

EDITORIAL

In honour of Wilhelm Doerr on the occasion of his 80th birthday

*Das schönste Glück des denkenden Menschen ist,
das Erforschliche erforscht zu haben
und das Unerforschliche ruhig zu verehren
Goethe, Maximen und Reflexionen*



On August 25th, 1994 Wilhelm-Doerr – Emeritus Professor of General Pathology and Pathological Anatomy, former head of the Institute of Pathology at the University of Heidelberg – will celebrate his 80th birthday.

Wilhelm Doerr is an encyclopaedic specialist in Pathology, but is, in every sense, a man of the University. His association with Virchows Archiv goes back over six decades; he was 24 years old when the first of his papers were published in the Journal in 1938. He has since published almost 30 more and has served on the Editorial Board and as a Managing Editor.

The scientific work of Wilhelm Doerr is both impressive and outstanding because of its internal coherence and his consequent striving to classify and bring together, in the widest sense, the results of morphological research and the functional characteristics of disease in a general medical, pathological, and anthropological way. One can say his work deals with the “thematic classification of living structures”. This wide spectrum of work established its fundamentals in the pathology of the cardio-vascular system. He has over 300 publications, showing the variety of his scientific endeavour. Two characteristics should be emphasized, the love of the importance of every individual case and the analysis of the individual disease follow-up, and an open mind to scientific questions.

Outside pathology, Wilhelm Doerr was Dean of the Medical Faculty, special representative of the University for the German Cancer Research Centre, founding representative of the universities and faculties in Lubeck, Ulm, Mannheim, publisher of the multi-volume publication of the 600 year Anniversary of the Ruperto Carola. These activities are not without public recognition, he holds honorary doctorates of numerous universities, is a member of “Leopoldina zu Halle”, the Heidelberg Academy of Science, and is an honorary member of the German Society of Internal Medicine. Wilhelm Doerr is also a prize-holder of the Paracelsus-Medaille of German physicians, the Ernst-von-Bergmann-Plakette of the German Association of Physicians, the Virchow-Medaille of the German Society of Pathology, the Auenbrugger-Medaille of the University of Graz, and the Verdienstmedaille des Landes Baden-Württemberg.

For Wilhelm Doerr work was always done to help others, as a benefit for mankind. The world of thoughts and thinking and of doing good deeds was an inalienable necessity for him. Everyone who know Wilhelm Doerr, those who meet him and were influenced by him, wish him health and joy in living on his 80th birthday.

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