

Sergio Trasatti



Sergio Trasatti, "Laureato" in Industrial Chemistry at the University of Milan in 1961, became Assistant Professor in the same University in 1967, and won the chair of Industrial Electrochemistry in 1980. In 1989 he was called to the chair of Electrochemistry.

S. Trasatti's research interests are in the field of the electrical double layer, electrocatalysis, electrochemical surface science, single electrode potential, surface chemistry of oxides, metal and oxide single crystals. S. Trasatti is author of about 300 papers including 20 chapters in multi-authored books. Editor of a book in two volumes on "Electrodes of Conductive Metallic Oxides" and of several special issues of various Journals, he has been a member of the Editorial Board of major electrochemistry Journals and book series.

Titular member of the IUPAC Commission on Electrochemistry since 1976, Chairman of the Commission in 1985-86, and elected member of the IUPAC Physical Chemistry Division Committee for the term 1987-90. The activity of S. Trasatti as an officer of the International Society of Electrochemistry (ISE) started in 1981 as Chairman of the former Division I (Thermodynamics) and as National Secretary of Italy. He was elected Vice-President in 1985 and President Elect in 1987. He was President of ISE for the term 1989-1990. He was Chairman of the celebratory 50th ISE Meeting (Pavia, Italy, 5-10 September 1999). Besides a number of Award Committees, S. Trasatti chaired the Publication Committee of ISE in 1999-2001. He was one of the Editors of *Electrochimica Acta*, the official journal of ISE, in 2002 and is Editor-in-Chief as of 1 January 2003.

Awards and Recognitions: "Miolati" Prize of the Italian Association of Physical Chemistry 1975; Honorary Member of the Polish Chemical Society (1985); Distinguished Lecturer at the Clarkson University, Potsdam NY (1988); Pergamon-*Electrochimica Acta* Gold Medal of ISE (1993); Corresponding Member of the National Academy of Sciences of Argentina (1994); Corresponding Member of the Istituto Lombardo Accademia di Scienze e Lettere (1997); 75th Anniversary Medal of the Polish Chemical Society (1997); Honorary Medal of the Institute of Physical Chemistry of the Polish Academy of Sciences (2000); Fellow of the Electrochemical Society (2000); Frumkin Memorial Medal of ISE (2003); Honorary Member of ISE (2004); Gold Seal of the Italian Chemical Society (2007); Olin Palladium Medal of the Electrochemical Society (2007).

Memories and highlights of Trasatti's Presidency

The decade between the 80's and the 90's saw the constant evolution of ISE toward a better corporate identity, which resulted in the creation of new infrastructures and in the progressive consciousness of the global character of the Society. My Presidency took place in the central biennium of that period (1989-90) during which the Annual Meetings were held in Kyoto and Prague, respectively. The ISE membership was 687 at the time of the Kyoto meeting and 718 in Prague. Nevertheless, participation in Kyoto was 1100, for the first time above 1000, and 700 in Prague, second only to Kyoto. More specific memories of my Presidency are itemized in what follows.

- At that time both e-mail and web were still to come. The only way to communicate with the membership was the ISE pages published in each issue of *Electrochimica Acta*. In 1989 the number of ISE pages were increased from eight to ten. At the end of each year the presidential letter was delivered to individual members by ordinary mail.
- In 1989 *Electrochimica Acta* received 350 papers (60% from Europe) with a rejection rate of 31%, compared to 2968 in 2010 with a rejection rate of ca. 65%.

- China began to show up on the international scene more consistently, reflected by the election of its first National Secretary. In 1990 the Executive Committee decided to accept the invitation from China for the 1995 Annual Meeting in Xiamen for the first time.
- Before Prague there was only one Society Award, the Tajima Prize. In Prague a new award, the Pergamon Electrochimica Acta Gold Medal (now Electrochimica Acta Gold Medal of ISE), was established. The design of the medal was also worked out.
- With the aim to recognise outstanding scientific contributions to the field of electrochemistry and for distinguished services to the Society, the new category of Honorary Members was introduced. The total number of such members was fixed to ten.
- An Awards & Recognition Session was established to impart a more formal character to the (till then rather informal) presentation of the awards. The A&R Session was joined to the General Assembly and included in the scientific program of the Annual Meeting. Besides, it was also decided that all awardees should deliver an Award Lecture at the next Annual Meeting. For the first time in Prague in 1990 there was a plenary lecture given by a Tajima Prize winner.
- The General Assembly had as a rule taken place right after the end of the Annual Meeting. That resulted in absence of member attendance. It was decided to move the General Assembly to the busiest time of the Annual Meeting, i.e., right in the middle of the week, in the day ending with the banquet.
- The inadequate involvement of Division Officers in the Annual Meeting organization was taken into particular consideration and initiatives to promote their active role were put forward. In particular, the Committee of Division Officers was charged to act as an International Advisory Board for Annual Meetings.
- The first steps to strengthen the coordination between the Society and local organizers of Annual Meetings were taken by imposing a common schedule to all organizers, i.e., a common set of deadlines. In 1989/90 the situation in this respect was still at a sidereal distance from that of nowadays. Scientific and technical organization was still completely in the hands of local organizers.
- Credit cards were introduced for the payment of membership dues. That removed energy barriers that had often made payment a boring operation. Successive information from the Treasurer indicated that ISE members had largely appreciated the facility.
- With the aim to increase the visibility of the society in ISE Sponsored Meetings, it was decided to appoint an ISE representative to address a welcome speech at the opening, and to publish an exhaustive meeting report on the ISE pages.
- The end of 1989 saw the transfer of competences as Secretary General from Manfred Breiter to Edwald Heitz.
- The situation of Corporate Sustaining Members suffered in the 80's from a continuous negative trend with a loss of ca. 20% in 10 years. The trend was reversed after the Kyoto meeting in 1989, presumably due to the positive impact of the Annual ISE Meeting on local industry. Unfortunately, the "Kyoto effect" did not solve the problem permanently.