

Obituary

In memoriam: Julien Hoste (1921–2011)

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It is with deep grief and sorrow that we inform you on the passing away of honorary Rector, emeritus Prof. Dr. Julien Hoste on 1. December 2011, at the age of 90.

After obtaining his doctoral degree in Chemical Sciences at the Ghent University (Belgium), Dr. Julien Hoste was employed (1946) at the Laboratory for Analytical Chemistry, where in 1958 he became Professor in the Rank of Lecturer and Director/Head of Service. In 1962 he became Senior Full Professor, and he was Secretary (1972–1974) and then Dean (1974–1976) of the Faculty of Sciences. Later on, he became Rector (1977–1981) and Vice-Rector (1981–1985) of the Ghent University. He retired in 1986, aged 65. Throughout this period, Prof. Hoste was President of various institutions such as the: “Third Industrial Revolution in Flanders”, “Flemish Interuniversity Council”, “Belgian Nuclear Research Centre”, “Interuniversity Institute for Nuclear Sciences”,

“National Fund for Scientific Research”, “Belgian Ecological Grouping”, “Flemish Chemical Society”, “Belgian Association for Radiological Protection” and “Deliberation Committee on Nuclear Energy”. He was awarded several national and civic decorations.

As to Prof. Hoste’s scientific career, his stay in 1953 with Charles Coryell and John Irvine Jr. at MIT, Cambridge, USA was the true start of his lifework in radiochemistry—particularly in neutron activation analysis. Under his impulse, in 1965 the new laboratories at the Institute for Nuclear Sciences (INW) were put into use, followed in 1967 by the nuclear research reactor “Thetis” and in 1977 by the cyclotron and the first PET-scanner. Prof. Hoste became member or chairman of many international scientific committees, and in 1972 he received the George Hevesy Medal Award “for his most distinguished work in radioanalytical chemistry”.

Julien Hoste was the pioneer of radioanalytical chemistry in Belgium, and one of the pioneers worldwide. Among numerous other achievements in various fields (fundamental developments as well as applications), he will be remembered for his bestseller book (1972) “Neutron Activation Analysis”, and for having sown the first seeds of the k₀-standardization method. But above all, he will always be in our mind as an excellent promoter, an amiable colleague and a good friend. We’ll miss him.

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