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### In Memoriam



**Professor Vasile CIOCÂRLAN Ph.D.**

**(21 December 1926 – 2 December 2013)**

”A *Life entirely dedicated to Botany*” would be the best title for the life and work of the tireless, rigorous, modest, severe but generous Professor V. Ciocârlan, who passed away just three weeks before he reached the age of 87.

A graduate, with Diploma of Merit, of the Faculty of Natural Sciences of ”A.I. Cuza” University of Iași (class of 1952), V. Ciocârlan was employed in the position of Assistant Lecturer (1953) at the Department of Botany of the University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest (formerly Agronomic Institute ”Nicolae Bălcescu”), in which he would achieve all levels of the academic hierarchy, and where, in 1990, he became Professor.

In 1968, he obtained the title of Ph.D., for the thesis “*Flora și vegetația bazinului subcarpatic al Slănicului de Buzău*” [*Flora and vegetation of the sub-Carpathian basin of Slănic of Buzău*], Professor Tr. Ștefureac being his scientific supervisor.

His outstanding contributions represented strong argument for his appointment as Ph.D. coordinator at the Bucharest University, in Biology, where, unlike other of our colleagues, he supervised only theses in botany.

The recognition of his performance, among other honours, resulted in the award (in 1974) of the prize ”Tr. Săvulescu” of the Romanian Academy for the work *Buruienile din culturile agricole și combaterea lor* [*Weeds of agricultural crops and their control*] (1972).

Floristic botanist *par excellence*, Prof. V. Ciocârlan will ever remain in the history of Romanian botany through his chorological contributions (he identified 64 new taxa in our country, such as *Lindernia dubia*, *Elodea nuttallii*, *Scabiosa triniifolia*, etc.), by taxonomic analyses, by floristic outlines of the Danube Delta, National Park Piatra Craiului and Șinca Nouă, etc., and through the three editions of *Flora ilustrată a României* [*Illustrated flora of Romania*] (1988-1990, 2000, 2009).

Based in an agricultural institution, it is natural that several of his works should consider weeds of crops, providing reference materials in the field (e.g. *Atlasul principalelor buruieni din România* [*Atlas of the main weeds of Romania*] – 2002, *Flora segetală a României* [*Segetal flora of Romania*] – 2004, etc.).

Collaborating with other specialists, he also made contributions regarding the anatomical structure and essential oils content of several species of *Nepeta*, *Mentha*, *Artemisia*, etc.

His work of 1996 is important from the theoretical and practical point of view, as it concerns the phytogeographical division of our country, where he reconsiders the floristic provinces.

Not even after his retirement did he cease to travel in the country and publish works written as a result of his experience, critical analysis and maturity. Even in the year of his death, at over 86 years of age, he accompanied us on the trip organized in reservations at Ciobotani, Bilbor and Borzont, and less than one month before his death his article on Poplar salt marshes was accepted for publication (Tulcea County, 2013, *Acta Horti Bot. Bucharest.*, **40**: 27-32).

I had the joy of meeting him 43 years ago (at the 9<sup>th</sup> National Conference of Geobotany, July 1971), we were together on excursions in many areas of the country, we attended several national and international meetings, but it seems that the last one (June 2013 in Tg. Mureş) will be the strongest memory. Beyond the clarity of his results, scientific rigour, the desire to discuss issues, Prof. V. Ciocârlan also impressed us with his literary culture or by his love of the eternal and still little-known waltz, within what we call today "dinner gala".

The assessment made by Sârbu *et* Tănase, 2006 (repeated in Oprea A., 2013, *J. Plant Develop.*, **20**, p. 166) seems to be the most synthetic format with which to conclude our presentation: "Being one of the greatest personalities of Romanian botany, he passed through different stages of his life with verticality, facing many difficulties, but he did not make any compromises in the scientific truth ... His entire life has proven reliability, depth, competence and professionalism, ambition and perseverance, with a deep passion for floristic studies ...."

The botanists of Cluj join their colleagues from other major universities to pay homage to the Professor, the researcher and the man Vasile Ciocârlan. Rest in peace!

Vasile CRISTEA