Foreword

One of the serious problems in medical research has been the limited communication between scientists dealing with different aspects of physiological and pathophysiological problems. Even in the field of thrombosis research this can be exemplified by the traditional fragmentation into 'coagulationists', the 'platelet people' and the 'fibrinolysis group'. In recent years the 'lipid workers' and the 'prostaglandiners' may naturally be added. The complex mechanisms involved in thrombus formation, an in vivo phenomena, of which only fragments are known, emphasize the importance of bringing people of different backgrounds together. This should hopefully generate new ideas, cooperative studies and thereby, increased knowledge.

This idea motivated the founding of the European Thrombosis Research Organization (ETRO). In 1978, this organization suggested that a subcommittee on problems related to the role of the vessel wall in thrombogenesis might be set up. In March 1979, an invited group of researchers from varied backgrounds and several different European countries gathered to assess the field of research. Although the spontaneous and stimulating discussions are not included in this volume, the main contributions are presented. They are all devoted to the problems of blood and vessel wall interactions in the mechanisms of thrombosis. Since the original observation by Virchow in 1856, damage of the vessel wall has been accepted as one of the main factors in thrombogenesis. However, studies of the vessel wall have been rather limited, not by ignorance, but mainly because of the tremendous methodological problems. During recent years significant progress has been made in studying blood vessel wall interactions. Animal models and tissue cultures have given a new dimension to the understanding of thrombus formation.

It is my hope that the reports in this volume will stimulate and inform the reader and that this documentation demonstrates the need to establish an active and progressive European group in this field of thrombosis research.

Arne Nordøy, Guest Editor