

## IN MEMORIAM

**PROF. DR. ERMINIO CARIATI**  
**“Italian Pioneer of Modern Lymphology and Lymphatic Surgery”**  
**February 28, 1934 - July 20, 2019**



*Prof. Cariati (center) at 7th ISL Congress in Florence, Italy in 1979*

Although Prof. Erminio Cariati is no longer physically with us, his invaluable heritage remains with us forever, above all, for having conceived the new translational and interdisciplinary role of Lymphology and of Lymphatic Surgery in General and Specialistic Surgical Fields.

Ingenious, innovative, and an enormously technically skilled surgeon, Prof. Cariati represented throughout his long scientific-clinical career, a constant landmark for his pupils, both direct and indirect, within the great School of his Mentor, Prof. Egidio Tosatti, including the undersigned, who had the high honor and privilege of working with him for so many years.

The acme of his meritorious national, European and international success can be summed up in two main peaks, represented by the completion of his "Magna Opera" Treatise with the title "La Linfostasi e la Patologia del Dotto Toracico / Lymphostasis and Thoracic



*Fig. 2. Prof. Cariati in his latter years at Riva Trigoso (Ligurian Coast)*

Duct Pathology" (Ed. Piccin, Padova, Italy 1978), and by his enlightened Presidency, in September 1979 in Florence, of the 7th International Congress of the International Society of Lymphology, that marked a turning-point in the history of the Congresses of our beloved ISL Society.

Prof. Cariati was also a Member of the ISL Executive Committee and of the Editorial Board of Lymphology, Founder and Chairman of the European Academy of Lymphology.

He was also a passionate Art lover and, above all, of painting: in his rare moments of free time from work, he himself loved to paint with an absolutely original and naturalistic chromatic style.

Prof. Cariati was particularly distinguished by his great human qualities, such as loyalty to friends, self-denial, and absolute respect for familial traditions, as well as the ability to maintain always his patients in the center of his affections!

"We will always remember you, dear Professor Cariati, above all in the most elated moments shared in scientific and research activity, and especially in the operating theatre!"

**Prof. Corradino Campisi**  
**MD, PhD, FACS, MD H.C., Prof. H.C.**  
**Co-Chairman of the ISL Past-Presidents**  
**Advisory Board**  
**Co-Editor of Lymphology**  
**Chairman of the Italian and**  
**Latin-Mediterranean Chapters of ISL**

**President of the XVIII ISL Congress of**  
**Lymphology, Genoa, Italy - September 2001**  
**Full Professor of General Surgery / Lymphatic**  
**Surgery and Microsurgery**  
**Department of Surgery**  
**School of Medical Sciences and Pharmaceutics**  
**University of Genoa, Italy**

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Fig. 3. Dr. Cariati pictured with his mentor Prof. Egidio Tosatti (center) and his colleague Dr. Corradino Campisi

Unfortunately Professor Erminio Cariati left us on the July 20, 2019, in Genoa san Martino Hospital where he worked for 45 years until, 15 years ago, a major left sided haemorrhagic stroke left him with a severe hemiplegia. Erminio was born in a small town, Torano Castello (on February 28, 1934), near Cosenza in the South of Italy as the last of 13 sons. At that time infant mortality was high and only 5 (Clementina, Abramo, Maria, Francesco, and the last, Erminio) of 13 sons, survived to croup, other infections and malnutrition. The father Giuseppe decided to give a better future for them and send the three brothers to study school at the catholic San Demetrio Corone College near Cosenza and then to Medicine university; Francesco and Erminio went to Siena University. Erminio, in Siena met professor Egidio Tosatti, who belonged to the school

of Raffaele Paolucci from Valmaggione, heroes of the First World War as a sinker of the Viribus Unitis battleship in Pola. Under Professor Tosatti, Erminio began studies on the lymphatic system and started publishing several articles. In 1967, the Master Tosatti started to move from Siena to Genoa University and three pupils – Prior, Casaccia and Cariati – followed him. In Genoa, Erminio continued studies on the lymphatic system publishing several articles and the masterpiece Book "La Linfostasi" edited by Piccin Padua; moreover, he opened the School of Thoracic Surgery of Genoa, and in 1979, he organized as President, the 7th International Congress of Lymphology in Florence; in the same years, he won the roles of Associate Professor in General Surgery and then of Ordinary Professor in General Surgery at Genoa University. During the

years, he followed the transition of lymphatic surgery from excision surgery to lymph-venous anastomosis stressing the antigravitational role of lymph nodes in lymphatics and chylous reflux (chyloedema, chylous ascites and chylothorax), and the different functions and roles of the lymphatic system also in neoplastic diseases (1-25); finally, he passed the baton of lymphatic surgery to Professors Campisi and Boccardo. During the last years of life, despite disease, he continued to follow patients that had been successfully operated on in the past for chylous and lymphatic disease and who developed with him a true friendship.

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