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## Preface

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Tegelen, a small town with an extremely neat residential area and an old mill turned into a fashionable hotel is a very pleasant and quiet place near the Dutch–German border. This hospitable town is very little (if at all) known outside the Netherlands. The quietness of the area is disturbed only during the weekends, surprisingly not by the tourists invading the neighbourhood but because the hotel (virtually the only one in the settlement) appears very popular with newly married couples to arrange their wedding day festive dinners and/or lunches and to organize photographs of the bride with her wedding gown neatly arranged on the main entrance stairway. This kind of picture is usually displayed for many years in the family living room depicting the once young appearance of today's grandmothers.

This was the place where the meeting which resulted in the collection of papers assembled in this volume was held. All the papers presented, partly original contributions, partly review papers, were collected by request to honour the retirement of Karel Macek, one of the pioneering personalities in chromatography and leader in the development of the Journal of Chromatography, in particular. I feel really redundant in attempting to emphasize all Karel's merits, as everybody is aware of his role in establishing what is today called J. Chromatogr. Biomed. Appl.; many of the lecturers and contributors to this volume learned the basics of chromatography some 35 years ago from the then scientific hit named Paper Chromatography edited by Ivo Hais and Karel Macek. These pupils have, in the meantime, become distinguished professors, faculty members, deans, rectors, research directors, vicerectors, etc. and all of them appreciate very much the close cooperation with Karel over the years as well as his

qualities as a scientist, editor, teacher and, last but not least, as a human being. All of us, who have had the pleasure of participating in this convention of Karel Macek's friends, enjoyed the three days very much. It was not only the friendly, informal social atmosphere of people who have known each other over many years, but also the intellectual joy of listening to the superb presentations of what can be today considered the highlights of chromatography and electrophoresis.

The meeting passed smoothly for which the Elsevier people have to be thanked, in particular Dr. Patrick Jackson, Klaas Bij, Erik van Aert and the spiritus movens of this event, Reina Bolt.

The above reminder of old family photographs bears in itself just the level of sadness which was present somewhere near the surface of the meeting. As somebody said it is always more pleasant to celebrate someone's promotion than to see someone leave because of his or her retirement. Perhaps, this is just the expression of nostalgia in part because of having worked with Karel so closely for about twenty years, in part because of developing this cooperation into a deep personal friendship and in part because of my Slavic origin (Slavic people are famous for their nostalgia).

All good wishes to Karel were said during the meeting and I can hardly think of anything new and original. Therefore, I stay very conventional and wish that Karel may have many more active years spent in good health in times to come. Let this volume commemorate his past as the wedding day photographs commemorate the beginning of a happy marriage.

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Zdeněk Deyl