

IN MEMORIAM

Obituary for professor Alfons Fernández i Sabaté[☆]

Necrológica profesor Alfons Fernández i Sabaté



Barcelona, 2nd December 1934/30th November 2019

On 30th November 2019 the Ex-president of the Spanish Orthopaedic and Traumatology Society (SECOT), professor Alfons Fernández i Sabaté passed away in Barcelona.

He was born in Barcelona on 2nd December 1934 and received an education in French schools and lyceums. His admiration for everything French resulted from this education.

He studied medicine at the University of Barcelona and became an internal medical student of professor Piulachs. He Doctorated in Medicine in 1969 with a magnificent thesis on post-traumatic pseudo osteoarthritis of the tibial shaft.

He specialized in Paris, in the Cochin hospital, under the guidance of professor Merle D'Aubigne. From 1965 to 1969 he practised as a specialist in the Hospital Vall D'Hebron with Dr. Fernando Cabot Boix who had inaugurated the COT Service of Bellvitge. In 1980 he was appointed as head of this service, which he held until his retirement in the year 2004.

Professor Fernández Sabaté was a serious-minded man, not prone to frivolities. He was extremely hard-working and disciplined and his perfectionism verged on narcissism, with his demand for things to be as he conceived them.

Respect for him from the orthopaedic community was extreme. When talking about orthopaedics it was impossible not to mention Fernández Sabaté, particularly with regard to septic involvement and hip surgery.

He was a very religious man possessing great spirituality. His religiousness was rooted in family and cultural memes; his spirituality led him to care about his fellow human beings, getting involved in charitable organizations. This activity was known only by his family and his most intimate circle. As a truly discreet individual he never gave expression of this in public. This spirituality was doubtlessly genetic in origin since he was most probably possessed of God's grace (Hamer's "God gene").

The two passions I knew of were his love of Catalan history in all of its facets: cultural, geographical and biological, and the history of everything connected to his specialty of orthopaedics.

He dedicated a great deal of effort and time to historic and social scientific research. He possessed all the attributes of a scientific spirit: positivity, rationality and objectivity although the latter is somewhat subjective and may distort reality, it is very difficult to be an "indifferent subject" (Barraud).

I believe it was in historic investigation where he found his spiritual development, through the discipline which this imposed. This spiritual growth was promoted by an energy or strength which acted as a drive for the discipline. For Scott Peck this strength is Love. Love is an act of will (intention and action) which requires effort. Alfons was able to continue this journey to the peak of spiritual development thanks to the fact his base camp was always well looked after, particularly by his wife Teresa.

Fernández Sabaté has left us with enduring masterpieces: Nuestros fundadores y maestros entre 1935 y 1946 (our founders and teachers between 1935 and 1946); Influencia europea en la COT española (European impact on the Spanish OTS) and Barcelona y la SECOT 1936–2002 (Barcelona and SECOT 1936–2002).

His contribution will remind us of him always. Training courses and speciality studies are short.

Alfons, SECOT will always be grateful for this donation endorsed by your altruistic spirit.

Thanks be (*Gràcies*)

Antonio Navarro Quilis

[☆] Please cite this article as: Necrológica profesor Alfons Fernández i Sabaté. Rev Esp Cir Ortop Traumatol. 2020;64:227–227.