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## FOREWORD

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The development and affirmation of the Faculty of Industrial Chemistry from Timișoara shortly after its creation in 1948, despite great difficulties in ensuring the material resources necessary for the learning system and the laboratories, was the result of the effort and the endeavor of its founders, professors Coriolan Drăgulescu and Ilie Murgulescu, and also of the decisive contribution of the first generation of teachers who made it possible for a high quality university education, successfully represented by Timișoara's chemical engineers.

During the years 1962 and 1963, the Faculty of Industrial Chemistry from Timișoara has solidified in value its teaching and researching staff, by “refreshing” itself with a new generation of young honorable graduates from the Romanian higher education facilities: Barbu Demian, Ecaterina Merca, Delia Perju, Adalbert Deaky, Maria Nemeș, Adrian Chiriac, Karlhuz Kohut, Romulus Minea (Faculty of Industrial Chemistry – Timișoara), Carol Csunderlik, Maria Nuțiu (Faculty of Chemistry – Cluj-Napoca), Mihail Bîrzescu, Ilona Bîrzescu (University of Bucharest) and Francisc Klepp (Faculty of Mathematics – Timișoara). Under specific circumstances, B. Demian (“Philip Morris”, USA), F. Kerek (“Max Planck” Institute, Germany) and K. Kohut (in production) have successfully continued their professional and research activity in other workplaces.

All the others remained loyal to the Faculty where they were formed and where they ascended in their academic career, both scientifically and didactically, for over four decades, in a very beneficial collaboration for preparing Politehnica Timișoara “brand” chemical engineers. Therefore, we were deeply saddened when, in 2012, two good colleagues, Mihail Bîrzescu and Carol Csunderlik, left us by passing into eternity, especially since their close friendship was well known. In these sad circumstances, of final departure, we were struck by some “coincidences” concerning the similarities of their two destinies.

Mihail Bîrzescu (b. October 6, 1941) and Carol Csunderlik (b. October 9, 1941) were born at very close dates in the same year. Although they had degrees in chemistry at different faculties from the centers University of Bucharest and of Cluj-Napoca, respectively, they professed together as teachers at the Faculty of Industrial Chemistry from Timișoara, carrying uninterrupted a meritorious activity through which they contributed to the modernization of

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both education and research in the Faculty, to the training of 36 generations of chemical engineers, and to their improvement through master and doctoral studies. Fortunately, it remained in the Faculty's memory book an entertaining story in which Mihail Bîrzescu and Carol Csunderlik made a chemical synthesis that used nitric acid and during which they both got "xanthoproteic freckles" on their faces. They died the same year, in 2012, with only days in between.

Wishing to better preserve and honor their memories and to pay tribute to the life and to the teaching activity of these two dear colleagues, "Chemeia Semper" Association organized three symposia under the name "Stability and Reactivity in Coordination Chemistry - in memoriam Mihail Bîrzescu", which took place on October 25, 2013, November 7, 2014, and September 18, 2015.