IN MEMORIAM

Professor emeritus Pierre Bodart
1923-2012

"Un grand maître, un grand patron nous quitte..."1

Professor Bodart passed away unexpectedly in the evening of June, 27th 2012 after a peaceful day spent with his wife, Edith.

Pierre Bodart was a master radiologist with great professional skills, a brilliant teacher, a charismatic and passionate leader, and an idealist.

Over four decades in the second half of the last century he was highly instrumental in the exponential development of Radiology in the hospitals, clinics, and medical faculty of the Université Catholique de Louvain² and developed a great influence in the radiological community of his country. Internationally, he made major contributions to the development of gastrointestinal and abdominal radiology.

During his career he remained committed to solid principles: deep respect of the patient and pursuit of excellence. He was a great defender of radiology as a specialty, and fought to prevent it from becoming a technical commodity. He did so by promoting the clinical dimension of his field, and by promoting the development of radiological sub-specialties. As a professor emeritus he remained involved in the social events of his department and faculty and devoted the rest of his time to his wife, family, friends, and to playing the piano.

Pierre was born in December 1923 in Temploux, North of Namur, where he was educated at Collège Notre Dame de la Paix. In 1951, he brilliantly graduated in medicine, surgery and obstetrics from the Université Catholique de Louvain and specialized first in Internal Medicine before engaging in the field of Radiology at the same university.

After his accreditation as a radiologist in 1959, he started in Namur a joint private practice with Charles Dive, his friend and colleague gastroenterologist. In 1960 he became head of the radiological department of the Clinique Universitaire St Joseph in Herent and consultant at the Universitaire Kliniek Sint-Barbara in Pellenberg. In a favorable medical environment he acquired a renowned experience in gastrointestinal radiology, particularly in Crohn's disease, with many publications in international journals, such as Archives des Maladies de l'Appareil Digestif and American Journal of Digestive Diseases. In Herent he started to organize his department with a team of sub-specialized radiologists and was subsequently promoted lecturer at the UCLouvain in 1964 and associate professor in 1966.

At the time, he was also very involved in a mixed group of gastroenterologists, digestive surgeons and fellow radiologists, which met on Sunday mornings at the Maison des Médecins in Brussels.

Promoted Professor of Radiology and Chairman of the department of Radiology of Hôpital Saint Pierre in Leuven in 1968, he further developed subspecialties in his department, notably in gastrointestinal, bone and joints, urogenital, pediatric as well as vascular radiology.

Subsequently in 1977, after the medical staff and faculty of UCLouvain moved to the Cliniques Universitaires St Luc in Brussels, he centralized all of the radiological activities in one single department and secured the acquisition of a broad range of new technical equipment including US and CT imagers. This new department later obtained the status of an academic and clinical department of Radiology and Medical Imaging.

Pierre Bodart provided his undergraduate students with remarkable teaching based on correlations with anatomy and pathology. His brilliant communication skills and charisma inspired many of those who attended his lectures to specialize in Radiology. The postgraduate training programme provided by his staff under his supervision gave his residents the opportunity to acquire a robust practical and theoretical expertise in the field of Radiology.

Since 1960 Pierre Bodart has been a regular member of the Royal Belgian Society of Radiology. He was elected member of the Board from 1977 to 1979 and served as president in 1978, organizing a very successful annual General Assembly on bone pathology.

He was made honorary member of the RBRS in 1981. From 1974 until his retirement, he sustained the Belgian Journal of Radiology (JBR-BTR) by hosting the editorial office in his department. Between 1983 and 2000, he was president of the French-speaking accreditation board in radiodiagnosis.

He received the Paul de Backer 1979-1981 prize of the Royal Belgian Academy of Medicine for his coauthorship in the reference textbook “Alimentary Tract Radiology” for a chapter on Inflammatory Diseases of the Small Bowel. In 1995, Professor Bodart delivered an invited lecture before the two Royal Belgian Academies for the commemoration of the centenary of the discovery of X-Rays by W.C. Röntgen.

He was also a regular member of the Royal Belgian Society of Gastroenterology, which he presided in 1980. He was a member of the association of the Belgian Museum of Radiology. He sustained the foundation and the activities of alumni of the department of Radiology at UCLouvain, of which he was nominated the honorary president.

During his career, Professor Bodart gained respect and admiration from his many fellow radiologists and colleagues. After becoming Professor emeritus in 1989, he maintained and even developed his charming, friendly and witty character. His many jokes, which he told with boisterous humor, often made his friends and the teller himself laugh uncontrollably.

President De Wispelaere and the members of the Board of the RBRS join the numerous friends and colleagues, former students and residents, as well as acquaintances in presenting deep condolences to his wife Edith, his sons Alain et Patrick, and the other members of his family. We will all miss this great radiologist and great personality, but his legacy remains and will be remembered.

Jacques Pringot and Baudouin Maldague,
Professors emeriti of Radiology, UCLouvain