

## **Professor Dr. Miodrag Rakić (1923-1998)**



Professor Miodrag Rakić was born on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1923. He graduated from the High School and Faculty of Electrical Engineering in Belgrade as one of the best students. Immediately after graduation from the University of Belgrade he joined the Institute for Nuclear Sciences “Vinča”. He was awarded the doctorate of science in engineering from the University of Belgrade, and started his academic carrier with Prof. Dušan Mitrović at the Department of Automatic Control, Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Belgrade. He was retired from the active duties at the Faculty in 1993, yet

he continued to be active to the last moment of his life.

Miodrag Rakić was a professor who dedicated his entire working life to students and their success. He enjoyed in teaching, supervising students, organizing extracurricular activities, and doing all other important Faculty businesses at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering. In parallel, he worked in the filed of automatic control; his design and development engineering skills are still in use and they were described in numerous projects for industry. He was the author or coauthor of many journal papers, conference contributions, project reports, and several textbooks. In this issue we are reprinting a short article from the book *Advances in External Control of Human Extremities V*, published by Yugoslav Committee for ETAN in 1973 presenting the mechanics of the Belgrade hand contributed by Prof. Rakić.

His design virtuosity reached a pick when he was designing the well-known Belgrade hand, the first multifunctional prosthetic arm that was used for many years as a quality and effectiveness benchmark. In mid sixties, Prof. Rakić was facing a health problem that he successfully concurred, and fortunately became strong enough to continue a productive carrier. In late eighties, Prof. Rakić was a key designer within the international research and development team (the University of Novi Sad and the University of

Southern California, Los Angeles, California); they developed a prototype of the Belgrade-USC multifunctional adaptive robot hand. The design implemented for the robot hand followed the genius ideas from the design of the Belgrade hand; however, the strength of available microcomputers, better actuators, and lighter materials promoted a device that became one of the best robot grasping devices at that time.

During his carrier he contributed greatly to the organization of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, and some of his ideas especially in the field of finances are still implemented to the satisfaction of most of his colleagues.

Professor Rakić possessed a unique love to his students and younger colleagues. Many times the younger colleagues spent hours chatting and enjoying the friendship, love, excellent advices and suggestions that only a parent can give, and above his students could admire the inherent wisdom that he possessed.

Professor Rakić, or “Mali” as his wife Mirjana called him, had many hobbies. He was a real sailor in his little sport board. He would board his small boat, together with his wife, and glided or jumped over the big waves of Adriatic Sea, around many islands trying to discover the unknown. His underwater fishing, even at later age, was difficult to match; he was always coming with what others would dream only. Mali was a passionate tennis player, and he also loved downhill skiing. He was never tired of doing things and he loved speed; he always found time to fine tune his almost antique BMW and his Mercury speed boat motor to be able to “fly” like a free young bird.

In 1998 he faced a disease that he knew was terminal, yet his optimism and strength had allowed him to communicate and work to the last day. He left a big empty space in hearts of many of us, especially his wife Mirjana, children Marina and Siniša, and four grand children.

With love and respect  
Dejan Popović, former student and friend