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1989 HERMAN F. MARK MEDAL OF THE CHEMICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF AUSTRIA TO PROFESSOR OTTO VOGL

Otto Vogl, Herman F. Mark Professor of Polymer Science at the Polytechnic University, Brooklyn, New York, represents the almost perfect prototype of both a cosmopolitan and of an international well-known scientist.

Born in the heart of Europe—in Austria, near Vienna—he has been a citizen of the United States for 30 years and is married to a charming resident of this country. He holds an honorary Doctor's degree of the University of Jena (GDR); is a foreign member of the Academies of Science both of the GDR and of Austria; is a frequent guest professor in Japan, Sweden, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, and of the GDR; and is president of the recently founded Pacific Polymer Federation. In short, Otto Vogl's personality and his scientific achievements are well known and highly esteemed throughout the world.

Although even this brief introduction may sufficiently characterize and illustrate Professor Vogl's life and work, it nevertheless seems appropriate to present a more detailed narrative at the occasion of the bestowal of the prestigious Herman F. Mark medal to my old friend Otto.

Born in 1927 in the beautiful small wine village of Traiskirchen (near Vienna in Austria), Otto Vogl studied chemistry at the University of Vienna where he received his Ph.D. in 1950. It is with some melancholy that I recall the common years full of hard studies but also full of cheerfulness both during and especially after the hours in the laboratory.

The migrant years of apprenticeship were spent at the former II. Chemical Laboratory of the University of Vienna as a teaching assistant; his years of travel (1956–1970) led him to the University of Michigan, to Princeton University, and to E. I. du Pont de Nemours until he finally received a call as Professor to the University of Massachusetts (Amherst). From the latter he is now retired as an Emeritus (!), since in 1983

he followed as successor to his famous fellow-countryman Professor Herman F. Mark to the Polytechnic Institute of New York at Brooklyn.

Since 1956 Otto Vogl has made very important contributions to the development of polymer chemistry and polymer science both in universities and in industry, as convincingly testified by approximately 350 scientific papers, 40 patents, and eight books.

Thus he has been very active in this important field and has influenced polymer chemistry to a large extent both by his activities and by the many scientific contributions mentioned. Professor Vogl is especially well known by his work on the polymerization of aliphatic (also halogenated) aldehydes and particularly by their stereospecific polymerization. But he is a leader in other sections of the field, too, such as functionalized polymers, polymeric drugs, and degradable polymers. His contributions to the chemistry of polymeric membranes and novel polymeric structures are already regarded as classic developments. More recent studies on optically active polymers, the helicity (chirality) of which is the cause for their optical activity, are of great theoretical interest.

Many awards, some already mentioned, are a striking proof for the general appreciation of Otto Vogl's outstanding position within the scientific community. From these, only the more important ones shall be mentioned:

1977 Humboldt-Prize, 1983 foreign member of the Academy of Science of the GDR, 1983 Dr.rer.nat.h.c. of the University of Jena, 1985 corresponding member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, 1986 Gold Medal of the City of Vienna, 1987 Wilhelm Exner Medal of the Austrian Trade Chamber Association, and now the Herman F. Mark Medal. Several medals of various universities and the designation of the ACS Award in Applied Polymer Science for 1990 complete the wide range of decorations for a scientist whose amiable personality matches his scientific achievements.

As mentioned, Professor Vogl has been visiting professor to many countries and has served in many important positions where he has significantly promoted the field of polymer science, such as: Chairman of the National Academy of Sciences (Committee on Macromolecular Science), Chairman of the ACS Division of Polymer Chemistry and of the Gordon Conference on Polymers (1981), and since 1987 President of the Pacific Polymer Federation. Moreover, Otto Vogl is editor, coeditor, and member of the advisory board of several important journals.

Otto Vogl's old friends and colleagues are very happy that he frequently — also in an official position, e.g., as consultant to the Austrian

chemical industry—visits his native country and spends pleasant hours with them—preferably at the famous Viennese “Heurigen.”

As the president of the Austrian Chemical Society and as a member of the presidency of the Austrian Chemical Society, I have the privilege and the pleasure of conveying cordial congratulations on the occasion of the award of the Herman F. Mark medal and the best wishes to you, Otto, of your Austrian friends and colleagues. We all hope you will enjoy many years to come of successful work and many pleasant hours within your family. Ad multos annos, Otto!

Karl Schlögl
Vienna, Austria
October 1989