

Foreword

Sixth in a series started in Paris in 1997, this International Seminar on Geometry, Continua and Microstructures (GCM), took place in Belgrade, September 22-24, 2002. The city of Belgrade still bore traces of useless aerial bombings, but the general friendly atmosphere of Serbia recovering from some nightmare made the meeting a scientific and social success. An additional reason for the adequacy of the choice of Belgrade as the organizing place was the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the birth of Professor Rastko Stojanović, who was, by excellence, before his untimely death in 1977, an engineering scientist who represented to the utmost the blend of solid mathematical physics and engineering mechanics that lies as a safe foundation of the modern theory of defects in continuum mechanics. Rastko Stojanović, together with K.Kondo in Japan, E.Kröner in Germany, W. Noll in the USA, and the group around Bilby in the UK, was one of those who most articulately advocated the introduction of good geometrical concepts in continuum mechanics, in particular in connection with the presence of a microstructure and defects. Witness of this is the enclosed reprint of one of his letters in the RAAG Bulletin of K.Kondo. His was pioneering work, a work sometimes ignored in the most recent technical literature, but to be rediscovered in a time where modern differential geometry has become part of the curriculum of many students. Therefore, the celebration of this anniversary was spot on. The organizers were happy to welcome active participants from Italy, France, Germany, Greece, Poland, Romania, Russia, Czech Republic, the UK, etc., who paid a justified tribute to the memory of Rastko Stojanović, a teacher dear to many of us, and whose scientific interests practically coincided with the seminar's initials. A concluding round table indeed focussed on this close association and emphasized the foresight and uptodateness of Stojanović's thinking. The University of Belgrade offered its hospitality for the venue of the seminar. It is to be thanked for having provided such facilities.

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