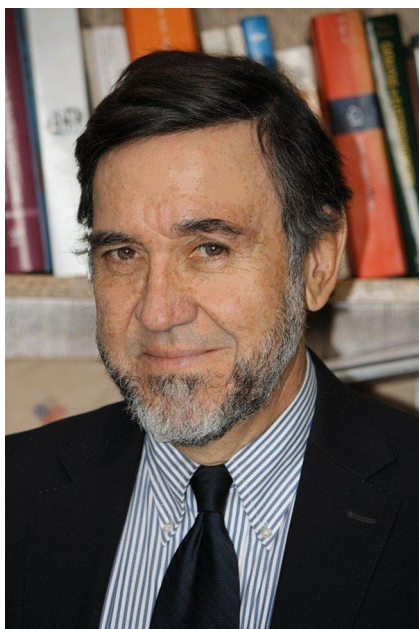


Preface for Special Issue on the occasion of José H Zagal 65th birthday

Maritza Angelica Páez¹

Received: 10 December 2015 / Accepted: 11 December 2015 / Published online: 30 December 2015
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Jose H. Zagal was born in Talca, Chile, a small town located south of Santiago. He was educated in a public school and fell in love with science soon after having attended some classes with very good science teachers. He graduated from school in 1966 and was elected the best student in the school and also

the best physics student of that promotion. The same year he lost his father, an intellectual who very much had encouraged him a career in science. He moved to Santiago and entered the School of Chemistry and Pharmacy of the University of Chile where he graduated with honors in 1973. Before graduating, he was a teaching and lab assistant for two years. Shortly after graduation, he joined the University of Santiago de Chile (USACH), as a lecturer at the time known as the Universidad Técnica del Estado. In 1974, he was awarded a Doctoral Fellowship from the Organization of American States in Washington DC and moved to the USA where he entered graduate school at Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH. He worked on his Ph.D. thesis on O₂ reduction on modified electrodes with metal complexes under the supervision of the late Ernest B. Yeager. After graduation, he spent some time as a postdoc in the same lab. He returned to Chile by the end of 1978 and became an assistant professor, back at the University of Santiago de Chile. In 1982, he moved to Brookhaven National Laboratory, Upton, NY, as a postdoctoral fellow. After that, he returned to Chile as an associate professor and was promoted to the position of full professor in 1985. He started a research group in electrochemistry, one of the few in the country in the 1980s, and trained many graduate students, and many of them are now successful faculty members in Chile. Other former students are scientists in industry both in Chile and in the USA. He has been an invited scientist at INIFTA, National University of La Plata, Argentina, in 1991 and 1996 invited scientist at the Federal University of São Carlos, São Paulo, Brazil; in 1992 and 1995, Brown & Williamson visiting scholar, University of Louisville, KY; 1996, invited professor at the University of Fortaleza, Brazil; 1997, invited scientist for several months, at ESPCI, Université Pierre et Marie Curie, Paris; and has been visiting scientist on several occasions at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Chimie de Paris (ENSCP)-Paris Tech.

✉ Maritza Angelica Páez
maritza.paez@usach.cl

¹ Universidad de Santiago de Chile, Santiago, RM, Chile

The President of Chile awarded him the *Presidential Chair in Science* in 1996 by a Committee chaired by Chemistry Nobel Laureate Rudolph A. Marcus and received the Silver Medal University Merit in 1998, the Gold Medal in 2002, and the Manuel Bulnes Gold Medal in 2013 from the University of Santiago de Chile. He was distinguished by the Chilean Commission for Science and Technology (CONICYT) with the “Fondecyt Diploma” for being awarded more than 10 consecutive research grants without rejects in 2012. He was appointed Member of the Superior Council of Research of CONICYT by the President of Chile and the Minister of Education for the period 2010–2013. In 2014, he received the “Dr. Alberto Zanlungo” Prize. The same year he was awarded The Fellow Medal from the *International Society of Electrochemistry* and the Fellow Medal from *The Electrochemical Society*.

He has published over 200 papers and 7 book chapters, and co-authored and edited 3 books and 3 patents. H impact factor = 33 (Web of Science), H = 35 (Scopus), and H = 39 (Google Scholar) with nearly 5300 citations. He has presented more than 300 papers in national and international meetings worldwide, including some plenary, keynotes, and invited lectures. He has also served in the scientific committees of many meetings. He has contributed in several fields: electrochemistry of coordination compounds, conductive polymers, self-assembled monolayers electrochemical sensors, and corrosion and recently has started research on molecular electronics. However, he is very well known for his seminal contributions to the promotion of electrochemical processes using hybrid electrodes containing MN_x molecular catalysts, establishing reactivity indexes and volcano activity correlations for the electrocatalysis of several electrochemical reactions. He has been one of the first to propose that one of the factors that increase the activity of pyrolyzed non-precious MN_x catalysts for the reduction of O₂ is the shift of metal-centered redox processes to more positive values as a result of the heat treatment.

He has served in the Editorial Boards of several international publications: *Journal of Applied Electrochemistry* (1988–2010), *Journal of the Chilean Chemical Society* (1984–2007), and *Electrocatalysis* (Springer) (2009–2015) and is presently member of the Editorial Board of *Journal of*

Solid State Electrochemistry (Springer), *International Journal of Electrochemistry* (Endawi), *Electrochemistry Communications* (Elsevier), *Journal of the Serbian Chemical Society*, *Electrochemical Energy Technology* (De Goutyer), and *Chimica Nova* (Brasil). He has been a Guest Editor of Special Issues of the *International Journal of Electrochemistry* and of the *Journal of Applied Electrochemistry*. He founded and was the first Chilean National Secretary of the International Society of Electrochemistry and also founded and chaired the Chilean Section of The Electrochemical Society. By these actions, he increased the visibility of Chilean electrochemistry abroad. His ideas about science policies, together with other Chilean scientists’ and thinkers’ opinions, have been recently included in the book “Semillas del Futuro” (Seeds for the Future) published by Chilean Senator Francisco Chauhan. He has been invited to the Chilean Senate on several occasions to talk about important issues related to science and renewable energies.

José is also a man of many talents: he plays several instruments including the Scottish bagpipes. He has been a volunteer fireman of the 14th British and Commonwealth Fire & Rescue Company of Santiago for 43 years, writes poetry, paints, and draws cartoons. Some of his caricatures have been published in *Interface* and in the *Journal of the Serbian Chemical Society*. He is a devoted train enthusiast. He has built large working locomotive replicas running on steam. Together with John O.M. Bockris, he once displayed in his lab in Santiago a large model electric train layout running on fuel cells and photovoltaics to illustrate to the public the concept of hydrogen economy. He has a collection of full-size railway coaches and freight cars and one steam locomotive, some of them more than 100 years old. He is a founding member of the Chilean Association for the Preservations of the Railways and has actively participated in actions to avoid the destruction of stations and railway vehicles of historical value. He shared this passion for trains with two distinguished electrochemists: John O’M. Bockris and Michael Weaver.

Maritza A. Páez
Guest Editor