

Preface

It was end of August 2007, Pierre arrived at the lab and said “J’ai attrapé une cochonnerie” (I caught a muck). We spent some time chatting, about his optimism for the french sanitary system and for him to beat the odds, about where we stood with our many common projects, and then he went to his office to continue on his work. One year later, the cochonnerie had him. It was a shock, even after one year of fight, for all of us. It took us two full years to sort of come out of the paralysis, maybe a way to deny what could not be denied. Pierre was not anymore with us, not in our everyday life, discussing, helping, eating, arguing, strolling, going together to concerts, laughing. The hole he left is so huge that we still struggle not to feel it in our everyday life.

This book wants to honor Pierre’s scientific activity, showing the influence he had on a wide range of scientific problems, from quantum chemistry, where he was an uncontested leader, to astrochemistry and beyond. Nation wise, this competence of his and longsighted view of science brought him to be the President of the Commission Spécialisée Astronomie (CSA: the highest level national french panel for governing the french astrophysical activity), just to name one of the many official roles he had in the development of local and national activities related to astrophysics. In Europe, he was one of the leaders and major actors of the European Training Network on molecular astrophysics, “The Molecular Universe”.

In fact, this book, by definition, cannot bring justice to the huge influence that Pierre had on several scientific problems. It wants, though, to provide at least a partial testimony of it by collecting some scientific works on areas where Pierre contributed to.

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