Optics in Russia: Selected Topics

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I am pleased to have this opportunity to present new information about recent achievements in optical sciences and optical engineering in Russia. In general, the papers present the main activities of my colleagues in the framework of the International Laser Center (ILC) of Eastern and Central European countries. The basic organization of the ILC includes Lomonosov Moscow State University and the Scientific Research Center for Technological Lasers of the Russia Academy of Sciences (NICTL). Saratov State University is a very active member of the ILC and is represented here by two papers. Papers from the Vavilov State Optical Institute (St. Petersburg), the Experimental Design Office "Raduga" (Vladimir), and the Image Processing Systems Institute of the Russia Academy of Sciences (Samara) are also included.

The nine papers in this special section deal with the problems of modeling, design and fabrication of new diffractive optical elements, experimental adaptive optics systems, planar optical schemes, laser spectroscopy for biomedical applications, and environmental control and application of photothermal probe beam deflection spectroscopy for testing of IR optical elements.

These papers are only a small part of the activities in our country in the field of optical sciences and engineering. Nevertheless, I hope that these papers will broaden the view of the optical community on the personalities, research centers, and laboratories in Russia and the results that have been obtained by them, and I hope it will serve as a good addition to papers from Russia previously published in *Optical Engineering.*

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