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IN MEMORIAM

PROFESSOR RADOMIR M. KONJEVIĆ (1946-2006)

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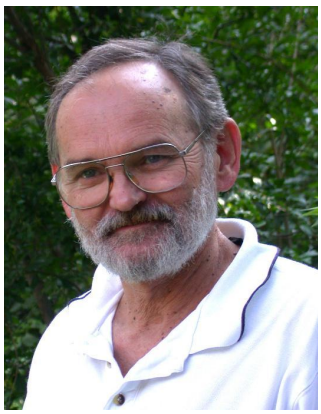

Professor Radomir Konjević passed away on July 22nd 2006, on the eve of his 60th birthday. He was born on August 1st 1946 in Laćarak, near Sremska Mitrovica, Serbia. After finishing high school in 1965 in Split, he enrolled in the Biology Group of the Faculty of Science and Mathematics in Belgrade, and graduated four years later. He then undertook graduate study in plant physiology and after earning his MSc. degree was appointed assistant in the Institute of Botany of the same faculty. He spent 18 months (1977-79) as a Humboldt fellow at Biological Institute II, University of Freiburg, Germany, in Professor Hans Mohr's lab. Radomir Konjević defended his PhD dissertation at Belgrade University in 1979. He was elected assistant professor in 1980, associate professor in 1989, and full professor in 1993. During that time, he also was an external collaborator in the Plant Physiology Department of the Siniša Stanković Institute for Biological Research (IBISS). He was in an executive position at IBISS from 1981 through 1984, served as Director of the Institute of Botany and Botanical Garden of the University in the period from 1997, and was Dean of the Faculty of Biology till 2002. In addition to this, he had many responsibilities pertaining to the organization of teaching and other school activities. For many years he served as a member of the Editorial Board of the "Archives of Biological Sciences", striving with all his knowledge and skills to improve the quality of papers and the layout of the journal.

Radomir Konjević showed a keen interest in plant physiology as early as an undergraduate student, volunteering in the lab. The topic he was attracted to was the interaction of light and phytohormones in higher plant growth and development, including stem growth, phototropism and seed germination. In early work he studied the relationship between phytochrome, endogenous gibberellins and the biosynthesis of nucleic acids. The research performed in Freiburg showed that red and blue light effects are of the "end-of-day" type and are counteracted by gibberellins, but the possibility of a reverse effect of gibberellins on phytochrome stability cannot be ruled out.

Crucial for the switch to phototropism were several stays in the Plant Research Laboratory at Michigan State University, East Lansing, from 1987 on. As a visiting professor, Radomir Konjević joined the team of Professor Kenneth Poff in work on a DOE-supported project entitled "Phototropic Reaction of Dicotyledonous Plants". Several years of collaboration resulted in a number of papers, all published in renowned peer-reviewed journals. By applying different wavelengths and fluence rates of blue light, the authors proposed that the phototropic reaction in *Arabidopsis thaliana* seedlings is mediated by at least two blue-light photoreceptor pigments. This was the basis for subsequent genetic and biochemical characterization of the phototropin receptor family in *Arabidopsis* and other plants.

From the beginning of his career, Radomir Konjević took part as a leading member of our team, interested in light-induced germination of dormant seeds. These studies were greatly promoted by the Beltsville Agricultural Research Station (USDA) and IBISS joint project, led by Dr. W. WanDerWoude and Radomir Konjević in the late ´80s. The favorite objects were *Paulownia tomentosa* seeds, but it is impossible to mention here all of the species that were studied. The factors under study included light of different wavelength, intensity and duration; temperature; osmotic agents; deuterium oxide liquid smoke; "cold plasma"; phytohormones and inhibi-

tors, such as growth retardants. The role of nitrogenous compounds evolving nitric oxide emerged in recent years and attracted much attention of workers interested in seed science. We greatly appreciate the participation of Radomir Konjević in that work, since his contribution to planning, evaluation of results, and design of future projects was immeasurable.

Apart from being an enthusiastic scientist, an excellent teacher, and an inspiring adviser, Radomir was an unforgettable person. For all of us it was a privilege to work with him. As a colleague, he was considerate and patient to hear other opinions, never imposing his own without a long friendly discussion. As a teacher, he never refused to help younger colleagues, trying to transmit his broad knowledge in discussing their results, articles, and dissertations. Radomir is survived by two sons, Marko and Nikša. Along with them, we regret his untimely death. Members of the Plant Physiology Laboratory will always keep in living memory the time when he was among us.

Prof. Dr. Dragoljub Grubišić

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zlatko Giba