

NERVAL'S DIARY

Le voyageur enthousiaste observe ...

Munich, October 10–13, 2001

10th Congress of the EADV and 2nd Meeting of the ESHDV

The 10th congress and the 12th year since the foundation of the European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology: a success story par excellence. By the thousands and from all over the world, from Brazil and Guatemala to India and Iran, they came for this occasion. The growth proceeds more quickly than it did with the venerable 'elder sister' in the USA 60 years ago. This was also the impression of John Strauss who commented on it accordingly in his address at the presidential dinner in the Munich Residence. Jean-Hilaire Saurat from Geneva is the incoming president of the EADV, and Prague, Barcelona and Florence will be the next venues – and where will we go? The number of sister societies and associated bodies grows year by year and the 'fragmentation' of dermatology is obvious [1]. To cope with this problem will be a formidable task – and its outcome is questionable. The determination of all of us is needed to hold dermatology together as a specialty discipline.

Another 'problem' to tackle is the enormous and ever increasing number of satellite symposia: several per day already. Forceful marketing one could say; on the other hand, without the support from the pharmaceutical industries such giant meetings could not be financed, no doubt about that. A balanced approach is necessary to keep this development in check. Anyway, the advancement of retinoids, immunosuppressants and of new local therapies cannot be overlooked. Ever newer laser and cryotherapeutic techniques are offered, cosmetic dermatology parallels dermatosurgery in its spread, and it is next to impossible to keep track of all the inroads into new areas of local and systemic regimens, even for the seasoned dermatologist. Participation at the annual meetings is

a must already despite all the above and despite the difficulty to sort out what one can cover within these few days.

The European Society for the History of Dermatology and Venereology (ESHDV) held its 2nd formal meeting on the day preceding the actual academy meeting. In the morning, there was a guided (and excellent) tour through the Neue Pinakothek; at noon, a lunch followed in a restaurant in the English Garden of Munich. There, the 2nd Alibert Oration (as we chose to name it) was delivered by Prof. Georg Stingl of Vienna, on the development of immunodermatology. A splendid lecture by a leading researcher in the field. The ESHDV harbors, by now, representatives of 26 countries with a total membership of 74. Small yet in number, but built up by enthusiastic supporters of the dermatological tradition over more than two centuries. Next month will see the *Alibert Bicentennial* at the Hôpital Saint-Louis in Paris, a highlight in this regard. The stream of dermatological celebrities will flow to the banks of the Seine on this occasion.

From the year 2003 on there will also be a winter meeting of the EADV, thereby paralleling the summer meetings of the American Academy. Soon there will be too many meetings if this is not the case already. Another development to care for. There is not enough time left for work, and the abstracts which are asked half a year or more ahead of all the major congresses lead to conjectures as to the results presented or present stuff not really new. One wonders how we can control this process and whether, perhaps, political developments, as for instance the crimes of earlier this year, will slow down this overgrowth.

Reference

- 1 Crissey J, et al: A Historical Atlas of Dermatology and Dermatologists. London, Parthenon, 2002, pp.i–xx.

à bientôt,

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