

OBITUARY

Raymond Vanbreuseghem 1909–1993

Raymond Vanbreuseghem, born on 21 December 1909 in Monceau sur Sambre, died on 27 November 1993 in Brussels.

Raymond Vanbreuseghem was one of the most impressive personalities in medical mycology. He graduated 1934 as Doctor of Medicine at the University of Liège and specialized in tropical medicine in Antwerp. From 1935 to 1946 he worked in the former Belgian Congo dealing mainly with leprosy and in these early years, he was already working on dermatophytes. Back in Europe in 1946 encouraged by experts such as A. Dubois in Antwerp and N. Langeron in Paris, his interest turned to dermatology and medical mycology.

R. Vanbreuseghem built up a service of medical mycology at the Prince Leopold Institute for Tropical Medicine in Antwerp incorporating a group of distinguished disciples, and created a reputed annual specialized course in human and veterinary mycology which still continues. As a professor at the University of Brussels he also headed the laboratory of parasitology and taught in the faculties of medicine, pharmacology and science. His research activities were focussed on dermatophytes and their taxonomy, physiology, ecology and sexuality which was summarized in an international symposium organized in 1981 in Antwerp. His other pioneering work included the discovery of *Histoplasma capsulatum* var. *duboisii* and he was also responsible for clearing up African histoplasmosis. In medical mycology he could turn his hand to anything: more than 350 publications, reviews, monographs and books are evidence of his scientific genius, his competence and his hard work; numerous mycological studies were originated and encouraged by his perspectives and

ideas. Due to his experience and knowledge he was a most competent and critical panel member in congress discussions; his demand for precision was exemplary.

R. Vanbreuseghem has deserved well of the foundation and early development of the International Society for Human and Animal Mycology, ISHAM. He was the first to serve as its General Secretary (1954–1968) and was President during the office period 1969–1972. Likewise, he was prominently active in the foundation of *Sabouraudia*, the official journal of ISHAM, now *Journal of Medical and Veterinary Mycology*, in 1960, the first journal exclusively dealing with medical mycology.

R. Vanbreuseghem was a member or honorary member of more than 25 national and international scientific societies, participating actively in many scientific meetings all over the world. He received numerous distinctions and was appointed Doctor honoris causa of the University of Montpellier, France. He was a member of the Belgian Académie Royale de Médecine and served as General Secretary and President of the Belgian Académie des Sciences d'Outre-Mer.

For three decades R. Vanbreuseghem acted as a Member of the Advisory Board of this journal which published a considerable number of studies written or originated by him.

The community of medical mycologists worldwide has lost one of its most remarkable members, an impressive personality, 'a missionary of medical mycology', as Ainsworth called him 1986, and he will be unforgettable to everybody who had the good fortune to have been acquainted with him.

J. Müller