

RESEARCH NOTE

THE PREVALENCE OF HELMINTH INFECTION IN BAN NANIN, LAOS: ADDITIONAL DATA

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During investigation into opisthorchiasis and other food-borne helminthiases carried out in Laos, inhabitants of the village of Ban Nanin in central Laos were coprologically examined. Results of this examination have already been published by some of us (Pholsena *et al*, 1991). The authors designated all small fluke eggs found in stool samples as *Opisthorchis viverrini*. However, the subsequent evaluation of material and data obtained in the Ban Nanin village supported the assumption about probable absence of *O. viverrini* at this locality. The examination of sera, using western blotting, enabled differentiation of antibodies against *Opisthorchis* and *Haplorchis* antigens. Antibodies in all sera of inhabitants of the village of Ban Nanin, reacting in high titers against *O. viverrini* and *H. taichui* antigens in ELISA, were identified as specific exclusively against *Haplorchis* (Ditrich *et al*, unpublished).

In addition, a malacological survey, carried out in August 1989, revealed that no bithyniid snails, the first intermediate hosts of this species, were found around the village of Ban Nanin. However, thiarid snails, intermediate hosts of heterophyid flukes, were rather frequent (Ditrich, unpublished data). These data also conform with the above results of serological analysis. Furthermore, the examination of fish from the river Nam Ngum showed only the presence of larvae of heterophyid trematodes (Scholz, 1991). *O. viverrini* metacercariae were not found in these fish (Scholz *et al*, 1990), which serve as one of the most important sources of food in Ban Nanin.

Considering the above additional data, we assume that most of the fluke infections in Ban Nanin

were caused, in fact, by heterophyid trematodes of the subfamily Haplorchiinae.

Data of Giboda *et al* (1991), who identified flukes expelled from Laotians treated with praziquantel, also support the above assumption about possible dominance of heterophyid trematodes compared to that of *O. viverrini* in some regions of Laos.

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