

In memoriam

Professor Gregory Rozovskis (1929–2005)

On January 31, 2005 one of the most eminent Lithuanian chemists, Professor Gregory Rozovskis (Rozovsky) suddenly deceased, just two months after celebrating his 75th birthday.

G. Rozovskis was born on 10 November 1929 in Kaunas, spent the 2nd World War years, 1941–1945, in Russia, and later studied chemistry at the Vilnius University. After graduating from the Chemical Faculty in 1951, he was engaged in research work at the Institute of Agriculture and in 1958 came to the Institute of Chemistry and Chemical Technology of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences (now the Institute of Chemistry), where he remained until his retirement in 2000. His positions at the Institute included several grades of research associate, Head of the Laboratory of Chemical Metal Coatings (1990–93) and Head of the Laboratory of Redox Processes at the Department of Chemical Kinetics and Catalysis (1993–2000). He became a professor in 1983.

The research activities of G. Rozovskis were broad and included several areas of chemical science and technology. His published works (over 130 scientific papers, the book “Electroless Copper Plating” written together with A. Vaškėlis, and 21 inventions) can be divided into three groups:

- 1) agricultural chemistry (studies of soil acidity and its regulation, carried out in the 1950s);
- 2) trivalent copper chemistry and related homogeneous catalytic processes;
- 3) electroless (autocatalytic) metal deposition and metallizing of dielectrics.

G. Rozovskis began working on the formation and properties of Cu(III) compounds in 1958, and in 1980 he systemized the results in his large dissertation “Physico-chemical properties of Cu(III) compounds in solutions”. Formation, decomposition and other reactions of several copper(III) complexes with tellurate, periodate and the use of these compounds in chemical analysis were investigated in detail. In those years trivalent copper was a rather exotic field, and only after discovering high-tem-



perature superconductors in 1987 Cu(III) became more widely known (trivalent copper is the core component of these materials).

G. Rozovskis began his investigations in electroless plating field in 1964. The work included studies of copper deposition using formaldehyde and borohydride as reducing agents, deposition of composites using the Ni-P matrix, autocatalytic Sn deposition using tin(II) disproportionation reaction.

Very important was G. Rozovskis' work in plastics metallizing including both classical electroless-electroplating sequence (study of plastics surface activation by palladium(II) compounds and colloids) and development of new-type metallizing processes using electro-conductive metal sulfide layers (the 'direct electroplating of plastics'). The latter investigations were highly successful technologically and commercially: two licenses for plastics metallizing processes involving copper and cobalt sulfide layers (the main authors, Dr. L. Naruðkevičius and G. Rozovskis) were sold to Western companies.

G. Rozovskis was the supervisor of twelve PhD dissertations. He was a brilliant lecturer in chemical

kinetics for under- and post-graduate students at the Institute of Chemistry, Vilnius University and Vilnius Pedagogical University.

For the work in copper(III) chemistry G. Rozovskis, together with Prof. A. Prokopchik, in 1983 was awarded the Lithuanian State Prize in Science.

Prof. G. Rozovskis was a real enthusiast of science, he remained actively involved in the research of his colleagues until his last day. He was well edu-

cated not only in science but also in literature, art and history; his personality, combining Lithuanian, Russian and Jewish cultures, a good-natured character and easy contacting with various people made him very attractive and popular. We will miss him as a person and as a scientist of exceptional talent and deep insight.

Prof. Algirdas Vaškelis