



IN MEMORIAM
Prof. Dr. doc. Liviu ONICIU

On November 27, 1999, the distinguished Professor Liviu Oniciu, founder of the School of Electrochemistry in Cluj, passed away peacefully, at the age of 72. An outstanding scientific personality and author of a large and authentic scientific creation, with national and international recognition, Prof. Oniciu had a significant contribution to the development of the Physical Chemistry in our country.

Prof. Liciu Oniciu was born, on 11th of February 1927 in Cluj. In 1946 he finished his high school education in Cluj, at the University Pedagogical Seminar and became a student in Chemistry at the Faculty of Science of "Victor Babeş" University in Cluj. He graduated in 1950 and in September 1950 he was appointed assistant at the Chair of Physical Chemistry. In 1961 he was promoted lecturer and obtained the Ph. D. with a thesis on aluminum complexes with organic hydroxy acids, under the supervision of Prof. Ioan Cadariu. In 1965 he obtained the position of associated professor and in 1970 became full professor. In 1971 he obtained the title of docent in science and in 1984 the Ministry of Education offered him the Award of Excellence in Teaching. He contributed much to the modernisation and development of chemical education in our university with abnegation and strength, being famous by his interesting and attracting courses, very much appreciated by his students, as well as by his involvement. Being an excellent organizer and a born leader, he was elected several times as Dean of the Faculty of Chemistry (between 1968-1976 and 1984-1987) as well as the Head of the Department of Physical Chemistry (between 1976-1984 and 1990-1996). He was a member of Faculty Council for 32 years and a member of the University Senate for 24 years.

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In 1997 he retired at the age of 70, but continued to work as a consulting Professor, until the last days of his life. Professor Oniciu was a member of the International Society of Electrochemistry and the representative for Romanian of this Society, a member of the American Society of Electrochemistry and a member in the Council of European Academy of Surface Technology.

He founded and coordinated the Cluj-section of the Institute of Chemical and Biochemical Energetics, being his Director during 10 years. Since 1990 he functioned as Director of the Research Centre in Electrochemistry at "Babeş-Bolyai" University, until he passed away.

As a Ph. D advisor since 1969, he supervised more than 40 doctoral students and promoted 35 of them to the award of Ph. D in Physical Chemistry. Two of them were guided together with professors from Brussels and Paris.

During his prodigious teaching and scientific career, Prof. Oniciu published 6 books, two of them abroad. He also published 8 monographs, one of them being translated abroad. He was the author of more than 220 scientific papers, published in Romanian or international journals and he succeeded in obtaining 19 patents.

In 1980 the Romanian Academy of Science awarded him with "Nicolae Teclu" prize for the book "Electrochemical Conversion of Energy", published by the Scientific and Encyclopedic Publishing House in Bucharest.

The scientific activity of Professor Oniciu started with the physico-chemical studies of the complexes of aluminium with various hydroxy acids, but he became famous by his papers in the field of electrochemistry. He approached the electrochemical conversion of energy, being the first in this field in our country. He was concerned with the anodic oxidation of methanol on various electrocatalysts in order to develop an indirect fuel cell. Then, he further investigated the fuel cells hydrazine/hydrogen peroxide, hydrogen/oxygen and the alkaline batteries nickel - iron and nickel - cadmium as well as the sodium - sulfur battery and lithium anode batteries.

Since 1981, with the organization of the Institute of Chemical and Biochemical Energetics, he diversified his research directions, by including new areas of applied electrochemistry as organic electrosynthesis, electrodeposition of metals, and photoelectrochemical conversion of energy. His contributions to the field were theoretical and experimental ones. He directed the research concerning the electrosynthesis of adiponitrile from acrylonitrile, the electrosynthesis of propionitrile and the electrowinning various metals as lead, zinc and manganese from different raw solid materials, aiming at the elucidation of fundamental aspects concerning them.

By his entire activity as teacher and scientist and by his praiseworthy results in both fields, Prof. Liviu Oniciu became prominent among the great personalities of our University, working here faithfully, for more than 49 years. With his passing away the teaching-staff of our faculty and the Romanian scientific community lost a great personality and a man of great heart.

May he rest in peace!