

DYNAMICS OF A LIFE DEVOTED TO MATHEMATICS - IN MEMORIAM MIHAIL MEGAN*

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Dedicated to the memory of Professor Mihail Megan

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Abstract

With an academic career spanning over 50 years in higher education and research, and internationally recognized achievements, Mihail Megan represented a life dedicated to mathematics and an exponent of a world where passion for science and research was the common denominator. This special issue is dedicated to his memory, to honor his life and work, bringing together a collection of papers authored by friends and collaborators. The guest editors express their gratitude to all authors for their scientific contributions.

1 Personal Life

Mihail Megan was born on January 2, 1947 in Zegaia, Mehedinți County. Son of a priest and a teacher, he learned the art of combining science with

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art from an early age. He had a beautiful childhood with his siblings Maria and Jan, with whom he had a particularly strong bond throughout his entire life. From his father, priest Gheorghe Megan, he learned what patience and faith mean, and perhaps these are precisely what made him the rigorous and generous mathematician that everyone knew. From his mother, Eugenia, he inherited the pleasure of teaching others and the joy of turning each lesson into a discovery for his students.

He met his wife Nicoleta, a high school biology teacher, during his student years, and she was by his side his entire life, with discretion and devotion. Together, they had two daughters, Mihaela and Diana, of whom he was very proud. Later, in the mid-1990s and, respectively, in the early 2000s, his two sons-in-law, Mihai Neamțu and Dan Stoian, joined his family. One of his greatest joys was having a house full of family members and friends who would come to listen to his stories or ask him for advice - Mihail Megan was an exceptional storyteller and always happy to offer support. He loved football, literature, and philosophy, passions that strengthened several life-long friendships. Mihail Megan very much loved traveling, meeting friends, and holidays spent with family.



With his family at Babeș-Bolyai University in 2017. From left to right: Dan Stoian, Diana Stoian, Mihail Megan, Mihaela Neamțu, Mihai Neamțu, Nicoleta Megan

Mathematics was his greatest passion. Family members, especially his daughters, often remarked with humor that he would find any reason to take refuge and do mathematics. His love for mathematics was directly carried on by his daughter, Mihaela Neamțu, who is currently a Full Professor and doctoral supervisor in Mathematics, and also indirectly by his daughter

Diana Stoian, who is an economist. His passion for the exact sciences was inherited by his two grandchildren, Felix and Daria Neamtu, both currently students at the university.

2 Professional Life

Ever since general school and high school, Mihail Megan was a student passionate about Mathematics, particularly talented in both exact sciences and humanities, always being the best student of his generation. He studied for his bachelor's degree between 1964 and 1969 at the University of Timișoara, Faculty of Mathematics - Mechanics, Mathematics Specialization, which he graduated as Valedictorian. He attended the doctoral program between 1973 and 1977 at the University of Timișoara, in the field of Mathematics, with Professor Mircea Reghiș as a scientific supervisor. His doctoral thesis *Asymptotic Behaviors and Controllability of Linear Differential Equations* (in Romanian: *Comportări asimptotice și controlabilitate la ecuații diferențiale liniare*) was defended on December 22, 1977.



Faculty of Mathematics, West University of Timișoara, 1998. First line, from left to right: Mircea Reghiș, Adina Luminița Sasu, Dumitru Gașpar - the University Rector, Mihail Megan as the Faculty Dean

Mihail Megan spent his entire academic life at the Faculty of Mathematics (and Computer Science) of the (West) University of Timișoara. He was a Teaching Assistant at the Chair of Mathematical Analysis (1966-1977), Assistant Professor at the Chair of Algebra and Analysis (1977-1990), Associate Professor at the Chair of Mathematical Analysis (1990-1992), and Full Professor at the Department of Mathematics (1992-2012). From 2012 to 2025, he was Professor Emeritus and a member of the Doctoral School of Mathematics/ Doctoral School of Exact and Natural Sciences, respectively.

Mihail Megan contributed significantly to the development of the faculty and the university, being a leader with a progressive vision, who dedicated his life with great devotion to the institution. He was Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences (1981-1990), Dean of the Faculty of Mathematics (1996-2004), Vice-Rector of the West University of Timișoara (2004-2008), and Director of the Department of Mathematics (2008-2011).



Babeș Bolyai University 2017. From left to right: first line: Ana Soos, Mihail Megan, Ioan Chirilă, second line: Adrian Petrușel, Bogdan Sasu, Adina Luminița Sasu, Viorel Negru, Horia Pop, third line: Octavian Agradini, Dan Comănescu

During the period 2010-2012, he coordinated the *Research Center in Qualitative Theory of Systems with Applications in Control Problems*. Professor Megan represented the West University of Timișoara in decision-making structures at the national level. He was a member of the *Commission of Mathematics and Natural Sciences* of CNCSIS (1997-2006). He was

a member of the *Mathematics Commission* of CNATDCU (2013-2016) and a member of the *Permanent Experts Commission, Exact and Natural Sciences Section* of ARACIS (2006-2018). Professor Megan was project leader for 3 CNCSIS type A research projects (1999-2007), for a "PN-II-IDEI" project (2009-2011), for three projects of the Academy of Romanian Scientists, and he was in charge of a "POSDRU" type project.



Mihail Megan receiving the visit of Mohsen Razzaghi (Department of Mathematics and Statistics, Mississippi State University), in April 2016.

Professor Megan's scientific interests were mainly devoted to the asymptotic and qualitative theory of dynamical systems and, respectively, control theory. He published over 200 scientific articles, among which 174 articles are indexed on Mathematical Reviews. He was a highly respected scientist in his field of interest, his achievements having important international echoes. His results were published in prestigious journals in the fields of Mathematics and Applied Mathematics, a significant number of his works being in well-ranked journals according to the Web of Science. Mihail Megan always had an idealistic vision about being a mathematician: he strongly believed in doing research with passion and fully living the joy of discovery. According to Mathematical Reviews, he developed fruitful collaborations with 39 co-authors, the majority much younger than him, with whom he shared ideas and enthusiasm for new findings. Mihail Megan had a very special versatility for identifying new research directions, and enjoyed training the

young people in his research group. His results have been cited by prominent figures in the asymptotic theory of dynamical systems and control theory, accumulating over 2200 citations on Google Scholar.



AOSR Conference in Timișoara. From left to right: Nicolae Avram, Petru Andea, Adrian Badea, Mihail Megan

Mihail Megan was the founder of the *Seminar on Mathematical Analysis and Applications in Control Theory*. The Seminar was in continuous operation from 1994 to 2025, being held in room 128 (first floor, main building of the university), almost every Monday morning in the active period of the academic year. The Seminar laid the foundations for many successful careers, and generations of valuable researchers were shaped around Professor Megan. From 1990 to 2025, he was a doctoral supervisor in Mathematics, with 39 doctoral theses validated by CNATDCU, and two of which were in co-supervision with universities in France.

Mihail Megan was the author of over 50 books. More precisely, he published 6 scientific monographs devoted to the asymptotic behavior of dynamical systems and the qualitative properties of control systems. Professor Megan had an impressive contribution to teaching: besides being unanimously considered one of the best teachers from West University of Timișoara with memorable lectures, his published courses were national

landmarks for the disciplines of Mathematical Analysis, Real Analysis, General Topology, and Control Theory. It is worth mentioning here that he published 14 university courses and 14 collections intended exclusively for students. In addition to these, he published 17 books (with problems and exercises for math olympiads and national exams) intended for high school education.

Mihail Megan was a full member of the *Academy of Romanian Scientists* (AOSR) from 2007 to 2025, regularly participating in the Academy's conferences and events. He was elected President of the *Mathematical Sciences Section* in 2019 and held the position until his passing in 2025.



Mihail Megan in the festive suit of the Academy of Romanian Scientists, 2007

Mihail Megan served on the Editorial Boards of specialized journals, among which it is worth mentioning *Carpathian Journal of Mathematics*, *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai Mathematica*, *Annals of West University of Timisoara - Mathematics and Computer Science* and was the Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Annals Series on Mathematics and Its Applications*.

Mihail Megan was highly regarded in the Romanian academic community. On the occasion of his 60th birthday, the *National Conference on Mathematical Analysis and Applications* - CAMA 2006 was held in his honor at the West University of Timișoara, organized by D. Gașpar, A. L. Sasu and B. Sasu. On the occasion of his 70th birthday, special issues were dedicated to him in *Annals Series on Mathematics and Its Applications* (volume 10 (1) 2018) and in *Annals of West University of Timisoara - Mathematics and Computer Science* (volume 56 (2) 2018). Furthermore, on the occasion

of his 75th anniversary, a special issue of the journal *Carpathian Journal of Mathematics*, guest editors: A. L. Sasu and B. Sasu was dedicated to him (volume 38 (3) 2022).



From left to right: Adina Luminița Sasu, Mihail Megan, Bogdan Sasu, 2017

As a special recognition of his remarkable career in higher education and research, as well as of the particularly valuable contributions made to the consolidation of national and international collaborations in the field of Mathematics, he was awarded important distinctions and medals. It is important to mention the prestigious title of *Professor Honoris Causa* of the Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, awarded in 2017 (<https://www.cs.ubbcluj.ro/doctori-si-profesori-honoris-causa/>).



Professor Honoris Causa Ceremony, Babeș-Bolyai University, 2017. From left to right: Horia Pop, Octavian Agratini, Adrian Petrușel, Ioan Chirilă, Mihail Megan

Another remarkable distinction is the *"Traian Lalescu" Prize for Mathematics, Computer Science and Natural Sciences* awarded in 2021 at the Banat Excellence Gala.



Excellence Galla in Banat 2021. From left to right: Viorel Negru, Mihail Megan and Mihaela Neamţu

Mihail Megan peacefully passed away on May 24, 2025, at his home, surrounded by his loved ones. He was buried in the family tomb in the Cemetery "Calea Şagului" Timişoara, on May 26, his funeral being attended by an impressive number of family members, friends, collaborators, present and former PhD students. It was another symbolic and emotional moment, another Monday, just like all the other days of the Seminar, in which his collaborators sat together, with deep respect and gratitude for everything he taught them.

3 Instead of conclusions

Mihail Megan will forever remain in the memory of the editors of this special issue and all those who cherished him. The guest editors would like to express their gratitude to all of Professor Megan's friends and collaborators who contributed to this issue, and especially to his family for the collection of photographs and family details they so kindly provided.

Creator of an internationally recognized and appreciated Mathematics School at the West University of Timişoara, Mihail Megan was a true promoter of academic values and a teacher of distinguished professional ele-

gance. Through his creative spirit, energy, and spiritual strength, but especially through his passion for Mathematics, Professor Megan remains one of the most important landmarks in higher mathematical education in our country.

His valuable achievements, reflected in the people and works he created, will remain immortal in history and in our hearts.

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