

Testimony about Jacob Palis,

Charles Favre

Jacob Palis has long been an impressive tutelary figure to me, primarily for his very influential work and his far-reaching conjectures in dynamical systems, but also for being the head of the internationally reknown institute IMPA in Rio, where I would always see him surrounded by a TV crew filming him explaining the importance to support mathematics with desarming ease and joy.

I started to work with him through the brazilian-french network in mathematics (RFBM) when I took the head of its french structure in 2015 while he was the head of its brazilian side.

Jacob Palis has always played a prominent role in the development of the mathematical relationships between our two countries. As the director of the IMPA, he maintained close contacts with the french embassy until the end of the 90's, allowing numerous brilliant young french researchers to replace their military service by a two years *scientific* visit to Rio: E. Ghys, J.-C. Yoccoz, C. Bonatti, or E. Ullmo to cite a few have benefited from this program.

Then Jacob worked hard with H. Rosenberg to put the RFBM in place so that collaboration projects between researchers from both countries could be funded more easily.

A couple of years ago, while the funding of the network was under threat and while the negotiations both from the french and brazilian sides were still on a bumpy road, Jacob invited me to his office to discuss these delicate issues. I was sitting in one of his comfortable chair, surrounded by framed pictures of him in company with the greatest mathematicians of our time or with famous international politician leaders. I informed him about my worries that the network could stop working soon. Thirty minutes later, after one phone call and an intense discussion, yet Jacob remaining perfectly calm and self-assured, the brazilian funding was confirmed. I left his office relieved almost by magic, and the network was put back on good tracks. That was a very efficient meeting indeed!

His constant dedication to strengthen the scientific bonds between Brazil and France have payed off far beyond expectation. A concrete proof of this fact is the recent success of the first joint meeting Brazil-France in Mathematics that was held in July 2019 in Rio and attracted over 250 mathematicians from both countries.

Jacob has contributed to the mathematical collaboration between Brazil and France for many years. He made it a success story, and we owe him a lot for that.