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SPECIAL ISSUE DEDICATED TO BIAGIO RICCERI ON HIS 70th ANNIVERSARY*

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Warm congratulations to my friend Biagio Ricceri, a brilliant expert in Functional Analysis

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1 Biographical sketch

Biagio Ricceri was born in Catania, on February 7, 1955. After graduating in Mathematics from the *University of Catania*, he was a fellow of the italian *National Research Council* from 1979 to 1982. In 1983, he became assistant professor at the *University of Catania* and, in 1987, he was appointed full professor at the *University of Messina*. In 1997, he returned to the *University of Catania*. He retired on November 1, 2025. Without going into much detail, I can say that Professor Biagio Ricceri was an excellent educator of several generations of students and the scientific mentor of 13 PhD students who are currently full or associate professors.

Biagio Ricceri is a member of the *Accademia Gioenia* and of the *Accademia Peloritana dei Pericolanti*, and in 2024 he became (on my recommendation) an Honorary Member of the *Academy of Romanian Scientists*: https://www.aosr.ro/membrii-sectiei-stiinte-matematice/.

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He served and is still serving as editor of several journals (including *Nonlinear Analysis, Journal of Convex Analysis, Journal of Nonlinear and Convex Analysis, Fixed Point Theory, Taiwanese Journal of Mathematics*) and, since 2024, he became (on my invitation) an editor of our journal, *Ann. Acad. Rom. Sci., Ser. Math. Appl.*:
https://www.aos.ro/editura/analeleaosr/annals-on-mathematics.

2 Scientific activity and achievements

The initial scientific interests of Biagio Ricceri were focused on multifunctions. In particular, in 1993, he founded *Set-Valued Analysis* which was the first journal entirely devoted to multifunctions and their applications. He was its Editor-in-Chief until 2014.

Then, since 1993, he has worked on minimax theory. In 2016, he founded *Minimax Theory and its Applications*, the first journal entirely devoted to that subject. He was its Editor-in-Chief until 2024.

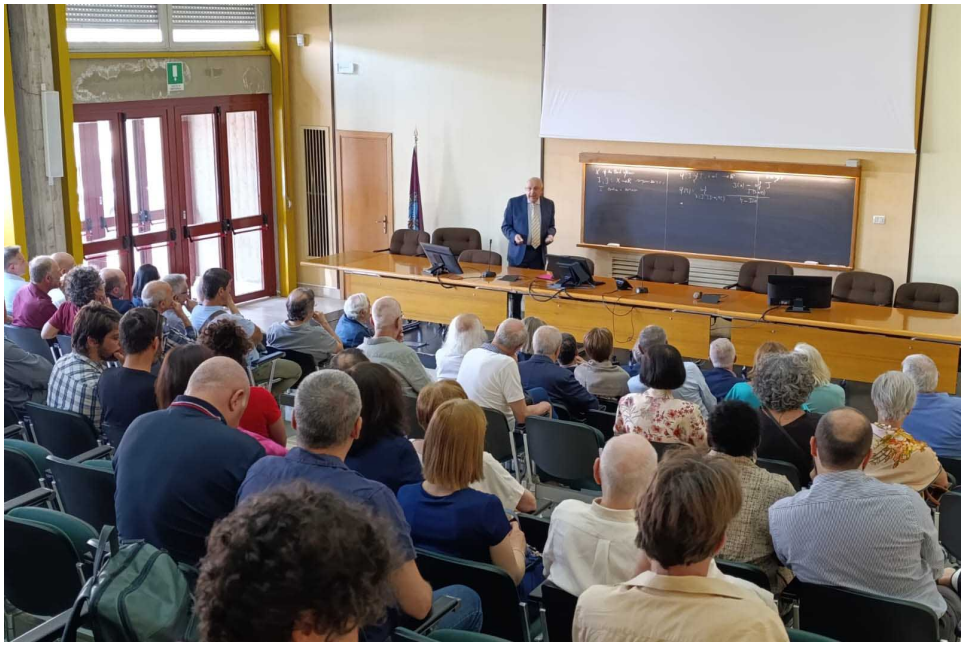
It is worth noticing that just multifunctions, jointly with the topological concept of connectedness, were the main tools that he used to obtain his minimax theorems. More generally, Biagio Ricceri's scientific work is characterized by a great internal unity based on multifunctions, connectedness and minimax.

Personally, I commend him for his exceptional results in the fields of *Convex Analysis, Optimization, Calculus of Variations, Nonlinear Analysis, Functional Analysis* (besides *Set-Valued Analysis* and *Minimax Theory*). His famous principles have found numerous applications, as I have seen in many publications.

Biagio Ricceri is a leading scholar in his fields, showing extraordinary inventiveness and creativity. During his career he produced numerous inovative mathematical results, which later proved to be very useful in various applications. I remember attending one of his plenary lectures (see https://mathinfo.ms.sapientia.ro/2017/), in which he shared over 20 important original results. Biagio swims easily in the waters of Functional Analysis, which makes him unique within the international mathematical community. What allowed Biagio Ricceri to obtain results of extraordinary novelty (even counterintuitive) is his way of doing mathematics itself. Namely, contrary to the majority of mathematicians, he systematically adopts the deductive method which goes from the universal to the particular. That is to say, he first establishes general principles in abstract settings, following only the internal logic of the theoretical development, and then goes on to

apply them to specific problems of different nature.

Due to his reputation in the academic world, Biagio Ricceri has been invited to deliver plenary lectures at countless conferences held in more than 20 different countries.



Professor B. Ricceri delivering a lecture on *Ricceri's Variational Principle* at the Mathematics Department of the University of Catania, on June 12, 2025

The great impact of Ricceri's results is shown not so much by the number of raw citations in references as by the very high values of certain specific indices of excellence. For instance, in MathSciNet the name Ricceri appears in the title of 33 papers and in the review texts of 434 papers. In zbMATH Open, the name Ricceri appears in the keywords of 73 papers. In the WoS, the name Ricceri in "Topic" and "Mathematics" appears in: 296 publications, 2,146 citing articles, 3,657 times cited, 32 H-index.

I conclude by referring to a forthcoming monograph in which Biagio Ricceri himself will illustrate his scientific production:
https://www.worldscientific.com/worldscibooks/10.1142/14550.

Finally, I would like to say that I was fortunate to have had the chance to know Biagio Ricceri, a great mathematician of modern times.

The authors who contributed to the present volume issue are glad and honored to dedicate their papers to Professor Biagio Ricceri in recognition and appreciation of his outstanding achievements.

September 1, 2025 Gheorghe Moroşanu