

To the master, with Love (1943-2010)

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Cardiovascular surgeon and Professor at the Federal University of Parana (UFPr) and the Evangelical University of Parana (FEPAR), Danton Richlin da Rocha Loures died on June 20 of this year, unexpectedly, after a cardiac event, at age 66.

I met Danton Loures in 1977 during his lecturer contest at the Federal University of Parana. By the will he had in becoming a cardiovascular surgeon and the impression he gave to me I joined his team as an intern in the same year. During all those more than 30 years of coexistence, we had a relationship of teacher/student, surgeon/apprentice, fellow workers and, above all, friends who had a deep respect for each other.

Born in Joinville (SC) on October 27, 1943, son of Dr. Josino and Carmen Rocha Loures, who moved to Londrina, for professional reasons, when he was only four months old. His father was an otorhinolaryngologist, which influenced Danton to study medicine in UFPr, hardly knowing what it would become one of his sites of work for a long time. From the start, he has shown a growing interest in cardiology, although he had accompanied his father for many years. During the course he was encouraged by Prof. Rachid Acir to specialize in cardiovascular surgery.

In the last year of medical school (1968), he married Regina Schrappe, with whom he happened to have four daughters.

Taken to Sao Paulo by Prof. Paulo Franco de Oliveira, for his connection to the cardiologist Radi Macruz, he joined Prof. Zerbini, where he remained until the end of 1971. When he returned, he started the cardiovascular surgery service at the former Santa Cruz Hospital, supported by his mentor Zerbini, in terms of guidelines and even attending the first surgeries, and after the Evangelical Hospital in Curitiba (HEC). He was encouraged and supported by Prof. Gastao Pereira da Cunha, he joined since his return in the academic life at UFPR.

In the early '70s, after putting his team together, he could always count from the beginning with a group of interns that helped him not only in surgery but also in monitoring



Phd Danton Richlin da Rocha Loures

patients in the immediate post-operative. Soon after they were joined by three young surgeons (Paulo Roberto Brofman, Roberto Gomes de Carvalho and Edison José Ribeiro), two of whom did their training in Sao Paulo (Prof. Zerbini's service), and the third in Paris (Prof. Dubost's service). This group of young surgeons began their work in the new Evangelical Hospital in Curitiba and maintained the tradition of adding trainees to the staff, and hence, during all those years; several have become prominent cardiovascular surgeons, within and outside the state.

Being a quiet person and possessing a unique surgical education, both for his skill and his training, he managed to pass on to his disciples the same way of working and ethical principles of surgery. This, undoubtedly, was one of the landmarks of his life - the ability to bring people together and to start a school to train new generations of cardiovascular surgeons.

Danton was a surgeon and entrepreneur with new projects always on his mind or being run. From the planning and execution of an operating room until the completion of a heart transplant, all details were carefully analyzed and

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discussed with all members of the group. Heart transplantation was a lifelong dream that began in the sixth year of college when, during a trip to Europe he learned of the completion of the first heart transplantation worldwide. Obsessed by this idea and persistent, as usual, he realized it, in 1985 at the HEC, when he was one of the pioneers of the second phase of heart transplantation in Brazil. Being a visionary, he kept this ongoing project, continuing it in the Hospital de Clinicas, UFPR.

In college, encouraged by Professor. Gastao Pereira da Cunha, he began his work by participating in the discipline of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery, under the responsibility of Professor Iseu Elias Affonso da Costa. Over the years, he developed his academic activities, with active participation at both the undergraduate and graduate school. This led to invitations to participate in various councils at various educational institutions and scientific activities both nationally and abroad. He took over as head of thoracic and cardiovascular surgery in 1993 and some years concurrently as head of the Department of Surgery. The last project that he was involved in was the stem cell project, at UFPR. He was also professor of FEPAR, responsible for cardiovascular surgery, for many years and always reference to future physicians as an outstanding professional.

In his life path, he played an important role in the formation of a number of cardiovascular surgeons, to whom he dedicated the same that he had received from his mentor Prof. Zerbini. A visionary, he is responsible for starting a series of services in Parana, now headed by his disciples.

He was honored several times by both the lay society, as in 1989 when he received the title of honorary citizenship of Curitiba, as by his peers at entering the Academy of Medicine of Parana, or by his students when honored as the class name.

Danton had a great empathy with all those around him, both in surgery and in academic life, always joining competent people, from his members to his collaborators in academic endeavors, but also with his patients whom he devoted all his attention. For them, he liked to explain all the treatment enthusiastically using very enlightening drawings of his own (Fig. 1).

Aside from his professional life, to which he devoted much of his effort, he has always been a great enthusiast for sports and with his wife Regina and his daughters, practiced it almost daily. Due to the loss of his third child after a heart surgery for correction of a Tetralogy of Fallot performed in the U.S., he devoted himself wholeheartedly

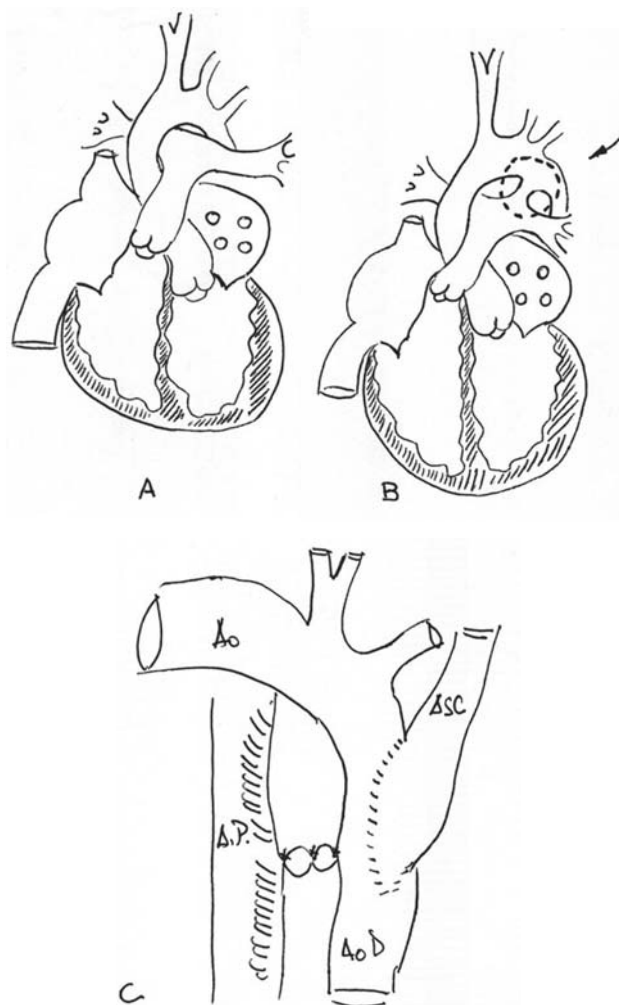


Fig. 1 - Drawings of Danton Rocha Loures. A) Normal heart, B) Persistence of ductus arteriosus; C) Technical correction of coarctation of the aorta with ligation of patent ductus arteriosus

to the surgical treatment congenital heart diseases, being responsible for servicing a large number of patients, establishing the infant heart surgery in Parana.

Bearer of coronary artery disease and having previously done some therapeutic procedures, he died of sudden cardiac arrest during physical exercises.

His legacy is an unfinished work with all the vigor of his labor as a teacher, and researcher with over 25,000 cardiovascular surgeries.