

"The passions are the only orators that always persuade"
Francois de La Rochefoucauld



IN MEMORIAM

DR. EMIL AVRAM*

(24.06.1937 – 16.08.2023)

The month of August 2023 brought sad news to the Romanian geological community, the passing of the research geologist Dr. **Emil Avram**, a member of the Geology-Geography Institute of the Romanian Academy and the Geological Institute of Romania, for 35 years. He was devoted for a long period of time mainly on paleontological studies, starting with the bachelor's thesis on fossil traces from Vrancea, presented in 1961 at the University of Bucharest. Following that year, as a co-author, he published the first paleontological monograph on vertebrate traces from the Miocene of the Romanian Subcarpathians, which became a classic and indispensable work for paleoichnological research all over the world.

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He saw the light of day on June 24, 1937, in Bucharest. After graduating the high school, he attended the Secondary Technical School of Geology (1951-1955), a veritable nursery for future university specialists and researchers in the field of geology. Between 1956-1961 he was a student at the Faculty of Geology-Geography of the University of Bucharest. After graduating from these geological education units, he carried out his professional activity as a geological technician at the quarry enterprise „Gh. Dimitrov” from Braşov (1955-1956), geologist at the Enterprise of Prospecting and Laboratories (currently „Prospectiuni SA”) from Bucharest (1961-1965) and trainee and principal researcher (from 1967) at the Institute of Geology-Geography of the Romanian Academy (1965-1970). A particularly fertile period of time for paleontological research and not only, was between 1970 and 1999, where he occupied, at the Geological Institute of Romania (IGR), the Researcher positions (since 1988), Principal Researcher

III (since 1990), Principal Researcher II (from 1995) and Principal Researcher I (since 1999). He collaborated for the compilation of an appreciable number of geological reports, and between 1988-1990 he was the Scientific Secretary of the IGR. Access to specialized foreign literature was facilitated by his knowledge of English, French and Russian. After his retirement (January 1, 2000) and despite some health problems, he continued his scientific activity by publishing paleontology/biostratigraphy works of the Lower Cretaceous formations in Romania based on ammonites, as well as presenting communications on the same topic at national paleontology symposia. In 1974, he obtained his PhD in geological sciences, and in 1988, the laureate of the Grigore Cobălcescu award of the Romanian Academy. He was one of the ten founding members of the Romanian Society of Paleontologists SPR (1994), being the president in the 1997-2000 mandate. In 2021, he receives the Diploma of Excellence and the title of Honorary Member of the SPR. Being a recognized specialist abroad, he had sustained international activity: IUGS member of the International Subcommittee on Jurassic Stratigraphy (1983-1995), IUGS member of the

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International Subcommission on Cretaceous Stratigraphy (1990-1999), national responsible for Project (IGCP) no 62 : „Tethyan Cretaceous Correlation“ and collaborator in the working group for the study of eocretaceous cephalopods (1987-1992), collaborator in projects (IGCP) no. 343 „Stratigraphic correlation in peri-Tethys epicratonic basins“ and no. 362: „Tethyan and Boreal Cretaceous Correlation“ (1993-1998), collaborator in the creation of the Fieldtrip guides for the excursions C2 - Contact area between the Eastern Carpathians and the Southern Carpathians, and D5 - Dobrogea (1996) and co-author of the excursion guide for the EUROPROBE international symposium — the TESZ, PANCARDI and GeoRIFT projects (1999). Dr. Emil Avram's contribution to the Romanian geology progress relates mainly to the field of paleontology, especially to Cretaceous cephalopods, but also to regional geology and tectonics, totaling 90 papers, to which are added a number of four published geological maps 1: 50.000, two in print and four in the layout stage (see list). In paleontology, most works are focused exclusively on the paleontology/biostratigraphy of late Jurassic and Cretaceous ammonoids. The studied cephalopods (ammonites, aptychi and belemnites) contributed to taxonomic clarifications, but also for dating the age of the host deposits, data which quickly entered the international circuit, being published in Austria, Denmark, Switzerland, France, Germany, Italy, Holland, Portugal, Spain, and United States. Some of these works served (i.e., Hoedemaeker, *et al.*, 1993) for the zonation based on ammonites in the Mediterranean region, much improved compared to the previous ones and used worldwide. Among the fossils published by Dr. Avram, there are 6 new genera (*Richterella*, Avram 1974; *Simionescites*, Avram 1976; *Haplobrancoceras*, Avram 1990; *Patrulusiceras*, Avram 1990; *Sabbaiceras*, Avram & Grădinaru 1993; *Barremites*, Avram 1997) and 31 new species and subspecies. A genus of ammonite (*Avramidiscus*, Vermeulen 1995) and several species of ammonites, gastropods, etc., wear his name, in international recognition of his contributions to paleontology. Regional stratigraphy works,

mostly including biostratigraphy data based on ammonites or integrated biostratigraphy, are focused on the north and south of the Apuseni Mountains, the Svinița-Banat region, the Dâmbovicioara Corridor, the Eastern Carpathian flysch, South Dobrogea and the eastern part of the Moesian Platform under the Romanian Plain, as well as on the Jurassic-Cretaceous boundary formations throughout the country. Finally, the tectonic works or those with implications in the tectonic evolution in some areas of Romania, refer to the Cretaceous flysch of the Eastern Carpathians, to the south of the Apuseni Mountains and to the tectonic contact between Central and Southern Dobrogea. The regional stratigraphic and tectonic data introduced by Dr. Avram have been included in several Fieldtrip guides for the scientific meetings of the projects IGCP 245 „Nonmarine Cretaceous Correlation“, IGCP 262 „Tethyan Cretaceous Correlation“ and IGCP 343 „Stratigraphic correlation in peri-Tethyan epicratonic basins“ (1993), etc. In the framework of the Geological Institute of Romania, Dr. Avram started to restore and standardize the documentation for the geological/paleontological protection objectives in the records of the Commission for the Nature Monuments Protection of the Romanian Academy, as well as the creation of a geo-eco-tourism map of Romania (current action at IGR).

According to a memorandum of activity prepared by the author before passing into eternity, a number of 29 works were considered significant: nine paleontological monographs (1, 12, 28, 37, 39, 45, 49, 63, 68)**; five regional monographs (16, 22, 35, 41, 47), two paleontological syntheses (33, 34), three zonation based on ammonites of the Lower Cretaceous (25, 43, 48), two integrated biostratigraphy ammonites-calpionelles-dinoflagellates (17, 23) and eight Fieldtrip guides for the Carpathians and Dobrogea (42, 43, 59, 60, 72, 86, 87, 88).

The researcher Dr. Emil Avram, with his prodigious scientific activity, remains an example worth following for the young generation of Romanian geologists. May his charming smile always accompany the memory of those who knew and appreciated him.

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GeoEcoMar București

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** The numbers in brackets correspond to the works listed in the attached list

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