

PROFESSOR PETRU SPACU (1906 – 1995)

Petru Spacu was born in Charlottenburg (Germany) on 6th June 1906. He studied chemistry at the Faculty of Sciences in Cluj where he graduated in 1929. From this date up to 1937 he was successively assistant and lecturer at the Laboratory of Inorganic Chemistry of the same Faculty, in Cluj. In 1937 he was appointed full-professor at the Faculty of Industrial Chemistry, the Polytechnic Institute of Bucharest where he remained until 1955. Between 1955 and 1972 he was Head of Inorganic Chemistry Department of the Faculty of Chemistry, from the Bucharest University.

His doctoral thesis, defended in 1932, was entitled “Double halogeno-metal amines”. Between 1934 and 1936 he worked in Paris with the famous Professor Georges Urbain and between 1936–1937 he was the co-worker of Professor W. Hiber at the Munich Polytechnic.

The development of modern Inorganic Chemistry in Romania is directly connected with the scientific and teaching activity of Professor Spacu.

Follower of the best traditions of the Romanian research school in Inorganic Chemistry, Professor Petru Spacu developed new domains of research, which evolved later as independent specific disciplines.

Professor Spacu, along with his co-workers published an impressive number of original papers (over 350) in Romania and abroad. The large recognition of Romanian Inorganic chemistry school and especially of Romanian Coordination Chemistry one is mainly due to Professor Spacu’s researches, which were always strongly connected with the latest achievements in the field. An impressive number of quotations of his papers in international journals and treatises prove the recognition of his scientific work.

The outstanding scientific activity of Petru Spacu was unanimously recognized in Romania and abroad. He was elected as a corresponding member of the Romanian Academy in 1963 and a full-member in 1990. Professor Petru Spacu was also elected corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences in Göttingen (1970), full member of Italian Mediterranean Academy of Chemical Sciences (Catania, 1986), as well as member in IUPAC – Committee for Inorganic Chemistry (1967 – 1971). In 1970 he was elected President of the Chemical Sciences Section of the Romanian Academy. He was a member of the Editorial Board of “*Revue Roumaine de Chimie*”.

Professor Spacu’s name is also connected with the scientific activity of Inorganic Chemistry Center of the Romanian Academy. This activity was later on continued within the Physical Chemistry Center of the Romanian Academy and in the last years in the Coordination Chemistry Group of the Romanian Academy – created and developed on the initiative of Professor Spacu. Under his guidance 31 doctoral theses were finished.

Professor Spacu brilliantly succeeded in transmitting to his younger co-workers the everlasting flame of science, the trust in their own resources, in their possibilities to attack and to solve even the most difficult scientific problems.

Many generations of Romanian chemists owe to Professor Spacu the direction in their scientific assertion, developed through hard creative work accomplished with modesty.

His vast encyclopedic culture, his extraordinary memory, the warm soul, his extremely pleasant companionship, young optimism, the courage of affirmation of his truth, are only a few of his personal qualities from which the co-workers and students benefited.

Professor Petru Spacu died in Bucharest on 30th March 1995.

The Editorial Board