

Editorial

Dear Readers of CHIMIA,

This special issue is dedicated to Italian chemists who had the chance to join research groups or receive part of their education in Switzerland and have been leading a research team in Italy afterwards.

The Swiss–Italian connection in chemistry has been always very strong. It has pushed well-established Italian scientists to join prestigious research centres (such as Prof. Piero Pino at ETH from 1968 to 1988) and has encouraged many young talented Italian students to join renowned Swiss groups as PhDs or postdocs. For many of these researchers, the training and the expertise acquired in Switzerland have been the springboard for their future careers in research in Italy.

The strong tradition of chemistry and chemical industry in Switzerland, coupled with the excellence of the Swiss universities and polytechnic schools, has always attracted students from all over the world, including Italy. This is certainly the case for the authors of this special issue: their Swiss time of life paved the way for their successful and independent academic career in Italy, either as professors at universities or as researchers at the Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR).

This special issue in CHIMIA showcases the research of eight groups in Italy who had, and in some case still have, strong Swiss connections.

Davide Bonifazi completed his PhD in 2004 under the supervision of Prof. Francois Diederich at the ETH Zurich. After a post-doctoral stay in Trieste (IT), he joined the chemistry department of the University of Trieste as part-time researcher and then that of University of Namur (BE) as professor. In 2016, he took up the Chair of Professor of Organic Supramolecular Chemistry at Cardiff University. His research interests are the synthesis of pi-conjugated aromatic systems doped with heteroatoms (boron, nitrogen and chalcogens), the self-assembly and self-organization of pi-conjugated aromatic molecules on surfaces, organic functionalisation of carbon nanostructures for optoelectronic applications and the application of the supramolecular concept to interface with cellular functions. In his account he gives an overview on the use of borazines as doping scaffolds for graphene nanostructures.

Giuliano Giambastiani joined the group of Prof. Carlo Floriani at the University of Lausanne in November 2000. After one year as Assistant Professor he obtained a permanent position at the Institute of Chemistry of OrganoMetallic Compounds of the Italian National Research Council – ICCOM-CNR, where he holds the position of Senior Researcher since 2007. His current scientific activities span organic and organometallic synthesis and homogeneous catalysis to the preparation and characterization of advanced materials and composites based on functionalized carbon nanostructures for application in heterogeneous (electro) catalysis. In his article he gives an overview on the most recent achievements in the field of heterogeneous catalysis promoted by *ad hoc* covalently functionalized carbon nanomaterials.

Umberto Piarulli also joined the group of Prof. Carlo Floriani at the University of Lausanne in 1991, where he received a strong education in coordination and organometallic chemistry and obtained his PhD in 1996. He is now full professor of organic chemistry at the University of Insubria (Como, Italy) and his research interests span the synthesis of enantioselective catalysts for asymmetric metal promoted transformations to the synthesis, conformational analysis and biological evaluation of peptidomimetics. He reports herein on enantioselective reductions promoted by (cyclopentadienone)iron complexes.

Francesca Cardona joined the group of Prof. Pierre Vogel in Lausanne in 1997 for her third PhD year. After gaining her PhD, she was a postdoctoral fellow in Vogel's group until the end of 1999. She became a permanent researcher (2002–2015) at the Department of Chemistry in Firenze, and since 2015 she is Associated Professor in the same Department. She continued the collaboration with Prof. Vogel until 2010. Her research interests range from the development of new green oxidation methods to the stereoselective syntheses of nitrogenated glycomimetics with potential as new therapeutics. In this special issue she reports on the oxidation of *N,N*-disubstituted hydroxylamines to nitrones.

Claudio Santi, supported by a Swiss National Foundation fellowship, joined the group of Prof. Thomas Wirth at the Institut für Organische Chemie of Basel University as visiting postdoc scientist in 1998. He worked on the synthesis and the synthetic application of new optically pure nitrogen containing diselenides. Currently he is professor of organic chemistry in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences in Perugia leading the group of Catalysis and Organic Green Chemistry. In 2011 he founded the international scientific network SeSRedCat continuing his scientific efforts toward the application of organoselenium compounds in green chemistry and medicinal chemistry. In this issue he gives an overview on organic diselenides.

Fabio Marchetti is currently Associate Professor at the Department of Chemistry and Industrial Chemistry of the University of Pisa. He joined the group of Prof. Paul Dyson at the EPFL of Lausanne in 2012 as a visiting researcher, and he presently collaborates with the same group in the field of anticancer transition metal compounds. In this special issue he reports on 'Arene Ruthenium(II) Complexes with Phosphorous Ligands as Possible Anticancer Agents'.

Gianna Reginato was appointed Researcher at CNR in Florence in 1989. She joined the group of Prof. Bernd Giese in Basel in 1991–1992 as a visiting researcher. Since 2001 she is Senior Researcher at the Institute of Chemistry of OrganoMetallic Compounds (CNR-ICCOM) Sesto Fiorentino (FI). Her interest is in synthetic organic chemistry, especially in the field of metal-mediated processes. Her recent activities focus on the design and synthesis of new organic sensitizers for non-conventional photovoltaic cells production. In this special issue she reports on 'The Stille Reaction: Applications in the Synthesis of Organic Dyes for DSSCs'.

Pier Giorgio Cozzi was assistant diplomee in the group of Prof Carlo Floriani at University of Lausanne in 1991–1994. Then he moved to ALMA MATER STUDIORUM, University of Bologna, starting in 1994 as assistant professor, becoming associate (2001) and then full professor (2013). His scientific interests include the invention of new, enantioselective catalytic reactions and the development of new synthetic methodologies with abundant metals. Recently, he has oriented his research to the growing area of photoredox catalysis. In this issue he describes the privileged Salen ligands in various asymmetric catalytic processes.

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