

In Memoriam to Alvim and Maestri

It is with profound regret that the *Brazilian Society of Plant Physiology* and the *Brazilian Journal of Plant Physiology* announce that Paulo de Tarso Alvim and Moacyr Maestri, two outstanding pioneers of plant physiology research and teaching in Brazil passed away while this issue was in preparation.

Paulo de Tarso Alvim's life now seems like a 'first light' to those of us who had the privilege to interact closely with him. A pioneer of plant physiology research in Brazil, he encouraged students and researchers, and also boosted the research in plant physiology countrywide. Alvim's contributions to science are numerous. He often focused on concepts, and some of his ideas elicited productive discussions and new insights in this field. His scientific interest ranged from water relations to global ecological concerns. For many years he was Technical Director of the Executive Commission for Planning of Cocoa Farming (CEPLAC), and founder/director of the Cocoa Research Centre (CEPEC) for 25 years. During this time, CEPEC was known worldwide as the main centre for research in tropical plants.

Alvim will be best remembered for his creative, and sometimes controversial, farsighted ideas, derived from his broad and profound scientific knowledge, and for his amazing eloquence that captivated his colleagues. He encouraged students and colleagues alike to think and reconsider the knowledge they had in mind.

Death has interrupted a career that was in a post-mature phase, allowing us all to benefit from his wisdom, keen insight and broad-based knowledge, and yet still moving in exciting new directions. What we do know is that our fields of research profited immensely from Alvim's exceptional gifts, and that we are all far richer for the time that we lived together with him.

The first graduate course on Plant Physiology in Brazil was founded by Moacyr Maestri, in 1970. Such a magic moment provided the country the possibility to trainee researchers in this important branch of the plant sciences.

As Professor of Plant Physiology at the Federal University of Viçosa (UFV), Moacyr Maestri led numerous studies in coffee physiology. Moreover, he pioneered the introduction of chlorophyll *a* fluorescence techniques to understand photosynthesis and the effects of environmental factors on coffee plants. Undoubtedly, his major contribution was in the formation of Masters and Doctorate courses at UFV. The list of scientists who have worked with Maestri is extensive and some have been successful careers worldwide. The following is a partial list (in alphabetical order): Alex-Alan Furtado de Almeida, Benedito Gomes dos Santos Filho, Carlos Alberto Martinez y Human, Eliemar Campostrini, Fabio Murillo da Matta; Jurandi Gonçalves de Oliveira; Nei Fernandes Lopes, Raimundo Santos Barros.

Coincidence or not, these two respected and awarded scholars were friends for decades and left us almost at the same time. The Brazilian Plant Physiology Community will remember their contributions. Friends and colleagues in Brazil and elsewhere, who worked together with them for decades or only occasionally, will sense a deeper loss, a void that will be difficult to fill, but will cherish warm memories of their vivid personalities.

With permission of the American Society of Plant Biologists (ASPB), the Obituary written by Dr. Raimundo Santos Barros is transcribed entirely to this BJPP issue. Raimundo, former researcher at CEPLAC, shared many scientific experiences with Alvim in the 70's. In the 80's, Raimundo became Professor at UFV, where he also could share several experiences with Maestri. Raimundo provides us with precious testimony that must be read by all of us but especially to inspire new generations of Brazilian plant physiologists.

Ricardo Bressan-Smith

President of the Brazilian Society of Plant Physiology

Arnoldo Rocha Façanha

Editor-in-Chief of BJPP