

## Preface

These two volumes regroup the Proceedings of the 9<sup>th</sup> International Conference on X-Ray Absorption Fine Structure (XAFS IX) held on August 26<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> in Grenoble (France). The first International Conference focusing on XAFS was organised in 1981 in Daresbury (U.K.) as a "study week-end" with 80 participants. Fifteen years later, the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of this very successful series of conferences was organised by the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF) and attracted over 550 registered delegates from all around the world. This rapid growth certainly reflects the vitality of the community of X-ray spectroscopists nearly one hundred years after the historical report by W.K. Röntgen of the discovery of X-rays and of their differential absorption by various elements in matter. The success of the XAFS IX Conference may perhaps be correlated to the fact that the ESRF was the first high energy synchrotron radiation source of 3<sup>rd</sup> generation which began user operation in 1994: it is not fortuitous, therefore, that the next conferences will be organized in 1998 by the user community of the American Advanced Photon Source and in 2001 by the Japanese user community of the new Spring-8 machine which is just starting operation.

With around 450 refereed papers to be included in the proceedings, the organisation of the two volumes was for several months the headache of the editorial group who did an enormous job. I wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge the considerable help we received from a number of excellent referees who stimulated so many constructive revisions and contributed a lot to improve the scientific value as well as the presentation of these proceedings. Unfortunately, the price to be paid for higher quality was some additional delay in collecting all revised manuscripts: I have to apologise for those of you who suffered from this collective penalty. Of course, I need to thank all plenary speakers who spent time and effort in putting in a written form their outstanding contributions. As regards presentation, we decided to regroup the full papers corresponding to the plenary lectures at the beginning of the first volume. The shorter communications were included in various sections illustrating a given topical content, the invited papers preceding the contributed ones.

The budget necessary to organise such a large conference is constantly increasing. Without the financial support of the ESRF and of a number of generous donators listed on the next page, it would have been simply impossible to organise this conference. I wish to acknowledge the very valuable advices I received from the chairmen of the previous conferences, especially from Pr. K. Baberschke, Pr. H. Kuroda and Pr. S. Hasnain. I wish next to express my personal gratitude to the members of the International Advisory Committee and Program Committee who helped me to balance the scientific aspects of the conference. Special thanks are due to the Local Organizing Committee and indeed to the conference secretary, Diane Downes, who shared the responsibility of all material aspects of the organisation. I cannot list here all the names of ESRF scientists and other staff members who helped us at some point in the preparation of the conference: they all know how deeply I appreciated their invaluable help.

José Goulon  
Conference Chairman