

*Distinsului Prof. Dr. Gh. Benga
membru al Academiei Române,
cu cele mai bune gânduri.
26. 09. 2006.
L. Gavrilă*

ROMANIAN JOURNAL OF GENETICS

Vol.1, No.2, 2005 102

MEMORANDUM REGARDING THE DISCOVERY OF THE FIRST WATER CHANNEL PROTEIN BY GHEORGHE BENGA IN ROMANIA, A FEW YEARS BEFORE PETER AGRE (2003 NOBEL PRIZE IN CHEMISTRY)

The priority of Gheorghe Benga's group in the discovery of the first water channel protein has been mentioned in many comments on the 2003 Nobel Prize in Chemistry (Bradley D. Spotlight www.psigate.ac.uk/spotlight/issuel3b/chemistry/html; Bradley D., The Alchemist, 13 October 2003; Vandenberg U, Kuchel P., Medical Journal Australia, 179: 611-613, 2003; Rogerund K. Kemipriset vållar ny Nobelstrid, Dagens Nyheter, 10 Decembrie 2003; Strid kring medicinpriset....och kring kemipriset, Sydsvenska Dagbladet, December 11, 2003; Nobel mystery. Newsletter of King's College, January 2004 etc).

More than 3000 supporters from dozens of countries, including a Nobel Laureate, have signed at www.ad-astra.ro/benga. By now, many academic institutions, faculties, universities, scientific organizations and associations, research institutes, have recognized Gheorghe Benga as a discoverer of the first water channel protein before Peter Agre.

Taking into account the facts presented above, many Romanian scientists consider Gheorghe Benga as the main co-discoverer of the first water channel protein. Here is a potential Paulescu's case repetition, Nicolae Paulescu being the Romanian scientist who in 1920, discovered pancrein – the crude pancreatic extract that proved to have real and efficient hypoglycemic effect and from which the insulin was isolated and purified by Charles Best and Frederick Banting. These scientists were awarded Nobel Prize, but Paulescu's contribution was not taken into account. *Repetitio mater studiorum est! Sic transit gloria mundi!*

Prof. Dr. Petre Frangopol

Prof. Dr. Lucian Gavrilă