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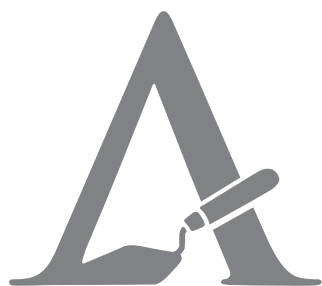
ARCHAEOLOGICA RESSOVIENSIA

VOLUME **20** RZESZÓW 2025



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Uniwersytet Rzeszowski
Wydział Humanistyczny
Instytut Archeologii

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mdebiec@ur.edu.pl

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DOROTA KOCZĄB

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EWA KUC

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JULIA SOŃSKA-LAMPART

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Editor's Address

INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF RZESZÓW
Moniuszki 10, 35-015 Rzeszów, Poland
e-mail: archeologia.ch@ur.edu.pl
Home page: <https://www.ur.edu.pl>

RZESZÓW UNIVERSITY PRESS
prof. S. Pigonia 6, 35-959 Rzeszów, Poland
tel. 17 872 13 69, tel./fax 17 872 14 26
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Adela Kovacs

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Botosani County Museum, Unirii 15, Botoșani, 710221, Romania;
e-mail: adelakovacs.museum@gmail.com; ORCID: 0000-0003-3980-0526

Archaeology, a Never-Ending Story... In Memoriam Gheorghe Lazarovici (13 September 1941 – 3 February 2025)

Professor Gheorghe Corneliu Lazarovici passed away at the age of 84 and would still have had much to say on a fundamental field of prehistoric civilizations, remaining in the consciousness of several generations of archaeologists with whom he collaborated during his career. Through his scientific activity, research and the dissemination of his results, Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici remains one of the most important Romanian archaeologists.

He was born on September 13, 1941 in a small town in Caraș-Severin County. Between 1948–1955 he attended the General School in Reșița, and between 1955–1958 he attended the vocational school in the same city. He graduated from high school in 1962, also in Reșița, and in 1968 he completed his university studies at the Faculty of History and Philosophy of the “Babeș-Bolyai” University in Cluj-Napoca. In 1979 he became a doctor in history, specializing in prehistory, at the same university, and between 1971–1972 he was a Herder scholar at the Institut Für Ur- und Frühgeschichte der Universität Wienn, with a complex postgraduate specialization, namely the Neolithic of Southeast Europe and the relations with Anatolia, under the coordination of Professor Richard Pittioni. He has contributed significantly to the training of new generations of archaeologists through his teaching activity. He was lecturer on history and archaeology courses at various universities in Cluj-Napoca and Alba Iulia (1993–1994), Reșița (1997–2007) and Sibiu (2002–2016). From 2002 he became a doctoral coordinator at “Lucian Blaga” University in Sibiu. He was a researcher and scientific secretary at the Romanian Institute of Thracology between 1991–1993.

He was a member of the editorial boards of the journals *Acta Mysei Napocensis*, *Acta Mysei Porolisen-sis* and *Tibiscum (Ethnographic-History Studies and Communications)*.

Between 1968 and 2004, Gheorghe Lazarovici occupied various positions at the National History Museum of Transylvania (MNIT) in Cluj-Napoca, evolving from archaeologist and museographer to the institution's General Director in the period 1993–1997. His scientific activity is extremely varied and broad, participating in congresses, symposium and conferences abroad: Belgrade, Nice, Bratislava, Budapest, Vienna, Novi Sad, Tolbukhin, Verona, Xanthi, Kiev, Ljubljana, Lisbon, Rome, The Hague, Riva del Garda and even in China. He organized several specialized scientific events, national and international, in archaeometry (32 editions), ethnoarchaeology (15 editions), ethnoreligion (9 editions).

He took part in numerous international archaeological expeditions, organized in Austria, Bulgaria, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Romania, Hungary and Olten (Switzerland), as well as ethnoarchaeology in Romania, with international participation (Institute of Archaeology in London), in the years 1973–1974, 1982–1986. This inevitably led to collaboration with many prestigious specialists and among them we can only mention a few: 1972 – Greece, Volos, together with Vl. Milojčić from Heidelberg University; 1974 – Romania, research into obsidian sources, together with J. Nandriș from the University of London; 1982–1986, 1999 – ethnoarchaeological studies in the Carpathian Mountains, in collaboration with J. Nandriș; 1992 – the search for prehistoric

sources of copper, in partnership with Prof. Dr. Ernst Pernicka Institute of Earth Sciences Im Neuenheimer Feld, Heidelberg University; 2003–2004: research on prehistoric sources of raw materials on the territory of Romania, together with G. Trnka from the University of Vienna.

As an archaeologist and museographer, a specialist in the research of prehistoric civilizations, he coordinated numerous archaeological expeditions, of which we mention only a few: Gornea, Zorlenț, Balta Sărată, Parța, Iclod, Cheile Turenilor, Cheile Turzii. He highlighted the significance of discoveries from Tărtăria and Parța through international multidisciplinary research.

He organized several major national and international exhibitions, as evidenced by the published scientific catalogs. His scientific contributions include numerous studies and specialized articles, as well as significant works, either as a sole author or in collaboration, books that contain conclusions that are still valid today.

In numerical terms, his scientific activity is titanic and is difficult to ever equal or surpass. He published more than 20 books and university courses, collaborated on 6 catalogs and atlases, developed over 100 syntheses, 70 analytical articles, 85 articles publishing archaeological materials, has more than 50 research reports, 6 micro monographs, 45 interdisciplinary articles, over 50 presentations at international congresses, countless press articles and reports from the sites under research, television interventions and documentary films.

He published more than 450 studies and specialized articles, as well as several books as sole author or in collaboration. We would highlight some of the more prominent monographs here: Gh. Lazarovici, *Gornea*, Reșița 1996, 124 p. and 84 pl.; Gh. Lazarovici, *Neoliticul Banatului*, in the BMN collection, vol. III, Cluj 1979, 273 p., 50 figs., 10 tables, 162 pl.; Gh. Lazarovici, Fl. Drașovean, *Cultura Vinča în România*, Comisia muzeelor și colecțiilor, Timișoara 1991, 250 p.; Gh. Lazarovici, Z. Maxim, *Gura Baciului*, in the BMN collection, vol. XI, Cluj-Napoca 1995, 452 p., 38 pl., 55 fig.; D. Țeicu, Gh. Lazarovici, *Gornea. From the archaeology of a medieval village in the Danube Gorge*, in the Caiete Banatica collection, Reșița 1996, 163 p., 26 pl.; Gh. Lazarovici, *Modern Methods and Techniques of Research in Archaeology*, Bucharest 1998; Gh. Lazarovici, Fl. Drașovean, Z. Maxim, *Parța*, Archaeological Monograph, vol. 1.1, 341 p., vol. 1.2, 115 pl., 137 figs, Timișoara 2001, Waldpress, BHAB, 12; Gh. Lazarovici, D. Micle, *Introduction to Computerized Archaeology*, BHAUT, vol. III, Timișoara 2001, 234 p., *Cheile Turzii. Archaeological Monograph* was published in 2024, with over 400 pages. The monograph *The Place of Banat in the Neolithization Processes of Southeast Europe – The Early Neolithic* was launched post-mortem, representing an essential contribution to the understanding of prehistoric cultures, synthesizing decades of research, archaeological discoveries and profound interpretations of the humanity past. What is not seen and cannot be measured in the pages of his publications is how much of his soul he put between the pages of these volumes.

The recognition of his outstanding merits is evidenced by the granting of prizes and distinctions from the Romanian Academy, such as the “Nicolae Bălcescu” Prize for the *Gura Baciului Monograph* in 1995; the “Vasile Pârvan” Prize for the volume, C.-M. Lazarovici, Gh. Lazarovici, *Arhitectura Neoliticului și Epocii Cuprului din România. I. Neolitic* in 2008. The Presidency of Romania decorated him, in 2004, with the Order of Cultural Merit, officer rank H, for scientific research, and in 2007 he became an honorary citizen of the city of Timișoara, for his contribution to historical and archaeological research in Banat. In 2014, the Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara organized an ArheoVest Symposium dedicated to the honor of Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici, accumulating the symposium materials in two substantial volumes, which capitalize on articles from all areas of the archaeological and interdisciplinary interest on which the professor focused.

His passion for archaeology and dedication to the discovery and interpretation of humanity’s past established him as a pillar of Romanian archaeology, having a long lasting influence on the understanding of prehistory in Southeastern Europe. He was equally concerned with the dissemination of information, collaborating on the production of several films presenting archaeological sites and documentaries.

There is no person who collaborated or had contact with Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici and remained unimpressed. During breaks on the archaeological sites, the workers and many students over time, with whom he worked, would come to sit next to him to listen to stories about tribes, chieftains, prehistoric societies and their houses, about love, war, thefts, attacks, raising children, their initiation rituals and many other great things about the people who lived a long time before us. His scientific qualities were exceptional, but his human qualities always prevailed. He was a man who will live forever, both through the memory of those who knew him, and through the ar-

ticles and monographs that changed the way we perceive southeastern European prehistory. He had a vast knowledge of the Balkan-Anatolian and southeastern European Neolithic, being capable of a comprehensive, synthetic image of prehistoric civilizations. He had rich stores of information about the ancient and medieval periods, being familiar with the processes of transformation and acculturation. He was frequently concerned with the application of innovative research methods in archaeological studies.

Gheorghe Lazarovici remains a benchmark in terms of the interdisciplinary approach to research on Neolithic sites. He defined, through research and then through publication with large demonstrations and conclusions, of almost mathematical precision, a series of cultures and cultural groups. He coordinated diverse and large work teams on archaeological sites that provided not only scientific research hypotheses, but also an inestimable value for museum collections, which he enriched. The establishment of at least five museum collections is related to his name. The site monographs, as well as the large synthesis studies on

which he worked tirelessly, are not only testament to his dedication, but a work ethic almost to the point of obsession in demonstrating social and evolutionary processes. He opened new avenues of approach, through the conferences he organized, bringing related fields closer to archaeology. He organized conferences on archaeometry, ethnoarchaeology, ethnoreligion, statistics applied in archaeology and cutting-edge computer techniques.

He was a professor who was loved and appreciated by all his students, whether in his undergraduate, master's or doctoral classes. Many of them went on to work in museums, as archaeologists or in related fields of activity. For all of them he was like a father, tough in moments of stagnation and gentle in periods of doubt.

As a personal confession, today I can see that Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici had more confidence in me than I myself, over time. He is the man who invested in me and my colleagues the most precious resource a man has in his entire life: his TIME.

Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici will live forever, because archaeology is a never-ending story...



Fig. 1. Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici at a Conference in Constanța, 2018.



Fig. 2. Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici during field research, 2020.



Fig. 3. Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici during field research, 2012.



Fig. 4. Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici during field research, 2017.



Fig. 5. Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici on a doctoral committee at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University in Iași, 2010.
From right to left: Gheorghe Lazarovici, Nicolae Ursulescu, Attila László, Dan Monah, Dumitru Boghian.



Fig. 6. Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici, researcher Cornelia-Magda Lazarovici and manager Emil-Constantin Ursu, at the “From Symbols to Signs” conference, organized at Suceava, September 2014.



Fig. 7. Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici during a survey in Transylvania, Rupea area, with students from Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany coordinated by Carsten Mischka and Silviu Gridan along with his family, 2020.
Celebration of his 80th birthday with the same team.



Fig. 8. Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici during research in Transylvania, Rupea area, with Silviu Gridan (red T-shirt), Mircea Oancă (green T-shirt), and Constantin Aparaschivei (2018).



Fig. 9. Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici with a large group of students from Universitatea de Vest Timișoara, at the first ArheoVest Symposium, 2013.



Fig. 10. Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici with Constantin Aparaschivei and Silviu Gridan, along with a group of locals during excavations at Rupea, in 2019.



Fig. 11. Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici with Zoia Maxim and Sergiu-Constantin Enea, on different occasions and conferences, 2013–2014.



Fig. 12. Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici with John Nandriş and Adela Kovacs at ArheoVest Symposium, 2014, In honor of Gh. Lazarovici.



Fig. 13. Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici during a press interview, 2022.



Fig. 14. Professor Gheorghe Lazarovici between colleagues and archaeologists, during a trip organized by the Bukovina National Museum from Suceava. From left to right, first row: Anamaria Tudorie, Dan Aparaschivei, Adela Kovacs, Cornelia-Magda Lazarovici, Gheorghe Lazarovici, Mykhailo Videiko, Natalia Burdo, Aleksandra Kadrow, Constantin-Emil Ursu, Sabin Adrian Luca; second row: Constantin Aparaschivei, Sergiu-Constantin Enea, Monica Dejan, Mihaela Cazacu, Senica Țurcanu. The trip was organized during the conference “From Symbols to Signs”, Suceava, 2–5 September 2014.



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