

PROFESSOR AND ARCHAEOLOGIST PETRE GHERGHE 75 YEARS OLD

Archaeology represents an ageless passion. It comes when one does not expect, but it stays forever. After a lifetime dedicated to this passion, for professor Petre Gherghe, archaeology remains the joy to live each day as if it were the most beautiful day.

The archaeologist and professor Petre Gherghe was born on January 1, 1947, in Buicești, Butoiești commune, Mehedinți county, an area filled with numerous archaeological sites, relevant for various historical periods, from Prehistory to the Middle Ages.

After completing his high school studies, his steps took him far to Transylvania, to his higher studies in history at “Babeș-Bolyai” University in Cluj-Napoca, which he graduated in 1973.

After graduating from university, he returned to his native Oltenia, where he perseveringly built a career, in which he approached the Geto-Dacian archaeology, first, and then the Roman archaeology.

His results in this area of research were acknowledged in 1995 with the PhD in history, for his doctoral thesis *Contribuție la cunoașterea civilizației geto-dacice din Oltenia* (Contribution to the knowledge of the Geto-Dacian civilization in Oltenia), presented at the National Institute of Thracology in Bucharest, under the scientific supervision of prof. Dumitru Berciu, PhD.

His activity took place in a series of institutions in Oltenia, starting with the Gorj County Museum – Târgu Jiu, the Center for Social and Political Sciences, today “C.S. Nicolăescu Plopsor” Institute for Studies in Social Science and Humanities in Craiova, within the Romanian Academy, and, between 1988–1990, at Oltenia Museum in Craiova.

Since 1991, he began his teaching career at the Faculty of History, Philosophy, Geography of the University of Craiova. As a university professor, he was a holder of undergraduate courses *The Old History of Romania, Introduction to Archaeology, General Prehistory, General Museology, History of the Human Society*. Furthermore, at the master programs, he held a series of courses such as *Dacia and the Roman Empire, Roman Archaeology and Museology, Archaeological Testimonies and Greco-Roman Sources regarding the Carpatho-Danube space*.

Any archaeologist gathers throughout his life the experience of numerous archaeological sites. Professor Petre Gherghe gathered expertise from research on over 30 archaeological sites, in Gorj, Dolj, Mehedinți, Olt and Vâlcea counties, practically in all the counties of Oltenia.

Archaeological research began in a series of archaeological reference sites for the ancient history of Romania, archaeological school sites for generations of students and graduates of the history faculties in our country. Amongst them, we mention those from Adamclisi-Tropaeum Traiani (under the leadership of Prof. Ion Barnea) and Capidava (under the leadership of Prof. Radu Florescu), respectively on the archaeological site of Sarmizegetusa Regia (under the leadership of Prof. Hadrian Daicoviciu).

Throughout his career, which continues today, professor Petre Gherghe has done archaeological research in a series of Getic settlements in Oltenia, of which we mention those at Bărbătești-Socu, in Gorj County, but also those of early Roman Age at Reșca-Romula, in Olt County. Moreover, in the recent decades, he has led, as a good parent, numerous series of students in

finding out the mysteries of archaeology and the joy of having done archaeological practice on an archaeological site, extremely important on addressing the historical issues, the landscape, such as the one at Celei-Sucidava, in Olt County.

Researcher Petre Gherghe managed to constantly capitalize on his research results in his 17 author, co-author and collaborator books, as many examples of good practices in scientific publishing. Even if it was not the first in chronological order, it remains the first in sentimental order, a chapter of his doctoral thesis *Asezări și cetăți geto-dacice din Oltenia* (Geto-Dacian settlements and fortresses in Oltenia), published by Universitaria Publishing House in Craiova, in 1997.

Among his books we mention *Repertoriul informațiilor și descoperirilor arheologice din Oltenia. Epoca Latene* (The Repertoire of information and archaeological discoveries in Oltenia. The Latene Era), *Istoria Craiovei. Mărturii arheologice și numismatice* (The history of Craiova. Archaeological and numismatic testimonies) (Petre Gherghe, L. Amon), *Opaițele romane și romano-bizantine descoperite în teritoriul Sucidavei* (Roman and Roman-Byzantine lamps discovered in the territory of Sucidava) (Petre Gherghe, Mirela Cojoc), *Dicționarul istoric al localităților din județul Dolj* (Historical dictionary of localities from Dolj County), vol. I, A-C (366 p.); II, D-M (378 p.); III, N-V (collaborator), *Așezarea și necropola geto-dacică de la Spahii-Câmpul Spahiului, jud. Gorj*, *Opaițele romane de la Acidava și Rusidava, județul Olt* (Geto-Dacian settlement and necropolis from Spahii-Câmpul Spahiului, Gorj County, Roman lamps from Acidava and Rusidava, Olt County), (Petre Gherghe, Mirela Cojoc, Laurențiu Comănescu).

For a long time, researcher Petre Gherghe worked at the Center for Social Sciences in Craiova, in whose prestigious journal he published a series of articles very useful to specialists studying the civilization of the Getae, of which we mention here *Cercetări și descoperiri arheologice cu privire la civilizația geto-dacică pe teritoriul județului Gorj* (Research and archaeological discoveries regarding the Geto-Dacian civilization on the territory of Gorj County), *Dovezi ale continuității dacice în așezarea romană de la Săcelu* (Evidence of Dacian continuity in the Roman settlement of Săcelu), in "Arhivele Olteniei", *Descoperiri arheologice din epoca geto-dacică la Socu-Bărbătești, județul Gorj* (Archaeological discoveries from the Geto-Dacian era at Socu-Bărbătești, Gorj County), *Așezarea geto-dacică de la Cernele-Craiova* (The Geto-Dacian settlement of Cernele-Craiova).

As a teacher, he understood his mission to give students university courses that would represent their guides, such as *General Prehistory, Introduction to Archaeology, Old History of Romania*, vol. I and II, *General Museology*.

Even if the position a man holds does not define them, sometimes it is good for some people to be in positions that allow them to fulfill their purpose of training professionals in the field of ancient history and archaeology. The same happened with Professor Petre Gherghe, who was the director of Oltenia Museum, respectively the vice-dean at the Faculty of History, Philosophy, Geography of the University of Craiova. In the both institutions, he collaborated admirably with his colleagues, today being regarded with the same appreciation.

Now, at the end of the presentation, it is hard to say what his first profession is. Being an archaeologist or being a professor is often a choice. In his case he did not have to make this choice. The two merged during the archaeology course and seminar, especially at Celei-Sucidava archaeological school site of the University of Craiova, which he led for two decades. During this time, numerous series of students graduated the school of archaeology, students who still remember the experience of this unique site. He brought up people who became archaeologists or professors themselves, with his tact and diplomacy, with his positive thinking, with his acrimony as an archaeologist-professor.

May you live a long, prosperous and happy life, full of professional achievements!

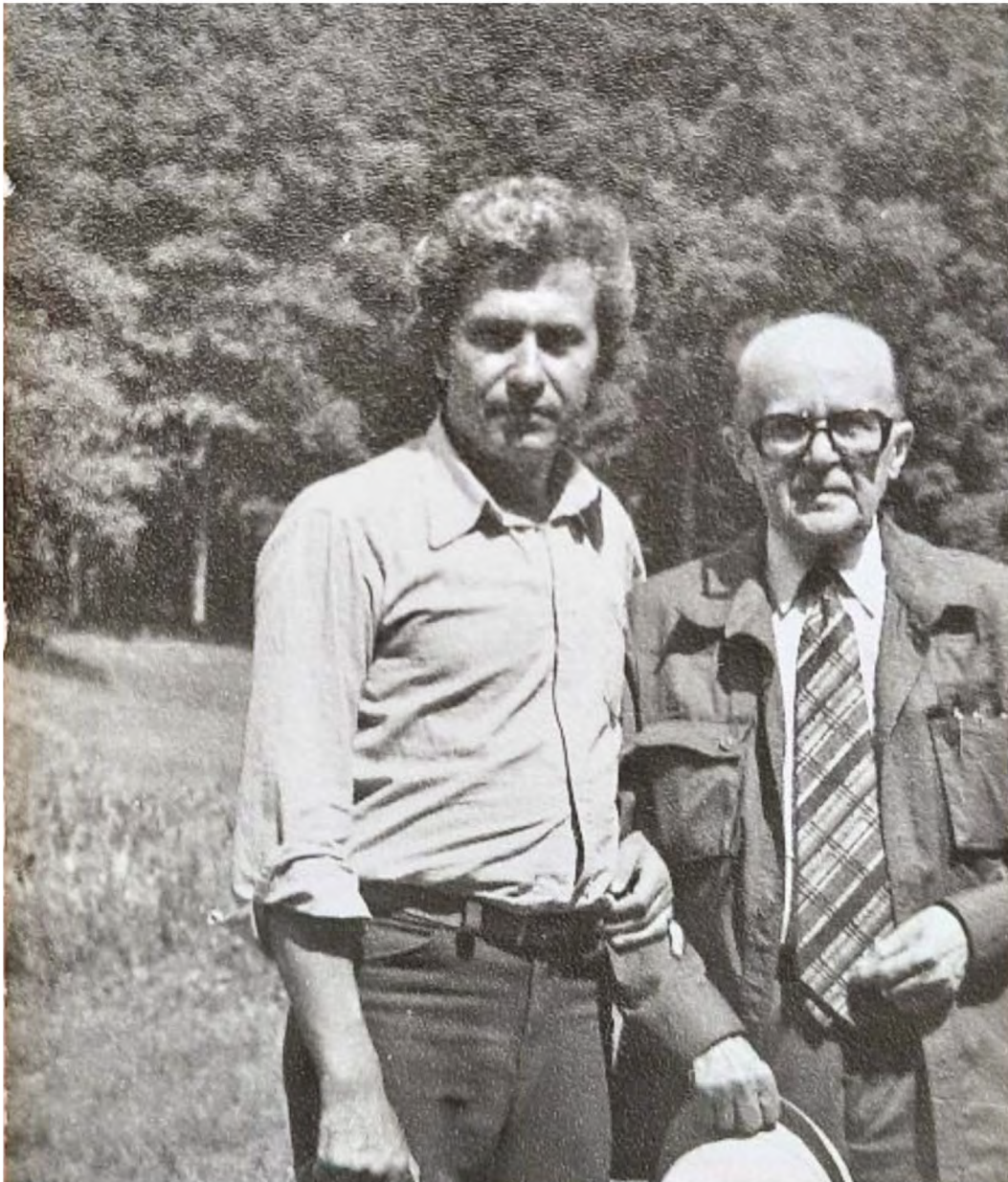
Assoc. prof. Mircea NEGRU, PhD



2009



2015



With Professor Dumitru Berciu (right), at Očnița-Buridava, Vâlcea county, 1987



University of Craiova, Blue Room. Graduation ceremony of students, series of graduates of 2004



University of Craiova, Blue Room. Opening ceremony of the academic year 2007-2008



Celei-Sucidava. During the practical training of the 2008 series of undergraduates



Celei-Sucidava. During the practical training of the 2022 series of undergraduates



Reșca-Romula. During the archaeological campaign of 2021



The Olt County Museum, Slatina. Launch of volume II of the Romula series (May 2022)