Dear Readers,

In this issue we offer you the following highlights: a review on the long awaited “Surgical Neuropathology of Focal Epilepsies: Textbook and Atlas”. This new book covers broadly all major lesions that can be found within epilepsy surgery. The Neurological Tissue Bank of the Biobanc-Hospital Clinic-Institut d’Investigacions Biomediques August Pi i Sunyer (IDIBAPS) in Barcelona has implemented a simple, customized equipment that improved their brain tissue dissection protocol. These colleagues asked to share experience with the neuropathological community. We include two participants’ reports on the 5th European Basic Course in Neuropathology that was held in Aachen, Germany, from March 15 – 18, this year. At the end of this Newsletter you will find information on the new position for a neuropathology chair in Luxembourg. If you have any news of interest to share with the neuropathological community, please feel free to contact us!

With kind regards,

The Euro-CNS News Editorial team

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BOOK REVIEW

Surgical Neuropathology of Focal Epilepsies: Textbook and Atlas

Editors: Ingmar Blümcke, Harvey B. Sarnat, Roland Coras
1st edition, 2015
John Libbey Eurotext: Montrouge, France

Since the International Summer School of Neuropathology and Epilepsy Surgery (which is supported by the International League against Epilepsy (ILAE) commission on European Affairs, ILAE commission on Diagnostic Methods, the International Brain Research Organization and International Society for Neuropathology) was founded in 2013, it is an ongoing success and an unique training opportunity for anyone interested in neuropathology of epilepsy surgery. Therefore, this book has been long awaited by all former and future participants or those who want to deepen their knowledge regarding this highly specialized subfield of neuropathology.

In general, the book covers broadly all major lesions that can be found within epilepsy surgery. The chapters 2 – 6 give an overview of the various pathologies including hippocampal sclerosis, malformations of cortical development, tumors associated with early epilepsy onset, encephalitis, and vascular malformation. The chapters discuss in detail etiopathogenesis for all categories in its historical context. There is little that is not covered, but it would be nice to have an overview section discussing future directions.

Chapter 7 provides an excellent atlas of the pathologies discussed in the previous chapters. The major histologic findings and additional immunostainings helping to make the correct diagnosis are presented in great detail.

The last chapter provides insight into the collection of the German Neuropathology Reference Center for Epilepsy Surgery in numbers. All major clinical features are presented in tables, which is sometimes hard to follow in terms of readability but nevertheless gives an impression of the large numbers of samples they have collected over the past decades.

In summary, the book is highly recommended not only for neuropathologists but also for other clinical neuro-scientists dealing with epilepsy surgery and provides a helpful tool in the assessment of the related pathologies.

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Improving tissue quality for brain banking: eutectic cooling plates for brain dissection

Ellen Gelpi, Oriol Grau-Rivera, Rainier Avila, Oscar Ramos, Mikel Vicente, Sara Charif, Veronica Santiago, and Raquel Sanchez-Valle

Neurological Tissue Bank of the Biobanc-Hospital Clinic-Institut d’Investigacions Biomediques August Pi i Sunyer (IDIBAPS), Barcelona, Spain

Brain banks are an important source of human brain tissue to support research in neurosciences. One of its commitments is to optimize and ensure the best possible tissue quality. In the frame of a “tissue quality” workpackage of BrainNetEurope II (www.brainnet-europe.org), conducted studies have confirmed that low temperature during brain tissue processing – e.g. 4°C in comparison to room temperature – is one of the...
its refrigeration is based on an eutetic system that, like classical cooling boxes, acts like a re-newable ice block, freezing solid during the refrigeration run cycle and thawing during off periods and all the time maintaining a constant temperature.

Our experience: We bought two plates sized 32.5 × 26.5 × 5 cm, and weighting 4 kg. As there are several sizes available, we selected those that better fitted in our freezer and biosafety cabinet. We placed both plates in their flat position into the freezer (Figure 1A) at –15 °C until the inner content was completely solid, which happened within about 4 hours. It is recommended to freeze the plate at least 10 °C below the set point of the plate (in this case –15 °C to –5 °C according to the manufacturer). When we have a brain donation, we put both plates in the biological cabinet (Figure 1B, C). We cover the plates with humidified absorbent paper sheets (Figure 1D) to avoid a direct contact of brain tissue with the plate. This avoids slipping of tissue, as fluids are absorbed, and freezing of the tissue, as the temperature is maintained below 0 °C during 5 – 6 hours (Figure 1E). After dissection and tissue sampling for freezing according to each laboratory’s protocol (liquid nitrogen, dry ice, others) plates are easily cleaned by a wipe (adding any disinfectant) (Figure 1G) and can be additionally treated with ultraviolet light (Figure 1H, I). After the cleaning process, plates are placed again into the freezer at –15 °C and maintained there until the next brain donation (Figure 1A).

Advantages
– Improved tissue quality for brain and tissue banking as tissue is important factors that ensure good preservation of RNA, proteins, and DNA, independently of postmortem delay [1, 2, 3]. There are, however, no standardized methods on how to maintain low temperatures during brain dissection in the fresh state without freezing the tissue during the procedure.

Our needs: At our IDIBAPS Brain Bank in Barcelona we were seeking for a convenient and cost-effective method for handling brain tissue in the aforementioned conditions. We found in the gastronomy field rigid stainless steel cooling plates that met our specific needs. These cooling plates are used in buffets to maintain perdurable foods in good condition during a couple of hours.
cessed at low temperatures allowing for better preservation of different molecules;

– increased consistency of brain tissue which facilitates homogeneous brain sectioning in the fresh state, which is also of special interest for the learning process of trainees;

– several sizes available that can be adapted to each needs, and finally,

– no electric or battery consumption, sustainable, reusable, and environmentally friendly.

We have implemented a simple, customized equipment that has improved our brain tissue dissection protocol. As we are happy with this, we wanted to share this with the neuropathological community.

References


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Participants report on the 5th European Basic Course in Neuropathology (March 15 – 18, 2016)

Dr. Yee Lin Tang, Singapore, and Dr. Yoon Jin Cha, South Korea

The recently concluded 5th European Basic Neuropathology Course held in Aachen, Germany from March 15th – 18th, 2016, marks the first course in which both of us, Yoon Jin (from Seoul, South Korea) and I (Singapore), required more than 10 hours of travel time to attend. Despite having to cross time zones and brave the surprisingly frigid temperatures we were sure that our trips were worth it. This popular course which was fully booked months in advance did not fail to deliver both in terms of content and experience. With a background of surgical/anatomical pathology, neuropathology felt like a daunting sub-specialty and we were expecting to be overwhelmed by the sheer amount of information. However, our fears were soon allayed as the organizers made sure there was a good mix between basic theory for the uninstructed and more obscure facts for those who wanted to know more. The pediatric autopsy, neuromuscular and neurodegenerative diseases were particularly helpful as these were areas which we were not accustomed to dealing with on a daily basis. The faculty members of the course were friendly, approachable, and engaging. What stood out was their willingness to teach and share their insights especially when dealing with difficult cases submitted by the audience. The informal setting of the tea breaks and lunch made it a lot easier to interact with the faculty members as well as with fellow participants of the course (which did not just consist of pathologists, but also of neurosurgeons, neurologists, and radiologists). The collections of cases from the institution, both macroscopic and microscopic, were impressive, although we wished we had a little more time to see them.

One of the highlights of the course had to be the evening tour of Aachen which was welcomed by many as a break in the hectic schedule. This culminated in a sumptuous dinner (and an informal after-party, which we sadly had to decline) at the Ratskeller, a lovely restaurant located at the basement of the historic Rathaus. Special mention must go to the core team of this course; especially Ms. Astrid van Schendel, Ms. Stephanie Labisch, Professor Wilfred den Dussen and Professor Joachim Weis who had worked tirelessly to put all this together and were always at hand to assist in any possible way (be it accommodation to simple things like getting around the institute, where I hopelessly got lost on my first day). These four days flew by all too quickly, and we left with fond memories not only of the content of the course but of friends made, contacts exchanged and the lovely town of Aachen.

Rieneke Britstra
Resident in Pathology, Academic Medical Center, the Netherlands

Fifty-one attendants from all across the world visited the idyllic city of Aachen, Germany, for four full days of knowledge concerning a course about Basic Neuropathology. Pathologists, residents in pathology, residents of neurosurgery, neurologists, and radiologists met in the spectacular “Universitätshospital“ recollecting memories and expand neuropa-thological knowledge. As a resident in pathology, situated in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, I was privileged to attend the specialized courses „leucoencephalopathies“ and „developmental neuropathology“ early in my residency. As an extension of my research project at the Neuropathology department of the Academic Medical Centre in Amsterdam, I joined this course in Germany. During the 4-day course, a broad spectrum of basic neuropathy passed, such as: cerebrovascular disease, trauma, developmental diseases, myopathology, neurodegenerative diseases, tumors, and nerve pathology. Lecturers gave 45 minutes’ presentations taking the basic knowledge, histology, immunohistochemistry, and molecular background into consideration. The presence of specialists from different departments gave a nice opportunity for discussion. The ex-
 excellent presentations were alternated with an impressive collection of macroscopic preparations as well as microscopic sections of a broad range of basic pathologies. The coffee breaks, wine and pretzels, city tour and diner were a nice opportunity to meet other attendants.

In summary, it was a perfectly arranged course, from lecturers till the coffee with cookies, from city tour to slide sessions. I can recommend this course, with maybe an extra day to visit the city during daytime or cross the border to Maastricht. Enjoy!

Neuropathology vacancy, Luxembourg

Luxembourg is recruiting a Chair in Neuropathology. With this recruitment, Luxembourg strengthens its national strategy by providing specialized pathology services as well as complementing ongoing strategic research efforts in Personalized Medicine, the National Centre of Excellence in Parkinson’s disease, and the National Cancer Plan. The candidate will be hosted at the Laboratoire National de Santé, the centralized diagnostic center of Luxembourg. He/she will be affiliated with the Luxembourg Institute of Health and the University of Luxembourg. The position is endowed with FNR PEARL funding and an invited professorship at the University of Luxembourg. With the substantial funding provided, he/she will be able to develop his/her own research programs in Luxembourg and establish a novel Center for Translational Neuropathology. He/she will contribute to ongoing research efforts in the field of neuro-oncology and neurodegenerative diseases (NCER-PD). The neuropathologist-researcher will be responsible for the processing of all neurological biopsies, surgical specimens, and autopsies collected in Luxembourg for both diagnostic and research purposes. He/she supervises neurological biospecimen collection in close cooperation with the LNS and the Integrated Biobank of Luxembourg. **Applications should be sent in by May 13th, 2016 and should include a) a motivation letter, b) a detailed CV, and c) a description of past research achievements and future research directions, also addressing how this research line will contribute to ongoing initiatives in Luxembourg (5 – 10 pages). Details at: http://www.euro-cns.org/home/job-posts/job-posts/**.

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Meeting Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CME Training Course “Forensic Neuropathology”.</td>
<td>June 1 – 3, 2016</td>
<td>Amsterdam, the Netherlands</td>
<td><a href="http://www.euro-cns.org">www.euro-cns.org</a></td>
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<td>57th Annual Meeting of the Japanese Society of Neuropathology.</td>
<td>June 16 – 19, 2016</td>
<td>Baltimore, Maryland, USA</td>
<td><a href="http://www.neuropath.org/meetings">www.neuropath.org/meetings</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fens forum 2016</td>
<td>July 2 – 6, 2016</td>
<td>Copenhagen, Denmark</td>
<td><a href="http://forum2016.fens.org/">http://forum2016.fens.org/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>11th European Congress of Neuropathology (ECNP).</td>
<td>July 6 – 9, 2016</td>
<td>Bordeaux, France</td>
<td><a href="http://www.euro-cns.org">www.euro-cns.org</a></td>
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