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Preface

From its early days, the total synthesis of complex molecules, especially those that are natural products, has been the king's discipline in organic chemistry. The reasons for this are manifold: the challenge lying in a novel and intricate molecular architecture or the difficulty encountered when isolating the substance from its natural sources, or the possibility of finding a wide test ground for established methodology or the incentive to invent new methodology when the old one has failed, or simply the art and elegance which is so typical of a truly efficient synthetic sequence. In any case, everybody will agree that total synthesis is the best way to train young chemists and to prepare them for any kind of later employment.

In these two volumes, the contributions of a number of organic synthetic chemists from the German speaking area have been collected and it can easily be seen that their expertise is on a par with any other synthetic community. It is thus the hope of the authors and the editor that these articles, which highlight all the various aspects of organic synthesis, will provide not only an insight into the basic strategy and tactics but also the purpose of organic syntheses.

Vienna, September 2004

Johann Mulzer

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