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Dear Readers,

2010 marked the centennials of the births of two outstanding Soviet scientists who made a valuable contribution to the progress of polymer science, Professor Georgii Vladimirovich Vinogradov and Professor Sergei Prokop'evich Papkov. Both of these prominent scientists established scientific schools that are developing now thanks to their pupils and colleagues. To show this development, the Editorial Board decided to publish a special issue devoted to these memorable events. Corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences V.G. Kulichikhin, who had happened to work for a long time first with Papkov and then with Vinogradov, was given the responsibility of preparing this issue. Papkov's and Vinogradov's pupils and colleagues have submitted special papers about modern concepts in the field of polymer rheology that develop Vinogradov's ideas and knowledge of phase equilibria in polymer systems, the foundation of which was laid by Papkov.

After an introduction to brief scientific biographies of Vinogradov and Papkov, the reader will receive evidence that they had very little in common: They were engaged in polymer science at different times, elaborated different problems, and worked at institutions belonging to different departments. In fact, except for their birth year, only their passion for research and their ability to unite creative people to harmoniously cooperate in the solution of important problems made them kindred spirits. These qualities did not bring them great public acceptance during their lives; however, nowadays, long after their passing, their ideas are advancing further, despite the marked changes in scientific work style that reflect a new character of social relations.

We hope that readers will find many interesting things about the progress of Russian polymer science and will encounter useful ideas that will assist in tackling new problems of polymer physics and chemistry.

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