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Preface

From 9 to 11 February 2000, the *6th International Symposium on Hyphenated Techniques in Chromatography and Hyphenated Chromatographic Analyzers (HTC-6)* was held at the Saint John's Conference Center (Congrescentrum Oud Sint-Jan) in Bruges (Belgium). About 350 scientists, from 35 different countries from all over the world, proved that hyphenated chromatographic techniques have become one of the most popular areas of analytical chemistry. In this 6th HTC meeting, as usual, academia, industry and government were well represented among both speakers and attendees.

The symposium was preceded by six short courses on: "Method Development, Optimization and Validation in HPLC and HPCE" (I.S. Krull and M. Swartz); "Theory and Practice of Solid-Phase Microextraction and Membrane Extraction with a Sorbent Interface" (J. Pawliszyn, H. Lord and A. Segal); "Practical HPLC-NMR and HPLC-NMR-MS" (I.D. Wilson); "Fast Capillary Gas Chromatography" (C.A. Cramers, J.G.M. Janssen, M. Van Deursen and J. Beens); "Problem-Solving with LC-MS" (R.C. Willoughby and E.W. Sheehan); "Hyphenated Systems for Polymer Analysis" (P. Schoenmakers). These short courses took place at the Novotel-Centrum Hotel in Bruges (Belgium).

The HTC-6 Symposium was organized under the auspices of the Royal Flemish Chemical Society (KVCV). Valuable financial support was offered by the Fonds voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek Vlaanderen (FWO) and by an important number of sponsoring companies. The organizing committee [K.D. Bartle, H.J. Cortes, R. Senten (Secretary), R. Smits (Chairman) and H. Van den Branden (Treasurer)] was aided by an advisory international

scientific committee consisting of F. Adams (Chairman), R. Smits (Secretary), K.D. Bartle, U.A.Th. Brinkman, R. Cela, H.J. Cortes, C.A. Cramers; E. Esmans, M. Grasserbauer, K. Grob, J. Hoogmartens, I. Krull, D.L. Massart and J. Pawliszyn and a highly motivated executive committee consisting of N. Zoete, G. De Molder, E. Jooker, J. Perneel, R. Verstraeten, P. Dieltiens and R. Proost.

During the symposium, 48 lectures both in plenary and parallel sessions and 105 poster contributions covered the most important fundamental aspects, instrumental developments and applications of the various hyphenated chromatographic techniques and hyphenated chromatographic analyzers.

During seven tutorials, prominent scientists gave an overview of the basic principles, methods, developments and applications in the field of: "Inductively coupled plasma time-of-flight mass spectrometer, a new detector for chromatographic effluents" (F. Adams); "Electrodriven separations and their hyphenations" (K.D. Bartle); "Multidimensional chromatography: trends and perspectives" (U.A.Th. Brinkman); "Strategies for speed optimization in gas chromatography: an overview" (C.A. Cramers); "Sample preparation methods based on solid-phase microextraction" (J. Pawliszyn); "Uncoated precolumns as retention gaps; function and required properties" and "Sample evaporation in split/splitless injectors: video films and some conclusions" (K. Grob).

Very successful also were the two topical discussions, lively round table debates chaired by I. Krull ("Validation is time consuming, difficult to perform, and adds no relevant analytical information, thus has a negative impact on the development of new

hyphenated techniques”) and by H. Cortes and U.A.Th. Brinkman (“The future of chip-based hyphenated techniques”).

A very inviting instrument, book and supplies exhibition, comprising an almost complete program of nearly 20 companies, created the ideal forum to assess the state-of-the-art modern instrumentation. Furthermore, during seven product seminars, sponsoring companies had the opportunity to go into detail about their new achievements and developments.

An international jury under the chairmanship of F. Adams ensured that the most innovative paper or poster contribution of the conference could be acknowledged. During the closing session this HTC Award, sponsored by Elsevier Science, was presented to Dr. Heidi Goenaga-Infante, a young post-doctoral participant of the University of Oviedo, Spain, for her innovative work on the utilization of vesicle-mediated high-performance chromatography for the separation and determination of Cd protein complexes based on the use of a combination of HPLC with hydride generation inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry (see also the News section in this volume).

There was a full social program, including a spouse’s program, welcome and farewell parties, guided visits to Bruges (inclusive a visit to the Groeninghe museum), Antwerp, Damme, a beer degustation evening and an excellent banquet, complete with a lively and full evening entertaining show of a folkloristic troupe, in the beautiful historical surroundings of the Castle of Moerkerke near Bruges.

The articles published in this symposium volume give an overview of the state-of-the-art of modern hyphenated chromatographic techniques.

The organizers would like to thank the speakers and the participants for their engagement, all sponsors for their support and Professor Zdenek Deyl for his immense help in editing this symposium volume of the *Journal of Chromatography A*.

The next HTC symposium (HTC-7) will again be held at the Saint John’s Conference Center in Bruges (Belgium), from 6 to 8 February 2002.

*Oostduinkerke
Belgium*

Robert Smits