



An interview with

## Clovis Monteiro Bramante

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- » Degree in Dentistry from the School of Dentistry, Pontifical Catholic University (PUC), Campinas, Brazil (1962).
- » Doctorate in Endodontics from University of São Paulo (USP, 1972).
- » Assistant Professor (1992), Lecturer (1983) and Full Professor (1992) at USP.
- » Associate-Dean of the Bauru School of Dentistry, (FOB-USP) (1998-2002).
- » Author of 16 books of Endodontics and 46 chapters in books about Endodontics.
- » Has published 364 papers in Brazilian and international journals.
- » Has given courses and lectures in 15 countries.
- » Was awarded the Dr. Luis César Pannain Medal of Honor in Endodontics (1985).
- » Outstanding Professor of 1988 in Dentistry in Bauru, Brazil.
- » Honorary Member of the Paraguayan Society of Endodontics (1990).
- » Antônio Rothier Duarte Endodontic Merit Award, from the Brazilian Association of Endodontics (1992).
- » José Gustavo de Paiva Merit Award from the Brazilian Group of Endodontics Professors (1994).
- » Honorary Member of the College of Surgeons of Guadalajara, Mexico (1995).
- » Honorary Professor of the Pedro Henrique Ureño National University, Dominican Republic (1995).
- » Person of the Year of the 500th Anniversary of Brazil, granted by the Cultural and Entrepreneurial Integration Center, State of São Paulo, Brazil (2000).
- » Dr. Augusto Motta Borges Merit Award, Ceará Chapter of the Brazilian Association of Endodontics (2000).
- » Dr. Antonio Martins Jr Merit Award, Brazilian Association of Dentistry, State of Rio de Janeiro (2001).
- » Special Tribute from the Health Ministry of Chile, Higuera Hospital, Chile (2008).
- » Honorary Member of the Mexican Academy of Endodontics (2008).
- » Honorary Professor of the Santa Maria Catholic University (Arequipa, Peru) (2014).
- » One of the professors with the most citations in the Webometrics Ranking of World Universities (2015).
- » Honorable Award granted by the Brazilian Society of Endodontics, São Paulo (2017).

#### Interviewer

**Murilo Priori Alcalde<sup>1,2,3</sup>**

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**I would like to start this interview by asking you about your education, both general and in Endodontics.**

I was born in Sorocaba, in the state of São Paulo (SP), to Giacomino Bramante and Alice Monteiro Bramante. At the age of one, I came to live in Bauru (SP). Later I left to take Dentistry in the Catholic University of Campinas (SP), from which I graduated in 1962. There were 78 students in my class, and the course lasted 4 years.

**When and how did you start your career as an endodontist and as a teacher?**

As soon as I graduated, I returned to my city of origin, Bauru, and opened my office on Ave. Rodrigues Alves, in the Pioneiro Hall. Since the beginning, my work was dedicated to Endodontics primarily. I was soon invited to join a dental office on the corner of Gerson França St. and Rodrigues Alves St., where Dr. Walter Antunes de Freitas, Dr. Waldyr Antonio Janson, Dr. Paulo Amarante de Araújo, Dr. Hermogenes de Freitas, Dr. Francisco Garcia Peres and Dr. Euwaldo Giraldis de Carvalho worked as dentists. Many of them were professors in the Bauru School of Dentistry (FOB-USP). In this dental office, I performed endodontic treatments for my colleagues. At the time, I was in contact with Dr. Jose Mondelli, whose family was close to my wife's family. As he was already a professor at the School of Dentistry, he invited me to the faculty at FOB-USP. Therefore, I joined the Department of Restorative Dentistry, which was headed by Dr. Mondelli. I started in the area of Restorative Dentistry and Dental Sculpture and, later, in Endodontics while I took my Ph.D. (1972) and my Habilitation degree (1980), became Associate Professor (1983) and, eventually, Full Professor (1992). I was the Associate Dean under Professor Dr. Ayamar Pavarini from 1998 to 2002.

**You have dedicated many years to your private practice and have published numerous scientific papers, which have contributed to endodontic clinical practice as a whole. Tell us how your clinical experience contributed to the development of your scientific studies.**

After working in the two dental offices that I mentioned above, I decided to build my own on Ave. Nações Unidas, block 17, where I worked exclusively with Endodontics and Surgery until I retired. At that time, I shared my time between the office and the School of Dentistry, thus developing both my clinical practice and my research.

**Most of your career has been dedicated to endodontic treatments of excellence based on biological concepts. Do you think that technological progress may have contributed to a greater predictability of endodontic treatments?**

During my activities while teaching Endodontics, I had the opportunity to be in contact with professors, such as Mario Roberto Leonardo and his team in Araraquara, Roberto Holland and his team in Araçatuba and Luis Valdrighi and his team in Piracicaba, who all extolled the virtues of biological Endodontics. Professor Alceu Berbert, my classmate at university, and I joined that group. I lived through many changes in Endodontics, and saw the advent of new instruments, techniques and materials. I worked with manual carbon steel instruments, and progressively moved to the recent rotary and reciprocating NiTi instruments. I believe that this great step in Endodontics gave dentists more confidence and improved predictability when performing their treatments.

**You add up over 50 years of dedication to Endodontics and teaching. In addition, you published numerous scientific papers and books in the area. We would like to know which book and paper you consider landmarks in your academic career and why.**

I have always tried to write very objective books that would bring to clinical dentists information applied to their everyday work in clinical practice, in a simplified way. My books have always focused on a specific theme, such as anatomy, radiology, retreatment and accidents. I believe that my book *Recursos Radiográficos no Diagnóstico e no Tratamento Endodôntico* [Radiographic Resources in Endodontic Diagnoses and Treatments] has exceeded my expectations. Three editions have been published and sold out rapidly.

Among the studies that I published, I would like to mention A methodology for evaluation of root canal instrumentation, published in the Journal of Endodontics, in 1987, which was the cover of that journal issue and had, for many years, the highest citation index. At that time, we did not have the resources that we have today, such as micro-CT scanners, to evaluate canal preparations.

**What was your greatest challenge in your entire teaching career?**

I love Endodontics because it challenges us all the time. When we believe that we have already mastered all of it, little surprises arise. I have always enjoyed facing difficult situations. As a professor, I have seen complicated cases all the time and tried to solve them as well as possible.

**Currently, you are a Senior Professor at São Paulo University (FOB-USP) and continue publishing books and scientific studies. Have you ever thought, at any time in your career, of retiring from teaching too? What is your strongest motivation to continue working?**

I have never accepted this word, “retirement”. I had colleagues at the university who said, “I can’t wait for the time to retire!” I have never thought about it and, when the time for retirement arrived, I was pleasantly surprised to see that USP offered me a position as Senior Professor, which allowed me to continue working, both in undergraduate and graduate courses and in the supervision of research and graduate students.

I have a great friend, Professor Ricardo Affonso Bernardes, from Brasília, who often asked me, “*Professor, what little pill do you take to maintain all this sunny disposition?*” I answered, “*I do what I like.*” It is very gratifying to be able to participate in academic work until today. I have already told my colleagues in Endodontics that, if I am ever disturbing, please tell me, and I will go away. I hope this takes a long time to happen.

**You are a reference in endodontic surgery, and you even have a book about it. In your opinion, what challenge (or challenges) does endodontic surgery face in relation to osseointegrated implants?**

Each area has its precise indication, and we should know how to decide when each of them should play their role. As I said, I try, as much as possible, to save all teeth. Today, endodontic surgery has a very clear, as well as predictable, role, with all its techniques and materials, and dentists should be able to evaluate the reach of each one of them.

**Endodontics is one of the areas of Dentistry that had the greatest technological advances in the last 20 years. In your opinion, which technological advance was crucial for the improvement of the quality of endodontic treatments?**

As I said before, the evolution of endodontic instruments has been a decisive mark of the advance of Endodontics. I spent a long time working with carbon steel files, facing challenges in terms of fractures and deviations of canal preparation. Therefore, I can say that today it is a lot easier to prepare a canal using the new instruments, but endodontists still have to be aware of some limitations.

**MTA is the material most studied and used in Endodontics. In your opinion, what was the greatest clinical contribution of MTA to Endodontics?**

This was another great advance of Endodontics. At the time it was introduced by Professor Torabinejad in a Brazilian Congress, coordinated by Professor Ilson Soares, in the city of Florianópolis, I had the opportunity to receive a considerable amount of this material and, together with my partner Alceu Berbert, started to use it. Those perforations that used to be indications for tooth extraction because of their size became treatable. From that point on, its application was extended to other situations, and its use was established in Endodontics.

**The number of graduate students in Master’s and Doctorate programs has been growing in the last years. What advice would you give to this new generation of professors, so that they have a successful career?**

Two important pieces of advice: modesty and knowledge. Modesty to recognize that, despite their Master’s or Doctorate degrees, there is a long way ahead, particularly in helping those that have not had the same opportunities; and knowledge because new information comes to us every day and, therefore, the truth of today may not exist tomorrow. We have to recognize our limitations and try to overcome them, in a constant search for updated knowledge – which is a lot easier today because of the access in the Internet.

Young people, you have the responsibility to keep our Dentistry at the stage it is and preserve its good name out of Brazil.

I thank you very much for thinking of my name for this interview, and I wish all our young colleagues a lot of success in their careers. It is a very beautiful and challenging career, and it fills us with satisfaction. Lend a hand to living organisms, and they will reward us with wonderful results.