
**Message of the President of Romania
Professor Dr. Emil Constantinescu
to the participants in the
First National Symposium of Palaeontology,
Romania,**

17-18 October 1997.

*Ladies and Gentlemen,
Esteemed professors and students,
Honourable audience,*

It is a great pleasure for me to open the proceedings of the First National Symposium on Palaeontology in Romania and, on this occasion, to take part in the celebration of the age of 65 years of Professor Theodor Neagu - a personality of exception in the international academic community.

I recognise in Palaeontology not only a scientific domain of greatest importance for the substantiation of the origin of life on Earth and of its evolution, but also a discipline which since its beginning underlay oil and gas prospecting activities and which has quite often offered the key to the discovery of new hydrocarbon fields.

Its methods of investigation - very laborious - often were stumbling-blocks for geologists and, probably for that reason, those who assimilate them carry aura of passion. This represents for me the premise of complete success in the chosen profession.

I cannot overlook and I emphasize in my speech the illustrious names of those who were your predecessors and set the bases of Palaeontology at the University of Bucharest, Professors Gregoriu Ștefănescu, Sabba Ștefănescu, Ion Simionescu, Miltiade Filipescu, Ion Z. Barbu..., or those who, having such a formation developed general or regional courses with various applied directions: Professors Grigore Cobălcescu, Gheorghe Macovei, Ion Atanasiu...

I know that their work represented a basis for the modern courses which our students in geology attend in the lecture halls of the universities of Bucharest, Cluj, Iași. I also know that you, those in the Department of Palaeontology, took over and continued these noble traditions.

The organisation of a scientific event in such a domain and with such an attendance (your programme impressed me) is capable of revitalising not only Paleontology as a science, but also the domain of Geology as whole. This kind of

reunions must render ourselves more optimistic when examining the trends in any scientific field.

By dedicating this reunion to Professor Theodor Neagu, you prove once more that you know how to appreciate real values and to cultivate respect for school founders. This is another sign of good omen for the future of the Romanian Geology.

In the position from which I address you, I am tempted to remember the words of Professor Gregoriu Ștefănescu:

" ... Whichever may be your career - do not give up to the discouragement of the difficult moments you go through. Try to live in the serene atmosphere of scientific research and never stop asking yourselves – what did I do for my instruction? And then – what did I do for my country?...until you perhaps have the exquisite bliss of being convinced that you have done something for the progress of science and for the good of humanity."

...and to wish you all success in the First National Symposium on Palaeontology, to those who came from beyond our borders, welcome to Romania, and to Professor Theodor Neagu - a happy birthday!

Emil Constantinescu
President of Romania
October 17, 1997
Bucharest