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RICARDO JORGE—«I'M A DOCTOR, NOTHING IS INDIFFERENT TO ME»

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Nowadays Ricardo de Almeida Jorge is an unknown personality to the majority of his compatriots, although outside Portugal, there are numerous authors who write about this man and his ideas. Who was this man? Actually it is difficult to answer by a simple, objective sentence. It is quite obvious that he was a well-known doctor, however what is really important is what is behind such a different person, and of course the reason why so many intellectuals and scientists have written pages and pages about him.

To understand the value of Ricardo Jorge's work is needful to investigate his life and to read all his writings, so that we can see him as a single person: a complex mix of genetics and ambience.

Starting from the beginning, Ricardo Jorge was born in a Portuguese city, O'Porto, on 9th May 1858, exactly 150 years ago. O'Porto is the city of Will, where we can breathe and hear the power of 'wanting', where people really live near each others, where we can listen to opinions and discussions about everything and everywhere, where the most censorious spirit speak louder. These characteristics passed throughout the city to Ricardo Jorge, in whose life we can see the emblem of that people and the personality of these roads.

José de Almeida Jorge, his father, was born in a small village on the north of Portugal, he had two brothers and one sister. One of his brothers was Ricardo Jorge de Almeida who was a pharmacist, godfather of Ricardo Jorge, influencing him a lot. José Jorge lived all his life in O'Porto, working as a worthy blacksmith.

D. Ana Rita de Jesus, his mother, was born in O'Porto and as far as I'm concerned she was a very beautiful and smart lady.

The first step of everyone's life is childhood, as it is known Ricardo Jorge had a happy and stimulating periode, which for sure took an important role in his future life.

From 1874 to 1879 he studied medicine at *Escola Médico-Cirurgica do Porto*, seen as one of the best students, he remained there for many years teaching Anatomy, Histology and Experimental Physiology. As a Doctor, he travelled to Paris and to Strasbourg opportunities that opened his horizons. Ricardo Jorge studied a wide range of subjects, such as: Neurology, Hydrotherapy and Electrotherapy.

In fact, it was around the years 1879-90 that Ricardo Jorge started his own projects. During all life we can see that he had a very large spectrum of interests and interventions.

After tight collaboration he directed the first Hydraulic Institute that appeared in

O'Porto, where he made many studies, and, which conclusions made him review the insularity of the city. This task made him deepen this area of studies, so that Ricardo Jorge developed and published a large amount of scientific studies and articles about Hygienics.

Simultaneously his spirit commented upon medical instruction and even medicine. Politics did not pass away, instead it played an important role in his life, as he was an attentive and interventive person, like Miguel Bombarda and Cunha Belém.

In 1892 Ricardo Jorge founded the first Municipal Laboratory of Bacteriology, in the same year that Biggs founded the New York Municipal Laboratory of Bacteriology (considered as the oldest one on the world).

Rapidly, Ricardo Jorge, became notable in a very wide range of subjects, specially in Epidemiology and Hygienics. According to that he was nominated the Municipal Doctor of O'Porto, leading him to embrace many subjects of study as: Sanitary figures, O'Porto's demography and fights against epidemics. His efforts were recognized as a great phenomenon for some and as a bad action for others. The Government and specialized bacteriologists saw his great work, however some people pointed him as the responsible for some bad measures against epidemics, in which, in fact, he was not involved.

Ricardo Jorge changed O'Porto for Lisbon

As General Inspector of Health, Ricardo Jorge reorganized all the sanitary legislation taking as a reference the most recent researche and scientific bases. He changed not only laws but also health services, this emblematic Doctor founded the 10th World's Central Institute of Hygienics (taking as a model the British and

the German Central Institutes of Hygienics) which worked in association with «Instituto Bacteriológico Câmara Pestana», and where he organized a group to teach a methodic sanitary instruction, not only to doctors, but also to engineers. By the time this Institute was a place for medical research, nowadays it is called *Instituto Nacional de Saúde Doutor Ricardo Jorge (INSDRJ)* and its investigation is concerned to a large number of subjects around medicine and public health. Nowadays, besides being a very well succeeded institute, it is a national reference in the scientific area. Furthermore, by the time of its foundation, the Institute had already a specialized Library and the Museum of Hygienics.

In 1906, Portugal received the 15th International Medical Congress, where Ricardo Jorge was the president of the section *Hygienics and Epidemiologic*.

During these years many epidemics caused deaths and suffering, so that many of the measures projected for Health Services did not have the right effect. Ricardo Jorge had to fight against many obstacles and start again after some delusions.

The period from 1909 to 1912 is characterized by the periodic trips that Ricardo Jorge made to Europe, culminating by starting working on the International Office of Hygienics in Paris.

On the second decade of the 20th century the world was desolated by the First World War, which had a great disgraceful and tragic effect on the populations health, not only directly, by the people death and hurt in combat, but also indirectly, by the poverty of Public Health Services. Ricardo Jorge went on a 'mission' to France, in the middle of the War, to visit and try to create plans to improve the population (soldiers and civilians) conditions. His remark-

able speech about 'war and medical thought' notices a great period of reflexion and writing. After the War, 1914-18, Ricardo Jorge is invited to be one of the members of the *Comité of Hygienics of the Nations' Society*.

His wife, mother of his four children, died in 1922, one of the worst moments of Ricardo Jorge's life, a subject that occupies many and many lines written by his pain, by himself with no covers.

After the Revolution of the 28th May, a new breath was split, Ricardo Jorge's son, Prof. Artur Ricardo Jorge was Minister of the Instruction, who continued and established his father projects for the Public Health System and Public Assistance. Ricardo Jorge, himself, wrote the decree-law (1926) that made a real revolution on these areas by upgrading the efficiency, by declining of wastefulness, and the last but not the least: by emphasising Health's role on the Government projects.

Ricardo Jorge remained the Technical President of the Portuguese Superior Council of Hygienics and member of the International Office and Comité of Hygienics.

As a fighter, Ricardo Jorge, participated actively in his last reunion of the International Office of Hygienics by the end of april/begin of May of his last year of life, 1939.

He leave life on 29th July 1939.

Ricardo Jorge, a man dedicated to Health, ironically had during all his life medical problems, in his words «a degenerate son of the sea's heros», many of his best works, (from 1914 to 1939) had been written in bed. In one hand we can put his physical weakness and fragility, and on the other hand we can put the Hygienics Doctor as a strong, determined and a fighter spirit.

Although all the fortuitousness of life and his contemporaneous mentality, Ricardo

Jorge always took his boat to a good port. As a sanitariat he: studied weaknesses, pointed mistakes, traced legal measures, taught technical efficient methods, going many times against all the ideas of his contemporaneous. For his innovations and concepts, Ricardo Jorge was considered by a great Professor of the London University, as one of the eighteen Doctors that contributed most to the progress of the International Sanitary Defense, during the last 200 years.

His publications are not only wide in number, around 300, but also in terms of diversity, abording themes such as: Epidemiology(114), Biographies(22), Hygienics and Salubrity(17), Literature(16), History of Medicine(13), Art review(10), medical life and medical instruction review(7), Legal Medicine(3), Neurology(2). Our intent is not to notice numbers, as it was said before, but to give an idea of the multiplicity of subjects that interested this eclectic man.

Ricardo Jorge is seen by many historiographers as a scientist, a thinker, an investigator and a writer. As a major investigator of the historical conscience and being a member of the International Societies of Science History and of the History of Medicine, Ricardo Jorge usually enriches his scientific publications by large and profound historical notes, which, in fact, fits the reader on the time and environmental mentalities.

Analysing all his large number of studies, reviews, notes and publications, we can identify some characteristics that are permanent in all of them: scrupulous observations, sense of responsibility, love for knowledge, historical investigation, search for the truth, errors review, honourable people defense, justice defense, family/group glorification. That fact make us think about the man behind the creation.

Certainly, after examining part by part we find a man that is led by curiosity and details. Not the kind of detail that leads us to blindness, instead of it, it is the detail that really makes the difference, and that only a few 'illuminated' people can see. Both, together, let Ricardo Jorge dream. A dream that was concerned not only about isolated scientific areas but mainly about humanity, he liked to observe his world and to analyse ancient knowledge. According to that he was still a young doctor when he chose to his lemma a Terêncio's sentence: *Medicus sum, nihil a me alienum puto* (I'm a doctor, nothing is indifferent to me), which shows clearly his manner of life.

As the majority of great personalities, this peculiar Doctor easily got involved in violent discussions and polemics, caused by his fulminant soul and speech. Intelligence serving bad

causes was the main reason that put his combativeness on its highest levels. In opposition he was a romantic and a tender person for the memory of the people he had loved and who Death took before him.

In Fernando da Silva Correia words: «great personalities, as Ricardo Jorge's personality, like all the great beams of light, can not be seen, unless from a great distance in time and space», not always understood by the people of his time, today, we can see that: throughout all the importance of his investigations, his popularity, his free mind, his medical skills or his humanity, what is really remarkable is that Ricardo Jorge was able to review himself or his world and the first one trying to change it.

Ricardo Jorge is an emblem and a nowadays' visionaire.

NONNE ALEXANDRA (ALIAS ALTESSE ROYALE PRINCESSE HÉLÈNE) ET SES BIENFAISANCES

G. Dinu, T. Chiriac

Suceava - Roumanie

En 1926 le chirurgien Victor Gomoïu reçoit la charge d'administrer les fonds de bienfaisances de la Princesse Hélène, la fille du roi Ferdinand et la reine Marie, construisant un hôpital pour satisfaire aux besoins d'assistance médicale de toutes les périodes de la vie (la femme enceinte jusqu'à vieillesse). Je suis né dans cet hôpital.

Le 14 Septembre 1929 Victor Gomoïu a fondé la Société roumaine d'Histoire de la Médecine.

En 1931 a Sonenberg (Autriche) la Princesse a ouverte un dispensaire pour les enfants.

Durant La II-ème guerre mondiale par la Croix Rouge, s'est soigné à Vienne des rou-

ains blessés et à Brassov des réfugiés de la gare. Près de Château Bran dans son hôpital "La coeur de la reine" a travaillé comme nurse. En Amérique (1950) s'est impliqué dans les activités des communautés roumaines.

En 1961 est novice à monastère Bussy-en-Orthe (France), devenant nonne Alexandra. À Elwood City (Pennsylvania) a construite sa monastère orthodoxe (1967).

À Bucarest (1990) : membre fondatrice de "Société de bienfaisances Christiana" (pour les malades sans possibilités). 1991 décède en Amérique.