TENDENCY IN THE SPREAD OF SYPHILIS AMONG THE POPULATION OF LITHUANIA, LATVIA AND ESTONIA (1920-1940)

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A study has been made of the spread of venereal diseases in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia from 1920-1940; it is a systematization of the features characterizing the incidence of syphilis, gonorrhea and soft chancre [1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 12] material presented is of a factographic character. Some suggestions in a number of cases require substantial affirmation therefore correction by analysing the course of epidemiologic process of the concrete disease has been made.

The present work gives an analysis of the dynamics of the various levels of incidence with syphilis during the period of the three independent capitalistic countries — Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The data of the contagious forms of syphilis (primary, secondary, active and congenital) have been studied as being those most characteristic in the spread of the epidemiology process. They have been systematized by I. Lelis in Lithuania and L. Nurmand in Estonia [1,3]. In Latvia while studying the levels of incidence with venereal diseases all indices of sickness with all forms of syphilis have been presented [2,9].

In the present work some additional sources were studied [4,5, 11] in order to compare data concerning the contagious forms of syphilis which were then generalized. During the 20-ies contagious forms made up 40% on the average from the whole incidence of syphilis. Taking into consideration that in Estonia in 1920, 1921, 1923 and in Latvia in 1922 incidence of all forms of syphilis has been registered, in the above mentioned years the incidence data of the contagious forms of syphilis have been calculated.

Data of incidence were calculated by means of an intensive coefficient on 100 000 inhabitants. For demonstrating

the spread of syphilis, beginning with the end of the 20-ies and the beginning of the 30-ies up to 1939 alignment of rows of straight line by method of the smallest squares have been made.

The material presented (table 1) prove that the data concerning officially registered cases of contagious forms of syphilis in Latvia and Estonia (1927) are obtainable of a short period only. In some years of this period we have calculated data at random. In the 20-ies in all three countries the level of incidence presents essential disbalance and cannot be included into any logical rules which might testify of the epidemiological process of syphilitic infection.

It is a well known fact that on territories where war is waged and during the post-war years, the incidence of venereal diseases keeps increasing [10]. This rule which is statistically grounded, does not pertain to the Baltic states during the first World War. Therefore official statistics during the 20-ies cannot reflect the true state of things and can be used only in a restricted way. It is very likely to suppose that the spread of syphilis was registered in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia up to the end of the 20-ies. In Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia in the years 1928—1930 the highest incidence rate of contagious forms of syphilis are marked; on the average there were 100 cases per 100 000 of the population. In the 30-ies there was a fall in the incidence rate. The picture, however, is not synonymous.

Compared to previous years, in 1936 in Lithuania and Latvia an increase in the incidence rate was registered by 19,3% and 4,2%; in 1937 and in 1938 in Estonia it increased by 9,2% and 13% correspondingly to the former years. In Latvia in 1939 a 6,1% incidence increase was noted compared to 1938.

By the end of the 20-ies and beginning of the 30-ies the incidence rate of contagious forms of syphilis was lower in Lithuania than that in Latvia and Estonia, while in the second half of the 30-ies the ratio was changed. The lowest level of incidence was registered in Estonia than Latvia and Lithuania.

The registered incidence rate of contagious forms of syphilis from 1928—1939 in the three Baltic states does not show essential logical contradictions. The period chosen for the study of the spread of syphilis among the population of

the Baltic states. It has been carried out on official statistical data.

Aligned (theoretical) number of features graphically prove that because of various internal factors influencing the spread of the epidemiology process in the 30-ies in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia there is a tendency of decrease in the incidence of contagious syphilis (fig. 1).

Fig. 1. Tendencies of the incidence of contagious forms of syphilis among the population in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in the years 1928—1939.

Thus in independent capitalist countries, i. e. in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia during the period from 1928—1939 a tendency is noted of the increase of syphilis among the population. The difference is only in the intensity of the process. There is a sharp decrease in Estonia while in Latvia and Lithuania it is less marked.

Tab. 1.

Incidence of contagious forms of syphilis among the population
in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia (1920—1939)

Years	On 100 000 inhabitants			Theoretic markers of incidence		
	Lithua- nia	Latvia	Estonia	Lithua- nia	Latvia	Estonia
1920	56		74,5*			
1921	40		98 *			
1922	25	127,6*	121,5*			
1923	26	116,2	98			
1924	37		69			
1925	33		78			
1926	42		93			
1927	61	69,5	98			
1928	100	94,2	104	90,17	110,91	101,34
1929	80	105,2	105	87,23	104,99	93,16
1930	85	104,7	114	84,29	99,07	84,98
1931	82	94,0	75,5	81,35	93,15	76,8
1932	74	104,4	47,2	78,41	87,23	68,62
1933	67	91,1	40,3	75,47	81,83	60,44
1934	61	77,1	35,8	72,53	75,39	52,26
1935	71	59,8	32,6	69,59	69,47	44,08
1936	88	62,4	28,7	66,65	63,55	35,9
1937	80	49,4	31,6	63,71	57,63	27,72
1938	51	47,4	36,3	60,77	51,71	19,54
1939	49	50,5	25,2	57,83	45,79	11,36

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* — approximate data

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ТЕНДЕНЦИИ РАСПРОСТРАНЕНИЯ СИФИЛИСА В ЛИТВЕ, ЛАТВИИ И ЭСТОНИИ (1920—1940 гг.)

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Резюме

В настоящей работе проведен анализ динамики уровней заболеваемости сифилисом во время существования независимых капиталистических государств Литвы, Латвии и Эстонии.

Показатели заболеваемости рассчитаны в интенсивных коэффициентах на 100 000 населения. Для выявления тенденций распространения сифилиса, начиная с конца 20-х и начала 30-х годов по 1939 г., проводилось выравнивание рядов по прямой линии методом наименьших квадратов.

Рост заболеваемости сифилисом среди населения Литвы, Латвии и Эстонии отмечался до конца 20-х годов. В 1928—1930 гг. в Литве, Латвии и Эстонии зарегистрированы наивысшие показатели заболеваемости заразными формами сифилиса, в среднем около 100 случаев на 100 000 населения. В 30-е годы в основном отмечается снижение заболеваемости.

Зарегистрированная заболеваемость заразными формами сифилиса с 1928 по 1939 гг. в трех государствах Прибалтики существенных логических противоречий не имеет. Этот период избран для изучения тенденций распространения сифилиса среди населения Прибалтики. Результаты показывают, что в независимых капиталистических государствах Литвы, Латвии и Эстонии за период 1928—1939 гг. отмечаются общие тенденции снижения распространения среди населения заболеваемости сифилисом. Различия имеются только в интенсивности этого процесса. Наиболее резко уменьшалась заболеваемость в Эстонии, менее интенсивно — в Латвии и Литве.

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