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## CHRONICLE

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### **PROFESSOR CHRISTIAN REICHARDT RECEIVED THE DEGREE *DOCTOR HONORIS CAUSA* OF THE KHARKIV V. KARAZIN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY**



On May 29, 2009, the diploma for appointment to Doctor honoris causa of the Kharkiv Karazin University was handed over to the famous German Professor Christian Reichardt at the meeting of the University Senate.

In fact, the title was awarded much earlier, on November 29, 2007. Professor Reichardt's candidature had been supported by Professor Anatolij F. Popov (Alumnus of the Chemical Faculty of the Karazin University, Member of the Ukrainian NAS, and Director of the L. M. Litvinenko Institute of Physical-Organic and Coal Chemistry of the Ukrainian NAS) and Dr. Sci. (Chemistry) Alexander A. Ishchenko (Laureate of the Kiprianov Award and Head of the Department of Organic Chemistry of the Institute of Organic Chemistry of the Ukrainian NAS). The University Senate voted

unanimously in support of this candidature. However, by tradition, the diploma should be awarded to the nominee personally. For this reason, Prof. Reichardt and his wife came to Kharkiv at the end of May 2009.

In the morning of May 29, before the meeting of the University Council, Prof. Reichardt gave an oral presentation to professors and students of the Chemical Faculty, talking about the development of chemistry at the Philipps University of Marburg, with particular attention given to the recent introduction of the Bologna system at this famous Western European University.

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Prof. Reichardt's research interests include both Organic Chemistry (chemistry of aliphatic polyaldehydes, syntheses and applications of polymethine dyes) and Physical-Organic Chemistry (solvatochromism of organic dyes, solvent effects in organic chemistry, empirical parameters of solvent polarity and their applications).

Prof. Reichardt is the author of more than 160 papers published in German and international journals. His fundamental book on Solvents and Solvent Effects in Organic Chemistry was published in several editions and was translated into German, French, Russian, and Chinese.

Prof. Reichardt belongs to the most quoted scientists among experts in the field of Physical-Organic Chemistry. Solvatochromic indicators of the polarity of their environments, synthesized by him, became extremely popular.

His first review on Empirical Parameters of the Polarity of Solvents (*Angew. Chem., Int. Ed. Engl.* 1965, 4, 29-40) found interest in the scientific community: the then young scientist received more than six hundred requests for reprints and had to make a reprint extra order.

There are more than 1300 references to Prof. Reichardt's fundamental review on Solvatochromic Dyes as Solvent Polarity Indicators (*Chem. Rev.* 1994, 94, 2319-2358) in referenced journals of today, and more than 150 ones to the comparatively recent paper on the Polarity of Ionic Liquids (*Green Chem.* 2005, 7, 339-351).

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Prof. Reichardt was born on November 16, 1934, in Ebersbach (Oberlausitz, Saxony, Germany). He spent his youth in the GDR and started studying chemistry in the academic year 1954/55 at the Technical University in Leuna-Merseburg (later called after Carl Schorlemmer). In 1955, Reichardt moved illegally to West Germany and continued there his chemical education at the Philipps University of Marburg. In 1962, Christian Reichardt obtained his Ph. D. under the tutelage of Prof. Karl Dimroth. His Ph. D. work was already devoted to pyridinium-N-phenolate betaine dyes, which possess unique solvatochromic properties. After finishing his Habilitation (in Organic Chemistry) in 1967, Doctor Reichardt presented his Dissertation (Habilitationsschrift) on Properties and Reactions of Substituted Malonaldehydes and in 1971 became Professor for Organic Chemistry at the University of Marburg. Prof. Reichardt devoted much of his time to academic work; he developed a love to Organic Chemistry in his numerous apprentices. For some time (1974/75) he was Dean of the School of Chemistry in Marburg. Between 1971–1999, altogether thirty-seven Ph. D. dissertations have been performed under the supervision of Prof. Reichardt. Now, he is retired but still active and regularly publishing scientific papers and reviews.

Prof. Reichardt takes also much time and efforts for the investigation of the history of the University of Marburg, particularly for its development in Chemistry. The University of Marburg, one of the oldest in Europe, was founded nearly 500 years ago (in 1527) as the first Protestant University in the World. Mikhail Lomonosov (who was trained by the then famous philosopher Christian Wolff) as well as Boris Pasternak, the Nobel Prize laureate of 1958, were students of this University. It should also be mentioned that five Nobel laureates of Chemistry are related to the University of Marburg, i. e. Hans Fischer, Adolf Butenandt, Otto Hahn, Karl Ziegler, and Georg Wittig.

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During the last decades, Prof. Reichardt cooperated actively with chemists of the Karazin University. A series of common papers were published which were co-authored by colleagues from the Karazin University. In one way or another, three Departments of this Chemical Faculty (Departments of Physical Chemistry, Materials Chemistry, and Chemical Metrology) cooperated with Prof. Reichardt. Seven dissertations have been carried out using compounds synthesized and rendered to us by Prof. Reichardt. In 1999, following an invitation of the Editorial Board of the Kharkiv University Bulletin (Chemical Series), Prof. Reichardt published an article entitled Solvent polarity – what is it and how can we measure it?

Prof. Reichardt assists the promotion of scientific results of Kharkiv's Chemistry School into the world's scientific community. For instance, in the last editions of his fundamental book, published in 2003 and 2010, he highlighted the priority of N. A. Izmailov in many important issues connected with the physical chemistry of solutions.

Prof. Reichardt was a member of the International Scientific Committee of the conference devoted to the 100th anniversary of N. A. Izmailov (Modern Physical Chemistry for Advanced Materials – 2007), which took place at the Karazin University under the auspices of the Ukrainian NAS and the IUPAC, and he gave a plenary lecture at this conference.

The staff of the Chemical Faculty heartily congratulates Prof. Reichardt for being awarded the honorary title Dr. h. c. and to his 75th birthday; we wish him good health and many further years of creative activity.

*Translated from the Russian issue of the journal by T.A. Cheipesh*