

**Professor univ. dr. eng. Mandache LEOCOV**  
(November 20, 1928 – October 16, 2018)



Just a few weeks ago, the man, professor and agronomist Mandache Leocov, left us discreetly and in dignity.

He was born on November 20, 1928, in the village of Prelipca, Salcea commune (Suceava County), in a family of peasants. After attending the Primary School in his native village (1936-1941), he graduated the Boys' High School (called now “Ștefan cel Mare” College) in Suceava (1949). After completing the high school he passed an entrance examination at the Faculty of Agronomy at the Polytechnic Institute of Iași, which he graduated in June, 1953, with the grade “very good”. In the same year, on October, 15, he was appointed as assistant to the Department of Social Sciences and Political Economy of the Polytechnic Institute of Iași, where he worked until the autumn of 1954, after which he was transferred to the Agronomic Institute of Iași, at the Department of Social Sciences. In the academic year 1955-1956, as a result of the change of the educational plans, he was appointed as assistant at the Department of Pomiculture, discipline of Dendrology, within the Faculty of Horticulture, where he worked until 1958.

In the autumn of 1959, he was appointed as Deputy Director and Associate Professor of Agriculture at the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences, at the founding of the 3-year Pedagogical Institute in Iași. As Deputy Director, he skillfully contributed to the renovation and adaptation of the old building (former Normal School of Girls “Mihai Sturza”) to the new requirements of education, improved the technical-material basis of the six established faculties (Faculty of Philology, Faculty of Mathematics, Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences, Faculty of Physics-Chemistry, Faculty of Music-Design and Faculty of Physical Education), organizing the “the Laboratory of Agricultural Sciences”, a school farming lot with herbal collections, other study facilities. He developed the *Agrofitotechnics Course*, which included Pedology, Agrotechnics and Fitotechnics, in 1964.

In 1962, when the agronomists, zootechnics and veterinary surgeons were redistributed, he was transferred as engineer at CAP / Agricultural Cooperative of Production / Miclești (Vaslui County), taking in the cumulation the didactics, also.

In Miclești, he set up new vineyards and orchards, expanded the vegetable culture and started the tobacco culture, made a lot of forest plantations on the degraded land, with an anti-erosive role. During the winters, he held classes in the agro-technological educational circles, for the professional training of the cooperative members.

In 1966 he returned to the chair, and in 1970, when the Pedagogical Institute was integrated into the University of Iași, he became a lecturer at the Faculty of Biology and the Faculty of Economic Sciences (for the subjects of Agrofitotechnics and the Basics of Agriculture). In 1977 he became professor.

He got the title of “Doctor of Agricultural Sciences” in 1972, with the thesis “Agro- and Geobotanic Study of Weeds in Vasluiet Basin”, under the direction of Professor Mihai Răvăruț, at the Agronomical Institute of Iași.

Between 1973-1990 he, also, was director of the “Anastasiu Fătu” Botanical Garden in Iași, where he continued the activity of his ancestors, putting his personal footprint on many achievements within the institution, of which: opening the access of visitors directly from the "Exhibition Park", by taking over of the so-called land “Petrescu” within the Botanical Garden; installation of a main gate, made of sculptured oak timber (a masterpiece of Professor Dumitru Zaucă) and of a second gate, as a wooden sculptured in popular style; setting up environmental environments (peatland, rocks); consolidation works on slopes subjected to active landslides; take-over of Dutch-type greenhouses from the Agronomical Institute of Iași, of 900 m<sup>2</sup>; the completion, in October 1974, of the construction and opening the “Palmarium” greenhouse (designed in early 1973); reorganizing the ring in front of the administrative pavilion; the organization of the Rosarium section on the ground of the former nursery, of 1.55 ha, where more than 700 varieties of roses were planted, and its opening in 1979, etc.

At the scientific level, he organized, together with the teaching staff of the Biology-Geography-Geology Faculty, in Iași, national scientific symposiums, the first being held on October, 16-17, 1976, occasioned by the celebration of the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the first university botanic garden in Romania; the second symposium took place on October, 10-11, 1981, when the bronze bust of Dr. Anastasiu Fătu was unveiled in the front of the administrative pavilion, the creation and donation of Iași sculptor, Eftimie Bârleanu.

A special initiative of the director Mandache Leocov was the organization of floral exhibitions in the botanical garden, with its own plants of the botanic garden; thus, the first exhibition was the one of the azalea (in 1981), and the one of chrysanthemum was organized in 1982, after which these floral exhibitions being organized each year, until today.

As a specialist in agriculture, landscape dendrology, ecology of exotic and indigenous decorative plants, Professor Mandache Leocov has published, alone or in collaboration, more than 110 studies and scientific articles, in specialized journals in the country.

Many articles of Professor Mandache Leocov evoke the memory of the forefathers (Ion Ionescu de la Brad, Anastasiu Fătu) and his contemporaries (Ion Tarnavski, Valeriu Cotea, Constantin Ciopraga, Gheorghe Bălțatu, Emilian Țopa, Constantin Oescu, Petru Magazin, Mircea Hatman, Constantin Liviu Rusu, Vlad Bejan).

Professor Mandache Leocov has also written many articles on popularizing science, nature conservation, the Botanical Garden in Iași in particular. He presented at the local radio and television stations, at the Romanian Academy, Iași branch, at the Romanian Literature Museum in Iași, the art galleries “Pod Pogor-ful” and “Anticariat D. I. Grumăzescu”, at the “Costache Negruzzi” Museum in Hermeziu-Trifești, at the “Dimitrie Cantemir” High School, etc., interesting expositions in various fields of agro-biological sciences and nature protection.

As a result of his recognition as a landscaping specialist, the local administrative authorities asked him to solve some problems related to the city of Iași, as it appears from the list of his papers, from the correspondence received and from the conferences held on different occasions. We remind you the green space around the Agronomic Institute in Iași, the landscaping project of the Bahlui River, the organization of the green spaces from the

Polytechnic Institute in Iași between “Red Bridge” and “Tudor Vladimirescu”, the embankments of the Bahlui River, the Eternity Iași Cemetery, and others. Also, he was concerned with the realization and installation of the statues of some cultural personalities of Iași or Moldavia, for the protection of the Eminescu's lime tree (*Tilia tomentosa*) in Copou Park in Iași, of the corner so-called “Plopii fără soț” (*Populus alba*) at Bucium, the “Unirii” horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) at Vișan, the green spaces of the current “Pallas” complex in Iași, and, last but not least, the presentation of the importance of Iași as a city of flowers and parks.

For his work in over seven decades, he was rewarded with numerous diplomas of excellence, as: from the “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași, from the Romanian Horticultural Society, from the “Ion Ionescu de la Brad” University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine in Iași, from the National Association of the Veterans of the War, the Iași branch, from the “Dimitrie Cantemir” High School of Iași, and from the Association of the Environmentalists Club in Iași, from the Egreta-Iași Association, from the parish “Descent of the Holy Spirit” of Bucium, and others.

Whoever remains impressed by the way in which Mandache Leocov contributed passionately and skillfully to the development of the Botanic Garden of Iași, but also to the establishment of the spiritual relations with all those who protect the nature and the perennial values of the Romanian people.

Professor Mandache Leocov was guided on his last journey by the family members, colleagues, friends and all who valued him, resting peacefully and reconciled himself and the others in the Eternity Cemetery of Iași.

**Cătălin TĂNASE, PhD. Univ. Professor**

“Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași, Faculty of Biology

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“Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași, “Anastase Fătu” Botanical Garden