PROF. OVIDIU DRAGASTAN'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY

Recently Prof. Dragastan celebrated his 60th anniversary. Therefore, one of the sessions within our symposium was dedicated to this anniversary.

Prof. Dragastan was born in Bucharest in 1939. He belongs to a mixed family of Moldavians and Saxons (old German population established on the present-day territory of Romania in the 12th-13th centuries). He graduated from the Faculty of geology in Bucharest; in 1962, Prof. M. Filipescu invited him to hold the position of assistant at the Paleontological Department. Soon after graduation, Prof. Dragastan oriented his research activity towards the study of limestones, especially focusing on micropaleontology and microfacies aspects. It can be said that together with the late dr. Dan Patruliuc, Prof. Dragastan was the promoter of the study of carbonate microfacies in Romania. In 1971 he took his PhD degree in geology with the thesis "Upper Jurassic and Lower Cretaceous microfacies in the Bicaz Valley Basin - East Carpathians". Four years later the thesis was published as a monograph in "Memoires" edited by the Geological Institute of Romania.

For the past 35 years, the scientific results of Prof. Dragastan activity have been published in prestigious publications in Romania and abroad: of the 104 published papers, half (52) were published abroad, in widely recognized international publications: Revue de Micropaleontologie, Revista Espagnoa de Micropaleontologia, Revue de Paleobiologie, Bochumer Abhandlungen, Geologica Romana, Paleobotany and Palynology, Sedimentology, and so on.

Prof. Dragastan is also the author of 10 books, mainly focused on Paleobotanics. Moreover, his teaching activity was based on the development and improvement of the course in Paleobotanics and Palynology. Among his fields of study in paleobotanics, calcareous algae were approached preferentially; it can be said that Prof. Dragastan stimulated this particular topic, and I am honored to consider myself one of his students. H. Tappan-Loebich, a well-known international personality in micropaleontology wrote: "Professor Dragastan's experience with fossil algae has included studies of most of the calcareous mineralized taxa, Dasycladaceae and other Chlorophyta, Rhodophyta and Phaeophyta, as well as microscopic Chrysophyta, Bacillariophyta (diatoms), Dinophyta (Peridiniales), and Cyanophyta (blue-green bacteria). He has concentrated upon those of Mesozoic age (Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous), but has also worked with older Paleozoic taxa (Permian), and younger (Tertiary) ones. His emphasis variously has concerned their taxonomy, systematics, and paleoecology, and the importance of their microfacies, reef-building components, diagenesis, and biostratigraphy, resulting in an exceptionally broad background for the further studies that he contemplates."

For the complete picture of the scientific personality of Prof. Dragastan, one should underline that he is the author of numerous new taxa for science (species, genera or upper rank taxa). In the '80s, Prof. Dragastan was a Research Fellow of A.v. Humboldt Foundation and in 1993 he received the Fulbright Fellow Senior Research Award of Boston University. He is also fellow of the French Geological Society (Paris), fellow of the International Organisation of Paleobotany (London), fellow of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists (Tulsa, Oklahoma) and Vicepresident of the Romanian Society of Paleontologists.

Professor Ioan Bucur
"Babeş-Bolyai" University, Cluj-Napoca