



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

European Journal of Pharmaceutics and Biopharmaceutics

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/ejpb

Editorial

Theme issue “Solid state and solid dosage forms”

Papers in “classical” Pharmaceutical Technology, including the field of solid dosage forms, do not guarantee the highest number of citations for a journal and are thus not the best to choose from all submitted manuscripts, if a journal only wants to increase its impact factor. Does this necessarily mean that such a field is only of marginal scientific value? Does it necessarily mean that almost everything is well known and the progress is only insignificant? Does it necessarily mean that the research field is of no relevance for the pharmaceutical industry? I don't think so. However, compared with other fields like nanotechnology or biopharmaceutics the number of pharmaceutical scientists in academia, who are doing research in “classical” Pharmaceutical Technology, is continuously decreasing. As a result the community shrinks, produces less citations and the papers are not boosting the impact factor of a journal. As an example from another area, chemical engineers are doing fascinating research into process understanding, including process simulation, but the impact factors of leading journals in the field is rather low compared to other communities such as biology or neuroscience.

Therefore, I am grateful that the European Journal of Pharmaceutics and Biopharmaceutics is willing to publish papers in the Pharmaceutical Technology field and dedicate a special issue like the one on “Solid State and Solid Dosage Forms.”. This editorial decision by Prof. Robert Gurny and his team is well appreciated. It reflects the history of the journal and the affiliation with the International Society for Pharmaceutical Technology (APV).

Some years ago, some scientists have founded the Pharmaceutical Solid State Research Cluster (www.pssrc.org). They teamed up to collaborate on overcoming current limitations in the formulation of solid dosage forms. The focus of their work is on the development of novel pharmaceutical dosage forms and strategies to ensure the quality of medicines. The research activities in the different groups cover all areas of solid dosage form development. Within the cluster the research activities address two main areas: the development of novel analytical technologies and their use for advanced process engineering of typical unit operations during pharmaceutical manufacture. The contributions in this special issue originate from PSSRC cluster members: a number are resulting from collaborations between two or more labs.

Solid state characterisation involves advanced techniques and enhances our understanding of starting materials, final dosage forms and process induced transformations. A number of papers address the amorphous state and its characterisation. Based on the improved understanding of the solid state, tailored solid dosage forms can be developed and produced. Reviews deal with modern imaging techniques for solid dosage forms, methods for solid form screening and alternative pelletisation aids. Recently, developments in the analytical field have opened up new insights into the structure and the behavior of solid dosage forms. The combination of advanced analytical methods and modern production technologies opens new perspectives in the field of solid dosage forms.

I thank all the colleagues who spent their time in writing or reviewing the contributions for the theme issue in due time. My hope as special issue editor is that the collection of papers is well received in the worldwide community and stimulating further research. We also want to encourage young enthusiastic scientists to enter into this field and join our work to develop better medicines and increase our understanding in this area.

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Available online 9 September 2008