

Opinion Article / Artigo de Opinião

## If it Were Today, Would Eduardo Be an Interventional Radiologist?

*Se Fosse Hoje, o Eduardo Seria Radiologista de Intervenção?*

Tiago Bilhim, Filipe Veloso Gomes, Élia Coimbra

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Interventional Radiology Unit, Curry Cabral Hospital, University Center Hospital of Central Lisbon, Portugal

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This perhaps audacious title will probably be as provocative as: “If it were today, would Eduardo be a member of Benfica Club?” We speak, of course, of Prof. Dr. Eduardo Barroso, Director of the Surgery Area of the University Hospital Center of Central Lisbon (CHULC), who retired last month. He is a nationally and internationally renowned surgeon, with proven experience, being a reference in the field of hepatic-biliary-pancreatic surgery and transplantation. He has chaired the Portuguese Society of General Surgery and the European Surgical Association, elected by his peers. He would hardly give up his professional passion for ours, but when we admire someone we try to project into the person all the qualities or virtues that stand out as the most positive. Both issues probably expose two of the great passions that move many of us: medicine and soccer; were we not Portuguese, the Land of Egas Moniz, Reynaldo dos Santos, Eusébio, Figo and of Cristiano Ronaldo. And the truth is that we hold both passions with the same conviction, whether it is science or faith-based. Which one to use in each of these aspects is our own’s choice, being natural that they move freely in a balance that is wanted to be both rational and emotional. This balance between emotionality and rationality, always based on deep medical knowledge and on a unique clinical sense, was one of the many characteristics that we learned to admire in Eduardo. The passion with which he discussed each clinical case as if it were the next of kin, even after more than 30 cancer patients had already been discussed in the multidisciplinary meetings that lasted 5 to 6 hours, are an example that is always marked in all those who worked with Eduardo. The multidisciplinary meetings, strongly encouraged by him for more than 20 years, lived with Eduardo and will surely continue to live, but with a different soul. Eduardo was one of the few leading surgeons at the national level who understood early on that multidisciplinary was essential to the success of a center of excellence in providing medical care. We are all aware that many of the surgical or medical-surgical specialties have a natural tendency to close themselves, oblivious to a multidisciplinary collaboration. It is simply human to follow the line of the least effort - it is easier. This approach naturally impoverishes the health care provided, often trying to assign valences or skills to caregivers without adequate training. For Eduardo it was always clear, from the beginning, that to create a Reference Center in hepato-bilio-pancreatic surgery and transplantation, it would take much more than doctors, much more than surgeons. All

medical personnel, in their different capacities: surgeons, radiologists, gastroenterologists, hepatologists, intensivists, internists, anatomists, pathologists, immunotherapists and oncologists were involved and embraced in a project much larger than any individuality or medical specialty. Within the non-medical staff, a comprehensive support network was also created with specialized and dedicated nursing, health technicians, psychologists and physiotherapists. Gathering all these human resources and streamlining the machine to work smoothly has been and is probably even more of a challenge than we can try to imagine. Not seldom did Eduardo correct someone who presented a clinical case as “my patient” to “a patient followed in the hepatic-biliary-pancreatic and transplantation center.” Even more grammatically complex; this paradigm shift defines the root of the Multidisciplinary Reference Centers.

As Interventional Radiologists of intervention, we cannot fail to praise the value that Eduardo gave to this medical subspecialty. The term used may come as a surprise, since it is not (yet?) officially a medical subspecialty; but we are confident that the proposal that the Interventional Radiology Section and the SPRMN Board have submitted to the College of Radiology Specialty of the Medical Association this year will be embraced and cherished until its official implementation. So we wish for future Interventional Radiologists! Eduardo was responsible for the existence of an ordinance in *Diário da República* in which the existence of Interventional Radiology is defined as essential to create a surgical reference center, Portaria nº 194/2014 of September 30, which establishes the concept and defines the certification process of the National Reference Centers for the provision of health care. So other medical and surgical specialties had done so and surely the national medical panorama would be very different. Unfortunately, Radiologists have rarely defended as much the work of Interventional Radiology as some of their fellow Surgeons. Eduardo was the best example of that unconditional support. For all his support, dissemination and implementation of the Interventional Radiology in the University Hospital Center of Central Lisbon (CHULC) and more indirectly in the other National Hospital Centers, the Merit Diploma of the Portuguese Society of Radiology and Nuclear Medicine (SPRMN) has been attributed by the Chairman of the Board, Prof. Doctor Filipe Caseiro Alves, on December 8th at the headquarters of the Medical Association in Lisbon (Figure 1).



**Fig. 1** – Merit Diploma from the Portuguese Society of Radiology and Nuclear Medicine (SPRMN) attributed to Prof. Doctor Eduardo Barroso by the President of the Board, Prof. Doctor Filipe Caseiro Alves.

Eduardo's institutional support was essential for the creation of the CHULC Interventional Radiology Unit (Figure 2). He left us equipped with one of the best angiographs in Europe, combining a C-arm angiography with a CT instrument and a state-of-the-art ultrasound. But above all, he leaves a team of doctors and non-physicians who respect themselves and learned to work together, a cohesive team that has everything to take their Unit and CHULC further, in favor of good medical practices in Portugal and in the valorization of the National Health Care System.

Interventional Radiology is nowadays a subspecialty very similar to the specialty of General Surgery: generalist, but with an increasing need for subspecialization; of



**Fig. 2** – Photograph of celebration of the start of the new angiography room of the Interventional Radiology Unit (URI) of Curry Cabral Hospital, University Hospital Center of Central Lisbon (CHULC). The CHULC Interventional Radiology team and the Directors of the Surgical Area: from left to right, Dr. Nuno Vasco Costa, Prof. Doctor Tiago Bilhim, Prof. Doctor Eduardo Barroso, Dr. Élia Coimbra (Coordinator of the URI of CHULC), Dr. Filipe Veloso Gomes, Dr. Américo Martins and Dr. José Hugo Luz.

intervention, without scalpel; focused on the clinical treatment of patients in a multidisciplinary context, but coming from the image. For that reason, if it were today, it would even be possible for Eduardo to be an Interventional Radiologist, but ... to belong to Benfica Club, never!

For everything that Eduardo did in favor of Medicine and for creating the conditions to maintain and grow his beloved Reference Centers, thank you very much, Eduardo!