

***In honour of Karl Lennert  
on the occasion of his 65th birthday***



On the 4th of June, 1986, Professor Karl Lennert, Director of the Institute of Pathology of Christian-Albrechts University in Kiel, celebrates his 65th birthday. His students welcome this opportunity to express their gratitude and best wishes for the future.

Born in the Bavarian city of Fürth, where he attended school, Karl Lennert completed his medical studies and spent the first five years of his training in pathology at the University of Erlangen. Following a year at the Max Planck Institute for Biochemistry in Göttingen, he joined Professor Arnold Lauche in 1951 at the Institute of Pathology at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt. There he habilitated in 1952 with a work on lymphogranulomatosis. Lymph node pathology has remained his main field of research ever since. The eldest of the authors has known Karl Lennert for 30 years, ever since his days as a student in Frankfurt, sedulously engaged in karyometric measurements of lymph node cells under his guidance. At that time Karl Lennert was absorbed in the writing of the first volume of the "Handbook" on the cytology of the lymph node and on lymphadenitis. Many pathologists would have appreciated a comparably comprehensive treatise on the malignant lymphomas at that time. But Karl Lennert knew

that too many gaps still existed for a definitive evaluation – and the simple collation of known data has never been his forte.

With a natural aptitude for selecting the right methods and inspiring talented co-workers, he began work while still at Frankfurt with his students L-D. Leder, H. Löffler and H.C.F.W. Schubert on the enzyme histochemical labelling of lymph node, blood and bone marrow cells. The result was a wealth of information essential to the fundamentals of hematopathology.

In 1960 he became deputy director of the Institute of Pathology of the University of Heidelberg. One year later, following the death of Edmund Randerath, he was appointed provisional director under the critical scrutiny of the seniors. His excellent work brought him the prestigious directorship of the Institute of Pathology in Kiel. No sooner had he settled in than he founded the first diagnostic registry in the Federal Republic of Germany as a consultative tool in the diagnosis of problem cases. Today, the lymph node registry in Kiel encompasses over 100,000 cases of lymph node diseases, meticulously collated with morphologic, ultrastructural, enzyme histochemical, immunologic and since recently, also molecular genetic data. This unique collection of cases underlines the confidence it enjoys among specialists in the field. The subsequent research culminated in 1972 in the formulation of the “Kiel classification” of non-Hodgkin lymphomas, based on a synthesis of cytological and immunobiological features of the lymphoid system. Now it was time, with the backing of a group of expert clinical oncologists led by Professors Stacher and Brittinger and assisted by his students, for him to begin the second volume of the “Handbook” on non-Hodgkin lymphomas.

Those who have visited the Institute in Kiel know that lymph node pathology is not Karl Lennert’s only field of interest. From the early days of his academic carrier, he has investigated various histological aspects of bone marrow diagnosis and promoted extensive research work on the monocyte/macrophage system, basophils, tissue mast cells and the spleen. Young students entering the service are assigned a specific topic – mostly a single cell or a part of it – to work on, joining one of the research teams of the department, which now numbers over 118 members. Despite his in-depth work in hematopathology, his command of pathology is comprehensive. He was among the first to establish independent departments of cytopathology and pediatric pathology.

For his work he has received numerous honors. He has served as president of a number of medical societies. He has received an honorary doctorate from the University of Gent and been awarded the Wilhelm Warner Prize, Ernst Jung Prize, the Schleiden medal of the Leopoldina, of which he holds the senator degree, the Ludwig Aschoff medal of the University of Freiburg, and the Roentgen Prize. He is an honorary or corresponding member of numerous national and international societies. But his greatest contribution to education has been the training of academic pathologists. What he values most is the knowledge that six of his former students have become directors of university departments, while others are the heads of important pathology sections at county hospitals. A large number of his foreign students are scattered around the world, including some in China. Indeed, his close relationship to Japanese pathology invites a comparison with the work of Ludwig Aschoff. In that country alone there are at present five professors that have been trained by Dr. Lennert.

On a day like this, only a few can, like Karl Lennert, take stock and find that life so far has been satisfactory and indeed blessed. We, his students and friends, wish him happiness, health and creative power for the years ahead.

On behalf of his pupils and friends: *R. Parwaresch W. Remmele H.J. Stutte*

On behalf of the editorial board and the publisher: *C.L. Berry G. Seifert H. Götze*