

OBITUARY

ROZA YAKOVLEVNA LEVINA (1900-1970)



R. Ya. Levina, Doctor of Chemical Sciences, Professor of the Chair of Organic Chemistry of the chemistry department of Moscow State University, and director of the laboratory of organic synthesis, died suddenly on July 10, 1970.

The death of this outstanding scientist and talented teacher is a huge loss to chemical science and to her numerous students, co-workers, and friends.

Doctor Levina was born in Moscow in 1900. After graduating from preparatory school, she entered the natural sciences division of Moscow University from which she was graduated in 1925. After two years Dr. Levina enrolled as a fellow in the laboratory of Academician N. D. Zelinskii. From that point on, all of the scientific life of Dr. Levina was spent within the walls of Moscow University. In 1930 she became an assistant, and in 1932 a lecturer, of the chair of organic chemistry. After a brilliant defense of her doctoral dissertation entitled "Synthesis and contact transformations of unsaturated hydrocarbons," she was awarded the scientific title of professor in 1942.

Upon her return to Moscow University after the evacuation, she headed the laboratory of organic synthesis created in the chair of organic chemistry; she directed this laboratory until the end of her life. It was in this period that the scientific activity of Dr. Levina underwent its maximum development.

Her enthusiasm for science and her creative giftedness determined the great diversity of her scientific themes.

In accordance with the tradition of the school of N. D. Zelinskii to which Dr. Levina belonged, the chief orientation of her investigations was the study of hydrocarbons of various classes. The classical researches of Dr. Levina on the mechanism of irreversible catalysis and contact transformations of unsaturated hydrocarbons are widely known, as are her extensive investigations of the reactivity of diene hydrocarbons and new syntheses of aromatic hydrocarbons and small rings.

Her investigations in the field of various six-membered heterocyclic compounds were a great contribution to organic chemistry.

A scientist of great talent and exceptional efficiency, Dr. Levina left an enormous scientific inheritance; she published about 500 scientific works including experimental and review papers, author's certificates, monographs, and textbooks. Together with Professor Yu. K. Yur'ev, her husband, she wrote individual chapters of the book "Practical Works in Organic Chemistry," the publication of which she continued after the death of Professor Yur'ev.

A pedagogue by profession, Dr. Levina was a splendid teacher of youth. Among her students are many well-known chemists who are now directing laboratories of a number of chemical institutes in the Soviet Union.

Her students and aspirants loved her for her brilliant gift for lecturing and for her benevolence and personal charm.

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Her lectures were distinguished by the depth of their content, their clarity, and their logic in exposition, and enjoyed great popularity among those who attended them.

The merits of Professor Levina in the field of science and the preparation of cadres of chemists were repeatedly noted by the government and the chemical society. She was awarded the Order of the "Red Banner" and medals. She was also awarded the N. D. Zelinskii academic prize.

The bright memory of Dr. Levina, the talented scientist, gifted teacher, and splendid human being, will always be preserved in the hearts of those who knew and loved her.