

THE HUNTERS OF NATURE TREASURES. THE NOBEL PRIZE IN PHYSIOLOGY OR MEDICINE 2015

MARIA DOLIGALSKA

*Department of Parasitology, Institut of Zoology, Faculty of Biology, Warsaw University, Miecznikowa 1, 02-096 Warsaw,  
e-mail: m.doligalska@biol.uw.edu.pl*

Summary

The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2015 was awarded to Youyou Tu “for her discoveries concerning a novel therapy against Malaria”, and William C. Campbell and Satoshi Ōmura “for their discoveries concerning a novel therapy against infections caused by roundworm parasites”. Chinese pharmacologist - Tu, identified artemisinin isolated from *Artemisia annuata* for inhibition of malaria development in the blood of man. Omura, microbiologist from Japan and William C. Campbell, biochemist and parasitologist from USA discovered anti-nematode activity of avermectin, extracted from bacteria *Streptomyces avermectilis*. Administration of drugs against malaria and filariasis salvaged millions lives, and reduced transmission of pathogens responsible for the lost vision and disability in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The history of the discoveries and mechanisms of drugs action are presented. International programs for the health introduced at the global scale have improved economic and social conditions in countries where diseases due to the treatment develop less frequently.