

ZIRIDAVA
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This volume is dedicated to the memory of Egon Dörner (1925–1993)

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Egon Dörner".

He was my “professor”...¹

Eugen Pădurean

Abstract: This article commemorates a long period of collaboration (1961–1982) with museographer Egon Dörner from the County Museum Arad. The author mentions moments of this collaboration starting with the summer of 1961, when he met Egon Dörner, and until the latter retired, and stresses aspects of this collaboration: providing data on the discovery of archaeological materials in the county of Arad, performing field walks (sometimes together with other researchers, such as V. Boroneanț – Bucharest, I. H. Crișan – Cluj-Napoca and jurist Gh. Miloi, external collaborator of the museum), and Dörner’s support in checking some articles for publication in local newspapers or in the specialized literature. The author also stresses the moral qualities of the person with which he collaborated for more than two decades (professionalism, nobility of the soul, friendliness, mutual respect shown to colleague professionals, selflessness). The author believes that museographer E. Dörner rightfully deserves that one of the exhibition rooms of the Arad Museum Complex – Ancient History Department bears his name.

Keywords: Egon Dörner, collaboration, field walking, mutual respect, professionalism, gratitude.

My collaboration with the Museum County of Arad (today the Arad Museum Complex) is connected to museographer Egon Dörner’s name and personality.

It was 1961 I entered the eighth grade at the “Elena Ghiba Birta” High School (at that time the Middle School no. 2 Arad). During that summer, together with a friend, today scientific researcher Octavian Mândruț (geographer), I discovered an old copper coin in the sand of an island on the Mureș, near the village of Cicir. Short afterwards I discovered a second coin in the edge of the village, near the canal called “Iarcu”, built during a period that is difficult to establish, also in the plowing layer. The second coin was made of silver and depicted an emperor’s portrait.

As we were anxious to know during which period the coins had been issued, I decided to go to the County Museum of Arad. It was a day in the end of the school year and when I came through the museum’s gate a terrible emotion took over me. The porter sent me, accompanied, to the first floor, to the museographers. Climbing the stairs I felt an oppressive atmosphere, that was at the same time pleasant, that of an institution with an intense cultural life. I relive that feeling every time I climb the stairs to the first floor. My visit was announced and a warm and friendly male voice invited me in. I went through the door that remained open for me from that moment onwards for dozens of years and I saw a middle-aged man sitting at a table, wearing thick glasses. He was the “owner” of a warm, pleasant smile. The ice of the emotion had melted way...he introduced himself simply: “Egon Dörner”. I told him the reason of my visit and I showed him the two coins. After a few routine questions he told me that only one of the coins was of special historical interest, the silver one, as it was a denarius from the time of Emperor Trajan; the other coin, made of copper, was a 12th century Hungarian coin (I later found out that it had been issued during the reign of Stephen IV). The County Museum of Arad bought the two coins shortly afterwards.

Museographer E. Dörner spent almost an hour with me and the discussion was open and friendly. His manner of being won me over from the first moment of the meeting: “Find me again, now that you will be closer to us” he told me, referring to the fact that the museum was near the high school. A couple of years later, in a “focus section” dedicated to me that he published in the local German media, he remembered that starting point of our collaboration².

Only half a year had passed and I stepped again over the threshold of his office. In the spring of 1962 I discovered, on the rim of the common near the village of Cicir (where my grandparents lived) a

¹ English translation: Ana M. Gruia.

² Dörner 1973, 2.

two-layer Dacian settlement (dated to the third-second century B.C. and the 2nd–3rd century A.D.) on the spot called “Gropi” (a clay quarry). The significance of this discovery was due to the fact that the first layer of habitation (dated to the 3rd–2nd century B.C.) contained traces of Celtic material culture, especially graffito pottery, made on the potters’ wheel; this proved that the Dacians and the Celts had cohabited in the area of the Lower Mureș. On the other hand, the second layer, the one from the 2nd–3rd centuries A.D., attested the persistence of the Dacian element along the line of the Mureș after the Roman conquest.

Due to the importance of the discovery, museographer E. Dörner mentioned it in the local media³. Even more, he contacted I. H. Crișan, the researcher from Cluj, who showed special interest in these discoveries. One can thus explain the archaeological excavations performed between 1965 and 1969 in Cicir under I. H. Crișan’s leadership, in collaboration with museographer E. Dörner as representative of the County Museum in Arad⁴.

My relationship of collaboration with E. Dörner was long and fruitful. It started with that meeting at the museum in 1961 and continued until the beginning of the 1980s when his health no longer allowed it. One of the ways in which we collaborated was me providing information on stray archaeological finds (foundations, sewage, roads, etc.). In 1965–1992 I was active as a mere school pedagogue (especially at the Industrial High School no. 2 in Arad). I had there pupils from the entire county, some of them passionate about history, and I co-opted them to a history school group called “Ziridava”. They told me of numerous discoveries of archaeological materials. Some of them I checked together with museographer E. Dörner and they proved to be prehistoric or ancient settlements and fortifications. We published and then donated to the County Museum of Arad the largest part of the resulted archaeological materials.

Our collaboration also included numerous surface researches in order to verify some data or in order to discover new points of archaeological interest⁵. Other researchers also took part in these field walks, such as V. Boroneanț (Bucharest) and jurist Gh. Miloi (Arad), a passionate amateur archaeologist and at the same time an eager collector.

The collaboration was also expressed through archaeological excavation sites in which I took part as discoverer: Cicir “La gropi” and Zăbrani “Cocoșa pietrei” Paleolithic and Epipaleolithic, and “Pârneava”, Dacian settlement with two levels⁶. On the archaeological site in Cicir led by researcher from Cluj I. H. Crișan (who stayed with my grandparents in Cicir during the archaeological campaign), I was taught the first notions of stratigraphy and excavation technique by museographer E. Dörner and by I. H. Crișan.

Thus, I was included in the research team of the excavation campaign from Zăbrani (1973–1975) besides V. Boroneanț (leader of the excavation), E. Dörner, and M. Cărciumaru (Bucharest). A team of British researchers from the Archaeology Institute in London was also present on the site in 1973, coordinated by J. Nandris (I had an emotional encounter with him 41 years later, in December 2014, during the Arheovest Session held at the West University in Timișoara).

In the summer of 1974 Mr. E. Dörner’s health deteriorated. It was said that the disease that ate him started from a conflict with the Romanian authorities due to his participation at a history congress in Prague (Czechoslovakia) in 1966. When he returned he was questioned by the Secret Service on the allegation that he did not support certain perspectives of Romanian historiography and thus sabotaged the national history. I do not believe he did this, it was only exaggerations. Despite the fact that we were very close, I never asked him about these problems, in order not to stir unpleasant memories.

The last archaeological site that he led together with archaeologist M. Barbu was the one in Sântana in 1979. Shortly afterwards he retired due to his illness and in 1990 settled with his family in Germany. He died in 1993.

How did I know him, after more than two decades of collaboration? As a true professional, in love with his work. He did not publish much, but his studies were well documented and argued, and some of his conclusions are still valid today. Researcher N. Chidioșan also stressed this fact in 1981 during a conversation we had at Țării Crișurilor Museum. E. Dörner was especially concerned with the issue

³ Dörner 1962, 3.

⁴ Dörner 1966, 4.

⁵ Schmidt 1971, 6.

⁶ Pădureanu 1972, 4; Hayer 1973, 1; Miloi 1973, 3; Dörner 1975, 7; Dörner 1976, 5.

of the Celts and the Sarmatians in the context of our national history. He was in close relationships of friendship and collaboration with a number of personalities from the field of historical research: C. Daicoviciu, K. Horedt, I. H. Crișan, V. Boroneanț, and S. Dumitrașcu. Meticulous during field walks, he noted many details. After he retired, he gave me several envelopes with notes (that I have recently donated to the County Museum in Arad). He stressed the good parts in his colleagues and peers. I never heard him gossip or blame someone. He was open, friendly. He had a noble soul, due to his elevated family education. Even when we did not discuss issues of history and research, our conversations were never ordinary.

In 1970 I started publishing in the local media articles related to the archaeological discoveries made in the county and since 1973 papers in specialized periodicals. Before submitting them, we checked them together. He sometimes tempered my youthful enthusiasm with pertinent observations. He often reminded me: *Non multa sed multum*.

Now, after so much time, my thoughts turn with unwavering gratitude to the one who guided my steps towards the field of history and archaeological research. He was “my professor”⁷.

Eugen D. Pădureanu

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| Dörner 1973 | E. Dörner, <i>Der Archäologie verbunden. Eugen Pădureanu- Ein Werthvoller Mitarbeiter des Arader Museum</i> . Neue Banater Zeitung, 7 th August 1973, 2 |
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| Dörner 1976 | E. Dörner, <i>Așezarea dacică de la Zăbrani</i> . Flacăra Roșie, Arad, 3 rd January 1976, 5 . |
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| Hayer 1973 | F. Hayer, <i>Grosste Feuerstein – Siedlung</i> . Neue Banater Zeitung, Timișoara, 14 th August 1973, 1. |
| Miloi 1973 | Gh. Miloi, <i>Cea mai mare așezare epipaleolitică la Zăbrani</i> . Flacăra Roșie, Arad 1973, 3. |
| Pădureanu 1972 | E. Pădureanu, <i>Așezare dacică târzie</i> . Flacăra Roșie, Arad, 12 th August 1972, 4. |
| Schmidt 1971 | M. Schmidt, <i>Arader Amateurforscher fand archäologische Raritäten</i> . Neuer Weg, 17 th December 1971, 6. |

⁷ Dumitrașcu 1995, 130–133.

Abbreviations

Acta Ant et Arch Suppl	Acta Antiqua et Archaeologica Supplementum. Szeged.
AAC	Acta Archaeologica Carpathica. Krakow.
ACMIT	Anuarul Comisiunii monumentelor istorice. Secția pentru Transilvania. Cluj.
ActaArchHung	ActaArchHung Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae. Budapest.
AEM	Archäologische Epigraphische Mitteilungen aus Österreich-Ungarn.
AIIA Cluj	Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie. Cluj.
AMP	Acta Musei Porolissensis. Zalău.
ATF	Acta Terrae Fogarasiensis. Făgăraș.
ATS	Acta Terrae Septemcastrenses. Sibiu.
Agria	<i>Agria. Annales Musei Agriensis</i> . Az egri Dobó István Vármúzeum évkönyve. Eger.
AnB S.N.	Analele Banatului. Timișoara.
ArchÉrt	Archaeologiai Értesítő. A Magyar Régészeti és Művészettörténeti Társulat tudományos folyóirata. Budapest.
Arh. Pregled	Arheološki Pregled. Arheološko Društvo Jugoslavije. Beograd.
AM	Arheologia Moldovei. Iași.
AMN	Acta Musei Napocensis. Cluj-Napoca.
ArchRozhl	Archeologické Rozhledy. Praga.
ASMB	Arheologia Satului Medieval din Banat. Reșița 1996.
BAM	Brvkenthal Acta Mvsei. Sibiu.
BAR Int. Ser.	British Archaeological Reports. International Series. Oxford.
BCMI	Buletinul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice.
BerRGK	Bericht der RömischGermanischen Kommission, Frankfurt a. Main.
BHAB	Bibliotheca Historica et Archaeologica Banatica. Timișoara.
BMB. SH	Biblioteca Muzeului Bistrița. Seria Historica. Bistrița Năsăud.
BMI	Buletinul Monumentelor Istorice, București.
BMN	Bibliotheca Musei Napocensis. Cluj-Napoca.
BMMK	A Békés Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei. Békéscsaba.
BMMN	Buletinul Muzeului Militar Național, București.
BThr	Bibliotheca Thracologica. Institutul Român de Tracologie, București.
CAB	
CAH	Communicationes Archaeologicae Hungariae. Budapest.
Carpica	Carpica. Muzeul Județean de Istorie și Arheologie Bacău. Bacău.
CAMNI	Cercetări Arheologice. Muzeul de Istorie al R. S. România/Muzeul Național de Istorie. București.
CCA	<i>Cronica cercetărilor arheologice (din România)</i> , 1983–1992 <i>sqq.</i> (și în variantă electronică pe http://www.cimec.ro/scripts/arh/cronica/cercetariarh.asp).
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CCA 2013 (2014)	Institutul Național al Patrimoniului (Ed.), <i>CCA. Campania 2013. A XLVIII-a sesiune națională de rapoarte arheologice, Oradea, 5–7 iunie 2014</i> . [București] 2014.
CCA 2014 (2015)	Institutul Național al Patrimoniului (Ed.), <i>CCA 2015. Campania 2014. A XLIX-a sesiune națională de rapoarte arheologice, Pitești, 28–30 mai 2015, Muzeul județean Argeș</i> . [București] 2015.
CRSCRCR	Coins from Roman sites and collections of Roman coins from Romania. Cluj-Napoca.
Dacia N.S.	Dacia. Revue d'archéologie et d'histoire ancienne. Nouvelle serie. București.
Danubius	Danubius – Revista Muzeului de Istorie Galați. Galați.
DDME	A Debreceni Déri Múzeum Évkönyve. Debrecen.
DolgCluj	Dolgozatok az Erdélyi Nemzeti Érem- és Régiségtárából, Klozsvár (Cluj).
DolgSzeg	Dolgozatok. Arbeiten des Archäologischen Instituts der Universität. Szeged.
EphNap	Ephemeris Napocensis. Cluj-Napoca.
FADDP/GMADP	Führer zu archäologischen Denkmälern in Dacia Porolissensis/Ghid al monumentelor arheologice din Dacia Porolissensis.
FolArch	Folia Archaeologica. Budapest.
Forsch. u. Ber. z. Vor- u. Frühgesch. BW	Forschungen und Berichte zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte in Baden-Württemberg.
GPSKV	Gradja za proučavanje spomenika kulture Vojvodine. Novi Sad.
GSAD	Glasnik Srpskog Arheološkog Društva. Beograd.
HOMÉ	A Herman Ottó Múzeum Évkönyve. Miskolc.
JAMÉ	A nyíregyházi Josa András Múzeum Évkönyve. Nyíregyháza.
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MCA-S.N.	Materiale și Cercetări Arheologice-Serie Nouă. București.
MA	Memoria Antiquitatis. Complexul Muzeal Județean Neamț. Piatra Neamț.
MFMÉ	A Móra Ferenc Múz. Évkönyve. Szeged.
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MN	Muzeul Național. București.
Opuscula Hungarica	Opuscula Hungarica. Budapest.
PamArch	<i>Památky Archeologické. Praha.</i>
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PIKS/PISC	Die Publikationen des Institutes für klassische Studien/ Publicațiile Institutului de studii clasice. Cluj-Napoca.
PBF	Praehistorische Bronzefunde. Berlin.
PZ	Prähistorische Zeitschrift. Berlin.
Rev. Muz.	Revista Muzeelor, București.
RIR	Revista Istorică Română.
RMM-MIA	Revista Muzeelor și Monumentelor. seria Monumente istorice și de artă. București.
RMMN	Revista Muzeului Militar Național. București.
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RVM	Rad Vojvodjanskih Muzeja, Novi Sad.
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SCN	Studii și Cercetări Numismatice. București.
SlovArch	Slovenská Archeológia. Nitra.
SIA	Studii de Istoria Artei. Cluj Napoca.
SIB	Studii de istorie a Banatului. Timișoara.
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SMMA	Szolnok Megyei Múzeumi Adattár. Szolnok.
SMMIM	Studii și Materiale de Muzeografie și Istorie Militară. București.
Starinar	Starinar. Arheološki Institut. Beograd.
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StComBrukenthal	<i>Studii și comunicări</i> . Sibiu.
StudArch	Studia Archaeologica. <i>Budapest</i> .
StudCom	Studia Comitatus. <i>Szentendre</i> .
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