

The 5<sup>th</sup> International Symposium “Molecular Mobility and Order in Polymer Systems” sponsored by IUPAC, was held at the Scientists House (the former Great Duke Vladimir’s Palace) in Saint Petersburg, June 20–24, 2005. The symposium was organized by the Department of Chemistry and Material Science of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Polymer Council of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Macromolecular Compounds of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The meeting was supported by the Russian Foundation of Basic Research and the St. Petersburg Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

The symposium has continued the series of St. Petersburg meetings on macromolecules. The first meeting was held in October 1994. These meetings are the most important international gathering of polymer scientists in Russia. They provide a venue where young scientists and more experienced researchers have the opportunity for close and friendly contacts with the leading specialists in the various domains of polymer science.

The symposium involved 21 plenary lectures, 60 contributed oral presentations, and more than 210 posters from 29 countries of Europe, Asia and America.

Main attention was paid to problems of the structure and dynamics of polymer systems which combine the order and the pronounced molecular mobility, i.e., systems with so-called “soft” order. Many such systems arise in the process of self-organization at some conditions and can change their structure even at small changes of these conditions. Such systems are in the focus of modern polymer science, explaining the large interest in the symposium from both Russian and foreign sci-

tists. The traditionally high level of participants working in the fields of theoretical physics and computer modeling of polymers should be mentioned. Many studies presented at the symposium were made in collaboration between Russian and Western researchers in the frame of international scientific projects and grants. Special attention was paid to attract young scientists, and more than 50 students presented their results at poster sessions.

The Symposium program covered six broad topics:

- Macromolecules in solutions, melts and networks oriented and stretched in strong external fields
- Liquid crystalline polymers
- Copolymers and polymer blends
- Polymer layers and micelles
- Polymer complexes and membranes
- Polymer networks of different topologies, branched and star polymers, dendrimers

This issue presents a selection of the contributions (some plenary lectures and selected oral/poster presentations). The papers are divided into three groups: papers based on experimental data, theoretical works and results of computer simulations.

Of course this issue covers only a small part of the works presented at the Symposium. The number of participants at the St. Petersburg Symposia is continuously increasing, and it is our intention to keep this tradition and to organize the 6th St. Petersburg Symposium in the future. We believe that it will attract at least as much interest of the scientific polymer community as the present one.

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