

PROMOTION OF THE BOOK "MATHEMATICIANS – ACADEMICIANS", BY ACADEMICIAN MIRJANA VUKOVIĆ



The cover of the book *Mathematicians – academicians*,
by *academician Mirjana Vuković*

A public event promoting the book "Mathematicians – academicians" by academician Mirjana Vuković, was held on December 19th, 2023, on the premises of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The book describes the life and work of academicians Mahmut Bajraktarević, Manojlo Maravić, Branislav Martić, Veselin Perić, and Fikret Vajzović.

The book and the individual academicians and their achievements were presented by academician Prof. Dr. Dejan Milošević, Secretary of the Department of Natural and Mathematical Sciences of the ANUBiH; domestic member of ANU-BiH Prof. Dr. Mirna Džamonja; Prof. Dr. Mehmed Nurkanović; Prof. Dr. Amela Muratović-Ribić, and the author, academician Prof. Dr. Mirjana Vuković.

Introducing the book, academician Dejan Milošević pointed out that this book is not only a skilful biography, but also a scientific work seen through a historic perspective. "The author has put in a lot of effort in collecting data on the mathematicians – academicians. Her mathematical knowledge and her innate literary talent, atypical for a mathematician, resulted in a book of rare quality." As Academician Milošević further stated, it is clear from the very beginning that this is not just a biographical book, since the author immediately states that she wants to

”rescue from the oblivion her dear professors and colleagues, to revive their memory, to tell a story about each of them, in addition to the story of their scientific work.”

How much the author succeeded in her plan is evidenced by the conclusion of Academician Milošević. It states that the author has created a significant work that will be read with pleasure, even by those for whom mathematics is not a primary occupation. The author’s extraordinarily broad knowledge of mathematics allowed her to write expertly about the various areas of mathematics that the academicians were engaged in.

Promoter Prof. Dr. Mehmed Nurkanović believes that this book is an exceptional work, which brought to the light of day various previously unknown details. It is a rather special book, different from what is ordinarily seen. It also contains information about two mathematicians who did not become academicians themselves, but had a major contribution to the development of mathematics and science in general in this region, namely Šefkija Raljević and Vera Šnajder. They were the originators of scientific and mathematical thought in BiH – believes Prof. Dr. Nurkanović.

In his address, he particularly referred to the part of the book devoted to the academician Mahmut Bajraktarević, the first doctor of mathematical sciences in BiH. He obtained his doctorate at the famous Paris Sorbonne. Prof. Dr. Nurkanović stated that he personally considers academician Mahmut Bajraktarević a role model. However, he did not forget to mention other professors, for whom he believes that they left an indelible mark on the creation of the mathematical life in the region.

The author of the book, Academician Prof. Dr. Mirjana Vuković, said that it was difficult for her to decide which of the academicians she would talk about during the event because she is proud to have spent her entire working life with academicians to whom she dedicated the book. Had she known that academician Hanjalić would be present, she would have asked him to talk about academician Maravić, and she would have only talked about the book. She insisted on the contribution of academician Vlatko Doleček, a dear colleague and friend, who first had the idea to write with her a book about academician Manojlo Maravić. As a student, academician Doleček was a demonstrator with academician Maravić and academician Vuković was his doctoral student. When she accepted to co-write the book, she had proposed to include academician Mahmut Bajraktarević, as she had been his assistant and she inherited his cathedra at the University of Sarajevo. Unfortunately, academician Vlatko Doleček passed away soon after this conversation, so academician Vuković wrote the book alone, including also all the other academicians. In addition, she felt that one could not leave out professors Vera Šnajder and Šefkija Raljević, who both left an indelible mark on the development of mathematics in BiH.

Continuing, academician Vuković spoke about academician Manojlo Maravić. He was a versatile mathematician who gathered a large group of followers. Academician Vuković was the youngest of his four Ph.D. students. Academician Manojlo Maravić was the first doctor of mathematical sciences to defend his doctorate at the University of Sarajevo. He also was a visiting professor at Wayne State University, Michigan, USA (for 2 years). He wrote of a scientific monograph and is a co-author of the book on the history of his native Drežnica. He made an outstanding contribution to the development of science in our country.

The author then presented the part of the book dealing with academician Branislav Martić. He was quite a personality, the most prolific of all mathematicians in the region at the time, publishing over 100 scientific papers. They were in mathematical analysis, logic and geometry. He also wrote books to help students learn the material, at the time when there was no professional literature available locally. His early life was hard. His mother raised him alone, while working as a domestic. During the World War II he was interned in a German concentration camp. Academician Vuković said that "It is safe to say that for him, mathematics was his only love and he loved it boundlessly. It helped him to forget the poverty of his childhood and the horrors of the camps and the war; it also helped him to peacefully step into eternity."

One of the many purposes of this book, according to the domestic member of ANUBiH, Prof. Dr. Mirna Džamonja, is to recall how the academic mathematical society in BiH was built. "In front of us we have a work that is mathematically and literary significant, a historical document that shows how it was in the past, because it was not easy to make mathematical and academic success in a country plagued by different occupations and wars. Our mathematicians worked not only on mathematics but also on building an academic society. The greatest contribution of an academic citizen is not only his scientific and artistic achievement, but the will to share it with those who are coming after him and with his homeland" – emphasized Prof. Dr. Džamonja. In her presentation, she spoke about academician Veselin Perić, who was the first modern algebraist in the whole region of Yugoslavia. "He was a truly engaged intellectual; he gave students an example, not only with his mathematical knowledge and lectures but also with his overall behaviour, making it clear that there are no differences that count in mathematics. Neither national, nor religious, nor racial differences exist, only logic and hard work" – recalled Prof. Dr. Džamonja.

Promoter Prof. Dr. Amela Muratović Ribić spoke about academician Fikret Vajzović, whom she considers her role model. "I had the privilege of being a student of academician Prof. Fikret Vajzović. He taught several subjects, at the same time leading in his own field of mathematics. He passed on his love for mathematics to his students. A quiet, withdrawn gentleman who always took off his hat to the students as a greeting, he was favoured and appreciated."

In the book, the author emphasized the importance of the academic work in the society, while stressing the human side of these mathematicians – academicians.

At the end of the event, the author concluded by explaining her guiding principle in writing of the book. "I wrote this book with great love. I have wanted these great people, whose merit is to have created the field of mathematics in our midst, to be justly remembered".

The event was organized by the Department of Natural and Mathematical Sciences of ANUBiH, and the book was printed with the support of the Federal Ministry of Education and Science. It was printed at the Fojnica Printing House.



Promoters of the book *Mathematicians – academicians*, from right to left: domestic member of ANUBiH Prof. Dr. M. Džamonja, academician Prof. Dr. D. Milošević, academician Prof. Dr. M. Vuković, Prof. Dr. M. Nurkanović and Prof. Dr. A. Muratović-Ribić