

**OBLETNICE
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PROFESSOR LIVIO POLDINI - AT THE SEVENTIETH
ANNIVERSARY OF HIS BIRTH

This year is the seventieth in the life of Dr. Livio Poldini, professor of botany at the Trieste University, the man who is due to his exceptional scientific and for no less than half a century lasting work considered one of the greatest phytosociologists in Central Europe today. His botanical knowledge of the Northern Adriatic Karst, Friuli, Southeastern Alps as well as of Istra and the Mediterranean is truly superb, and it is thanks to him that the northwestern part of Italy is the best "covered" Italian province. He is, of course, also a true expert for the neighbouring Slovene and Croatian regions, for nature knows no political and national borders, and so much less for Prof. Poldini who has always been and still is an exceptionally open and honourable man.

He was born in Trieste on September 7th 1930 and concluded his studies with a PhD in Natural Sciences in 1949 at the University of Padova. He became associated botanical curator at the Natural History Museum of Trieste in 1958 (till 1960). In 1961 he became assistant senior lecturer of Pharmacological Botany. He improved and perfected his knowledge under Prof. J. Braun-Blanquet at the Station Internationale de Geobotanique Méditerranéenne et Alpine in the years 1961-62. He became an assistant professor in 1968 and a senior lecturer at the University of Trieste in 1976. Since 1979 he has been lecturing Plant Ecology at the University of Trieste.

His research work is concerned mainly with floristic, phytogeographic, phytosociologic and phytochemical studies, with vegetation mapping and naturalistic land assessment. Among his numerous papers there are a monograph on vegetation of the Northern Adriatic Karst and a chorological atlas of the flora of Friuli-Venezia Giulia. He participated in the preparation of sylvicultural typologies both of Veneto and Friuli-Venezia Giulia.

He was also devoted to applied ecology and nature conservation. He did the spadework in nature conservation - theoretically and practically. In the seventies he participated in the preparation of the Regional Urbanistic Plan with the aim to lay out nature parks and reserves in Friuli-Venezia Giulia. From 1994 to 1996 he was the scientific supervisor of the project "Natura 2000 - Bioitaly" for the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region, with an aim to create a catalogue of the areas with a prominent

naturalistic value. In the years 1996 to 1998 he was responsible for the project of vegetational restoration along the pipelines built in the Karst environment, in collaboration with SNAMPROGETTI. He was one of the first scientists who focused on the problem of abandonment and overgrowth in the Karst areas. Together with Prof. E. Feoli's team he developed the so-called "Trieste School" of numerical ecology and was one of the very first phytosociologists who used the computer supported numerical analysis as early as in the seventies!

At the moment he is in charge of the national MURST project on "Biodiversity and processes of vegetational recovery in marginal areas", focusing on the reconstruction of matorrals and bush encroachment in different altitudinal belts (from plain to mountain) and on the relationships with the climatic-edaphic factors. His half-century experiences, knowledge and numerous floristic and vegetational data are now used by Prof. Poldini in his project "Causal analysis of the north-eastern Italian vegetation", where the main aim is to systematically analyse the vegetation cover of the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region, in order to produce a complete monograph on the regional vegetation. Could there have been done any more in a single region? Very recently he has also been devoted to halophyte vegetation and coastal problematics. He is taking part in the "Project for the coastal and marine conservation in Friuli-Venezia Giulia". The most fascinating for me whenever I joined him during field excursions was the combination of taxonomic (floristic) knowledge with the ecological approaches. According to the Central-European tradition he is simply a perfect florist. At the moment he is compiling the Checklist of the Flora of the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region, in order to define the correct nomenclature and to produce a catalogue of synonyms. He is also a regional adviser for the "Illustrierte Flora von Mitteleuropa" and "Atlas Flora Europaea".

Although Prof. Poldini is Italian, his mentality and way of thinking as well as working is more Central European. Apart from it, he has retained some of the Austro-Hungarian spirit. He is a modest, hardworking and systematic man and has always stuck, together with his associates, to certain discipline. All this has resulted in hundreds of published articles, dozens of completed projects, some voluminous books, and plenty of still unfinished things.

Prof. Poldini is an extremely open personality (particularly as a citizen of Trieste) for understanding the contact area of the Northern Adriatic, Karst, Istra, Dinarids and the Alps also from the anthropological, national, cultural, linguistic and historical points of view. His very rich and perfectly spoken German, which he proposes to become the "conversation language" between Central European countries, and enthusiasm to learn Slovene also enabled him to cooperate frequently with Slovene and Croatian botanists in the past and pre-

sent. Because of his very "open mind" he is also a correspondent member of the Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts, as well as a member of several editorial boards: *Studia Geobotanica*, *Flora Mediterranea*, *Gortania*, *Hladnikia* and - lately - also of the journal *Annales*.

I am very proud to consider Prof. Poldini my phytosociological teacher: the hours, days and months I spent in his room at the university were certainly the most productive in my botanical career. During every morning that I spent at the computer and during every afternoon that I spent in a fruitful discussion with him certain conclusions were made. He gave much of his time to the students, colleagues and amateur botanists. For years he has been leading the "Regional Group for Floristic Research - GREF", which is very active in the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region and broader.

Prof. Poldini is celebrating his seventieth birthday in the midst of a number of very important scientific and applicative projects, student diplomas and other faculty commitments. We sincerely hope that in the years to come he will retain all that penetrating mind and creative inspiration, and at the same time wish him a lot of good health and of course many happy moments in nature amongst plants.

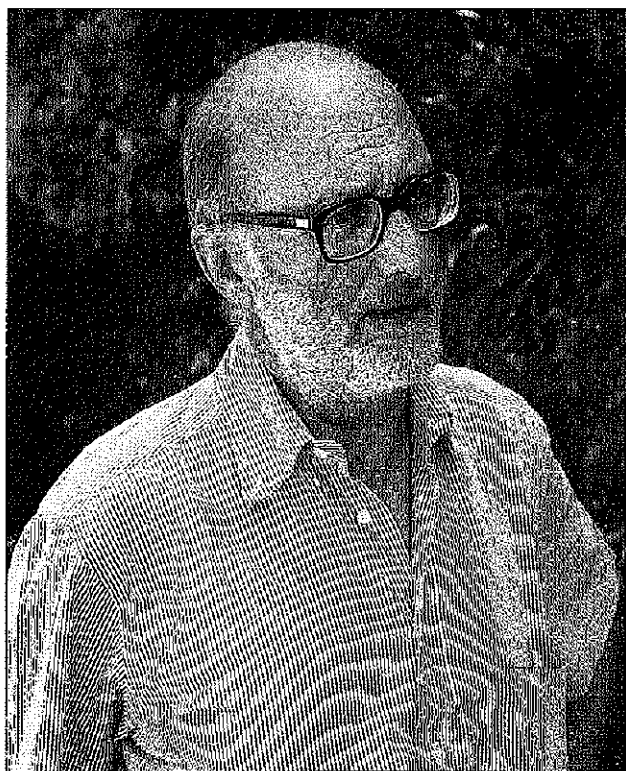
IN MEMORIAM

Robert Turk

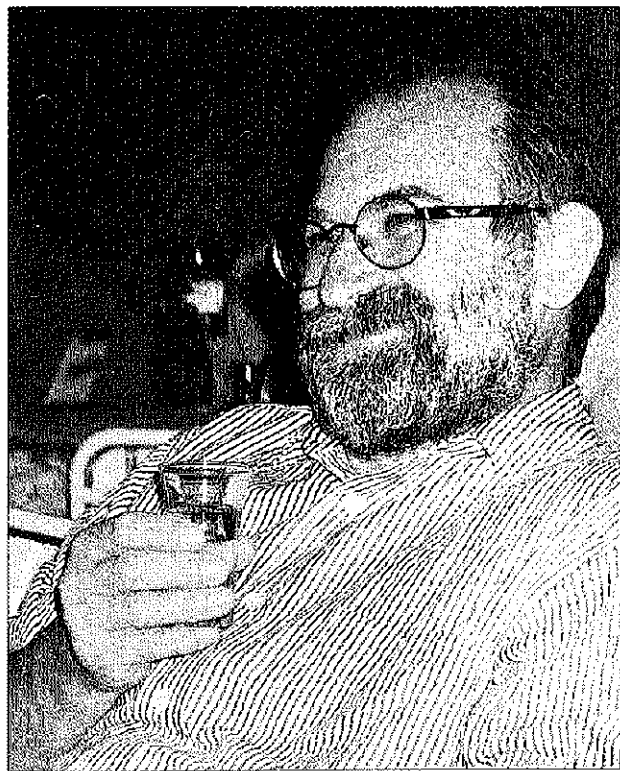
BORIS KRIŽAN 1948-2000

Dolina Dragonje, Kraški rob, Sečoveljske soline, Škocjanski zatok. Če jih še imamo in če obstaja upanje, da bodo še naprej na seznamu vseslovenskega naravnega bogastva, potem je to v veliki meri zasluga Borisa Križana, naravovarstvenika in v zadnjih letih tudi direktorja Medobčinskega zavoda za varstvo naravne in kulturne dediščine Piran. In če se lahko Slovenija po svetu hvali z zelo zadovoljivim odstotkom zavarovane in ohranjene naravne obale, je to predvsem Borisova zasluga. In če načrtovalci razvoja slovenske obale dandanes vsaj potihem pomislijo, da bi bilo morda dobro ohraniti tisto malo naravne in kulturne dediščine, ki nam je - bolj po sreči kot ne - še ostala, potem je tudi to posledica Borisovega neprestanega in neutrudnega dokazovanja in pričevanja o nujnosti naravi prijaznega razvoja.

Od kod je prinesel to širino in pronicljivost? Ali je posrkal vso širino in prostranost rodnega Prekmurja ali morda uvidel zapletenost in medsebojno povezanost naravnih procesov in socialnih pojavov med študijem geografije? Kdo bi vedel. Dejstvo je, da je dovolj zgodaj stopil na pravi breg, da je vedel za pravo smer že takrat, ko v slovenskem besednjaku skorajda ni bilo zaslediti tega,



Livio Poldini (foto: T. Wraber).



Boris Križan