

## PREFACE

This issue of *Acta Biologica Hungarica* is publishing a number of papers by colleagues, former coworkers and friends of Maria Wollemand, celebrating her 80th birthday and appreciating her outstanding contribution to science. She has been working in neuroscience since the late nineteen forties covering several fields with a great enthusiasm, success and world-wide recognition.

Maria Wollemand was born in Hungary, attended schools in Baja and Bucharest, spoke German, French and Romanian at an early age. She started her medical education in Szeged in 1941, while the Nobel Prize laureate Albert Szent-Györgyi was there. Due to the war situation she continued her studies in Budapest and obtained her medical degree there. Later she returned to Szeged, where she took part in the research activity of several departments of the Medical School. From the Institute of Medical Chemistry headed by Professor Brunó F. Straub she moved to Budapest and worked on muscle biochemistry. When the Academic Institute of Biochemistry was founded she started to work there on the mechanism of action of acetylcholine in the nervous system. On this topic was her candidate's dissertation written, which was also published as a joint edition of *Akadémiai Kiadó*, Budapest and Masson et Cie, Paris. Maria Wollemand spent fifteen years at the State Institute of Neurosurgery, where she studied human brain tumors and published a book entitled "Biochemistry of brain tumors" under the sponsorship of foreign publishers with the foreword of Abel Lajtha.

She spent several years abroad, including Berlin, New York and Paris learning new methods, investigating several topics. During her stay in Paris she was interested in neurotransmitters, including receptors, metabolism, etc. This became her major field when she moved to Szeged in 1971, when the Biological Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences was founded. At the beginning, her group investigated the adrenergic system and later they concentrated on the opioid system. Maria Wollemand played a pioneer and major role in starting receptor research by biochemical methods in Hungary.

In 1977, she was appointed as deputy and a year later as director of the Institute of Biochemistry and served in that function for five years. Her research group gave

an internationally recognized contribution to the opioid field. They have purified for apparent homogeneity one of the major receptor type (kappa), have studied ligand/receptor interactions and functional consequences. She had worked out several collaborations with institutes of the Academy of Sciences and university departments.

Besides research, she has always been involved in teaching, in undergraduate as well as in postgraduate programs, mainly at the Comparative Physiology Department in University of Szeged where she is holding an honorary professorship.

Maria Wollemand has been served as a member of editorial boards, and as referee for a number of journals. She is a member of several national and international societies and recipient of a number of scientific and national awards reflecting her tremendous achievements.

Besides, being a scientist fighting for accepting her ideas (see her correspondence at TIPS 1996), she is a colorful person with hobbies, great sense of humor and outstanding language skill.

Her colleagues, friends appreciate the possibility for publishing their papers in the present issue of *Acta Biologica Hungarica*, congratulating for her birthday and wishing her many more successful years in science.

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