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SPECIAL REPORT

AIDS and Cancer Research

"Convergence of AIDS and Cancer Research" – this was the title of an unusual international conference held August 25–28, 1996 in Budapest, Hungary. The conference was organized by the Mór Kaposi Research Foundation of the National Institute of Dermato–Venereology, Budapest together with the Foundation for Advanced Cancer Studies, Frederick, MD, USA.

The title of the conference, as well as its timing was right on the mark. It is most appropriate that this 1st International Meeting – convened in the honor of the late ***Mór Kaposi****, the prominent Hungarian-born dermatologist who first described Kaposi's sarcoma in 1872, (as recalled by Karl Holubar who along with his medical degree is professor of history at Vienna University) – was held in Budapest, Hungary. The Mór Kaposi Foundation, founded in 1990, set out to promote international cooperation in basic research efforts and personal contacts between Hungarian scientists and members of the international scientific community. The first Kaposi plaquette (solid silver) was awarded to George Klein, Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, who gave in his Award lecture an outstanding talk about general aspects of tumorigenesis.*

The conference was most timely, due to recent developments in our understanding of the pathogenesis of HIV summarized by John M.Coffin from Tufts University, Boston in his excellent lecture dedicated to the memory of the late Howard Temin; Eva-Maria Fenyő from the Karolinska Institute, Stockholm; and Angus Dalgleish from the St.George's Hospital London – and in the extraordinary success in AIDS therapy, including HIV proteinase inhibitors whose function was pioneered by Stephen Oroszlan, co-chairman of the conference, from NCI-Frederick Cancer Research and Development Center, and his colleagues John M Louis, NIH and József Tőzsér Debrecen Medical University. The important role of other viral enzymes in HIV replication was discussed by Stephen Hughes, from NIH, Frederick Cancer Research and Development Center, who explained the resistance of HIV-1 reverse transcriptase to inhibitors; Alexander Wlodawer, also from Frederick, who introduced crystal structure of HIV integrase, as well as Alan Engelman, from the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Boston, who talked about the function of HIV integrase. The perspective on HIV vaccines was offered by Marc Girard of the Pasteur Institute, Paris and the progress in cancer chemoprevention was discussed by Gary Keloff of NCI, Bethesda. The spread of AIDS in Central and Eastern Europe was analysed by István Dönök of the National Institute of Hygiene,Budapest.

In addition, we heard from Robin Weiss, Denise Whitby (Institute Cancer Research, London), and Alvin Friedman-Kien (New York University Medical Center) on the recent progress in identifying the human herpes virus 8 (HHV-8) as the likely causative agent of Kaposi's Sarcoma (KS). Brian J. Nikoloff, from Loyola University, Chicago discussed the ability to propagate this virus in large quantity. These advances provide great opportunities for studying the molecular biology and pathology of both the virus and KS. In these fields, Attila Dobozy and Lajos Kemény, from Szeged Medical University, and Attila Horváth and Károly Nagy, from the National Institute of Dermato-Venereology, Budapest, also contributed significantly. Barbara Ensoli (Instituto Superiore de Sanita, Rome) reported on the effects of HIV tat protein on angiogenesis and KS development. The colorful Joseph G.Sinkovics from St.Joseph's Cancer Institute, Tampa, Florida, in his Ferenc Györkey Memorial Lecture introduced to us several contradictory concepts in the etiology and regression of KS. These studies facilitate the understanding of the role of oncogenic or other factors; for example, the inappropriate autocrine MET-HGF/SF signaling, explained by George F. Vande Woude (NCI-Frederick Cancer Research and Development Center), the co-chairmen of the conference, in his brilliant talk about tumorigenesis, invasion and metastasis; that might interact with HIV in the etiology of AIDS associated malignancies. Jay A. Levy (University of California, San Francisco) related the similarities in the challenges presented by AIDS and cancer. Eva Klein (Karolinska Institute, Stockholm) introduced to us immunsurveillance against EBV carrying B cells, and Antonio Carbone (Instituto Nazionale Tumori, Milan) summarized the pathology of the spectrum of AIDS-related lymphomas.

The biological significance of apoptosis, the programmed cell death in AIDS pathogenesis, was discussed by Béla Szende, Semmelweis University of Medicine, Budapest, Marie Lise Gougeon, Pasteur Institute, Paris, László Fésüs, Medical University, Debrecen, and Richard Heyman, Ligand Pharmaceuticals, San Diego.

There were two workshops held: AIDS-HIV and KS-Herpesviruses, this latter with Nicolas Dupin (Hopital de la Pitie, Paris) and Peter Medveczky (University of South Florida, Tampa) as chairmen, with 18 talks, and a poster section with 22 presentations.

The Organizers of the Conference together with the Editors of Pathology Oncology Research, have decided to make the information presented during the conference available to the readers of POR, as Special Reports: AIDS and Cancer Research.

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Chairman of the Conference

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Chairman of the Local Organizing Committee