



Academician Cristian SILVESTRU



ACADEMICIAN CRISTIAN SILVESTRU A STEP FURTHER INTO THE REALM OF ORGANOMETALLIC CHEMISTRY IN CLUJ-NAPOCA

In 2020, a milestone year with global challenges that will remain marked in history, the scientific community is honored to celebrate the 65th anniversary of Acad. Cristian Silvestru, Professor of Inorganic and Organometallic Chemistry at Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering.

Born in Baia-Mare, on the 8th of December 1955, he moved with his family in Cluj-Napoca soon afterwards. Starting from the secondary school he attended a special line of education, with focus on Chemistry, at the National College *George Bariţiu* in Cluj-Napoca. Between 1975 and 1979 he was student at Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Technology at Babeş-Bolyai University. Interested to go deeper in the experimental chemical adventure, he joined the research group of Acad. Ionel Haiduc since his first year of bachelor studies and he started to work on organotin(IV) compounds. In his MSc studies, between 1979 and 1980, he enlarged the area of investigation and he focused his work on the chemistry of organoantimony compounds.

After several years spent in industry, as part of the rules imposed at that time for young absolvents, he enrolled as a PhD student in 1986 under the supervision of Acad. Ionel Haiduc and he defended his thesis entitled “*Organometallic Compounds with Potential Biological Activity (Antitumor Activity). Synthesis and Structural Characterization*” in 1990. In the same year Cristian Silvestru joined the staff of Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering as Assistant Professor (Lecturer). In 1995 he became Associated Professor (Reader) and since 1999 he is Professor of Inorganic and Organometallic Chemistry at the Chemistry Department of Babeş-Bolyai University. Since 1990, Cristian Silvestru established his own research group in organometallic chemistry at the Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering. Later, in 2010, together with Prof. Grosu, founded at Babeş-Bolyai University, the Supramolecular Organic and Organometallic Chemistry Center (SOOMCC), one of the Centers of Excellence in the Babeş-Bolyai University. Over the whole career he concentrated his efforts to develop a modern research laboratory, equipped at international standards, to attract talented and dedicated students and co-workers, thus succeeding in a performant research activity. With funding from World Bank, he established in 2001 the National Centre of X-ray Diffractometry (NCXRD) at Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, where the first single-crystal diffractometer in Romania was installed and operated.

Professor Cristian Silvestru was invited as visiting professor or visiting research associate at universities worldwide, e.g. Bremen Universität (Germany, Prof. H. J. Breunig), Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico (Mexico, Prof. R. Cea Olivares), Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Belgium, Prof. M. Gielen), University of Nottingham (United Kingdom, Prof. D. B. Sowerby), Michigan State University (East Lansing, USA, Prof. M. Smith), Universidad de Zaragoza (Spain, Prof. A. Laguna), University of Oxford (United Kingdom, Prof. M. Green). The time spent in these research groups allowed him not only to exchange valuable scientific ideas, but also to establish valuable cooperation relations in the specific research field (organometallic chemistry). Such cooperation enabled exchange of students at various education levels, access to international grants and joint publications, as well as an increased visibility of the Roumanian science and of the Babeş-Bolyai University at international level. The significant number of invited lectures presented throughout Europe and North America reflects the value of his recognized contribution to this specific field in the scientific community.

His research interests span from coordination chemistry of main group and transition metals with organophosphorus ligands, organometallic compounds with antitumor activity, organometallic chemistry of heavy *p*-block elements and chiral organometallic molecular compounds to supramolecular organometallic architectures.

The contributions of Professor Cristian Silvestru in organometallic chemistry, inorganic chemistry and other related topics are reported in more than 230 research articles and reviews. He published together with Acad. Ionel Haiduc already in 1989 the book *Organometallics in Cancer Chemotherapy* (two volumes at CRC Press) and later he contributed eight book chapters to volumes appeared in prestigious publishing houses, e.g. Narosa Publ. House, Wiley-VCH or Walter de Gruyter GmbH.

In recognition of his valuable scientific contributions in the field, he was honored over time with several awards, at national and international level: in 1992 he shared the “Gheorge Spacu” Prize of the Roumanian Academy with Dr. Carmen Socaciu (USAMV Cluj-Napoca) and Dr. Adela Bara (The Oncologic Institute in Cluj-Napoca) for their studies on the antitumor properties of organometallic compounds and in 2011, with the occasion of the International Year of Chemistry, he received the “Gheorge Spacu” medal of the Roumanian Society of Chemistry, for the whole activity in the field of chemical sciences. In 2010 the Technische Universität Dortmund invited Professor Cristian Silvestru for a couple of Gambrinus lectures as a Gambrinus fellow.

In 2009 he was elected as corresponding member of the Roumanian Academy and in 2017 he became a full member of this prestigious institution. Since 2019 he is member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts in Salzburg (Austria).

Besides the professional activities, Acad. Cristian Silvestru dedicated part of his time to various academic administrative positions: between 1995 and 2000 he was appointed as vice-Dean of the Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering and since 2012 he is Director of the Department of Chemistry. With determination to improve the organizational framework of the institution, he dedicated a tremendous amount of time and energy to achieve this goal. For various time spans, Professor Cristian Silvestru was member of National Research Council (CNCSIS/CNCS) and National Council for Attesting Titles, Diplomas and Certificates (CNATDCU). Since 2013 he is permanently involved actively in the organization of the National Olympiad for Chemistry. He also represents the Roumanian Chemical Society in the EuChemS Division for Organometallic chemistry.

He is involved also in editorial activities, including the position of regional editor for Organometallic Chemistry at *Open Chemistry* (formerly *Central European Journal of Chemistry*) and the membership in the editorial board of *Inorganics*, *Revue Roumaine de Chimie* and *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai, Seria Chemia*.

With the occasion of the 65th anniversary of Acad. Cristian Silvestru, the Editorial Board of *Revue Roumaine de Chimie* along with the whole community of Roumanian chemists are honored to wish him many happy returns of this day and a further fruitful activity.

The Editorial Board

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS (most recent first)

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