Ilana Herrnstadt & Daniel Zohary

C. Clara Heyn (1924-1998)



Professor C. Clara Heyn passed away in her Jerusalem home December 27, 1998. She left an intertwined and outstanding legacy of close friends, among whom were family, colleagues and students. Some of her former students later became her colleagues. She seemed to have unlimited time and energy to assist those who sought her advice. Heyn was a fascinating person and conversationalist and her circle of friends was as broad as her knowledge and interests.

Chaia Clara Heyn (nee Blau) was born June 13, 1924 in Cluj, Romania, and moved with her family to

Austria in 1931. Following the "Anschluss" in 1938 her family succeeded to escape to Israel (then British-Mandate Palestine). The teenager quickly adjusted to the new and challenging environment. Upon her arrival she trained to be a secondary school teacher at Tel Aviv's College for Teachers and was employed as a school teacher. Subsequently she entered The Hebrew University of Jerusalem where she studied biology, and specialised in Botany. She earned her M.Sc. in 1954 and her Ph. D. in 1960. During this period, she also married and began to raise a family. (For a more detailed account of her life history see Taxon 48: 427-430. 1999).

In 1962, Heyn was accepted as a member of the academic staff of the Department of Botany, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. From the outset she excelled both in teaching and research. She was highly appreciated – both by the students and her colleagues – for the clarity of her lectures, and for her in-depth and meticulous preparation of the laboratory sessions. She retained this quality of teaching throughout her career.

Her formative years in research culminated in the publication, in 1963, of her monograph on the annual species of the genus *Medicago*. This work placed her in the forefront of Mediterranean plant taxonomy. Among her early activities in the Department of Botany was her involvement (together with her former teachers Michael Zohary and Naomi Feinbrun-Dothan) in the development of The Hebrew University Herbarium. She became increasingly involved with this research facility and subsequently was appointed as its director.

Throughout her career, Prof. Heyn focused on taxonomic plant research and contributed significantly to our understanding of numerous genera belonging to the *Leguminosae*, *Umbelliferae* and *Compositae*. In addition to the classical approach, Heyn was keen to elucidate the processes of speciation in the groups she studied. She was quick to appreciate, introduce and adopt new taxonomic tools and techniques (e.g. SEM, flavonoid content, and computer database analysis) that expanded the parameters useful for species characterisation and species delimitation. Her use of SEM techniques to visualise differences in seed coat structure in *Lupinus* received recognition as a novel approach.

In addition to *Medicago*, some of the genera she studied in depth were *Trigonella*, *Lotus*, *Onobrychys*, *Lupinus*, *Prangos*, *Heptaptera*, and *Calendula*. Within *Lotus* her attention focused on the *L. creticus*, *L. peregrinus*, and *L. angustissimus* groups. In *Lupinus*, she conducted a taxonomic and evolutionary study of the old world species. The revision of *Prangos* and *Heptaptera* included re-evaluation of generic delimitation based on karyology, fruit anatomy and secondary metabolites. The study of the annual species of *Calendula* assessed the affinities between species based on fruit morphology, chromosome numbers and interspecific crosses.

At an early stage of her career she became intrigued by the bryophytes and their ecology but could not devote research time to the group until about 20 years ago. Together with one of us (I.H.), she took the lead in the study of the mosses of Israel which later resulted in the preparation of the book *Bryophyte flora of Israel and some adjacent regions*.

Prof. Heyn made numerous contributions to regional floras. Among them were treatments of *Medicago*, *Lotus*, *Tetragonolobus*, *Scorpiurus*, *Prangos*, and *Heptaptera* for *Flora of Turkey and the East Aegean Islands*, *Medicago* for *Flora iranica* and *Flore de France*, and *Calendula* for the *Nouvelle flore du Liban et de la Syrie*.

Locally understudied plant groups (e.g. the umbellifers and mosses native to Israel) were always her concern. She encouraged and directed both students and former students to study them and to apply a variety of modern techniques in doing so.

Heyn was active in popularisation of botanical research and the knowledge of the local flora. She contributed, in Hebrew, numerous articles and chapters to Israeli magazines, encyclopaedias, and nature guides. One of the most effective contributions of this kind was her coverage of numerous botanical entries in *Encyclopaedia hebraica* (vol. 24-32, 1972-1981).

Heyn was one of the founders of the Organisation for the Taxonomic Investigation of the Mediterranean Area (OPTIMA) in 1974, and served on its board and executive council until 1993. She continued serving on its various commissions until her last days. In 1995 she received the OPTIMA Gold Medal, honouring her for her scientific contributions to the phytotaxonomy of the Mediterranean region.

Three taxa are named in her honour: *Medicago* sect. *Heynianae* Greuter, *Medicago* heyniana Greuter, and *Prangos* subg. *Heynia* Pimenov & V. H. Tikhom.

Chronological list of scientific publications by C. C. Heyn (not including book reviews, abstracts, and texts in Hebrew only)

By Nir L. Gil-ad

Research papers

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