



Prof. A.S. Mujumdar
Editor-in-Chief
Drying Technology – An International Journal

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of *Drying Technology* it gives me great pleasure and honor to write about the Editor-in-Chief of this journal, Prof. Arun S. Mujumdar. Although this is not the first time that his biography appears in this journal since many people have already recognized his illustrious achievements, this brief biographical sketch is written from a more personal point of view and focuses mainly on his role in bringing *Drying Technology* to the forefront of archival journals in engineering and technology and thus firmly establishing drying as a viable inter- and multi-disciplinary R&D area of both academic and industrial interest.

Although studied and trained in areas that are a far cry from drying *per se*, Prof. Mujumdar has contributed very significantly to the field of drying, either as a researcher or a promoter of the field, even before the launch of *Drying Technology* in 1982. Indeed, he established the interdisciplinary field of drying as a discipline in its own right worthy of serious R&D with the successful launch of the IDS series in 1978. With the beginning of the journal 25 years ago under the editorship of the Emeritus Editor, Dr. Carl W. Hall, Prof. Mujumdar assumed the role of Associate Editor and later became the Editor-in-Chief of this journal in 1988.

For the benefit of new entrants to the fascinating field of thermal drying as well as the future generation of researchers who will take this field forward, I am including some statistical information for archival purposes, some of which can be “googled” out today but may not be so readily accessible in future years. Statistically speaking, the following numbers attest to his lasting contributions, not only to generation of research results but also the mentoring of a future generation of highly productive researchers. Between McGill (until 2000) and NUS he has advised over 50 Ph.D. students, over 30 postdoctoral fellows and over 150 undergraduate research students. His publication statistics are impressive: 350+ refereed papers, 250+ conference papers, 60+ plenary and keynote lectures, 60+ edited books, 2 co-authored books (also translated in many languages), over 120 book chapters including contributions to two encyclopedias and six handbooks. What is not commonly known is that he has also published research papers in Chinese, German, Hungarian, Czech and French (thanks of course to his

collaborators). Despite a heavy commitment to this journal he has also helped guest-edit theme issues of drying of several other journals as well. If this is not enough in terms of service to the global community in academia and industry, he is the Founder and Program Chairman of all IDS conferences starting from 1978. He also helped spawn and assist actively in organization of numerous other drying conference series worldwide. He has been a consultant for over 80 companies and given workshops and seminars in over 40 countries in four continents. Finally, as his way of mental relaxation (he thinks of it as meditation when he can forget totally about drying) he has taken up the brush and paint and started “doodling.” The results are not bad; some can be spotted on his Website at <http://serve.me.nus.edu.sg/arun>. So, he may be making a smooth transition from drying to drawing seeking his mentors to pick up the slack when the need arises. In fact, he has made many transitions earlier in his life, e.g., from industrial R&D to academia in 1972; from chemical to mechanical engineering in 2000, then to engineering science in 2005; and now the latest transition will see him manage and conduct a major initiative at NUS on R&D relevant to the mineral, metal and materials sectors, which also includes drying and dewatering operations along with numerous other unit operations and processes.

For the past 20 years, under Prof. Mujumdar’s editorship, *Drying Technology* has seen many changes in a positive direction, thanks to his vision. The number of pages has increased from a mere few hundred pages in 1982 to more than 2500 pages in 2005, with the number of annual issues rising from two issues in 1982 to 12 issues in 2006. The impact factor of the journal has also increased almost steadily; in fact, the impact factor of the journal has been on a continuous rise for 4 years in a row with the current (2005) value of 1.029. For a technology journal serving both academic and industrial readership globally, this value of impact factor is impressive. The flow of manuscripts is also continuously on the rise indicating the demand for the journal on a global scale. Authors from over 50 countries have contributed to the journal with no one country or region dominating the field.

Even with the current team of Associate Editors, Assistant Editor and Editorial Board members, Prof. Mujumdar continues to play the most major role in reviewing and processing of incoming manuscripts. It is not uncommon to see the Editor-in-Chief receiving a manuscript, reviewing it within one day with detailed comments that are immediately sent back to the authors. Unlike principal Editors of most journals, Prof. Mujumdar is the principal reviewer for the journal and a prolific contributor to it as well. Readers may be interested to note that a recent search of ISI database showed that Prof. Mujumdar has made over 100 separate contributions to this journal, including editorials, which have avid readership even among non-drying researchers and engineers around the world. This has helped the journal enhance its impact factor continuously and propel itself into the top 15 journals out of some 115 mechanical engineering journals internationally. This is of course on top of his routine role of being a reviewer for other 35-plus journals in chemical/food/mechanical engineering and his much greater-than-average teaching, supervising and administrative duties. This was true while he was at McGill and also later on at NUS.

As we embark into the new century of bio and nano, Prof. Mujumdar aims to extend the scope of the journal into the emerging areas as well to better serve the research community. As mentioned in my earlier editorial (*Drying Technology*, 24(1), p. 3, 2006) drying has already played an important role in these increasingly important areas of research. It is thus appropriate that *Drying Technology* should also play an important role in disseminating and connecting information from the two worlds of transport phenomena and material sciences; it

were indeed Prof. Mujumdar's words of decades ago that it is impossible to consider drying without considering material sciences. He also encourages international collaboration for research in drying and also industry-academia interaction to ensure that such R&D is relevant and readily transferred to industry. The escalating energy costs we have seen recently will certainly provide a further boost for drying R&D.

As *Drying Technology* enters its next quarter of a century, Prof. Mujumdar continues to play a visionary role in guiding the journal in a direction that is more useful to both academia and industry. The journal will remain a medium for disseminating innovations in drying and dehydration although, surprisingly or expectedly, one cannot be certain, these innovative papers receive lower number of citations compared with those reporting more simplified analysis and data. As rightly mentioned by Dr. Carl W. Hall, it is more difficult to maintain good health of a journal, especially of a specialized one like *Drying Technology*, for such an extended period of time than to initiate it. However, Prof. Mujumdar is successful not only in maintaining the health of the journal but also in elevating its stature in the global drying research community. He is also in the process of continuously mentoring young researchers and leaders in drying R&D who can effectively carry on the development of this journal as well as the various drying symposia he helped initiate and nurture.

On behalf of the Editorial Board members, I congratulate Prof. Mujumdar on his successful role as the Editor-in-Chief of the journal. I also express my appreciation to all of our dedicated authors and reviewers for their invaluable contributions to the journal during the past quarter of a century and for the years to come.

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