



Report from the symposium:

„1st Nencki Symposium on: Jerzy Konorski contribution to modern neuroscience”

Warsaw, 19 September, 2013

On 19th September 2013, in the Nencki Institute we organized symposium entitled “1st Nencki Symposium on: Jerzy Konorski’s Contribution to Modern Neuroscience”. This event commemorated the outstanding achievements of Jerzy Konorski and marked 40th anniversary of his death. The conference was organized by the Department of Neurophysiology, Nencki Institute of Experimental Biology and sponsored by BIO-IMAGIning in research INnovation and Education Project, supported by the EU FP7 Capacities Programme (Research potential).

The scientific achievements of Jerzy Konorski had worldwide impact on the concepts of fundamental brain function. His career started before World War II when he discovered, jointly with Stefan Miller, instrumental (Type II) conditioned reflexes and carried out intensive research on this topic. Indeed, the distinction between the classical (Pavlovian or Type I condition reflexes) and instrumental (Type II) learning appears to be of fundamental importance since huge body of data has indicated that classical conditioning and instrumental learning involve quite different neural networks. In 1948, that is, before the ‘Iron Curtain’ substantially isolated intellectual exchange between the East and West, Cambridge University Press published Konorski’s 1st seminal book entitled: “Conditioned reflexes and neuron organization” in which he attempted to integrate classical Pavlovian theory with Sheringtonian neurophysiology. In this book Konorski established the concept of the „plasticity” of neuronal networks. Almost 20 years later, in 1967, University Chicago Press published Konorski’s 2nd book entitled: “Integrative activity of the brain” in which he formulated many of the ideas which underlie heuristically fruitful programs in the 21st century neuroscience.

The symposium consisted of seven lectures in which a number of important concepts formulated by Jerzy Konorski were discussed. The invited speaker came from United Kingdom (1 person), Germany (1 person), Norway (1 person), USA (1 person), Israel (1 person), Italy (1 person) and Poland (1 person). The conference had 94 participants.

All materials may be found on the newly established site: <http://www.konorski2013.pl/>.

Andrzej Wróbel
Chair of the Organizing Committee

The Symposium was supported by the EU FP7 Project BIO-IMAGINE:
BIO-IMAGIning in research INnovation and Education, GA No. 264173

Nencki award for prof. Bogdan Dreher, pupil of Jerzy Konorski:



Audience:



Coffee break together with poster session:



The tour around behavioral laboratories:



Round Table memoirs by Konorski's friends and pupils



The lecture hall in the Nencki Institute was denominated by the name of Jerzy Konorski

