Introduction

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The 20th Symposium of the Collegium Internationale Allergologicum (CIA) took place September 25-29, 1994, on Nantucket, and was dedicated to an exploration of the ‘Molecular and Clinical Implications for Allergy in the 21st Century.’ The attendance surpassed any prior CIA meeting. Two-hundred-ninety authors were represented in the 112 podium and 73 abstract presentations. All members who wished to give a presentation did so, as is the CIA custom. This volume includes most of these presentations. Pagination requirements have limited the lenght of each contribution, but most authors are represented. The ‘Molecular and Clinical Implications’ for the next century focused mainly on the cell- and cytokine-dri-ven events in the allergic response. Professor de Week initiated the meeting with the Carl Prausnitz Lecture. The program began with a consideration of IgE regulation, including the roles of CD23/21, CD40 ligand induction, genetic factors, allergens, pollutants, and IgE autoantibodies. The next part of the program, on the cellular effectors and regulators of the allergic reaction, included presentations on the role of stem cell factor, the c-kit receptor, and AP-1 in the development and function of the mast cell. Keratinocyte-generated mast cell differentiation factors, integrin-dependent signaling in human mast cells and basophils, and the effects of nedocromil on the IgE response were then reviewed, along with the regulation of mast cell function in rats, modulation of IgE in atopic patients, prevention of anaphylaxis by monovalent haptens, the role of the cytokine inter-leukin (IL)-13, the regulation of CD14 expression, and the characterization of human T cell clones with specificity for the major birch pollen allergen (Betv1). In the Paul Kallos Lecture, Professor Austen presented a review of research from slow-reacting substance of anaphylaxis to characterization of the sulfidopeptide leukotrienes including the role of 5LO synthase. Subsequent presentations dealt with pharmacologic inhibition of the leu-kotriene-generating 5LO pathway by receptor and 5-lipoxygenase-activa-ting-protein antagonists, the interaction of mast cells with extracellular matrix, the role of recombinant human stem cell factor in promoting human mast cell and melanocyte hyperplasia, the use of proteases as markers of mast cell differentiation, and the contribution of cardiac mast cells to human anaphylaxis. A broad diversity of papers addressed the molecular basis of the acute allergic reactions, including presentations on characterization of IgE-dependent histamine-releasing factors andbradykin. Communication between mast cells and nerves, neuro-peptide effects on lymphocytes, and connections between eosinophils and the nervous system were discussed in a neuroallergy symposium. To accommodate all the members who wished to discuss their work 73 posters were presented. The subjects of these presentations ranged from the molecular characterization of allergens to mechanisms of action of antiallergic drugs, including the effects of nedocromil in the inhibition of the 5-lipoxygenase pathway in allergic rhinitis. Attention was also directed to the inflammatory response, particularly the relationship between T cell subsets and remodeling of the airway in asthma, the response of the extracellular matrix to inhaled corticosteroids, and the sources of the Th2 cytokines and specific T cell subtypes in the patho-genesis of the allergic response. Finally, on the last morning, the program was devoted to allergens, immunotherapy, and the management of allergic diseases, with specific reference to drug therapy. Peptide-medi-ated immune regulation, particularly the use of T-cell-reactive peptides and oral immunotherapy with peptides, was reviewed. Further discussions described changes in allergic inflammation associated with the successful

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administration of immunotherapy. The oral administration of various pollen allergens to mice, molecular cloning of the German cockroach allergen, identification of the allergen in molds, as well as specific cat and dog allergens were also reviewed in detail. Other speakers described attempts to down-regulate allergic responses with IL-4 receptor antagonists, anti-IgE antibodies, epitope-specific antiallergen antibodies, allergen-antibody complexes, antigen-mPEG conjugates, or pharmacologic approaches. New drugs, such as 5-lipoxygenase inhibitors, and even the removal of drugs such as fenoterol, were discussed in an effort to emphasize recent advances in the pharmacological management of allergic diseases. As noted in our welcoming statement, the scientific aspects of the CIA meeting are important, but the social aspects are also critical. It seemed that both objectives were fulfilled. We all enjoyed each other’s comments and thoughts during the academic program and then enjoyed each other’s company during the social events at the end of each day. The organizers are indebted to the Scientific Advisory Committee and the Local Arrangements Committee for their advice and support throughout the development of the program. We now look forward to returning to Europe for our next meeting in Austria, to be organized by Professors Kraft and Ring.