



ARTICLE

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH FOR THE LAST NUMBER**

You joined the team of Dr. Hugo René Mercado at Hospital Militar Central in 1955, two years after your graduation with honors. You came and contributed the knowledge that surrounded you when you were the beloved disciple of the great professor Alfonso Albanese, a great friend of Dr. Raúl Nicolás Velasco, Director of Hospital Militar Central, exalted thoracic surgeon, our surgical grandfather, and both devotees of the postulates of the Finocchietto School, from which they graduated.

You were of Mendoza origin, renowned winemaking lineage, the Escorihuelas. Your cousins gave you the family that you lost very young, when your parents died. Your family relationship changed over time and you became part of us, the group of young followers of the engine Hugo Mercado: Mercado, Bianchi, Lucas and Santín Hassan Iasín.

You were the first to follow Mercado to Hospital Ferroviario Central.

Together in that group, we were pioneering founders of new vascular surgery techniques conceived and shared by all. In 1963, we received the Honor Award for the book “Acquired Arterial Diseases, Arteriographic Diagnosis, Direct Surgical Treatment”, edited by ED Bernades and perhaps the first book in Spanish on the treatment of chronic arterial diseases.

We created the use of the escape route through the deep femoral artery in the difficult issue of aortoiliac and femoral-popliteal occlusions. The scientific battle, of the highest academic level, in which you were engaged with Rubén Siano Quirós in the forum of the Argentine Academy of Surgery was unforgettable. At the time, I was the secretary of the President of the Argentine Society of Angiology. With Dr. Samuel Rascován, at his house on Av. Cruz in Parque de los Patricios, we promoted a meeting in which the actual authority was made clear. I had the punched card that we used before computers and proved that it was Mr. Luengo, from Río Colorado in the southern region of the country, (diagnosed with full bilateral superficial femoral and aortoiliac occlusion) on whom we together performed the previous bilateral femoral arteriotomy and then an aorto-bifemoral bypass, successfully deriving to the branches and

recovering the flow from the aorta to the distal sectors. There, the dispute came to an end. We even signed a “reconciliation certificate” (that is what we called it) and peace was reestablished with a handshake between the two opponents and bold pioneers of new techniques. Mercado had been the one who gave Rubén Siano the score in a meeting at a café on the corner of AMA, when Rubén confessed his uneasiness due to the very bad result of his case studies with complicated aortofemoral bypasses until then.

In 1975, you took up the presidency of the Argentine Society of Angiology and, together with Mercado, Albartal, Favaloro, Welsh and others, we founded the Argentine College of Cardiovascular Surgeons, an institution first essentially intended for guild purposes which then became an outstanding leader of cardiovascular, and today endovascular, surgery and all their surgical subspecializations. We had been civil surgeons at Hospital Militar Central since 1955 and in 1967, having received the gold medal for our work during ten consecutive years and created the Cardiovascular Surgery Service of Hospital Militar Central, we resigned and embarked on the adventure of Hospital Ferroviario Central. There, in 1964 we performed the first surgery on a ruptured abdominal aortic aneurysm, replacing it with a segment of a lyophilized aorta from a soldier injured in a tragedy at Puente Pacífico. I removed the abdominal aorta at the Pathology Service of Hospital Central, as Dubost did in Paris in 1961, put it in a tube with absolute alcohol, took it refrigerated to the Plasma and Blood Bank of the Argentine Army, producer of dried plasma for all Latin America, and had it lyophilized there.

In 1975, he took his native Mendoza to the Congress of the Argentine Society of Angiology and returned triumphant to his longed-for homeland.

Dear Pedro, today I can be honest with you and tell you about the great respect I feel for your surgical and human virtues. Hassan Santín left us very young when he died in a car accident in Brazil. You were the intellectual of the group, the respected one and capable of stopping Hugo Mercado when he got carried away and only listened to your wise advice.

Golf, your favorite sport, prevented you from getting to know what soccer was like, in a group of members of the Mercado School, fans of the soccer ball.

Your first marriage was a bad experience in your personal life, but several years later God rewarded you with a worthy woman, your partner for life, who gave you beloved children and grandchildren of the heart, and you were happy. When I last talked with you, you told me about her death and your depression, which undoubtedly undermined your last years.

I remember with a smile our trip to Moscow in 1970 together with Guillermo Masnata, the erudite tourist and great companion... Stockholm, Finland, Saint Petersburg, Moscow, Warsaw, Hungary and Greece... I travelled as official rapporteur to the International Congress of Cardiovascular Society in Moscow, and you two accompanied me out of friendship and curiosity. On that trip, we saw the impact of the 2nd World War and the excesses of victors and vanquished, in a life experience.

Do you remember when, in the Mozart square of Warsaw, we danced with Masnata under the rain, happy to be in the land of the great Polish creator?

You were full member of the Argentine Academy of Surgery, it was Velasco who made us join that worthy scientific society. Your contributions, discussions, arguments – particularly, those with Siano Quirós and his scientific presentations – were memorable.

A qualified and neat surgeon, almost exalted, you loved dissecting and hard-to-solve cases.

You were Chief of the Cardiovascular Surgery Service of Hospital Ferroviario and even held office as Director of that great hospital for a long time.

There is an infinite number of your virtues that I omit but your friends from the Mercado group could name fluently... Mauro Brangold, Adolfo Juorio, Mario Firpo, A. Sazzano, and the great Héctor Trabucco and Francisco De Pedro and the engineer Zeuli, creators of the Argentine artificial heart, the first one implanted by you at Hospital Ferroviario Central. They are part of the Argentine surgical history.

Pedro, you have left to the mystery of the beyond. I pray to the Infant Jesus of Prague, to whom your mother consecrated you as a child, that you are at peace in the dream celestial Kingdom, waiting to meet us someday so I can continue telling you how much I miss you since your death on 20 August this year... ■