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STERMAT'94  
PREFACE

STERMAT'94 - IV INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON STEREOLOGY AND  
IMAGE ANALYSIS IN MATERIALS SCIENCE

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IV International Conference "Stereology and Image Analysis in Materials Science - STERMAT'94" was held in Wisła, Beskidy Mountains (South Poland) on October 3-7 1994. The conference was really international - among 140 participants 43 came from the following countries: Austria, Belgium, China, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, The Netherlands, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom, USA, Norway and Yugoslavia.

The Organizing Committee made every effort to keep the unique and traditional properties of STERMAT conferences:

- warm, family type atmosphere of the meeting,
- medium price, covering EVERYTHING (fee, proceedings, food, accommodation),
- conference proceedings published prior to the conference,
- rich additional program including concerts and bonfire.

These properties mixed with high scientific level and enormous activity of the participants produced the final success of the conference. The high scientific meaning of STERMAT'94 could be measured by the number of leading scientists attending it. It is impossible to list all of them, so let me mention a few, possibly most known in our society: Michel Coster, Arun M. Gokhale, Hans-Jørgen G. Gundersen, Vivyan Howard (ISS President) and Brian Ralph. Many other wanted to take part in the meeting but had either health problems or simultaneous urgent duties. However they agreed to take part in the Advisory Board and helped us a lot in preparation of the final program and the proceedings. Many thank for this help to David Aboav, Jean-Louis Chermant, Jean Serra and Ervin E. Underwood. I would like to apologize the rest of colleagues, many of them from Poland, for missing their names. Be sure that the participants will remember your efforts to make the final success of STERMAT'94.

The total number of 69 contributions was divided into 5 sections:

- Theoretical stereology. Sampling and estimation.
- Young stereologists. Teaching in stereology.
- Mathematical morphology. Image analysis.
- Quantitative fractography.
- Applications in materials science.

The contributions were presented as invited lectures (12), oral presentations (15) and posters (42). The poster sessions were responsible for the final success of the meeting, possibly due to the famous Żywiec beer served during these sessions...

We observed with great pleasure that there exists a new, young generation of stereologists. Competition of young stereologists won Dariusz Łazęcki who obtained the Hans Elias Bursary to attend ICS9 (prize founded by V.Hovard, ISS President). The second prize, (Hand Size Dictionary and Organizer 813S, founded by K.Kurzydłowski, Prorector of the Warsaw Technical University) obtained Mariusz Młynarczuk.

Of course to keep the medium price without sponsors would be absolutely impossible. The main sponsors were: Faculty of Materials Engng, Metallurgy, Transportation and Administration of Silesian Technical University, Hitachi-Nissei Sangyo GmbH (Germany), JEOL (Europe) S.A. (Japan), Ministry of National Education, Noran Instruments - Tracor Europa B.V. (The Netherlands), Quality Steel Plant "Batory" S.A. and State Committee of Scientific Research.

Thanks to Miroslav Kališnik, the Editor of Acta Stereologica, we are able to give you some "taste" of STERMAT'94 by publishing some of the papers. These papers were selected on the basis of recommendation of the Advisory Board and referee's opinions. The final acceptance was made, of course, by the Editorial Board of Acta Stereologica. As an editor of the proceedings I would like to say my sincere "Thanks!" to all the participants and referees for their effort to collect the papers early enough to issue the proceedings prior to the conference. Unfortunately, some of the authors had difficulties with keeping the requirements of Acta Stereologica and their contributions could not be published in this issue of Acta. For those interested in all the contributions some copies of the Proceedings are still available. In such a case, please, write to my address.

STERMAT'94 was accompanied by the exhibition of scientific and computer equipment, devoted mainly to microscopy and image analysis. The event had a great impact on international and interdisciplinary (!) scientific contacts.

The final success of the conference encouraged the organizers to transform STERMAT into one of the leading events in the field of stereology and image analysis application in material and earth sciences. We hope that with your active participation this ambitious goal can be obtained...

## REFERENCES

- STERMAT'94, Proc. IV Int. Conf. "Stereology and Image Analysis in Materials Science", Beskidy Mountains, Poland, October 3-6, 1994, Ed. Wojnar L, Fotobit-Design, Cracow, 1994.