



In memoriam Wolfgang Thoenes

Wolfgang Thoenes died on 3 March 1992 after a fatal illness that he succeeded in staving off for so long with the same admirable strength of character and energy that he devoted to everything he undertook. Our journal has lost a Managing Editor who was tireless in representing the interests of cell-biology-oriented pathology.

Wolfgang Thoenes was born in Cologne in 1929. He went to school in Magdeburg, where his experience in connection with the developments in East Germany in the early post-war years left a deep impression. He studied medicine in Mainz and by the age of 24 had already graduated and qualified as a physician. Initially he worked in pathology under M. Nordmann (Hannover) and then received 4 years of training in internal medicine under H. Plügge (Heidelberg). The instruction he received subsequently from H. Ruska (Düsseldorf), the pioneer of biology-oriented electron microscopy, proved to be a kind of crossroad in his career. In 1960 he moved to the Institute of Pathology in Würzburg, where he joined H.-W. Altmann's group; it was here that he founded an internationally recognized working group on electron microscopy. In 1970 he became Full Professor of Cytobiology and Cytopathology at the University of Marburg and in 1974 he received a call from the University of Mainz, where he took over the Chair of General Pathology and Pathological Anatomy.

The fact that it had become possible to justify Virchow's *Cellularpathologie* by means of the findings of electron microscopy was of fundamental importance to Wolfgang Thoenes. The scientific impetus he was able to give, as well as his capacity for making a subject "attractive", provided the basis for an era of productive work at the Department of Pathology in Mainz. As well as being able to inspire his colleagues, he himself could be filled with inspiration and enthusiasm. Work was not only performed in his own special field of interest, renal pathology (most recently, the classification and histogenesis of renal tumours), but he and his colleagues also made significant contributions in such multi-disciplinary subjects as tumour invasion, cytokeratin research, amyloidosis and viral infections of the liver, to mention just a few.

Wolfgang Thoenes steadfastly pleaded for an ever closer interaction between clinically relevant pathology and its theoretical foundations in cell biology, and he achieved a great deal. His death represents a great loss for the field of pathology and for our journal.