



IN MEMORIAM



Professor Manuel Fontes Baganha was born on 15th June 1940 in the city of Oporto, but it was in Coimbra that, after finishing primary and secondary school, he graduated in Medicine, and so his future path was set and he pursued the diverse passionate interests which motivated him.

From early on he committed himself to pedagogical activity with particular dedication which he maintained throughout the 40 or so years of his career; in the Faculty of Medicine (Courses of Hygiene and Social Medicine, General Pathology and Pneumotisiology), the Faculty de Letters (Courses of Hygiene and School Health) of the University of Coimbra, and also in the University of Luanda.

One could never fail to recognize his intelligence, which was informed and also intuitive which made Fontes Baganha a professor who was both sound and brilliant.

This was the reason that his academic activity was so successful, culminating as Professor Emeritus. He did not just climb up the academic ladder but he engaged in multiple academic activities such as training, the supervision and evaluation of innumerable dissertations and academic examinations in all of the Portuguese Faculties of Medicine.

The dizzy pace of modern life sometimes makes it difficult to maintain the powers of concentration and reflection which characterized the style of other times and of other leaders in the field, people who Fontes Baganha knew well,

whose memory he always treasured; he was facilitator and privileged interpreter in transmitting this learning/wisdom to the present generation.

This caring concern becomes even clearer when we consider the philosophical and cultural depth which always underpinned his diversity.

Editorial activity

It is true to say, apart from the hundreds of scientific publications (in the form of book, monograph or article) which led to 14 scientific prizes, both national and international, Fontes Baganha enriched us with elegant texts of great depth and consistency, which he imbued with his own strong and undisguised francophone influence.

It was this editorial bent, which Fontes Baganha took on with a decisive desideratum to value and promote our specialization, that led him to become co-founder of the Archives for the Portuguese Society for Respiratory Pathology, predecessor of the present Portuguese Journal of Pulmonology (RPP); he was Editor-in-chief from its foundation until 1990.

The RPP owes a great deal to his qualities of organization and leadership; it gave an initial boost to this important editorial component of our Society.

But Fontes Baganha was also a well-known and highly regarded clinician by exception, with clinical acumen and subtlety rooted in a solid medical training, which went beyond the boundaries of Pulmonology and from which there was always something to be learned.

Understanding in this way the crucial importance of life-long learning and the globalization of knowledge, he always knew how to harness his own strong personal resources to be able him to leave his imprint, even in critical or decisive moments; this was his personal touch which he managed to stamp so naturally on the Institutions which he served all his life.

In this context among the many responsibilities that he took on one should emphasize the field of Tuberculosis, the matrix of our speciality, where he excelled in particular; on the Managing Board of the Anti-tuberculosis Dispensary in Coimbra, on the National Committee for the Campaign

against Tuberculosis and with responsibility for the area of Tuberculosis –on the national Committee for the anti-AIDS campaign, to name but a few.

But his timbre still resonates, in the Pneumology Department of the Coimbra University Hospitals, in the Portuguese Pulmonology Society, in the Portuguese Medical Association College of Pulmonology, Portuguese Lung Foundation, the Association of Respiratory Studies, or in the “Jornadas de Atualização Pneumológica de Coimbra”, among many others where his vision and intelligence will never be forgotten.

His legacy remains, with that indelible mark of a personality rooted in firm convictions. With an authority which never failed to defend ideas that he considered fair, even if they were controversial, with a permanent and persistent concern to keep and glorify the memory and the history of medicine and our Pulmonology.

And so we have learned how to appreciate, judiciously, with reference to quality this inheritance of medical knowledge, in this way we pay homage to history and the great men who made it.

In this moment of evocation and respect for the memory of a distinguished Professor of the School of Pulmonology it is still his attitude which was ever paternal and guide which echoes (reverberates) in my memory and brings to mind a line by Miguel Torga which is so apt for Professor Fontes Baganha, *whoever does what he can, does what he should.*

Bem-Haja

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