

LAUDATIO ERIC VAN SCHOONENBERGHE

Guido Vanden Berghe

Eric Van Schoonenberghe was born in Oudenaarde on September 14, 1940 and studied Greek — Latin at Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-College, a secondary school in his hometown.

Afterwards he studied chemistry at the KU Leuven and in 1968 he obtained his doctoral degree in sciences. Later on he also studied brewing technology at KU Leuven. In 1968 he began to teach general and applied biochemistry and microbiology at Hoger Instituut Sint-Lieven, better known as 'Brouwerijschool Sint-Lieven'. He was also responsible for the department of fermentation businesses.

In 1977 he was involved as professor and vice-principal in the establishment of a new school, the Katholieke Industriële Hogeschool Oost-Vlaanderen or KIH.O. In 1988 he was task holder of applied scientific research for the VVKHO, Vlaams Verbond van het Katholiek Hoger Onderwijs.

Since the Katholieke Hogeschool Sint-Lieven was established in 1995, he is Head of the Department of Research Coordination and the Department for Continued Education Programs.

Eric Van Schoonenberghe's research activities can be situated in three different fields: food hygiene, analysis of the research done in institutions of higher education and the history of the alcoholic fermentation.

Being responsible for the laboratory of the Landsbond der Belgische Slagers, housed at H.T.I. Sint-Lieven, he mainly focussed on hygiene issues. He acquired an expert knowledge in this field. He published over 50 articles on food hygiene and he participated in hygiene education programs of the Food Education Committee of VLORA (Vlaamse Onderwijsraad), the different education providers, VIZO, VDAB and IVK (Instituut voor Veterinaire Keuring).

Since 1977 he is a permanent member of the Belgian Food Advice Committee.

He is also a founding member of BAMST (Belgian Association of Meat Science and Technology).

In his responsibility of task holder for VVKHO on applied scientific research Eric Van Schoonenberghe studied the research activities at the Flemish catholic institutions of higher education. This study revealed the research expertise and the research capabilities of the institutions of higher education. This analysis was one of the reasons to broaden these institutions' task definition of their research and services and the doctoral possibilities of the graduates of two cycle higher education. Furthermore it stimulated the participation of the institutions of higher education during *Wetenschapsweek* (Flemish Week of Science), the special fund for higher education ex university (HOBU-fonds) and the admission of representatives of the institutions of higher education on the several research boards. Eric Van Schoonenberghe represents the institutions of higher education from all sectors in the steering committee of IWETO (Inventarisatie van het Wetenschappelijk en Toegepast Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek), in the steering committee of the Flemish Week of Science and in the in IWT's (Vlaams Instituut voor Wetenschappelijk en Technologisch Onderzoek) steering committee of small and medium sized businesses.

As professor of the department of fermentation businesses Eric Van Schoonenberghe was relatively active in the scientific and professional life of this sector. For instance, he is a member of the editorial staff of the Dutch magazine *Voedingsmiddelentechnologie* and he is chief editor of the magazine *Cerevisia* that is being published by the brewing departments of the Belgian institutions of higher education and the universities. He is co-founder of the section food and the section history of the KVCV (Koninklijke Vereniging van de Vlaamse Chemicci).

The research project he preferred was the study of the history of the alcoholic fermentation process. In this respect he published in magazines in Belgium and abroad and he was asked to speak in several national and international colloquia. Some of the subjects were: the history of mead, the Belgian brewing education, the biochemistry and the technology of alcoholic fermentation and ... gin.

In his book *Jenever in de Lage Landen* (Gin in the Low Countries),

published in 1996 by Stichting Kunstboek, Eric Van Schoonenberghe offers a new view on the genesis of our national distilled drink. In 1997 the book was awarded the Marcel Minnaert Prize, causing the book to be elaborately covered in both the written and spoken press. For instance, the VPRO and VRT3 spent a large topic on it. The book was also the guideline to renew the arrangement of the National Gin Museum in Hasselt of which Eric Van Schoonenberghe is the chairman.