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Grădina Botanică “Alexandru Borza”
Cluj-Napoca

In Memoriam



Professor Doina IVAN, Ph.D.
(31 January 1932 – 23 December 2013)

On the eve of the 2013 Christmas holiday, Professor Doina Ivan, Ph.D., died aged almost 82. In 1960–1980 she established the basis of phytosociology at University of Bucharest. We called her, and we continue to call her, “Professor”, although in 1990 she was forced to retire much earlier than would have been normal, and then only with the title “Associate Professor”. Revolutions have their costs!

Born in the city of Bistrița (Bistrița-Năsăud County), Ofelia Doina Ivan attended the courses of the Faculty of Biology at the University of Bucharest (class of 1955) and then the courses of the doctoral school of St. Petersburg, Russia, where she prepared (under the leadership of Prof. I. Lumental and the Professors G. Tian-Șanskaia and G. Dohman) her doctoral thesis concerning the coenology and ecology of grasses in the Streltckaya steppe of the Kursk region (1965). The revolution of December 1989 found her as the severe and demanding Manager of the Central Institute of Biology of Bucharest, which is why some “revolutionary” type behaviour determined her resignation. Gracefully, Professor Doina Ivan also retired from university life, but not from research.

In the Romanian botany in school, her name is linked primarily to the methodological aspects of phytosociological (phytocoenological) research, by the two manuals she developed in collaboration with N. Donița (1975), and respectively L. Spiridon (1983), and also to the theoretical aspects, by the course *Geobotanică* [*Geobotany*] (1969) and, especially *Fitocenologie și vegetația R.S. România* [*Phytocoenology and vegetation of S.R. Romania*] (1979), the latter more accessible to students and Ph.D. candidates compared with the standard book of Al. Borza and N. Boșcaiu (1965).

Those who study the vegetation of Europe and also those who have established habitats in Romania have benefited from the summaries in *Vegetația României* [*Vegetation of Romania*]

(1992) and *Vegetația potentială a României* [*Potential vegetation of Romania*] (1993) developed by teams coordinated by Prof. Doina Ivan.

Without the intention of making an exhaustive analysis of her scientific contributions (about 70 articles written in Romanian, German, Russian or French), we believe that it is necessary to mention the main themes:

- she monitored the distribution of species in South-Eastern Romania (e.g. *Silene thymifolia* – 1972, *Paliurus spina-christi* – 1971);
- she studied the qualitative and quantitative structure of the vegetation in various parts of the country (e.g. Bâlea and Podragul glacial lakes – 1960, Techirghiol – 1969, Siret valley – 1973, Sakhalin island – 1977, Brăila Plain – 1979);
- she made observations on a number of physiological parameters of steppe and forest-steppe plants (1968);
- she worked with teams of practitioners to monitor the evolution of soils, vegetation and ecosystems under the influence of hydro-amelioration and irrigation works (26 monographic articles published 1974–1982);
- she developed a number of theoretical issues related to concepts of geographical and ecological areas (1977), for the shaping and delineation of terrestrial ecosystems (1979), zoning of forests in Romania (1980) and the conservation of ecofund and genofund (1982).

In a period marked by the pursuit of "phytosociological novitates", Prof. D. Ivan showed caution in describing new coenotaxonomic units, selecting ecologically thorough studies before producing such descriptions.

The work on the spatial structure and grassland productivity in Monte Bondone, Italy (2003) is interesting even in relation to its theoretical and methodological aspects; which seems to gather together the theoretical synthesis about primary production of terrestrial vegetation (1982) and her practical experience in the study of phytocoenosis structure.

In our journal, she published only the work on phytocoenoses with *Chrysopogon gryllus* of the Black Sea (1967), where the author discusses about how this species is *invasive*, with high *competitiveness* under more favourable moisture conditions, having antagonistic relations with *Cynodon dactylon*, concepts more used at present.

Her death leaves a void in the world of Romanian and European phytosociologists. On behalf of the botanists of Cluj and the Romanian Society of Phytosociology, we pay her tribute and our homage, keeping her memory alive. At the same time, we express our sincere sympathy and pay our respects to her husband and constant collaborator, the distinguished Professor Nicolae Doniță.

Vasile CRISTEA