

IN MEMORIAM

José Palacios Carvajal☆



Madrid, 29th November 1928/Madrid, 25th July 2019

On 25th July 2019 Professor Palacios Carvajal passed away. The news, although expected was nonetheless extremely painful. It is true that in recent months his health had deteriorated greatly and, given to his age, we should have sensed the approach of his departure. There are people, though, who are capable of arousing such admiration, affection and recognition that we refuse to think that one day they will no longer be with us and their absence envelops us with a feeling of having been orphaned, which is difficult to understand for those who were not lucky enough to know the “boss” as we all called him.

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I am not intending to recount his biography here, (which I believe should be obligatory reading in all orthopaedic teaching units). For those who are interested this was eloquently written just a few years ago by Dr. Sánchez Vera – but I will attempt to convey very briefly the greatness of his mastery in science and in life itself.

Medicine was his great passion, and he dedicated most of his time to it generously, enthusiastically, with a love for his patients which was naturally always reciprocated. He was an excellent organizer, developing and directing several of the most prestigious orthopaedic services in Spain, such as that in La Paz and Ramón y Cajal hospitals, with an exemplary distribution of sub-specialties of orthopaedic surgery that have been replicated to this day. He was also employed as the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health. Unusually for these parts his ability and excellence was recognized with multiple distinctions such as that of the Cross of the Military, Naval and Aeronautical Merit, the Golden Blue Cross of the Social Security, the Grand Cross of the Order of Civil Health Merit and the Medal of Merit at Work, to name just some of the most renowned.

We can without a doubt consider José Palacios Carvajal as the founder of cutting –edge orthopaedics in Spain and the teaching value of his weekends established the base for the modernisation and development of orthopaedic surgery in Spain, enabling us to know first-hand most of the worldwide figures of the times, in our speciality.

Given his great love of medicine, his dedication and ability to communicating it came as second nature, and as a result he was appointed as Associate Professor of Surgical Pathology at the Complutense University and Full Professor of Orthopaedics at the Autonomous University. However, he was always most greatly concerned about the training of new specialists, and this led to the founding of a school with several generation of orthopaedists who went on to direct many services throughout Spain and to which we feel proud to belong.

In this society he was everything: Journal editor, Secretary, Vice chairman, Chairman, President of the Senate, and naturally, Honourable Member. He instilled respect in all of his students and the importance of participating in and keeping SECOT alive, as a body of training, communication and representation of all orthopaedists.

We wish to acknowledge that a large part of merit goes to Paloma, the love of his life and loyal companion, with whom he formed a family of 8 splendid children, 31 grandchildren

and 11 great-grandchildren, all of whom were educated in all the values that ruled their lives and for whom knowing the "boss" was always their greatest pride.

We have to try to get used to his absence, a difficult task when he left such a deep mark, but his memory will prevail forever, and from time to time we will think we hear his voice saying once again: "May God keep you".

May he rest in peace, Maestro, Boss, Friend.