

PREFACE

The present issue of *Arch. ital. Biol.* contains the abstracts of a Satellite Symposium to the XXth Annual Meeting of the Bárány Society. The Satellite Symposium took place in Freiburg, Germany, from September 9 - 11, 1998 and was entitled THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE VESTIBULAR SYSTEM TO OCULO-MOTOR, SKELETO-MOTOR AND PERCEPTUAL FUNCTIONS. It was organised by U. Büttner (München), N. Dieringer (München), M. Fetter (Tübingen) and T. Mergner (Freiburg). It intended to bring together scientists from all over the world, who work on basic and clinical aspects of vestibular research. The Symposium was held in honour of two outstanding scientists in this field of research, who are approaching their retirements, Ottavio Pompeiano, Pisa, and Victor J. Wilson, New York. These two scientists, who are friends many years since, had a profound influence on vestibular research over more than four decades and continue to do so. Many scientists from abroad have either worked in the Pisa and the New York laboratories or have collaborated in some form with Ottavio and Victor and came to Freiburg to demonstrate their great respect and gratitude, together with colleagues who did not have the good fortune to work directly with them. The present collection of abstracts bear witness to the great success of the conference. The contributions testify to the fact that both Ottavio Pompeiano and Victor J. Wilson had substantial impact on the course of vestibular research and the related fields. We are glad to present a collection of contributions from outstanding authorities in the field as well as from young scientists who will form the scientific community in this field in the future.

It was a honour and a great pleasure to host this conference. The meeting was originally planned for 50-60 participants, but more and more colleagues wanted to come, so that the number increased to ninety. Finally, we had more than 120 participants, when many young people from the different laboratories joined us. We would like to thank the University of Freiburg which supported the Symposium by providing free use of the conference facilities in the form of a representative setting. In addition, we acknowledge the sponsorship of Sensory-Motor Instruments, the European Community (BIOMED, BMH1-CT-1133), the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, the Land Baden-Württemberg as well as of *Novartis* and *Sanofi*. We also wish to thank the staff of the Neurological University Clinic of Freiburg for their help to organize the conference, especially Mrs. W. Vasold. Moreover, our thanks are extended to the many participants who came from different european and non-european countries, such as the United States, Canada, Japan, China (Hong Kong) and Australia to make the conference an exciting event of lively discussions which were always kept at a high scientific level. Finally, we would like to thank Ottavio Pompeiano and Victor J. Wilson for their active participation and their promotion of the ongoing research in this field of science.

For the organisers,

Thomas Mergner

Scientific Commitee:

W. Becker (Ulm), U. Büttner (München), T. Brandt (München), J. Dichgans (Tübingen), N. Dieringer (München), M. Fetter (Tübingen), W. Graf (Paris), T. Mergner (Freiburg)