

## Book review

**Fondamenti di patologia vegetale.** By Alberto Matta, 1996. 494 pp. Pàtron Editore, Bologna.

Science is international. Paradoxically, textbooks in a national language contribute to this internationality. Only if students of whatever nation can think clearly and precisely in their mother language, they can develop to the level of international scientists. Clear thinking and precise expression in one of the international scientific languages, now english but formerly german, french and even latin, is necessarily based on cleanliness of thinking in the mother tongue.

Therefore, I greet with enthousiasm new textbooks, especially at the basic level, in whatever national language I can reasonably understand. Alberto Matta, Professor of Plant Pathology at the University of Torino, Italy, recently produced such a textbook on the basics of plant pathology 'Fondamenti di Patologia Vegetale', with the collaboration of Enrico Luisoni (virus diseases) and Giuseppe Surico (bacterial diseases).

The 494 page book contains a general (174 pages) and a special part (300 pages). The general part discusses plant pathology (Ch.1), the diseased plant (Ch.2), Causes of disease and diagnostics (Ch.3), Parasitism

(Ch.4), Inoculum (Ch.5), Mechanisms of infection (Ch.6), Mechanisms of resistance (Ch.7), Epidemiology (Ch.8), and Principles of control (Ch.9).

The special part provides an up-to-date discussion of diseases caused by viruses (Ch.1), phytoplasmas (Ch.2), bacteria (Ch.3), fungi (Ch.4) and non-parasitic diseases (Ch.5). Wisely, emphasis is placed on mediterranean crops and their diseases.

The book is illustrated with 176 black-and-white figures, usually taken from existing literature, and 32 tables. It contains a detailed Table of Contents. The extensive index has about 1700 entries. Selected references are organized chapter-wise and refer mainly to the international literature. Such references to international texts will stimulate the students' interest in international science, especially in Italy where students tend to neglect foreign languages.

The book is primarily intended for Italian university students in the natural sciences, agriculture and plant pathology, but it will certainly help plant pathologists and agriculturalists outside Italy to better understand their Italian colleagues and read their publications.

J.C. Zadoks  
Wageningen, The Netherlands