



ELSEVIER

Catalysis Today 46 (1998) 69



Foreword

Aidan W. Sexton, Julian R.H. Ross

Dept. ChES, University of Limerick, Plassey Technological Park, Limerick, Ireland

This edition of *Catalysis Today* is a record of the proceedings of the 5th European Workshop on Methane Activation, held in the University of Limerick (Ireland) on 8–10th June 1997. The previous workshop proceedings have also been published in *Catalysis Today* (Vol. 4, No. 3–4, Vol. 6, No. 4, Vol. 13, No. 2–3, and Vol. 21, No. 2–3); the workshops themselves were held in Bochum (1988), Enschede (1989), Villeurbanne (1991) and Eindhoven (1994), respectively.

About 50 scientists and engineers attended the meeting, coming from 13 countries, mostly members of the European Union, but also from Russia, the United States and Canada. Both industrial and academic interests were fully represented. All attendees of the workshop were required to make presentations of some aspect of their work at the meeting and the papers presented in this issue are written versions of some 50% of these; they represent the current state of the art in our scientific and engineering knowledge of methane activation with regard to the production of synthesis gas (reforming/partial oxidation), coupled products (C_{2+}) or selective oxidation products (formaldehyde, methanol etc.).

Prof. Manfred Baerns (Berlin) presented a plenary lecture on “The Partial Oxidation of Methane to Synthesis Gas – from Mechanistic to Engineering Aspects”. A further invited lecture was given on “The Total Oxidation/Combustion of Methane” by Prof. Robbie Burch (Reading). We should like to thank both the invited speakers for their valuable contributions to the workshop. Due to the continued interest in the subject of methane activation, it is currently intended that the 6th European Workshop on Methane Activation will be held in Berlin in 1999.

We would like to thank Prof. Burch for his assistance in editing this issue and the following organisations for their welcome financial support, which ensured the success of the workshop:

Hidden Analytical Ltd. (Warrington),

Air Products Ireland Ltd. (Dublin),

Irish Times Plc (Dublin),

Bank of Ireland Ltd. (University of Limerick).