

Obituary

Piet Leclercq (1942–2000)



It is with deepest regret that I have to report the death of Dr. Piet Leclercq, associate professor of the Eindhoven University of Technology. He was one of the most prominent European specialists in gas chromatography – mass spectrometry during the last decades. On 22 March 2000 he lost after an almost five months struggle against an unconquerable disease.

I got acquainted with Piet in 1967, when preparing my Ph.D. thesis and Piet contributed as a MSc. (Ir) student a chapter to my final dissertation. In 1975 he obtained the Ph.D. degree from the Eindhoven University on a thesis entitled “Some applications of mass spectrometry in biochemistry” with Aloys Keulemans and Evan Horning as supervisors.

Piet Leclercq got international reputation in the seventies by his method oriented work on hyphenating glass capillary columns and positive ion chemical ionization. Together we published numerous papers and review articles on fast gas chromatography and fast GC-mass spectrometry.

In recent years he mainly applied GC-MS for mapping the biodiversity of plants. In cooperation with scientists from Vietnam, India, Peru and Benin essential oils from various plants have been analysed resulting in over eighty articles.

In Piet we lose a diligent coworker, who contributed highly to the scientific output of our group with more than 180 scientific publications. Piet and I had a very close contact and friendship.

Piet's death leaves a gap in our laboratory; we will miss his humour, loyalty, activity and friendship.

Karel Cramers
Eindhoven University of Technology

Petrus ('Piet') Antonius Leclercq was born in Heerlen, The Netherlands, on 19 February 1942. After graduating from the local St. Bernardinus College in 1959 (which happened to be a superb vintage year), he studied music and chemistry in Eindhoven. In 1967 he obtained the 'Ir.' degree in Chemical Engineering from the Eindhoven University of Technology. The graduation work, on pyrolysis gas chromatography, was carried out in the Laboratory of Instrumental Analysis, headed by the late Prof. Dr. A.I.M. Keulemans. Since 1967 Leclercq is employed in this laboratory, from 1972 as head of the mass spectrometry group. During a sabbatical year in 1970/71 he worked as visiting assistant professor in Dr. E.C. Horning's Institute for Lipid Research, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas. In 1975 he obtained the 'Dr.' degree, with a thesis entitled "Some applications of mass spectrometry in biochemistry". In 1985 he was appointed associate professor.

His research interests include the advancement of integrated chromatography/mass spectrometry/computer methods, and their application for the analysis of complex mixtures from various origins. Dr. Leclercq is author or co-author of more than 180 articles in international scientific journals and conference proceedings, and has lectured and chaired at many international conferences.

He is a member of the American Society for Mass Spectrometry, the British Mass Spectrometry Society, the German Working Party on Mass Spectrometry, and the Dutch Society for Mass Spectrometry. He was president of the Dutch Society during 1980/83. In 1994 he was appointed European Editor of *Spectroscopy: An International Journal*.