, he said that all his research and development never made him rich because, since he was financed by the Japanese government, it all belonged to his people and to the world, to benefit as many people as possible. He told that, deep inside, he felt he had done his 'duty to humanity'². He was saying all that slowly, calmly, with no rancor, in a positive frame of mind! His tone of voice was of someone who felt peace of mind.

I arrived in Piracicaba, dropped him at the hotel where he was staying, said good-bye with a handshake, and he thanked me. I did not ask him for an autograph, nor took a picture.

On that day, I got home in a lethargic state, and thinking over all he said, someone who really changed 'the world'... and I admit I almost cried when he was sharing his life-stories with me!

He, a man of a pure soul, with no vanity... and me, happy for having spent an afternoon with a TRUE DENTISTRY GENIUS!



Nobuo Nakabayashi.

References:

1. Nakabayashi N, Pashley DH. Hybridization of dental hard tissues. Tokyo: Quintessence; 1998.
2. Nakabayashi N. Entrevista com Nobuo Nakabayashi. Rev Dental Press Estét. 2006 Jul-Sep;3(3):16-22.