

Symposium 45 Years of Continuous Neurotransmitter Research in Croatia (1978 - 2023)

under the auspices of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts

AUTHOR:

LIDIJA BACH-ROJECKY

Under the auspices of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts (HAZU) and supported by the Croatian Pharmacological Society, the scientific symposium **on 45 years of continuous neurotransmitter research in Croatia (1978-2023)** was held in the HAZU Library in Zagreb with the presence of about 75 participants. This meeting celebrated the 45th anniversary of the establishment of the Laboratory for Molecular Neuropharmacology at the University of Zagreb School of Medicine and the 20th anniversary of the collaboration with colleagues from the Department of Pharmacology, University of Zagreb Faculty of Pharmacy and Biochemistry. Two weeks before the meeting, it was announced that the founder of this Laboratory, Professor Zdravko Lacković received the State Award for Science for lifetime achievement, which contributed to the atmosphere of celebration.

Academician Professor Vida Demarin opened the meeting by emphasizing the importance of basic research, especially for the continuous development of neurology.

Professor Lacković described the path from the establishment of a small laboratory in the attic of the faculty building at Šalata

11 to world-renowned achievements. Professor Lidija Bach-Rojeky and Ivica Matak, Ph.D., briefly presented the discovery that botulinum toxin, a powerful poison, drug, and cosmetic product, reaches the CNS by axonal transport after peripheral application. Then Professor Melita Šalković-Petrišić described the discovery that experimental diabetes caused by streptozotocin can be studied as a model of sporadic Alzheimer's disease. This model was additionally discussed by Associate Professor Jelena Osmanović Barilar and Jan Homolak, Ph.D.

Guests from collaborating laboratories in Italy, Professor Marco Pirazzini (Padua) and Professor Eugenio Barone (Rome), spoke about the effect of tetanus toxin and insulin on the brain, respectively. The lecture on the role of cell organelles in brain diseases was held online by Professor Dimitri Krainc from Northwestern University, a member of the American Academy of Medicine and president of the American Society of Neurologists. Academician Professor Peter Riederer (Wuerzburg) spoke about the oxidative stress in neurodegenerative diseases.

The scientific part of the program was followed by a short informal gathering.



IMPRESSIONS*(translation LBR)*

Academician Prof. Peter Riederer, PhD, German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina, and Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Wuerzburg)

It was indeed traveling through the times of neurochemistry and neuropharmacology with all its facets. The development of research into botulinum toxin and the basis of Alzheimer's pathology have been characteristic highlights of the institution that you have founded. Congratulations!!!

I was very much impressed to see the development of your teams ... excellent teams of young scientists with a great future ahead. You can be proud! It is hoped that the University recognizes that these teams are a treasure, which lead to an increase in the University's international reputation.

Academician Prof. Dimitri Krainc, MD, PhD, National Academy of Medicine (part of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine) and President of American Neurological Association (Chicago)

And once again, let me say that I'm sorry I wasn't there in person... I wasn't with you in Lab. for a long time, but the memories are wonderful. Without your initial inspiration and support, who knows where I would have ended up.

Karlo Toljan, MD, Neurologist and Neuroimmunology fellow, Cleveland Clinic Foundation (Cleveland)

Congratulations! 45 years! One epoch! That number will be impossible for many labs in the global world, where so much is produced quickly. This is a testimony that with effort, a lot is possible, no matter how many people mention the phrase "in our conditions" as an excuse.

Prof. Tonči Matulić, PhD, University of Zagreb Catholic Faculty of Theology (Zagreb)

It was an honor and a pleasure for me to take a short part in the celebration of the anniversary and witness the top achievements and excellence of which you are the originator, mentor, and soul... I wish you a lot of happiness and health and God's blessing in everything.

