

Editorial

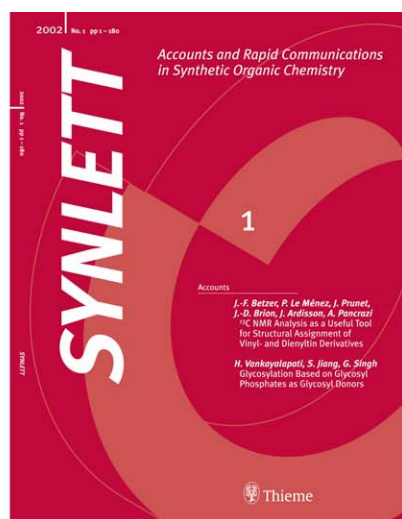
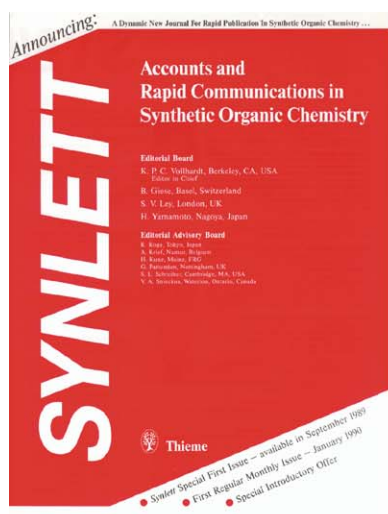
Dear Readers,

This year *Synlett* will be 20 years young, and I feel somewhat nostalgic composing this editorial for the occasion.

It was a little over 20 years ago that I was approached by Thieme Publishers to consider spearheading a new journal for synthetic organic chemistry. The idea was (vaguely) to create a sister journal to *Synthesis*, which had garnered a solid reputation as a reliable and high quality venue for full papers in advances in synthetic methods and total synthesis. The new publication was to complement these features by focusing on rapid communications. My gut response was “we already have too many journals”, but my attention was piqued when it transpired that I would be given complete freedom in designing content, establishing a fast protocol for handling manuscripts, choosing co-editors, etc. One has to remember that at the time the number of journals solely devoted to organic synthesis was limited, processing a manuscript in the pre-internet era

was cumbersome and slow, and involvement of publishers in the support of our discipline was uncommon and sporadic.

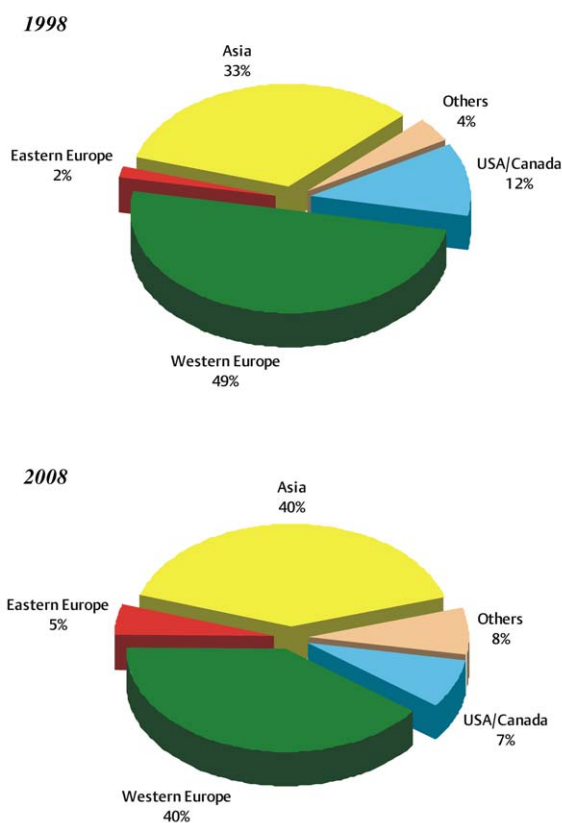
Still sceptical about this venture, I proceeded to present the publishers with a list of stipulations without which the project was a non-starter. These included operating funds to enable the use of telephone, Fax, and FedEx to accelerate the reviewing process (eventually this turned into work stations for everybody), a low subscription price for libraries (\$ 153!), even lower for individuals (\$ 80), and lowest ones for students (\$ 50), the institution of a major award (this became the Thieme-IUPAC Prize), a general commitment to support graduate students and postdoctorals in various ways, and high quality production of manuscripts (eventually including the free use of color). Moreover, I asked that the project be scrapped if it did not succeed. To my amazement, Thieme accepted these conditions without ado.



From then to now

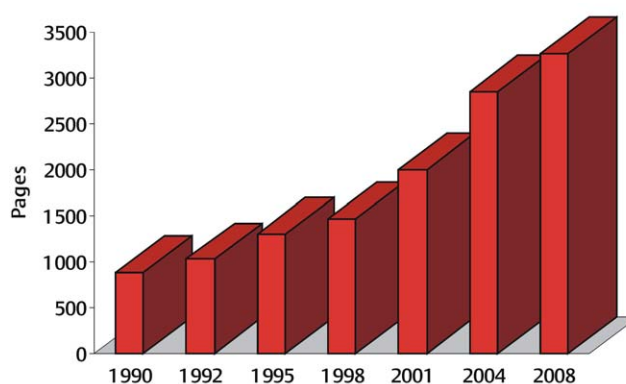
I went to work with the outstanding help of our first managing editor Joe Richmond (now editor of *Advanced Synthesis & Catalysis*) and was delighted to engage the collaborations of three co-editors, my colleagues and friends Bernd Giese, Steve Ley, and Hisashi Yamamoto to launch *Synlett* with the first issue in September 1989. I remember (or not) a rather wet inaugural meeting in Hawaii, which ended with the rallying cry: “For the students!”

To our delight, the journal quickly became a publishing success with rapidly increasing submissions of manuscripts and subscriptions from all over the world. The development of the distribution of published papers over the last 10 years is visualized in the two diagrams below.



Regional partition of published papers in 1998 compared with 2008

We expanded the list of editors with Vic Snieckus and, more recently Hak-Fun Chow and Henry Wong, the latter to give justice to the most significant change observed in this period of time – the rapid increase of submissions from China. Steve Ley, who luckily stayed on as an active and innovative adviser, was succeeded by Laurence Harwood. Similarly, Hisashi Yamamoto was replaced by Yas Uozumi, but fortunately stayed on to start a series of topical “Clusters”. The number of yearly issues increased from 12 to 20 to accommodate the increasing number of submitted manuscripts. Since the early days of *Synlett* the amount of published research has more than tripled as shown in the graph below.



Increase in the number of published pages over the last 20 years

These expansions went together with the additions of additional new features, such as the “Reagent Spotlights” submitted by graduate students and the biyearly special issues dedicated to individual icons of organic synthesis: Gilbert Stork (1995), E. J. Corey (1997), Albert Eschenmoser (1999), Ryoji Noyori (2001), Ray Lemieux (2003), Clayton Heathcock (2004), Richard Heck (2006), and Sir Jack Baldwin (2008). The appearance of a special issue on “Organic Chemistry in China” coincided with the addition of our Chinese editorial office in 2006.

20 Years of *Synlett* – that means 20 years of highlights in synthetic organic chemistry. The following lists of the most popular papers (overall and over the last 5 years) provide you with a perfect overview of the key topics and the most important developments in the area.

Most Cited Papers in Synlett 1989–2007

Citations	Title	Corresponding author(s)	Citation, article type
527	Rare Earth Metal Trifluoromethanesulfonates as Water-Tolerant Lewis Acid Catalysts in Organic Synthesis	S. Kobayashi	1994 , 689 (Account)
297	Synthetic Organoindium Chemistry: What Makes Indium so Appealing?	P. Cintas	1995 , 1087 (Account)
296	[Hydroxy(organosulfonyl)iodo]arenes in Organic Synthesis	R. M. Moriarty G. F. Koser	1990 , 365 (Account)
277	Synthesis of Sterically Hindered Biaryls via the Palladium-Catalyzed Cross-Coupling Reaction of Arylboronic Acids or their Esters with Haloarenes	A. Suzuki	1992 , 207 (Letter)
271	Self-Assembly in Organic Synthesis	J. F. Stoddart	1991 , 445 (Account)
269	Transition Metal Catalyzed Cycloisomerizations	B. M. Trost	1998 , 1 (Account)
267	Palladium-Catalyzed Amination of Aryl Halides: Mechanism and Rational Catalyst Design	J. F. Hartwig	1997 , 329 (Account)
263	Asymmetric Aminocatalysis	B. List	2001 , 1675 (Account)
263	New Mechanistic Insights into Reductions of Halides and Radicals with Samarium(II) Iodide	D. P. Curran	1992 , 943 (Account)
261	Coping with Extreme Lewis Acidity: Strategies for the Synthesis of Stable, Mononuclear Organometallic Derivatives of Scandium	J. E. Bercaw	1990 , 74 (Account)

Most Cited Papers in Synlett 2003–2007

Citations	Title	Corresponding author(s)	Citation, article type
198	Renaissance of Ullmann and Goldberg Reactions – Progress in Copper Catalyzed C–N-, C–O- and C–S-Coupling	K. Kunz	2003 , 2428 (New Tools)
123	5-Pyrrolidin-2-yltetrazole: A New, Catalytic, More Soluble Alternative to Proline in an Organocatalytic Asymmetric Mannich-type Reaction	S. V. Ley	2004 , 558 (Letter)
102	Power of Cooperativity: Lewis Acid–Lewis Base Bifunctional Asymmetric Catalysis	M. Kanai M. Shibasaki	2005 , 1491 (Account)
94	Organocatalysis in Ionic Liquids: Highly Efficient l-Proline-Catalyzed Direct Asymmetric Mannich Reactions Involving Ketone and Aldehyde Nucleophiles	C. F. Barbas III	2003 , 1906 (Cluster)
87	Mining Sequence Space for Asymmetric Aminocatalysis: N-Terminal Prolyl-Peptides Efficiently Catalyze Enantioselective Aldol and Michael Reactions	B. List	2003 , 1901 (Cluster)
84	Stereoselective Chemical 1,2- <i>cis</i> O-Glycosylation: From ‘Sugar Ray’ to Modern Techniques of the 21 st Century	A. V. Demchenko	2003 , 1225 (Account)
81	Novel Palladium Catalytic Systems for Organic Transformations	S. Uemura	2004 , 201 (Account)
81	Some Recent Advances in Metallosalen Chemistry	T. Katsuki	2003 , 281 (Account)
79	Catalytic Multistep Reactions via Palladacycles	M. Catellani	2003 , 298 (Account)
78	A New Green Approach to the Friedländer Synthesis of Quinolines	A. Arcadi	2003 , 203 (Letter)

Most Downloaded Papers in *Synlett* up to November 2008

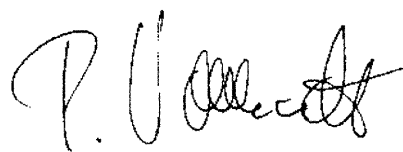
Downloads	Title	Corresponding author(s)	Citation, article type
9098	From α -Amino Acids to Peptides: All You Need for the Journey	C. Nájera	2002 , 1388 (Account)
3842	Cobalt and Palladium Reagents in Organic Synthesis: The Beginning	R. F. Heck	2006 , 2855 (Account)
3426	Solid Phase Synthesis	A. R. Brown	1998 , 817 (New Tools)
3395	An Improved One-pot Procedure for the Synthesis of Alkynes from Aldehydes	H. J. Bestmann	1996 , 521 (Letter)
2697	A Journey Across Recent Advances in Catalytic and Stereoselective Alkylation of Indoles	M. Bandini A. Umani-Ronchi	2005 , 1199 (Account)
2689	Discovery and Understanding of Transition-Metal-Catalyzed Aromatic Substitution Reactions	J. F. Hartwig	2006 , 1283 (Account)
2468	Power of Cooperativity: Lewis Acid–Lewis Base Bifunctional Asymmetric Catalysis	M. Kanai M. Shibasaki	2005 , 1491 (Account)
2458	Renaissance of Ullmann and Goldberg Reactions - Progress in Copper Catalyzed C–N-, C–O- and C–S-Coupling	K. Kunz	2003 , 2428 (New Tools)
2380	Discovery of New Multi Component Reactions with Combinatorial Methods	L. Weber	1999 , 366 (New Tools)
2377	Approaching Highly Enantioselective Reductive Amination	V. I. Tararov A. Börner	2005 , 203 (Account)

Thieme and *Synlett* have been actively engaged in the support of young chemists over the years. The biyearly Thieme-IUPAC Prize (awardees: Stuart Schreiber, Paul Knochel, Eric Jacobsen, Andy Myers, Alois Fürstner, Erick Carreira, John Hartwig, David MacMillan, Dean Toste), which is given to individuals under 40 years of age, has joined the ranks of the most prestigious awards in the field. Our Thieme Chemistry Journal Award for Assistant Professors, which has been given since 1999 to acknowledge and encourage young investigators, has had a most enthusiastic response from its recipients. Therefore, all current and previous Awardees have been invited to celebrate *Synlett*'s 20th birthday throughout the year 2009 with a manuscript on their research. The first contributions in this section are part of this issue. Similarly, the identification of outstanding graduate students as "SYNStars" has been very successful.

More generally, Thieme sponsors an annual conference for Ph.D. students in organic chemistry in Stuttgart (including a "Thieme lecturer"), regularly awards prizes for best posters at international conferences, and provides financial support in various forms for international meetings. Keeping up with the tradition, Thieme Chemistry will also be present at various conferences in 2009, for example, the two ACS National Meetings, as well as OMCOS 15, the 22nd ICHC, the 16th ESOC, and many more. At these meetings, you are cordially invited to join our staff at the Thieme Chemistry booth for little birthday get-togethers.

Later in January, *Synlett* will receive an online facelift, when the new Thieme Chemistry Web site is released under the known URL: www.thieme-chemistry.com. New functionalities, enhanced features and direct linking to all electronic resources will ease the navigation and access to all information regardless of whether you visit us as an interested chemist, author, or librarian. The beta version of the new Web site is accessible through the current homepage at www.thieme-chemistry.com.

Finally, we have taken the opportunity of this occasion to reconstitute our Editorial Advisory Boards. Thus, with our colleagues from *Synthesis*, we decided to merge all into one common board, with a much smaller and more intensely active composition. We are greatly indebted to the members of our past boards for their help, support, and valuable advice, without which we would not be where we are now. We would also like to welcome the members of our new board, the composition of which is shown in the imprint, and look forward to a productive association that will take us into the next 20 years!



Peter Vollhardt, Editor in Chief
January 2009



The Stuttgart Editorial Office Team (from left to right: Sabine Heller, Susanne Haak, Helene Deufel, Selena Boothroyd, Thomas Loop, Stefanie Baumann, Thorsten Schön, Christiane Kemper with the newest "team member")

On behalf of all members of the **Synlett** Editorial Office in Stuttgart I would like to join Peter Vollhardt in thanking you, our readers, authors, referees as well as old and new Advisory Board members for your continued support over the past two decades. We look for-

ward to a fruitful and intense collaboration with you to continue to creatively build on a bright future of **Synlett**! With my best wishes for a successful, peaceful and happy New Year

Susanne Haak

Susanne Haak, Managing Editor
January 2009