

Foreword to the Commemorative Section

The main purpose of the First Forum EMR-PL held in Rzeszów on 19 – 21 May 2010 was to commemorate the outstanding scientist and our beloved Master, Professor Jan Stankowski. For all of us who in their research apply various Electron Paramagnetic Resonance (EPR) related methods to study the spectroscopic, structural, and magnetic properties of matter, Professor Stankowski had always been the highest Authority in Poland in the field of EPR spectroscopy. The meeting in Rzeszów has also aimed at working out a new model of integration of EPR scientists in Poland. Systematic proposals in this regard have been presented at the Forum by Professor Czesław Rudowicz, so we could efficiently continue Professor Stankowski's legacy (see an Announcement in this issue).

Fascination with the EPR and related domains of science was conveyed to us by Professor Stankowski, who knew – as nobody else – how to demonstrate the physical phenomena in a very attractive way and to interpret them in the most convincing manner. I will mention only a few of Professor Stankowski's numerous scientific achievements. He was the founder and first director of the Institute of Molecular Physics (IMP) of Polish Academy of Sciences in Poznań. IMP has become the center agglomerating very talented people and specialists in radiospectroscopy and related techniques. Under Professor Stankowski's leadership, the IMP staff used to undertake the most topical and challenging tasks, e.g., construction of the first maser in Poland, studies on ferroics and high temperature superconductors, investigation of phase transitions in solids and transfer phenomena in carbon materials like fullerenes. In all these domains the research results accomplished by Professor Stankowski and his coworkers were excellent.

Another initiative realized successfully by Professor Stankowski, at the time when the contacts of Polish scientists with abroad were very limited for political reasons, was organization of international conferences RAMIS, which created a forum to exchange ideas with experts from the whole scientific community. Foundation of Low Temperature Laboratory of Radiospectroscopy in Odolanów was also a significant attainment of Professor Stankowski. This unique Laboratory, specialized in measurements at temperatures close to absolute zero, was also a center of education for school pupils and students interested in discovering secrets of physics.

Professor Stankowski attracted in a magic way very young people as well as matured and experienced researchers of the wide spectrum of professional interest: physicists, chemists, and biologists. We had admired him for his knowledge, for teaching us how to solve complicated scientific problems, and for his friendly support offered to everyone who asked him for advice.

The memory of the extraordinary scientific and educational achievements of Professor Jan Stankowski and of his friendship, so appreciated by each of us, will remain in our hearts for ever. This special section contains three papers based on the presentations given at the First Forum EMR-PL and dedicated to Professor Jan Stankowski.

Professor Krystyna Dyrek