

Report of the 4th Polish-Ukrainian Parnas conference

The Polish and Ukrainian Biochemical Societies organize Parnas Conferences every two years. This year, the 4th Parnas Conference was organized in Wroclaw, September 15-17. Scientific meetings of Polish and Ukrainian biochemists are held to commemorate Jakub Karol Parnas, a distinguished Polish biochemist, who during 1920-1941 was the head of the Department of Physiological Chemistry of Lviv University, and was the founder of Lviv's Biochemical School. Jakub Karol Parnas died in a Moscow prison in 1949.

The first Parnas Conference held in 1996 in Lviv was organized by Professor R. Stoika (Lviv, Ukraine) and by the Polish Biochemical Society (Professors L. Konarska and J. Barańska). A plaque commemorating Jakub Karol Parnas was placed on the wall of the University building where the Department of Physiological Chemistry was situated. This plaque was made in Poland, thanks to a fund collected by Polish biochemists, and brought to Lviv by a Polish delegation consisting of about one hundred people. Participants of the Conference passed a resolution regarding organization of the Parnas Conference every two years, rotating between Poland and Ukraine. Thus, the 2nd Parnas Conference organized by Professor S. Angielski was held in 1998 in Gdansk (Poland), and the 3rd one, organized by Professor R. Stoika in 2000, again in Lviv. This year, the Conference was held in Wroclaw, Poland, as one of the scientific meetings celebrating the 300th anniversary of

Wroclaw University; it was organized by Professor A. Dzugaj.

The 4th Parnas Conference was attended by 60 Ukrainian and 50 Polish biochemists. The organizers, thanks to many Polish institutions, were able to offer financial support to our Colleagues from the Ukraine. 35 participants, mostly students or young scientists from Ukraine received this support. The participation of young scientists at this Conference was one of the principal goals of the organizers. Ukrainian participants were not obliged to pay the Conference registration fee and, thanks to Wroclaw University, got a considerable discount in student dormitories.

The leading theme and the title of the Conference was: "Molecular mechanisms of cell activation; biological signals and their target enzymes". The opening ceremony was held in the beautiful baroque hall of Wroclaw University, Aulum Leopoldinum. The plenary lectures were:

- ◆ The Parnas Lecture on "Structural and energetic aspects of serine protease-protein inhibitor interaction" by Professor Jacek Otlewski (Wroclaw), the 2001 winner of the Parnas prize, the most prestigious research prize awarded annually by the Polish Biochemical Society;
- ◆ Professor Sergiy Komisarenko, President of the Ukrainian Biochemical Society (Kijow) on "Molecular mechanisms of lymphocyte activation";

- ◆ Professor Kai Simons, President of the European Life Science Organization (Dresden) on "Lipid rafts in membrane trafficking and cell polarity".

Lectures were held at the Institute of Chemistry of Wroclaw University: The Programme outline of the IV Parnas Conference was as follows:

- ◆ I. Metabotropic receptors and cross-talk signalling,
- ◆ II. Signalling in cell differentiation,
- ◆ III. Immune system and intracellular signalling,
- ◆ III. Target enzymes,
- ◆ IV. Signalling mediated by ionotropic receptors, voltage dependent channels and low molecular weight molecules.

30 lectures were presented by 15 scientists from the Ukraine and 15 from Poland. Colleagues who attended the previous Parnas Conferences emphasized the great progress in the presented lectures. 51 posters were presented during the Poster Session and 18 of them entered the competition for the best poster. Professor Andrei Sybirny (Lviv) was the chairman of the jury which awarded prizes to two young scientists, one from the Ukraine and one from Poland: Katerina Shostak (Kijow) for the poster: Shostak K.O., Dmitrenko V.V., Garifulin O.M., Rozumenko V.D., Khomenko, O.V., Zozulya Y.A., Zehetner G., Kavsan V.M. "Inactivation of putative suppressor gene Tsc-22 in human brain tumors"; and Rafal Czajkowski (Warsaw) for the poster: Czajkowski R., Banachewicz W., Sabala P., Ilnytska O., Drobot L., Baranska J. "Differential effects of P2Y1 and P2Y12 ADP receptors activation on intracellular signalling pathways and on proliferation of glioma C6 cells". The prizes were funded by the Nencki Institute of Experimental Biology.

Participants praised the friendly atmosphere of the Conference. Wroclaw newspapers and TV reported on the Conference. Wroclaw, an old city of multinational heritage, is a very good place for international meetings. We hope that this Conference will stimulate further collaboration between Polish and Ukrainian scientists and will lead to strengthening of their friendship. The next Parnas Conference will be held in Kyiv in 2005 instead of 2004 because of the 29th FEBS Congress organized by the Polish Biochemical Society in Warsaw in 2004. We expect that a number of our Ukrainian Colleagues and Friends will attend the FEBS Meeting and take this opportunity to cordially welcome them.

*Professor Andrzej Dzugaj, Organizer
of the 4th Parnas Conference
Professor Jolanta Baranska, President
of the Polish Biochemical Society*

The Polish organizers of the 4th Parnas Conference want to express their sincere gratitude to the Rector of Wroclaw University, the State Committee for Scientific Research, the Polish Academy of Sciences, the Polish Network for Cell and Molecular Biology UNESCO/PAN, the Nencki Institute of Experimental Biology, the Mayor of Wroclaw, and the President of the Council of Lower Silesia. Without their help the Parnas Conference could not have been organized.

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