

*Substantia* in Latin means substance, matter, material, that is the realm of chemistry. Indeed, chemistry has always studied – since its ancestor alchemy – matter around us and its transformations. An international journal with this title opens its own perspective to every theme associated to this fantastic discipline: history of the chemical thought, relationship between chemistry evolution and mankind, position of science and scientists in the society, role of creativity in the progress of the field of science mostly connected to the daily life, and many other intriguing aspects. Chemistry has always wanted to challenge what Primo Levi used to call the *Mater materia* (Mother matter), trying to solve the infinite mysteries of such ineffable Sphynx, and during this long lasting struggle chemists and matter have been at the same time friends and enemies.

This journal aims at investigating some topics of history of chemistry, but has also the ambitious scope of ensuring that scientists continuously ponder and worry about a different way of working with respect to that our society, infected by the terrible profit-syndrome, day by day suggests and dictates.

In 1933 Maria Skłodowska Curie, speaking about the decision not to patent the procedure for isolating radium, that sounded outrageous to some people, pointed out: “Humanity needs practical men ... But humanity also needs dreamers, for whom the disinterested pursuit of an end is so captivating that it becomes impossible for them

to think of their own material profit.” Another great Polish scientist, Albert Sabin, pursued the same path in the 1960s for the anti-polio vaccine. He decided not to patent his discovery, thus permitting very low production costs, and earning not even a penny out of it. The justification for his stance looks almost naïve in a world that was already irremediably infected by the disease of capitalistic profit at all costs: “lots of people insisted that I should patent the vaccine, but I didn’t want to: it is my present to all the children in the world.”

The aim of this journal is to inspire those who are working in the world of chemistry about the harmful effect of the market on research, the importance of disclosing the scientific results, the necessity of recovering the unity of knowledge and culture in the frame of a multi-disciplinary approach.

We want to create bridges between disciplines, but also between different perspectives and languages: as an example the appreciation of the “far and diverse”, both in space and time, and the choice of adopting open access.

Today we terribly need bridges against walls and it is not by chance that we launch this new journal, with these distinctive features, from Florence, the cradle of the Renaissance: we take the baton of the cultural Florentine renaissance from the Camerata dei Bardi, progenitor of the modern opera, and from the Accademia del Cimento, mother of the contemporary scientific Societies.