

EDITORIAL

This issue of the *Journal of the Serbian Chemical Society* is dedicated to an accomplished scientist and excellent mentor Academician Slobodan Milosavljević, Professor Emeritus at the University of Belgrade – Faculty of Chemistry, on the occasion of his 80th birthday, in honor of his many achievements in chemistry, his contribution to university education, structural instrumental analysis and natural products chemistry at the University of Belgrade.

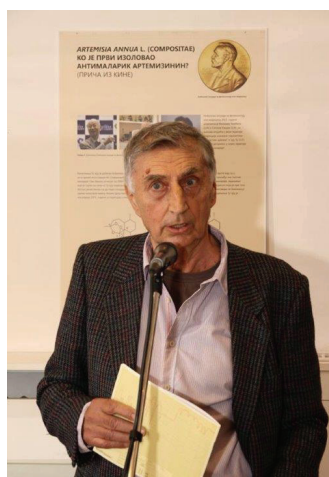
Slobodan was born in Belgrade on 30 December, 1941. He grew up in Belgrade, where his mother was philologist and the father university professor, and where he finished the high school. He received B.S. (in 1965) from Faculty of Technology and Metallurgy, University of Belgrade, M.S. (in 1970) as well as PhD (in 1974) at Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Science and Mathematics (later Faculty of Chemistry) University of Belgrade.

The two years of postdoctoral studies (1974–1976) included the synthesis of natural products, at The Polytechnic of North London, with Dr. A. P. Johnson.

The first job was in INEP Institute for Application of Nuclear Energy 1965, but Slobodan soon moved to Institute for Chemistry 1966, and finally to Faculty of Chemistry 1970, where stayed till retirement. He became assistant, associate, and full professor at the University of Belgrade in 1970, 1986 and 1992, respectively.

Slobodan's lifelong interest for structural analysis started when he joined prof Jeremić at the Institute for Chemistry in 1966, and helped develop modern Laboratory for instrumental analysis.

The Laboratory, later Center for instrumental analysis (CIA), equipped with IR, UV–Vis, MS and NMR gradually became a core for further teaching and



scientific work in chemistry. Main task and interest was structure determination of organic compounds.

Slobodan dedicated most of his energy creating better conditions for scientific work in chemistry and similar, related sciences, like biology, that use the aforementioned analytical tools. He is still involved in work of this Centre assisting in solving problems concerning structure elucidation of various compounds and commercial products.

As a researcher, Slobodan mostly deals with investigation and interpretation of NMR and mass spectra of synthesised and natural compounds. It presents a permanent scientific interest and have started with M.S. thesis.

The main research topic in last two decades was isolation and identification of natural products, the constituents of wild-growing plant species from Serbia and Montenegro by means of spectroscopic and chromatographic methods (1D and 2D NMR, MS, GLC-MS, IR, UV-Vis, HPLC). Lately he is involved in metabolomics investigations of plants.

Besides intensive scientific work (about 150 original papers and reviews), Slobodan was dedicated to teaching 1979-1986 "*Structural instrumental methods*" at the same faculty. From 1979 teaching in "*Organic chemistry of natural products*" for the third-year undergraduate students of Molecular biology at the Faculty of Biology, Belgrade; from 2000 teaching in "*Structural instrumental methods II*" at the Faculty of Chemistry.

In his very good textbook "*Structural instrumental methods*" (in Serbian), II edition published at the Faculty of Chemistry (2004) Slobodan treats the subjects in more than 500 pages.

Slobodan also served as a visiting professor, teaching Structural instrumental methods at the University of Niš and Kragujevac. He led numerous students in their diploma (B.S.) works, M.S. theses, and Ph.D. dissertations. As a member of committees, he selflessly helped students and degree candidates mentored by his colleagues.

Students, associates and colleagues respect Slobodan as a scholar and admire him as a man for his modesty and fine humor. He has trained many academics, collaborated with others in research, and influenced large number of students over the decades of his academic career. Some of these students contribute to this Special Issue.

Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts elected Slobodan as a Corresponding Member in 2009 and as a Full Member in 2018.

Serbian Chemical Society gave Slobodan a Medal for his lasting and outstanding contribution to science in 2006. University of Belgrade appointed him Professor Emeritus 2012.

Besides chemistry, Slobodan enjoys fishing, tennis and skiing.

The papers in this issue deal mostly with natural products chemistry. Space limits prevented us from inviting contributions by other, equally deserving authors affiliated with Faculties Chemistry, Biology and Pharmacy. We thank all contributors for their efforts, as well as for financial support.

On behalf of your colleagues, collaborators and students, we dedicate this Special Issue to you, Slobodan, and hope that you will enjoy it for years to come.

Belgrade, December 2021

Guest Editors

Dr. Vele Tešević, Full Professor
University of Belgrade – Faculty of Chemistry

Dr. Ljubodrag Vujisić, Associate Professor
University of Belgrade – Faculty of Chemistry

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My collaboration with Prof. Slobodan Milosavljevic

It is hard for me to say when exactly I met Prof. Milosavljevic (Sloba) for the first time, it was so long ago, further than my memory could reach. But I remember how Prof. Jeremic (then the chair of the Center for Instrumental Analysis) brought us together.

After I returned from two years postdoc at ETH in September of 1981, Prof. Jeremic shown a keen interest in my postdoc experience. I was telling him what I did and about new development in the field: 2D NMR, COSY, NOESY, double-quantum spectroscopy, *etc.* He was really impressed as he understood immediately that this was the future. Then Prof. Jeremic asked Sloba, then his young collaborator to come over and join us in the conversation, and in no time, we realized that we have complementary interests and expertise that could be aligned and that we can collaborate fruitfully. At that time, we did not have proper equipment as the only NMR instrument in the Center was outdated A-60. (A year earlier I saw the same model in London's Science Museum as an exhibit of the lab of 1960s.) Since I was travelling around the globe for my own research, I was taking along Sloba's samples and kept recording the spectra wherever I went.

First few papers went through smoothly but on one sent to Magnetic Resonance in Chemistry we got a mixed review with major complaint that "2D NMR spectrum could be recorded by any average lab". We were flattered by this rejection as we interpreted this that in previous papers we were above the average. Then we wrote back that there is nothing wrong being an average. (In USA there was very famous show about fictitious place called Lake Wobegon where "... all the children are above average.") This paper was eventually published but the lesson learned was that we must raise the papers on higher level. And Sloba indeed did just that. There was nothing more I could contribute, I was just recording and occasionally interpreting the spectra. And we went on and on. Later when I moved to the USA we included other colleagues from the Chemistry department who had interest in NMR.

Many years ago, our collaboration naturally winded down as 2D NMR became quite common and generating useful spectra no longer needed specialized expertise. But our friendship has continued till today. We rarely met in Belgrade outside his lab. But I am grateful for the time we got to spent together in Rochester (Minnesota), Minneapolis, Chicago, Rio de Janeiro...). Even more interesting is that both of us had passion for skiing, tennis, and fishing but never went together to enjoy these activities. I gave up sports long time ago, but I hope there's time to go fishing. Happy anniversary, my friend.

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Slobodan Milosavljević, dear friend, distinguished scientist

It is difficult to describe dedication and devotion of Prof. Slobodan Milosavljević, member of Academy of Sciences and Arts, tireless scientist, postdoc at London University, researcher and promoter, who selflessly transferred knowledge to students and associates of faculty for chemistry as well as biology.

My dear friend Slobodan is specially excelling in the field of education and formation of young people through mutual work and numerous tasks performed on the Faculty of Chemistry in Belgrade. He led students from basic level to the highest degrees, with great knowledge and enthusiasm, so later they felt at home in world of chemistry and biology. Slobodan is still in this noble mission.

I shall remark on his work as much as I can see it from our longstanding collaboration and friendship. We have spent time mostly on the Montenegro mountains and in the botanic garden Dulovina in Kolašin. Academician Slobodan took part, with group of botanist led by dr Nebojsa Menković, in long-term quest to discover medicinal and endemic plants of east Balkans, namely Montenegro and Serbia. The stress was on the complex mountain system Prokletije, and the mountain massif Orjen. Going through unexplored landscape, through rocky paths and inaccessible remote stones they have collected many precious medicinal as well as endemic plants. All mentioned activities were well documented, with photographs and botanical specimens for herbarium. Those investigations were important for botanical garden in Kolašin and later for garden Velemun in Plav. Furthermore, the research was significant and useful for many institutions in Serbia and Montenegro such as: Faculty for Chemistry, Faculty for Biology, Institute Josif Pančić in Belgrade and Biotechnical institute, in Podgorica.

One of the results of the explorations is the book on medicinal plants by Nebojsa Menković *et al.* entitled: "A guide to medicinal plants".

Slobodan made a great contribution to development and growth of the botanic garden Dulovina, however it was not only scientifically significant, but the garden has become more visible. In other words, papers published in domestic and international magazines made mountains of Montenegro and their botanical gardens more popular and more frequently visited by general public.

Daniel Vincek (1926–2021),
Founder and director of the botanic garden Dulovine