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To whom ever concerns

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Statement about possibility plagiarism commitment

Dear Madam or Sir,

This statement is prepared to address the question of whether Rafal J. Wrobel utilized material from my thesis book titled "Spektroskopische in situ-Untersuchungen der katalytischen CO-Oxidation an oxidmodifizierten Platinmetalloberflächen" in his habilitation monograph titled "Aktywność katalityczna układów M-tlenek ceru (M=Pt, Pd, Cu) w reakcji utleniania tlenku węgla". Rafal Wrobel requested this statement and provided the expert opinion of Małgorzata Witko regarding the possibility of plagiarism in my thesis book. This expert opinion was professionally translated from Polish to German by sworn translator Ilona Monika Szemerda. Additionally, I received an electronic copy of dr. Rafal Wrobel's habilitation book via the link <https://oa.zut.edu.pl/handle/20.500.12539/1559>. I think that the translation of habilitation book to German is unnecessary as Prof. Witko compared the figures and tables only.

I collaborated with Professor Helmut Weiss' group at Otto-von-Guericke-Universität Magdeburg as a student from 2004 to 2008. After completing my graduation in the years 2008-2009, I worked closely with dr Rafal Wrobel in the laboratory until his tenure was scheduled to end in August 2009. We conducted experiments, analyzed data, discussed results and ideas, and prepared manuscripts together. The tables and figures resulting from data analysis were created for group meetings to discuss results and for presentations in the form of posters and seminars. All these findings were stored in a repository. Although the concept of a repository was innovative at the time, it has since become standard practice. Based on these archived results, manuscripts were prepared for publication and also stored and shared in this way. However, not all results were published, despite having complete figures ready. Some of the prepared manuscripts remain unpublished to this day. Many results, in complete form as figures and tables, were not used for either publication or for Rafal Wrobel's PhD thesis and habilitation monograph, despite their readiness.

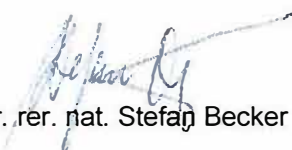
From 2005 to 2007, dr.Rafal Wrobel and I primarily worked as a team, with dr Bartek Strzelczyk briefly being a member of the lab group in that period. From 2007 to 2009, the entire scientific group consisted only of three individuals, with Rafal Wrobel and myself working in the laboratory. We jointly analyzed all data and prepared figures, tables, and manuscripts ready for publication. Professor Helmut Weiss occasionally supervised the progress of the research during group meetings and was involved in the final refinement of the prepared manuscripts. Most of the material from this period was never published in the form of papers, despite the figures and tables being ready for publication.

Expert Prof Małgorzata Witko, in her opinion, mistakenly assumed that my PhD work was completed in 1982. This is incorrect, as I was born in that year. The phrase "Stefan Becker geb. am 04.09.1982" on the title page of my PhD book indicates my birthdate as September 4, 1982. Based on this mistake, the expert drew a false conclusion, asserting that all experimental results were ready in 1982 and later some of these results were published in papers in the years 2007, 2008, and 2010. The erroneous conclusion is that Rafal Wrobel's habilitation book, published in 2013, was based on the results taken from my thesis book published in 1982. This reasoning is incorrect, as it assumes the year 1982 not as my year of birth, but as the year of publication of my PhD with all results. In reality, as I stated above, all results, i.e., figures and tables, etc., used in my thesis from 2010 were prepared together with Rafal Wrobel during his tenure in Magdeburg until August 1, 2009.

I have meticulously examined all the figures and tables from Rafal Wrobel's habilitation book and compared them with those from my PhD thesis book. I can affirm that the similarity arises solely from the shared source of these figures, namely the shared data archive where we stored and evaluated results. These results were retained in the archive, and I incorporated some of them into my thesis book from 2010. It is worth noting that I utilized this data and interpreted it from the perspective of my background as a physicist and chemist from the view physical chemistry. Form the physical interpretation was mainly in focus of my thesis. Conversely, to the best of my knowledge, Dr Rafal Wrobel employed the data from the archive and analyzed it as a chemist. These approaches are distinct and provide different insights into the discovered phenomena. The resemblance in the figures and tables does not result from plagiarism, but from the shared source, i.e., the archive of results, of which the authors were Rafal Wrobel and myself. I provided written permission to use the data from the archive and resulting papers in the habilitation procedure, with an exact and detailed description of coauthor contributions. Professor Helmut Weiss, the group leader, also granted similar permission. From the content of the expert's opinion, it is evident that she was not in possession of these permissions, as she states that it is unclear whether they exist. In my view, comparing my PhD thesis and Rafal Wrobel's habilitation book without reviewing the coauthors' permissions may lead to erroneous conclusions such as plagiarism.

In summary, as the author of the thesis titled "Spektroskopische in situ-Untersuchungen der katalytischen CO-Oxidation an oxidmodifizierten Platinmetalloberflächen" I affirm that Rafal Wrobel did not commit plagiarism by using figures or tables from my thesis book. This is because the authors of these data (ready-for-publication figures, tables, etc.) were Rafal Wrobel and myself, and this data was stored in the shared data repository prior to the writing and publication of my thesis book. The accusation of self-plagiarism is also unfounded, as Rafal Wrobel diligently informed the reader about the prior publication of his material by providing the appropriate references. I trust that my statement is clear and sound. I also declare my readiness to come to Szczecin and participate in Rafal Wrobel's defense process as a witness, if deemed necessary.

Sincerely Yours,



Dr. rer. nat. Stefan Becker