Foreword

Zsolt Révay¹

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When we decided to organize the first International Conference on Radioanalytical and Nuclear Chemistry (RANC-2016), many colleagues thought that another radiochemistry conference would be simply too many for this small and specialized “market”. Starting a new conference series is of course risky, but we at the editorial board of the Journal Radioanalytical and Nuclear Chemistry (JRNC) noticed several trends: during the past few years, the number of manuscripts submitted to us has increased by more than 30%. There may have been countries where radiochemistry and the related subjects are less popular than they used to be, while there are many countries where they have never lost their importance and good reputation; and there are many newcomers with more and more powerful research in the field. The colleagues from all these countries all know each-others’ names and papers, review each-others’ manuscripts, i.e., a lively scientific discussion has already taken place among them. We wanted to collect the scientists from all over the world to give them a chance to meet and continue the discussion in person. The conference was held in Budapest, April 10–15, 2016 with great success. In fact, the level of interest pleasantly surprised us as well. More than 600 persons registered for the conference at the beginning. As it happens, not everybody could join us; at the end, 430 participants (including 20 accompanying persons) from all five continents, 51 countries presented and listened to 18 plenary lectures, 41 invited talks, 166 talks, and 141 poster

presentations. Lively discussions took place at the exhibitions of six companies and also at the social programs.

2016 is an important year for us for other reasons as well. We commemorate György Hevesy (or George de Hevesy) (Fig. 1) on the occasion of his 50th death anniversary, and we celebrate the 80th anniversary of his greatest invention, namely neutron activation analysis. The conference was dedicated to the memory of this Nobel-laureate radiochemist. Four members of the Hevesy family graced the meeting with their presence: Dr. Georg de Hevesy and Mrs. Pia Barone de Hevesy—the children of the famous scientist, and his two grandsons: Steven and John de Hevesy.

On the occasion of the conference, a life-time achievement award was presented to Prof. Dr. Tibor Braun the founder and the honorary Editor-in-Chief of JRNC by the editorial board and Akadémiai Kiadó. A wreath was also laid on the grave of György Hevesy by Dr. Balázs Réffy, the director general of Akadémiai Kiadó, the editorial board of JRNC, and the Hevesy family the morning of the conference opening (Fig. 2).

A festive session on Sunday afternoon opened the meeting, in which Dr. Georg de Hevesy shared with the audience personal memories of his father; then Prof. Siegfried Niese, the well-known biographer of György Hevesy [1], presented an overview of his life and work. The participants had a great time together not only during the sessions, but also during the social programs (Figs. 3, 4).

Prof. Amares Chatt, Chair of the JRNC Board of the Hevesy Award, then announced this year’s winner of Hevesy Medal Award: Prof. Tomoko Nakanishi. The medal was presented to her by Dr. Georg de Hevesy. She summarized her results in her award lecture. Sunday’s festive session closed with celebrating all Hevesy awardees being present, and commemorating those who could not be with us anymore.

✉ Zsolt Révay
Zsolt.Revay@frm2.tum.de

¹ Technische Universität München, Forschungs-Neutronenquelle Heinz Maier-Leibnitz (FRM II), Munich, Germany

Fig. 1 György Hevesy in 1943. (www.nobelprize.org)

We wanted to cover the entire scope of the journal, that is why the experts of these fields were invited to organize sessions and/or to present invited talks. Here I also thank the work of the international organizing committee for arranging the scientific sessions:

Xiaolin Hou and Nóra Vajda: *Radioanalytical methods of long-lived radionuclides*
 Pavel Povinec: *Mass spectrometry*
 Andriy Berlizov: *Nuclear safeguards*
 Lav Tandon: *Actinide analytical chemistry*
 Susanta Lahiri: *Radionuclide separation*
 Amares Chatt: *Neutron activation analysis*
 László Szentmiklósi: *Nuclear instrumentation and methodology*
 Erzsébet Takács: *Radiation chemistry*
 Stephen LaMont and Éva Kovács-Széles: *Nuclear forensics*
 Jerzy Mietelski and Nóra Vajda: *Radioecology and environmental radioactivity*
 David DiPrete: *Advances in radiochemistry supporting the nuclear fuel cycle*
 Junbo Zhang: *Radiolabeled compounds and radiopharmaceuticals*
 Zoltán Homonnay: *Radio- and nuclear analytical methods*
 Ferenc Tárkányi: *Production of radionuclides*
 Richard Lindstrom: *Prompt gamma activation analysis*

I am grateful to Nóra Vajda for taking part in the organization of two large sessions, and especially to Amares Chatt, the editor of JRNC for helping in the organization, compiling the documents of the conference, taking care of the Hevesy award, and also for organizing a session.

Fig. 2 Placing a wreath on the grave of György Hevesy at the Kerepesi Cemetery, Budapest, Hungary. *Left to right:* Dr. Balázs Réffy, Dr. Tibor Kocsor, Steve and John de Hevesy, Dr. Georg de Hevesy, Prof. Amares Chatt, Mrs. Niese, Dr. Zsolt Révay, Prof. Siegfried Niese

Fig. 3 Conference participants' photo

Fig. 4 Boat trip on the Danube

In the closing ceremony, the award for the best presentation by a young scientist was given to Giovanni Baccolo (Università di Siena, Italy), and the best poster award to Chun-Hsu Yao (China Medical University, Taiwan). The editorial board took this opportunity to thank the support of our most efficient reviewers: Georg Steinhauser (Fig. 5), Steven Biegalski, Andrey Berlizov, Tapas Das, Xiaolin Hou, Richard M. Lindstrom, Fazilet Zümrüt Biber Müftüler, Štefan Palágyi, Gary L. Silver, Ning Xu, Yoon Yeol Yoon. I would like to express my special thanks to Veronika Bíró (AK Congress) and Dr. Tibor Kocsor (Managing Editor JRNC, Akadémiai Kiadó) for their help and the wonderful organization of the conference.

In this issue, the selected papers of the conference are printed. The first one after the foreword is the laudation of the Hevesy awardee by Prof. Amares Chatt, which is followed by a review paper by Prof. Tomoko Nakanishi on her activities. It is my great honor to present here Prof. Lloyd Currie's review. He was the first I invited for holding

Fig. 5 Prof. Georg Steinhauser (University of Hannover, Germany), our best reviewer

a plenary lecture at RANC. Unfortunately, he could not join us in person, but he sent us this article: his personal summary of his own research in the field of nuclear

detection and the famous Currie criterion, one of the most cited methods in our field. Many invited and plenary speakers sent us the article version of their talks, they are also published here, and a selection of the regular talks and posters can be found afterwards.

I offer this issue to your attention in the name of the organizers of RANC-2016 wishing that it brings back all the good memories from this fantastic meeting, and the scientific discussion goes on in the always changing, but still fresh and reviving radioanalytical and nuclear chemistry.

Zsolt Révay
Munich, December 2016

Reference

1. Niese S (2009) Georg von Hevesy: 1885–1966, Wissenschaftler ohne Grenzen. Principal, Münster