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CONGRATULATION NOTE TO PROF. DRSC DOBRINA
N. TEMNISKOVA-TOPALOVA
ON OCCASION OF HER 80TH BIRTHDAY



It is really difficult in a brief way and in a concise style, as it has to be done in a scientific journal, to describe the various activities of Prof. DrSc Dobrina N. Temniskova-Topalova and her role in Bulgarian algology and botany. This is even more difficult to be done after the detailed and very emotional, touching paper, dedicated to her in the honour of her 70th birthday. This article, published in a special “Festschrift in honour of Prof. Dobrina Temniskova-Topalova” (2004, Pensoft & St. Kl. Ohridski University Publishing House) and co-written by her supervisor and respected teacher Prof. D. Vodenicharov with two of her

students-successors in diatomology – K. Manoylov and N. Ognjanova, with the subtitle “Life dedicated to students” is strongly recommended to all readers, who want to follow in detail the professional and life-time of Prof. Temniskova.

Prof. Dobrina Temniskova was borne on November 12, 1934 in the renowned historical Bulgarian town Veliko Turnovo. There she made her first steps in elementary school and there she graduated from gymnasium. In 1952, she started her biological studies in Sofia State University, Faculty of Biology, Geology and

Geography. As a student, she specialized in the Department of Plant Systematics and Plant Geography (nowadays named Department of Botany), from which she graduated in 1957. During the university educational period raised her interest to algae and their magnificent microscopical world. In 1962 she started work as external assistant in the same department, and in 1964 occupied there a position of a regular assistant. Since 1962 till her retirement in 2004, she spent all her lifetime in the Department of Botany, growing step by step in her career. In 1972 she defend her PhD Thesis on euglenophytes and other flagellate algae in small temporary water basins of Bulgaria, in 1982 she became Associated Professor, in 1994 she defend a second thesis on fossil diatom in Bulgaria and obtained the degree “Doctor of Biological Science”, and in 1995 became a Professor of Botany. Extremely helpful for her scientific development was the possibility to specialize in the Diatom lab of Sankt Petersburg University and in the Botanical Institute of the Academy of Sciences of USSR (1968–1969).

The scientific and teaching professional development of Prof. Temniskova ran parallel with different administrative duties in the Department of Botany, Faculty of Biology and Sofia University. She was a Head of the Lab of Diatom analysis in the Department of Botany (1982–2002), Head of the Department of Botany (1996–2002), member of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Biology (1987–2002), as well as of the Academic Council of the Sofia University (1999–2003) and a member of the Editorial Boards of the Book 2–Botany of the Annual of Sofia University and of the Volume 1 – Plants of the Red Data Book of R. Bulgaria. She was elected as the first Ombudsman of Sofia University (2004–2012). Noteworthy in her administrative activities was the support for the Botanical Gardens of Sofia University, which had to overcome extremely hard circumstances and for the Herbarium of the Department of Botany.

Prof. D. Temniskova was a deeply respected member of many scientific councils and boards in Bulgaria: Commission on Medico-Biological Sciences in the frame of the High Attestation Commission at the Ministry Council in Bulgaria, Specialized Council in Botany and Mycology in the frame of the High Attestation Commission, Scientific Council of the Central Laboratory of Ecology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Scientific Council of the Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystems at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Scientific Coordination Center for Global Projects at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, *etc.* In addition, she is a member of many scientific societies, among which have to be noted the International Society for Diatom Research, International Phycological Society, Union of Bulgarian Scientists and especially – the Bulgarian Botanical Society. In 1999 she became a Chair of this eminent Bulgarian scientific organization, founded in 1923. She plays an important role in its recent establishment, scientific and public awareness, keeping strongly its traditions and scientific grounds developed by its first Chair (the first Bulgarian algologist Prof. S. Petkov) and

other prominent Bulgarian botanists among its founders – Acad. N. Stoyanov and Acad. D. Jordanov. Leading Bulgarian Botanical Society, she organized and chaired 6th and 7th National Conferences of Botany, the proceedings of which were published in special issues.

Very special note has to be given in this tribute to the efforts of Prof. Temniskova, made from the position of already respected professor, to unify and consolidate Bulgarian algologists, who belong to different scientific schools and traditions. It is to hope that these efforts, which already showed many positive results, shall be not forgotten by future generations.

Prof. D. Temniskova was a favourite interesting and attractive lecturer, teaching mainly in bachelor and master compulsory courses in the Department of Botany, related with systematics of algae and fungi, in which she was a reputable tutor. She created the course of Diatom analysis for students, who specialized in Botany, and later on in the more narrow specialization of Algology. Diatoms became the “great love” in the scientific studies of Prof. Temniskova, which she hand down to her students and successors (N. Ognyanova, M. Vuleva, S. Passy, K. Manoylov, P. Ivanov, R. Stancheva and R. Zidarova). Some of her Diploma paper students left the field of algology, but continued successfully their work in other fields of botany and kept their narrow connections with the Department of Botany and Faculty of Biology as external or regular teachers there. Among them are Assoc. Prof. Dr K. Uzunova, Assoc. Prof. Dr A. Uzunova and Prof. DrSc D. Ivanov.

The scientific heritage of Prof. Temniskova, written separately or in co-authorship, consists of scientific papers, presentations on prestigious scientific meetings, reports on scientific projects, bibliographic papers, Handbook for exercises in Systematics of algae and fungi (in two editions), manual on Algology (in two volumes) and a book, compiled on the life and scientific legacy of the first Bulgarian algologist Prof. S. Petkov. In all these works clearly can be seen her respect to the traditions of the world best algological schools, of the so-called “old masters”, her personal scientific conviction and her wish to raise the level of Bulgarian algological publications. This scientific heritage was evaluated in peer reviews, some of which were published by eminent scientists like Academician Prof. DrSc T. Nikolov, Academician Prof. DrSc. V. Golemansky, Prof. DrSc G. Gärtner, and therefore has not be appraised in more detail here. The scientific works of Prof. Temniskova represent the stable ground for future studies of fossil and recent biodiversity of algae in Bulgaria, and for its conservation.

For her various teaching and administrative activities and scientific contributions Prof. D. Temniskova-Topalova was awarded by the prestigious signs of Sofia University – by the Honorary Sign of Sofia University (level 1) and Honorary Sign of Sofia University with Blue Ribbon, and additionally, especially from the Rectorate of Sofia University, she obtained the Icon of Saint Kliment Ohridski.

Obviously, the small tribute, presented here, can not compete with these respectful awards, but it is wealthy due to its warmest cordial and grateful acknowledgment of her personality and scientific trace, which leaves memorable part in everyone, who was in contact with her. The best expression for this is the Old Indian wise sentence: “King is honoured only in his own country, to the Scientist homage is paid everywhere”.

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