

OBITUARY

ŽIVKO R. ADAMOVIĆ

A brief biography and appreciation of work of Dr Ž.R. Adamović (born 9 March 1923, Obrenovac, Serbia; deceased 1 May 1998, Belgrade, Serbia; curator at the Serbian Natural History Museum and staff member at the Institute for Medical Research; the doyen of Serbian odonatology) are followed by his odonatological bibliography (1948-1997; 27 titles). Most of his papers deal with the fauna of the former Yugoslavia, and combine ecology, morphometry, taxonomy and studies of biogeography.

Dr ŽIVKO ADAMOVIĆ, was born of a craftsman's family in Obrenovac near Belgrade, on 9 March 1923. His father Rafailo, a tailor, and his mother Bosiljka, a housewife, also had four daughters. He died in Belgrade on 1 May 1998, after a professionally and privately successful and fulfilled life.

The elementary school he attended in Obrenovac, and completed in 1942 a teacher-training in Belgrade. After a brief employment as a teacher, in 1945, he joined the Serbian Natural History Museum. In 1952 he graduated from the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics (Biology) in Belgrade. It was during this period that he published his first scientific papers, which mark the beginnings of odonatology in the post-World War II Yugoslavia.

In the subsequent years, Dr Adamović broadened his research interests, publishing on Cicindelidae and Cerambicidae (Coleoptera) and particularly also on Asilidae (Diptera). Indeed, robber flies were the object of his special interest; his doctoral dissertation was titled "*Ecology of some asilid species and their relationships with the native bee, Apis mellifica L.*" (cf. 1963b).

Concurrently, he produced meticulous studies on the orthopteran fauna of Serbia and Montenegro, published in national and international periodicals.

In 1972 he moved to the Institute for Medical Research, at the University of Belgrade, from which he formally retired in 1986. During that period he worked



on the Psychodidae and Culicidae (Diptera). His papers on the mosquitoes represent an invaluable contribution to our knowledge of the fauna and ecology of these insects in the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

Throughout his life, most particularly also after his formal retirement, Dr Adamović continued his odonatological studies. His first papers are dealing with the older institutional collections to which he had access (1948, 1949), but very soon he began to gather material and data in the field himself and has produced a number of valuable publications, such as e.g. his 1956 treatment of the fauna of southern Banat in Serbia. In 1967 he was invited by Dr Armin HEYMER (Brunoy, France) to participate in the tribute issue of the *Deutsche entomologische Zeitschrift*, produced by the Akademie-Verlag in Berlin, in celebration of Dr Erich SCHMIDT's 70th anniversary. Needless to say, Adamović had a longstanding and intense correspondence with the doyen of German and central European odonatology, and gladly complied with this request, contributing a paper on the odonate fauna of the Dubrovnik area in Dalmatia, which continues to remain one of the key works on the fauna of the Adriatic coast. Recently (1996a) he produced a monograph on the Odonata of the Durmitor Range in Montenegro, where much emphasis is given to ecology, altitudinal distribution and biogeography. In other papers he analysed odonate communities in peculiar habitats or in the regions of particular nature conservation interest. Noteworthy are his morphometric studies on *Cordulegaster heros* in Serbia and Macedonia (1992), on *Calopteryx balcanica* and *C. splendens ancilla* (1996c) and on *Platycnemis pennipes nitidula* (1997).

Dr Adamović was, as he himself often underlined, primarily an ecologist by vocation. But he was also a gifted taxonomist and biogeographer, and contributed significantly to applied medical entomology as well. In Diptera and Orthoptera he published seven taxa new to science. He was a first-rate museum worker, and has left indelible marks on the Entomological Collection of the Natural History Museum in Belgrade.

Much appreciated was his proverbial inclination to help his younger colleagues enter and persist in the world of science. On numerous occasions he acted as a mentor to M.Sc. and Ph.D. candidates, and assisted in preparation and defence of their work related to Odonata and mosquitoes. Even during the last years of his life, he strove to initiate young colleagues into the world of damselflies and dragonflies, and he left gifted, by himself trained successors to continue his work.

Dr Adamović departed from us suddenly and, inevitably, he left behind a number of research and other projects he was unable to complete. Among these is the project of research into the history of entomology in Serbia. He realised the need of gathering in a single publication the achievements and trends in Serbian entomology, and he was marvelously qualified for this task, which occupied much of his time during the last two or three years.

Another of his projects was starting the journal, *Acta entomologica serbica*, published by the Entomological Society of Serbia, which society had appointed him as

the Editor-in-Chief. He approached this assignment in the same spirit he had shown in his previous engagements – with zest, enthusiasm, feelings of responsibility and consciousness of the importance of the undertaking. He conquered the difficulties inherent to the start of a scientific periodical with perseverance and vigour, which his younger colleagues will find hard to emulate. The first issue appeared in 1996. He has also completed the editorial work for the second volume, dated 1997, but did not live to see it published. The book came off the press just a little too late.



Fig. 2. During a field trip in Pohorje Mts, Slovenia, with Professor Dr B. Kiauta and Mrs M. Kiauta. — (Photo Dr J. Ott)

In the entomological and odonatological world, Dr Adamović was known as a profound intellectual, an expert in languages, and an artist painter – a member of the widely known and distinguished group of the “Four Painters of Obrenovac”. He was a reliable correspondent, and undertained vivid correspondence with entomologists and odonatologists in numerous countries of all continents, to whom he rendered every kind of professional assistance whenever required.

It goes without saying, Dr Adamović was an active member of the Serbian Biological, Serbian Ecological, and Serbian Entomological Societies. The Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts invited him on their Committee for Fauna of Serbia. He was also a member of the Organisationskomitee der Entomo-Faunistik Mitteleuropas (with its main office in Austria). The International Odonatological Society (S.I.O.) he joined almost immediately upon its inception. He participated actively at the Kyoto Meeting, convened by the S.I.O. Japanese Branch in the framework of the 16th International Congress of Entomology (1980), and at the 1st Odonatological Symposium of the Alps-Adriatic Regional Community, in Maribor, Slovenia (1994). The papers, discussion contributions and the various addresses he has given there have received much appreciation from the international community.

The odonatology has lost a great worker, the odonatologists will miss a dear friend, and a caring and noble husband has departed from his family, above all his devoted wife, MILA, who has supported him in his work lifelong.

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* Dr Adamović also published 99 papers on mosquitoes, robber flies, locusts and other insects.

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Fig. 1. Portrait on p. 87 dated 1974/1975.

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