

LAUDATIO ETIENNE AERNOUDT

Jan Penning

It is a great honour and pleasure for me to introduce to you em. Prof. dr. ir. Etienne Aernoudt from the Catholic University of Leuven as a Sarton medallist for the academic year 2005 – 2006.

Etienne Aernoudt was born in Roeselare in 1938. In 1962 he graduated as a Metallurgical Engineer. In the same year he also obtained a degree in nuclear engineering.

Etienne Aernoudt started his professional career in 1964 as a responsible for the research about the deformability of metals in the Zwevegem plant of the Bekaert group. For the first two years of his professional career, Etienne Aernoudt was sent to the Rheinisch Westfälische Technische Hochschule (RWTH) in Aachen to perform doctoral research under Prof. H. Stüwe's guidance. In 1966 he obtained his PhD.

In 1967 Etienne Aernoudt was appointed as a part time professor at the Catholic University of Leuven. He became a full professor in 1974 and was charged with courses about Materials Science, Mechanical Metallurgy and History of Technology. He is professor emeritus since 2003.

His research efforts mainly dealt with topics as the deformation behaviour of metals, the recrystallisation behaviour and the texture development in metals, shape memory alloys, high strength deep drawable steels, electrical steels, composite materials and biomedical materials.

Prof. Aernoudt guided twenty doctoral theses and he is author of more than 220 papers. Among them there is a recent book entitled: *Materialen maken Geschiedenis* (Materials make History).

Prof. Aernoudt undertook different initiatives to improve the collaboration between the Belgian universities, between the Leuven University and developing countries and between university and industry. As such there has been an intensive collaboration between the metallurgical departments of Ghent and Leuven and Sidmar (now member of the Arcelor group) within the Institute for the Encouragement of Scientific Research in the Industry and Agriculture (IWONL). There was also collaboration between the materials science departments of the universities of Ghent, Leuven, and Louvain-la-Neuve and several research groups within the Free

University of Brussels in the framework of the university attraction poles (IUAP) action of the Belgian federal government.

Professor Aernoudt's work was often honoured. He was twice holder of a Francqui chair, among which at the Engineering Faculty of the Ghent University in the academic year 1995-1996.

Prof. Aernoudt was dean of the engineering faculty of the Catholic University of Leuven for six years and chairman of the Department of Metallurgy and Materials Engineering of this university for eight years.

Dear colleague Aernoudt, many times already I had the pleasure to enjoy your big passion for the history of metallurgy and of materials science. On behalf of the University of Ghent, its Engineering Faculty and the Sarton committee, I wish to thank you for the efforts you have been doing to introduce students and many others to the history of materials and to demonstrate how materials improved life of mankind from the very first moment of their use.

