

Foreword

In all aspects but one, this is a regular issue of our journal, containing peer-reviewed research papers, short communications and, unfortunately, an obituary. The novelty introduced in this issue is the English translations of research papers, originally published in some other language, which would be of interest to historians and philosophers of science. The tradition opens with an early paper of Rein Vihalemm, translated from Russian by Ave Mets. Rein Vihalemm was a founding member of our journal's Editorial Board. He was also an initiator and founding member of the International Society for the Philosophy of Chemistry. In a way, without applying the term, philosophy of chemistry existed in the Soviet Union earlier than it was established as a philosophical discipline in the West. Rein Vihalemm was active in the discipline and published research in Russian and Estonian long before he got the chance to begin regular cooperation with his Western colleagues and start publishing in English. In this issue, Ave Mets also authors an interesting original article in philosophy of chemistry.

This year, the academic world is celebrating the 1150th anniversary of the great Islamic scholar Abū Naṣr al-Fārabi. In Islamic philosophical tradition, he was often called “the Second Teacher”, following Aristotle who was known as “the First Teacher”. As already noted in the foreword to our previous issue, it is believed that al-Fārabi was born on the territory of modern-day Kazakhstan. Mainly for that reason, another short communication by our Kazakh colleagues addressing the views of al-Fārabi is included in the current issue.

As promised in the foreword to our previous issue, our readers can find here the obituary of Jānis Stradiņš, the outstanding leader in the study of history of science in the Baltic countries for decades.

Unfortunately, the stream of sad news has not ceased. On 24 January 2020, Eduard Kolchinsky, another prominent Editorial Board member of our journal, passed away. Only in 2019, he became a full member of the International Academy of the History of Science. For twenty years, Kolchinsky was the director of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of the History of Science

and Technology of the Russian Academy of Sciences and held several other leading academic positions. Eduard Kolchinsky was a close colleague and friend of several historians of science in the Baltic countries, especially in Estonia. He will be remembered in Russia, the Baltic region, and beyond. I hope to publish a full obituary of Eduard Kolchinsky in a forthcoming issue of our journal.

Peeter Mürsepp
Editor-in-Chief