

Introduction

This issue presents a survey of papers presented at the 37th annual conference of the Committee of Experimental Cardiology, established on the initiative of P. Bravený and B. Ošádal in 1972. It was contrived as an informal and independent association of scientists engaged in research in any branch of cardiology. The apparent primary stimulus was an absence of a community of this kind in the Czechoslovak Republic. The second, implicit one was the political climate of the seventies. Many researchers in basic science as well as in clinical cardiology were forestalled from publishing abroad, taking part in international meetings, spontaneous forming research teams, etc. Thus, the origin of the Committee may be regarded a form of silent protest of the most affected individuals.

Right from the beginning, the annual three days lasting conferences of the Committee have taken place at less busy but attractive sites of Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia. This tradition of organizing the workshops in a modest, inconspicuous way, with negligible financial support, outside fancy hotels and congress centres has been maintained until these days. The lack of pomp has been greatly outbalanced by friendly atmosphere, open informal discussions during both scientific programme and free time. The participants have always appreciated the possibility to get acquainted with the latest news in cardiology and to present and discuss own not yet published results and thus, to get timely corrections, inspiration and even new collaborators.

It may be surprising that a relatively small group, soon embraced by the Czechoslovak Physiological Society, survived the gloomy years as well as the political

upheaval of the year 1989 and fuzzy reinstatement of freedom and democracy. The Committee survived even the split of the country. It exists all the time on the Czech – Slovak basis, under incomparably more favourable conditions.

During almost four decades of its existence, the Committee tried to concentrate the conferences to one topic at a time and to observe all crucial topics of experimental and clinical cardiology. Some of them were treated several times, e.g. ischemic a reperfusion injury, electrophysiology and arrhythmias, regulations etc. Not until 2008 an idea appeared to focus a conference on the methods in cardiovascular research. The project was accepted for the next conference under the title “Methods in experimental and clinical research of cardiovascular system”.

A country hotel near Blansko was chosen for venue on October 14 - 19, 2009. It was attended by 53 participants from the Czech and the Slovak Republic with 25 presentations. The participation of young scientists and postdoctoral students was remarkably large. A representative set of presented reviews and original papers were selected for this Supplement of Physiological Research. It is worth noting that the presentations from the conferences of the Committee were published in form of abstracts in the former journal of Physiological Society. This Supplement is resumption after so many years and in a more representative appearance.

Marie Nováková
Pavel Bravený