

LAUDATIO

In honour of Professor **Henning HOPF**,
from Braunschweig University of Technology, Germany

28 October 2010

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Laudatio

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from Braunschweig University of Technology, Germany

Professor Henning Hopf was born on 13 December 1940 in Wildeshausen, Lower Saxony, Germany. After graduating from secondary and high school, he enrolled at the Faculty of Chemistry at the University of Göttingen, where he graduated as “Diplomchemiker” in 1963. He then continued his studies in organic chemistry, being conferred the “Master of Science” degree at the University of Wisconsin - Madison, USA, two years later. After two more years spent in the same American university, he was conferred the “Doctor of Philosophy” degree, with the thesis “Solvolysis Reactions of benzhydrol-esters” under the scientific coordinator of Professor H.L.Goering.

Professor Henning Hopf achieved his habilitation in 1972 with Professor H.Musso’s support at the Technical University in Karlsruhe and continued to extend his research in organic chemistry under the scientific coordination of Prof.

H.M. Frei at the University of Reading, United Kingdom, committing to a post doctoral scholarship.

Professor Henning Hopf was conferred all academic degrees in the German higher education system; he started as an assistant at the University of Marburg (1967-1969) and Karlsruhe (1969-1972), continued as a Privatdozent at the Technical University of Karlsruhe (1972-1975), then as a C-3 Professor at the University of Würzburg (1975-1978) and later as a C-4 Professor at Braunschweig University of Technology, where he still teaches. In the meantime he had a few temporary “extended calls” at the Technical Universities of Karlsruhe and Darmstadt.

From a didactic point of view, Professor Henning Hopf supervised organic chemistry laboratory works, seminars and held lectures to students in all higher education institutions where he was active. At the same time he coordinated several Bachelors, Masters and PhD theses (including habilitation theses) always suggesting contemporary research themes.

From a scientific point of view, Professor Henning Hopf approached a series of up-to-date research themes in organic chemistry, out of which stand as remarkable evidence:

- the chemistry of olefins, acetylenes and cumulenes, but also other aliphatic and aromatic compounds, etc.;
- the mechanisms of thermal reactions;
- new materials with properties of liquid crystals;

- the study of polyenic systems related to well-known natural structures: beta-carotenes, vitamins, etc.;
- the examination of ecologically important processes, placed under the umbrella of environmental protection.

More precisely, his research showed, for instance, that cyclophanes own a specific geometry which offers numerous applications in supramolecular chemistry. Chiral cyclophanes represent excellent auxiliaries in the stereoselective synthesis of biologically active compounds. Furthermore, many hydrocarbons of the alkyne, allene and cumulene type synthesized at Braunschweig University of Technology became compounds of reference in the structural chemistry at international level. A synthesis of allenes and cumulenes were turned into heat resistant polymers with remarkable conductive properties, having various applications in the petrochemical industry or in the production of liquid crystal displays.

His outstanding scientific achievements - around 550 papers, books, patents etc., brought Professor H. Hopf indisputable international prestige. Consequently, he was invited to be part of various international scientific organizations, such as: Gesellschaft Deutscher Chemiker (1963), American Chemical Society (1965), Royal Society of Chemistry (1979), European Photochemical Association (1978) etc., being awarded prizes, distinctions and honorary scientific

titles: Stipend of Studienstiftung des Deusches Volkers (1960-1967), Fulbright Scholarship (1963-1964), Karl-Winnacker-Stipend (1974-1978), Prize of Academy of Science Goettingen (1975), Prize of van't Hoff Fonds of Royal Dutch Chemical Society (1977), Award of the Dreyfuss-Foundation of New York (1982), Award of the Japanese Society for Protection of Science (1987), Max-Plank-Preis of the Max-Plank-Gesellschaft /Alexander von Humboldt -Stiftung (1994), Adolf-von-Baeyer-Denkmuenze of the Gesellschaft Deutscher Chemiker (1996), Creative Award of the University of Oregon Foundation (1998), Gay-Lussac / Alexander von Humboldt-Preis of the French Ministry of Research (1999), Literaturpreis of the Fonds des Chemischen Industry (2001, 2007), Doctor Honoris Causa of Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca (2002), UNESCO Decade Award (2006), Fellow Royal Society of Chemistry (2006).

He was a “visiting professor” at the University of Wisconsin - Madison, Oregon -Eugene and Stanford in the USA, Bar-Ilan University in Ramat-Gan, Israel, University of Melbourne, Australia, University of Bordeaux, France etc., where he held numerous conferences, lectures, and other scientific cooperation activities.

Enjoying international professional prestige, Professor Henning Hopf was part of editorial committees of some ISI journals/reviews, such as: Chemische Berichte, Liebigs

Annalen, Australian Journal of Chemistry, Chemie-Studienbuecher at Teubner Verlag, Beilstein-Institute, Nachrichten von Chemie und Labor Technik, European Journal of Organic Chemistry, Indian Journal of Chemistry, Pure and Applied Chemistry, Naturwissenschaftliche Rundschau, Beilstein Journal of Organic Chemistry, etc. Furthermore, Professor H. Hopf was invited to be a member in the boards of academic and non-academic associations, such as: Gesellschaft fuer Biotechnologische Forschung-Braunschweig, Center for fine Chemicals- Oslo, Kinetik und Reaktionsmecanistik – DECHEMA, Gesellschaft Deutscher Chemiker, Abfallbeseitigung durch Hochtemperaturreaktionen of District Government Braunschweig, Publishing Committee of VCH Verlagsgesellschaft - Wiley-VCH, International Committee of the American Chemical Society and others. It is worth mentioning the fact that Professor Henning Hopf was appointed vice-president of the German Society of Chemistry: GDCh between 2000-2002 and 2006-2007 and president between 2004-2006.

The Faculty of Chemistry of Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi started the cooperation with the Institutes of Chemistry at Braunschweig University of Technology even since 1995-1996, with the support of the following professors: H. Hopf, B. Koenig, G. Drann, M. Fild, dr. I.Neda etc., who accepted undergraduate and postgraduate students and

teaching staff from our faculty for internships under the Tempus and especially Socrates-Erasmus Programmes. Therefore, more than 30 undergraduate and postgraduate students spent 5 to 10 months in the laboratories at Braunschweig University of Technology. Many of them continued their PhD studies in chemistry at this university with German funding, out of which eight (8) PhD theses have been defended until now (R. Bărbieru, A. Constantinescu, R. Judele, I. Jipa, C. Hrib, C. Daniliuc, R. Riclea and R. Soldănescu). Moreover, Lucian Birsa, a professor in our faculty, as a stipendiary of “Alexander von Humboldt” Foundation in Bonn / Bad Godesberg, has been working for more than 7 years in these laboratories, under the supervision of Professor Henning Hopf. Other common programmes and activities of scientific cooperation are currently under development, directly supported by Professor Henning Hopf.

Taking into consideration all his remarkable achievements, the Board of the Faculty of Chemistry requested the Senate Board of Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași the award of the title Doctor Honoris Causa to Professor Henning Hopf. Subsequently, the Senate of Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, during the meeting on 29 April 2010, approved the request, appointing the following commission for this **Laudatio** to the award of the title **Doctor Honoris Causa** to **Professor Henning HOPF**:

COMISSION

President:

Prof.dr. **Vasile IȘAN**

Rector of Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași

Members:

Acad. prof.dr. **Ionel HAIDUC**

President of the Romanian Academy

Prof.dr. **Ecaterina ANDRONESCU**

Rector of the Polytechnic University of Bucharest

Prof.dr. **Luminița SILAGHI DUMITRESCU**

Vice-Rector of Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca

Prof.dr. **Alexandru CECAL**

Faculty of Chemistry

Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași

Iași, 28 October 2010