

FALERNA LIDO, ITALY
SEPTEMBER 7-11, 1999

Last September a great rheological event was held in Italy, it was organised by the National rheological societies of Greece, Slovenia, Spain, Portugal and Italy which decided to collapse their annual meetings in a unique meeting that was called "Southern Europe Conference on Rheology". The meeting follows the long traditional activity of the Italian Society of Rheology that already last year made a joint conference with Austrian and Slovenian rheologists (Trieste, May 1998). It was thought that it would have been rather interesting to join researchers from the southern Europe to encourage scientific exchange between them; it was decided that south Italy would have been a good place for this event and, maybe, also this was an attraction for scientists coming from other countries. Thus, also the European rheological community recognised the validity of this initiative and this event was entitled Eurorheo 99-3.

Prof. Bruno de Cindio, vice-president of the Italian Society of Rheology, proposed to make this meeting in Calabria, a beautiful region of south Italy placed in "the middle of Mediterranean sea" and unfortunately somehow considered "the middle of nowhere", to give in this way an occasion to Calabria to become the "centre" in which many researchers met and presented their works. He accepted the challenge with his co-workers belonging to the Department of Chemical Engineering and Materials of the University of Calabria. The large success obtained by this initiative was also shown by the presence of the president of the European Society of Rheology, Prof. Ken Walters, who gave his personal welcome to the participants and also an interesting presentation. There were about eighty participants coming essentially from the

five organizing countries, but also from other European countries and one from USA. The technical program included 41 oral and 35 poster presentations, on various topics, divided in four days. With some difficulties, that everyone can understand, the Proceedings were available already at the beginning of the conference!

The first day September 8th, at the opening ceremony Prof. Rosario Aiello from the Department of Chemical Engineering-UNICAL, Prof. Angelo Ferro, president of the Pavan S.p.A. (official sponsor of the conference) a world leader of pasta production plant factory, Dr. Enrico Borgarello from EniTecnologie (official sponsor of the conference), the research centre of Eni, the most important Italian petrochemistry company, Prof. Ken Walters president of European Society of Rheology, and Prof. Romano Lapasin president of the Italian Society of Rheology, gave their welcome to the attendants.

The sessions were possibly organised with speakers coming from different countries just to favour the scientific exchange, it was also tried to put together different topics but, as expected, it was quite difficult due to the large number of works on polymers.

The first session was held on Wednesday morning and was focussed on recent advancements in polymer rheology. They were discussed both theoretical matters such as the non-linear viscoelasticity, the difference between shear rate and shear stress as independent variable, and experimental results about suspensions of polymeric spheres. In the afternoon the works having a particular industrial interest were presented. It was very interesting to discuss together works dealing with different topics as polymers, foods, cosmetics and lubricants. Even if the materials





appeared to be very different, the rheological approach was very similar, therefore the researchers could have a very fruitful exchange of information. We must admit that it was really a very long and tiring day but not boring.

At the opening of the second day we had the pleasant participation of Prof. G. Latorre, just elected as new rector of University of Calabria, who made a welcome and presented this University that is very proud to have promoted the conference.

In the morning session it was possible to discuss works on rheological properties of foods like gels, egg-yolk, dough for pizza and fruits, of emulsions and also of polymers with particular emphasis on processing aspects. It was very appreciated to dedicate the afternoon to researcher integration by making a visit to the Calabria National Park on the mountains where the participants were "obliged" to make a walk of about 2 KM at 1400 m over sea level. Then we moved to Camigliatello Silano, a tourist centre on Sila mountains, where we had our "casual" gala dinner based on special and typical calabrian foods. It was difficult to start a new session on Friday morning but we succeeded. In the first part we had works on computation but also on foods and ceramic suspensions, linked to specific processes such as extrusion, membrane filtration, flow in ducts. The second part was mainly dedicated to polymers with a particular focus on theoretical and experimental aspects such as flow visualisation, molecular weight distribution, extensional flow and molecular structure. Apart from that we had also a new approach for food and a singular presentation about rheology of wood used for musical instruments. Friday

afternoon was dedicated entirely to the poster session. The works dealt with several rheological problems from polymers to ceramics, foods, lubricants, emulsions, surfactants, paintings, etc. We had really a wide overview of rheology. During the last day tired people could effort the last two sessions concerning with polymers and suspensions. Some experimental aspects were discussed in detail such as the steady anular extrusion, the use of eccentric cylinders, the shape of drops, the filler dependence in gels, the rheo-optics of polymers, but also the effect of the deformation field on the rheological properties of some modified polymers and suspensions based on polysaccharides were presented. At the closure the presidents of the five organizing societies expressed their sincere gratefulness to the local committee for the "extraordinary" work performed during the conference organisation. This experience was rather positive because the size seemed right to allow enough long talk and also discussion. This has convinced to repeat this type of event every four years in different countries, therefore, if this will be realised, the calabrian local committee is very proud to have been the founder of the "Southern Europe Conference" series.

Further information can be available by contacting directly the local committee by email.

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