

## WELCOMING SPEECH



Welcome to everybody. Together with our secretary Professor George Vlahakis, I bring you all the best wishes from the History of Physics Group of the European Physical Society.

First, I would like to say a warm, “*Thank you*” to the Director Professor A. G. Petrov for inviting me yesterday to your Institute and Museum and to be here with you at this Conference.

My special thanks are also addressed to Ganka Kamisheva, who is a member of our board at the Group History of Physics of the European Physical Society, and who underlines the importance of our work through her contributions presented during our international meetings.

We have to keep in mind that physics, however complicated this science might appear, has been developed by human kind, that therein persons and their fascinating fates have been involved, who achieved advances only after tenacious struggling. So the heritage of our European physics survives not only in scientific data and research reports, but also in the richness of its historical scientific instruments, in photographic plates and in the scientist’s biography. This historical documentation is certainly the basis to start from, but thereafter, the physicists will have to continue the job on their own, somehow they must accomplish the discoverer’s achievements afresh and they have a duty to impart results to both the history specialists and to the public. Therefore, trained physicists and not only historians are requested to understand and to obtain benefit from these valuable sources.

Thus I arise my big wish as the Chair to the History of Physics Group (HoP) of the European Physical Society (EPS) that all member States of the EPS will set up their own HoP group or section. It is essential that, from every member state, the physicists themselves will eventually assume the task to work up their national history of physics and that, they will help protect from harm or destruction the historical instruments and equipment, which once served their national heroes of physics. If we do not set up a detailed documentation now, it will be too late: the upcoming generation of physicists will no longer know about the significance of these instruments.

Europe has to become conscious of its leading role in founding modern physics, history of physics is the way to go on.

The problem is that those valuable contributions by single physicists – uttered in their national language – are limited to a national audience and remain unknown to the international science community. We cannot but endure the big nations having a commanding influence on the course of the history of physics. This shows the imminent task of our EPS HoP Group to assist these efforts of the smaller EU-States. Therefore, I am happy to get today information from names of physicists I never had heard before.

There is so much about Physics, which calls for attention. The difficult task of physics has been to make clear through few and exact formulae that living as a physicist is worthwhile being lived. Physics is validating Life! This, above all, is what the physics community can and must impart to the public in a near future.

No more words from me now, let us come to the essentials of the meeting.

*Dr. Peter M. Schuster*

Director of the European Centre for History of Physics “*Echophysics*”  
([www.echophysics.org](http://www.echophysics.org))

President of the Group “*History of Physics*” of the European Physical Society  
([www.petermschuster.at](http://www.petermschuster.at))  
[pm.schuster@echophysics.org](mailto:pm.schuster@echophysics.org)