

Preface

This book collects the contributions of the fifth issue of the conference series on polycrystalline semiconductors (POLYSE). This time, we organized the conference POLYSE '98 from September 13 to 18, 1998 in Schwäbisch Gmünd, the Staufer-city about 70 km in the east of Stuttgart. More than 120 participants from 22 countries met in this Swabian town. The 'Tagungszentrum' provided us with excellent support of personnel, technical equipment, and plenty of space, which helped us to overcome the disadvantages of a 'rainy season' during the conference week.

Similarly to the previous conferences of this series, POLYSE '98 covered many aspects of polycrystalline semiconductors. During the years, we observed a change. While the proceedings of POLYSE '88 and POLYSE '90 contained many contributions on basic research, for example on structural properties of single grain boundaries, the successors POLYSE '93 and POLYSE '95 contained many articles on solar cells and thin film transistors, seemingly marking a transition to a more technology-oriented conference. However, the contributions in the present proceedings of POLYSE '98 show again that the POLYSE-series brings together the advocates of both sides: researchers from basic research as well as engineers working on devices.

This time, ten internationally recognized scientists were invited by us to review their work. These speakers are

O. Bonnaud	T. Negami
M.F. Chisholm	S. Ostapenko
J. Im	R. Scheer
J. Katz	A. Yamada
J. Maier	N. Wyrsh

We are grateful for their excellent presentations. In addition to these invited talks, we had 32 oral contributions and 42 poster presentations. We thank all of these authors, not only for their contributions, but also for mailing their manuscripts in due time.

Conferences such as POLYSE live from the contributions of many people. It is a pleasure for us to thank the advisory committee for their input before the conference, as well as to gratefully acknowledge the financial support of our sponsors who made it possible to organize the conference again in Germany.

Finally, we express our sincere thanks to our staff members who worked hard and sometimes even very hard before, during and after the conference. Thank you for your commitment!

Stuttgart and Erlangen, January 1999

Jürgen H. Werner, Horst P. Strunk, Hans-Werner Schock

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