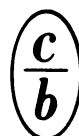


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THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL TERIOLOGICAL CONGRESS

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The First International Teriological Congress was held in Moscow from June 6 to 12, 1974, and was attended by more than 900 scientists from 30 countries. The holding of this international forum in the capital of the Soviet Union is convincing testimony to the successes achieved by Soviet teriology. In a paper entitled "The current state of teriology," delivered at the first plenary session, G. A. Novikov (USSR) gave a number of interesting data. There are more than 1500 teriologists in the USSR alone and thousands of specialists are working in other countries. About five or six thousand articles and books on teriology appear annually throughout the world, constituting about 24% of the total number of publications on vertebrate zoology. The largest number of such works deal with ecology (54.8% during the 1960's). Ecology and its specific methods have now permeated almost all areas of teriology.

The plenary sessions of the congress heard papers by leading teriologists from throughout the world on the following topics: mammalian evolution during the Cenozoic (B. Kurten, Finland), general problems of mammalian variation (R. J. Berry, Great Britain), evolutionary and genetic aspects of intraspecies variation and speciation (S. S. Shvarts, USSR), history of the formation of the Quaternary teriofauna in the USSR (N. K. Vereshchagin and I. M. Gromov, USSR), ecological organization of populations (K. Petrusiewicz, Poland), population regulation in mammals (D. Davis, USA), chemical communications in mammals (V. E. Sokolov, USSR), and signalling, biological signal fields, and their significance in the life of mammals (N. P. Naumov, USSR).

Six sections held meetings at the congress: phylogeny and paleoteriology, taxonomy and zoogeography, morphology, ecology, ethology, and applied teriology. The ecology section (organized by N. P. Naumov and S. S. Shvarts) was one of the largest and consisted of two subsections. The meetings of subsection A were devoted to general problems of ecology and the ecology of members of different mammalian orders. The papers on mathematical simulation, population bioenergetics, the population radiosensitivity of mammals, and the territorial structures of populations were of special interest.

The reports presented at the meetings of subsection B dealt with diverse problems of the ecology of rodents. By way of illustration, the following were the papers delivered on June 7: "Two methods for determination of mammalian population" (J. Galsler, Czechoslovakia), "Influence of interspecies relationships on population dynamics in field hamsters" (G. N. Cameron, USA), "Certain characteristics of the ecology of the hamster under conditions of intensive agriculture in the southern portion of the Panon lowland" (A. A. Ruzhich, Yugoslavia), "Comparison of food spectra in sympatric populations of the yellow-throated mouse and bank vole" (V. Golishev and R. Orbtel, Czechoslovakia), "Comparative ecology of subarctic voles" (O. A. Pyastolova, USSR), etc. Primary consideration was given to study of the population structure of species, the specific mechanisms of and factors governing population dynamics, and improvement of methods for evaluating and monitoring populations. For example, it was pointed out that population dynamics are investigated at different levels, ranging from the mechanisms governing animal behavior in elementary groupings to analysis of the events that occur over large geographic regions. The materials presented are especially interesting because similar problems are being studied for ecologically similar species in different geographic regions and on different continents (e.g., by B. Fuller in Canada and T. V. Koshkina in the USSR). Direct comparison of such data is possible only at international congresses. It can be seen from the papers presented that the ecology of rodents is increasingly becoming a population ecology. This is clearly manifested both in theoretical studies and in practical work.

Ecological problems also occupied the most important position at the symposia held at the congress. There were lively discussions regarding the principles of intrapopulational organization in mammals,

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population regulation, and research on population age structure. As a result of a suggestion made by W. Schmidt (USA), the symposium on the winter ecology of mammals was dedicated to the memory of the outstanding Soviet ecologist A. N. Formozov, whose work on the role of the snow cover in the life of mammals and birds is highly regarded by zoologists throughout the world.

The First International Teriological Congress was of great value in strengthening the working contacts between Soviet and foreign scientists. The successful conduct of the Congress was facilitated by its excellent organization, as was specifically noted in a resolution adopted at the suggestion of K. Jones, the President of the American Society of Mammalogists. Two volumes of abstracts have been printed, in Russian and English, together with a list of the participants and their addresses.

It was decided to hold the next teriological congress in Czechoslovakia in 1978.