

The 39th International Symposium on High-Performance-Liquid-Phase Separations and Related Techniques

HPLC 2013, Amsterdam, 16-20th June

I am currently in the final year of my PhD. As the main focus of my work was Capillary electrophoresis (CE) and High Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC), the HPLC meeting was recommended to me by a colleague who had previously attended it several years before. I had not yet attended any large scale conferences and was eager to experience the many lectures, networking opportunities and informative tutorials that this meeting offered. Thanks to the generous Student Bursary Award granted by The Chromatographic Society, I was able to attend this meeting and present a poster highlighting the successes of my work.

After having arrived at the conference on the opening evening and setting up my poster (one of an incredible 945 posters), I attended the opening lectures which included a very informative talk by Ron Majors about HPLC column myths and the presentation of several awards. One of the awards was the Csaba Horváth award. Prof. Horváth was mentioned consistently throughout the conference as one of the pioneers of HPLC.

There were four parallel sessions on at any time, so I had a choice of what to go to. The first day of lectures included a talk on the modern day Van Deemter equation from Dr Fabrice Gritti, a tutorial on HPLC columns by Ron Majors and another tutorial on UHPLC by Dr Monika Dittmann. This was particularly interesting as UHPLC was one of the main topics at the conference. I then had the chance to attend two lectures that were of particular interest to me, on CE, and got to talk with Prof. David Chen who presented one of the talks. That evening I went for the dinner with the members of the Irish Separation Science Cluster, including Prof. Brett Paul and others who currently work in the University of Tasmania.

Tuesdays lectures included a talk on band broadening by Prof. Gert Desmet, several talks on sheathless CE-MS which I had not previously been aware of and a tutorial on column efficiency by Dr Fabrice Gritti. Numerous talks also mentioned the relatively new superficially porous particles (core shell particles) that are becoming widespread in chromatography thanks to their improved efficiency. As there were stands from many companies at the conference, I spoke with representatives from Merck, Sigma-Aldrich, ACD/Labs, Agilent and many others about their current and new products. There were also stands from several publishers such as LCGC and The Analytical Scientist who offered free subscriptions and were available to give advice about publishing. Stands advertising other relevant conferences were also of interest. My designated poster time was on Tuesday so I talked with several people about my work and answered any questions.

On Wednesday, the selectivity section of talks included topics of various stationary phase additives, and a very funny presentation by Prof. David McCalley. After a tutorial on Supercritical Fluid Chromatography by Dr Isabelle Francois, I spent some time looking at some of the posters. I found this particularly useful as I had some conversations with other people doing similar CE work, as well

as techniques I haven't yet used. I then attended a talk by Prof. Robert Kennedy on the use of CE on a microchip platform. The conference dinner was that evening and was very well organised with lots of nice traditional 'Dutch' touches in the food and décor. This was a chance to talk with the other attendees of the conference in a more relaxed atmosphere.

The Thursday morning session I attended concerned work using LCxLC - two dimensional Liquid chromatography. This is not an area I am familiar with and so was very enlightening to hear the work being done in this area. I then attended a tutorial on Hydrophilic Interaction Chromatography (HILIC) by Prof. David McCalley which was very well rounded and covered HILIC basics, columns and method development strategy. A session on forensics comprised of several talks on the use of LC-MS analysis, and was followed by an audience discussion on forensics needs. The conclusion from this discussion was presented at the closing ceremony. In the sample preparation session, a talk on nanoparticles by Dr Frantisek Foret was followed by a very interesting talk by Prof. Koji Otsuka on microscale electrophoresis in which he discussed various electrophoretic sample pretreatment such as large volume sample stacking using an EOF pump (LVSEP) and field enhanced stacking. The closing session was chaired by Wolfgang Lindner and Attila Felinger and included talks on Ion chromatography, microfluidic-MS devices and a round-off of the conference.

Overall the HPLC conference was a very enjoyable and educational experience. The running themes included CE-MS, 2DLC, UPLC and column efficiencies. I would like to most sincerely thank the Chromatographic Society for awarding me the bursary and providing me with the opportunity to attend.

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