

PROFESSOR IONEL MIRON ON HIS 80th ANNIVERSARY

Constantin TOMA

Romanian Academy, Faculty of Biology, "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași, 21A Carol I Bvd, 700505 Iași, Romania



With Professor Ionel Miron, a constant friend from the 1953, with whom I lived for better and for worse more than six decades, I was colleague in student times and later on teaching together at the „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași. Our wives were sisters and this long-term friendship was also built on mutual knowledge of our work in the field of biology. Rarely was it given to me to meet and appreciate a naturalist so passionate to study aquatic organisms, especially fish, a naturalist who traveled extensively throughout Europe, Asia and Africa, either diving into the sea or studying life in the Sahara desert.

About this known and much appreciated colleague and friend I will write the lines below.

*
* *

Born on the 6th of July 1935 in Ivănești, a village in Vaslui County, Ionel Miron is the son of Ioan and Elena Miron, farmers, his father being also a psalm reader at the village church.

In his native village he followed primary school and, after that, from 1949-1953, he attended the „Mihail Kogălniceanu” high school in Vaslui. After

successfully passing his baccalaureate, he became a student at the Faculty of Natural Sciences, Section of Natural Sciences-Chemistry, of the „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University, graduating with good results in 1957. In the same year, Ionel Miron becomes a teacher of biology at the school in his native village.

In 1956, Professor dr. Petre Jitariu, the Dean of our faculty, founded the Biological, Geological and Geographical Research Station “Stejarul”, from Pângărați-Neamț. Knowing this young researcher’s interest and passion for scientific research and taking into account of his involvement in the student circle of Hydrobiology (co-ordinator Professor dr. Gheorghe Hasan) and after that, the circle of the Animal eco-physiology (co-ordinator Lecturer dr. Ștefan Agrigoroaie), Professor Jitariu invited Ionel Miron, in January 1958, to become scientific researcher at this new station, where Professor Jitariu spared no efforts to employ young graduates in the different sections created in the beginning of this Station.

That is why, from 1958 to 1982, Professor Ionel Miron was a scientific researcher (beginner, principal and 3rd degree) at the „Stejarul” Station, having as a main research direction the study of the aquatic fauna. In 1973, under the supervision of Academician Professor dr. Petre Jitariu, he obtained his PhD thesis in the Eco-physiology field, with the thesis “Researches on the behavior of some aquatic invertebrates into a river-lake ecological succession”. The rhythm and amplitude of this ecological succession, from the lotic ecosystems – the Bistrița river and its tributaries in the floodplain to the lentic ecosystem – Bicaz Reservoir, built in the summer of the 1960, were also materialized in extensive faunal lists, included in the „*Limnofauna europaea*” monograph (published in Germany, Joachim Illies ed., 1967), that mentioned Professor Miron’s important contributions.

From 1967 until 1982, Ionel Miron led the Section of Hydrobiology of the “Stejarul” Station. Since 1982, as a 2nd degree researcher, he became director of the Forestry Research and Management Institute (ICAS) from Potoci-Neamț, on the shore of Bicaz Reservoir. In 1991, he became a 1st degree researcher, transferring from ICAS to the „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University, proposing the establishment of the Potoci Biological Station, approved by the Education Ministry, and he served as its director until 2002. Since 1993, Ionel Miron became an Associate Professor, Professor and again Associate Professor, since 2005, after his retirement, at Faculty of Biology of Iași. In 1998, he became PhD supervisor in Ecology (preparing nine young researchers, who obtained the doctoral degree in Biology).

His most important scientific results were published (1960-2010) in 91 scientific articles in different Romanian journals (84) and abroad (7). Twelve books should be also added, among which a course of Aquaculture and five limnological monographs (in national and local publishing houses).

It is worth pointing out that, in 1983, in collaboration with 12 limnologists from the „Stejarul” Station, the Romanian Academy Publishing House issued the limnological monograph “Izvoru Muntelui-Bicaz Reservoir”, with I. Miron as editor. Another monograph, “Bioindicators of running waters quality” (2008, authors Anca Neagu and Ionel Miron), received the „Grigore Antipa” Romanian Academy’s Award and „Emil Pop” Award of the Academy of Romanian Scientists. In 2014, Ionel Miron published in collaboration with Liviu Miron the book „Underwater expeditions”, receiving the „Emil Pop” Award of the Academy of Romanian Scientists.

To elucidate many of the fine physiological mechanisms of aquatic organisms and to determine *in situ* hydrobiont behavior in a river-lake ecological succession, Professor Ionel Miron applied, with high accuracy, an experimental model, following the method of direct underwater observations, using a submersible laboratory and scuba diving techniques. The sustained efforts of a research team, which included Prof. Miron, have led to the first Romanian bathyscaphe for research and underwater works, called and patented as L.S. 1, with the support and guidance of the Professor dr. Petre Jitariu.

Based on the limnological theoretical results, presented in Prof. Miron PhD thesis, an application concerning the ecological fundamentals of aquaculture on the mountainous reservoirs was designed. In 1984, it was approved, by the Forest Ministry, and implemented on the Bicaz Reservoir, the biotechnology „Trout breeding in floating cages on the mountainous reservoirs” (authors Ionel Miron, Costică Misăilă and Rodica Misăilă).

Over these 57 years as researcher, professor and PhD supervisor career, Mr. Ionel Miron attended different specializations in limnological research (Ghent-Belgium, 1971; Zürich-Switzerland, 1974), and obtained a scholarship in the Laboratory of Hydrobiology from Ghent University. He participated as invited speaker in various international meetings (Abisko-Sweden, Gdynia-Poland, Tihany-Balaton-Hungary, Lindbergmühle and München-Germany), and took part in scientific expeditions. He was in one expedition in Morocco, in 1971, another in Anatolia, in 1973, and the three expeditions, with a team of foreign specialists, into the „Limnology of Sahara” Programme (Director Professor Henri Dumont, Ghent University), in different areas of this desert (Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, Niger, Tunis), in 1975, 1976 and 1977. In collaboration with Professor dr. Peter Zwick, from the Limnologische Fluss-Station Schlitz (Germany), Mr. Miron discovered and published a new stonefly genus, *Afroperlodes atlas* Miron&Zwick, 1972. During these activities, he specialized in hydrobiology, underwater research, biogeographical zonation, acquiring new techniques and modern specific methods, studying different ecosystem types, collecting a rich fauna material, establishing scientific contacts in aquatic ecology

and aquaculture domains, organizing research programmes, gathering an important scientific literature and a great experience.

His extensive experience was acknowledged both at national and international level. In 1995, Professor Ionel Miron was invited and accepted to give a course on Aquatic ecosystems, at Paris VII „Denis Diderot” University – France, for a full academic year. In 1992, he also guided, during two months, the Romanian and French students while undertaking field work in France. Professor Miron also was a co-director of the International campus for the environment, along with Professor dr. Michel Petitjean, under the auspices of „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” and Paris VII Universities (1991-1996). From 2006 to 2010, Professors Karl-Otto Rothhaupt and Ionel Miron were co-directors of the International Limno-ecological Summer school (organized by „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” Iași and Konstanz Universities).

Professor Miron represented “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University in the European Project „Ecological management of catchments in Europe” – ECOCATCH, Director Professor Dr. Anna-Kristina Brunberg, from Uppsala University-Sweden (2005-2011). He was invited by other European universities (UCO Angers-France, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam-Netherlands, Porto-Portugal, Sussex-UK). He also participated with scientific presentations in different international congresses, symposia and other events in Hungary, Sweden, Germany, Spain, Poland and Republic of Moldova, but also organized himself scientific events in Romania (Iași and Piatra Neamț), dealing with reservoirs biology, the biological basis of aquaculture and human impact on the environment.

He has been a member of the International Society of Limnology (SIL) since 1970 and he is a member of the Scientific Committee of the Academy of Sciences - Institute of Zoology, led by Professor dr. habil. Acad. Ion Toderaș.

With his scientific papers and books and numerous participation in national and international scientific events, Professor Ionel Miron contributed tremendously to the development of the Romanian Biology, especially of the Hydrobiology and Aquaculture. In his activity of over than 55 years at „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași (as a Researcher and Professor), Ionel Miron displayed a high professional competence, passion and a great capacity for work, as well as a scientific probity and ethics, in a general biological culture context.

He enjoys the prestige and is appreciated within the specialist communities in Romania and abroad, due to his entire written work, problems solved, due to the numerous and important research grants and projects in which he was involved as a member or a director from 1971 to 2013, and also due to his 12 inventions, some of them awarded with gold in important international meetings.

Since 2010, Professor Miron has been reconfirmed as a titular member of the Academy of Romanian Scientists. In 2014, he received the title „*Professor emeritus*” of „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași.

I could mention that Professor Ionel Miron is the first researcher and professor with international scientific contribution who was born in Ivănești, and for this the local community recognized his merits, giving to the school of the village the name “Ionel Miron”. He is always deeply dedicated by this school and its people, developing a lot of activities such as lectures, projects in biological agriculture field and ecology, meetings and organizing ecological summer schools.

Summing up all these important results, I could say that Professor Miron is a model of abnegation, of energy for work, passion, exigency and kindness, revealed in all circumstances. I am very glad to express my great admiration and I would like to wish the forever young Professor Miron many happy life years, a great capacity for work and a good health.

Iași, the 4th of February, 2015