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Foreword

The isotachopheresis (ITP) symposia held in Baconfoy in Belgium (1979), in Eindhoven in The Netherlands (1980), in Goslar in Germany (1982), in Hradec Králové in Czechoslovakia (1984), in Maastricht in The Netherlands (1986) were focused, mainly, on the progress in capillary isotachopheresis. Starting with the event held in Vienna (1988), the ITP series have changed to a forum for presentations of research results in capillary electrophoresis, in a general sense. This concept of the scientific program, which was also followed at the symposia held in Tatranská Lomnica in Czechoslovakia (1990), in Rome (1992), in Budapest (1994), in Prague (1996), and in Venice (1998), is reflected in the current name under which the series is presented to the scientific community. For obvious reasons, the *12th International Symposium on Capillary Electroseparation Techniques* (ITP 2000), held in Bratislava from 10 till 13 September 2000, continued this tradition. The meeting, chaired jointly by Dušan Kaniansky (Comenius University) and Ernst Kennidler (University of Vienna), took place in a historical Reduta building (Opening lectures by Frans Everaerts, Stellan Hjertén, Shigeru Terabe, František Foret and Norberto Guzman on September 10) and in the Congress Centre of Hotel Forum.

The scientific program of the symposium, attended by 160 participants from Europe, Japan, USA and Taiwan, included 45 orally presented lectures, arranged into eleven sessions, and two poster sessions with 105 contributions. Besides recent results in the fields of capillary electrophoresis dealing with various aspects of theory and instrumentation, new developments in chiral analysis of biosamples, progress in electrochromatography, progress in the

separation of biopolymers and bioparticles, coupled separation techniques, enhanced detectabilities of trace analytes and new application areas, the participants could discuss also various aspects of miniaturization of electrophoresis systems ('lab-on-a-chip') as presented in a number of contributions. More than thirty posters, presented by pre- and postdoctoral investigators (young scientists below 30 years) as the first authors, took part in a poster prize competition. The results of the competition, based on an evaluation by the members of the Scientific Committee, were very tight and, therefore, three prizes had to be shared by six young scientists: Róbert Bodor, Petr Barták, Melissa Hanna, Mariana Danková, Ronny de Ridder and Eva Ölvecká.

Two of the lecture sessions, Frans Everaerts and Theo Verheggen Honorary Session and Josef Huber Memorial Session, were dedicated to our electrophoresis and separation science colleagues and friends. Unexpectedly, our intention to arrange two honorary sessions had to be changed in August 2000 as a message by the main program director, The Life, was strict and we had to miss in Bratislava our teacher, friend and the scientist, Professor Josef F. K. Huber.

An opening address of the symposium delivered by Professor Marta Sališová, President of the Slovak Chemical Society, ended by a small ceremony, presentations of the Gold Medal of the Slovak Chemical Society to Professor Frans M. Everaerts and the Memorial Medal of the Slovak Chemical Society to Theo P.E.M. Verheggen. These awards reflect a response of the Slovak chemical community to significant contributions of Frans Everaerts and Theo Verheggen in introducing capillary isotachophoresis.

phoresis and related techniques at the Comenius University and the Slovak Technical University and in Slovakia.

The symposium venue, in a prestigious downtown location near the historical and cultural centre of Bratislava, framed by a beautiful late summer weather offered many excellent possibilities for social activities of the participants. Especially, the almost completely reconstructed Old City of Bratislava provided excellent places for excursions and visits to small museums, galleries, shops, lovely coffee restaurants and wine cellars to taste the history of the city situated on both banks of the Danube River just on the borderlines of Slovakia with Austria and Hungary.

This special issue of the *Journal of Chromatography A* is a collection of contributions presented at the symposium that passed the refereeing procedure

and it covers all main topics of its scientific program. We would like to express our appreciation to Professors Zdeněk Deyl and Petr Boček, for their efforts and care in its editing.

Finally, we feel very appropriate at this place to thank the participants for their excellent contributions to the symposium program and for a pleasant and friendly atmosphere accompanying this meeting.

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