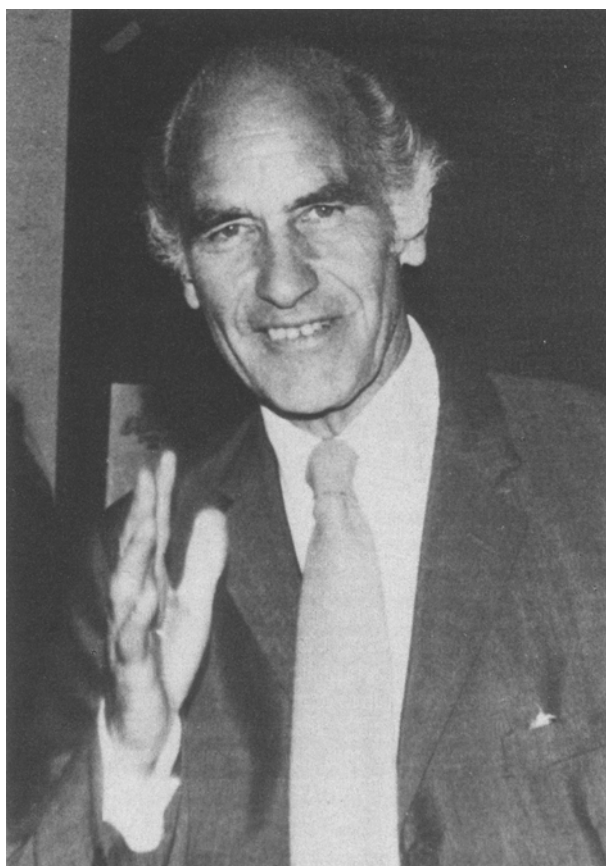


A Tribute to Hans Mislin on his 80th Birthday

In May 1987, Hans Mislin celebrates his 80th birthday. As Managing Editor for 41 years, and Founding Editor since 1986, he has successfully guided the destiny of *EXPERIENTIA* since its inception in 1945. Surely, there are few scientific journals that can boast such an astonishing period of continuous editorship.

Hans Mislin studied preclinical medicine and zoology in Basel, Vienna, Prague and Königsberg, taking his doctorate in zoology in Basel in 1939. He became Privat-Dozent in zoology in Basel in 1942, and was called to take the Chair of Zoology and General Biology at the University of Mainz in 1953. He retired from Mainz in 1973 and settled in Carona (Switzerland), from where he actively continued to edit *EXPERIENTIA*. One of his innovations was the creation of Multi-author Reviews (originally called 'puzzle reviews'), which have proved to be an outstanding success with readers and authors alike. The breadth of his knowledge in biology and philosophy, his creative imagination, his skill in convincing reluctant authors to write for *EXPERIENTIA*, his impulsive way of attacking new subjects (frequently to the despair of his collaborators trying to keep step with him) have all been major factors in making this journal a leading exponent of truly interdisciplinary science. From the very beginning, it was his aim to use *EXPERIENTIA* as a communication bridge, offering a forum where the various branches of science could meet and try to find a common language and an integral understanding of nature and its multifarious phenomena.

Hans Mislin founded *EXPERIENTIA*, jointly with the human physiologist A. von Muralt, the chemist (and Nobel Prize winner) L. Ruzicka and the physicist J. Weiglé, at a critical time: the first issue appeared on 15th April 1945, three weeks before the war ended in Europe. In volume 2, 1946, we find articles in German by K. von Frisch, in French by P.-P. Grassé and in English by R. B. Goldschmidt and V. B. Wigglesworth: *EXPERIENTIA* was developing into a forum of international repute, where scientists from former enemy nations could meet and freely exchange ideas and research results. In the first



few volumes we find such names as J. Brachet, J. B. S. Haldane, W. Kuhn, F. Verzár, L. and M. Fieser, I. Eibl-Eibesfeldt – a random and incomplete selection. An early highlight was the long article in volume 6 by E. Chargaff on 'Chemical specificity of nucleic acids', a pioneering work which was to become a pillar of modern research in molecular genetics. Many of us still recall the thrill of having the manuscripts which we wrote as young students or assistants accepted by *EXPERIENTIA*.

By 1948, *EXPERIENTIA* was publishing in 4 languages, Italian having been added, and in 1967, volume 23 carried its subtitle in 6 languages, including Spanish and Russian. Without doubt, Hans Mislin would have been delighted to publish a paper in Latin, had such a manuscript been offered to him. However, the internationalization of science and the emergence of English as the lingua franca of scientists all over the world finally forced *EXPERIENTIA* to face this reality and accept only English-language manuscripts. At the same time, emphasis shifted more and more to the life sciences, as it became increasingly unsatisfactory to cover 'pure and applied science' (the original subtitle) within the covers of a single journal. Today, thanks to Hans Mislin's restless energy and relentless efforts, his successors in the editor's chair have inherited a lively journal, open at all times to new ideas, and aiming at originality and scientific excellence.

In the name of all those who have been associated with *EXPERIENTIA* over the years, I express our gratitude to Hans Mislin and wish him many more active and creative years.

A. Pletscher