

Dear Friend

Ljubljana, 15.12.2013

It is ten years since I started to write this New Year message to You, my professional friend. Then years of different experience and a lot of successful work can be found on these paths. Many of us had chance to meet and to enjoy each other's company and friendships even in the last year, which is just diminishing away. This is a good feeling for our future. But finally it is just one more year. In my personal view this is the year when I had to cancel many contributions to international and national meetings due to health problems, like IFT Chicago, ISSY Tatras; Biotechnology Boston, CIGR China, EBC Luxemburg, FABI Skiatos, TROFELIA Gornja Radgona, ECPD Beograd. I was lucky to settle health issues in the second half of the year when I was also definitely informed that my work with university will be terminated since I fulfil 40 years of professional work. In the frame of this new law shall enter pension found with New Year. This development is due to new law, which regulates employment at state universities with clear intention to reduce the number of employees in public sector and is connected to current financial crisis in Slovenia. Saying shortly I invested last 25 years of my work as a superior of the group and last 20 years as a head of the Chair of biotechnology and last five years as a head of the study of microbiology, speaking about University of Ljubljana. But let me reflect to just passing year to stick to my traditional habit.

Extensive work was put to knowledge dissemination in the country but also abroad. The EU project »DREAM« conducted in June in Nantes at final conference, but completion of all reports and activities with the final dissemination meeting in Ljubljana on 12th December entitled "Design and development of food models with well characterised micro- and macro-structure and composition – What will be next step?" wrapped the DREAM with great success. Majority of the projects still go on and we look forward for good outcomes in PROMISE - Protection of consumers by microbial risk mitigation through combating segregation of expertise and in FOOD-SEG - Strengthening cooperation in food safety research in the enlarged European Union. I have to mention also nice success, the start of "TRAFooN" project which has just been started in December and will cover "Traditional Food Network to improve the transfer of knowledge for innovation« under the guidance of Susanne Braun, but I also shall not ignore good work which is going on with Slovenian Breweries and on the project about microbial adhesion to surfaces. On top of all this national and international work is permanent cooperation with University of Vienna, Veterinary University in Vienna, University of Maribor and already traditional with BOKU. We should be grateful to our jobs for this opportunity of excellent experience with students and teachers.

Regarding our activities at scientific conferences I could stress just a few of them. To illustrate our frame of contributions let me list the yeast as negative player "Quantification of Yeast Adherence and Invasion: Can we handle this challenge?" presented at 8th Balkan Congress of Microbiology MICROBIOLOGIA BALKANICA '2013 in Veliko Trnovo in Bulgaria under organisation of professor Galabov. or "Methodological approaches for unraveling ill-natured moments of generally good-natured *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*" at The 5th International Scientific Meeting, MYCOLOGY, MYCOTOXICOLOGY AND MYCOSES in Novi sad under organisation of professor Škrinjar. But also as good contributor „Composed inoculum of yeasts *Candida zemplinina* and *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* improves alcoholic fermentation of must overloaded with sugars" at INTERVITIS INTERFRUCTA in Stuttgart in April under organisation of prof Rauhut or „Interactions among yeasts during fermentation: Do they affect wine aroma profile?" at regular meeting POWER of MICROBES in INDUSTRY and ENVIRONMENT 2013 in Primošten in October under organisation of professor Mrša.

Regarding building capacities on global level, I appreciated to be invited to 2nd International symposium "Vera Johanides": Biotechnology in Croatia till 2020 where I touched the issue: "Biotechnology at the door of Horizon 2020" to Zagreb in May under organisation of professor Kniewald, and as Vice president of COST DC in Izmir at COST action meeting INFOGEST in October under organisation of professor Dupont where I addressed at opening "Ethical responsibilities within Food Supply Chain". About broadening perspectives I am happy that I accepted participation at MoniQA International Conference in Budapest in February with planery "The variation in environmental and demographic patterns as challenge for life learning in society: food case" under organisation of professor Kneifel but also at 4th CONPASTA in November entitled "From grain to pasta and...bread: Step or journey?" under organisation of Mr. Odabašić or at the conference Food | Design | Humanity in Łódź in October tacking to interesting audience of artist and designers of food about »The role of Ethics in Food Safety and Quality« under organisation of Mr. Hablesreiter what gives reword and inspiration for us as teachers and researchers. In the same direction I can cluster also lecture "Food safety between Scylla and Charybdis - between EFSA and consumer" at University of Hohenheim in April under organisation of Professor Braun.

As a president of Slovenian Society for Microbiology I have to mention few events which were conducted by our colleagues like BAGECO under organisation of professor Mandič Mulec and 4th Likar symposium under organisation of professor Petrovec. On a side I am specially honoured to get invitation to speak in The House of Experiments in Ljubljana as SSM chair "Our daily bread and microbes: Who will win?" but on particular place in my heart will stay a plenary lecture devoted to Professor Emeritus Dr. Tibor Deák (1935–2013), for his achievements in the area of yeast research entitled "Biotechnology, biosafety and diversity of yeasts *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*: Can all this be managed?" He was the person who marked nice moments in my life.

European declaration ambassadors continued with their activities this year within their own countries and we did not manage to have general meeting together. I trust this will be next year more intensive again. The idea is still growing well and new partners are on the door what is good for the spirit and for activity which was showed with interest at different meetings like the one in Budapest, where the view on declarations was presented to participants "Development initiative 2003 in 2008: European declarations on microbiology and food technologies and nutrition" in March.

Direct communication to Slovenian citizens was never ignored and a closer look shows that I gave in average every month one contribution to public media. Beside food safety concerns, maybe for this year is the most important communication about 20th anniversary of microbiology study at University of Ljubljana. For that reason I gave few interviews in journals on TV and radio. Worthwhile to mention is the interview in December where I introduced the programme of the meeting which took place during the University week and promoted 7 selected cases of students who highly overcome mediocrity and they shared with us their personal success stories embedded in current frame of needs in microbiology. This was followed by 5 success stories of professors who were the most successful in research and in pedagogical field in last 10 years.

Additional to this, it was complicated to conduct the chair since we are involved in four study programs and staff is involved in 20 projects and one program group. One could easily see that I still have also duties in Program committee of FW7 in Brussels, vice presidency of COST, evaluation bodies in research but also in pedagogical area and some other duties in Slovenian Government. Pedagogically I was occupied with microbiology collegium which stays focused on microbiological activities with very complex structure since we are deeply integrated to some departments at Biotechnical Faculty and to Medical Faculty as well, not to mention 20th anniversary challenge. This milestone would not be complete without comprehensive publication about microbiology programme, teachers and students on 800 pages within 30 chapters.

However, in spite of this, last year was in our group reasonably productive. We published 15 papers in journals with IF and 32 monographic publications in books among 150 items registered in database for 2013. We are especially proud on two chapters in the books like "Springer Food engineering series: Advances in food process engineering research and applications with chapter Food chain safety management systems: the impact of good practices" and in the book Biofilms in bioengineering by Nova Science Publishers with the chapter "Mechanisms of microbial resistance in biofilms" and one pedagogical book: Biotechnological Techniquim: Textbook for Exercises.

We employed new young researcher Miha Tome. At the same time Marko Blažič, Janko Koselj and Teja Zakrajšek finished their work and there are about to defend their PhD theses. Professor Smole Možina escorted Ana Mavri successfully and I helped to Martina Avbelj, Etjen Bizaj and Katarina Kovač to become doctors in microbiology and biotechnology area and Petra Medved Djurašinović and Urška Pivk Kupirovič in food and nutrition area. We are happy that we had guests in our laboratory, Danijela Horvatek from Croatia, Bohdanka Janštova from Czech Republic, Zorica Tomićić and Ružica Tomićić from Serbia, but also our students worked abroad, in Austria, United Kingdom... In a way this year was dense with events and outcomes and even more with obstacles.

Not to exceed usual size of this writing to you I briefly mention some of the issues, although you could give them different weight and distribution. There were also other issues, which would be worth to mentioned in organisational part and in particularly in scientific part of our activities as well as in auditing at different universities, or chairing commission and also dealing with daily concerns in our group which counts currently for 19 people and is handled to vice chair Sonja Smole Možina with new year.

In my "other" life I am still active in Rotary club Ljubljana Center. This year we conducted already 6th St. Martin's Days. The participants were happy with the culture, but also wine from Bela Krajina region and traditional foods and traditional music from the region were much appreciated.

But, let it be enough for this year. I can not write down all anyway. But I have to mention my family, Tatjana and Sara, but also Petra and Duško for all altruistic help within this turbulent year. Coming to this point, starting real job with 17 years of age, after 40 years of regular work and facing different experiences at different levels in industry and academia as well as in different cultures, I see many opportunities to be active contributor to actual society, with so many needs. The Needs, with very diverse Faces.

Take care and all the best in coming year 2014.

With session greetings

Peter and Co.

