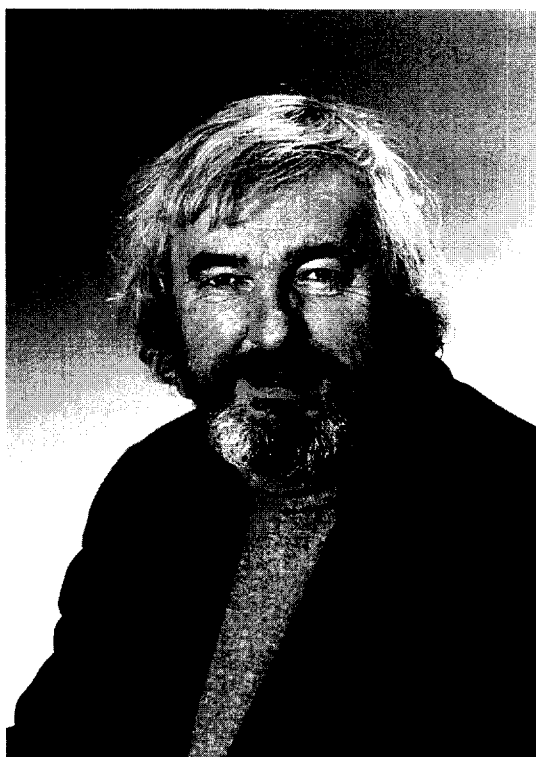


Preface

Gottfried Huttner on his 60th birthday



When Gottfried Huttner enrolled at Munich University in fall 1957, organometallic chemistry was still in its infancy. Very soon, the curious student Huttner encountered Ernst Otto Fischer, then a young “Extraordinarius” of his university. Like we younger students, Huttner was so convinced of the overwhelming personality of Ernst Otto Fischer that he decided early on to join his research group. In 1964, he prepared his diploma thesis, and only two years later (E.O. Fischer had in the meantime become the Chair Professor of Inorganic Chemistry to follow Walter Hieber at Technische Hochschule München) the Ph.D. thesis was completed too. At that time, organometallic chemistry discovered a series of instrumental analytical techniques to characterize the surprising new chemical structures that were generated by a growing number of scientists. Certainly enough, the Technische Hochschule München developed as one of the major centers of organometallic

chemistry, culminating in the Nobel Prize that Fischer and Wilkinson shared in the year 1973.

Albeit being a dedicated synthetic chemist, Gottfried Huttner’s scientific career started with structural chemistry: he introduced X-ray diffraction as an analytical tool into E.O. Fischer’s laboratory. It is suffice to say that single-crystal crystallography played a key role in the structural elucidation of Fischer’s metal-carbene and metal-carbyne complexes discovered in 1964 and 1971, respectively. In both cases, Huttner’s crew furnished the final structural proof of metal-to-carbon double and triple bonds. However, an incredible amount of structural work arose from his and his coworkers’ activities until he was awarded the chair position of inorganic chemistry at Konstanz University in 1977. When he left Munich, the road was paved towards further success; new, modern diffractometers included powerful computers constantly came along and improved the working facilities up to the present time. In the moment, four diffractometers including CCD-cameras on a rotating-anode system (ENRAF-NONIUS) form the working basis of structural chemistry performed in the “Anorganisch-chemisches Institut”.

Gottfried Huttner himself made an outstanding scientific career, both in Konstanz and, from 1986 onwards, in Heidelberg. In addition, he held a number of visiting professorships, among others in Paris, Strasbourg, Bordeaux, and Helsinki. Huttner’s marvellous and most productive organometallic research was appreciated in the “Alfred Stock-Gedächtnispreis” of the German Chemical Society in 1992.

It is difficult to find words for the extraordinarily fertile scientific WORK of Gottfried Huttner. Born on August 1, 1937, the son of the I.G.-Farben chemist Dr. Karl Huttner, a highly educated man, Gottfried Huttner inherited his scientific curiosity from his father. His work has always been aimed at an as-deep-as-possible understanding of experimental analysis; in most cases, theoretical approaches are being used to shine light on the structure and behaviour of his new compounds.

In the first years of his scientific work, Huttner investigated transition-metal π -complexes and synthesized charge-transfer adducts if π -aromatic metal complexes a donors; UV- and infrared spectroscopy was

included as analytical tools. While his “Habilitation” was mostly dealing with structural problems of more or less complex organometallic compounds, Huttner began to focus on synthetic challenges in 1973. A most beautiful series of unusual compounds arose from the period to follow; phosphinidene-, arsenide-, and stibinidene complexes of transition metals, cluster compounds containing organophosphorous bridge ligands of the type R-P-, including the arsenic and antimony congeners. Shortly later, wonderful metal complexes of the diatomic E₂ ensembles of phosphorus, arsenic, antimony and bismuth showed up in Huttner’s scientific agenda. The reactivity of clusters was investigated, the chemistry of organometallic π -systems was studied, tripod-ligands and their metal complexes were synthesized, and main-group elements exhibiting unusual multiple bonds to transition metals were established. At that time, Gottfried Huttner and myself were competitors, but became good friends.

Organometallic chemistry today cannot be thought without Huttner’s fundamental contributions, both in his early days with Ernst Huttner’s fundamental contributions, both in his early days with Ernst Otto Fischer (structural work) and later on in his synthetic work. Numerous well-trained students were educated in Huttner’s environment which has always been an environment of competitive science and personal friendship. It is my great honour as the present Regional Editor of the *Journal of Organometallic Chemistry*, to concentrate Gottfried Huttner on the occasion of his 60th birthday, both personally and on behalf of the entire scientific JOM community. Dear Gottfried, we all wish you personal happiness and ongoing fascination in science!

Wolfgang A. Herrmann
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