

## 80 YEARS SINCE THE FOUNDATION OF THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OF ROMANIA

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**Abstract.** The Academy of Sciences of Romania was legally founded on March 29, 1935 having as main purpose to encourage and guide scientific creation. In its 13 years of existence, the Academy of Sciences organised conferences, symposia and scientific sessions, edited a “Bulletin” and a “Comptes Rendus”, published 40 books, and awarded a number of valuable scientific papers. On June 8, 1948, the Academy of Sciences ceased its activity, and was integrated into the Academy of the Romanian People’s Republic.

**Key words:** science, organisation, conferences, symposia, awards, books.

On March 3, 1935, on the premises of the Faculty of Sciences of the University of Bucharest, 26 professors of Bucharest, Iasi and Cluj gathered to discuss the establishment of an association designed to support and stimulate scientific research in Romania.

After the discussions that then took place, it was proposed to found the Academy of Sciences. In the following days were drawn up the Articles of Incorporation of the Academy of Sciences of Romania, which were discussed and approved in the sitting of March 11, 1935. The document was signed by Constantin Angelescu, Dragomir Hurmuzescu, Nicolae Coculescu, Dimitrie Călugăreanu, Ștefan Minovici, Andrei Popovici-Bânzoșanu, Anton Davidoglu, Constantin Kirițescu, Nicolae Condeescu, Ion Borcea, Negoită Dănilă, Alexandru Borza, Ion Popescu-Voitești, Nicolae T. Deleanu, Constantin Stătescu, I. V. Bădulescu, Eugen Bădărău, Costin Stoicescu, Marin Drăcea, Eugen Angelescu, Constantin Mihăilescu, Simion Radian, Constantin Popescu, Ion Miclescu, Ilie C. Purcaru and Christian Musceleanu.

The signatories were prominent personalities in the scientific world and beyond, creators of schools in mathematics, medicine, physics, biology, astronomy, geology, etc.

The famous surgeon Constantin Angelescu was elected president of the Academy of Sciences, and the physicist Christian Musceleanu was appointed its secretary.

In the following period was developed the Statute, which stated that: “The purpose of the Academy of Sciences of Romania is to foster, encourage and guide scientific creation through:

a) disquisitions, reports, publications and exhibitions related to matters of pure and applied science;

b) granting awards for valuable works;

c) subsidisation of research in the field of science.

The Academy will be an advisory body for authorities and a guide for scientific research institutes”.

The members of the Academy of Sciences could be “Romanian or foreign scholars who distinguished themselves through their work in pure or applied science.” They were 70 in total, distributed in the following 10 sections:

1. Mathematics and Astronomy;
2. Physics;
3. Chemistry;
4. Zoology, Anatomy, Palaeontology and Animal Physiology;
5. Botany and Plant Physiology;
6. Applied Biology;
7. Geology, Mineralogy and Geography;
8. Military engineering applied to National Defence;
9. History and philosophy of science, Organisation, education and popularisation;
10. Technical Sciences (Civil Engineering).



Busts Ph.D. Constantin Angelescu and Ph.D. Vasile Căndea, unveiled on the day of March 25, 2015 at the headquarters of ARS

In accordance with the legislation in force, the necessary documents were submitted to the Ilfov County Court, which - by its **Judgment of March 29, 1935** - granted legal personality to the Academy of Sciences of Romania. This writ marked the legal establishment of this institution.

The establishment of the Academy of Sciences corresponded to a real historical necessity. As early as the second half of the nineteenth century, Romanian scientists felt the need to assemble in an organisation in which to discuss and promote ideas and actions aiming at modernising society from the economic, technical, cultural standpoint, to provide practical solutions to government policy makers designed to develop Romania.

The Great Union of 1918 created the national framework conducive to achieving this goal. For the first time in history, all spiritual forces - the Old Kingdom, Bessarabia, Bukovina and Transylvania, regardless of their ethnic origin - could work together to accelerate the material and spiritual progress of Romania.

Since the first decade of the interwar period, many intellectuals - including Grigore Antipa, P.P. Negulescu, Dimitrie Gusti - pleaded for the establishment of an Academy designed to promote mainly technical sciences, thereby complementing the activity of the Romanian Academy, which - according to its Statute - was meant to foster the Romanian language and national history.

Among the founding members of the Academy of Sciences were also five prominent members of the Romanian Academy: Dragomir Hurmuzescu, Ion Borcea, Ștefan Minovici, Constantin Angelescu and Dimitrie Călugăreanu.

The headquarters of the Academy of Sciences were in the premises of the Faculty of Sciences in 14 Poincaré Street, opposite the School of Architecture.

Under the decision of the Council of Ministers of June 1937, the Academy of Sciences received “in full and permanent use” a piece of land of 566.77 square meters in the area extending from Edgar Quinet Street, next to Ene Church and Brătianu Boulevard to build there, within five years, its own headquarters. It was to be a monumental building that would fit in the scenery offered by the centre of Bucharest, then in the midst of a reconstruction process.

The efforts for gathering the necessary funds failed to give the desired results therefore the Academy of Sciences could not build its own headquarters. Currently, on the respective piece of land rise an artesian well and the small park between “Ion Mincu” University of Architecture and Urbanism and the old building of the University of Bucharest.

The main activity of the Academy of Sciences was the organisation of scientific sessions at the level of the sections and plenary meetings, the works thereof being published in the “Bulletin of the Academy of Sciences of Romania”, in which 14 issues were published between 1936 and 1947.

It also published in French the publication entitled “Comptes Rendus de l'Académie de Sciences de Roumanie”, which had a wide international circulation.

In return for this publication, the Academy of Sciences hoarded - according to its secretary's statements - the most complete and valuable collection of foreign scientific journals existing in Romania.

Under the aegis of the Academy of Sciences more than 40 books appeared, including the results of the research conducted by its members. Among these it is worthwhile citing *The Problems of War and Science*, a work published in 1943, having no less than 588 pages, including among its authors Constantin C. Kirțescu, Gheorghe N. Leon, Dimitrie Leonida, Florea Stănculescu, Agricola Cardaș, Victor Gomoiu, Constantin Popovici, Ion Grințescu, Ion Zamfirescu, Demetru Paulian, Ion Popescu-Voitești, Eugeniu Neculcea, Alexandru Ionescu-Matiu, general Ștefan Burileanu.

In accordance with its Statute, the Academy of Sciences awarded several works, which distinguished themselves by their originality and valuable scientific contributions. The amounts for these prizes were donated by a series of personalities such as Mihail Haret, doctor P. Pitulescu, Demetru Paulian, Elvira and doctor I. Istrate.

The political developments after August 23, 1944 strongly influenced Romania's situation in all areas, including the cultural and scientific field.

All the existing organisations during the war in the East (22 June 1941-23 August 1944) were subjected to rigorous scrutiny in order to determine whether they conducted hostile actions against the United Nations. In the file drawn up by the Prefecture of the Capital Police it was estimated on November 30, 1944, that "the Academy of Sciences had made no politics" therefore it could continue its activity.

Under the Journal of the Council of Ministers of 9 April 1947 it was decided to close the military genius section "for the higher interests of the state".

Given the fact that the persecution against former political leaders had begun, doctor Angelescu – one of the leaders of the National Liberal Party - resigned as president of the Academy of Sciences, and on 16 November 1947 in his place was elected the famous mathematician Dimitrie Pompeiu, member of the Romanian Academy.

A few months later, by decree of the Presidium of the Grand National Assembly on June 8, 1948, the Romanian Academy was transformed into the Academy of the Romanian People's Republic. Article 4 of this decree stated: "The current Academy of Medicine and the current Academy of Sciences merge into the Academy of the Romanian People's Republic", and Article 5 stipulated: "All movable and immovable property of the Romanian Academy, of the Academy of Medicine and of the Academy of Sciences shall become the heritage of the Academy of the Romanian People's Republic.

The Academy of Sciences revived on May 30, 1956, when - by the decision of the Council of Ministers - was authorised the establishment of the Association

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of Scientists of the Romanian People's Republic, which became affiliated to the World Federation of Scientists.

The Association of Scientists included - as collective members – the Society of Mathematical Sciences, the Society of Natural Sciences and Geography, the Society of Historical and Philological Sciences, the Union of Medical Societies, the Lawyers' Association and the Union of Architects.

The first President of the Association of Scientists was Traian Săvulescu, President of the Romanian Academy, who was succeeded by Athanasie Joja (1959-1972), Nicolae Victor Teodorescu (1972-1994), and Vasile Câdea (1994-1996).

The Congress of the Association of Scientists held between May 22 and May 24, 1996 decided to change its name to Academy of Romanian Scientists and doctor Vasile Câdea was elected its President.

Subsequently the necessary documents were prepared, based on which, on October 3, 1996 the Court of Bucharest District 1 adopted the decision which stated: "Upholds the request made by the Academy of Romanian Scientists" and ordered it to be "entered in the Register of Legal Entities".

After a decade, on January 18, 2007, a law passed providing in Article 1 that "AOSR is the successor and only heir" of the Academy of Sciences of Romania and of the Association of Scientists of Romania, which changed its name to the Academy of Romanian Scientists.

This law underlies the existence and activities of this institution.

Marking the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the founding of the Academy of Sciences of Romania, we can conclude that - through its members, some of them Nobel Prize winners - it was a noteworthy presence in the Romanian society, conducting fruitful work on multiple levels which ought to be known and appreciated.

Its spiritual heritage, gathered over the years, is an incentive for its members to continue and enhance the work of the predecessors, to multiply their efforts in order to increase the role of science in the contemporary world, with a view to accelerating Romania's development on the coordinates of modern progress and civilisation.

