

PREFACE

This volume marks the 50th anniversary of *Acta Biochimica Polonica*, the first biochemical journal published in Poland. We are celebrating this memorable event by inviting numerous eminent researchers and several of our old-time colleagues to contribute to the four “golden” issues of 2003. Among them is Professor David Shugar whose article opened volume 1 of this journal in 1954.

Fifty years of the existence of this journal warrant a moment of reflection about the circumstances in which it was founded, its role and its adaptation to the changing scientific environment, how it survived the years of complex political changes and economic difficulties in Poland and also about its future. The archives of the Department of Biochemistry of the Medical Academy in Gdańsk have preserved the manuscript of Professor Włodzimierz Mozółowski, one of the founders and for many years the Editor of the journal. It was to have appeared as a “Word from the Editors” to introduce the first volume of *Acta Biochimica Polonica* in 1954. Unfortunately, the authorities of that time did not allow the publication of that text which told much about the early years achievements and perspectives of biochemistry in Poland. Decisions of what could be printed and what was banned lay in their hands. Thanks to the courtesy of Professor Mariusz Żydowo, Mozółowski’s student and since many years a member of our Editorial Advisory Board, in this anniversary issue we publish this text in two versions – the original Polish and an English translation. We are also pleased that Professor Konstancja Raczyńska-Bojanowska, long-time editor and former editor-in-chief of the journal, accepted our request to furnish an introductory editorial showing the 50 years of history of this journal as well as the vision and organizational abilities of its founders and first editors. In the next issues of the golden volume of *Acta Biochimica Polonica* we will also publish the recollections of several outstanding Polish biochemists showing the conditions and directions of development of biochemistry in Poland in the early post-war years and the collaboration of the research centers and laboratories from which they originated with our journal.

Fifty years of the existence of *Acta Biochimica Polonica* falls at an extremely dynamic period of development and great discoveries made in life sciences, especially in biochemistry and molecular biology, all of whose aspects are within the broad scientific scope of the journal. During these years *Acta Biochimica Polonica* has changed from a local journal publishing in Polish “behind the Iron Curtain” exclusively papers by Polish scientists to a journal published in English and with an international scope, indexed in international databases with a slowly but steadily increasing IF and with a free full-text access to its online edition.

The 50th anniversary of *Acta Biochimica Polonica* can thus be perceived as a confirmation of its right to exist, and also as a measure of its success which is the status the journal has achieved and growing acceptance by the community of biochemists and molecular biologists not only in Poland. This anniversary also makes us aware at the same time how many people have worked for the achievement of this success during the past 50 years, especially many authors by sending their articles to it, innumerable referees, many members of the

Editorial Board, Editors and Editorial office staff (listed below), and of course readers without whom this whole work would not make any sense. The current anniversary is an excellent occasion to express our gratitude to all those who contributed to the setting up and development of the journal – especially to the late former editors Włodzimierz Mozołowski and Irena Mochacka, and to those who have been involved with the journal for the longest time, and are still active and irreplaceable – Konstancja Raczyńska-Bojanowska, Lech Wojtczak, Kazimierz L. Wierzchowski, Daniela Barszcz and editorial secretaries Anna Olszańska and Małgorzata Basaj.

When I took over as editor-in-chief in 1999 I had the honour, together with the wonderful team of experienced editors, to bring *Acta Biochimica Polonica* into the 21st century. We started it with an edition of a full-text on-line version of the journal, electronic submission of articles to NLM's MEDLINE/PubMed and links to the complete texts at the journal site, and the possibility of placing moving images in on-line version of articles. In the future we plan a further rise in scientific and editorial levels of the journal and introduction of all the facilities brought by the Internet, in order to fulfil the requirements of modern biochemistry and the expectations of authors and readers.

Liliana Konarska

Editor-in-Chief