

# Paying homage to Dr. Eugenio Ortiz



(1931-2016)

**T**o leave a place behind for those coming (our children and our children's children), humbly and generously, it just happens because it is meant to be— it is the only reason that justifies that the new generations are the ones behind the old generations' death.

Gustavo Bueno, the philosopher, justified the reason for not living forever, and gave the passport to eternity in the deeds done by those who leave a place for us.

I was lucky enough so as to meet Eugenio upon leaving Medical School, at the end of 1983, and I'm honest when I say that I feel privileged by holding one of the places that he left, even when he was not my master.

Undoubtedly he is leaving the place, since he graduated at the La Plata University Medical School in 1957, one year before I showed up in this world, just as he used to say when he referred to the generational change of his mentor in Orthopedics, Dr. Juan A. Mendiberry.

Speaking deeds, one of the works he left for us is one on Feet Conditions, Plantalgias (sole pain), published in 2005 and one in which the both of us together with Dr. Juan Jesus Blanik worked upon two years in a row and that linked us forever. They looked up to each other deeply, even when they belong to the same generation, and I looked up to them both even though I belonged to a younger generation.

His words while paying homage to Juan Jesus when he left his place, in October 2006, stated that Blasnik was "a man of great personality, moderate, modest and extremely respectful of others, and showing off about his virtues or success was just repugnant to him". Undoubtedly he was speaking about someone that used to live the same way as he himself did, that was born at approximately the same time, on November 21<sup>st</sup> 1931, but Ortiz left his place ten years later, last year on October 29<sup>th</sup>.

Ricardo Tito Amor, encouraged by the admiration he felt for his friend, at his funeral would recite some improvised stanzas that spoke for themselves:

Eugenio Ortiz: fuiste un hombre de bien  
Esposo, padre, abuelo y amigo ejemplar.  
Tu figura, alta y elegante siempre dio que hablar  
Médico, especialista de nota como otros pero sin igual.

Eugenio Ortiz siempre recordaré nuestras charlas  
Tus ideas y opiniones serias y concretas  
Nunca, nunca las voy a olvidar  
Eran así como consejos de oro de un ser humano excepcional

Eugenio Ortiz fuiste un hombre de bien  
Tu figura se agiganta a través del tiempo  
La llama encendida no se apagará jamás  
Eugenio Ortiz...que descanses en Paz...

Every conversation with Eugenio was not only a lecture but also a party. Because to his academic knowledge about whatever and to his clear explanations... He vivaciously added hilarious comments to make his speech much friendlier. He was a restless hardworking man; a generous, an approachable man.

Where he developed much of his creativity was in his specialization: foot medicine and surgery. He was Founding and Titular Member of the Latin American Federation of Foot Medicine and Surgery, and President of the Argentine Society of Foot and Leg Medicine and Surgery. He was also the president of the 8<sup>th</sup> SAMECIPP Congress and that of the 19<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Foot and Leg Surgery, which was held in Buenos Aires in 1996.

As a medical doctor he practiced as chief of the Orthopedics Department at the General Acute Care Hospital “Pedro Fiorito”, in Avellaneda city, in the Province of Buenos Aires. In turn, he was chief of the Orthopedics Department at the Glass Workers Health-care Center, where later he was Director between 1991 and 1997. At these institutions, he trained a good deal of specialists, who later played an important role in the Foot and Leg Medicine and Surgery specialization.

He has been the author of more than 70 works in the Foot and Leg Medicine and Surgery specialization, published in national and international congresses, workshops and scientific meetings, and was finally acknowledged as an AAOT life member. What makes a difference between the man and the professional is when that who leaves his place refers to his roots in *Memorias de Esquel* (Esquel memoirs)

What was his greatest asset? His children Ricardo, Fabiana and Laura; his pampered grandchildren Agustín, Felipe and Jean Luc, and his beloved wife Helia Botinky, who I am most grateful to due to her help to write these words—they will see and hear Eugenio no more, but they themselves and Eugenio’s deeds will occupy the place that he left and that those like me who are lucky enough so as to follow his footsteps feel as Eugenio’s sheer presence.

Eugenio Ortiz—the stern professor, the restless researcher, the kind and warm friend who leaves an invisible but not an absent place for us... We, his colleagues, friends and students who now hold his place, remain here with joy at having enjoyed his clear intelligence and his generous commitment.



*Miguel Ángel Picardi, MD*