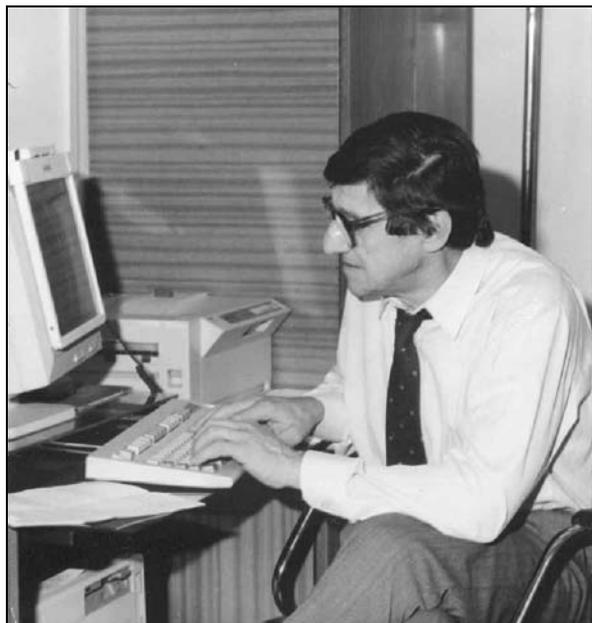


OBITUARY

Professor Ing. Peter Pelikán, DrSc.



Professor Ing. *Peter Pelikán*, DrSc., a respected member of the Slovak physical chemistry and chemical physics community, died prematurely at the age of 62 after bravely fighting cancer for nearly a decade.

He was born in Bratislava on 7 August, 1939. Following his graduation in 1969 from the Faculty of Chemical Technology at the Slovak University of Technology specializing in physical chemistry, he defended his PhD. thesis in 1973 and DrSc. thesis in 1988 in the field of chemical physics. He was appointed University Professor in physical chemistry in 1991. Furthermore, in recognition of his exceptional management skills, the Slovak University of Technology appointed him the Vice-Chairman of the Academic Senate of the Faculty of Chemical Technology in 1990–1991 and the Dean of the Faculty of Chemical Technology from 1991 to 1994. Professor Pelikán was also a Chairman of the Slovak Grant Agency, a member of the Scientific Boards of the Slovak University of Technology, Faculty of Chemistry of the VUT in Brno, and the Institute of Inorganic Chemistry of the SAS in Bratislava. Additionally, he was a member of the Editorial Board and Editor-in-Chief of the *Chemical Papers*

and a member of numerous committees for defending PhD. and DrSc. theses.

Few scientists have left such a formidable legacy as Professor Pelikán. A scientist in the top rank, his principal contributions were in stereochemistry, catalysis by transition elements, fixation of molecular nitrogen, the Jahn–Teller effect, high-temperature superconductivity, and photochemical reactions. Since 1987, he worked in the field of materials engineering with special interest in the interpretation of EPR spectra of randomly oriented radicals in solids and spectroscopy of transition elements. His more recent research involvement was in the band structure of solid materials with translational periodicity.

Professor Pelikán gave lectures on chemical physics, physics of the solid phase, fundamentals of NMR spectroscopy, theoretical fundamentals of EPR spectroscopy, symmetry in chemistry, physical chemistry, and applied quantum chemistry. At the Slovak University of Technology, he established a group of young scientists dedicated to research in fields including quantum chemistry, resonance spectroscopy, and structure–property relationships of technologically important materials. The group has an international reputation among the most distinguished schools of modern theoretical chemistry.

The depth and versatility of Professor Pelikán is illustrated by his prolific publication record – a total of 10 monographs, 138 scientific papers, and more than 100 papers presented at national and international conferences. To date, there are more than 700 citations of his scientific work. In acknowledgement of his remarkable contribution to the Slovak science, he was awarded the Honorary Dionýz Ilkovič Plaque in 1994 for the merits in the development of physicochemical sciences.

Professor Pelikán, who had a clear philosophy, took the position of the university professorship as a life mission. No doubt, this helped him to get relief during a difficult period of illness when he was able to demonstrate the power of his genius over matter. Noted for his warmth, generosity, and capacity, Professor Pelikán will remain in the memory of those who were privileged to have known him. His untimely death is a major loss to the international scientific community and the society in general.

S. Biskupič and P. Šimon