

## Editorial

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The present volume is a collection of contemporary knowledge, thoughts, ideas and suggestions concerning polymer networks and physical gels. The published papers are selected from contributions presented at the Microsymposium “Polymer Gels and Networks” that was held in the Institute of Macromolecular Chemistry of Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic in Prague, in July 2005. The social context of this gathering appeared as pleasant as its scientific content. The doyen in the field, Karel Dušek, a member of the research staff of the Institute, celebrated his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday in that year still being fully engaged in scientific activities. The organizers dedicated the Microsymposium to him. Karel wrote a nice contribution about his fifty years in polymer science, which, we believe, appropriately concludes the volume.

At the same time, we think that some more coincidences regarding the Microsymposium participants are notable. Another great personage in the field, Walter Burchard of the University of Freiburg celebrated his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday in that year as well. His contribution opens the present volume. A man renowned in the area of drug delivery and biomedical polymers, Jindřich (Henry) Kopeček of the University of Utah arrived at his age of 65. Before his move to U.S., Jindřich spent a good portion of his scientific life in the Prague Institute. Last but not least, the Chairman of the 44<sup>th</sup> Prague Microsymposium, Michal Ilavský, known for his achievements in the area of responsive gels celebrated his 65<sup>th</sup> birthday. In addition to the renowned authors, the volume also contains papers of several young researchers, newcomers to the field.

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Guest Editors