

Introduction

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Since the inception of his all brilliant medical career, Jean-Bernard Otte has always had a particular interest in liver transplantation. This interest has been concretized early by a research fellowship of the Belgo-American Education Foundation, during his third year surgical residency with Professor Thomas E. Starzl at the University of Colorado in Denver.

After early attempts with professor P.J. Kestens in 1969 and 1971, the liver transplant program at the Cliniques Universitaires Saint-Luc in Brussels was launched in 1983 under the leadership of Jean-Bernard Otte.

The particularity of this program lies in the fact that pediatric and adult liver transplant activities are almost equally present. This particularity was at the basis of the development of innovative techniques in liver transplantation such as reduced size, split liver and living related liver transplantation.

All these developments would not have achieved their actual, world known, level without the scientific curiosity, tenacity and endurance of its program director.

Moreover clinical activities not only led to seminal important publications in the field of transplantation but

also to the development of numerous officialized collaborations with many centers, in and outside of Europe.

More than 100 physicians and surgeons throughout the world have been trained at the liver transplant program of our hospital.

In order to pay a tribute to Jean-Bernard Otte, prestigious guests from throughout the world have been brought together in order to update our knowledge not only in the field of liver transplantatin but also in the future fields of hepatology such as the use of bio-artificial liver, hepatocyte transplantation and genetic engineering. These new fields are all direct or indirect consequences of the "medico-surgical movement" initiated in 1963 by T.E. Starzl. We warmly thank our invited speakers. The formidable evolution of postmortem and living related liver transplantation has given rise to ethical issues which will also be addressed in this symposium. This symposium has been held under the auspices of the European Society of Organ Transplantation and the European Liver Transplant Association (ELTA), section of ESOT.