



## Preface

The *Nineteenth International Symposium on Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Analysis* (PBA 2008) was held for the first time in the history of this series in Gdańsk, Poland, from 8 to 12 June 2008.

Since 1987, symposia in the PBA series have succeeded in creating a very friendly atmosphere with the participation of many internationally recognized scientists. The aim of this 19th Symposium was to provide a forum for high-level scientific exchanges and updating information on advances in pharmaceutical analysis with emphasis on the most recent discoveries concerning disease biomarker analysis, metabolite profiling and individual "omics".

PBA 2008 took place in the modern Gdańsk Music and Congress Centre, located in the heart of the Old Town. The scientific programme featured five invited plenary and 32 keynote lectures and a considerable number (32) of oral communications. In the programme, ample time was scheduled for poster sessions with the presentation of about 350 posters. Approximately 500 delegates attended from 55 countries all over the world, making this edition of PBA one of the most successful, also in terms of participation.

The opening ceremony started with a plenary lecture by Prof. Irving W. Wainer (National Institute of Health, Baltimore, USA) entitled "Cellular membrane affinity chromatography (CMAC): working at the intersection of chromatographic and biological sciences". The ceremony was concluded by a concert by the string quartet from the Polish Baltic Philharmonics and a welcome reception held in the lobby of the Congress Hall.

Starting from Monday 9 June, for the duration of 3 days, a high quality well balanced scientific program was presented in the Auditorium, Green Hall and the lobby of the Congress Centre. The programme reflected the main current scientific themes, like analytical methods in pharmaceutical R&D, "omics" in pharmaceutical studies, analytical studies involving biomacromolecules, analysis of natural products, preformulation and drug formulation analysis,

biorecognition, enantiospecific drug determination, analytical processing of biological materials, toxicological and environmental analysis and new tools in bioanalysis. These different themes are represented in the present issue in which a number of the presented papers are brought together.

Gdańsk provided a wonderful environment for PBA 2008. This Hanseatic city on the Baltic Sea coast with over 1000 years of history, offered excellent opportunities for scientific, cultural and social experiences in unique urban setting. Just outside the Music and Congress Centre on the Olowianka Island, where the meeting was held, the delegates were already in the heart of the city, where just taking a short walk one could discover magnificent architectural masterpieces. The social programme and the accompanying persons programme were also highly enjoyable, including the open-air picnic in the pictorial Kashubian countryside, the invited speaker reception on the magnificent sailing ship "Dar Pomorza" and a banquet in the City Hall cellars located in the heart of the Gdańsk Old Town near the famous Neptun Fountain.

The PBA 2008 Symposium in Gdańsk has been evaluated by its participants as an extraordinary scientific and cultural event.

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