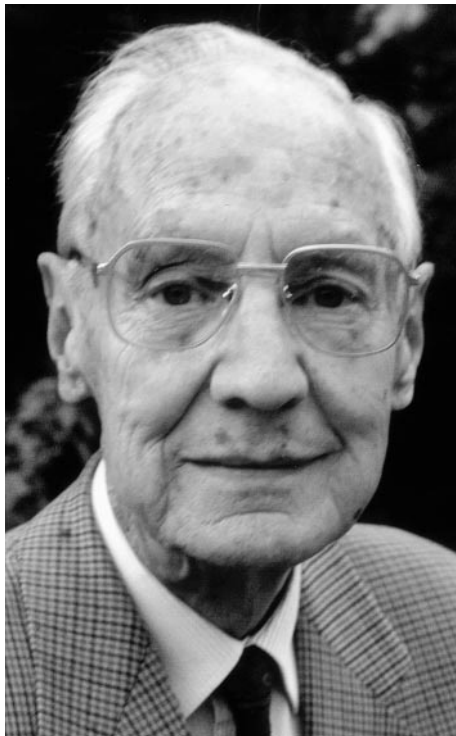


OBITUARY

Philipp U. Heitz

Christoph E. Hedinger**President of the European Society of Pathology 1980–1981**

Christoph Hedinger, Emeritus Professor of Pathology and Chairman of the Department of Pathology of the University of Zurich from 1970 to 1987 died on 12 January 1999 after a short illness.

Christoph Hedinger was a brilliant pathologist and physician, teacher and researcher. Despite his many commitments he was able to indulge his enthusiasms for paintings and sculptures and for mountaineering.

From 12–14 November 1998 he attended the Annual Meeting of the Swiss Society of Pathology; as usual, he was well informed on important events in medicine and in pathology. In addition, he was a witty, brilliant and charming companion at dinner. Shortly after this meeting his severe illness manifested itself – he fought cou-

rageously against it with the force of his strong personality.

He was born on 5 February 1917; his parents were a pathologist and an ophthalmologist. He was the youngest of three children and was educated in Zurich and St. Gallen, Switzerland. He studied medicine at the universities of Geneva, Switzerland, Berlin, Germany, and Zurich, Switzerland. He then worked from 1941 to 1944 with Erwin Uehlinger at the Institute of Pathology in St. Gallen and subsequently from 1944 to 1950 with Albert Schüpbach at the University of Bern, where he specialised in internal medicine.

Christoph Hedinger worked with Hanns von Meyenburg in the Department of Pathology at the University of Zurich from 1950 to 1953 and continued working there with Erwin Uehlinger from 1953 to 1956. He then spent a sabbatical in the Department of Pathology at the University of California in San Francisco with H.D. Moon, working in the Division of Electron Microscopy.

On returning home, he embarked on a brilliant career. He was first appointed Head of the newly founded Institute of Pathology in Winterthur, Switzerland, in November 1958. In November 1959 he was appointed Assistant Professor, and in October 1965 Associate Professor of Pathology at the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Zurich.

He was then appointed to the Chairmanship and Full Professorship of Pathology of the Institute of Pathology of the University of Lausanne, Switzerland in 1966. He always thought fondly of his times in Winterthur and in Lausanne, describing them as a very happy period of his life. Despite his preference for the French civilisation and charm, he accepted the nomination as Full Professor of Pathology and as the Chairman of the Department of Pathology at the University of Zurich in 1970. He realised – together with Jacques R. Rüttner and Gerhard Zbinden – a concept of a Department of Pathology amalgamating the previously existing two institutes and integrating a Division of Experimental Pathology, which was the basis for the subsequent successes of this institution.

Christoph Hedinger was a brilliant surgical pathologist and a researcher. He was an expert in the pathology of the male genitalia, of the thyroid and of the neuroendocrine system. Together with T. Isler he published a sem-

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inal observation in 1952 and 1953, entitled “Metastasierende Dünndarmkarzinoide, Tricuspidalklappenveränderungen und Pulmonalstenose – ein neues Syndrom”. This was the first thorough description of the carcinoid syndrome and its specific lesions in the heart. He was a recognised expert on the pathology of thyroid tumours, being the editor of two “blue books” (WHO), published in 1974 and 1988, on the “*Histological Typing of Thyroid Tumours*”.

Christoph Hedinger was admired as a teacher, being able to come to the point swiftly and clearly, even when discussing complex interrelationships of mechanisms of disease. He fostered the founding, construction and organisation of new institutes of pathology. The activities of these institutes in Chur, Münsterlingen and Zurich contribute to the high standard of pathology in Eastern Switzerland.

His major contributions to medical administration resulted in honours from several institutions. He was the Editor in Chief of the “*Schweizerische Medizinische Wochenschrift*” from 1953 to 1974; he was the President of the Swiss Society of Pathology in 1958, of the German Society of Pathology from 1976 to 1977, and of the

European Society of Pathology from 1980 to 1981. He served as the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Zurich from 1976 to 1978. He was elected a member of the “Deutsche Akademie der Naturwissenschaften Leopoldina” in 1985. He received honorary degrees from the Free University of Brussels in 1978 and from the University Pierre et Marie Curie in Paris in 1981. In 1987 he was awarded the Virchow’s medal by the German Society of Pathology.

After his retirement in 1987, Christoph Hedinger made a sustained effort to keep up with progress in medicine and pathology – an attempt in which he was very successful.

He is survived by two daughters, having lost his wife in 1995 after a long and cruel illness.

The international community of pathologists has lost one of its leading personalities. Christoph Hedinger will be remembered by his colleagues and disciples as a pathologist and chief who excelled as a teacher, chairman and leader and who had a distinct, strong personality with an arresting charisma.