

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF THE FOUNDER OF CHEMICAL ENGINEERING IN BULGARIA – Prof. Dimiter G. Elenkov, DSc



November 4th this year marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of Prof. D.Sc. Eng. Dimiter G. Elenkov, Corresponding Member of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS). He was the founder of chemical engineering in Bulgaria.

Prof. D. Elenkov created the discipline "Basic Processes and Apparatuses in the Chemical Industry" (now called "Chemical Engineering") at the Institute of Chemical Technology (later High Institute of Chemical Technology and now University of Chemical Technology and Metallurgy

Under his guidance and at his initiative, a Central Laboratory for Theoretical Foundations of Chemical Engineering (CLATOCHT) was established at BAS. Again at his initiative, this Central Laboratory grew into the Institute of Chemical Engineering in 1986, as it has been until now.

Prof. D. Elenkov's scientific activity was oriented towards the practical realization of the chemical and mass exchange processes taking place in the chemical technology. Together with the traditional heat and mass transfer processes in multiphase systems under his leadership, in CLATOCHT, the modern branches of chemical engineering science were developed, namely: chemical reactor engineering, chemical systems engineering and biochemical reactors. The latter is currently one of the leading research fields at the Institute of Chemical Engineering and in the country. All of them, equipped with modern mathematical apparatus and modern research methodologies, have contributed not only to the scientific growth of young scientists, but also to solving practical problems in chemical industry and in environment protection from pollution caused by chemical production in Bulgaria.

Examples are the installation for capturing sulfur dioxide, combined with the capture of lead and zinc at the State Mining Company at Eliseyna and the Lead-Zinc Plant- Kardzhali; the intensification of aniline production in Neochim - Dimitrovgrad; the capture of hydrogen sulphide in industrial gases and the optimization of the regeneration of carbon sulphide at Svilosa -Svishtov; the catalytic oxidation of sulfur dioxide and the production of sulfuric acid in a heterogeneous reactor (KCM-Plovdiv) and others.

Under his guidance, 17 doctoral theses were defended, and the scientists with habilitation who have grown with his support are sixteen.

He was elected Corresponding Member of BAS in 1977. He was Professor Emeritus and Doctor of Leningrad Institute of Technology (1982), now in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Prof. Dimiter Elenkov is the winner of twelve different awards of Bulgarian state bodies and institutions.

The contribution of Prof. Dimiter Elenkov to the training and development of thousands of highly qualified chemists and chemical engineers is remarkable. It can be affirmed that there are no Bulgarian scientists and specialists working in the field of chemical engineering who were not strongly impacted by his example in teaching and scientific guidance.

The Bulgarian chemical engineering community remembers him with gratitude and respect.

Prof. Venko Beschkov, 2019