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Held in Banff, Alberta, Canada, July 20–23, 1986

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Preface

Within the past decade (and most noticeably in the past five years), a considerable upsurge of interest has taken place in the roles of excitatory amino acids as synaptic transmitters. This has been due in large part to the introduction of receptor-specific and less selective antagonists of amino acid receptors. Electrophysiological and neuropharmacological studies using these new substances have allowed the establishment and characterization of several distinct subclasses of receptors, and in consequence the whole field of excitatory amino acid transmission is progressing at an unprecedented pace.

It is due in part to these rapid advances that the idea evolved of holding a scientific meeting devoted to this subject as a satellite symposium to the 30th Congress of the International Union of Physiological Sciences, in Vancouver, July 1986. The enthusiastic response from over one hundred scientists was ample proof that such a meeting was not only overdue but also of sufficient interest and benefit to attract participants from twelve countries throughout Europe, North America, Australia, and Asia. The meeting was held at the Rimrock Inn, Sulphur Mountain, in the scenic and natural environment of Banff National Park, on July 20–23, 1986.

The book therefore presents a topical "state of the art" survey of most aspects of excitatory amino acid transmission; as a satellite of the IUPS Congress, the meeting emphasized the physiological aspects of the field, which were complemented by important contributions from anatomical, biochemical, behavioural, immunocytochemical, pharmacological, and clinical applications. We hope sincerely that its impact will be felt by facilitating further developments in this burgeoning field of research not only in the basic physiological and allied sciences, but also in the clinical domain. A final word of thanks is due to the contributors and the publisher, who have facilitated the editors' goal of publication of the proceedings within five months of the meeting.

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