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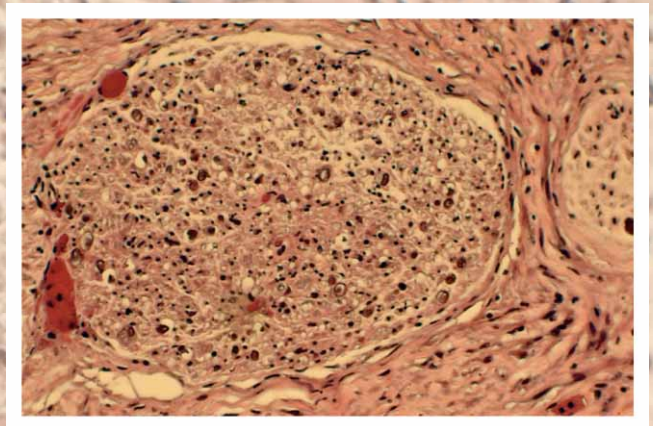
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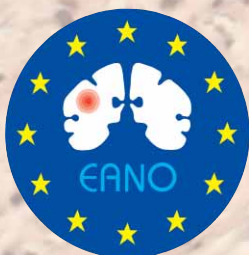
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Early Activities of Brain Tumour Research in Austria: A Historical Note

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The idea to organize a neurooncology research association was first proposed in 1990 by a group of brain tumour specialists and was realized in 1992, when Peter Krauseneck, then chairman of the “National Oncology Alliance” (NOA) organized a meeting of European neurooncologists in Pommersfelden (Germany). Ever since, the EANO has considerably progressed, with members from more than 30 countries, organizing biennial scientific congresses and successfully promoting research in neuro-oncology. As one of the first/initial members of this society, I was invited by Wolfgang Grisold, president of the EANO, an old friend and previous scholar, to write about the early development of neuro-oncology research in Austria, which antedated the establishment of EANO.

In 1967, Jellinger wrote a chapter on the pathology of brain tumours in infancy for a book on paediatric neurosurgery and, later, on congenital brain tumours and glioblastoma. In August 1974, together with H M Zimmerman, the famous neuropathologist from Montefiore Hospital, New York, he organized the first international symposium on malignant lymphomas of the nervous system, published as a supplement to *Acta Neuropathologica* in 1975. Several publications on primary malignant lymphomas of the CNS and involvement of the CNS by lymphomas and leukaemias followed between 1978 and 1984.

After 1975, the team of the Department of Neurology at the Lainz Hospital, Vienna (one of the staff members was W Grisold), was among the first to perform combined postoperative (adjuvant) radiation and chemotherapy (according to the COMP protocol) of malignant gliomas. The results were published at international meetings in Gardone, Italy (1979), Wiesbaden (1980), and London (1984). In 1986, the book “Therapy of Malignant Brain Tumors”, edited by K Jellinger, was published by Springer, Vienna-New York, with chapters on pathology, neurosurgery, stereotactic biopsy, radiation and chemotherapy, and malignant brain tumours in children, written by a panel of international experts.

Early attempts to establish an internationally accepted systemic approach to brain tumour nomenclature began with the first AFIP book, “Tumors of the Central Nervous System”, by

J W Kernohan and G P Sayre in 1952, the AFIP fascicles under the auspices of the National Research Council published by L J Rubinstein in 1973, and the WHO “blue book”, “Histologic Typing of Tumours of the Central Nervous System” in 1979 (edited by K J Zülch). International meetings of the WHO working group “Histological Typing of Tumors of the Central Nervous System” (one of the members K Jellinger, Vienna, Austria) in Houston, TX (March 1988), and Zurich (March 1990) followed. These resulted in the publication of the second edition of “Histological Typing of Tumours of the CNS” (P Kleihues et al, eds, Springer 2000), and the “Pathology and genetics of tumours of the nervous system” (edited by P Kleihues and W K Caviness, IARC Press, Lyon, 2000), which was followed by a revised edition in 2007. The historical perspective of the development of the WHO classification of tumours of the CNS was summarized by B W Scheithauer [1].

In the meantime, the classification, diagnosis, and treatment of tumours of the nervous system has made considerable progress, in particular through the activities of EANO that is also involved in the organization of the World Conference of Neurooncology (Washington 2002, Edinburgh 2005, Yokohama 2009, and Edinburgh 2011).

The author is proud to have been active in neuro-oncology research both as a neuropathologist and a clinician, trying to participate in early and current attempts to promote the diagnosis and treatment of nervous system neoplasms.

References:

1. Scheithauer BW. Development of the WHO classification of tumors of the central nervous system: a historical perspective. *Brain Pathol* 2009; 19: 551–64.

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