

# LAST LECTURE

Professor Henrique Bicha Castelo  
*Aula Magna* of FML, 20 February 2013

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Magnificent Rector of the University of Lisbon, Professor António Sampaio da Nóvoa,

Professor João Lobo Antunes, President of the Assembly of the Faculty of Medicine of Lisbon and President of the Institute of Molecular Medicine,

Professor José Fernandes e Fernandes, Director of the Faculty of Medicine of Lisbon,

Dr Maria de Jesus Barroso, Dr Maria de Belém Roseira and Monsignor Pedro Feytor Pinto, through whom I greet all the distinguished friends of Professor Henrique Bicha Castelo,

Dr Rita, daughters and granddaughters of Professor Henrique Bicha Castelo,

Dr Rita and relatives of Professor Henrique Bicha Castelo

Academic Authorities,

Professors, Unit Directors, Researchers, Students and Professionals of the Lisbon Academic Medical Centre,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

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Professor Henrique Bicha Castelo:

The presence of so many distinguished friends greatly facilitates the task you were kind enough to invite me to accomplish. It was in the name of our friendship that I have decided to speak at this solemn last lecture before your retirement.

Rector, ladies and gentlemen:

Given I am his contemporary in terms of training and professional activity, I can attest to the intense and valuable career of my friend Henrique Manuel Bicha Castelo.

We are both part of a generation of physicians who had the privilege of living in times of major challenges and is proud of the contribution it gave to the profound changes that took place in the country in general and in the health field in particular.

On the Faculty benches still during the dictatorship and inspired by the great individuals of this institution, such as Cid dos Santos and Miller Guerra, this generation stirred consciences and helped to lay the foundation for reform of professional practice.

Taking part in military missions in the colonies in fulfillment of what was then officially seen as a patriotic duty, this generation provided an important service and had a major influence on the development of new countries after independence.

Through medical careers, that generation led the systemic organization of care provision in Portugal, with the consequent success of the National Health Service we are so proud of.

In our common home, the Faculty of Medicine of Lisbon/ Santa Maria Hospital, we were both born and raised for medical practice. Henrique figured prominently in this field from an early stage, thanks to his intellectual abilities, the excellence of his surgical performance, his clinical compassion and scientific probity, as an outstanding resident doctor, *civitas* surgeon, much sought-after trainer, proficient educator, and renowned researcher.

His commitment has been demonstrated continuously throughout his long career as a surgeon, medical professor, hospital and academic director and intense activity in Portugal and abroad.

The list of titles and positions held by Professor Henrique Bicha Castelo is very long, for which reason I will briefly mention that he completed his PhD in 1988 and became Auxiliary Professor of FML in

the same year. He was made Aggregate Professor in 1993, Associate Professor in 1997 and has been a Full Professor since 2000.

He has been the Hospital Career Head of Service since 1989, Unit Director since 1991 and Director of Department since 2005.

He was Deputy Director of FML and President of its Scientific Council.

He was *Professeur Invité* at the Faculty of Medicine Aix-Marseille.

He is Visiting Professor and conducts academic activities at nine Services abroad, in the US, Canada, France, United Kingdom, and China (Hong-Kong and Macao).

He is a member of six national scientific societies and of ten international ones.

He has had multiple institutional positions and held posts at scientific societies.

He has organized several academic activities, example of which is the 12th Surgery International Meeting culminating in this session.

He introduced Endoluminal Surgery in Portugal.

He was awarded the degree of Grand Officer of the Order of Merit.

In terms of my personal experience, I take the opportunity to express my appreciation and thanks for his participation in the Clinical Management of Santa Maria Hospital/Northern Lisbon Hospital Centre. My appreciation is further increased by the fact that his involvement occurred during the growing crisis in which we are immersed.

Henrique:

This is a time to enjoy an entire life. As this chapter comes to an end, and hopefully it will not be the last, you can legitimately say that it was worth it and we all agree with you. Your public career, now officially terminated, lives up to the title normally given to the last academic lectures.

You have made a significant contribution to the institutional reality in which we live. Through this Lisbon Academic Medical Centre, the country has its largest Faculty of Medicine, a Hospital Centre citizens fully rely on, on a level that is often the last resort, and a high quality Research Centre.

As from now on, you will continue to be present at the institutions you have always wanted, very successfully, to give your best. Both the

excellent team you brought together at the João Cid dos Santos Surgery Service and the entire hospital and academic community rely on your availability, skills and knowledge.

We are living in a time of great confusion, insecurity and distress, and facing the apparently paradoxical challenge of doing more with a brutal reduction of resources:

- Increasing the academic dimension of clinical medicine, reflecting on access to, and on the equity and quality of health care at the service of sick persons;

- Increasing the modernization and qualification of medical education and health sciences through the training of a high number of doctors and other professionals with recognized profiles and skills;

- Increasing biomedical and clinical research and advanced academic training.

But we are sure of one thing:

The followers, many of whom your disciples, are here today. In the institutional environment in which we live, of which the scent brought by the musical instruments played by our younger members is a good example, the followers are guided by dreams and driven by wills as exciting as ours, and they will know how to strengthen and advance the quality level of our home for the sake of patients, education, and research.