

Preface

Research on neural plasticity and regeneration following spinal cord injury naturally falls in 3 categories: (1) limitation of the primary injury; (2) improvement of axonal growth and regeneration; and (3) repair and possible substitution of damaged spinal cord tissue. The program for the International Symposium on Transplantation to Spinal Cord injuries, held August 30 – September 2, 1990 in Aarhus, Denmark was centered around these topics, and included presentation of some of the newest results regarding (1) pharmacological prevention of secondary neural degeneration; (2) the occurrence and action of neural survival factors and growth promoters as well as growth inhibitors; and (3) neuronal and glial transplantation.

Most results were obtained from studies directly on the spinal cord, but valuable and highly relevant results were brought in from other areas of the central nervous system.

The chapters in this special issue of Restorative Neurology and Neuroscience represent the invited lectures presented at the symposium and the free communications presented as posters. We are grateful to the active participants for their help and enthusiasm in submitting the manuscripts and for accepting our critical reviews. Within the topics of the symposium the reader is provided with an up-to-date assessment of the status of the field.

We are indebted to Lars Hermansen, Bente Ovesen, Helge Rishave and Viggo Rasmussen, who as members of the two Danish organizations for para- and tetraplegics originally fostered the idea of having a symposium on Transplantation to Spinal Cord Injuries, and thereafter, together with Nis Schultz, deputy director of the Danish Society for Polio and Accident Victims, were very active in the administrative planning and fundraising.

We also gratefully acknowledge the support of the sponsors of the symposium. They made it possible to bring together an international group of scientists active in research on neural regeneration and transplantation. Besides the immediate scientific purpose, this has already stimulated scientific collaboration and exchange of information. The sponsors were the EEC Directorate-General for Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs, the Danish Ministry of Education and Research, the Danish Medical Research Council, Mads Clausen's Foundation, Brock and Michelsen Instruments Ltd., Den danske Bank, Coloplast Ltd., and V. Guldmann Ltd.

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