

EDITORIAL

Analytical Chemistry is like the Fruit of an Apple Tree

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Analytical chemistry is deeply rooted in Europe. It started with the work of Liebig and Fresenius, among others. Then Kirchhoff, as father of spectroscopy, contributed to the development of the modern instrumental analysis techniques flourishing today. As soon as I started learning analytical chemistry at university, I fell in love with it. At that time, I could not explain why I wanted to become an analytical chemist. Having gained experience teaching and performing research in analytical chemistry, I know now that I am attracted to it because this branch of chemistry is what an apple means to an apple tree - the fruit of a myriad of results in fundamental research in chemistry, always offering solutions to real life problems. I always wanted to become an analyst and to work at the analytical chemistry department where I studied. One year ago, my life drastically changed at the institute when I was invited to apply to lead the analytical chemistry department where I have been working since 2007. I must admit that I had mixed feelings in the beginning. First of all, I was honored that my colleagues in the department fully expressed their support. At the same time, I was confused and scared. I felt that I am not the right person to lead a department with a history of almost 120 years, that I had no clear vision of what could I do for my colleagues and for the students choosing our department. However, I wanted to express my gratitude to my colleagues for their trust in me. In my application, I advocated to maintain the high-quality teaching of analytical chemistry at the department and offered to implement challenge-based learning for students choosing our department. In past years, I felt that the *raison d'être* of analytical chemistry departments as single entities would soon end. My colleagues working in other fields such as biology, geography and geology, pharmacy and medicine, all purchased instrumental analytical equipment and started performing research by themselves. Recently, analytical chemistry departments underwent important organizational and structural changes. Some of them disappeared, others incorporated into their name environmental chemistry, food chemistry, or biochemistry. Recent advances in instrumental analysis create the impression that conducting chemical analysis is an easy task that no longer requires the expertise of chemists devoted to this branch of chemistry. However, there is still a lot of work to do, especially in the field of organic analytical chemistry. Thanks to innovations in mass spectrometry and related techniques, infrared spectroscopy, miniaturization (lab-on-chips) and sensors, ultra trace analysis, green methodologies, and elemental speciation, analytical chemistry is experiencing a second Golden Era. In last year alone, I was surprised by the ever-increasing number of chemistry bachelor and major students knocking on my door asking me to provide them with analytical chemistry-related research topics. That led me to contact faculty working at the other institutes offering cooperation with the arsenal of our instruments to widen the research topic choices in our department, advocating that we should unite and complement our efforts to create synergies. Surprisingly, the response of those colleagues was very positive. In one year, I could almost double the number of research topics for diploma work in our department. This is something that makes

me happy and optimistic. I am confident that the development of analytical methods together with proper sampling and sample preparation are still important and crucial steps to produce high quality and reliable results. Moreover, participation of analytical chemists in these tasks is indispensable. The recent success of the Brazilian Journal of Analytical Chemistry achieving an impact factor of 0.7 makes me also think that analytical method development has still a bright future ahead. Long live Analytical Chemistry! Long live Brazilian Journal of Analytical Chemistry!



Victor G. Mihucz has been working at the Department of Analytical Chemistry of ELTE Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary since 2007. In 2014, he habilitated in Analytical Chemistry. In 2015, he was appointed as associate professor. Currently, he is head of the Analytical Chemistry Department at the Institute of Chemistry, ELTE. He obtained the DSc degree from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA) in October 2022. He participated in about 20 national and international research, scientific cooperation, and educational projects. His main research field is elemental analysis, mainly arsenic speciation in water and food. Another research topic of Victor G. Mihucz is indoor air quality. He was the secretary of the Spectrochemical Society of the Hungarian Chemical Society (MKE) between 2015 and 2019, then its president (2019-2023). In 2019, he was elected as a member of the MKE Steering Committee. He has been secretary of the MTA Analytical Chemistry and Environmental Sciences Scientific Committee since 2018. In 2016, he received the Ernő Pungor award of MTA. In 2020 and 2022, he was awarded the Miklós Preisich award of MKE and CHARM-EU Award of ELTE, respectively.