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Foreword

The ExTech 2002 symposium dedicated to advances in extraction techniques took place at the Ecole Supérieure de Physique et de Chimie Industrielles (ESPCI) de Paris, from 3 to 5 July 2002. This symposium was organised by Dr. V. Pichon, Professor M.C. Hennion and colleagues from the ESPCI. It was the fourth of this symposium series, which has been initiated by Professor J. Pawliszyn and which had been successfully held three times before, twice at Waterloo University (Canada) and once, in 2001, in Barcelona (Spain).

ExTech is a symposium series highlighting new extraction technologies for chemical and biochemical analysis in laboratory and on-site settings. The focus is on solvent-free sample preparation including methods for rapid and selective enrichment prior to analysis, and micro-sample preparation.

In Paris, major emphasis was placed on a fundamental understanding of extraction processes that should result in greater selectivity and efficiency in method development, and a rationalization of method selection for specific applications. The symposium was attended by ca. 120 participants from many countries all over the world, with the active participation of several companies. The scientific programme included 37 lectures and 43 poster presentations. It was divided into five different sessions. The first one highlighted sample preparation for biological systems and for nanotechnologies. New membrane extraction technologies were discussed in the second session. A large part of the second day was devoted to the presentation of new sorbents such as sol–gels or new kinds of restricted access materials as well as extraction mechanisms involved in solid-phase extraction when using graphitised carbons, molecular imprints and immunosorbents. Solid-phase microextraction was well represented in the following session. For solid matrices, the developments were focussed on enhanced solubility extraction techniques such as microwave assisted or pressurized liquid fluid extractions. The main focus of the applications was on food, environmental and gas-phase odor-related analytes. During the three days, the interaction between participants and the discussion on both oral and poster presentation were very fruitful.

The next, 5th, ExTech meeting was organized by Professor A. Malik at Tampa, USA from 5 to 7 March 2003. Among topics highlighted there were: theoretical and practical aspects of environmental, biomedical, forensic, toxicological, industrial and field sample preparation and extraction technologies.

The ExTech 2004 venue is planned in Leipzig (Germany) in September 2004 and will be organized by Professor P. Popp and Dr. A. Paschke.

Paris, France V. Pichon and M.-C. Hennion

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