

## ŠESTDESET LET PROF. DR. VASILIJA PREŠERNA

### LAUDATION IN HONOUR OF PROFESSOR DR. VASILIJ PREŠERN ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 60<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY



Rodil se je 4. julija 1947 v Mariboru. Osnovno šolo in prvi letnik gimnazije je obiskoval na Jesenicah. Po preselitvi v Ljubljano je leta 1966 z odliko maturiral na Gimnaziji Vič v Ljubljani. Vpisal je študij metalurgije na Univerzi v Ljubljani, kjer je leta 1971 kot prvi iz letnika tudi diplomiral. Naziv magistra znanosti je pridobil leta 1974, naziv doktorja metalurških znanosti pa že leta 1978. Leta 1992 je bil habilitiran za izrednega profesorja.

Po diplomi se je zaposlil na Metalurškem inštitutu v Ljubljani (danes IMT – Inštitut za kovinske materiale in tehnologije), kjer je ostal do leta 1991.

Na inštitutu se je ukvarjal z raziskavami termodinamike procesov rafinacije z dodatkom kalcija v z aluminijem pomirjenem tekočem jeklu in s formiranjem nekovinskih vključkov, z raziskavo reakcije kalcija v sistemu talina-vključki-žlindra. Področje raziskav je že takrat zahtevalo tesno sodelovanje s slovensko oziroma jugoslovansko kot tudi z avstrijsko jeklarsko industrijo. Študij termodinamičnih reakcij v talini pri dodajanju Ca je bilo izredno pomembno tako z raziskovalnega vidika kot tudi s proizvodnega, zato so ga povabili k sodelovanju strokovnjaki z National Standardization and Technology – NIST, Gaithersburg, ZDA. V večletnem bilateralnem projektu YU-USA je bil pojasnjen vpliv CaO in Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> v talini, dobljeni rezultati pa so bistveno

Professor Dr. Vasilij Prešern, scientific councillor and former general director of the Acroni steelworks, is celebrating his 60th birthday. This provides us with an excellent opportunity to look at the background and the development of this well-known scientist – and even more successful economist – and his influence on research and economics in the field of steelmaking in Slovenia and abroad.

Vasilij Prešern was born in Maribor, on the 4th of July 1947. After completing his secondary-school education in Ljubljana with a distinction, he studied metallurgy at the University of Ljubljana and finished in 1971, as the first in his class. He joined the Metallurgical Institute, now the Institute of Metals and Technology (IMT), Ljubljana, where he worked until 1991. In 1974 he finished his master's degree. He then went on to his doctoral thesis and graduated in 1978 at the University of Ljubljana. In 1992 he was habilitated at the university as a professor.

In 1981 he received a six-month scholarship from the Confederation of British Industry (CIB) to develop subsidiary steelmaking agents for molten steel treatment at Foseco in Birmingham, UK.

Vasilij Prešern is an enthusiastic developer, with creative ideas and tremendous energy. During his time at IMT he worked on the thermodynamic conditions for the modification of inclusions in calcium-treated aluminium-killed molten steel. The topic of his research was very innovative and he was invited to take part in a

priпомogli k proizvodnji jekla z manjšo vsebnostjo žvepla in nekovinskih vključkov.

V želji, da bi svoje bogato teoretično znanje in poznanje svetovne metalurgije čim bolj povezal s prakso, se je leta 1991 zaposlil v takratnem Holdingu Slovenske železarne (danes SIJ – Slovenska industrija jekla).

Leta 1998 je sprejel zelo zahtevno nalogo sanacije največje slovenske jeklarske družbe Acroni. Kot glavni direktor Acronija je bil postavljen pred zahteven izziv sestaviti skupino ključnih sodelavcev, ki bo sposobna prenoviti in usposobiti podjetje za konkurenčni boj na zahtevnih svetovnih trgih.

Z dobrim poznanjem svetovnega jeklarskega trga in konkurence ter s svojo širino in pozitivnim načinom je Prešernu uspelo prepričati lastnika, da je jeklarstvo panoga, ki ima dolgoročno prihodnost tudi v Sloveniji in ji je vredno zagotoviti vso podporo za uspešno sanacijo in tudi nadaljnji razvoj Acronija. Tako so z večletnim investiranjem v spremembo in optimizacijo proizvodnih poti, v odpravljanje ozkih grl in v naprave, ki omogočajo večjo proizvodnjo izdelkov z visoko dodano vrednostjo, uspeli sanirati Acroni, in leto 2005 je bilo v vseh pogledih najuspešnejše, saj je postal največji proizvajalec specialnega jekla v Sloveniji z dodano vrednostjo več kot 38 000 EUR na zaposlenega.

Za uspešno saniranje Acronija je bil prof. dr. Prešern prejemnik nagrade GZS za leto 2006. V utemeljitvi so navedli:

*"ACRONI je družba z eno največjih hitrosti v rasti dodane vrednosti na zaposlenega in hitre rasti produktivnosti! Ima močno izraženo razvojno komponento, dolgoročno in moderno, atraktivno strategijo, rekordno izpolnjevanje tržnih, razvojnih, R&D in splošnih meril za nagrado GZS ter tudi meril internacionalizacije. Velja podobno kot za Krko: model nagrad GZS najbolj ustreza prav takšnim družbam.*

*Zelo dobri poslovno-finančni rezultati, tudi če se jih zaradi razmeroma velikega tržnega deleža in majhnega števila primerljivih konkurentov primerja na osnovi celotne panoge 27 – Proizvodnja kovin.*

*Predsednik uprave prof. dr. Vasilij Prešern je opravljal funkcijo od leta 1998 do 2007 in je mednarodno priznan strokovnjak na svojem področju ter optimističen, nadvse uspešen gospodarstvenik.*

Ves čas je prof. dr. Vasilij Prešern skrbel tudi za prenos znanja, saj je sodelovanje med Inštitutom za kovinske materiale in tehnologije vzor za sodelovanje med akademsko sfero in industrijo. Mladi raziskovalci so se usposabljali od pol do 1 leta v Acroniju in delali skupaj s strokovnjaki iz prakse ter si tako pridobili izredne izkušnje, in stkale so se prijateljske vezi, ki zagotavljajo dolgotrajno sodelovanje.

Po prodaji večinskega deleža SIJ je prof. Vasilij Prešern prepustil mesto glavnega direktorja mlajšim

Yugoslav-USA bilateral project, where he worked together with world-recognized experts from the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Gaithersburg, USA. He investigated the thermodynamic relations between calcium-treated aluminium-killed molten steel and non-metallic inclusions and demonstrated the importance of having the right Ca content. The results of this research were also very important for the steelmaking industry. The influence of CaO and Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> in molten steel was explained during the course of the bilateral project, and the results were very helpful for the production of cleaner steels containing smaller amounts of sulphur and non-metallic inclusions.

During his time at IMT he published more than 50 papers in leading scientific journals and had more than 50 invited lectures at the most important international conferences. He has also been involved in more than 250 projects with industry.

Because of his wish to combine his deep theoretical expertise and his knowledge of world metallurgy with industrial work, in 1991 he joined the then Holding of Slovenian Steelworks (presently, the SIJ, the Slovenian Steelwork Industry)

In 1998 he accepted the very difficult task of reorganizing the biggest Slovenian steelworks company, Acroni. As the general manager he faced a great challenge: to form a highly qualified group of leading co-workers, qualified to modernize and reposition the company to be competitive on the global market.

His expertise in the global steelmaking market and competition and his positive approach enabled him to persuade the owners that the steelmaking branch had great promise – also in Slovenia – and was worth supporting during the successful reorganization and further development of Acroni.

The investments over several years led to the modification and optimisation of the production lines and equipment; this enabled increased production levels with a higher added value and made possible the successful reorganization of Acroni. The year 2005 was, in all respects, the most successful year for Acroni, which produced special steels in Slovenia with an added value of € 38,000/employee.

In 2006 Vasilij Prešern was the winner of an award from the Chamber of the Economy of the Republic of Slovenia (GZS-gospodarska zbornica RS) for his successful reorganization of Acroni. At the awards ceremony Acroni was recognised as a company with a rapid growth in added value per employee and increasing production levels. The company was described as having a strong development component, long-range and advanced strategies, a record of satisfying the market, and good R&D standards.

Vasilij Prešern took great care of the knowledge transfer and cooperation involving on of Slovenia's leading research institutes, IMT, representing an ideal model of cooperation between the academic sphere and industry in Slovenia. IMT's young researchers were able to work together with Acroni's experts for six months to one year at the Acroni plant, where they gained

sodelavcem, ki jih je vzgojil in ki jim zaupa, da bodo tako zagnani in uspešni, kot je bil sam.

Prof. dr. Vasilij se privaja na novo odgovornost v okviru SIJ kot direktor za investicije in razvoj celotnega SIJ-a. Tako mu ostaja čas, ki ga je vsak dan porabil za vožnjo na Jesenice, da ga preživlja s svojo vnukinjo Julijo.

Vendar pa še vedno najde čas za stroko, saj v okviru Mednarodne podiplomske šole Jožefa Stefana prenaša svoje bogate izkušnje na mlade podiplomce.

Dragi kolega in prijatelj Vasilij! Ob 60-letnici ti iskreno čestitamo za vse dosežke in ti želimo tudi v prihodnje veliko uspehov, sreče, predvsem pa osebnega zadovoljstva v krogu svoje družine in prijateljev.

invaluable experience. Friendly links were formed and these links have ensured the long-lasting cooperation between these two partners

After a takeover of the majority share of the Slovenian Steel Industry, Vasilij Prešern left his position as Acroni's general manager to younger co-workers, who he brought up in previous years and who he has trusted to be even more successful than he was.

Professor Vasilij Prešern is getting accustomed to his new position in the SIJ – as the director responsible for investments and the development of the whole SIJ. This means he now has the time, which he previously used for a daily commute to Jesenice, to spend with his granddaughter Julija.

Dear colleague and friend, Vasilij, on the occasion of this 60th anniversary we congratulate you on your excellent results and we wish you and your family many years of successes and happiness in good health.

Monika Jenko