

In memoriam

BORIS KAMENAR

(1929 – 2012)



It is a very sad duty to announce that academician Boris Kamenar, Professor Emeritus at the University of Zagreb, member of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts and associate member of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, passed away on July 12, 2012.

Boris Kamenar was born on February 20, 1929 in Sušak (present day Rijeka), Croatia, where he attended primary and secondary school. In 1953 he graduated at the University of Zagreb, majoring in chemical technology. From 1953 to 1956 he worked at the Cranes Factory and Foundry “Vulkan” in Rijeka where he established the Laboratory for Chemical and Mechanical Investigations. In 1956 he joined the group of Professor Drago Grdenić at the Rudjer Bošković Institute in Zagreb. After obtaining a PhD degree of the University of

Zagreb in 1960, Boris Kamenar in 1962 was appointed Assistant Professor, in 1966 Associate Professor and in 1972 Full Professor at the Faculty of Science, University of Zagreb. After his retirement in 1999, he was awarded the status of Professor Emeritus.

In 1964/1965 Dr. Kamenar did his postdoctoral research at the Chemical Crystallography Laboratory of Oxford University, in the research group of Professor Dorothy C. Hodgkin, later Nobel Prize winner. He returned to the same laboratory as a Visiting Fellow in 1971/1972. Later he was appointed Visiting Professor three times at the University of New Zealand (in 1980, 1989/1990 and 1995/1996).

Academician Boris Kamenar was a distinguished Croatian chemist and an internationally recognized scientist in the field of structural chemistry. His scientific interest was X-ray structural analysis of inorganic, coordination and organometallic compounds as well as organic compounds of pharmacological importance. He has been primarily engaged in the investigation of the crystal structure of molybdenum complexes and involved in the X-ray structure determination of a large number of mercury(I) and mercury(II) compounds and complexes of iron, nickel, copper and other metals. A very interesting research in which Boris Kamenar participated was that of compounds of pharmaceutical importance, notably the determination of the crystal structure of a class of new azilide macrocyclic antibiotics (azitromycin), published in 1987. The results of the scientific research of Professor Kamenar have been published in 160 scientific articles and 20 professional papers. He has also had about 240 presentations at various international and domestic conferences and congresses, including 37 plenary lectures.

Professor Boris Kamenar was an active member of the society, participating in many public and professional activities. Thus he continuously took care for the development of the crystallography in Yugoslavia and later in Croatia. In collaboration with Professor Drago Grdenić, he was the founder of the Yugoslav Center of Crystallography (1966), and later (1992) of the Croatian Crystallographic Community. Professor Kamenar served as President of the Croatian Chemical Society (1976–1980), President of the Union of Chemical Societies of Yugoslavia (1976–1980), Secretary of the Yugoslav Center of Crystallography (1966–1990), President of the Croatian Crystallographic Community (1991–2005), Vice-president (1978–1989) and President of the European Crystallographic Committee (1981–1984) and President of the Board for International Collaboration of Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts (2000–2004 and 2011–2012).

Academician Boris Kamenar received several awards for his scientific and teaching activities. He received the “Rudjer Bošković” Award (1970), the Award of Zagreb (1980), the State Award for Lifetime Achievement (2000), The “Božo Težak” Medal (2002) and the Medal of the Chemistry Department (2005).

Professor Kamenar continuously supported the development of the X-ray structure analysis in the Republic of Macedonia. He acted as a mentor of the first MSc student in the area of the X-ray diffraction from the Republic of Macedonia (1974), and later a mentor of two PhD students from our country (1978 and 1981). It is worth mentioning that the X-ray diffraction equipment of the research group of Professor Kamenar in Zagreb is for about 40 years continuously at disposal of the researchers from Macedonia working in this area. It enabled a group for structural chemistry at the Institute of Chemistry, Faculty of Science in Skopje to be established. As a result of the collaboration of the two research groups from Zagreb and Skopje, 32 scientific papers in the field of X-ray structure determination have been published. It should be also mentioned that Professor Kamenar was a member of the Advisory Board of the *Macedonian Journal of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering*.

We shall remember Academician Professor Kamenar as a distinguished scientist in the area of structural chemistry, but also as an extraordinarily warm, humane and friendly personality.

Gligor Jovanovski