

Note by the coordinator of the issue

Nearly one year ago Fausto Calderazzo and Gian Paolo Chiusoli asked me whether I would act as coordinator for a special issue of the *Journal of Organometallic Chemistry* in memory of Piero Pino, whose untimely death deprived organometallic chemistry and homogeneous catalysis of one of its most prominent figures. I willingly accepted this duty as an opportunity to pay my tribute to a departed colleague and a friend. My task is now complete and I should like to thank the initiators of this volume for their constant assistance and their willingness to write an account of Piero Pino's life and work for the Introduction to the issue.

I should also like to express my thanks to all those who have contributed papers to this issue.

Zurich, 6th February 1991.

L.M. Venanzi

In memoriam Professor Piero Pino

Piero Pino, born in Trieste on April 9th, 1921, died in Milan on July 9th 1989. He studied at the University of Florence and in 1946 he became Assistant Professor at the Istituto di Chimica Industriale, Politecnico di Milano, directed by Professor Giulio Natta. In November 1955 he was appointed Professor of Industrial Organic Chemistry at the University of Pisa, and in 1968 he joined the Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule of Zürich as Professor of Macromolecular Chemistry. He formally retired from that post in 1988, but he has continued his intense scientific activity as a consultant for the Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche and for industry.

Piero Pino had many scientific interests and made many contributions to science in macromolecular chemistry, industrial processes, hydroformylation, and asymmetric induction. A detailed account of his important scientific contributions appeared in *Gazzetta Chimica Italiana* (July 1990 issue) and another is due to appear soon (*Rendiconti Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Supplementi*). He was one of the major contributors to the discovery of stereoregular polymerization of α -olefins, which took place in Milan early in 1954. Such metal-catalyzed formation of carbon-carbon bonds aroused his interest in organometallic chemistry, to which, together with his coworkers, he greatly contributed, especially in connection with use of organometallic complexes of cobalt and rhodium as catalytic precursors in carbonylation reactions.

Piero Pino had a very stimulating way of thinking about science. He seldom accepted the seemingly most intellectually satisfying interpretation of a chemical reaction in terms of mechanism; more frequently he addressed his attention and that of his coworkers to neglected details which could disprove a given mechanism. His approach led him to devising elegant interpretations in the areas of hydroformylation and asymmetric induction.

His rigorous scientific attitude did not prevent him from maintaining a close connection with applied research. It was clear to him that organizational structures should be created in order to transfer the results of basic research to applied research and development, and Professor Natta's school, to which he deeply committed himself, was the most efficient model of this type in Italy. Collaboration between academic and industrial researchers is not easy even today, because science and economy follow different logics, and this must be taken into account when arranging for conversion of basic into applied research.

Pino's attitude was that of a man looking for first-class achievements. This is the kind of ambition that guides a scientist towards perfection rather than futile objectives. His dedication to science is shown by one of his last decisions after his retirement: he agreed to take a temporary professorship at the Politecnico di Milano, where he wanted to resume the scientific activity he had initiated many years before as a young scientist.

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