

## Chronicle

### Life for science - Professor Horst Aspöck is sixty years old



Born in České Budějovice (Bohemia) on 21st of July 1939 into a traditional learned family, Horst Aspöck spent his early childhood in Linz (Upper Austria, Austria) and Vienna (Austria).

After completion of his secondary education in 1957 he matriculated at the Leopold-Franzens-Universität in Innsbruck (Tyrol, Austria) where he studied Zoology and Botany, and after 5 years he finished his studies with a thesis on the toxicologic characteristics of carbamates in July 1962 as a PhD.

Since November 1962 H. Aspöck has been a member of the Institute of Hygiene of the University of Vienna, first as a research assistant, since 1970 as an associate professor and later on (since 1977) as a full professor. In 1963 he succeeded in isolating arboviruses from mosquitoes in Austria for the first time and from that time onwards, throughout the following years he published many papers on arboviruses and on mosquitoes.

In 1966 H. Aspöck was entrusted with the establishment of a parasitological department with the special respect to a diagnostic laboratory within the Institute of Hygiene; several papers about myiasis cases in Austria, helminthologic-epidemiologic examinations of refugees

from Korea, Brazil and Uganda and foreign workers as well as cercarial dermatitis in Austria have been published between 1968 and 1973. Special scientific attention has been paid by H. Aspöck to palaeoparasitological topics (i.e. detection of eggs of intestinal worms in prehistoric human excrements of the Hallstatt culture).

H. Aspöck's name is inseparably connected with the establishment of the serological toxoplasmosis screening of pregnant women in Austria which was started in 1975. Numerous papers on the Austrian model of toxoplasmosis surveillance during pregnancy indicate the intensive scientific engagement of Prof. Aspöck with this topic.

After becoming a full professor for Medical Parasitology, Prof. Aspöck focused his activities - together with his increased scientific staff and on the basis of well equipped laboratories - to echinococcosis research (since 1982), molecular parasitology (since 1983), *in vitro* maintenance and cultivation of parasites (since 1984), toxocarosis and parasitoses and AIDS (since 1986) and free-living amoebae (since 1995). Several national and international research projects were carried out.

Prof. H. Aspöck's scientific opus comprises about 500 publications, among them 250 original papers, 95 original reviews and ten monographs.

For 36 years H. Aspöck has been teaching, during this period two colleagues have been habilitated for medical parasitology, numerous diplomas and doctoral dissertations were performed under his supervision.

Due to his ex- and intensive scientific activities (publications, lectures) H. Aspöck has received several prizes and awards and has been member of the editorial board or advisory board of several scientific journals.

All colleagues, friends and co-workers join in congratulations to a man, whose uppermost aim of life was and has been to learn continuously and under discipline in order to get a wide-spread spectrum of knowledge; prerequisites therefore are mental and physiological harmony. Prof. Aspöck has gained universal respect for his broad scientific knowledge, for his engagement establishing the field of Medical Parasitology in Austria, for his decency and integrity, for his excellence in academic and university life. We all wish him good health, further academic achievements and the prolongation of his enthusiasm for living science.

H. Auer

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