

Dedication

This book is dedicated to a well-known botanist - phytosociologist and phytoecologist, science organizer, educator of young scientists, environmental defender, Prof. Dr. Giorgi (Gia) Nakhutsrishvili.

Giorgi Nakhutsrishvili was born in 1932, in Tbilisi (Georgia), in the family of a well-known researcher of vegetation of the Caucasus - Shalva Nakhutsrishvili. With his father's influence, Giorgi Nakhutsrishvili got interested in Georgian nature from an early age. He started scientific work while studying at Tbilisi State University, faculty of biology. His first scientific publications (1959-1961) are about phytosociological problems of high-mountain meadows in Lagodekhi Nature Reserve (East part of the Great Caucasus).

Afterwards, Giorgi Nakhutsrishvili continued to research alpine vegetation, phytocoenosis structural-functional organization and impact of human activity on high-mountain vegetation in the Central Caucasus, Kazbegi region. These studies were deepened and widened, when ecologists from Innsbruck University Botanical Institute got involved. The studies became known internationally. Six international conferences about ecological problems of alpine vegetation were organized in 1977-1996, in Kazbegi, in high mountain ecological station of Tbilisi Institute of Botany. Later, this station became the basis for Ilia State University "Stepantsminda Alpine Ecology Institute".

Giorgi Nakhutsrishvili is the founder of Georgian school of ecology of high-mountain vegetation. Researchers from this school are working successfully at Georgian universities and environmental NGO's in the Caucasus/Georgia.

In the last decades the main interest of Giorgi Nakhutsrishvili's research is comparative analysis of flora and vegetation of the Great and the Lesser Caucasian and European Alps. Giorgi Nakhutsrishvili filled the gap that existed about the flora and vegetation of Georgia in the world botanical literature. He is one of the authors of the Caucasus part of the Map of the Natural Vegetation of Europe (Doluchanov, Nakhutsrishvili, Zazanashvili, Ivanishvili (2000): Sheet 9: Southeast Europe, In: Bohn, Gollub, Hettwer, Neuhäuslova, Raus, Schlüter, Weber (zusammengestellter und bearbeiteter) Karte der natürlichen Vegetation Europas. Map of the Natural Vegetation of Europe. Maßstab/Scale 1:2 500 000. Bundesamt für Naturschutz, Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, Bonn-Bad Godesberg, Germany: 153).

In 1999-2017 European authoritative publishers published several books and many articles with Giorgi Nakhutsrishvili's authorship or co-authorship. Among them should



Professor Georgi Nakhutsrishvili on one of his frequent study visits to the Caucasus.

be mentioned: 1) The vegetation of Georgia (Caucasus), *Braun-Blanquetia* 15: 74; 2) The vegetation of Georgia (South Caucasus). Springer-Verlag, Heidelberg New York Dordrecht London: 235; 3) Nakhutsrishvili, Abdaladze, Batsatsashvili, Spehn, Körner (eds) Plant Diversity in the Central Great Caucasus: A Quantitative Assessment. Geobotany Studies: Basics, Methods and Case Studies. Springer, Cham, Switzerland. The Georgian Botanical Society is highly interested in this books.

Giorgi Nakhutsrishvili is also author and one of the publishing organizers for the following book: Red List of Endemic Plants of the Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, Russia, and Turkey. Monographs in Systematic Botany from the Missouri Botanical Garden (MSB) 125. Missouri Botanical Garden Press, Saint Louis, USA: 113-147.

Giorgi Nakhutsrishvili is a skillful science organizer. With his leadership, the Tbilisi Institute of Botany, despite the difficult socio-political situation in Georgia in the beginning of last century, mainly retained scientific potential.

For decades Giorgi Nakhutsrishvili was reading lectures at several universities in Tbilisi; he was and still is a scientific supervisor of many young researchers.

Giorgi Nakhutsrishvili continues to conduct active scientific, scientific-organizational and environmental activities, participates in international scientific meetings.

We wish him health and productive work.