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58. Koichi Hatada

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Personalities in Polymer Science



Professor Koichi Hatada

Honoring Koichi Hatada on his 60th birthday

Few scientists have the unique qualities of being an outstanding scientist, and at the same time, dedicated to scientific writing *per excellence* as does **Koichi Hatada**. In his scientific work, Koichi Hatada has devoted his time to the **stereospecificity of polymerizations**, the development of conditions to prepare **configurationally regular (stereoregular) and conformationally regular polymers**. His most recent contributions to polymer science are his isolation and characterization of **uniform polymers**, polymers that are macromolecular compounds of **single molecular weights**, similar to the typical characteristics of natural polymers, such as proteins and nucleic acid.

Koichi Hatada was born on December 15, 1934 in Osaka as the son of Yoshio Hatada and Yoshi Hatada. He went to high school in Tondabayashi, Osaka and graduated in 1953. He then entered Osaka University where he received his B.S. degree in chemistry in 1957. After completing undergraduate research under the guidance of Professor Shusuke Murahashi, one of the most distinguished scientists of Japan at that time, he joined the Dainippon Celluloid Company (now known as Daicel Chemical Industries Ltd.) as a research fellow and worked on aldehyde polymerization with Dr. Tanaka

(Research Manager) at the Central Research Laboratory of Daicel. Hatada was at that time already recognized as a scientist of great promise and the company decided to send him back to Murahashi's laboratory at Osaka University to work on his masters degree. For the research on "**Polymerization of Allyl Chloride by Ziegler Catalysts**" he received his M.S. in 1960. After a short return to Daicel as a Research Associate, he was again given the privilege of continuing his research at Osaka University. Under the direction of Professor Murahashi he completed his doctoral thesis on "**Stereospecific Polymerization of Styrene with Ziegler Catalysts**" in 1965. The subject of his thesis was the stereochemistry of polymerization, that was to be the main theme of Hatada's work in his illustrious scientific career in polymer science.

In 1964, Koichi Hatada was appointed Assistant Professor of the Faculty of Engineering, Osaka University, then a newly established institution at Osaka University, and joined the "Koza" of the famous Professor Heimei Yuki; Hatada was promoted to Associate Professor in 1967.

After a year of postdoctoral studies in 1973 with Professor Otto Vogl at the University of Massachusetts, Hatada started his own research activities at Osaka University, an organization which is now part of one of the most renowned centers of scientific excellence in polymer science in Japan.

In recognition of Hatada's scientific competence and his outstanding personality, he was appointed to Full Professor in 1983. Shortly thereafter Hatada became Chairman of the Department of Chemistry of the Faculty of Engineering Science in 1984. Since 1992, Professor Hatada has been a Council Member of Osaka University and from 1994 the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering of Osaka University, one of the largest and most prestigious institutions of higher learning in Japan.

Professor Hatada's research interests are highly focused and at the same time quite broad. His group is involved in stereospecific and living polymerization and copolymerization of α -substituted acrylates, the preparation of graft copolymers of controlled structures, including stereoregular graft copolymers, the characterization of polymers and

oligomers by NMR, chromatographic and X-ray analysis, and mechanistic studies of polymerization reactions by spectroscopic methods.

Professor Hatada has been a highly regarded lecturer in Japan and abroad. He was a Visiting Professor in the Department of Polymer Science and Engineering at the Tokyo Institute of Technology, the Faculty of Engineering of Osaka Prefecture University, Faculty of Engineering of Nagoya University, Jilin University, Changchun, China and in the Department of Polymer Technology of the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm, Sweden.

Professor Hatada has published extensively. Over 350 scientific papers account for his prolific scientific activities. He is and has been in key positions of scientific publishing in polymer science in Japan, as one of the five Associate Editors of the Polymer Journal. He is also a member of several Editorial Boards of international and highly regarded scientific Journals, including Polymer Bulletin, Progress in Polymer Science. He is also a regular contributor to Polymer News as a columnist.

Hatada's activities, other than those associated with his scientific activities are numerous. Hatada was a Council Member of the Pacific Polymer Federation (PPF) and the Editor of the Newsletter of the PPF since 1991. He was and is also instrumental in some of the activities of IUPAC. He has been a titular member of the Commission on Macromolecular Nomenclature since 1990. As the chairman of the domestic commission on macromolecular nomenclature, he published a Japanese version of the "Compendium of Macromolecular Nomenclature" in 1993.

In Japan, Professor Hatada has been recognized for some time for his untiring initiatives; he was the Head of the Kansai (the western region of central Japan, including Osaka, Kyoto) and Kobe Branch of the Society of Polymer Science, Japan (1990–1992) and became a Vice President of the Society (1992–1994).

Professor Hatada is married to **Michiko Sawada**. They are the parents of three boys, Izuhō, Naoki and Tatsuya. Izuhō is married to Mio Ishida and Tatsuya to Hisayo Aoyama. Michiko recently wrote a most interesting and most successful book describing her experience

in international interactions and relationships.

Many people recognize Koichi Hatada for his scientific correctness, integrity, and his dependability in his various scientific endeavors. His astuteness in the proper naming of chemical compounds or complicated structures such as macromolecules is legendary.

For those of us who know Koichi well, his true dedication is in the fine points and the flavor of the various types of teas. Over 400 specimens of samples of teas are in Koichi's and Michiko's house representing ten samples from all over the world. I often think that probably there are few, if any private collectors, that have such a superb collections of the many kinds of regular and exotic *teas*.

Koichi's other and most demanding hobby is photography. He is particularly interested in photos of the countryside, particularly the Japanese countryside and photos that depict husband and wife. He takes almost 2000 pictures a year and many of us have benefited from the results of his photographic skills. Very recently he has published a most interesting series of 16 postcards of the Japanese landscape of the countryside throughout the seasons of the year.

**An article submitted by *Otto Vogl*,
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