

Foreword

Professor Hans Georg von Schnering celebrates his 75th birthday



Born 1931 in Ranis (Thuringia) as the son of a medical doctor, Hans Georg von Schnering, along with his family, spent some time before the War moving around Germany. After living in several locations in the eastern part of the country, the family moved to Potsdam. Here, young von Schnering was introduced to (applied) chemistry by learning the profession of a baker. It seems it was neither his style nor his destiny to produce pastries, i.e., doing organic chemistry, but the liaison with chemistry has remained throughout his whole life.

After the War, the family finally arrived in Münster (Westfalia), where Hans Georg von Schnering spent several decades. He finished the gymnasium, studied chemistry at the Westfälische Wilhelms-University of Münster, and in 1960 finished a Ph.D. dissertation on oxo- and thiozincates and cadmates under the supervision of Rudolf Hoppe at the well-known Institute of Wilhelm Klemm. Under the guidance of Professor Zeman in Göttingen, he studied the art of diffraction methods and crystal structure determination. On the basis of knowledge that was relatively new at that time, he focused his research first on hydroxides and fluorides but then soon switched to cluster compounds, which became his preferred field of research for many years.

After habilitation in 1964, von Schnering received several offers of a professorship from other universities. But the fascination to work at Klemm's Institute was obviously too strong for him to leave Münster, and in 1966 von Schnering decided to accept the call of his alma mater to a professorship of inorganic chemistry. Despite further attractive offers, he stuck to this decision for nearly a decade until 1975, when he accepted the offer of the Max-Planck Society to become a member of MPG, director at the Max-Planck Institute for Solid State Research (Festkörperforschung) in Stuttgart, and professor at Stuttgart University. He is a member of several scientific academies, has served on the editorial boards of a number of renowned journals, and was cofounder of conferences that are today very popular within the community.

The real destiny of Hans Georg von Schnering is inorganic (solid state) chemistry. The spectrum of his scientific interests is very wide and involves a large part of the Periodic Chart: oxides, halogenides, chalcogenides and pnictides, silicides, and germanides, as well as intermetallic, cluster, and clathrate-like compounds, were and still are in the focus of his research. A fine feel for crystal structure, very careful attention to detail, and extremely precise experimental investigations in combination with critical and sophisticated interpretations are the trademarks of his work. Whole classes of inorganic compounds, for example, polyphosphides, and novel approaches to understanding matter, such as periodic nodal surfaces, are associated with von Schnering's name. His experimental and theoretical studies have been presented in more than 800 publications so far.

We congratulate Professor Hans Georg von Schnering on his 75th birthday.

Reinhard Nesper
Yuri Grin

Editorial Board of the Journal of Solid State Chemistry

Dedicated to the occasion of the 75th birthday of Prof. Hans Georg von Schnering