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## Comptes Rendus Mecanique

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Basic and applied researches in microgravity/Recherches fondamentales et appliquées en microgravité

## A tribute to Bernard Zappoli



## Preface

The most prolific period for microgravity research around the world was, without any doubt, the period from the 1980s to the 2000s. In spite of the *Challenger* accident in January 1986, all the space agencies were developing infrastructures allowing microgravity experiments to be performed: this included the construction of drop tubes and drop towers, the availability of aircrafts for parabolic flights, the American space shuttle equipped with the European Spacelab, and of course the MIR station.

Bernard Zappoli was a junior scientist at the beginning of this age, already motivated by the numerical simulation of fluid physics experiments. When he joined CNES, one of his first tasks was to model germanium crystal growth experiments performed in space aboard the Soviet MIR station. This is the time when I met with him first: I was myself involved in the preparation of solidification experiments on MIR.

Since that time, we developed very friendly scientific relationships that lasted up to now. Bernard was one of the few people who understood, like I did at that time, that the rather expensive microgravity experiments should be reserved for fundamental research and not used for supposing space factories, as it was the trend overseas.

When he took the lead of the Microgravity Program at CNES up to the Space Station era, he spent his knowledge and energy to gather together the best scientists of the country and made his best efforts to develop high level international cooperation, keeping at the same time himself involved as a top-level researcher. We now know that this was the way to go when considering the number of publications and prestigious awards he got.

Thank you Bernard for your tremendous contribution!

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