

PREFACE

The investigation of the chemical nature of cell processes plays a key role in the study of living matter; the present advances in biochemistry, bioorganic chemistry, molecular biology, genetic engineering, etc. are widely known. Practically every day we are witnessing the revelation of new facts, the discovery of new bioregulators and the deciphering of new structures. The new direction in science, which is often called physico-chemical biology, not only strikes our imagination, but also has a considerable influence on the improvement of health care, efficiency in agricultural production and the development of new technologies.

In the summer of 1984, Moscow was the venue of the 16th Meeting of the Federation of European Biochemical Societies (FEBS). More than 4000 participants gathered in Moscow; this included not only Europeans, but also researchers from America, Asia and other parts of the world.

The scientific programme of the 16th FEBS meeting was very wide and covered practically all major aspects of the study of living matter on a molecular level. The lectures and posters presented at the meeting were devoted to the structure and function of biopolymers, the questions of the cell and membrane biology, the pressing problems of immunology, enzymology, neurobiology and modern directions of biotechnology.

The scientific level of all symposia organized within the framework of the meeting was extremely high and has reflected the latest achievements in each particular branch of science.

This three-part publication of the Proceedings of the 16th FEBS Congress includes the lectures that are of particular interest. We unfortunately could not publish all of the contributions—this would be hardly practicable.

On behalf of the organizing committee I should like to express my sincere gratitude to all attendants of the meeting for their active participation in this outstanding biochemical forum. I hope that the spirit of cooperation, mutual understanding and friendship which has marked the Moscow FEBS meeting will contribute to future progress in the study of living matter, to the well being of all nations and to peace and happiness on Earth.

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