

## *ARGUMENTUM*

The annual scientific communications session organized in 2022 (April 15-16) by the Centre for the Comparative History of Ancient Societies (CICSA) was dedicated to the memory of Alexandru Barnea (1944-2020) and Alexandru Avram (1956-2021), founding members of the Centre, whose activity they supported with a permanent dedication and professionalism.

*“Archaeologists at the meeting with history. In memoriam professorum Alexandru Barnea et Alexandru Avram”* was organized in collaboration with the Department of Ancient History, Archaeology, and Art History (further DIAAIA) of the Faculty of History, University of Bucharest, and the “Vasile Pârvan” Institute of Archaeology from Bucharest.

Fate made whole generations of students to be trained by the two professors, true mentors whom Romanian history and archaeology will remember as some of the most prominent personalities. Former students, colleagues, collaborators, all having the privilege of meeting professors Alexandru Barnea and Alexandru Avram, presented the results of their scientific endeavours as a pious tribute to their memory.

Both of them were university professors and distinguished specialists in the fields of history, archaeology, epigraphy, and classics. Alexandru Avram’s research activities referred mainly to the history of ancient Greece and Greek colonies from Pontus Euxinos. Alexandru Barnea’s scientific interests covered a broader time frame, from the Roman period of the Late Republic to the Early Byzantine period, as he was an exceptional *connaisseur* of both classical languages – Greek and Latin – spoken and used in the areas of the Lower Danube and Black Sea. Over time, the commemorated professors have participated in many archaeological excavations also carried out in the Dobrudja region, elaborating numerous works and reference studies, guiding the training of many generations of researchers within the “Vasile Pârvan” Institute of Archaeology or on the archaeological sites of Histria and Tropaeum Traiani, and in the Romanian and French university milieu. With patience and professional accuracy, they created working groups of students, historians, epigraphists, and archaeologists, bridging education and research in the field of classical studies. They have always encouraged critical thinking about the role of ancient material culture, as well as the role of modern preoccupations in shaping the study of ancient material, encouraging their students to be aware of the latest theories and principles coming from the social and human sciences to archaeology. This scientific meeting was intended to stimulate a dialogue not only between the two ancient cultures but between generations of researchers belonging to different historiographic and methodological traditions.

During the two days of the online scientific meeting, 26 papers, prepared by scholars from France, Italy, Poland, the USA, and Romania were presented. Addressing a wide range of historical, historiographical, archaeological, and epigraphical topics, these interventions were organized into smaller panels: Material culture from the Mediterranean to the Danube and the Carpathians;

Roman Dacia and Lower Danube areas – armies and settlements; Roman Dacia and Lower Danube areas – multidisciplinary approaches; Art, religion, ideology and Histria – Greek Colony and Roman City. Exposing the contents and analysing them from different perspectives gave the authors the chance to dialogue with the participants and validate their interpretations, opening the way to new correlations and nuances. Aspects of economic materiality attested archaeologically through various categories of artefacts; particularities of political, military, and administrative control brought to light by epigraphic or archaeological evidence; expressions of religious and funerary rituals correlated with important testimonies in the field of art and architecture; all could be met convergent, despite their content diversity, in the realm of rigorous contextualization methodologies and multidisciplinary approaches.

The conference was opened by two particularly warm and friendly evocations of the two, presented by professor Mihai Bărbulescu for Alexandru Barnea, and professor Vlad Nistor for Alexandru Avram. The keynote speaker was professor Lucrezia Ungaro, with the paper *Il potere dell'impero ritratto nel Foro di Traiano: la comunicazione globale attraverso il programma figurativo*.

In the closing speech of the session dedicated to the memory of professors Alexandru Barnea and Alexandru Avram, dr. Daniela Zaharia, director of DIAAIA from the Faculty of History of the University of Bucharest, expressed her conviction that the intellectual and scientific legacy of the commemorated colleagues proves to be successfully valued by their disciples, contributing to the continuation of the great Romanian archaeological and classical studies tradition. She also emphasized the two evoked professors' contributions to the maintenance and development of the collaboration between the academic bodies of the partner institutions in the organization of this pious and scientific event.

The organizers of the conference would like to thank the editors of the Dacia N.S. journal, especially the editor-in-chief, Dr. Eugen Nicolae, for publishing this special issue containing some of the papers presented at this conference. We are very grateful to Dr. Daniela Zaharia for the support given to the organisation of the commemorative event, for the warm concluding remarks of the two days of scientific presentations, and for the constant support for the publication of many of these communications. We also extend our warmest thanks to the authors, who prepared their texts for publication in a very short time, and to the members of the editorial board, who patiently read earlier drafts and helped shape the content of the papers into their final form.

Adriana Panaite  
Florica (Bohîlțea) Mișuț