

Obituary

In memoriam: Prof. Ferenc Paulik 1922–2005



The life of Ferenc Paulik ended on 12 October 2005.

After his studies at the Technical University in Budapest and his PhD obtained in 1944, he found a very good position at the Institute for General and Analytical Chemistry under the supervision of Prof. L. Erdey. The analytical research required a thermobalance, but during the cold-war it was not easy to obtain such an instrument outside ‘the West’. As was common in Eastern–European labs, he decided to develop such a system with help of his brother Jenő. The result was a very powerful instrument, which included several improvements over commercial instruments. The determination and interpretation of thermogravimetric curves reached a new quality level. The first use of an inductive device to measure the DTG curve at the same time as the change in mass was unrivalled for many years. From the concept of analysing various signals simultaneously, a new universal measuring system was born: the Derivatograph (Fig. 1), followed by the TG, DTG and DTA, the derivative dilatometry, the simultaneous gas analysis (TG–DTG–DTA–EGA) and the quasiisothermal/isobaric thermogravimetry (Q-TG).

Between 1955 and 1995, over 400 instruments were built by the Hungarian Optical Industries (MOM) according to Fer-



Fig. 1. Derivatograph, built 1964, at the former Mineralogical Institute of the Friedrich-Schiller University in Jena, Germany.

enc and Jenő Paulik’s concept. These were used worldwide, especially in the countries of the former Warsaw Pact and the so-called “developing” countries, for thermal analysis in both academic and industrial research labs (Fig. 2).

Ferenc Paulik reported new technical developments for solving scientific questions in over 200 publications and 4 monographs. Many scientists from all over the world came to the lab of the brothers Paulik to learn about the new tech-

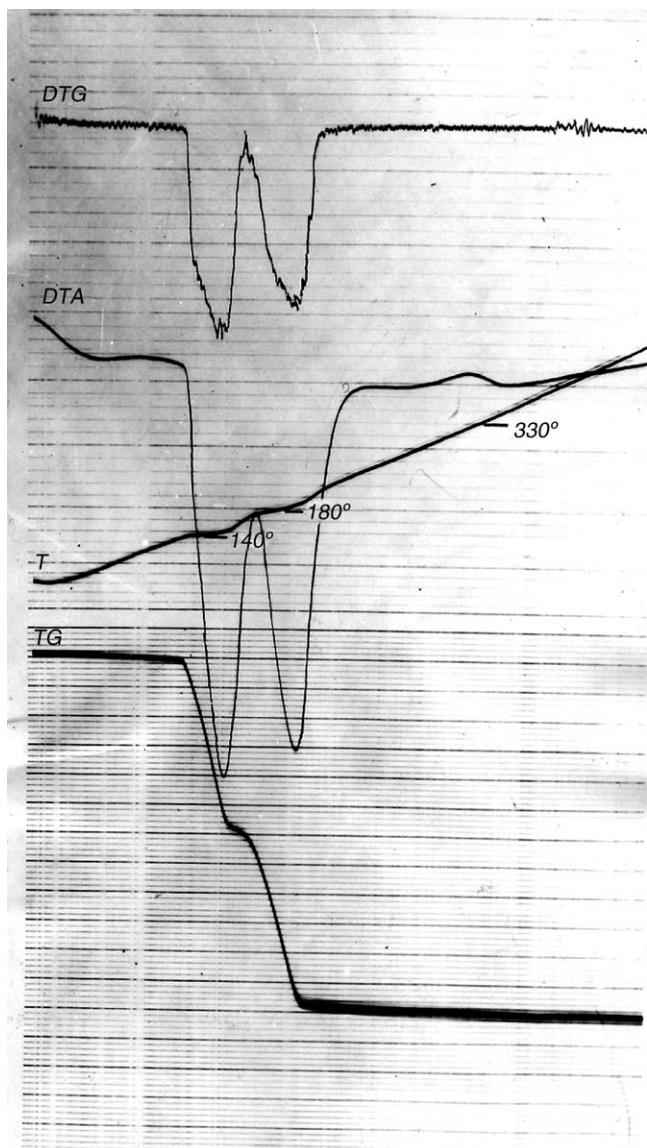


Fig. 2. The thermal decomposition of Leonite $K_2Mg[SO_4] \cdot 4H_2O$ (TG and DTG curves), recorded with a Derivatograph, Jena, Germany, 1965.

niques and their applications in research and industry. With his devoted support for international meetings, like the 3rd ICTA, he greatly contributed to international cooperation in thermal analysis.



Fig. 3. Ferenc Paulik during a meeting of the ICTA Committee of Standards, led by H. McAdie, Canada 1972, in Ye Olde Felbridge Hotel in East Grinstead, Sussex, England.

Apart from these scientific and technically creative aspects of his personality, Ferenc Paulik stays in clear memory to anyone who has ever been in contact with him, as a person with happiness-of-life, humour and correctness. I personally found out about these characteristics during the many meetings of the Boards of the ICTA. As a member of the Committee for Standards he contributed constructively and energetically for many years.

As an established specialist and dedicated person he contributed much to overcoming the cold-war barriers between scientists and regions (Fig. 3).

Through the person of Ferenc Paulik it became clear to everyone how important those highly esteemed people who combine a targeted persistence with warmth for people are for the advancement of science and international communication.

All those who knew Ferenc Paulik will miss him dearly and remember him with honour.

K. Heide

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15 January 2006

Available online 29 March 2006