History of the Collegium Internationale Allergologicum: A Very Special Society Devoted to Allergy and Immunology

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Keywords

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Abstract

The Collegium Internationale Allergologicum (CIA) was founded on 15 October 1954 in London by a group of 48 international allergists and immunologists from 18 countries of all continents, among them such distinguished scientists as Carl Prausnitz-Giles, Sir Henry Dale, Paul Kallos, and many others. Contrary to other international associations in the field, this Collegium limited the number of members in order to allow more intense and open discussions in “the humble spirit of scientific enquiry, friendly cooperation, good fellowship and professional relationships in the field of allergy” as stated in the statutes. It is not possible to apply for membership, and one has to be proposed by at least 2 CIA members and invited to present at least once at a symposium. Over the decades, a rhythm of biannual symposia developed, the 32nd held in Palma de Mallorca in October 2018. These symposia went around the world from London, Rome, Copenhagen, New Orleans, Puerto Vallarta, Nantucket, Hakone, Konstanz, Goeteborg, and Sorrento, just to name a few places.

Preferably they were held on islands such as Capri, Corfu, Martinique, Curacao, Bornholm, Malta, and Ischia in order to make it more difficult for people to arrive late or leave early. It is expected that participants stay over the whole length of the 5-day symposium. On these symposia, it is good custom to also present unpublished data, so participants get the latest news. The most important developments in the field of Allergy and Clinical Immunology have been discussed at early stage and sometimes by speakers who later won the Nobel Prize. While all presentations are equal, be it oral communications or posters, there are 3 special lectures, namely the Carl Prausnitz lecture, the Paul Kallos lecture, and a “Relaxing from Immunology” lecture which can be devoted to any interesting topic not necessarily related to medicine or allergy. Since many years, the contents of the symposium are published in a proceedings volume, over a longtime printed within the “International Archives of Allergy and Immunology” which until now is the official journal of the Collegium. Participants agree that in the flood of more and more scientific congresses and larger events, the CIA Symposia are unique in their openness and friendly scientific interchange.

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Introduction

In the early 50s of the last century, allergy and immunology were not among the first disciplines to be recognized and academically established strongly within European and North American Universities, partly due to the interdisciplinary character of these fields. There was a trend to form national and international societies under various names like “Allergy,” “Allergology,” “Allergy and Clinical Immunology,” “Allergy and Immunity Research,” or others. In 1951, the “International Association of Allergy and Clinical Immunology” was founded, followed by the “European Academy of Allergology and Clinical Immunology” [1].

There was a feeling that in between these rather large societies it would be good to have a smaller group, allowing more intense contact and discussions between the leaders in the field. So on October 15, 1954, the Collegium Internationale Allergologicum – soon known under the acronym of “CIA” – was founded in the city of London by 48 well-known clinical investigators and basic immunologists from 18 countries of all continents and from very different fields of medicine and biological research. The majority was Anglo-Saxon with 10 scientists from United Kingdom, 7 from USA, and 3 from Australia (Table 1) [2].

Statutes and Leadership

The statutes clearly define the aims of this association with the simple sentence. “the Collegium is an international group for study of scientific and clinical problems in allergy and related branches of medicine and immunology. The collegiums aims to promote the humble spirit of scientific enquiry, friendly cooperation, good fellowship and professional relationships in the field of allergy.”

Not fortuitous was it that the acronym “CIA” alluded to a somehow exclusive character of this club of friends. From the beginning, membership was originally limited to maximum of 100 living members and since 1986 to 250 active members.

Nobody can apply for membership. New members only can be introduced by invitation through a CIA member; before they will be selected, he or she has to present original research work at one symposium as active participant. The Collegium is governed by a Council of 8 members and the officers including the president, the past president, the vice president, and the secretary.

Table 1. Founder members of the Collegium Internationale Allergologicum in October 1954 in London

O.G. Bier (São Paulo)	R. Meier (Basel)
P. Blamoutier (Paris)	G. Melli (Milano)
D. Bovet (Rome)	G. Miescher (Zürich)
C.J.C. Britton (London)	H.R. Olivier (Paris)
H. Christensen (Roskilde)	D. Ordman (Johannisburg)
R.R.A. Coombs (Cambridge)	Z. Ovary (Rome)
Sir H.H. Dale (London)	W. Pagel (London)
H.A.E. van Dishoeck (Leiden)	G.W. Pickering (London)
R.H.O. Donald (Melbourne)	S. Raffel (Stanford, CA)
J. Duchaine (Bruxelles)	Bret Ratner (New York)
J. Freemann (London)	B.M.B. Riley (Sydney)
C. Frugoni (Rome)	C. Rimington (London)
C.P. Giles (Ventnor, GB)	E. Rothlin (Basel)
F. Gross (Basel)	H. Selye (Montreal)
M.T. Gutman (Jerusalem)	U. Serafini (Rome)
K. Hansen (Lübeck)	M.A. Solari (Buenos Aires)
D. Harley (London)	R.S. Steel (Sydney)
C. Jimenez-Diaz (Madrid)	A. Stoll (Basel)
E.A. Kabat (New York)	G.L. Waldbott (Detroit, Michigan)
P. Kallós (Helsingborg)	J. Waldenstroem (Malmö)
L. Kallós-Deffner (Helsingborg)	F.F. Yonkman (Summit, NJ)
W. Kaufman (Bridgeport, Connecticut)	
A. Lunedei (Firenze)	
W. Löffler (Zürich)	
M. Maekawa (Kyoto)	
J.R. Marrack (Cambridge)	
R.L. Mayer (Summit, NJ)	

The first president was D. Harley from London, with Vice president J. Duchaine from Brussels. The secretary was Paul Kallos from Helsingborg who did most of the organizational work in the first decades.

For many decades (1980–2010), 2 eminent scientists, Alain de Weck in Europe and Lawrence M. Lichtenstein in the USA (Fig. 1, 2), played a semiformal but substantial role in recruiting new members from different countries and in supporting the organization of several biannual meetings. The Alain de Weck travel grant program to support young fellows, named after him, has been established to recognize his dedication to the Collegium. The most important activity of the Collegium is the organization of a scientific meeting in a biannual rhythm on very special places going around the world.

The last 32nd symposium has held in Palma de Mallorca in October 2018. The 33rd symposium should take place in September 2020 in Montebello, ON (Canada). Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the symposium has been postponed to 2021.

Table 2. Officers of the CIA

<i>President</i>	
D. Harley	1954–1974
G.B. West	1974–1978
F. Milgrom	1978–1982
K. Ishizaka	1982–1986
A. Schon	1986–1990
A. de Weck	1990–1994
L. Lichtenstein	1994–1998
J. Bienenstock	1998–2002
J. Ring	2002–2006
G. Marone	2006–2010
S. Galli	2010–2014
S. Holgate	2014–2018
B. Bochner	2018–
<i>Honorary secretary</i>	
P. Kallos	1954–1974
A. de Weck	1974–1986
A. Capron	1986–1990
J. Ring	1990–1998
<i>Executive secretary</i>	
A. Cerletti	1954–1974
P. Dukor	1974–1988
J. Bienenstock	1988–1994
<i>Secretary general</i>	
G. Marone	1998–2002
S. Galli	2002–2006
S. Holgate	2006–2010
B. Bochner	2010–2014
T. Bieber	2014–2018
D. Vercelli	2018–

CIA, Collegium Internationale Allergologicum.

Fig. 1. Henning Löwenstein, Alain de Weck, and Alec Schon in Sorrento 1982. **Fig. 2.** Lawrence M. Lichtenstein. **Fig. 3.** Cover page of the symposium in Korfu 1998 organized by A. Togias and L.M. Lichtenstein.

Table 3. CIA council members

1954–1955 Duchaine, Coombs, Giles, Kaufman, van Dishoek, Blamoutier, Gutman, Serafini	1982–1984 Lichtenstein, Ricci, Bach, Kishimoto, Lessof, Radermecker, Salvaggio, Schmutzler
1955–1957 Van Dishoek, Olivier, Jimenez-Diaz, Kaufman, Coombs, Gross, Waldbott, Hansen	1984–1986 Bach, Kishimoto, Lessof, Radermecker, Salvaggio, Schmutzler, Norman, Capron
1957–1959 van Dishoek, Coombs, Hansen, Jimenez-Diaz, Feldberg, Hoigné, Olivier, Kaufman	1986–1988 Norman, Schmutzler, Lessof, Salvaggio, Miyamoto, Bienenstock, Ring, Marone
1959–1962 Coombs, Kaufman, Olivier, Gell, Waldbott, Hoigné	1988–1990 Miyamoto, Ring, Marone, Frick, Holgate, Koda, Lichtenstein, Loewenstein
1962–1964 Gell, Kaufman, Olivier, Waldbott, Hahn, West, Jaques, Panzani	1990–1992 Frick, Holgate, Koda, Loewenstein, Bousquet, Bjorksten, Romagnani, Sheffer
1964–1968 Hahn, West, Jaques, Panzani, Coombs, Loveless, Sicuteri, White	1992–1994 Bousquet, Bjorksten, Holgate, Romagnani, Sheffer, Behrendt, Likura, Kraft
1968–1970 Coombs, Loveless, Sicuteri, White, Glynn, Glazer, de Weck, Turk	1994–1996 Behrendt, Iikura, Kraft, Capron, Galli, Johansson, Lee, Marone
1970–1972 Glynn, Glazer, de Weck, Turk, Feinberg, Giertz, Inderbitzin, Levine, Brocklehurst	1996–1998 Capron, Denburg, Galli, Holt, Ishikawa, Johansson, Lee, Marone
1972–1974 Feinberg, Giertz, Inderbitzin, Levine, Brocklehurst, Glazer, Diamant, Macher	1998–2000 Blaser, Denburg, Holt, Ishikawa, Kay, Platts-Mills, Togias, Vercelli
1974–1976 Giertz, Diamant, Macher, Rorsman, Berrens, Lichtenstein, Roitt	2000–2002 Blaser, Kay, Mekori, Platts-Mills, Thomas, Togias, Tomioka, Vercelli
1976–1978 Rorsman, Berrens, Lichtenstein, Roitt, Austen, Parker, Rother	2002–2004 Aalberse, Blaser, Bieber, Durham, Mekori, McDonald, Tomioka, Thomas
1978–1980 Austen, Parker, Rother, Gleich, Oronsky, Pepys, Brocklehurst, Aas	2004–2006 Aalberse, Bieber, Durham, McDonald, Holgate, Nakagawa, Levi-Schaffer, Valenta
1980–1982 Gleich, Oronsky, Pepys, Brocklehurst, Aas, Schon, Lichtenstein, Ricci	2006–2008 Holgate, Saito, Levi-Schaffer, Valenta, Dahlen, Akdis, Marshall, Stevens, vanRee
2008–2010 M Akdis, Dahlen, Saito, Stevens, Marshall, Thomas, van Ree	2010–2012 Befus, Behrendt, Breiteneder, Durham, Izuvara, Simon, van Hage, Weller
2012–2014 Behrendt, Befus, van Hage, Weller, Durham, Izuvara, Simon, Breiteneder	2014–2016 Castells, Creticos, Nilsson, Bleecker, Pawankar, Triggiani, Bohle, Levi-Schaffer
2016–2018 Bleecker, Bohle, Castells, Creticos, Levi-Schaffer, Nilsson, Pawankar, Triggiani	2018–2020 Bohle, Canonica, Dahlen, Gordon, Meyers, Nadeau, Pawankar, Poulsen
CIA, Collegium Internationale Allergologicum.	

The list of members of the Collegium reads like a “Who is Who” in Allergy and Clinical Immunology over the decades. Table 2 shows the list of officers. From the beginning until recently, it was predominantly the task of the secretaries to organize continuity, starting with Paul Kal-

los who did this over almost 20 years followed by Alain de Weck, John Bienenstock, and Johannes Ring. A more regular election of officers was introduced in 2002 starting officer work with secretary and moving progressively on to vice president (“president elect”) and finally president.

Fig. 4. Cover page of the symposium in Malta 2006 organized by S. Holgate, B. Kay, J. Ring, and G. Marone.

In the Council, the international character of the Collegium over the years is very well represented (Table 3). The council proposes the officers to the general assembly during the business meeting. It is also responsible for putting together the program of the symposia which is distilled from active contributions by the members critically reviewed before acceptance. "This is a society which does not have politics involved in its administrative discussions, which in itself is a pleasure and a rarity!" said former president John Bienenstock.

Symposia

The biannual symposia are the major activity of the Collegium and organized in special locations preferably on attractive and sometimes isolated locations like an island in order to keep the people together after the sessions and allow free time for discussion and friendly in-

Table 4. Locations of CIA Symposia and organizers

Date	Site	Organizer(s)
1954	London	P. Kallós, D. Harley
1955	Basel	A. Stoll, E. Rothlin
1957	London	P. Kallós, R.R.A. Coombs
1959	Rome	L. Businco
1962	Freiburg i. Br.	F. Hahn, H. Giertz, W. Schmutzler
1964	London	G.B. West
1968	Tel Aviv	I. Glazer, M. Feldmann
1970	Montreux	A. de Weck
1972	London	F. Feinberg, J. Pepys, J.L. Turk, G.B. West
1974	Copenhagen	B. Diamant, N. Hjorth, P. Kallós, H. Rorsmann
1976	Heidelberg	K. Rother, H. Giertz, E. Schöpf, G. Till
1978	New Orleans	J. Salvaggio
1980	Konstanz	P. Dukor, A. de Weck
1982	Sorrento	G. Marone, M. Condorelli, G. Rossi, M. Ricci
1984	Puerto Vallarta (Mexico)	P. Norman, L. Lichtenstein, T. & K. Ishizaka
1986	Göteborg	L.A. Hanson, N. Lindholm
1988	Martinique	M. & A. Capron
1990	Madeira	S. Holgate, J. Bienenstock
1992	Capri	G. Marone
1994	Nantucket	S.J. Galli, A.L. Sheffer
1996	Fuschl/Salzburg	D. Kraft, J. Ring
1998	Corfu	A. Togias, L. Lichtenstein
2000	Hakone	T. Ishikawa, T. Miyamoto, H. Tomioka
2002	Bermuda	A. Togias, J. Bienenstock
2004	Bornholm	H. Loewenstein, J. Ring
2006	Malta	S. Holgate, B. Kay, J. Ring, G. Marone
2008	Curacao	R. van Ree, J. Ring
2010	Ischia	G. Marone, M. Triggiani
2012	Jeja	Y.Y. Kim, S. Galli
2014	Petersberg/Bonn	M. Maurer, H. Behrendt, S. Galli
2016	Charleston	P. Creticos, B. Bochner
2018	Palma de Mallorca	M. Castells, S. Holgate

CIA, Collegium Internationale Allergologicum.

terchange (Fig. 3–6). It is expected that the participants stay over the whole length of the 5-day symposium. A fundamental is a short boat ride which sometimes can lead to very untoward sensations like motion sickness as has happened sometimes. Table 4 shows the list and locations of the 32 symposia in the past together with the local organizers (Fig. 7–9). As previously mentioned, the 2020 meeting was planned to be held in Montebello, ON, Canada. The history of the scientific contributions to the CIA symposia reflects the progress in the field from very basic biology and immunology to the clinical aspects of allergen-specific immunotherapy, new pharmacotherapies, and novel biological therapies [3–10].

Sometimes the developments were presented by persons who later received the Nobel Prize (e.g., Bengt Sam-

Fig. 5. Cover page of the symposium in Curacao 2008 organized by R. van Ree and J. Ring.

Fig. 6. Cover page of the symposium in Palma de Mallorca 2018 organized by M. Castells and S. Holgate.

Fig. 7. Frank Austen and Gianni Marone in Capri 1992.

Fig. 8. Dietrich Kraft and André Capron in Fuschl 1996.

Table 5. Carl prausnitz lectures

1972	London	R.R.A. Coombs “Antiglobulin reactions”
1974	Copenhagen	O. Westphal “Endotoxin”
1976	Heidelberg	M. Mayer “Complement”
1978	New Orleans	A. Eisen “Cyclic nucleotides and Allergy”
1980	Konstanz	Z. Ovary “IgE-production and suppression in mice”
1982	Sorrento	H. Metzger “The receptor for immune-globulin E: taking it apart – Putting it back together”
1984	Puoto Vallarta	W.E. Paul “Living with lymphocytes”
1986	Göteborg	O. Ouchterlony “Immunoprecipitation on court – The Chamberlain case”
1988	Martinique	K. Ishizaka “Regulation of the IgE-antibody response”
1990	Madeira	A.H. Sehon “suppression of antibody responses by chemically Modified antigens”
1992	Capri	M. Ricci “T cells, cytokines, IgE and allergic inflammation”
1994	Nantucket	A. de Weck “What can we learn from the allergic zoo?”
1996	Fuschl/Salzburg	F. Melchers “B-cell development in mouse and man”
1998	Corfu	L. Lichtenstein “The role of basophil cytokines in human allergic disease”
2000	Hakone	Y. Kitamura “Mutant mice: a useful tool for studying development of mast cells”
2002	Bermuda	J. Bienenstock “Mast cell-nerve communication: an important regulator of many physiologic functions”
2004	Bornholm	S. Prusiner “The story of prions”
2006	Malta	J. Ring “From wheals and wheeze to tolerance: allergy, quo vadis?”
2008	Curacao	K. Alitalo “Lymphangiogenesis in development and human disease”
2010	Ischia	G. Marone “Mast cells and basophils in angiogenesis – Bridging the gap between inflammation and tumors”
2012	Jeju	H. Dvorak “Vascular permeability: why it is important?”
2014	Petersberg/Bonn	S. Galli “Contribution of mast cells and IgE to innate and acquired resistance to venoms: is this the “good side” of allergy?”
2016	Charleston	K.F. Austen “Development and character of innate and induced mast cells in situ: Why does evolution allow for two subclasses of mast cells?”
2018	Palma de Mallorca	S. Holgate “The five ages of asthma: a simple concept but a complex disease”

Table 6. Paul Kallós Lectures

1990	Madeira	Klaus Rother (Heidelberg) “Complement in inflammation: induction of nephritides and progress to chronicity”
1992	Capri	Tadamitsu Kishimoto (Japan) “Interleukin-6 and its receptor: from cloning to clinic”
1994	Nantucket	K. Frank Austen (Boston) “From slow-reacting substance of anaphylaxis to leukotriene C4 synthase”
1996	Fuschl/Salzburg	Stephen J. Galli (Boston) “Mast cell cytokine production: new insights into differential Regulation and biological significance”
1998	Corfu	Dietrich Kraft (Vienna) “The importance of recombinant allergens for diagnosis and therapy of IgE-mediated diseases”
2000	Hakone (japan)	André Capron (Lille) “Allergy and immunity to helminths: common mechanisms or divergent pathways?”
2002	Bermuda	Jan de Vries (Vienna) “Inhibition of allergic inflammation by a low molecular weight dendritic cell modulator”
2004	Bornholm	Hermann Waldmann (Oxford) “Reprogramming the immune system”
2006	Malta	Sir Ravindar Maini (UK) “Identification of TNF as a therapeutic target”
2008	Curacao	Irving Weissmann “Normal and neoplastics stem cells cancelled J. Ring “History of Collegium Int. Allergologicum
2010	Ischia	Alberto Mantovani “Inflammation – the seventh hallmark of cancer”
2012	Jeju	E. Unanue “The unsolved mysteries of antigens presentation”
2014	Petersburg/Bonn	B. Beutler “Genetic analysis of immune responses”
2016	Charleston	L. Glimsher “ER stress in immunity and disease”
2018	Palma de Mallorca	F. Powie “Immune pathways in the intestine in health and disease” cancelled J. Ring “Reflections on the history and life of CIA”

CIA, Collegium Internationale Allergologicum.

uelsson [Stockholm], Erwin Neher [Goettingen] or Stanley Prusiner [San Francisco], Luc Montagnier [Paris], and Bruce Beutler [Dallas]). The essence of this meeting is a very open discussion which usually stays friendly, but sometimes can be quite vehement as for instance 1986 in Goeteborg with Luc Montagnier and Roberto Gallo discussing HIV infection and in 1980 in Konstanz with the

discussion between Jacques Benveniste (Paris) and Neil Pinckard (Denver) on the structure of Platelet Activating Factor.

The scientific contents of the symposia are published in proceedings volumes which for a long time were printed within the series “Monographs in Allergy” [9], then the “International Archives of Allergy and Immunology,”

Table 7. “Relaxing Lectures” (from Immunology)

1996 Fuschl/Salzburg Carl Djerassi (San Francisco) “My life as a scientist and a writer”	2008 Curacao F. Zufall (Homburg) “Immunology, Olfaction and behavior”
1998 Corfu Peter Jones (Newcastle, UK) “What you always wanted to know about the ancient Greeks but never dared to ask”	2010 Ischia E. Rietschel (Borstel) “Deadly Germs and great music”
2000 Hakone, Japan Tomio Tada (Tokyo) “Japanese culture and tradition: as seen through a biologist’s eyes (the ma and the kata)”	2012 Jeju South Korea Brenda Maddox (Wales) “The dark lady of DNA”
2002 Bermuda David Foot “The world of demographics and the demographics of the world”	2014 Petersberg/Bonn Wilhelm Barthlott (Bonn) “The secret of sacred lotus: Learning from biological surfaces”
2004 Bornholm Uffe Ellermann-Jensen (Copenhagen) “The Baltic region. History, present and future”	2016 Charleston, South Carolina USA Tom Johnson (Charleston) Magnolia gardens and the effort to preserve older azaleas and camelia varieties
2006 Malta C. Savona-Venturea (Malta) “History of medicine in Malta”	2018 Palma de Mallorca A. Vea “ <i>The great Majoricans: Lull the computer science founder, Serra a saint founder of the californias; and the Internet of things that matter</i> ”

Fig. 9. Stephen Galli and Fritz Melchers in Fuschl 1996.

which is still the official journal of the Collegium [6]. Later they were printed by Hogrefe-Huber (Toronto) and Pacini editore (Pisa) [4, 7, 8, 10]. In the time of internet and electronic publications, it remains open as to how long bound volumes of symposium proceedings will still be attractive. The organization of a CIA symposium is a

Fig. 10. Heidrun Behrendt and Tomio Tada in Hakone 2000.

major task, not so much because of the scientific content which is usually excellent since everybody tries to bring her/his best scientific results but in providing a social atmosphere of a “family spirit” also attractive for spouses, partners, and families.

From the beginning, the Collegium has been a blend of well-established scientists and young promising fellows in the field of Allergy and Clinical Immunology. The Alain de Weck travel grant program has been very successful to identify young brilliant clinical and basic investigators and to attract them into the club.

Special Lectures and Other Traditions

All contributions submitted by the participants are regarded equal after review and acceptance and presented as oral communications or posters whereby the poster presentations have the advantage to be presented over the whole duration of the symposium, while the oral communications usually only have a time slot of 15–20 min. There are 3 special lectures which have been developed over the decades, namely Carl Prausnitz lecture (Table 5) and the Paul Kallos lecture (Table 6) dedicated to progress in allergy and immunology; the Carl Prausnitz lecture every other year is given by the departing president. Since some years the tradition of a “relaxing from immunology,” lecture has been created and very much estimated to make participants not only think in a narrow-minded fashion of their own specialty but also open to other horizons and philosophical themes, as, for example, the unforgettable lecture of Tomio Tada on “The Ma and the Kata” in Hakone, Japan in 2000 (Fig. 10; Table 7).

There is a long-lasting tradition of the “CIA minutes” to give by a gifted speaker during the gala dinner and reflecting not only the scientific highlights of the preceding symposium. This tradition was started by Geoffrey West and continued by John Bienenstock and Steve Galli [2].

There also was a tradition that new members were asked interesting and sometimes quite personal questions prior to their official introduction into the Collegium at the gala dinner. Some members felt that this was the most difficult examination they had to pass in their occupational life. But all survived and are working together in this “humble and friendly spirit” so that the Collegium will have a bright future.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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