

ANNIVERSARY**Congratulations for the 90th anniversary and many heartfelt wishes for healthy, happy and stimulating life in the future!****Prof. Dr Dobrina N. Temniskova–Topalova, PhD, DSc**

On 12th November 2024 Prof. Dobrina N. Temniskova celebrated her 90th anniversary! Admirable age for few privileged!

She was born in Veliko Tarnovo in 1934. Those who are familiar or happened to have been in contact with her, know her as a lively, intelligent, persevering, and enterprising person, with a firm opinion on all issues concerning biological education and scientific research, a much-loved university professor, scholar, and true and beloved friend. All those characteristics of a strong personality seem not only to support her Scorpio sign, but prove that it was not accidental that she was born in that old, full of traditions capital city, a pearl in the crown of Bulgarian rulers, a historical and spiritual capital of Bulgaria.

Dobrina Temniskova completed her basic and secondary education in her native town and in 1952 enrolled as a biology student at the Biological, Geological and Geographical Department of Sofia University. She graduated in 1957 from the Plant Systematics and Vegetation Geography Chair (now the Botany Chair), where she studied under Acad. Daki Jordanov, Corresponding Member Alexander Valkanov, Prof. Kiril Popov, and Prof. Dimiter Vodenicharov. It was during that period that she became interested in algae. In 1962, she began work as a part-time Assistant



Professor and in 1964 continued as a regular Assistant Professor at the Botany Chair. In 1982, Dobrina Temniskova attained the academic rank of Associate Professor and, already in 1995, got the staff grade of Professor.

In her early years at the Botany Chair, Temniskova led exercises and practical classes for the students, read lectures in morphology and plant systematics, algae and fungi systematics and, subsequently, phycology with diatom analysis. She was the organizer and



Prof. Temniskova opens the 11th National Conference on Botany, Sofia (2011).



With colleagues in the botanical garden, Balchik (2018).

supervisor of unforgettable summer practical classes for students in biology and plant systematics in various parts of Bulgaria, of algology along the Black Sea coast and the Botanic Garden of Balchik.

During her first period of scientific research, Prof. Temniskova studied the floristic composition, taxonomy and chorology of flagellate algae from various water basins. In 1972, she defended a dissertation on the subject of *Algal Flora of Temporary Water Pools in Bulgaria* for her PhD degree. She pioneered the studies of benthic diatom algae in the Bulgarian part of the Black Sea. In 1994, she defended a second disser-

tation on the subject of *Miocene Diatom Floras in Bulgaria: Composition, Structure, Evolution, Paleoecology and Stratigraphy* for her DSci degree. In that dissertation, Prof. Temniskova summarized for the first time the results of paleodiatom researches in Bulgaria, obtained during her own studies, and from the scanty information in literature. She compiled a full list of the paleoflora of diatom algae from the sediments of sea breccia and continental paleobasins in Bulgaria, and described 11 taxa new for science. Credit for the first zonation of Bulgaria for diatom algae also goes to Prof. Temniskova. It featured the diatom algae from the Miocene sediments of Northeast Bulgaria and Mio-Pliocene sediments of South Bulgaria, which happened to be the first diatom zones of Miocene sediments from the Eastern Paratethys. She was also the first in Bulgaria to offer diatom-based reconstruction of the paleoecological conditions during sedimentation in the country. Also, Prof. Temniskova reported for the first time three genera and 86 taxa of diatom algae for the entire Paratethys.

Prof. Temniskova specialized under some well-known experts at the world-famous Diatom School in Sankt Petersburg (Russia) and the School for Research of Flagellate Algae in Harkov (Ukraine).

She initiated the systematic modern researches into diatom algae in Bulgaria from actual and relict water habitats and achieved some original results of applied scientific, national and European import, describing also some new taxa for science.

Prof. Temniskova created and organized the Laboratory for Diatom Analysis (1982) and headed it until her retirement. Since 1996-2002, she was also head of the Botany Chair at the Biological Faculty. In the course of many years (1987-2002) she was on the Biological Faculty's Board and member of the Academic Council of Sofia University (1999-2003). Her participation in the academic councils was very active, and her statements and expert judgements as member of the Higher Attestation Commission were much sought in decision-making. Highly valued by her academic colleagues, she was elected Ombudsman of Sofia University in 2004 and occupied that post until 2013. She was Bulgaria's first academic Ombudsman. Prof. Temniskova was deeply respected by her



Celebration 60 years of Balchik University Botanical Garden (2015).



Celebration of 95 years of the Bulgarian Botanical Society, Balchik (2018).

students and thus for her 70th anniversary *Advances in Phycological Studies* (Ognjanova-Rumenova & Manoylov, eds. 2006) was published, a book comprising the contributions of more than 54 authors – her former students, colleagues and friends from Bulgaria and abroad.

With papers and posters, Prof. Temniskova took part in more than 50 national and international conferences, symposia and congresses. She showed consideration for problems in her beloved profession and was active in the campaigns for protection of the university botanic gardens.

Scores of diploma theses and dissertations were defended under her supervision, as well as many research projects (UNESCO, EC, Ministry of Education and Science of Bulgaria), a project for all-round research of the Livingstone Island, the Antarctic, etc.

Prof. Temniskova was an excellent teacher, reader and greatly favored professor. With her fluent, convincing and very artistic speeches she managed to seize the attention and conquer her audiences. Her stature, perfect style and sweeping elegance contributed much to that.

She set up a course in taxonomy and evolution of algae and compiled a highly varied collection of many lasting microscopic preparations of various algae and fungi, used for education of students ever since.

Her publications comprise more than 150 research studies, including coauthorship in the first algal flora of Bulgaria (*Flora of Bulgaria. Algae*, 1971). She is also co-author of a manual for students issued by the Biological Faculty of the Saint Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia in two volumes, *Algology* (Temniskova & Stoyneva 2011), dedicated to Academician Stefan Petkov, a university professor and founder of algology in Bulgaria. In 2013, Temniskova organized the publication of a book of his selected works by Sofia University.

Prof. Temniskova held membership in many Bulgarian and international scientific societies: Union of Scientists in Bulgaria, Society of Bulgarian Ecologists, Bulgarian Botanic Society, chaired by her from 1999 ever since, International Physiological Society, and International Research Community for Diatom Algae.

She has lived an eventful life, marked by predicaments and happy moments across the years, and dedicated to her profession:

- to train students, graduands and doctorands, to conduct unforgettable, interesting and much-loved practical classes in the field;
- to engage in research for long hours over the microscope, to roam for days the water basins in the country so as to collect materials necessary for her studies;

- to react to the problems and assist their solution from the position of the Head of the Botany Chair and as member of various scientific and specialized councils, and especially as Ombudsman of Sofia University.

Many of her students stepped on the path of scientific research and gained a worthy place there: Stefan Stanev, Petar Beron, Mariana Filipova, Snezhana Moncheva, Nadja Ognjanova, Ralitsa Zidarova, Dimiar Ivanov, etc. Others sought fulfilment in different foreign research institutions: Kalina Manoylov, Rosa-

lina Stancheva, Sofia Passy, etc.

Prof. Temniskova was awarded the honorary insignia of Sofia University, 1st level – the Golden Insignia of Sofia University with Blue Ribbon (2003), and on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Faculty of Biology she was awarded with the Icon of Saint Kliment Ohridski by the Rectorate of Sofia University (2004).

Many happy returns, with love, our dear and much-prized colleague and friend! We wish you, health and happiness in the days to come!

Many happy returns, with deep respect, Prof. Temniskova!

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