

PREFACE



PREFACE

Werner Heisenberg: *Physics and Beyond*. Encounters and Conversations. Harper & Row, New York, 1972. German ed.: *Der Teil und das Ganze*. Gespräche im Umkreis der Atomphysik. Piper, München, 1969.

Werner Heisenberg begins his autobiography, *Physics and Beyond*, with the words: “Science is made by people.” He wants to point out that any growth of knowledge should not be considered in isolation from those who have contributed to it. The following notes are therefore dedicated with heartfelt thanks to all those who have accompanied me on my way to science. Since there were so many, I cannot mention each one by name, and the selection will necessarily remain somewhat arbitrary, for which I apologize.

In the summer of 2019, the chair of the History of Chemistry Division of the German Chemical Society (GDCh), Carsten Reinhardt, invited me to write an overview of my major essential scientific achievements. These have been presented over the course of more than five decades in about 700 publications (see section “Publications” in the Appendix.) Their list can be found on my website, and references in the text follow the numbering in this list. It is obvious that I had to refrain from completeness to a large extent. Instead, the selection was made according to subjective criteria and was also essentially oriented to my stations in life, which I will also briefly describe.

Prof. Dr. Gerhard Ertl, Director of the Dept. of Physical Chemistry 1986–2004: [Links \[20\]](#).

Details can also be found on the aforementioned website: [Links \[20\]](#).