

A tribute to the late Professor Constantin Corduneanu



Constantin Corduneanu, Emeritus Professor of the University of Texas at Arlington (USA), Member of the Romanian Academy, passed away on December 26, 2018, at a hospital in Arlington, Texas, and his body was taken to Iasi, where he was buried.

The scientific community has lost a great scientist, an esteemed teacher, and a special man. He founded and published for 31 years the mathematical journal *Libertas Mathematica* through which he contributed to the promotion of the values of the Romanian school of mathematics.

As a scholar, he is recognized as a celebrity in the field of ordinary differential equations, integral equations and functional equations with causal operators. During the last 66 years, he achieved remarkable results, published in over 200 research papers and seven books in a total of 15 editions, at prestigious publishers. He presented over 140 works at more than 100 national and international conferences and congresses of mathematics had short visits and discussed his research activities in more than 60 universities and institutes from over 20 countries, including Russia, Ukraine, Germany, England, France, Italy, China, Japan, and Chile.

The Romanian Academy recognized Corduneanu's exemplary contributions to mathematics and bestowed on him the corresponding membership in 1974 and full membership in 2015.

As a teacher, he contributed to the mathematical training of over 4000 students in Romania and over 3000 students in the USA, after settling overseas in 1978. Two dozen young people have obtained their Ph. D. under the guidance of professor Constantin Corduneanu. All of them are now professors in Romanian or American

universities and mourn the death of their teacher, which they remember with great affection. He was popular, appreciated by his students, who always filled his classrooms, wanted him in the doctoral commissions, and in which Professor Constantin Corduneanu was full of affection and encouragement.

In the 47 years of his university career, he went through all the steps of the university hierarchy, from the university trainer to the university professor, at the University of Iasi (1947-1977), and since 1978 when he settled in the USA, he served as Professor at the University of Texas at Arlington, where he retired in 1996, becoming Professor Emeritus. Professor Corduneanu did math until his last days of life, regularly went to his office at the university.

As a man, he was charming, elegant, spiritual, cheerful, wonderful, academic and colloquial at the same time, which has always had stories from other times to tell in sweet Moldavian wheat, but to whom nothing is escaped from the present.

Although established in the USA since 1978, he has always followed with interest what was happening in the country from which he left, but he cared, crossing the ocean more than 60 times to see what else was there, in Romania, what the brothers, relatives, former students did.

Professor Corduneanu always helped everyone, the students, the faculty colleagues, and the mathematicians whom he met only once. He always had a good word, an answer, or a bibliographical reference to the questions that were asked of him. He was generous to everyone, always accessible, and helped and positively influenced the mathematicians from the diaspora, and undoubtedly many of us will miss him.

After 1990 he was present both in the USA and in Romania; in Romania he worked at the Institute of Mathematics *Octav Mayer* of the Iasi branch of the Romanian Academy.

As the newly elected Correspondent member of the Romanian Academy, he planned with some colleagues from Bucharest and Iasi setting up a scientific journal with the title *Romanian Journal of Control Theory* and presented the proposal to the Academy Publishing House motivating it by the fact that in the country “we have specialists reputed in that field of research, already co-opted in the editorial committees of several international journals”. It was not possible then, and even today Romania does not have such a publication.

A few years after this unsuccessful attempt, in 1979, for the first time at the annual Congress of the Romanian-American Academy of Sciences and Arts (ARA), at the suggestion of the then President of the ARA, Professor N. Timiraş (great-grandson of Ion Creanga), presented to the general assembly of ARA the proposal for the establishment under the auspices of that institution of a mathematical journal with the suggestive title *Libertas Mathematica*.

The proposal was accepted immediately and within a few days he received the decision of the general assembly to set up the magazine. A former member of the ARA leadership once told him “*Libertas Mathematica is your American dream.*”

Since 1979 he has been active in ARA where he held the position of Member in the management committee (1982-1995) and then the President (1995-1998). After the successful term of office, in 1998 he was elected President emeritus of the ARA, and from 2016 until the end of his life he was the Interim President. In the previous several years, he was enormously involved, even financially, for bringing the Romanian-American Academy back to the proper parameters of an academic institution and stopping the degradation to which it was subjected.

For 31 years he edited without interrupting *Libertas Mathematica*, one volume a year and the journal can be found on the shelves of libraries like Library of Congress, British Library, in the libraries of some great universities such as Harvard, Tel Aviv, Göttingen, Brown, Michigan, and university libraries in Japan, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Sweden, Brazil, Australia.

He wanted to continue publishing *Libertas Mathematica* at least until 2010 when the centenary of the *Al. I. Myler* Seminar at the University of Iasi was planned to be celebrated.

He succeeded, and also published volume XXXI in 2011, the year in which Professor Cordunneanu asked me to take over the management of a journal and re-launch *Libertas Mathematica* in a broader international context.

I accepted the challenge, and I am grateful to Professor Cordunneanu for trusting me to continue his American dream. I gathered a prestigious international editorial team, and since 2012 we have published *Libertas Mathematica (new series)*. We kept the name *Libertas Mathematica* and the objectives of promoting the values and contributions of the Romanian mathematical school and its links with the mathematical world, in which it acquired a place of honor.

An issue of *Libertas Mathematica (new series)* published in December 2018, was dedicated to Professor Cordunneanu on his 90th birthday. I informed him, and he gladly received the news of this homage.

I know that Professor Cordunneanu followed with great interest and satisfaction with the evolution of the journal. He also contributed financially to its publication. We fondly remember his integral personality and his exceptional dedication to raise the level and quality of the journal. I hope the evolution of the journal in its eight years of its existence as the new series has reached his level of expectations.

The passing of Professor Constantin Cordunneanu greatly saddened the Editorial Board of *Libertas Mathematica (new series)* and me, and we deeply miss him. We endeavor to continue his work.

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