

Speak, Memory—of Sensors and Materials

Henry Baltes

ETH Zurich, D-MAVT, Micro and Nano Systems
Tannenstrasse 3, 8092 Zurich, Switzerland

Speak, Memory is the title of the well-known autobiography by Vladimir Nabokov.⁽¹⁾ It was the first thing that came to mind when Professor Ishida asked me of my recollections of the early days of *Sensors and Materials*. So I had an inspiration for a title, but nothing else. Memory alone often goes wrong; dates, names, and anecdotes get easily mixed up. And so I am grateful to Misako Sakano and Tomoko Tanabe of MYU K.K. and Japanese friends for helping me remember with their records.

A solid time anchor for my memory is the year 1988, the year *Sensors and Materials* was first published. That same year, I left the Henry Marshall Tory Chair at the University of Alberta and joined ETH Zurich as Professor of Physical Electronics. Also, in 1988, Arokia Nathan, Walter Allegretto, and I published our work for the first time in a Japanese journal. That journal was *Sensors and Materials* and our paper on magnetotransistors appeared on page 1 of volume 1 of the journal.

How did this happen? CMOS-based magnetic field sensors were my main research objective. The Transducers 1987 Conference brought me to Tokyo. The General Chairman of the conference, Dr. Shoei Kataoka, also studied magnetic sensors. With great pleasure, I remember our discussions at Densoken, Arakawa-oki (and later at Sharp K.K., Osaka) and at my home in Canada.

During that time, I learnt about the new journal and became interested in submitting a paper. The paper was written in late 1987. The photo shown in Fig. 1 was taken in my Alberta office during my discussion of the paper with Arokia Nathan, who was then a Ph.D. student. He holds now the Chair of Photonic Systems and Displays at the University of Cambridge, U.K.

My next memory time anchor is the year 1991, when the 10th Sensor Symposium was held in Tokyo. The chairman of the organizing committee then was Professor Tetsuro Nakamura of Toyohashi University of Technology. About a year earlier, I had been invited by Dr. Yuji Hazeyama of MYU K.K. to serve as Associate Editor (Europe) of *Sensors and Materials*. Around that time, the Japanese editors stepped down and Dr. Hazeyama asked me to help look for a successor. With the decisive support of Dr. Kataoka, the search led to Professor Nakamura, who served as editor of *Sensors and Materials* from 1991 to 1994.

At the 10th Sensor Symposium, I was one of three invited speakers, together with Professor Wen Ko from Case Western Reserve University and Dr. Iseki Igarashi from Toyota Central R&D Laboratories. On May 29, 1991 we enjoyed a memorable dinner party with the Organizing Committee. Our conversation included the nostalgic *Tora-san* movies I had started to take interest in at the time. Professor Nakamura most kindly answered my curious questions.

*Corresponding author: e-mail: hbaltes@ethz.ch
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Fig. 1. (Color online) Arokia Nathan and Henry Baltes, University of Alberta, Canada, 1987.

As associate editor (Europe), I enjoyed the smooth collaboration with Professor Nakamura and the excellent professional support of the editorial staff Harumi Yanagidaira. To promote *Sensors and Materials*, we set up an exhibition desk at MEMS 1994 in Oiso, when I had become a member of the MEMS Technical Program committee. All went well until October 31, 1994, when we received the sad news that Professor Nakamura had passed away. With a heavy heart I wrote an obituary entitled “In Memoriam Professor Tetsuro Nakamura 1932–1994”, which was published in *Sensors and Materials*.

Transducers 1993 was held in Yokohama, where I first met Dr. Susumu Sugiyama from Toyota Central R&D Laboratories. He became a Professor of Ritsumeikan University in 1995, and much to my satisfaction, the new Editor of *Sensors and Materials*. With vivid recollections of our harmonious collaboration over the years that followed, for our journal and beyond, I conclude my story of the early years of *Sensors and Materials*.

References

- 1 Vladimir Nabokov: *Speak, Memory: An Autobiograph Revisited*, in: *Novels and Memoirs 1941–1951* (The Library of America, New York, N.Y., 1996) pp. 359–629. The title quotes from a poem:
*Speak, memory,
that I may not forget the taste of roses,
nor the sound of ashes in the wind;
that I may once more taste the green cup of the sea.*