

OMICOS 6

Utrecht
1991

OMCOS 6, Utrecht, August 25-29, 1991

Exactly 20 years ago, OMCOS 6 was held in Utrecht and therefore it is very nice to be invited by Prof Shengming Ma, the organizer of present conference, OMCOS 16, to write down some words about what I still can recollect from our Utrecht meeting. First thing one is going to do is to have a look in ones files. As in those days electronic filing was unknown (no internet) I went to see my OMCOS 6 files stored in the archives of the Department, files with hardcopies, photographs, etc. Regrettably, this appeared to be a mission-impossible as those files were located in an area with strictly forbidden access: over the years our files had been covered with dusts of dangerous asbestos. I felt desperate but had to live with it because no permission for access was granted.

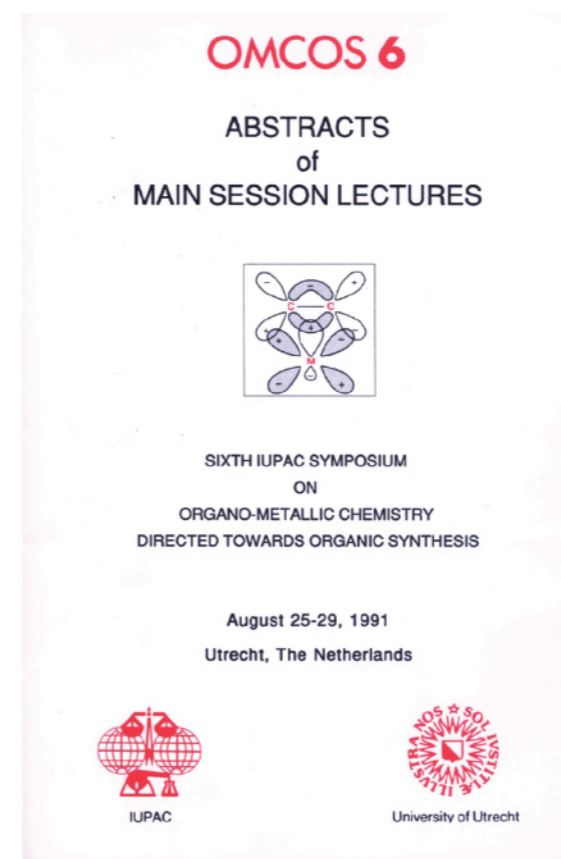
So, what do I recollect? My remembrance is certainly a colored (rose) one because I have to extract these facts from my fond memories of those days. However, one hard fact I could trace down via our library! I found a very nice report about OMCOS 6 made by Prof Irena Beletskaya, at that time President of the Organic Chemistry Division of IUPAC. Her report also contains a picture of the local organizing committee featuring, dr Jaap Boersma, Ms Frida Scheurs (who could speak Japanese to the de-

light of the large Japanese attendance), dr Dave Grove, dr Johann Jastrzebski and myself (interesting to see them and myself all 20 years younger!).

OMCOS 6 took place in the large auditorium of the Fair of Utrecht that physically is connected to Utrecht Railway station which is about 30-50 minutes away by train from Schiphol airport, the big cities in the Netherlands, such as Amsterdam, the Hague and Rotterdam and, for example, the big defense works against the sea in the south of the Netherlands. Next to the auditorium we had access to a large hall with room for nearly 300 posters (on display during the whole meeting) and where also the daily lunches (including the raw, salted Dutch herring with onions) were served. The program comprised 6 plenary lectures (see table), 9 session lectures, 20 invited lectures, 300 posters from which 17 short (10 minutes) lectures for the two non-overlapping minisymposia where selected by the National Scientific Committee. It is nice to note that many of the young presenters selected are now leaders in "OMCOS"-chemistry. The format of the meeting was special in that it had no parallel sessions and lasted 4 days. As a result the sessions were extremely well attended (in spite of the nice weather and the

closeness of attractive cities as Amsterdam) and discussions following the lectures were intense.

A number of the lecturers also gave lectures during a 2,5 day OMCOS 6 Satellite Advanced course in Metal-Mediated Chemistry, in Zeist, which was participated by PhD students, junior Faculty members and young scientists from industrial laboratories. Also the now Nobel-prize winner Professor Ei-ichi Negishi was lecturing during this course that was sponsored by the Ministry of Economic Affairs.



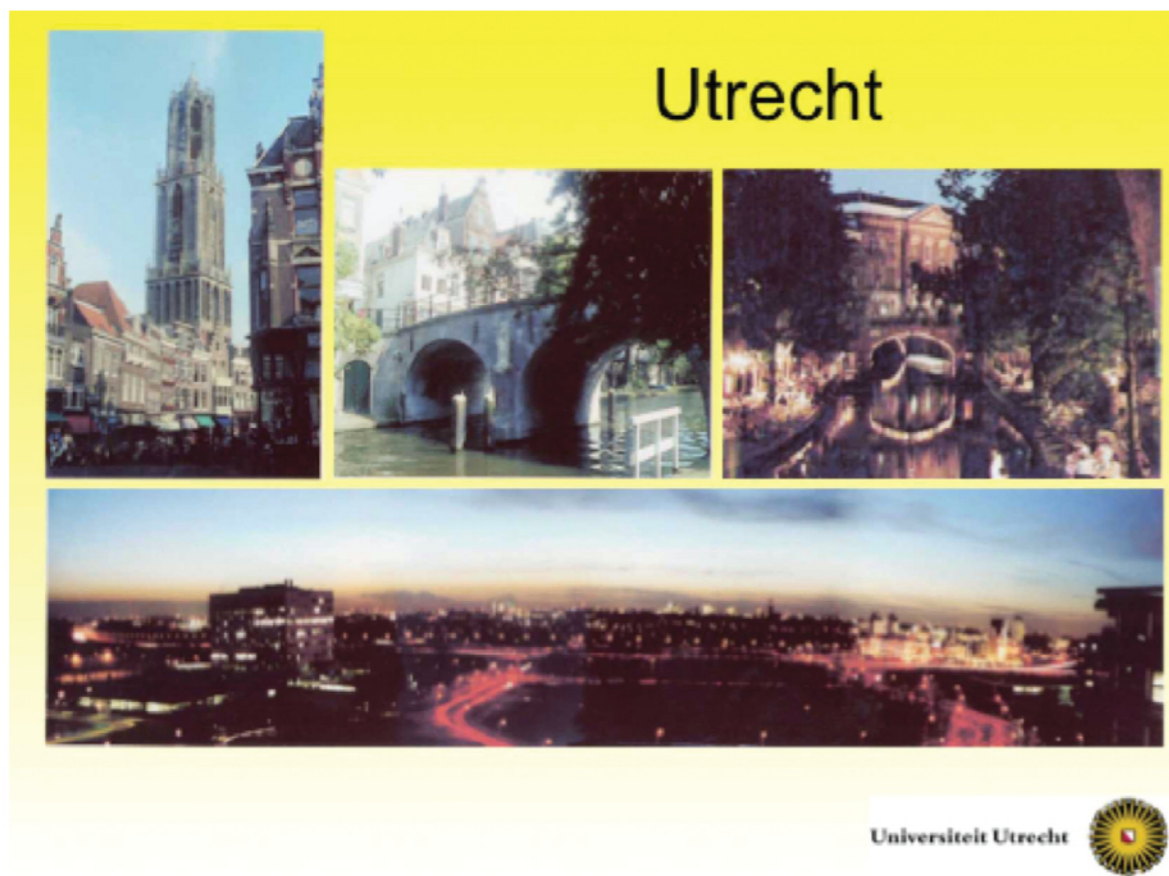
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| SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM OVERVIEW | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | |
| 9.00 | OPENING | Reetz | Davies | Häner |
| | Trost | | | Mikami |
| 10.00 | BREAK | Knochel | Alexakis | Kellogg |
| | Negishi | Bigi | Nisson | BREAK |
| 11.00 | Salaün | BREAK | BREAK | Faller |
| | Meyer | Helquist | Collin | Bolm |
| 12.00 | Pfeffer | Stephenson | Utimoto | Hayashi |
| | | Thomas | Erker | |
| 13.00 | LUNCH | EXCURSIONS including lunch or lunchbox | LUNCH | LUNCH |
| 14.00 | Kishi | | Murahashi | POSTERS C |
| 15.00 | Beletskaya | | Hiemstra | Bäckvall |
| | Ostoja Starzewski | | de Vries | Moretó |
| | Tanaka | | Nishiyama | Larock |
| 16.00 | BREAK | | BREAK | Ricci |
| 17.00 | POSTERS A + Minisymposium "Metals in catalysis" | | POSTERS B + Minisymposium "Copper in focus" | CLOSING CEREMONY Poster removal |
| 18.00 | 18.30 Departure for City Hall | | 19.00-19.30 Bus Departures for Conference Dinner | 17.30 Departure for Satellite Conference |
| 19.00 | | | | |
| 20.00 | | | | |

The organization of OMCOS 6 spurred interest of the organic chemist in the Netherlands for the application of metal catalysis in fine chemical synthesis and special research programs for the promotion and financing of this type of research were installed. Various plenary speakers gave interviews to the Dutch press in which attention was paid to the need "to green" chemistry and stressed the importance of catalysis as an important generic science to reach this goal.

The weather was gorgeous and showed Utrecht city with its historic center, dating back to the time of the Romans, at its best.

A quite nerve breaking experience for the organizers was the start of the Desert War with its invasion of Koeweit in August



View of the historic city center with the church tower "The Dom", the old canals and a panoramic view from the "Uithof" Utrecht University campus in the direction of the city center

1990. As a result international traveling collapsed which was reflected in that in early April 1991 we still had received almost no applications to attend OMCOS 6. In spite of the fact that the war ended in February, the number of applicants remained restricted to those coming from the Netherlands. Luckily we did not cancel the meeting because at a certain point of time we considered this as a serious and necessary option. Howev-

er, then, from May on, applications arrived like an avalanche, the committee worked in shifts and finally we could welcome 650 participants from 36 countries.

I would have liked to show some nice pictures made during OMCOS 6. However, the only one that was accessible is the one showing all the students and co-workers who made the meeting to run smoothly.

On behalf of all Dutch participants I am



The OMCOS 6 organisers and crew

wishing Professor Ma and his co-organizers a successful and a very nice OMCOS 16.

May, 2011, Prof dr Gerard van Koten