Alexander Brunswig was very important person in surgical oncology during the 20th century. He helped Maximow and Bloom to write their well-known histology text "A Text-Book of Histology", he was the first to do a one-stage radical pancreatoduodenectomy and pelvic exenteration.

Doctor Alexander Brunswig was born in El Paso, Texas, on September 11, 1901. He graduated from Rush Medical College in 1927. He was named for the chief of gynecology and clinical assistant at Clinics and Medical School of the Chicago University in 1933. He became professor of surgery at the same University in 1940 where he worked until 1947. Doctor Brunswig moved to New York in 1947 and became the Chief of gynecology in Memorial Hospital for Cancer and Allied Diseases and professor of clinical surgery at Cornell University at Medical College.

He published some very important books about oncology, "The Surgery of Pancreatic Tumors", "Radical Surgery in Advanced Abdominal Cancer" and "L' Exenteration pelvienne".

Key words: Alexander Brunswig, pelvic, exenteration, history, surgery.

INTRODUCTION

Doctor Alexander Brunswig was born in El Paso, Texas, on September 11, 1901. His parents moved from province Alsace-Lorraine. After attaining his Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees at the University of Chicago, he entered Rush Medical College where his superb intellect and gigantic capacity for work resulted in his immediate recognition as an outstanding student. He defined the principles and dynamics of placental perfusion. During his student days at Rush Medical College he helped Maximow and Bloom to write their well-known histology text "A Text-Book of Histology".

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and medical School of the Chicago University in 1933. He became the professor of surgery in 1940 and he worked there until 1947.

He contributed more than four hundred articles to American and foreign journals. He dealt with various themes: tumors of teudons and uterine, X-ray diagnosis of joint and bones diseases, state of shock and blood return, physiology (placental, pancreatic, gastric and renal), wound healing, radio therapy, ovary cancer, ascites tissue problems that occurred after radiation, intestine cancer, urethra cancer, urine diversions, surgical treatments of massive liver hemangiomata, production of animal maligus cells, treatment of Hodgkin disease with radiation, concoctions for decrease gastric juice secretion... He was the author of four textbooks and he contributed chapters to two score more. After his father's sudden death, who died of pancreatic cancer, and whom he exceedingly expected and loved, he published the famous textbook "The Surgery of Pancreatic Tumors" in 1942.2

In 1937 he performed a one-stage radical pancreatoduodenectomy where he resected the entire pancreas head and most of duodenum, so it can be said that he was the first one to perform Whipple procedure.3

Alexander Brunschwig did for the first time the operation that made him famous - total pelvic exenteration. The patient was 60 years old and died 36 days after the operation due to coronary heart disease. Many prominent surgeons who worked when the ultra radical intervention was published thought that the operation was very mutilative, more mutilative than preventive and it was often harshly criticized, questioning the morality of the man who was doing the exenteration.

He published his second textbook "Radical Surgery in Advanced Abdominal Cancer" in 1947. In the article published in 1948 he announced his 22 pelvic exenteration, where he had 5 (23%) of the patients intraoperative deaths.

In 1947 Doctor Brunschwig moved to New York and became the Chief of Gynecology in Memorial Hospital for Cancer and Allied Diseases and Professor of Clinical Surgery at Cornell University Medical College.

The first Society of Pelvic Surgeons meeting was held on December 13. 1956 at The Memorial Hospital, New York, and the host was Alexander Brunschwig. Joe V. Meigs was the first elected president. They both were excellent surgeons but their work was focused on treating the gynecological cancers. Brunschwig was the first to do the pelvic exenteration, while Meigs defined anatomy and surgery technique of radical hysterectomy and the two men are regarded as the founders of the Society. Most members of the Society were gynecologists. Urologist Eugene Bricker, who first performed pelvic exenteration of advanced rectum cancer, was a member as well as Victor Marshall and Fletcher Cellby who also recognized the importance of pelvic surgery.

In the following 10 years he performed 430 pelvic exenterations at patients who had cervix carcinoma. 21.6% of patients survived the next five years. Until 1967 he performed 925 exenterations.5 He published the book on pelvic exenteration in French in 1964 ("L’Exenteration Pelvienne").7

Medical history will be the best judge to Doctor Brunschwig and his contribution to oncology, surgery and medicine in general. Despite the troubles that followed his work, he stimulated radio therapists to revalue their work and to improve their technique, urologists to find better ways to perform urinary diversions after the exenteration, and he placed the foundations of gynecological oncology surgery. By exchanging his knowledge with doctors from all over the world, he learned, taught and operated and finally started the new chapter of American surgery.

He was the member of honor of many prestigious medical, surgery and gynecology-oncology societies such as Czechoslovakian Medical Society, Society of Surgeons in Vienna, French Society for the Study of Cancer, Italian Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Mexican Urological Society, Society of University Hospitals (Quebec), International College of Surgeons, Medical Society of Guayquil (Equador), i Societé de Chirurgie de Lyon, France. He was the founder of two gynecology societies and one of the founders of prestigious surgery society - American Board of Surgery. He was the professor of honor at many Universities and recipient of 40 awards including James Ewing's medal in 1966 and Lucy Wotham James' award for clinical research in 1962.

Doctor Brunschwig was very religious man and he shared his beliefs with his family. Besides medicine and surgery he had time and love for studying literature, music, work of art and it can be said that he was one of the most cultural and most educated doctors of his time.

He died at age of 67 of a heart attack in Pelham, New York. Brunschwig and his wife Leah had two daughters Louise Suzanne and Roxanne Josephine.

SUMMARY

ALEXANDER BRUNSCHWIG - 110 GODINA OD RODENJA (11.09.1901, 7.08.1969.)


Ključne reči: Alexander Brunschwig, pelvična egzentera, hirurgija
BIBLIOGRAFIA


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