

EDITORIAL

The dramatic events caused by the clash of the Republic of Slovenia and the army of the former Yugoslavia about a year ago in Slovenia, among other things caused the cancellation of the XIII European Congress of Pathology in Ljubljana, Slovenia. This was a pity, because lots of programme had been planned, which would especially concentrate on the use of quantitative methods in histopathology. The Committee for Quantitative Diagnostic Pathology, which was responsible for that part of the the program, then turned to Dr. Gian Mario Mariuzzi, at the time the Professor of Pathology at the University of Ancona, Italy, who was located just a crossing of the Adriatic away from the scene of the battle. With the help of his colleagues he organized a meeting at one month's notice in Ancona, to save what could be saved. The participants of that meeting will always remember Prof. Ferluga and his colleagues whose positive spirit and knowledgeable appearance at the conference reflected the good prospects of the new independent Slovenia.

When the cancellation of the Ljubljana meeting was obvious, Dr. Miroslav Kališnik, the Editor of Acta Stereologica, kindly asked me to collect the papers which were planned to be presented in Ljubljana at the connection of Quantitative Histopathology sessions. Many of these papers are collected in this issue. We were not able to get all potentially interesting material. However, we were much helped by authors who expanded the scope of titles for a covering exposure of modern quantitative pathology. As the reader will realise, quantitative pathology uses a wide range of methodology, and applies this methodology in many areas of diagnosis and research. Stereology has always had a special place in the theory of histopathology, although the diagnostic applications usually cannot be called stereological. However, even though the methods much vary, the principles on how the results affect clinical decisionmaking are identical and dependent on the diagnostic performance of the methods applied. These principles are not solely limited to medical decisionmaking. They can be extended to cover any decisionmaking based on criteria which can be understood as diagnostic tests.

I have the feeling that quantitative histopathology has already started to influence the culture of medical decisionmaking. But it is not the only developing field in laboratory medicine. Molecular pathology has been developing extremely fast recently. It is most interesting that these two fields are now approaching each other. Let us hope that these developments will make it possible for us to serve the medical community in a way which brings satisfaction to patients and medical professionals alike.

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