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### **In memoriam**

**PROF. DR. BOŽIDAR ĆURČIĆ**  
(1946–2015)



Prof. Dr. Božidar Ćurčić was born on 3rd July 1946 in Belgrade, where he completed his elementary and secondary education. In 1969 he graduated at the Faculty of Science (Biology), University of Belgrade. The same year he was posted in the Institute of Zoology, Faculty of Science (Biology), University of Belgrade, Belgrade, where he spent his university career teaching and conducting his fruitful scientific research.

Pseudoscorpions (arachnology) were the main object of Prof. Ćurčić's scientific research. Many different aspects of these taxa were the scope of his studies (systematics, taxonomy, developmental biology, teratology, evolutionary biology, biogeography and biospeleology). Many years of devoted investigations resulted in erecting numerous genera and species, both epigeal and cavernicolous, new to science from Serbia (Yugoslavia), Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania,

France, USSR, China, Mongolia, Afghanistan, Nepal, Israel, Vietnam, Philippines, USA.

Prof. Ćurčić was a fellow and a member of numerous domestic and foreign scientific societies — Royal Entomological Society, Russian Arachnological Society, American Arachnological Society, British Arachnological Society, Japanese Arachnological Society, Council of the European Association of Arachnologists, Swiss Zoological Society, Serbian Biological Society, Entomological Society of Serbia, etc. He was the president of the Serbian Biological Society and the Entomological Society of Serbia.

Prof. Ćurčić was the editor-in-chief and a member of the editorial board of the Archives of Biological Sciences and Monographs, Institute of Zoology for several years. Being an expert, he was a member of editorial boards of several domestic and international scientific journals (*Acta zoologica bulgarica*, Journal of Science — Sofia, *Acta entomologica serbica*, Journal of the Geographical Institute “Jovan Cvijić” of the SASA).

He was elected as a foreign member to the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in Sofia. Furthermore, he was a chairman of the MAB (Man and Biosphere) Committee, Commission of Serbia for UNESCO.

Apart from his scientific and teaching activities, Prof. Ćurčić held many important professional positions. He was the Director, Institute of Zoology, Faculty of Biology; Head, Department of Animal Development, Faculty of Biology; President, Trade Union, Faculty of Biology; Vice President, Academic Council, Faculty of Biology; President, Council; Vice Dean, Faculty of Sciences; President, Executive Council, Faculty of Biology; member, Council on Biology and Genetics, Serbian Ministry of Science and Technology; expert advisor, Federal Ministry of Development, Science and Environment; and the President, Council of Biological Sciences, University of Belgrade.

During his university career Prof. Ćurčić was the leader of several domestic and foreign scientific projects sponsored by the Serbian Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Macedonian Ministries of Culture and Ecology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, and Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

In the course of his investigations devoted to the study of pseudoscorpions, Prof. Ćurčić visited and spent time in research in many institutions such as: CNRS (Moulis, France), Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (Barro Colorado, Panama), Museum of Natural History (Paris), Museum of Natural History (London), Russian Academy of Sciences (Moscow), Institute of Zoology of the

Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (Sofia), etc. He lectured at many universities and scientific institutions (Bucharest, Sofia, Paris, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Frankfurt am Main, Boston, Cambridge, Geneva, Florence, Thessaloniki, Athens, Ljubljana, Zagreb, Sarajevo, Skopje).

As a devoted biospeleologist and well aware of the importance of cave protection and conservation, Prof. Ćurčić was the founder of the Center for Biospeleology, Faculty of Biology and NGO Center for Biospeleology of Southeast Europe. Together with his colleagues from the Faculty of Geography, University of Belgrade, he explored many caves in Serbia erecting numerous cavernicolous species of pseudoscorpions, coleopterans and springtails new to science.

His longlasting investigations of cave-dwelling organisms (above all pseudoscorpions) resulted in several monographs. In 1988 “Cave-Dwelling Pseudoscorpions of the Dinaric Karst”, in 2004 “The Pseudoscorpions of Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia”, and a decade later, in 2014 “Cave Fauna of Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia” were published.

Besides pseudoscorpions, Prof. Ćurčić had interest in the study of other groups of arthropods (diplopods, spiders, coleopterans, springtails). Together with his younger colleagues he erected many new genera and species new to science (seven genera and 32 species of coleopterans, six genera and 16 species of diplopods, one genus and 13 species of springtails).

As a token of his scientific recognition and contribution to zoology, especially arachnology, several taxa of invertebrates new to science were named after him (*Curcicia*, *Neobisium bozidarcurcici*, *Svarogosoma bozidarcurcici*, *Schizmohetera curcici*, *Belgrandiella bozidarcurcici*, *Magdelainella bozidarcurcici*, *Serbiella curcici*).

In 2008 “Advances to Arachnology and Developmental Biology — Papers Dedicated to Professor Božidar P. M. Ćurčić” was published, a monograph that contains scientific papers by eminent zoologists in recognition of decades of Professor Ćurčić's scientific research and teaching activity.

Prof. Ćurčić devoted a great deal of his time in support and assistance to all of his younger associates, especially in the early phases of their scientific careers. Bearing in mind that many arthropod taxa were not in the scope of scientific research in Serbia, he encouraged them to devote themselves to the study of these neglected groups (myriapods, spiders, springtails, beetles). He unselfishly shared his energy and broad knowledge in support to his younger associates

giving them constant encouragement and constructive criticism. Through the years they became experts for these groups in Serbia and the Balkan region.

In the course of his prolific teaching and scientific career Prof. Ćurčić was the author or co-author of 28 textbooks, 18 monographs and more than 600 scientific papers. He was also the editor of 20 monographs, as well as mentor (supervisor) of 23 master and PhD theses.

As a person of diverse interests Prof. Ćurčić had broad knowledge of art, literature, languages and ethnology. He was especially interested and well acquainted in ancient (Greek, Roman, Slavic) mythology. That enabled him to name many, new to science, pseudoscorpion species after various gods and deities.

It was a great privilege to be a student, a colleague and a friend of a person of such professional and personal qualities during the past 38 years. Although Prof. Ćurčić is no longer with us, he will not be forgotten. Fond memories of him and his scientific achievements will be cherished by his friends and colleagues.

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