

Obituary

Dr. Eng. Virgil IORDĂNESCU (1927 - 2011)

He played a very special role in the history of Romanian oceanology, as the founding director, at 30/03/1970, of the Romanian Marine Research Institute in Constanța, an institution which became, over time, in 1999, the current National Institute for Marine Research and Development “Grigore Antipa”.

He passed away, somewhat unexpectedly, on 15/06/2011, leaving behind a powerful memory, marked by a lifetime of good achievements in the sphere of his profession.

He was born on 28/09/1927 in Giurgiu, Ilfov County, on the banks of the Danube. Following his father's advice, who worked in the military, after finishing elementary school in Constanța, he attended, starting with 1936, the “Mihai Viteazu” Military High School in Târgu Mureș, being transferred later, in 1940, to the Military High School in Timișoara, which he graduated in 1946, with outstanding results.

Military School shaped his discipline, formed a good general knowledge, the ability to use the French language and brought lasting bonds of friendship with a number of future officers, who became, over time, reference names of the Romanian Navy, Vice-Admiral Eng. Ilie ȘTEFAN and Counter-Admiral Cornel ENĂCHESCU.

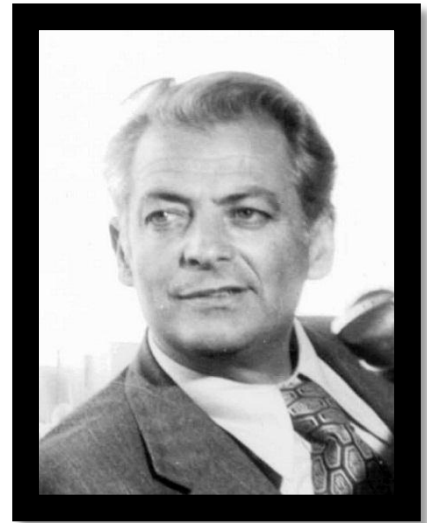
He began the university studies in 1947 at the Faculty of Agronomics - Timișoara, from where, in 1948, he transferred to the newly established Faculty of Fisheries and Fish Farming of Constanța, which he graduated, with excellent results, in 1950.

Throughout his academic studies, he was trained under the guidance of Romanian ichthyology and hydrology personalities, such as Senior Academician Prof. Dr. Theodor BUȘNIȚĂ, Senior Prof. Dr. Constantin S. ANTONESCU, prof. dr. ing. Nicolae BACALBAȘA-DOBROVICI and, first of all, Senior Prof. Emeritus Dr. Sergiu I. CĂRĂUȘU, founder of the Romanian school of fisheries (higher fisheries science).

He also had exceptional colleagues, who became, over time, prestigious academics and researchers: Prof. Dr. Eng. Mircea RĂUȚĂ, researchers Dr. Eng. George ȘERPOIANU, Dr. Eng. Carmen IONESCU-MĂRGINEANU, Dr. Eng. Ileana CAUȚIȘ. For his student years, he is exquisitely characterized by some reminders of Prof. Dr. Eng. Mircea RĂUȚĂ, marked with sympathy: “...A tall, nice, popular, expansive, athletic young man, with many qualities for a good friend”.

In order complete specialized training, between 1961-1963, he attended part-time courses at the Technical-Economic Faculty of the Polytechnic Institute Bucharest and, between 1972-1973, he perfected his management training through the graduation of the courses of the Training Center for Managers - Bucharest.

In 1976, after a period of three years under the guidance of late Professor Dr. Dumitru BOGATU, he presents his doctoral dissertation “*Atlantic Ocean Fish Stocks and Romania's Participation in their Exploitation*”. The event was held in the auditorium of the Faculty Fisheries - Fish Farming, in the presence of a prestigious audience, including academics, researchers and specialists in the field. Beyond the excellent presentation, the reference of the scientific coordinator, we, who actually lived the moment of presenting this thesis, gladly remember the touching words of Senior Prof. Dr. Sergiu I. CĂRĂUȘU, who emphasized, by his phrase academism and power of anticipation, the future of a notable scientific and managerial career.



The moment of awarding, by the Commission, the title of doctor of science was deeply moving for Virgil IORDĂNESCU and underlined once again the very special nature of this extraordinary, sensitive man.

The professional development of specialist Virgil IORDĂNESCU distinguished several stages, each marked by the scope of work requirements, time characteristics, the constant striving for improvement, driven by love for the profession, for the destiny of the field of the Romanian marine and mainland of Dobrogea fisheries. We are trying, synthetically, to make a review of these stages:

- After graduation, from 1950 until 1957, he worked as a worksite responsible within the Fishery Construction and Management Company - Bucharest. The complexity and diversity of the works executed enable him to acquire good field practices and detailed knowledge of the secrets of his later design concerns.

- By a conjuncture, in 1958-1961, he became an expert at the Investment Bank - Constanța, with the task of supervising the investments in the fisheries sector of Dobrogea, including the Black Sea fisheries. This position proved his good skills in the economic expertise and the proper use of investment funds.

- Between 1962-1969, by March 30, 1970, he worked at the Institute for Fisheries Research and Design - Bucharest, "Grigore Antipa" Marine Research Station - Mamaia. He occupied, in turn, the position of main designer, main researcher, initially being the head of the design studio and later the head of the Department of Fish Farming, deputy of the station manager, in those days the prominent and much regretted ichthyologist Nicolae IONESCU.

In this position, he designed the fishery facilities from Tașaul, Gargalîk, Carasuhat and Perișor, the Ciprinidae breeding station from Ovidiu, with the use of water discharges of the thermal plant with the same name.

In Perișor, along with other researchers, he brought an important contribution to a better understanding of the pathology, ecology and controlled breeding of Asian Ciprinidae, introduced into Eastern European fish farming.

For a brief period in 1968, after my relocation from Iași to Constanța, I worked in the same office with Virgil IORDĂNESCU, at the Marine Research Station in Mamaia, an occasion which allowed us to know each other better, establish relationships of appreciation, despite the age difference. I was impressed then, but especially in the years that followed, of maximum professional advancement, by his openness towards the new, his excellent capacity for analysis and synthesis, his bending to the problems of economics and fishing law of the sea, also by understanding the needs of the younger generation, with the obligation to respect his illustrious predecessors.

The events of March 30, 1970, which led to the unification of Romanian marine research, of the institutional structures in the field and the creation of the Romanian Marine Research Institute in Constanța, determined the appointment of expert Dr. Eng. Virgil IORDĂNESCU, with his economic and management training, as director of the institute created by high presidential decree.

The new oceanology research institution, created by the initiative of academics Senior Prof. Dr. Eugen PORA and Senior Prof. Dr. Mihai BĂCESCU, brought together research teams from the I.C.P.P. fishery research station in Mamaia, oceanology research experts from the Romanian Academy station in Constanța and the station of the "Alexandru I. Cuza" University, Iași, from Agigea, joined by the staff of the local hydrology station and a core of marine geology experts from Bucharest.

The first years of managing the destiny of the new institute, harmonization of activities within the unified teams, preparation of perspective, in accordance with the requirements of international cooperations opened in Romania, with national interests in the Black Sea and the World Ocean, did not prove to be easy, requiring much leadership, professional dedication, but also firmness, ability to work with people, both young and renowned specialists.

In an effort to give life and endurance to the new structure, he kept by his side valuable specialists in Romanian oceanology research, meeting within the Scientific Council of the Institute, but, first of all, that one man who was his deputy, scientific director, the much regretted late Dr. Hilarius V. SKOLKA, an encyclopedist of marine sciences.

The road of the beginning was hard, with good and bad, with decisions appreciated in time and perhaps less popular at that moment, but he outlined the direction of Romanian oceanology development, deepening the knowledge of the Black Sea, developing investigation programs beyond the Bosphorus-Dardanelles, into the Mediterranean, but especially in the Atlantic Ocean and Indian Ocean, later on.

As time has passed, today, at the moment of remembrance, we can appreciate that many of the deeds started with courage, with bravery facing the difficulties and limitations of time, many of the decisions of late Dr. Eng Virgil IORDĂNESCU were acts of total dedication to the profession, for the prestige of Romanian marine research, for the continuity of ideas and the whole that he created, not alone, but along with those who accompanied him in time.

After a brief interruption of the managerial act, occurring between 1975-1976, in 1977 he became scientific director of the institute, a position he maintained until his retirement, requested in September 1989 and approved on 15/01/1990. In the latter function, he worked closely with the two directors who succeeded him at the leadership of the institute, Counter-Admiral Eng. Constantin TOMESCU and Eng. Marcel STANCIU, the latter fellow colleague and good friend.

His managerial skills, the drawbacks of the stage, the increasing orientation of the interdisciplinary activities towards the strictly practical side made the activity effort to be focused mainly to the coordination of the primary development direction of the institution, leaving little time for the profession itself, for his vocation of researcher.

Virgil IORDĂNESCU was a skilled expert and keen observer of the economic development of fisheries, the international and regional conjunctures in the area of marine fisheries, of issues of fishing law of the sea that characterized the stage prior to the creation of the International Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982 - Montego Bay. He represented Romania in the technical delegation of national representation at the second U.N. conference in Caracas and prepared the arguments for the position at Montego Bay in 1982. Equally, he represented Romania in the functional structures of the Joint Commission for the Implementation of the Agreement on Maritime Fishing 1962 - Warsaw, agreement bringing together the interests of Eastern Europe countries with expedition fishing fleets. In this areas of concern, fishery economy and fishing law of the sea, alone or jointly, he conducted a series of scientific papers, characterized by excellent analysis of the evolution of global phenomena and good anticipation of future dynamics.

By his position as scientific director of the Institute, he had an important role in ensuring a notable presence of Romanian research in I.C.N.A.F./N.A.F.O., C.E.C.A.F., I.C.S.E.A.F. and in the realtions with F.A.O.

It is hard to characterize the activity of such a man, developed in various directions, where the personal effort is identified with the evolution of the institution, of the whole 1970-1990 period of development of the institute in Constanța.

Above all, Virgil IORDĂNESCU was and remains an important figure in Romanian oceanology, with an overwhelming role in the creation and development of the institute that will become the bearer, abroad and in Romania, of the traditions and scientific progress of marine sciences, for an excellent representation of Romania's national interests.

For everything good he did, for a lifetime of dedication to the flagship marine research institution in Romania, for many spoken or unspoken, we wish the late Dr. Eng. Virgil IORDĂNESCU *peace, tranquility and rest of mind*.

We, who are still here, at the institute, will honor his memory with great respect.

We thank for their contribution in achieving the lines hereby Mrs. Dr. Carmen IORDĂNESCU, wife of late Dr. IORDĂNESCU, Prof. Dr. Eng. Mircea RĂUȚĂ, from the "Dunărea de Jos" University, and our distinguished friend, Dr. Eng. Tania ZAHARIA, scientific director of N.I.M.R.D. "Grigore Antipa" in Constanța.

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