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NOTE ON SLAVIŠA PREŠIĆ

The intention of this paper is not to write about S. Prešić's results in mathematics. Instead, some important events from the life of Slaviša Prešić, especially those events related to Kragujevac, will be presented in the following paragraphs.

Slaviša Prešić was born in 1933 in Kragujevac. He lived in a very nice, urban neighborhood of the town. There was a very nice park near his house and the school was close as well. He and his sister had the lucky childhood until 1941. In October 1941 the Germans killed several thousands people in Kragujevac, including the pupils from the grammar school. Slaviša Prešić experienced the hard days of the German occupation. Professor Prešić talked about those days:

“I remember the horrible time of the Second World War, but even today the behavior of my teacher Mateja Veljković has effects of spiritual light. When it was the hardest, when the German troops were in front of Stalingrad, he encouraged us and cheered us up, and at the end of school lessons we would sing, led by him, “Let's sing with love to St. Sava” [1].

Professor Prešić finished the higher grammar school in Kragujevac in 1952 . He often talked about his very good teacher of mathematics Vitaly Hovorostansky, who was the author of the official textbook of mathematics for higher grammar schools. The influence of his teacher Hovorostanski on young Prešić was very great.

In 1957 S. Prešić graduated in Mathematics at Faculty of Science of the University of Belgrade. Then he became the assistant of Professor Dragoljub Marković who gave a great contribution to the introduction of modern algebra in Serbia. Professor Prešić finished his PhD thesis in 1963.

Professor Prešić had great achievements in the field of algebra and logic, especially in polynomial theory and universal algebra. He was successful in artificial intelligence, functional equations and numerical analysis as well. He gave a great contribution to the application of the reproductivity to solving equations in algebraic structures. Professor Prešić dealt with mathematical logic and its applications for 45 years. His book “Elements of mathematical logic” has been used at universities in Serbia for over 40 years. Fourteen PhD theses and about 20 MSc theses were defended under supervision of Professor Prešić.

In his introductory lecture to the Serbian Academy of Science, academician Ivan Gutman, professor of the Faculty of Science in Kragujevac and the leading scientist in Serbia (with over a thousand scientific papers published and with more than ten thousand citations), said the following: “Two men had decisive influence on me to do mathematical

chemistry – my primary school chemistry teacher in Sombor and professor Slaviša Prešić”. It should be noted that professor Gutman studied chemistry and that he went to professor Prešić’s lectures voluntarily with students of mathematics. When referring to professor Prešić’s lectures, prof. Gutman used the word ‘bravura’.

Professor Prešić spent the first 19 years in Kragujevac. The inhabitants of Kragujevac, who remember him from that period, say that he was a very good pupil and a very handsome man.

In the sixties, there was a great need for professors of mathematics in Kragujevac. Professor Prešić organized lectures in Kragujevac for the teachers of mathematics who wanted to continue studies and graduate from the faculty. The exams were taken at the Faculty of Science in Belgrade. The lectures in Kragujevac made studies much easier for those people and a lot of them successfully graduated. That was a great contribution of professor Prešić to his home town.

In the late eighties, when the Department of Informatics started its intensive development, the help of professor Prešić was necessary and he gave lectures for the courses in programming languages LISP, PROLOG and C. Coming to Kragujevac enabled him to bring back memories of his youth and days when he was a pupil in grammar school, and also gave him the opportunity to spend more time with his relatives and friends. Even after retiring he still gave lectures in Kragujevac.

The great number of PhD’s of the current professors at the Department of Mathematics in Kragujevac were supervised by Professor Prešić or by his students.

Professor Prešić had a special relationship towards the money. He preferred forwarding the money earned by him to his younger associates. During the war he gave money to soldiers. Furthermore, he donated significant funds to monasteries.

Professor Prešić liked hiking, especially at a quicker pace. He usually went about 15 kilometres a day on foot. He was in great physical condition until the end of his life.

Professor Prešić had three sons and seven grandchildren. He died in 2008 and he was buried next to his parents in his hometown Kragujevac.

References

- [1] Ž. Mijačlović, On the scientific work of Slaviša Prešić, A Tribute to S. B. Prešić, Papers Celebrating his 65th Birthday, Matematički institut SANU, Beograd 2001.