

## M I S C E L L A N E A

– List of Mathematicians and Computer Scientists of Romanian extraction residing outside Romania

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– Personalia

– Contributors to the volume XXIV

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## FROM THE BOOKSHELVES

S. CHANDRASEKHAR: *Newton's Principia* (for the common Reader). Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press, 2003, XIX + 593 pp.

Newton's PHILOSOPHIAE NATURALIS PRINCIPIA MATHEMATICA is one of the cornerstones of the modern science, with outstanding significance for Physics and Mathematics. The Author is providing an indept analysis of some 150 propositions constituting a direct chain conducing to Newton's formulation of the universal law of gravitation (and its consequences for the buildup of physical theories). In doing so, he is rearranging the material from the original (not always easy to read!), providing a modern version of the work Newton has left for the posterity. The book will constitute a great tool in deeper penetrating the dept and beauty of Principia - a true monument for the intellectual achievement. The Author has written other outstanding books, on subjects like "The Mathematical Theory of Black Holes", "Hydrodynamic and Hydromagnetic Stability", and won the Nobel Prize in Physics (1983). The book is highly recommended to any scientist.

NIELS HENRIK GREGERSEN (Editor): *From Complexity to Life* (On the Emergence of Life and Meaning). Oxford University Press, 2003, XI + 243 pp.

This volume represents a collection of eleven studies and essays, related to the emegence of life and meaning. It is a philosophical work, which is interesting for large categories of scientists and researchers from all fields of knowledge and thinking. Part I , Defining Complexity (Randomness and Mathematical Proof by G. J. Chaitin and How to Define Complexity in Physics and Why? by Ch. H. Bennett); Part II The Concept of Information in Physics and Biology. This part contains five articles authored by Stuart Kauffman, Paul Davies, W. A. Dembski, Ian Stewart and W. R. Loewenstaein); Part III Philosophical and Religious Perspectives. This part contains three articles by H. J. Morowitz, Arthur Peacocke and the Editor. There are short characterizations of contributors' work, and an Introduction, by Paul Davies, Toward an Emergentist Worldview.

GABRIELA MARINOSCHI and STELIAN ION: *Mathematical Modelling of Environmental Problems*. Romanian Academy Publishing House, Bucharest, 2002, 160 pp.

This volume contains a serie of articles presented at a meeting which took place in Bucharest, June 2002. A foreword by Acad. Marius Iosifescu, Vice President of the Romanian Academy, stresses the importance of this kind of research, and expresses the hope that the meeting will be the first one in a series dedicated to mathematical modelling of environmental problems. There are ten research papers authored by Romanian and foreign participants. The first paper is entitled "Environmental Problems and Mathematical Modelling" is authored by G. Marinoschi and Harry Vereecken. Other articles treat aspects as Numerical Simulation,

Random Walk Transport, Qualitative Properties, Analytical Method, Optimization of some processes and other topics.

N. V. AZBELEV, V. P. MAKSIMOV, L. F. RAKHMATULLINA: *Elements of Contemporary Theory of Functional Differential Equations* (Methods and Applications). Moscow, 2002, 384 pp. (Russian)

This volume is authored by a group of researchers who have done pioneering work in the field of functional differential equations, and particularly in the theory of functional differential equations with abstract Volterra (causal) operators. The greatest part of the material included is due to their own research work, but also to a larger group of mathematicians which were connected with the Perm Seminar on Functional Differential Equations. The work of these participants to the Seminar is primarily included in the publication *Functional Differential Equations* (in Russian), then continued by the Israel publication with the same name (in English). The seven chapters of this book, addressing primarily researchers, are entitled as follows: Linear abstract functional-differential equations; Equations in traditional spaces; Equations in the extensions of traditional spaces; Singular equations; Minimization of the quadratic functional; Constructing approach to linear problems; Nonlinear equations. The list of references includes about 200 items.

MATHEMATICAL REPORTS, vol. 5(%%), No. 4 (2003). Romanian Academy Press, Bucharest. 158 pp. (271-429)

This issue of *Mathematical Reports* (formerly *Studii si Cercetari, Matematica*) contains 14 contributions, dedicated to the 50th Anniversary of the "Seminar on Qualitative Theory of Differential Equations and Control Theory", started in 1953 under the leadership of Aristide Halanay (1924-1997). Halanay returned from Moscow in 1952, where he obtained his PhD degree under the guidance of V. V. Niemytzki, at Moscow State University. Most of the contributors were members of the Seminar or occasionally associated with it. Among the participants to the Seminar, we are mentioning Felix Albrecht (University of Illinois at Urbana until his death), V. M. Popov (University of Florida, Gainesville), Israel Berstein (Cornell University), Tudor Ganea (University of Washington, Seattle - his last work place) and many more in Romanian Universities or Research Institutes of Romanian Academy. The introductory paper is authored by the Editorial Board of the journal, with close cooperation from Prof. V. Rasvan (University of Craiova). He issue represents a well-deserved tribute paid to the memory of Aristide Halanay. Highly recommended for specialists in the Theory of Ordinary Differential Equations and Control Theory.

UNIVERSITATEA ROMANO-AMERICANA (Romanian-American University) (Past, Present and Future). Arvin Press, Bucharest, 2003 345 pp.

This volume has been printed in excellent conditions in occasion of the inauguration of the new building and campus of the Romanian-American University of Bucharest (a private institution), in October 2003. The PM of Romania, Prof. Adrian Nastase participated as representative of the Romanian Government (likely, to show support of private higher education in the country). Many academics from Romania and from abroad have been also

among the participants. The volume had been edited by a group of faculty members from the University, under the direction of Prof. Ion Smedescu - the founder and current President (Rector) of the University. The institution has been founded in 1991, short time after the political and social changes which culminated with the fall of communism in East Europe. Presently, the Romanian American University has over 9,000 students, in six Departments (Faculties). The University is actively pursuing the development of relationships with foreign universities, particularly with American Universities. Prof. D. Tudorache has done a very good job in coordinating the work on this volume.

## Personalia

Dan Virgil Voiculescu (University of California, Berkeley) has received the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) 2004 Mathematics Award "for the theory of free probability, in particular, using random matrices and a new concept of entropy to solve several hitherto intractable problems in von Neumann algebras." The award, established by the AMS in 1988 in commemoration of its Centennial, was funded mainly by gifts to the Society. The \$5000 award is given every four years for excellence of research in the mathematical sciences published within the past ten years.

Preda Mihailescu, Professor of Mathematics with the University of Paderborn, Germany, has recently proven Catalan's Conjecture, dating back to 1844. Tanno Metsankyla, in the article published in Bull. American Mathematical Society, vol 4 (2004), 43-57, surveys the history of the problem, and outlines Mihailescu's decisive contribution.

## A. Myller (1879–1965)

Cette, année marque l'anniversaire de la naissance du Professeur Alexandru Myller, le créateur de l'école de Géométrie à l'Université de Jassy, il y a 125 ans. Le Professeur Myller, membre de l'Académie Roumaine, appartient à cette pléiade de savants Roumains qui, vers la fin du XIX-ème siècle et au début du XX-ème, contribuèrent à l'essor de la vie scientifique et à l'accomplissement d'un enseignement hautement qualifié, dans notre pays.

Nommé en 1910 Professeur titulaire à l'Université de Jassy, il y enseigna jusqu'au moment de sa retraite, qu'il prit en 1947, avec le titre de professeur honoraire.

Pendant ce temps, il réussit, à force d'une inlassable ténacité, à développer dans cette Université l'intérêt pour la recherche scientifique et à créer une école mathématique qui a, depuis, obtenu une authentique consécration: le Séminaire Mathématique de Jassy, aujourd'hui "Séminaire Mathématique A. Myller".

Dans les années qui suivirent la fin de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale, c'est au professeur Myller que revient le rôle de réorganiser l'Université de Jassy et de présider à sa nouvelle orientation.

En 1948, il fut élu membre de l'Académie Roumaine. L'oeuvre scientifique du Professeur Myller comporte d'importantes découvertes du domaine de la théorie des équations différentielles ou aux dérivées partielles, ainsi que du domaine de la géométrie différentielle. Certaines de ces découvertes sont citées dans différents traités classiques, d'autres sont à tel point du domaine des connaissances fondamentales courantes qu'on n'en cite même plus l'auteur.

Dans sa thèse, qui inaugure la série de ses travaux et lui valut le titre de Docteur de l'Université de Goettingue, il étudie les équations différentielles linéaires auto-adjointes, d'ordre pair et impair, ainsi que le développement d'une fonction en une série d'auto-fonctions vérifiant ces équations. La thèse a été soutenue devant la commission composée par D. Hilbert, H. Minkowski et F. Klein.

De retour au pays, en 1906, et jusqu'en 1910, année de sa nomination à l'Université de Jassy, il publie encore quelques travaux du même domaine. Rappelons, pour exemple, un mémoire, publié dans "Mathematische Annalen", portant sur les problèmes de la théorie des équations aux dérivées partielles du type hyperbolique, problèmes résolus pour la première fois au moyen des équations intégrales. Puis, un autre mémoire sur les solutions triplement périodiques de l'équation  $\Delta u + \lambda \alpha(x, y, z)u = 0$ , travail cité par Appel dans son traité classique de Mécanique, un autre encore, sur les solutions périodiques de certaines équations intégrales, et ainsi de suite.

La qualité de titulaire de la Chaire de Géométrie analytique lui impose un autre champ de recherche. Dès lors et jusqu'à la fin de sa vie, le Professeur Myller se consacre à la Géométrie. C'est en touchant ce domaine qu'il a publié la plupart de ses travaux, qu'il a tenu des cours sans nombre et formé des générations entières d'élèves.

Au début, il s'est consacré à la Géométrie algébrique, étudiant certaines quartique planes, certains complexes de droites, etc.

Après 1919, par suite du succès de la théorie de la relativité généralisée, et sous son impulsion, la géométrie différentielle devient l'un des objets les plus actuels des préoccupations des mathématiciens du monde entier. La contribution du Professeur Myller à l'essor de cette science n'est pas des moindres.

Ses recherches ont enrichi la notion de connexion de Levi-Civita dans un espace Riemannien. L'interprétation de cette connexion au moyen de la réglée formée par les tangentes à une variété, parallèles au sens de Levi-Civita, la notion de directions concurrentes au sens Levi-Civita, la notion de parallélisme au sens de Levi-Civita dans un système de plans, la notion de réseaux de Tchébycheff dans un espace de Weyl sont autant de travaux qui ont suscité l'intérêt du monde mathématique; tous ont été appliqués par d'importants mathématiciens à des recherches ultérieures et sont cités dans les mémoires et traités classiques. Dans le pays, également, ces travaux furent repris et poursuivis par quelques-uns des élèves du Professeur Myller, devenus à leur tour de brillants savants, dont nous ne citerons que O. Mayer et Gh. Vrănceanu.

La contribution du Professeur Myller s'est affirmée dans d'autres domaines encore de la géométrie différentielle. Telles sont: la géométrie centro-affine, chapitre créé et développé en collaboration avec O. Mayer, membre de l'Académie Roumaine, chapitre qui a éveillé un intérêt particulier, l'étude des différentes transformations des surfaces en  $S_3$ , l'étude de quelques courbes ou surfaces spéciales, etc.

Outre ses multiples activités didactiques et scientifiques, outre un travail inlassable en vue d'une parfaite organisation de l'Université et de l'enseignement mathématique, le Professeur Myller s'est attaché à contribuer au développement de la culture mathématique de son pays en écrivant nombre d'articles de vulgarisation des mathématiques et de popularisation des mathématiciens.

Note de l'éditeur: Cet article a été rédigé en suivant la préface écrite par Professeur Mendel Haimovici au volume "Scrieri alese" de A Myller, publié par l'Académie Roumaine. Professeur Haimovici a été lui-même membre de l'école créée par A. Myller et Membre de l'Académie Roumaine.

## APPEAL

The year 2010 will be the Centennial year of the Mathematical Seminar "A. Myller" of the University "Al. I. Cuza" in Iasi.

All former and present members of this venerable institution are kindly invited to prepare their participation at the Conference dedicated to this Centennial Celebration, which will take place sometime during the year 2010 at the University of Iasi (jointly with the Romanian Academy Branch of Iasi).

As a result of the Conference, one or several volumes will be published, containing the proceedings - The papers to be presented must be in Mathematics, both Pure and Applied.

Beside, over 100 members of the "Seminar" residing in Romania, a conspicuous number of former members are residing in France, Germany, England, the United States of America, Canada and other countries.

The editor has contacted the following persons, in the last category: Sergiu Aizicovici, Nicolae Pavel, Irinel Drăgan, in the US; Mordechai Epstein, Izu Vaisman, Dan Butnariu, Sender Solomon, in Israel.

Prof. Radu Miron and Prof. Viorel Barbu, both members of the "Seminar" and of the Romanian Academy, have expressed their interest in celebrating this event.

Any ideas from the members, as well as from other colleagues, will be highly appreciated.

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