

OBITUARY



Academician Veselin Perić 1930–2009

On December 3, 2009 in Podgorica (Montenegro) the life journey of eminent mathematician and Academician Veselin Perić, our dear friend and colleague Veso, ended.

Academician Veselin Perić was born on January 20, 1930 in Zagorič near Podgorica where he completed his elementary and secondary education. He then went on to study mathematics at the University of Zagreb completing his undergraduate degree on April 15, 1954 at the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics. That fall, namely September 1954 Academician Perić was elected as one of the first assistants in the Department for Mathematics of the Faculty of Philosophy (later Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics) in Sarajevo where he worked almost 40 years.

Professor Perić left for Germany in the fall of 1992 where he also had to undergo a surgery. While in Hamburg (Germany) he was also included in the Seminar on Algebraic number theory, Classes of fields and Arithmetical geometry headed by Helmuth Brückner. When his health improved he

returned to his native Podgorica where he started teaching mathematics at the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics of the University of Montenegro. Professor Perić retired in 2001.

Since its foundation Professor Perić also significantly contributed to the work and activities of the Chair of Mathematics at the Faculty of Philosophy at Pale (University of East Sarajevo) and until the end of academic 2007/08 he was very actively involved in the teaching to graduate students, while he worked at the postgraduate by the end of his life.

The period of five semesters, from fall 1957 till spring 1960, had an immeasurably important influence on Professor Perić as a young aspiring mathematician. First on a DAAD and then with an “Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung” fellowship (based on the recommendation of the renowned mathematician Professor Max Deuring) he spent this period at the internationally acclaimed Mathematical Institute of the University of Göttingen. The intellectual atmosphere there, then one of the world’s leading algebraic centers, school of algebra, one of whose founders was famous Emmy Nöther, meeting with the world class mathematicians Max Deuring, Helmuth Hasse, Wolfgang Krull and others had a tremendous and lasting effect, especially in the field of algebra on Veselin Perić. On returning to Sarajevo Veselin Perić was the only modernly educated algebraist in the entire region of the former Yugoslavia.

Professor Perić completed his Master Degree at the University of Zagreb in 1965 and defended his thesis “*Theory of Ideals of E. Nöther and R. Dedekind*” under the direction of Dj. Kurepa. One year later (1966) he defended his Ph.D thesis “*Contribution to Ideal Theory*”, also under the supervision of Professor Kurepa.

It is really difficult to describe briefly all aspects of activities of Professor Perić at the University of Sarajevo and his role in the development of mathematics, especially algebra in Bosnia nad Herzegovina and Yugoslavia. We can say that he was the pioneer in the field of algebra. Until the arrival of Professor Perić algebra as a science almost did not exist in Bosnia, more precisely, it was on the level of the beginning of the 19th century, actually at the stage before the fundamental works of E. Galois.

The teaching of algebra in the Department of Mathematics was radically modernized and approached the world class level under the direction of Professor Perić. Most particularly in this regard played the role his monographs: Algebra I (Rings and Modules) and Algebra II (The Theory of Fields and Galois Theory). The rich material in these two volumes, rigorously presented, continues even today, in later editions, to educate mathematics students in the former Yugoslavia and beyond.

In addition to these two monumental works Veselin Perić wrote several other monographs and problem books.

The citation of Professor Perić's works in renown scientific journals and monographs testifies to the high ranking of his theoretical results and achievements. At this point it is particularly worthy of mention that his work are cited in such two mathematical monographs as R. Gilmer's *Multiplicative Ideal Theory* (Martin Dekker, New York) and D. Larsen's *Multiplicative Ideal Theory* (Academic Press, New York & London).

In this regard it should also be mentioned that since 1967 Professor Perić himself wrote about 300 reviews for a world famous journal "Zentralblatt für Mathematik".

Academician Perić was one of the founders of graduate school education in mathematics in Sarajevo (1968) and in the following nearly 25 years was one of the main lecturers in this program. All researches in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the field of Algebra were his students. He was the advisor for about 20 masters theses and 6 Ph.D. theses in Sarajevo, Zagreb, Belgrade, Podgorica, Novi Sad and East Sarajevo.

Another area in which Professor Perić had a very large impact is in the field of his scientific publications. He had written around 50 research papers in respected local and foreign scientific journals reviewed in the world data basis (EMIS and MathSciNet).

The scientific work of Veselin Perić was carried in various areas of algebra, such as: commutative algebra, which includes his Master's and doctoral thesis and associative rings which may include scientific works relating to the modules over certain rings, as well as works on near rings, but he showed an interest and worked as well in other areas of mathematics such as topology, set theory and relations, ordered structures which indicates his extensive mathematical culture.

His main results deal with quasi-invertability, questions of primary decomposition and the so called S-component ideals in the field of commutative algebra and questions of commutativity and subdirect decomposition in associative rings.

Academician Perić was also on the Editorial Board of the following journals: *Radovi ANUBiH Odjeljenja prirodnih i matematičkih nauka* (from its beginning), which later was renamed in *Radovi Matematički* and still later in *Sarajevo Journal of Mathematics* (Sarajevo), *Glasnik matematički* (Zagreb), *Matematika Crne Gore*, now *Matematica Montisnigri* (Podgorica) and *Punime Matematike* (Pristina).

Veselin Perić served two terms as president of the Society of Mathematicians, Physicists and Astronomers of Bosnia and Herzegovina. He run the postgraduate studies program of the Department of Mathematics from 1980

to 1990; served as a Department Head, and later as the Dean of the Faculty of Natural Science and Mathematics of the University of Sarajevo. He led more two or three years projects with 10 to 20 mathematicians, and he served on dozens of educational and scientific commissions at various levels (departmental, faculty, university, state).

As a result of so rich scientific, professional and other activities Veselin Perić, in 1987 was elected as a member of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. After the formation of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of the Republic of Srpska he became a corresponding member, and then a full member in 1997. In 2002 he was elected as an honorary member of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Montenegro.

For his dedicated work in teaching and especially for his scientific work he had received many awards as the *Order of merits for the people with silver star* and both of Bosnia and Herzegovina most important awards for science: *Veselin Masleša* and the *27th of July*.

Academic Perić was not only a very successful and respected scientist in the field of algebra, but a man with broad mathematical and wide cultural scope combined with extraordinary human qualities. He was an excellent lecturer and person, a refined intellectual who besides mathematics had a wide knowledge in literature, classical music as well as history and philosophy. His total influence over a long period was of critical importance for the entire mathematical life of the community where he lived and worked, particularly Bosnia and Herzegovina, where he spent the best years of his creative life and contributed the most.

The death of Veselin Perić – Veso marks his parting from us as a scientist who grew with the University of Sarajevo and whose total being is intimately connected with the advance of the mathematical sciences and mathematics in general in Bosnia and Herzegovina. His name and his contributions leave a deep trace on us and hold a special place in our memories. He will be always remembered by those who had the honour to know him.

Mirjana Vuković
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