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Autor: Freyvogel, Thierry A.

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Editorial

A periodical, even a scientific journal, will in some measure reflect the attitude towards research prevailing at the institution which publishes it. Accordingly, in its new orientation as in the past, *Acta Tropica* will shape its editorial policy in the light of the aims and tasks of the Swiss Tropical Institute. Insofar as they are relevant to the journal, these aims are not dissimilar from those of other tropical institutes and schools, and may be summarized as follows:

- to extend basic knowledge in the field of the biomedical sciences,
- to develop and refine scientifically based methods which are of practical utility in the field of health, especially the health of people living in tropical zones,
- to transmit the knowledge and experience acquired to people of varying standards of education in Europe and overseas.

Given such objects, the journal is one medium among a number of others and therefore, as outlined on the first cover-page, will

- aim to disseminate new knowledge in the field of biomedical basic research by means of original papers,
- attempt to present occasional surveys of the latest developments in selected fields in review articles,
- report on attempts to apply scientific knowledge in the field,
- seek to stimulate fresh scientific work and
- help to foster personal relations between research workers at an international level.

Every scientific periodical must set limits to its journalistic activities. The choice of «biomedical sciences» as the keyword for *Acta Tropica*, and the degree of limitation this implies compared with earlier years, is in accord with the development of the Swiss Tropical Institute during the past 33 years. However, in view of the enormous increase in the number of publications pertaining to tropical and subtropical zones, this restriction is doubtless also in the interest of our readers. At the same time, however, it is essential to bear in mind the multi-disciplinary nature of the biomedical sciences; all the fields relevant to the subject must be embraced. As everyone knows, health is only one aspect of those processes which are commonly referred to as «development». Hence a journal with the «biomedical sciences» as its theme must set these within the framework of the overall development of human societies, and this implies a deliberate reference to everyday realities in the tropics and subtropics.

Correspondence: Prof. Dr. Thierry A. Freyvogel, Swiss Tropical Institute, Socinstrasse 57, CH-4051 Basel, Switzerland

Today the publication of a scientific journal incurs a greater economic risk than previously. For this reason the international response elicited by our questionnaire on the reorganization of the journal is all the more gratifying. The strong desire evinced by scientists for a reduction in the mass of publications in favour of quality, in other words the demand for a greater condensation of information, will induce the editorial board of *Acta Tropica* to make a careful selection from among the papers submitted, and to limit the compass of the individual contributions to a reasonable minimum. In reaching a proper assessment of the papers received it is therefore dependent on a large number of experts and of representatives of the various geographical regions. On this occasion we should like to express our grateful thanks to all those who have spontaneously consented to collaborate on the journal.

It will be the policy of the editorial board to publish contributions from colleagues in every part of the world. It will also try from time to time to tailor individual issues to themes of special topical interest and to obtain contributions from authoritative colleagues to this end. In 1977, the first year in which *Acta Tropica* will be published with the new objectives we have outlined, several issues will be devoted, by way of exception, to selected themes in order to convey a clearer notion of the intentions of the editorial board. Numbers dealing with «Host-Parasite Relations» and, in the second half of the year, «Community Health» are in immediate prospect. We should like to express our thanks here to all those colleagues who have offered to supply contributions for these issues.

Acta Tropica, which is now to be published by Schwabe & Co. Basle, has entered upon the second part of its existence which, we hope, will continue to be fruitful. It will be the task of others to assess what lies before us. But it is our duty to express gratitude for what lies behind. We are anxious to convey our cordial thanks to all those who, in any capacity whatever, contributed towards the success and the distribution of *Acta Tropica* during the past 33 years. By name we would single out only Prof. Rudolf Geigy, the former Head of the Swiss Tropical Institute, and at the same time founder and for many years editor-in-chief of *Acta Tropica*. His broad interests, his scientific authority, his unfailing energy, and the high standards he set for authors, the publisher, and the printer, are in large measure responsible for the existence of this journal and for its continued career.

On behalf of the editorial board:
Prof. THIERRY A. FREYVOGEL
Head of the Swiss Tropical Institute