

# The joy of reading, the effort to get information and the wish to educate oneself

Marian-Vladimir Constantinescu  
DDS, PhD, Professor  
Editor-in-Chief



Dear Readers,

Confucius said: "By nature, men are nearly alike; by practice, they get to be wide apart".

In the socialist countries beyond the Iron Curtain, the communist education system stated that it was compulsory to attend ten grades, since in this way people were easier to control as Henry Peter Brougham said: "Education makes a people easy to lead, but difficult to drive; easy to government, but impossible to enslave".

Problems arose when one started to look, in the specialized libraries, for information, references and the necessary documentation to write a graduation paper or a doctoral degree. If you were lucky you were likely to find some magazines or books, but not during the last years of that utopian regime in Romania, a regime which was an economic failure and which, moving towards its end, had come to the conclusion that education is expensive, therefore would invariably guide us towards ignorance.

Index Medicus allowed you to get information on the existing citations about the subject that you had selected. To add to your documentation you could go to the American Library where you could borrow books coming from the very libraries of the American universities. Moreover, upon request, I managed to receive a series of videotapes from the University of Michigan on modeling in wax and clinical and instrumental occlusal analysis. These videotapes were presented in a scientific session for the faculty teaching staff and practitioners in Bucharest.

Also in order to supplement your documentation you could contact the author asking him to send you some reprints. If you did that, and also if you were a patron of the American Library, you would be targeted by the secret services because you had relations with foreigners and you had to suffer the consequences as I had to.

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world", said Nelson Mandela. Perhaps for this reason access to training courses by renowned foreign specialists was practically impossible. Exceptionally, we managed to invite Prof. Jean Romerowski, dental anatomy professor at the University Paris VII as a participant in a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) assistance program. So, for a week, Prof. Romerowski initiated us into the occlusal analysis methodology at the Clinic for Dental Prosthetics in Bucharest. Also as part of that UNDP assistance program we managed to equip the first metal-ceramic laboratory and together with Prof. Lucian Ene we managed to take part in the congresses organized by the International Academy of Gnathology - European Section, in Paris and Lausanne. While attending these congresses I met the famous Dr. Paul B. Feinmann from Geneva, President of these scientific events and personal dentist of several film celebrities. He was so generous as to keep me updated on the latest developments related to dental occlusion.

"The goal of education is the advancement of knowledge and the dissemination of truth" said the late president John F. Kennedy. The evolution of knowledge after the fall of the Berlin Wall and implicitly of all the communist regimes that slavishly followed the Kremlin ideology involves other issues as

well. These countries were faced with Benjamin Disraeli's statement: "Upon the education of the people of this country, the fate of this country depends". Now access to databases on the Internet is unprecedented, unlimited. You must have acquired the research methodology and have the ability to select your bibliographic sources. Difficulties occurred when you wanted to read a treatise which could cost as much as your monthly salary paid by the state, as a practitioner or educator; when you wanted to participate in some congress or hands-on refresher course.

Initially, there were problems with getting your visa, then there came the costs of airfare, hotel accommodation and the participation fee. Even if some professional societies or associations would exempt their colleagues from the former communist countries from the payment of the participation fee or asked for a lower fee, such as a student or pensioner fee, the financial burden of participating in a congress in Europe was felt for over half a year.

We found ourselves in the position of inviting the great professionals and professors of dentistry to our country. The Romanian Society of Stomatology, founded in 1923, organized the FDI World Congress in Bucharest in 1970. During this event a decision was adopted to introduce the FDI tooth notation system. The Romanian Society of Stomatology extended invitations to a number of professionals to deliver conferences during this event to. Here are some of those who generously accepted to do it: Dr. Paul B. Feinmann from Geneva, prof. Sami Sandhaus from Lausanne, prof. Julian B Woelfel from Ohio University, CO, USA and others as well.

During the Dracula Tour I managed to strike a close friendship with Prof. Woelfel and his family. So, Prof. Dumitru David and myself are privileged to receive from Prof. Woelfel a presentation copy of each and every edition of his remarkable treatise on Dental Anatomy. To my surprise I have recently received an advanced copy of Woelfel's Dental Anatomy - ninth edition to be issued in 2017 by Wolters Kluwer Publisher!

At first our associations could only cover the accommodation costs as well the social program. Then we also started covering economy class plane tickets. There were exceptional circumstances when some lecturers asked for 10,000 euro for a one-day lecture and a hands-on event and some professional associations managed to meet their request.

Indeed "Education is the best provision for the journey to old age." as Aristotle said. This may be the reason why the EU has adopted a program of lifelong learning (LLP). The objective of this EU program is to contribute by promoting lifelong learning, to the development of the EU as an advanced knowledge society with sustainable economic growth with more jobs and greater social cohesion.

LLP is a challenge for our prestigious journal editors to be actively involved in raising awareness and educate our readers so they can continuously improve their quality of care.

Sincerely yours,  
M-V Constantinescu  
Editor-in-Chief

[https://doi.org/10.25241/stomaeduj.2016.3\(3-4\).edit.3](https://doi.org/10.25241/stomaeduj.2016.3(3-4).edit.3)