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Preface

Catalysis plays a central role in the modern chemical and petroleum refining industries. For example, according to a 1992 US National Research Council report: *Catalysis Looks to the Future*, between 1930 and early 1980s, 63 major products and 34 major process innovations were introduced by the chemical industry. More than 60% of these products and 90% of these processes were based on catalysis. In addition to its role in manufacturing, catalysis has also played a significant role in environmental abatement processes, especially in the transportation industry.

As we begin a new century, the desire of an expanding global population for a better living will continue to place heavy demands for the energy production and chemicals manufacturing industries to increase the efficiencies and environmental friendliness of their processes. These industries will look for new catalytic technologies constantly to meet these challenges.

In an effort to review the present state of catalysis research and technology, and to look at future oppor-

tunities, Elsevier Science hosted a 2-day workshop in April 1999, in Egmond aan Zee. The workshop provided a forum for various researchers representing the petroleum, chemicals, and transportation industries, as well as from academia to present their views on current topics in heterogeneous catalysis, and to discuss these views with the editors of catalysis-related journals published by Elsevier. The workshop was organised professionally, and there was sufficient time for meaningful discussions.

The authors of the papers presented at the workshop were asked to summarise their presentations for publications to be available to the public, and hence this special issue. One can see that these papers cover a wide range of current topics, but the stronger emphasis on catalysis with high specificity and for environmental applications is, perhaps, an indication of the direction of catalysis research at present and for the near future. We hope that our readers enjoy reading them.

On behalf of the organisers:

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