

**PROFESSOR DR. DUMITRU MITITELU
(1929-2005)**



One of the outstanding professors of the Faculty of Biology of “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași, was Dumitru Mititelu. He has marked many series of students and graduates of bachelor's, master's or doctoral studies, specializations in biology, biology-geography or natural and agricultural sciences, for more than four decades.

Of course, Professor Dumitru Mititelu was honored during his life by the Faculty of Biology members, by his doctoral students and doctors, but also by the students he guided, all with a rare competence and a deep attachment to quality of their scientific works, done together or under his direct guidance.

Thus, on October 19, 1929, the only son of Constantine and Euphrosine Mititelu, came to the world in Vaslui town. It is known that him graduated the primary school in Vaslui. The high school studies begin at the “Vasile Alecsandri” humanist high school in Galați, but the last two high school classes he followed at the “Mihail Kogălniceanu” Vaslui high school, which he graduated in 1948. After a short career as a teacher at a school in Dănești, Vaslui, he attended his military training (1950-1951).

He is admitted on a base of an examination to the Faculty of Natural Sciences of Iași, in 1951, the Biology-Botany section, which he graduated in 1955. Later on, he also graduated the courses of the Faculty of Philosophy, the evening section (in 1963), and of Faculty of Agronomy, the section with no regular frequency (in 1969), both in Iași. He completed and supported his doctoral thesis entitled “Flora and vegetation from Depression and Elan hills (Vaslui county)” in 1973, under the guidance of Professor Constantin Burduja, obtaining the title of the Doctor in Biology (Geobotanical specialty).

On a professional level, after graduating his bachelor's degree in Biology-Botany, he was appointed as a Preparator at the Botany Department of the Agronomic Institute of Iași, where he advanced to the position of Head of Laboratory in 1957, becoming an University Assistant in 1959.

In 1961 he transferred to the Pedagogical Institute in Iași, advancing to the position of University Lecturer, and in 1964 he advanced to the position of the University Reader. Also, in the same year he became Head of the Department, so that from 1965 he became Prodean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences. Here he teaches the disciplines of morphology, systematics and plant physiology, of microbiology and technique of preparation of biological material, and others. As a result of the integration, in 1968, of the Pedagogical Institute into the structures of the “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University, he taught courses in systematic botany, general biology, phytocoenology and the vegetation of Romania to the students of the Faculty of Biology-Geography-Geology. For a short period of time, starting in 1990, he taught the Theoretical Biology course to the students of the Faculty of Philosophy of the

University “Alexandru Ioan Cuza”. In the same year, he was promoted to the position of University Professor.

In 1975 he acted as a Professor-Cooperating of the University of Kisangani (Republic of Zaire), teaching, in french language, the courses of Tropical Taxonomy and Synecology.

Due to his scientific probity, Professor Dumitru Mititelu has fulfilled many professional-scientific functions, such as: member of the Professional Council of the Faculty of Biology, member of the University Senate, member of the Scientific Council of the Botanic Garden, scientific secretary of the Professional Council of the Pedagogic Institute, secretary of the Subcommittee of the Romanian Academy for the Protection of Nature in Moldova, member of the Group of the Romanian Academy for the mapping of the Carpathian flora and vegetation, editorial secretary of the publication “Scientific Works” of the Pedagogic Institute, and member of the editorial board of the *Biology* series of the *Scientific Annals of the University* “Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, Iași.

Being an acknowledged specialist, he was appointed as Doctoral supervisor of Faculty of Biology, “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University in Iași, starting with 1992, in the Systematic Botany and Phytocoenology specialties.

During his life, Professor Dumitru Mititelu has been a scientific reviewer in many commissions for the award of doctoral degrees in biology, university teaching degrees or scientific degrees in various research institutes. He has led and guided many methodological-scientific works for granting the first degree in pre-university education and many graduate or master's degree works of biology graduates.

As students, we were enchanted both in the classrooms, but also in the botanical trips, by the vast scholarship of Professor Dumitru Mititelu, also by his botanical knowledge and didactic mastery.

The festive graduation courses of the students of Faculty of Biology, whenever he was invited to lecture, were very lively and attractive, leading the audience in many fields of Romanian and universal science and culture.

As a result of his professional activity and his numerous botanical incursions in the field, he left a very rich didactic material, represented by large color plates, including all the plant species studied by students in the disciplines of Systematic Botany or Phytocoenology, a representative herbar used in the classrooms at the practical works by students, a personal collection of over 8,000 color slides with plants photographed by himself in their natural environment (slides presented to students in their classrooms) or with various aspects of the protected natural areas of Romania and visited countries.

He wrote, alone or in collaboration, a lot of scientific papers in which he brought to the attention the personal biographies and scientific contributions of over 150 Romanian botanists, thus contributing decisively to the knowledge of the history of Romanian botany. Professor Dumitru Mititelu elaborated, in collaboration, floristic and geobotanical bibliographies on the historical provinces of Romania, as Moldavia, Bucovina, Maramureș, as well as Dobrogea, works that synthesized all botanical knowledges (up to the time of their appearance), from many Romanian or foreign scientific publications.

In the 43 years of professional activity (in 1998 he retired) he published, alone or with more than 80 collaborators, over 230 scientific, bibliographic works, reviews, etc., summing over 5,000 pages. The scientific fields addressed in these works are: flora and vegetation of Romania or Zaire, taxonomy and phytogeography of vascular plants, vegetal zoology, inventory of decorative woody plants, ecology and productivity of terrestrial ecosystems, phytocoenology, forestry and praticole typology, mapping of Romanian vegetation, etc.

In recognition of his scientific probity, Professor Dumitru Mititelu was one of the co-authors of the monograph “Vegetation of Romania”, published in 1992 (under the editorship of Professor Doina Ivan, University of Bucharest). Subsequently, the synthetic paper “Vegetation potentielle de la Roumanie”, in which Professor Dumitru Mititelu was one of the collaborators, was published in *Braun-Blanquetia* scientific magazine, in Camerino, Italy, in 1993.

Among the scientific contributions of Professor Dumitru Mititelu is the description, as new for science (alone or in collaboration with other botanists), of a number of 28 plant communities (among which two plant communities of tropical epiphytic ferns, identified on the oil palm trees in Zaire) and two subassociations, identification of a significant number of new vascular plant species for the flora of Romania or Moldavia, elaboration of botanical and phytocoenotic monographs for all the counties of Moldavia, as well as monographs for many botanical reserves in Moldavia, Muntenia, Transylvania, Dobrogea and Maramureș, of some botanical field guides on some areas of Moldavia or Dobrogea, etc.

For all his scientific contributions, for his qualities as a teacher, for his honesty and humanity, Professor Dumitru Mititelu will remain forever in the memories of those who were close to him. For the community of Romanian scientists he will remain a landmark of competence and hard work in the field of Romanian botany.

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