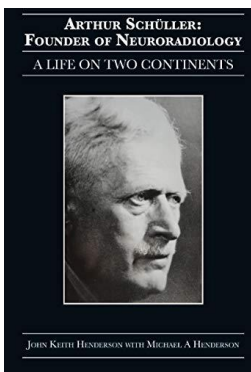## Book shelf

Arthur Schüller: Founder of Neuroradiology – A Life on Two Continents

Henderson, Henderson

REVIEW INFO

Publisher:
Hybrid Publishers

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REVIEW

Book reviewed by Dr Arpan K Banerjee, chair of The International Society for the History of Radiology; former chair of British Society for the History of Radiology.

Arthur Schüller was one of the unequivocal giants of neuroradiology and is considered the father of this branch of radiology, an honour bestowed on him in 1967 (10 years after his death) by his peers at the eighth Symposium Neuroradiologicum in Paris.

He trained at the Vienna medical school, qualifying as a doctor in 1899, and spent the early part of his career there. His early training was in neurology and psychiatry (he worked for Kraft Ebbing) before turning his attention to the subject of neuroradiology – a term which he himself coined in 1914.

In this brilliantly written book by neurosurgeon John Keith Henderson from Saint Vincent's Hospital in Melbourne (who knew him personally), we are privileged to have a truly outstanding biography of this remarkable Viennese doctor. The biography was completed by Henderson's son, a surgical oncologist who saw it through to publication on the death of his father.

Schüller had a remarkable life; he was a brilliant student at university and was inspired by Röntgen's discovery to eventually study and research the subject of radiology, becoming one of the early specialists on imaging the brain. His training in neurology and psychiatry gave him a cutting edge in clinical knowledge. In 1905 he published The Skull base on the Radiogram and followed this in 1912 with The Röntgen Diagnosis of Diseases of the Head, two of the earliest books in this field.

Schüller made prolific contributions to radiology literature, skull radiology in particular, and was the first to describe osteoporosis circumscripta in the skull seen in Paget's disease. He rose through the ranks to become a professor in Vienna in 1914. His numerous friendships with the pioneers of
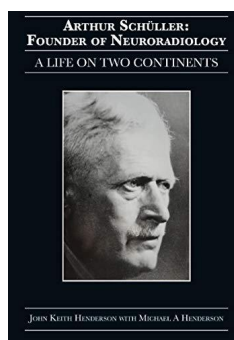
Springer

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REVIEW

... review continued

the early 20th century neurologists, neurosurgeons and radiologists overseas, including Dandy in the USA, make for a fascinating read.
The book movingly describes the rising anti-Semitism in Germany in the 1930s and the terrible atrocities of the third Reich, which eventually forced Schüller to flee the country to a safe haven.

At the start of the Second World War, Schüller left Vienna for Oxford where he worked in the department of Hugh Cairns, the famous neurosurgeon and professor of surgery at Oxford. After a few months he decided to move to Melbourne. He was already quite senior by this time and his time in Melbourne is movingly described. He had lost the status he had in Vienna and faced financial hardship as he was not able to be paid since he did not have a licence to practise until the end of the war. Nevertheless, he maintained his dignity and continued to teach and make research contributions in his field. He became a broken man, however, when he discovered that both his sons had died at the hands of the Nazis and never fully recovered from this.

This biography is a superb contribution to radiology history literature. It chronicles the life of a remarkable man who made major contributions to his subject, who suffered terribly in the years leading up to WW2 and tragically lost both his sons. The book is illustrated with old photographs and contains a list of Schüller's publications and a bibliography for further reading.

It should appeal not only to the medical community but any member of the interested public.

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