

This issue contains the papers presented during the pineal part of the International Conference on "Thymus and Pineal Gland in Neuroimmunoendocrinology" held in Swieradow Zdroj, Poland on October 22–24, 1998. The papers presented during the thymus part will be published in the *International Journal of Thymology*.

The Conference, organized by Sections of Neuroendocrinology and Experimental Endocrinology together with the Association of Therapy with Thymic Preparations, was dedicated to the memory of Prof. Dr. Jeremi Czaplicki. Jeremi Czaplicki was born on July 3, 1930. He graduated from the Medical Faculty, Silesian School of Medicine, in 1954. His doctoral thesis was accepted in 1958, and he was awarded a degree of "doctor habilitatus" in 1970. In 1985 Jeremi Czaplicki was nominated for professor of medical sciences. As a medical student he began his scientific work in the Department of Histology and Embryology. Since 1962, he directed a Laboratory of Transplantology affiliated with the Department of Pathological Anatomy, and later with the Department of Biology. In 1970, Jeremi Czaplicki organized the Department of Biology and Genetics at the Faculty of Pharmacy. He was a head of this Department until the end of his life. Prof. Czaplicki was in charge of several important functions at his Alma Mater; namely, he was a Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy (1978–1982) and Pro-Rector (Vice-President) of the Silesian Medical University.

The scientific activity of Prof. Czaplicki mainly concerned the thymus. He was one of the pioneers of the thymus research in Poland, and he was the co-editor of the *International Journal of Thymology*. Together with his team Prof. Czaplicki discovered several previously unknown biological effects of embryonal and fetal thymus extracts, and he was a pioneer of the therapeutical applications of thymic preparations, among others in transplantology, severe burns, cerebral palsy, and Down's syndrome.

Prof. Czaplicki was the initiator of this Conference, now dedicated to his memory, and took part in the works of the Scientific Committee until his premature death on January 8, 1997.

Over 80 scientists from 8 countries, including Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and USA, participated in the Conference. The Conference started with two general lectures: one was delivered by Prof. P. Fedor-Freybergh which is presented herein and the second was delivered by Prof. M. P. Dabrowski which will be published together with papers on the thymus. The Conference was divided into two parts. In the first, devoted to the thymus, 3 plenary lectures and 10 short communication were presented. In the second, devoted to the pineal gland 10 plenary lectures and 6 short communications were presented. The majority of these presentations are published in this issue, whereas some of them will be published in the next issue.

Meetings such as the one in Swieradow Zdroj are only possible due to generous support by various organizations. The organizers are very grateful to the pharmaceutical company JELFA S.A. (Jelenia Gora) and KGHM Polska Miedz S.A. (Lubin) for their support. Finally, we are indebted to the members of the Local Organizing Committee, especially to the Chairman, Mr. Zdzislaw Kleski, for their tireless input in making this conference a success.

Guest Editors:

*Prof. Dr. Michal Karasek, Lodz, Poland*

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