

PROF. DR. ANCA SÂRBU ON HER 65TH ANNIVERSARY

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This paper's main goal is to present and honor a prominent Romanian scientist: Anca Sârbu. She has worked as a teacher and researcher, a scientist in the field of vegetal biology.

Keywords: Anca Sârbu, tribute, didactic and research activities.

Born on December 7, 1954, in București, where she also completed all her studies, Anca Sârbu gathered, over her 65 years of life, 41 years of didactic and research activity – 4 of which as a highschool teacher and 37 in higher education at university level – in which her prestigious work came to be unanimously recognized by the specialists of the field.

After graduating from the University of București – Faculty of Biology, in 1977, as the best student, with a certificate of merit – she was recommended for a position in the higher education and scientific research system. In the first four years she was a teacher in a secondary school in București, then, in 1982 she was invited to become a university assistant at the Faculty of Biology – University of București, a didactic position in which, for 9 years, she conducted practical laboratory works of *Morphology and anatomy of plants*, *Vegetal cytology*, *Genetics of microorganisms*, *Techniques of biological preparation realization*, and delivered a lecture on *Plant morphology and anatomy* for first-year foreign students.

Concomitantly with the beginning of her university career, Anca Sârbu participated as an active member in various research teams, supervised by reputed personalities of the field, taking part in the realization of 11 research and public projects, and co-authoring 10 scientific papers. Spurred by the enthusiasm and



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impetus of the young age, backed up by hard work and perseverance, she accumulated a rich experience, which, along the years, established her expertise in the field of vegetal biology.

Consequently, in 1992, the teacher and researcher Anca Sârbu was accepted as a PhD candidate with the theme: *The role of submerse macrophytes in the circuit of some mineral elements in the natural ecosystems of the Danube Delta*. The thesis was finalized and publicly defended in 1997, with academician prof. dr. Nicolae Botnariuc as scientific adviser, and academician prof. dr. C. Toma, prof. dr. Angheluță Vădineanu and prof. dr. Claudiu Tudoroanca as members of the PhD commission, thus becoming, according to the decision of the National Council for Attesting University Titles, Diplomas and Certificates, a “Doctor in Biology”.

Her didactic and research career continued in the same rhythm, along all stages of university hierarchy, up to the final position of full university professor.

To illustrate the scientific personality of Anca Sârbu and the esteem she gained among the Romanian and foreign specialists of the domain, a brief survey of her professional activity will be made in the following.

Along 37 years of teaching, she delivered to her students several lectures on vegetal biology and coordinated their laboratory works, devoted to: *Plant morphology and anatomy, Plant reproduction, Flora and vegetation, Evaluation and conservation of plant diversity, Plant ecomorphology, Vegetal cytology, Post-embryonary differentiation*. She also initiated six courses on *Vegetal bioindicators in ecology, Plant ecomorphology, Conservation of biodiversity, Apomixis, Histogenesis and organogenesis* which were introduced in the curricula of the Faculty of Biology for the first time, together with two sets of practical works for master and post-university studies.

Apart from the teaching activities, she was also interested in some joined activities, such as: planning and endowment of didactic, research and communication equipments for the Laboratory of plant anatomy, supervision of various scientific diploma or dissertation works for students in final years of study and also for secondary school teachers (pre-university levels), coordination of practical works for first-year students, president of various commissions for graduation and master admission exams, etc.

A rich activity was also developed within the management structures of the Faculty and University, as chief of department, member in the Senate of the University, Director of the Botanical Gardens, Director of studies in the Faculty of Biology, member in the Scientific Council of the Faculty and Scientific Secretary of the Center of Botanical Researches, Innovation and Technological Transfer.

The scientific activity of Anca Sârbu got materialized in an important number of books and chapters of books (34), some of them issued by either Romanian or foreign prestigious publishing houses, to which one should add 158 scientific and popularization studies, 8 of them published in ISI-cited journals, 59 in journals indexed in international databases, 34 articles included in the volumes of international

scientific manifestations, 22 in the volumes of some national scientific manifestations, and 14 studies of popularization in various Romanian magazines.

Worth mentioning, as well, is the elaboration of 47 research projects, as a coordinator and a member of the scientific team or as a partner. Out of these programmes, 13 benefited from external financial support and 35 from national financing. The themes approached in the researches were extremely comprehensive and diversified, including topics from the coastline of the Black Sea up to the heights of the Carpathian mountains. As a minute observer and researcher, she discovered a new species in Romania (*Eclipta prostrata*) and a new infrataxon for botanics (*Nymphaea candida* var. *undulatifolia*). One of the regions most dear to her was the Danube Delta, with its aquatic and swampy vegetation, a topic also approached in her PhD thesis. A passionate photographer, she elaborated a splendid bilingual *Album* (300 pages), with colour images of some aquatic and marshy plants and landscapes of the Danube Delta, *dedicated to children and adolescents, for getting them more acquainted with the world of plants, the vital element for a future safer biosphere*.

Endowed with managerial and organizational skills appreciated by all her collaborators – tact, patience, perseverance and kindness – Anca Sârbu mobilized – for the realization of the projects to be achieved – the efforts of people of various scientific background, different characters, different expertise, and even different interests, showing her appreciation and esteem for her colleagues. She always included in the research groups an important number of young researchers who, working together with experimented older specialists, had the chance of being formed in mixed teams.

I have had the chance of participating, together with her, in various scientific commissions or as a partner or member of different research teams; working in direct contact with nature, she became a different – emotive and enthusiastic, friendly – person, capable of elegantly going beyond some less pleasant moments, thus creating a most amicable and relaxing atmosphere.

As a president of the Botanical Gardens Association of Romania, she resumed the initiative of “Professional trips” (thus continuing the previously organized geobotanic ones), organizing scientific meetings and collaborations among generations, for discovering different phytogeographical Romanian areas with a special flora. On such occasions, exchanges of scientific opinions and information became possible among the participants, on the latest aspects of botanical nomenclature, taxonomic status of some species, phytosociology, habitats, preservation of phytodiversity, management of protected areas, etc.

The research themes she approached and developed, the conferences delivered in foreign countries, her active participation to internal and international scientific manifestations devoted to botanics, ecology, preservation of phytodiversity, as well as her contribution to the identification of protected areas in România, as an integrating part of the “European Network Natura 2000”, made Anca Sârbu become a unanimously recognized personality both in the country and abroad.

Her good command of two languages of international circulation (English and French) recommended her as a reputed personality at numerous national and international scientific manifestations.

Along the years, she was awarded numerous titles and positions: corresponding member of the Swedish Royal Academy of Agriculture and Silviculture; corresponding member of the American Society of Botanics; president of “PLANTA EUROPA” international organization and member in its Management Committee; member of the International Association for Danube Research (IAD); member of the International Management Committee of the European organization of Botanical Gardens; member of the international work group 2 for GPPC (Global Partnership for Plant Conservation); collaborator to the elaboration of the European Strategy for plant conservation (2008–2014); continental expert (Center and East Europe) for GIG Lake Macrophytes; evaluator for Life NATURA international projects.

She participated to numerous international scientific manifestations as president, organizer, member in scientific and management committees, such as: the 7th PLANTA EUROPA International Conference: “Plants for people, people for plants”, May 21–25, 2014, Chania, Creta (member in the organizing committee); IMPACT – International Conference on Managing Protected Areas under Climate Change, September 24–26, 2012, Dresden, Germany (member in the scientific committee); the 6th PLANTA EUROPA International Conference: Actions for Wild Plants, May 23–27, 2011, Krakow, Poland (member in the scientific committee); Workshop – Commune Monitoring and Evolution System for the National Rural Development Program (NRDP) in Romania, September 10–11, 2009, București, Romania; EUROGARD V – Fifth European Botanical Gardens Congress, June 8–12, 2009, Helsinki, Finland (member in the scientific committee); PLANTA EUROPA – the 5th European Conference on the Conservation of Wild Plants in Europe, September 5–9, 2007, Cluj-Napoca, Romania (president of the organizing committee); PLANTA EUROPA Steering Committee Workshop, May 16–21, 2006, Cluj-Napoca, Romania (organizer); Meeting of the 10th Macrophytes Group, organized in the Danube Delta, as part of the IAD/SIL programme, August 24–28, 1998, Romania (organizer); “Ecotones and plant diversity” Symposium, organized within the 7th International Congress of Ecology (INTECOL), July 19–25, 1998, Florence, Italy (organizer).

The interest for her scientific contributions published both in Romania and abroad is shown in more than 350 citations in Google Scholar – Mycitation.

Equally, numerous national and international prestigious prizes were awarded to Anca Sârbu, such as: in 2004 the FORD Prize, for the international project “Identifying Important Plant Areas in Romania”; in 2013 the “Ludovic Mrazek” Prize of the Romanian Academy, for the study entitled *Nanominerals and their bearing on metals uptake by plants*, authored by: Udubasa S.S., Constantinescu S., Popescu-Pogrion N., Sârbu A., Stihî C., Udubasa G; in 2017 the “Jean-Paul Galland” Planta Europa Prize – Golden Leaf.

Due to her professional competence, she was invited to join the scientific staff of several ISI-cited international publications, as scientific referent to: *Archiv für Hydrobiologie Suppl. – Large Rivers*; *Journal of Ecology and Natural Environment*, or as a member of the Editorial Board of “*Revista Botanică*”, issued in the Republic of Moldova. In Romania, she is a member of the editorial staff of five journals of the field: coordinator of the Board of “*Acta Horti Botanici Bucurestiensis*” (ISSN 0374-1273), indexed in Ulrich Periodical’s Directory international database; scientific referent and member of the Scientific Council of “*Journal of Plant Development*”, issued in Iași; member of the editorial staff of “*Natura*”, issued in Arad; member of the Scientific Council of “*Sănătatea plantelor*”.

To conclude with, this brief presentation of the didactic and scientific profile of Prof. dr. Anca Sârbu shows that, in the busy 37 years of work, she acquired special competences, which permitted her to approach various topics, such as: cytological, histological, morpho-anatomical, biochemical and physiological researches on spontaneous and cultivated plants from the flora of Romania; morpho-structural and physiological researches on aquatic plants belonging to Romanian natural ecosystems, for the preservation of the existing genofund; researches devoted to the evaluation of the diversity of plants and of the vegetal communities of Romania, according to the standards of the Directive on Habit of the European Union; researches on the flora and vegetation of Romania for the identification of the sites that might be included in the Natura 2000 Network of the European Union; researches of the Romanian natural pastures characterized by a rich biodiversity; classification and evaluation of phytodiversity; a multifunctional study on the aquatic vegetation of Romanian running waters, according to the standards of the Water Directive of the European Union; morpho-structural studies on some fossil algae, rare plants, phytoindicators and on species utilizable in phytomining; climatic changes and plant adaptive management.

On her 65th anniversary, we wish Prof. Anca Sârbu, a highly appreciated professor and a passionate researcher, recognized at both national and international level, a successful life – as a token of our esteem for her achievements, which contributed to enriching the actual stage of the biological sciences.

Congratulations, wishes of good health and full creative scientific forces, dear colleague!

