

Conference report

**The 15th Congress of the International Society for Human and Animal Mycology (ISHAM),
San Antonio, TX, USA, May 25–29, 2003**

**The 1st Trends in Medical Mycology, Joint Meeting of the 9th Congress of the European Confederation
of Medical Mycology and the 7th Trends in Invasive Fungal Infections,
Amsterdam, The Netherlands, September 28–October 1, 2003**

**The 47th Annual Meeting of the Japanese Society for Medical Mycology,
Tokyo, Japan, October 16–17, 2003**

In 2003, two main international meetings were organized in the field of medical mycology. In San Antonio, 670 scientists gathered for the 15th ISHAM Congress. This meeting, traditionally the main Medical Mycology congress, included sessions on such diverse fields as Diagnostics, Immunity, Epidemiology, Evolution, Ecology, Resistance, Morphogenesis, Teaching, and Genomics.

Yeasts, being among the most important pathogens, were dealt with in various sessions. Of course the most extensively discussed yeast was *Candida albicans*, but this was closely followed by *Cryptococcus neoformans*. The latest research on morphogenesis, biochemistry and genomics of clinically important yeasts was presented in some very good sessions, clearly giving the state of the art. It was obvious that research on these organisms is developing fast, mainly due to the various genome projects that are complete or near completion. The impact of genomic research was most clear in areas such as morphogenesis, signalling, and resistance. However, it can be anticipated that this will soon be true for such areas as diagnostics and epidemiology as well. This was the most significant take-home message of the meeting. Of course this is a biased view, and others may have different opinions on the meeting, as the range of topics discussed was really very wide.

As the 1st Trends in Medical Mycology Meeting was held some months later, it is tempting to compare these two meetings. The Amsterdam meeting was attended by approximately 900 participants, a majority coming from European countries. Interestingly, also Middle-Eastern countries were represented, may be as a consequence of trends in global politics. More or less the same topics were treated as at the ISHAM meeting. Although con-

tributions dealing with genomics and post-genomics were more limited, some very interesting sessions were held on these topics. The emphasis at this Trends meeting was more towards the medical or clinical fields, with update sessions on various mycoses, vaccines, medicinal mushrooms, susceptibility testing and resistance, but this impression may be coloured by the reviewer's 'session visiting behaviour' during the two meetings.

The 47th Annual Meeting of the Japanese Society for Medical Mycology included about 80 oral presentations and 93 poster presentations. Participants were mainly from Japan, along with some speakers from Europe, America, and other parts of Asia. Yeasts were featured in a keynote address given by Scott Filler of UCLA on identification of yeast and human receptor molecules facilitating uptake of *C. albicans* germ tubes into endothelial cells. Several Japanese studies were presented on yeast-related topics such as *Cryptococcus neoformans* heat shock protein, *Cr. neoformans* serotype AD, and differentiation of *Candida dubliniensis*.

All three meetings were very well organized, and we think it is an advantageous situation to have these general meetings on medical mycology, with a distinct focus on clinically relevant yeasts, being organized on different continents. As such, they also present some flavour of the research trends and needs in various parts of the world.

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