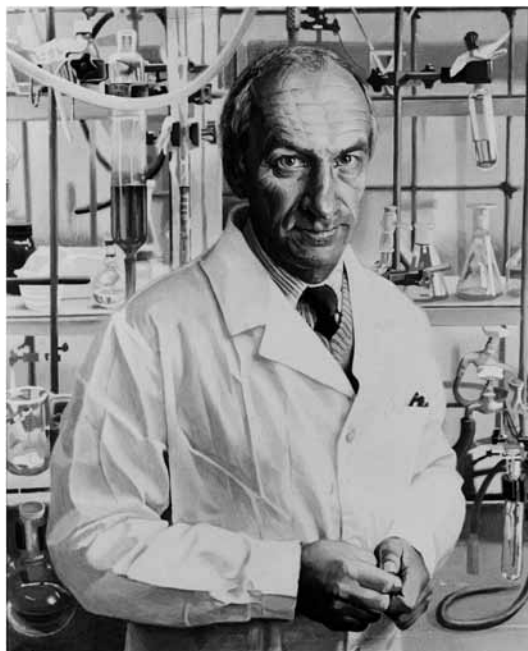


Introduction



Professor Stanisław Pasyńkiewicz

It is my great pleasure to write an introduction to this special double issue of the Journal of Organometallic Chemistry, dedicated to Professor Stanisław Pasyńkiewicz on the occasion of his 70th birthday. Professor Pasyńkiewicz graduated from the Warsaw University of Technology in 1956 and was appointed as a research assistant there. In 1960 he obtained his Ph.D. degree based on a thesis entitled 'The synthesis of organoaluminium compounds and the explanation of the role of bromine and iodine as activators of aluminium'. He first postulated that active species 'Al-X' played a crucial role in the synthesis of aluminium alkyls from aluminium and alkyl halides. The existence of such species was experimentally confirmed many years later. At that time he was fascinated by Ziegler catalysts for olefin polymerisation and this led to his long-lasting research interest in the synthesis, properties and structures of organoaluminium compounds. In 1961 he spent a year in Moscow working as a post-doctoral assistant at Lomonosov University in A.S. Nesmeyanov's group. In 1964 he obtained another post-doctoral position in Natta's Institute at the Polytechnic,

Milan. His promotion in the Warsaw University of Technology was rapid: in 1965 he was awarded his D.Sc. degree (habilitation), in 1970 the title of extraordinary professor, and in 1973 the title of ordinary professor. In 1976 Professor Pasyńkiewicz was elected a member of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

His research in the field of organoaluminium compounds gave him world-wide recognition. In the 1970s the main subjects of his research interest were alumoxanes, their synthesis, structure and properties. He first applied alumoxanes as components of Ziegler-type catalysts for olefin polymerisation. The only difference between his and the well-known Kaminsky catalyst was the use of ethyl- instead of methylalumoxanes.

In 1981, after a career in university management, as the Dean of the Chemical Faculty, the Director of the Institute of Organic Technology and the President of the Warsaw University of Technology, he went as a visiting professor to the Max Planck Institut für Kohlenforschung in Mülheim, where he worked with Professor Herbert Lehmkuhl in the field of organonickel chemistry. At this time they were particularly

interested in studying the thermal decomposition of complexes of {CpNiR} species in the presence of olefins. Many cyclopentadienylnickel clusters were synthesised in these reactions, the reactions involving hydrogen transfer from organic ligand to nickel were explained, and understanding of hydrogen elimination processes beyond α - and β -H elimination considerably extended. In 1985 Professor Pasynkiewicz spent another year in Mülheim. Research on cyclopentadienylnickel chemistry continues in his research group to the present time, although he is also still active in the field of organoaluminium chemistry. His scientific achievements are documented in over 250 original papers, books, chapters, surveys and patents. His favourite journal has been the *Journal of Organometallic Chemistry*, in which he has published over 100 papers.

Another important aspect of Professor Pasynkiewicz's activities has been the promotion of science. In 1969 he organised the first Polish–German Colloquy on Organometallic Chemistry. Since then, 21 colloquies in this series have been organised, alternately in Poland and in Germany (formerly in the GDR). These colloquies have been particularly important, as for many years they allowed organometallic chemists from the former GDR and other Eastern European countries to have contacts with the most distinguished scientists from all over the world.

Since 1973 Professor Pasynkiewicz has been active in the Federation of European Chemical Societies. In 1974 he was the initiator of the FECS Working Party on Organometallic Chemistry and has been elected the chairman of this body since then. In 1976, on the instigation of the FECS Working Party on Organometallic Chemistry, Professor Pasynkiewicz or-

ganised a European Conference on Organometallic Chemistry in Jablonna near Warsaw. It was the first of the series of FECHEM Conferences on Organometallic Chemistry, the biggest and the most popular meetings of organometallic chemists in Europe. For his activities within the Federation of European Chemical Societies Professor Pasynkiewicz received the FECS Award and Honorary Medal in 1987. For many years he has been a member of the International Advisory Board of International Conferences on Organometallic Chemistry. He organised such a conference in 1992 in Warsaw.

All these activities have made Professor Pasynkiewicz one of the best known figures in the community of organometallic chemists. His open-minded and open-hearted personality have made him many friends on all continents.

Although Professor Pasynkiewicz will officially retire at the end of 2000, I am sure that he will remain active in research for some time. We shall be able to read new papers from him and have the chance to meet him in person at future conferences.

As his pupil, and as his co-worker and close friend for many years, I should like to take this opportunity to wish Stan, on behalf of all organometallic chemists, good health, creative ideas and success for many years to come.

With this volume we pay tribute to him for his outstanding contributions to organometallic chemistry.

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