

Opening of the Epiphany Conference '09

It is a real pleasure to welcome all of you on behalf of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences. When Cracow Epiphany Conferences started in 1995, we were all happy and some of us even young. At that time no one could envisage that so soon, at this very conference, we shall be commemorating our great friend and great physicist, Professor Jan Kwieciński, a member of this Academy and a recognized authority. It was indeed difficult to accept his passing away 5 years ago. And it is as difficult to live without his presence today.

There is no question that Jan was a leading figure in the search for understanding the physics at low x , as is clearly demonstrated by your presence here. I must say that it is truly moving to see such a collection of distinguished physicists coming to pay tribute to their teacher, collaborator and friend.

Because Jan was indeed an excellent teacher, not only to his younger colleagues but also to most of us who often profited from his inspiring and clear advice.

And he was also a great collaborator, full of initiative, often leading, nevertheless always very discreet and never putting himself in front.

But, most of all, his great personality, his true willingness to listen and to understand others, and -not to be treated lightly- his excellent manners, made of Jan a really ideal friend to all of us who had a chance to know him closely enough.

Remembering this rich personality of our friend, it should not be forgotten, however, that his self was concentrated on physics of which he made the central point of life. In the coming three days we shall surely hear many times about the physics developed by Jan and about his impact on the subject of this conference.

But before we start this exciting adventure, let us commemorate Jan by observing a minute of silence.

Thank you very much.

Andrzej Białaś

Kraków, 5 January 2009.