



ACADEMICIAN PETRU MIHAI BĂNĂRESCU AT 85 YEARS OLD

Happy Birthday, Academician Petru Mihai Bănărescu!

Born on the 15th of September 1921, even as a child he shows a passionate interest in nature, and especially in fish. After graduating the Natural Sciences Department from the Faculty of Sciences and achieving PhD in Biology at Cluj University in 1949, Dr Petru Mihai Bănărescu imposes himself as a lead zoologist, both at the national and international level. Focusing initially on taxonomical research, he diversifies his scientific interests during time: aside the systematics and biology of freshwater and marine Romanian fish, he assesses in detail the systematics of Cyprinidae and Cobitidae families in Europe and Asia; he approaches the general problems of biogeography and zoogeography and especially the zoogeography of freshwater fish and invertebrates; also he studies the complex problems of taxonomical principles, of speciation and issues related to nature conservation.

Among his greatest achievements there are the following:

- The description, sole or in collaboration, of some new taxa for Romanian ichthyofauna, i.e.: a subfamily, a genus, two species, two subspecies.
- The first report from Romanian fauna, sole or in collaboration, for eight fish species and six copepods.
- The description, sole or in collaboration, of five new Cyprinidae genera and nine new Cobitidae genera from several Asian countries.
- Synonymization of six Cyprinidae genera.
- Revalidation of two Cyprinidae genera and four Cobitidae genera and revision of one subfamily.
- The compelling of the first and only Zoogeography of Freshwater Fish.
- Coordination and establishment as Doctors of 25 PhD students in Biology.

As regards Acad. Petru M. Bănărescu's original scientific work¹, it comprises 327 titles, among which 316 articles published in periodicals, collections or as book chapters, and 12 are books. Six of the 12 books were published in Romania, two of them being translated into other languages: "Principles and Problems of Zoogeography" and "Biogeographie. Fauna und Flora der Erde und ihre geschichtliche Entwicklung". The other six were published abroad: "Zoogeography of Fresh Waters" (three volumes) and "Freshwater Fishes of Europe" (three volumes). Most of his papers (over 60%) are written in widely used languages, as English, French, German and Russian.

For all these achievements Acad. Petru M. Bănărescu received the following distinctions and honors:

- The Romanian Academy „Emil Racoviță“ Prize (1964).
- Honorary foreign member of the American Society of Ichthyology and Herpetology (since 1975).
- Honorary member of the European Society of Ichthyology (since 1988).
- Doctor Honoris Causa of the „Al. I. Cuza“ University, from Iași (since 1999) (photo)
- Titular member of the Romanian Academy (since 2000).

Dear Dr. Bănărescu, it is a very special occasion for many friends and colleagues that are highly appreciating your persona to wish you a long healthy life, and to thank you again for your great contribution to the Romanian and universal science.

VICTORIA TATOLE

¹ In Travaux du Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle „Grigore Antipa“, vol. XXVI: pp. 497-510, 1996, the list of the papers issued until 1997 has been published.