EDITORIAL

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Obituary

Prof. h.c. Dr. phil. Dr. med. h.c. mult. Heinz Götze

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This journal lost its mentor when Heinz Götze died on the evening of 2nd March 2001. “Mentor” – in Homer’s Odyssey this was the friend of Odysseus. Heinz Götze was our friend, teacher and counsellor over many decades, in particular when our ship threatened to drift onto the rocks.

Heinz Götze, born in Dresden, was an archaeologist with a doctorate. He knew ancient history and knew how to draw current conclusions from it. In 1949 he moved from the German Archaeological Institute in Rome to Springer-Verlag in Heidelberg. He did not want to reflect on the past, he wanted to shape the future. He put this forth in Badgastein when, in 1951, he drank with cheers in friendship to the author (E.G.). Taking over with great impetus the department of medicine at Springer-Verlag he said: “You must gain access to the international world of science,” as I recall from notes in 1951. He was right, we thought so too.

It was the same perspective with which Ferdinand Springer endowed the editorship of “*Zeitschrift für Krebsforschung*” to Gerhard Domagk in 1948, in those days the only German Nobel prize-winner for medicine who was an active cancer researcher himself. Heinz Götze wanted more. By this time English had become the *lingua franca* in medicine and sciences. This also applied to Springer-Verlag publications. In 1953, the internationally renowned pathologist from Bonn, Herwig Hamperl, skilled in languages, agreed to Heinz Götze’s invitation to become the co-editor of our journal. From then on an ever-increasing proportion of papers in English was accepted. Shortly after, the journal was subtitled “*Journal of Cancer Research and Clinical Oncology*”, and in 1971 this became the sole title of the journal. As of 1987, the editorial board was split into regional boards for Europe, North America and Asia-Pacific. Heinz Götze had always been the thriving and protecting “old man” in the background whenever there was discordance about perspectives and procedures among the early editors.

Soon after, Heinz Götze took responsibility for other fields in his publishing house. At the wish of the Springer

family, he became a partner and co-owner of the company in 1957, and soon after that executive managing director. More than 500 scientific journals were taken over or founded at Springer, most of them initiated by Heinz Götze. In addition to all fields of medicine and sciences, the periodicals programme included a large number of journals in mathematics, physics and computer sciences.

Heinz Götze was talented in promoting new ideas and could make them come true with imagination, energy and a never-ceasing perseverance. In his conversations he could stimulate his partners, motivate them, but also be critical. In crucial situations he could elegantly switch over to other topics – his outstanding knowledge of literature, music and arts inspiring him with thoughts and ideas from many sources – and back to the goals of his negotiations.

Heinz Götze also used his clear-minded style in negotiating for our journal, especially whenever any

concerns, criticism, scepticism arose. He managed – far beyond the framework of our journal – to establish oncology at Springer-Verlag internationally with a broad spectrum of periodicals, renowned monographs, and also with the publication of *The International Histological Classification of Tumors* of the World Health Organization.

Heinz Götze offered a stable publishing home to the entire field of international oncology, not only for our journal. For this we are most grateful to him – in lasting memory of a great personality, unforgotten his mind and works.