



## Preface

The following Special Issue of *The Journal of Molecular Catalysis A: Chemical* consists of the Proceedings of The Third San Luis Symposium on Surfaces, Interfaces and Catalysis, a Pan-American Advanced Studies Institute, which took place in Mérida, Venezuela, on March 15–19, 2004. This was a third of a series of symposia designed to strengthen the links between Latin American and US and European scientists in the areas of surface science and catalysis. The idea started at a conference in August of 1994 organized to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the founding of the city of San Luis, Argentina. This conference was financed primarily by the State of San Luis with supporting funds from the Argentinean National Government, and was considered a great success, more than fulfilling the expectations of the organizers. It featured attendees from many nations, including US, UK and Mexico (as well as from Argentina itself). The quality of the work presented there is reflected in the publication of the conference papers in the leading international journal *Langmuir* (**12**, 1 (1996)). Several new collaborative research projects were also started between Argentinean universities and foreign institutions.

Encouraged by that success, a Second San Luis Symposium was organized in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in April of 2000 with financial backing from the US National Science Foundation. Again, the symposium was deemed a great success. There was a substantial increase in international participation, with people attending from the United States, Mexico, Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, the United Kingdom, France, Italy and Japan. New collaborations were established and the proceedings were published in *The Journal of Molecular Catalysis A: Chemical* (**167**, 1–2, (2001)). Several changes were implemented, including the inclusion of a Summer School on Surface Science targeted at Graduate Students. Fellowships were given to several U.S. graduate students with the intention of fostering collaborations with people early in their professional careers.

To continue with that tradition, a permanent Organizing Committee was established to make the San Luis Symposium a periodic event to be held in the different Latin American Countries. With the financial help of the U.S. National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy under their PASI Program, and with additional support from University of Los Andes, Mérida, Venezuela (especially CDCHT, Inter-

cambio Científico and Autoridades Rectorales (Chancellor's Office)), FONACIT-Venezuela and FUNDACITE-Mérida, the Third San Luis Symposium on Surfaces, Interfaces and Catalysis, was held in March of 2004 in Mérida, Venezuela. There were approximately 70 participants from fourteen countries, including the U.S., Europe (Ireland, U.K., Spain, France, Germany), and Latin America (Mexico, Costa Rica, Colombia, Venezuela, Chile, Argentina, Peru, Brazil), and an additional ~40 local students. There were 40 oral presentations plus almost 50 posters covering the areas of surface science, interfaces, and catalysis. These Proceedings provide a representative sample of the breadth and quality of those contributions. It includes papers in surface physics and chemistry, the properties of interfaces, and the synthesis and characterization of heterogeneous catalysts. The studies illustrate the capabilities of a diverse array of experimental techniques and theoretical methods. In general, they cover problems that involve gas-solid and liquid-solid interfaces, with topics that are at the cutting-edge of catalysis, materials science, environmental chemistry, geochemistry and biophysical chemistry.

The Fourth and Fifth Symposia have been scheduled to take place in Mexico and Brazil in 2007 and 2010, respectively. For more information about those, please contact the local organizers, Drs. Fernando Rojas (Mexico) and Pedro Nascente (Brazil).

### Committees

#### General San Luis Symposium Organizing Committee:

- Professor Wilfred T. Tysoe (University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, USA)
- Professor Francisco Zaera (University of California, Riverside, USA)
- Professor Giorgio Zgrablich (Universidad Nacional de San Luis, Argentina)

#### Third San Luis Symposium Organizing Committee:

- Professor Francisco Zaera-US representative
- Professor Alfonso Loaiza-Local organizer

#### International Advising Committee:

- United States
  - o Professor Andrew Gellman (Carnegie-Mellon University, USA)
  - o Professor D. Wayne Goodman (Texas A&M University, USA)
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  - o Dr. José Rodríguez (Brookhaven National Laboratory, USA)
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  - o Professor Fernando Rojas (Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Mexico)
  - o Professor Giorgio Zgrablich (Universidad Nacional de San Luis, Argentina)
- Venezuela
  - o Dr. Paulino Andreu (international Coordinator, CYTED)
  - o Dr. Joaquin Brito (IVIC, Venezuela)
  - o Professor Francisco Machado (Universidad Central de Venezuela)
  - o Dr. Trino Romero (Intevep and President, Sociedad Venezolana de Catalisis)
- Local (Mérida, Venezuela)
  - o Professor Alfonso Loaiza (Universidad de Los Andes, Venezuela)
  - o Professor Pedro Colmenares (Universidad de Los Andes, Venezuela)
  - o Professor Marisela Reyes (Universidad de Los Andes, Venezuela)
  - o Professor Freddy Imbert (Universidad de Los Andes, Venezuela)
  - o Professor Graciela Diaz (Universidad de Los Andes, Venezuela)

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