

## Foreword

The first meeting in the new millennium of the North American Catalysis Society (17th NACS 2001: Horizons of Catalysis) was held in July 2001 at the Harbour Castle Westin Hotel, located on the scenic shores of Lake Ontario in Canada's most vibrant city, Toronto, Ontario Attendance was at an all-time high of 1113, of which more than 700 were full registrants and about 150 were students. Natural Gas Conversion and Related Topics was one of the topics included in the technical program. A total of 57 relevant abstracts were received from which 30 were selected for oral presentation over 3 days, the remainder being presented during a poster session.

The majority of abstracts focused on Fischer-Tropsch synthesis and syngas generation with a number of other papers related to direct methane conversion. The keynote on the Fischer-Tropsch synthesis, presented by Iglesia (University of California, Berkeley, USA) highlighted aspects of design, synthesis and use of Co, Fe and Ru catalysts, while the keynote on syngas generation, presented by Rostrup-Nielsen (Haldor-Topsøe, Lyngby, Denmark) focused on different options for syngas production from natural gas.

The present volume is a collection of 12 of the papers presented at the 17th North American Catalysis Society Meeting. The papers cover a wide range of topics related to natural gas conversion, from

conventional steam reforming to partial oxidation for syngas production, methanol synthesis and methane decomposition for hydrogen production. Although the papers represent only a small fraction of the conference papers, the breadth of topics covered demonstrates the very wide application of catalysis to a technology area that remains important after many decades of study and development.

We wish to thank the authors for their contributions and the reviewers for their efforts which have made this special issue possible.

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