Reflections on 30 years in the life of a journal

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This past year, we have celebrated the 30th Anniversary of *NJC*. Thirty years ago, the journal, then called *Nouveau Journal de Chimie* (and later *New Journal of Chemistry*), was founded by Lionel Salem. Salem, who held a chair of Theoretical Chemistry at the University of Paris-Sud in Orsay and was also head of the Laboratory of Theoretical Chemistry, proposed the establishing of a multi- and interdisciplinary journal, in which authors from all countries could report their best work on any aspect of chemistry. In particular, he wished to promote dialogue between chemists in different fields. His ideas received strong support from the CNRS Department of Chemistry, and its director of the time, Prof. Jean Cantacuzene, oversaw the launch of *NJC* by providing personnel and financial support.

The first editor-in-chief was Salem; he was followed by Nguyen Trong Anh, Henri Kagan, Olivier Kahn, Odile Eisenstein, Clément Sanchez and currently Jean-Pierre Majoral. Very recently, Jerry Atwood has been named co-Editor-in-Chief, alongside Majoral. The daily workings of the journal were managed by Dr Claudine Lehman between 1977 and 1996 in Orsay, and since then by Dr Denise Parent in Montpellier. The journal was published initially by the French publishing house Gauthier-Villars.

Ten years ago, the CNRS formed a partnership with the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC), and since January 1998, *NJC* has been co-published by the two institutions. *NJC* is a general chemistry journal of the RSC, publishing predominantly full papers. It joins *Chemical Communications* and *Chemical Society Reviews* as the RSC's third non-thematic journal.

Thirty years is a long time, and it is possible to cite some historic papers published by *NJC* in its early years. Z. Grabowski introduced twisted intramolecular charge-transfer (TICT) states. N. T. Anh and O. Eisenstein interpreted 1,2-asymmetric induction. J.-M. Lehn and J.-P. Sauvage showed how to chemically store light energy, while H. Kagan produced hydrogen by visible light irradiation. Kagan also pioneered the use of divalent lanthanide iodides in organic synthesis in an *NJC* paper. Many other top chemists have published in *NJC* over the years.

The role of *NJC* has changed significantly since 1977. In its earlier days, the essential activity of the journal was to publish articles. Nowadays, there are many other ways in which *NJC* participates in the life of the chemical community. *NJC Invited Speakers* Prof. V. Percec and Dr G. Kickelbick were featured at two meetings this past summer. Junior authors whose work has been recognised nationally or internationally have been invited to write reviews. This has led to many highly visible and well-cited papers (we can mention those by M. Benaglia, M. Buchmeiser, C. Copéret, J.-F. Nierengarten, L. Prodi and M. Zanda as examples). The work of young scientists is also recognised by the *NJC Interface Poster Prize*, which the editors of the journal have presented since 2005 at international conferences. More generally, the journal endeavours to support the participation of younger chemists at international conferences.

So here we are at the end of 2007. Zinc, the 30th element of the periodic table, has been one of the year's focuses. Its varied chemistry, like that of *NJC*'s, has been illustrated through its ability to form supramolecular interactions (J. Atwood), to be a potential anti-Alzheimer agent (M. Pitié and B. Meunier), to be involved in artificial nucleases (P. Tecilla), to mediate in organic reactions (F. Chemla) and to be used in semiconductors (P. Reiss). The sensing of zinc was also covered in two review papers (J. Canary, G. Parkin).

Other 30th Anniversary articles published this year dealt with luminescent thiophenes (Marder), the metal-directed assembly of combinatorial libraries (E. Constable and C. Housecroft), ionic liquids in pharmaceutical ingredient synthesis and delivery (R. Rogers), asymmetric synthesis from experimental and theoretical points of view (S. Davies, F. Maseras), dendrimers on gold electrodes (J.-F. Nierengarten and C. Amatore), molecular wires (J. Gladysz), π-electron delocalisation (J.-P. Malrieu and C. Lepetit), meso- and macroporous materials (A. Galarneau and F. Fajula), the electronic structure of boron carbide (R. Hoffmann) and an essay (in this issue) on the role of concepts in chemistry (S. Shaik).

From synthesis to theory, from chemistry to biochemistry and drug design, from photochemistry to electrochemistry, *NJC* covers the infinite facets of the creativity of chemists.

This creativity is reflected in the rapid development of the chemical sciences at the interface of many disciplines, inspiring biology, nanomedicine, nanotechnologies, materials science, catalysis, *etc*. It is evident to us that *NJC*, a leading journal in the chemical sciences, should provide its practitioners with the "state-of-the-art" on given topics through special issues. The special issue on dendrimers (July 2007) is an example of how we want to publish other hot research areas in the future.

It was a year worth celebrating. The birthday party is almost over, and we wish *NJC* many more years of publishing outstanding chemistry.

Jerry Atwood and Jean-Pierre Majoral
(Editors-in-Chief)
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