

IN MEMORIAM

PROF. DR. VLASTA PUJIN
(1929-2008)

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Our outstanding scientist in the field of hydrobiology, Professor Vlasta Pujin, died in Novi Sad on August 29, 2008. Professor Pujin was born in Karlovac, Croatia, in 1929. She graduated with a major in biology in 1952 from Belgrade University's Faculty of Science, where she was one of the group of students taught by our renowned scientist, Professor Siniša Stanković. After graduation, Vlasta Pujin became a teacher at the Sombor High School. While on leave, she taught at Novi Sad High School in the fall of 1955, and at the „Đorđe Natošević“ Elementary School. Professor Pujin showed great interest in research work and joined hydrobiology staff of the Center of Fisheries of Vojvodina Province in 1959. There she stayed until 1961, when she moved to Novi Sad University's Faculty of Agriculture, where she served as a research assistant in the field of agricultural zoology. Between 1963 and 1964, she completed a training course at the Institute of Hydrobiology, Munich. In 1965, she received her PhD degree from the Faculty of Agriculture in Novi Sad. Her doctoral thesis was entitled „A contribution to the study of nutrition and growth gain of fishpond carp (*Cyprinus carpio* L.), emphasizing the relationship between natural nutrition and additives in intestinal contents“ She became an assistant professor at the Institute of Biology of Novi Sad University's Faculty of Science in 1966, an associate professor in 1972, and a full professor in 1978.

Professor Pujin served as a Director of the Institute of Plant Protection of Novi Sad University's Faculty of Agriculture between 1975 and 1976, and as a Director of the Institute of Biology of Novi Sad



University's Faculty of Sciences between 1977 and 1979.

She taught courses in agricultural zoology and ecology at the Faculty of Agriculture in Novi Sad. Students of biology will never forget her lectures in hydrobiology, ichthyology, environmental protection, and taxonomy. All these courses, based upon extensive field work, resulted in more than 200 published research papers and the two books, „Agricultural Zoology“ and „Hydrobiology“, which are still widely appreciated among students.

Professor Pujin was endowed with the ability to bring students together, motivating them to learn novel approaches and to recognize the importance of work. Her numerous graduates became hard working members of many research teams, as well as serious and meticulous government authorities.

She worked not only with undergraduates but also with postgraduates and candidates for the highest academic degrees. Under her guidance, 20 students completed their PhD degree, and her collaborators are scattered through many institutions.

Over the course of 20 years, Professor Pujin carefully created teams of collaborators and scientists working in the field of hydrobiology. As a result, the Novi Sad school of hydrobiology became well-known and acclaimed both at home and abroad.

Her international contacts were extensive. Many international institutions benefited from her research work. Since 1956, when the International Association for the Investigation of the Danube

Basin was founded in Vienna, Professor Pujin took an active part in its work and activities. In 1984, she was appointed to represent Yugoslavia in the Association where she spent 12 years as a member. Also, she launched a joint project on investigation of the Tisa River, involving international scientific cooperation between the University of Novi Sad and the University of Szeged. She published many of obtained results in international journal „Tiscia“ as a member of its Editorial Board. Her enthusiasm, good personal contacts, and excellent knowledge of the German, Hungarian, and Russian languages enabled her to establish fruitful international communication at scientific meetings of countries belonging to the Danube and the Tisa regions.

Her opinion that the results of scientific investigations must be open to the public led to her participation in numerous forums and improving the daily lives of people. She used these activities to bring various scientific topics closer to ordinary citizens.

The name of Professor Vlasta Pujin is widely known to many generations of students and professors of biology throughout the republics of former Yugoslavia. An example of her interest in teaching is the „Handbook of Biology“, prepared in collaboration with Dr. Magdalena Marinček. This handbook

was intended for elementary school children. An extraordinary person in every way, Professor Pujin relished the task of interpreting biology in a way attractive for children.

Professor Pujin retired in 1991, but she continued to work diligently, quietly, and without forcing her opinion and ideas. Hard work was her life. As a retired person, Professor Pujin took an active part in the Ecological Movement of the City of Novi Sad by organizing ecological conferences on the problems of urban and suburban regions, as well as on food-safety matters.

She received many awards and distinctions for her work.

Professor Pujin communicated her knowledge and skills effectively, not only to her students, but also to colleagues in other institutions. Inclined to take things as they come and not to get upset, she was a very friendly, cooperative, and helpful person, full of love and understanding. For all these reasons, we shall honor the memory of Professor Vlasta Pujin.

Prof. Dr. Ružica Igić

Prof. Dr. Desanka Kostić