

## Report on EPU V<sup>th</sup> Conference “Parasitosis: A Multidisciplinary Approach”, 24-25 March 2018; held in collaboration with the 'Specialized Federation of Research' at Ain Shams University Guest House

The Egyptian Parasitologists United (EPU) Society initiated its V<sup>th</sup> conference with the aim of uniting its members and promoting their research efforts. The various presentations and discussions in the V<sup>th</sup> EPU conference revealed that parasites are not just some neglected infectious organisms in developing and tropical areas. In fact, they serve us as a great and curious source for immunological, therapeutic and genetic researches, in order to understand the host immune system and provide for the development of new therapeutic approaches.

On the morning of Saturday the 24<sup>th</sup> of March, the opening ceremony was presided by **Prof. Magda Azab** [Professor Emeritus, Parasitology Department, Faculty of Medicine, Ain Shams University, President of EPU and Chief Editor of Parasitologists United Journal (PUJ)]; **Prof. Nadia El Dib** [Professor Emeritus, Parasitology Department, Faculty of Medicine, Cairo University, Vice-President of EPU and Associate Editor of PUJ]; as well as our guests **Prof. Jørgen Kurtsahls** [President of the World Federation of Parasitologists (WFP) and Professor at the Center for Medical Parasitology, Department of Clinical Microbiology, Copenhagen University Hospital (Rigshospital), DK-2100, Copenhagen]; **Prof. Wagida Anwar** [Professor Emeritus, Public Health Department, Faculty of Medicine, Ain Shams University, President of the Specialized Federation of Research (SFR)]; **Dr. Omar Amin**, [Director and Owner of the Institute of Parasitic Diseases (IPD) and Parasitology Center, Inc. (PCI), Scottsdale, Arizona, USA]; **Dr. Monika Gulia-Nuss** [Assistant Professor, Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Howard Medical Sciences, University of Nevada, Reno, USA]. Unfortunately, **Dr. Akinwale Efunshile** [Department of Medical Microbiology, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki, Federal Teaching Hospital, Abakaliki, Nigeria] could not make it.

After the opening session talks and the introduction of the guests, it was a pleasure to present some of our renowned fellows with a special trophy in appreciation of their long research history and achievements. Trophies went to **Prof. Jørgen Kurtsahls**, **Prof. Wagida Anwar**, **Dr. Omar Amin**, **Dr. Monika Gulia-Nuss**, **Prof. Mamdouh Hegazy** (Mansoura University), **Prof. Helen Awadalla** (Alexandria University), **Prof. Rifaat Khalifa** (Assiut University), **Prof. Khairy Maklad** and **Prof. Mohamed Abdel Baki** (Ain Shams University), and **Prof. Hassan Ibrahim** (National Research Center).

We had 250 attendants coming from medical schools of 21 Universities of Cairo, Ain Shams, Al-Azhar (3

branches; Cairo, Demiatta and Assiut), Misr for Science and Technology, Alexandria, Tanta, Benha, Zagazig, Mansoura, Menoufyia, Kafr El-Sheikh, Suez Canal, Helwan, Beni-Seuf, Fayoum, El-Minia, Assiut, Sohag, and South Valley. There were 2 attendants from Faculty of Pharmacy (Pharos University) and one from Faculty of Sciences (Demiatta University). Also, we had attendants from 7 institutes; from Cairo (4): Theodore Bilharz Research Institute, Research Institute of Ophthalmology, Research Institute of Medical Entomology and Research Institute of Radiation; from Alexandria (2): High Institute of Public Health and Medical Research Institute; and from Menuofyia (1): National Liver Institute.

The scientific program consisted of 6 sessions (3 on each day) composed of 70 presentations; 16 lectures, 27 oral talks and 27 posters. Keynote lectures were on ‘Iron and Malaria (**Prof. Jørgen Kurtzshls**); ‘*Plasmodium vivax* as an emerging cause of severe malaria’ (**Prof. Nadia Sabry**); ‘Delusional parasitosis’ and ‘Variability in Acanthocephalans’ (**Dr. Omar Amin**); ‘Managing ticks by gene-editing’ (**Dr. Monika Gulia-Nuss**); ‘CRISPE/Cas9 gene editing: Applications in Parasitology’ (**Prof. Khalifa E. Khalifa**). There were three interesting lectures on the existence of parasites since ancient times by **Prof. Nadia El Dib** (Schistosomiasis in ancient Egypt), **Prof. Magda Azab** (Since how long ago did *Toxoplasma* exist?), and **Dr. Noha El Laboudy** (The amazing adventure of parasitologists chasing mummies). In addition, there were two lectures on ‘Gene mutations in parasitic diseases’ and ‘Drug targets in parasitic diseases’ (both by **Prof. Sherif Abaza**); two lectures on the relationship between microbiota and parasites (**Prof. Ayman El Badry** and **Prof. Hala Elwakil**), and three lectures: ‘Electro-sprayed nanoparticles and electro-spun nanofibers: Process and Application’ (**Prof. Hassan Ibrahim**), ‘PCR trouble shooting in PCR techniques’ (**Prof. Hesham El Khadrawy**), and ‘Gamma irradiation as a control measure of parasites’ (**Dr. Rita Wassif**).

The 27 oral talks presented covered various aspects of molecular biology and genotyping (7), treatment (7), immunology (4), diagnosis (2), prevalence (3), ultrastructure (2), case report (1) and education (1).

Of special interest were the 27 posters that included various methodologies utilizing diagnostic, immunological, molecular and ultrastructural techniques, as well as treatment. The parasites involved were helminthes (12 posters): *Schistosoma* spp. (8), *T. spiralis* (1),

*W. bancrofti* (1), eye helminthic infections (1) and *Streptopelia senegalensis*, (a Cestoda parasite infecting doves) (1); protozoa: (13 posters); *Cryptosporidium* spp. (4), *T. gondii* (3), *G. lamblia* (2), *Blastocystis* spp. (2) and *T. vaginalis* (2), and one poster for myiasis. There was a single poster for microbiological hazards on municipal sewage workers.

Two workshops were affiliated to the conference. One on: 'PCR Primer Validation: Integrating Bioinformatics Tool' directed by **Prof. Aymen El-Badry**, was held on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> of March between 3:00 and 6:00 pm. The other was held post conference on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of April on 'Real Time PCR Applications in Research Field' organized by **Prof. Hala S. Salem** [Head of Parasitology Dept. Faculty of Medicine Al Azhar University for Girls], and **Prof. Hesham El Khadrawy** [National Institute of Science and director of GMA] in collaboration with EPU society.

We had 2 prizes for best oral talk and best poster. The best oral talk went to 'Impact of treatment with a protein tyrosine kinase inhibitor (Genistein) on acute and chronic experimental *Schistosoma mansoni* infection' presented by **Dr. Shaymaa El Sayed**, Helwan University, Cairo, (T22; Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> March, Session III, 13:10-13:20). The best poster presentation went to 'Molecular phenotyping of *Giardia duodenalis* isolated from preschool Egyptian children' presented by **Dr. Hanan Abou Seri**, Ain Shams University, Cairo, (P22; Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> March).

As with all our previous conferences, we issued a CD to record the conference time table and abstracts of all the presented lectures, talks and posters. This year, the conference coincided with the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Parasitologists United Journal (PUJ) issued by our Egyptian Parasitologists United society (EPU). To celebrate this occasion, all editorials, reviews, research articles, short communications, case reports, spotlights on recent publications and parasitological resources included in two volumes each year since 2008 to 2018 were added to the conference CD.

Success of the conference is attributed not only to the various scientific presentations but also to the never ending and motivated efforts of the organizing committee and the managerial staff; to our sponsors who never fail to extend their generous support thus contributing by their presence to the success of our conference.

Finally, I thank our guests for their valuable updates and I thank all participants for sharing their researches and practical knowledge and hope that everyone benefited from the various experiences and reports and from meeting with each other.

**Respectfully yours,**  
**Magda E. Azab**  
**President of EPU**