

3rd International colloquium on natural foci of infectious diseases in Central Europe

Between 24 and 27 May 1979 the 3rd International colloquium on natural foci of infectious diseases in Central Europe (3. Internationales Arbeitskolloquium über Naturherde von Infektionskrankheiten in Zentraleuropa) was held in Graz and Seggau (Austria) which was attended by participants from 10 countries. As the previous two meetings it was organized by Prof. Dr. J. R. Möse, Director of the Hygiene Institute, University of Graz and Doc. Dr. W. Sixl, Head of the Institute's Parasitology Department. The Czechoslovak participants, representing research centres of the two Academies, Universities and other institutes affiliated to the Ministry of Health, formed the most numerous group from abroad. The colloquium took place at the time of the 40th anniversary of the ecological analysis of the natural focality phenomenon by E. N. Pavlovsky. The history of this theory dating from 1939 was presented and demonstrated on the basis of original material by Prof. Dr. B. Rosický, D.Sc., the disciple and collaborator of E. N. Pavlovsky.

The proceedings of the colloquium were divided in 7 topical ranges: virology, problems of dumps, rickettsioses, leptospiroses, piroplasmoses, disinfection and general topics. Over 50 papers were read at the colloquium. Virology was represented by the most numerous contributions devoted to various aspects of tick-borne encephalitis. It was revealed that the problems of this disease are still very urgent in Central Europe. Attention was also paid to the incidence of the tick-borne encephalitis virus in urban areas. The role of birds and mammals, including domestic animals, in the epidemiology of influenza was also discussed. The paper concerned with the problem of the Tettnang virus and the report about the dynamics of the rabies incidence in Austria received a lively response. The paper read in the second group and stressing the negative public health importance of waste heaps and dumps as places of dissemination of grave diseases, was very stimulative. The contributions in the rickettsioses group were directed at the results of field studies in the territory of Austria. Remarkable was the discovery in Switzerland

of the new agent from the spotted fever group, transmitted by *Ixodes ricinus*. Papers devoted to leptospiroses dealt with the dissemination of different serotypes in the territory of Central Europe, with priority demonstrations of natural foci of leptospiroses caused by *L. saxkoebing* in Austria and *L. pomona* in Czechoslovakia. Another group of contributions was concerned with the problems of *Babesia microti* in Europe, the protozoan, which has lately attracted attention of researchers as the causative agent of human disease. The only contribution dealing with disinfection discussed the preparation Betaisodona and its virucidal effects. The papers devoted to free topics covered a wide spectrum of problems, from general problems of natural focality, adiaspiromycosis, chlamydiosis, listeriosis, brucellosis to the bionomy of ticks and occurrence of ectoparasites on rodents.

The scientists from Czechoslovakia were authors or co-authors (mostly with Austrian scientists) of over one half of papers presented. The colloquium proceedings showed that Czechoslovak research centres retain their priority position in the studies on various aspects of natural focality. The long-term collaboration of Czechoslovak and Austrian research centres proved to be very fruitful, yielding quite a number of valuable results. The participants of the colloquium had a good opportunity to exchange opinions and experiences from their studies. During an excursion they became acquainted with the character of the local landscape with natural foci of tick-borne encephalitis and leptospirosis.

The 3rd international colloquium in Graz-Seggau successfully resumed the work of the previous similar meeting held three years ago in Graz. This time again its organizers prepared an excellent scientific programme as well as a pleasant working and social atmosphere. A good tradition has been thus developed of regular meetings of specialists in the field of natural focality of diseases and its continuation is to be welcomed.

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