

**PROFESSOR DENNIS V. PARKE  
MEMBER OF THE EDITORIAL BOARD  
OF THE IJOMEH DISTINGUISHED  
WITH THE DEGREE OF *DOCTOR  
HONORIS CAUSA***



The Senate of the Medical University of Lodz, at the initiative of its Faculty of Pharmacy, distinguished Professor Dennis V. Parke with the degree of *Doctor Honoris Causa*. The conferment took place on 28 April, 1995 in the Pruszczyński Hall of the Medical University of Lodz. The ceremony was held with the participation of Professor Jan Berner, Rector of the Medical University, Professor Ryszard Wierzbicki, Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy and the Promoter, Professor Jerzy K. Piotrowski. The recommendations were prepared by Professors: J. Brzeziński (Warsaw), J.A. Indulski (Lodz) and W. Seńczuk (Poznań).

Dennis V. Parke, born 1922, studied medicine and chemistry at the University College, University of London. During the years 1944–1947 he served, as pathologist, in the Royal Army in India and the Far East. Thereafter, he was employed at Glaxo Laboratories in the fields of biochemistry and experimental medicine. Later, he was appointed Lecturer in the St. Mary's Hospital Medical School, University of London where he worked under the famous Professor R.T. Williams. There he received his PhD and DSc. degrees. In 1967 Professor Parke moved to Guildford, where he was appointed Professor and Head of the Department of Biochemistry, and later took the position of Dean of the Faculty of Biological and Chemical Sciences, University of Surrey.

During his stay at St. Mary's in London he was mainly involved in studies of metabolism of organic compounds in experimental animals. His published work refers to over 20 chemicals, some of them fundamental for toxicology, such as benzene, halogenobenzene, nitrobenzene, aniline. Often he resumed his study of some chemicals as soon as new techniques allowed for more in-depth approach, as was the case with  $^{14}\text{C}$  tracing and isotope dilution technique. Toward the end of his 18-year stay at St. Mary's, he published "The biochemistry of foreign compounds", a book still widely used in teaching of toxicology.

In his new biochemical laboratory at the University of Surrey, Guildford, Professor Dennis Parke made a special study of the biochemical mechanism of metabolism of xenobiotics. His attention was focused on the system of microsomal enzymes and its key factor, the cytochrome P-450. Many of his works dealt with the inducibility of P-450 and its ontogenetic development in pregnancy, postnatal life and ageing, nutritional status, to mention just a few. Studying the influence of a natural product, safrole, on the cytochrome P-450, Parke's research team found a particular cytochrome, named P-448, able to catalyze the oxygenation

of xenobiotics in sterically hindered positions. This results in “active metabolites” capable of reacting with macromolecules and initiating radical reactions leading to oxydative stress. The role of oxydative stress in the pathogenesis of various diseases became the latest subject of interest of Professor Parke.

Professor Parke has been deeply involved in the toxicological implications of drug metabolism. That led to research into Structure-Activity-Relationship (SAR) with special emphasis on modelling of carcinogenic potential of chemicals.

During his professional career Professor D.V. Parke has published over 400 articles, monographs and books, reflecting a broad range of his interests. He has become well known to scientists, especially those working in the field of biochemical toxicology.

The scientific achievements of Professor D.V. Parke, in particular, in toxicology, are reflected by many national and international distinctions.

At home, he is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemist, the Royal Institute of Biology, the Royal College of Pathology, an Honorary Member of the Royal College of Physicians and the Biochemistry Society. Abroad, he is a Scheel Medalist (Uppsala), an Honorary Member of the Polish Society of Toxicology, and an Honorary Fellow of the Polish Society of Occupational Medicine.

His unique qualifications and span of knowledge has prompted his involvement in a variety of expert bodies. He was a member of the Committee of Safety of Drugs (U.K. 1967–1969), the Committee of Safety of Medicines (U.K. 1969–1982): an advisor to WHO and FDA (USA) on drug toxicity and safety evaluation, a WHO consultant on industrial toxicology, food toxicology, pesticide toxicity and public health, and an advisor to WHO, NATO and EPA (USA) on environmental toxicology. He has also become a member of the Scientific Group on the Methodology of Safety Evaluation of Chemicals (SGOMSEC) and other international bodies concerned with safety evaluation of drugs and chemicals, especially those working under the International Programme of Chemical Safety (IPCS; joint activity of WHO, UNEP and FAO).

While in London, and also in his laboratory in Guildford, Professor Parke hosted several Polish scientists who under his guidance studied the methodology of drug metabolism investigation. He has visited Poland several times as a guest of the Medical University of Lodz, the Nofer Institute of Occupational Medicine in Lodz, the Polish Society of Toxicology and also as a WHO consultant on the Polish system of chemical safety. He has also made available to the Polish scientists the journal “Xenobiotica” of which he was the founder. Professor Dennis V. Parke has also strong family links with Poland.

