

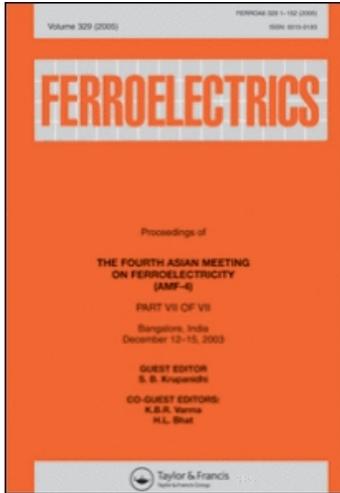
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Guest Editorial

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GUEST EDITORIAL

The present special issue contains papers collected on the occasion of the 7th International Symposium on Ferroic Domains and Mesoscopic Structures (ISFD7) that was held in Giens (France) in September 2002. This Symposium gathered more than 120 participants from an increasing number of countries (26) who submitted about 180 contributions. This issue should however not be considered as the proceedings of ISFD7: first because all papers presented at ISFD7 are not published in the present volumes that moreover contain few supplementary contributions. Finally, it should be noted that the papers, whose length was free, were processed according to the usual rules of Ferroelectrics.

All abstracts of contributions presented at ISFD7 may be found in “Journal des Sciences” (Dakar) which published them and are available electronically (see the link in the internet site of the meeting at <http://isfd7.cjb.net>).

The field of Ferroic Domains and Mesoscopic Structures appeared to be in constant evolution, with an increase of activity in topics related with recent applications, mainly of ferroelectrics. Since the first Symposium on Ferroic Domains that took place in Volgograd (Russia) in 1989, the scope of ISFD has been enlarged to all types of mesoscopic structures and, more recently to problems related with structural organisation at nanometric scales. Such questions as static domain structures in crystals and ceramics, dynamics of domain walls and switching phenomena, change of domain structures at phase transitions, domains in thin films and size effects, nano- and mesoscopic structures (including relaxors, glasses, and incommensurate phases), were in the scope of the meeting.

Besides, the research in this field has become so important for applications which appeared in recent years, that a specific part was devoted to applications and techniques: aspects related with FeRAMs and integrated ferroelectric films, high-k materials for microelectronics, domain engineering and photonics, domains in piezoelectric materials, transducers, sensors, actuators, and shape memory alloys, together with development of techniques, gave rise to special sessions of ISFD7. Contributions on theory, interdisciplinary topics, and unifying aspects were given in special sessions.

Naturally these topics are found in this special issue though they are organized here in a manner differing with the presentation at ISFD7.

We would like to add also some words about the human aspects of ISFD7. Perhaps because of the proximity of the Mediterranean Sea and nice weather, the meeting was characterized by a sympathetic atmosphere favourable to exchanges. We are grateful to the participants for that. We would like also to thank the young members of the local organizing committee who made great efforts before and during the meeting.

The next ISFD (ISFD8) will be organized in Japan in 2004 and the international committee has also selected the proposal of Germany to organize ISFD9 in 2006.

We hope you will enjoy reading these volumes!

Sincerely,

The guest editors,

Prof. Pierre SAINT-GRÉGOIRE
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April, 2003

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