



Drago Grdenić
(1919–2018)

Drago Grdenić was born in Križevci, Croatia in 1919. He graduated Chemistry in 1942 at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb. He specialized X-ray crystallography in Moscow 1946–1948 at professors A. N. Nesmejanov and A. I. Kitajgorodskii (crystal structures of alkylmercury halides). He obtained the doctoral degree in 1951 at the University of Zagreb. He was on post-doctoral studies at the University of Oxford at Professor Dorothy C. Hodgkin in 1955–1956, resulting in two papers on the structure of the bacterial pigment feroverdine. D. Grdenić was Full Professor at the Faculty of Science, University of Zagreb from 1960 till 1985 when he retired. He received the title Professor Emeritus in 1997. Since 1973 he was a full member of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts and during 1973–1975 its general secretary.

Professor Grdenić was member of the Committee for construction of the Ruđer Bošković Institute in Zagreb, where he headed the Department of Structural and Inorganic Chemistry from 1952 to 1961. During 1960–1974 he was director of the University Institute of Inorganic and Analytical Chemistry, 1960–1962 dean of the Faculty of Science, University of Zagreb and 1976–1979 rector of the University of Zagreb. He was member of the Croatian Chemical Society (from 1945), Royal Society of Chemistry (from 1955), American Chemical Society (from 1959), president of the Croatian Chemical Society (1970–1972), founder and president of the Yugoslav Center of Crystallography at the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts (now Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts) (1966–1991). From 1992 he was honorary president of the Croatian Crystallographic Association.

In 1950, he was the first in Croatia to apply the X-ray diffraction method for determination of the crystal and molecular structure, and together with collaborators founded the Zagreb School of Structural Chemistry.

Drago Grdenić is author of over 100 scientific and professional papers. He described the square antiprism as a coordination polyhedron (*Nature*, London 1958, *Acta Crystallogr.* 1959), interpreted oxonium and sulfonium compounds of alkylmercury, established rules for the coordination of the mercury atom in the crystal structures of mercury compounds (*Quarterly Reviews of the Chemical Society*, London, 1965), found permercurated methane, acetaldehyde and acetic acid and determined the crystal structure of a number of mercury and organic compounds.