

## THE PARTICIPATION OF THE CROWN DOMAIN AT THE NATIONAL EXHIBITIONS (1884-1939)

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**Abstract.** Exhibitions were initially seen as a competition in which each participant would tend to make a profit directly from sales focusing particularly on agricultural and industrial products. Later, they became a scene that showed different lifestyles, political ideologies and structures. Their role was to promote a country's identity and also to exhibit the scientific and technical performance of different areas. They address a broad range of participants, from researchers, developers, producers to potential consumers, buyers and users.

The first major exhibition organized by the Romanian state which had also a strong echo abroad, was a Jubilee exhibition in 1906, held in Bucharest. The event commemorated 1800 years from the arriving of the first settlers in the Romanian lands, 40 years of reign of King Carol I and the 25 years since the proclamation of the kingdom. Of the 12 sections of the exhibition, the Crown Domain ranged only from 7: agriculture, sericulture-hunting, horticulture-viticulture, zootechny, mining, quarrying and industry. That institution, also participated to the expositions from Chișinău (1925) and Bucharest (1934, 1939).

**Keywords:** Romanian, Crown Domain, exhibition, national, XIX-XX centuries.

Exhibitions were initially seen as a competition in which each participant would tend to make a profit directly from sales focusing particularly on agricultural and industrial products. Later, they became a scene that showed different lifestyles, political ideologies and structures<sup>1</sup>. Their role was to promote a country's identity and also to exhibit the scientific and technical performance of different areas. They address a broad range of participants, from researchers, developers, producers to potential consumers, buyers and users.

The first Romanian exhibition was recorded in our country in the early nineteenth century, being organized in Iași (1836). The law from June 1836 that divided the country in 10 agricultural regions conferred the right to each county's residence to organize an annual exhibition that would show the progress registered in that region. This represented an impulse in the development of the Romanian agriculture. Later, the number of these manifestations increased, between 1865 and 1884, being registered 10 agricultural and industrial exhibitions<sup>2</sup>.

Considering that the man from the village will be much more interested in the work from the different domains, only if he is shown concrete, tangible, things, Crown Domain's administration sought to promote their products through these events, at first local.

The first exhibition on which it is reported the presence of Crown domain is that of the Cooperators, organized in Craiova on August 15<sup>th</sup> 1887, and then to all the exhibitions held in Craiova and Bucharest between 1894 and 1895<sup>3</sup>. We also mention the participation to all agricultural and industrial exhibitions, organized in the districts to which they belonged, such are: Vaslui, Brăila, to that of Societatea Agrară (Agrarian Society), of Asociația română pentru înaintarea și răspândirea științelor (The Romanian Association for the development and the spreading of science)<sup>4</sup>, exhibitions that allowed them to become more and more recognizable on the national market.

The first major exhibition organized by the Romanian state which had also a strong echo abroad, was a Jubilee exhibition in 1906, held in Bucharest. The exhibition was intended to be a replica of the one in Paris in 1900. The initiative belonged to Take Ionescu, who proposed the celebration of four decades of existence of the king on Romanian soil. By his gesture aimed to impress the king and thus strengthen its position in the party<sup>5</sup>. The event commemorated 1800 years from the arriving of the first settlers in the Romanian lands, 40 years of reign of King Carol I and the 25 years since the proclamation of the kingdom<sup>6</sup>.

The exhibition was organized by a law voted by the Parliament (Chamber of Deputies and Senate) in May 1905. By royal decree, published in the Official Gazette<sup>7</sup>, C. Istrati was appointed general Commissioner of the exhibition. As members of the committee we mention: Al. Ghica, General Secretary, Grigore Groceanu, General Inspector, and Dr. Alexandru Zaharia. The works on the exhibition began a month later and were executed under the guidance of the architect I. Berindey (1871-1928), who perfected in 1925, the Administrative Palace in Iași, after the plans created by the French landscape architect Edouard Redont (1862 - 1942). As a place for the exhibition, it was elected the Carol Park, located in

<sup>1</sup> Laurențiu Vlad, *Propagandă și identitate. România la Expozițiile universale belgiene, 1897-1935*, Bucharest, Arta Grafică Publishing House, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> I.A. Rocer, Horia Oprescu, *Expozițiile*, in *Enciclopedia României*, vol. IV, *Economia Națională, circulație, distribuție și consum*, Bucharest, 1939, p. 284.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 290, 324; *Catalog. Administrația Domeniului Coroanei la expoziția generală română din București*, Bucharest, 1906, p. 29.

<sup>4</sup> *Circulara despre modul cum trebuie întocmite muzeele locale* (24 ianuarie 1904), in *Îndrumări date agenților Domeniului Coroanei de către Ioan Kalinderu doctor în drept de la Facultatea din Paris, membru al Academiei Române*, vol. II, Bucharest, 1909, p. 179-185.

<sup>5</sup> *România în timpul lui Carol I 1866 – 1914. Romania during the Reign of Carol I 1866 – 1914*, Bucharest, Cetatea de Scaun Publishing House, 2006, p. 101.

<sup>6</sup> *Expoziția generală română*, in vol. *Călăuză oficială și catalogul expozițiunii autorizat de comisariatul general*, Bucharest, 1906, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> No. 43 from May 26<sup>th</sup> 1905.

the southern part of Bucharest, with an area of 360,000 m<sup>2</sup>. This event aimed at presenting the achievements of Romania in the period 1866 - 1906, on all levels: political, cultural, economic and military.

The exhibition was inaugurated by King Charles I, on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 1906<sup>8</sup>. Although the exhibition was intended to be a national character, the event was attended both the Romanian provinces occupied - August 26 arrived in Bucharest over two thousand Transylvania, the Romanian Banat, Bukovina, Macedonian and Romanian - and some neighbor countries such are: Hungary, Austria, France.

The pavilion of the Crown Domain and of the Royal House was located in front the Mihai Viteazul square, on Calea Moldovei and was distinguished through the pure Romanian style. The building looked like a peasant's house with two staircases at the entrance<sup>9</sup> and a garden with beehives, tree trunks, traditional chairs of the villagers<sup>10</sup> etc.

Noticing it, Nicolae Iorga said: "It's neat, harmonious, and doesn't have more embellishments than needed. The little garden in front of it makes it even more enjoyable. The title was written in Cyrillic letters, many believing that the flag is a Muscovite, Bulgarian or Serbian"<sup>11</sup>.

The next day after the official opening of the exhibition, the pavilion of the Crown Domain was visited by the Royal Family, accompanied by the principles Ferdinand and Carol, on which occasion they brought thanks to Mr. Kalinderu "for his tireless work" for the flourishing of these estates<sup>12</sup>.

The exhibition was comprehensive in covering all the fields. Of the 12 sections of the exhibition, the Crown Domain ranged only from 7: agriculture, sericulture-hunting, horticulture-viticulture, zootechny, mining, quarrying and industry.

The exhibited objects represented the result of a collaborative effort in 22 years and individualized every estate.

In the pavilion designed for agriculture, could be identified: the economic plans of the Sadova, Segarcea, Domnița, Dobrovăț, Gherghița, Cocioc, Rușețu Domains; soil profiles belonging to these domains; photos representing schools plans, constructed by the Crown Domains' Administration; photos of the plans of walled deposits for products, a hop dryer from Gherghița and Cocioc, of a stable; different graphics of the surfaces, exploitation expenses, the gross and net income from the twelfth estates; photos of the marsh and river Snagov drainage works from the Cocioc Domain; postcards and plans of the staff's houses; miniatures of the administration houses from Cocioc<sup>13</sup> etc.

A special section exposing all varieties of cereals grown between 1905 and 1906: samples of wheat, corn, flax, beans, peas, hemp, sugar beet, oats, rye, barley (winter, spring, common, with six rows) two-row barely, proso millet, millet, hops, rape, sorghum, poppy seed, vetchling, clover, sainfoin, buckwheat, white mustard, coriander, sunflower, yellow lupine, soybean hispida, horse bean and earthmouse, lentils, different varieties of wheat, oat, barley, rye, flax, hemp, made up in bundles, different varieties of potatoes<sup>14</sup>, lucern root<sup>15</sup>. In photos was shown how the land was exploited with farm machineries and plows. There have been presented two plows from 1866, 1906 in order to observe the development in the technical area. They were joined by a panel of instruments used in agriculture. There have also been exhibited miniature models of rack wagons and cart used to transport grains, made in the workshops of the Sadova Domain, wheelwrights and smiths workshops models, the mill from the section Ocolna of the Sadova Domain and the model of the same farm, that included maize barns, store houses, cars sheds, cattle stables, the houses of the personnel, gardens surrounded by plantations. Other exhibits consisted of: fruits dried in the dryer from Gherghița such are: apricots without kernels, sour cherries, apples, soup vegetables, etc.; sheep wool samples from the breeds tzurcana and prime wool sheep, washed and unwashed, carded and spun, dairy products from the Periș milk factory on the Cocioc Domain such as: Periș butter, Cocioc cream, Cocioc Brie, Tilsit, milk and butter milk.

*The viticular domain*<sup>16</sup> was represented by boxes with grafts arranged on multiple layers in different types of soil: in moss and sawdust; a panel with different grafting systems and tools used for this purpose; a wooden replica of the workshop from Segarcea where were grafted the vines, realized in the carpentry workshops of the domain; different photos of the vineyards and the plan of the vineyards' section from the same domain; different types of white and red wine, produced in the Segarcea, Sadova and Gherghița Administrations.

*The sericulture*<sup>17</sup> showed different silk products, made by the peasants or the students from the schools of the different domains; woven materials and silk drawings, several varieties of silk cocoons from the Cocioc Domain, a collection that presented the silk worm in different stages of evolution, the cloths obtained after the processing on the cocoons, silk, simple and colored silk cloth; the metamorphose of the silk worms collected by the mixed school from Mălini, a sericulture conspectus, made for the rational culture of the silk worms and a weaving machine made in the workshops from the Bușteni Domain.

<sup>8</sup> *Expoziția generală română*, in *op. cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>9</sup> „Albina”, year IX, no. 39, June 25<sup>th</sup> 1906, p. 1066.

<sup>10</sup> *Expoziția generală română*, in *op. cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>11</sup> „Neamul Românesc”, year I, no. 17, Bucharest, 6<sup>th</sup> of July 1906, p. 268.

<sup>12</sup> *Amintiri despre jubileul de 40 ani de domnie a M.S. Regelui Carol I 1866-1906*, Bucharest, 1906, p. 258.

<sup>13</sup> *Catalog. Administrația...*, p. 87-89.

<sup>14</sup> During 1901-1906, at Cocioc there was experimented with 28 categories of potatoes, obtaining a good production only Professor Wotmann, Mohort etc.

<sup>15</sup> *Catalog. Administrația...*, p. 89-91.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 109-110.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 112.

*The apiarian domain*<sup>18</sup> exhibited few postcards with bee gardens from the domains Mălini, Bicaz, Cocioc, Gherghița and Segarcea; different types of hives: Dzierzon, Berlepsch, Hermes; many types of honey combs; the bee in different forms with the enemies of the hives; jars of different shapes with May honey; liqueurs, made at the Periș apiary from honey and fruits – vanilla, sour cherries, centaury, coffee, peppermint, strawberries, oranges, bitters liqueurs but also beverages such as: sour cherries wine, wormwood wine, honey beer; different shapes and qualities of candle wax.

The pavilion of *the silviculture* presented different types of wood products:

a) *industrial wood*: wooden species samples, presented in different sections, belonging to the Bicaz Domain, birds nests, Berlepsch system, after the models introduced by *The Society for the Protection of the Animals*, realized in the carpentry workshop from the Gherghița Domain; plop wood troughs, wooden bowls; water buckets, milk churns, fir tree wood vats made in the workshops from Mălini; common maple yoke for the oxen (Dobrovăț); different housekeeping objects; sieves and strainers, spoons, bushels, ladles, tubs and wooden pails, oak butts and barrels with iron hoops (Sadova), boxes and barrels for khalva (Bușteni), oval and round boxes for delight, pharmacies, cheese (Bușteni); forester hammers, forester compasses, different models of blinds made at Bicaz, oak tubs; shovels, rakes, beech wood pitchforks; the replica of a oak bathroom made in the workshop from Sadova<sup>19</sup>;

b) *resonance wood* for the musical instruments: the back side of a piano glued and unorganized, discharged after the German system; filed piano back side, realized after the English or German model, made at Mălini, resonance boards, unplanned boards for the drawing plank, boards cut for the piano key boards, unplanned and planed, unplanned boards for the piano side, of different widths and violin back sides;

c) *wood shaped as a wooden tile* executed on the Borca Domain;

d) *wood discharged for staves and wheelwright's work*: oak staves and back parts for wine butts, oak spokes and ash tree wheel rims;

e) *wood discharged at the frame saw for construction*: different dimension beam samples, between 0.10 m/1.12 m – 0.28 m/0.12 m and 0.20 m/0.20 m – 0.30 m/0.30 m; the relief of the Bicaz Domain, with the explained conventional signs that represented the forest, the commons, the plough land, the hay land, the meadows etc; samples of glazed beech and lime tree boards for furniture;

f) *deformed and abnormal pieces of wood, sections in different species of wood*;

g) *replicas of some installations used in exploitation*: the water saw from Gura Borcei, the mechanic saw and the telepher from the Mălini Domain;

h) *photos* that reproduced the way in which was realized the forestry exploitation, the replica of the resinous seed drier, of the timber factory from Ața-Bour, made of 4 frame saws, 10 Venetian saws, 4 circular saws, machines for grinding and for cutting the logs of wood, from the Bicaz Domain.

i) *studies of forest planning and plans*: the topographic plan of the Sabașa-Farcașa domain, maps that presented the mountains after the situation of the forest in 1900, of the forestry administrations from Bicaz and Tașca, the Bicaz Domain; the map of the same forestry administrations, during 1900-1909; the map of the forest from the Dobrovăț Domain (1899), of the Mălini Domain for 1905-1915; the map of the mountains and the forest planning of the Cocioc Domain's forest (1905), of the Gherghița Domain' forest (1906); the general plan of the mountains from the Mălini Domain; the forest planning of the Segarcea Domain' forest (1901); the topographic plan of the mountain Caraiman, the Bușteni Domain; studies of forest planning of all the forests from all the Crown's Domains;

j) *the relief of the Bicaz Damain*, accompanied by the list of the conventional signs of the forest areas, the commons, the plough lands, the hay lands and the meadows etc.; the relief of the Poiana-Doamnei administration from the Mălini;

k) *graphics regarding the circulation of wood*;

l) *instruments used in hunting and different wild animal and birds*: stag, deer horns from the Mălini Domain, moose horns from the same Domain, wolf, wild cat, marten, woodcock, sparrow hawk, wild boar with the piglet, bear, the skeleton head of a bear hunted in the Bicaz Domain mountains, eagle, mountain cock and hazel hen, bustard, diver etc;

m) *fishes*: barbell, umber, dace, huck;

n) *collections of insects and butterflies*: a collection of butterflies from the Dobrovăț Domain and a collection of insects injurious to the forest, each species being presented in all the phases, from egg to the mature insect.

There also have been presented different pieces of furniture and objects made in the willow-weaving workshop, situated on the Cocioc Domain, which was created in 1888 and given away in concession, free of charge, to a foreman and was placed at his disposal the necessary willow. Among the presented objects we mention: travelling baskets in different shapes and sizes, fantasie basket for flowers, with the form of a horn, lyra, bookstand basket for notes, wheelbarrow made of weaven straws and willow for flowers, shopping baskets, nests-basketsfor flowers, with different forms, fruit dishes and wallets; different shapes of laundry baskets, desks, different objects made at the Gherghița Domain, longue chairs, willow colored armchairs, a red table and four chairs for garden, a green garden pavilion, made of 24 pieces of furniture, along with tables an chairs<sup>20</sup> etc. There have also been presented products of the foundry from the Segarcea and Bicaz Domains<sup>21</sup>, stone quarry products from Bușteni<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 112-113.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 61-62.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 101-102.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 79-81.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 81.

In the housekeeping industry section<sup>23</sup>, there have been exhibited: traditional clothes, carpets and peasants' furniture, made by the students and by the personnel's wives from the Domain.

The pottery factory from the Cocioc Domain exhibited: vases, flat bottles, plates, different pitchers, medallions representing the king and the queen, stoves etc., all made of ceramic<sup>24</sup>.

From the Mălini toy factory there have been exhibited different shapes of dolls, simple and luxurious, some of them were closing and opening their eyes, dressed in rustic clothes, but also different other toys such as: soldiers, weapons, animals<sup>25</sup>, small houses, cars<sup>26</sup> etc. The products created in the brushes workshop were also from Mălini<sup>27</sup>.

The public present at the exhibition was also shown the studies and the publications that belonged to the Crown Domain Administration' library<sup>28</sup>, monographs, plans and school replicas, churches monographs, the statues of the cultural-economic societies existent on the Domain, replicas of the churches from Farcașa, different objects realized in the school workshops<sup>29</sup>, replicas of some theatre scenes, photos showing different scenes from plays in which acted school children and the model of the village's theatre from Borca<sup>30</sup>.

Remarking the diversity of the objects that the Crown Domain exhibited, the newspaper Albina related: "It is a real kaleidoscope of all the country's richness"<sup>31</sup>.

At the awarding of the prizes, on November 5<sup>th</sup> 1906, the Crown Domain Administration, represented by Ion Kalinderu, was awarded a special prize, representing a silver vessel with allegorical figures, admirably executed. This prize was offered by the king "to the most outstanding farmer"<sup>32</sup>. Exposing the motifs for which the Crown Domains were awarded this special prize, Dr. C. Istrati, said: "The Crown Domains are for a long time a good example for the entire country, having an important influence on the activity of our great landowners. All that was done there was due to a serious thinking, had been studied and applied before on a large scale, only after it had been experienced on a smaller scale"<sup>33</sup> and continued, referring to the industry that was developing in the perimeter of the Administrations: "A good result was that regarding the industry and especially the industry that works with the products from agriculture and particularly during the winter's months, by our villagers"<sup>34</sup>.

The exhibit was closed on November 23<sup>rd</sup>, in the presence of Queen Elisabeth and the princely couple, Ferdinand and Mary. In the speech that Ion Lahovary delivered, it was mentioned all the objectives and the purposes of the organizers: "We desired to show to the foreigners and to the Romanians that what Romania once had been and what is today, after 40 years of glorious reign of the King Carol I ... we wanted that the foreigners to know and that the Romanians to know themselves better, to know that between the Danube and the Carpathians leaves, grows and becomes stronger a hard-working, brave and peaceful people, leaded by a patriot and wise king"<sup>35</sup>.

The organizers and the Romanian Government considered the event a great success, recognized also by the foreign press, present in our country.

After this exhibition, the agricultural contests and exhibitions gained a greater importance.

Mentions regarding the exhibitions organized during the period 1906-1918 aren't any, although we don't doubt about their existence, the archive of the Crown Domain being destroyed during the First World War (1916-1918).

The union of Basarabia with Romania from 1918 extended the possibility to participate at the exhibitions organized in the Romanian province from over the Prut. Thus, when such an event was organized at Chișinău, on 5<sup>th</sup> of August 1925, the Segarcea Crown Domain, recognized especially for the wines produced there, answered positively to the invitation to participate with agricultural, forestry, viticulture and animal products. There have been exhibited: samples of red and Polish wheat, barley, millet, oat, two-row barely, vetchling, but also 93 forestry species collected from the Domain's forest, arranged on 48 boards; 0.300 kg of silk, starting from a thread made from a cocoon and to 100 gr. of cocoons, 0.50 kg of silk worms cocoons; 0.150 kg of prime wool in 6 flocks, a distaff and a spindle; different categories of wines representative for this administration: 20 bottles of Frongtinon from 1921, 20 bottles of brandy, obtained in 1919, 20 bottles of Pinot Noir, 30 bottles of Riesling from 1920, 20 bottles of Alb superior from 1920, 20 bottles of Fetească albă from 1920<sup>36</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 116, 103-105.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 113-115.

<sup>25</sup> Rabbits, pigs, geese, chickens, ducks, dogs, snakes, a pair of yoked oxen, different size horses.

<sup>26</sup> *Catalog. Administrația...*, p. 106-107.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 109.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 95-99.

<sup>29</sup> The replica of the mixed school from hamlet Brătulești, the commune Cocioc, made in the workshop of the domain, of the mixed school from the commune Gherghița, realized by the pupils; the reproduction of the school garden from the commune Ciurmuș, county Prahova, with a collection of seeds; different pictures, pyrograved trays, different embroideries, brushes, door mats etc. (*Ibidem*, p. 107-108).

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 68.

<sup>31</sup> „Albina”, p. 1066.

<sup>32</sup> *Expozițiunea Generală Română din 1906. Sebearea distribuirei premiilor*, Bucharest, 1906, p. 4.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 13.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>35</sup> Andrei Florin Sora, *Expoziția jubiliară din 1906 – considerații preliminare* –, in „ERASMUS”, no. 12/2001, Bucharest, Ars Docendi Publishing House, p. 183.

<sup>36</sup> The County Administration oh the National Archives from Dolj, fund Segarcea Crown Domain, file 4/1925, f. 289.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 1927, the Chamber for Agriculture from Dolj organized in the commune Segarcea a zootehnic agricultural exhibition. For the examples that the Domain Segarcea presented, it was awarded 5 gold medals by the Chamber for Agriculture<sup>37</sup>.

In 1934, on the occasion of the manifestation „Expoziția Târg”, organized in May at Bucharest, the domain Sadova brought 275 bottles of wine, bottled in recipients of 750 ml and other 275 bottles of 750 ml, with wine from the butts<sup>38</sup>.

A last participation, as coming from the documents, is mentioned four years later, at the agricultural exhibition from Bucharest, in 1938. On this occasion, the Sadova Domain exhibited a plan that evidenced the evolution of the estate in the third decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The plan involved a presentation of the oak and locust tree forest, the vineyard and the cultivated soil; the five existent agricultural centers, represented by red colored rings, the sixth sub-center, planned to be realized in the future, such is the forest range from Dăbuleni – marked by a circle hachured with red; the apiarian centre from Ocolna, hachured with blue. It was especially insisted on the development of the apiary, during 1930-1939, showing in the diagrams the price in cost and the medium price for selling; the increased number of hives and the annual produce in kilograms<sup>39</sup>.

The outbreak of the Second World War made, then, impossible the organization of such events. Being on the scene of operations, many administrations had to interrupt their activity. Although, most of the documents from the Crown Domains' archive were destroyed during the events of the two world wars, the few left information regarding the exhibitions they participate and the awarded prizes, allow us to create a shaped image about the part played by this institution in the emancipation of the Romanian village.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, file 4/1928, f. 49-55.

<sup>38</sup> *Idem*, fund Sadova Crown Domain, file 2/1934, f. 863, 874.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, file 8/1938, f. 24.

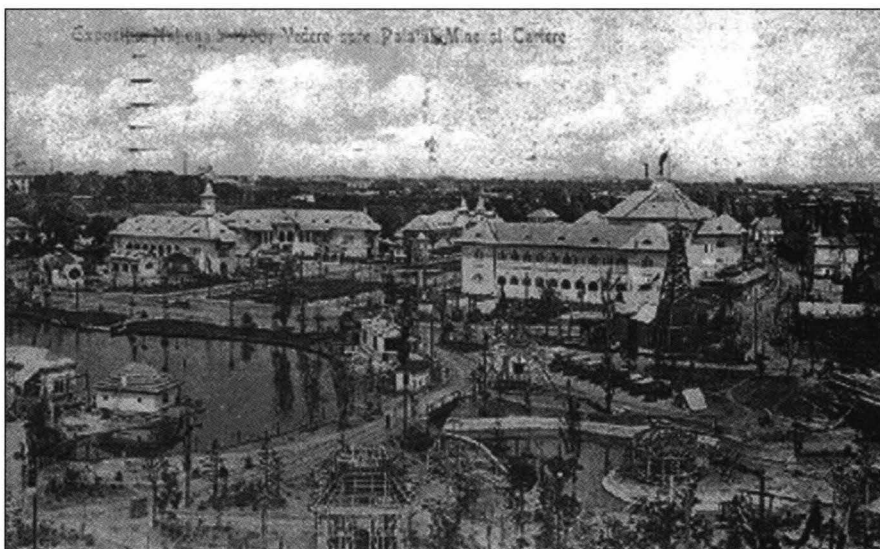


Fig. 3

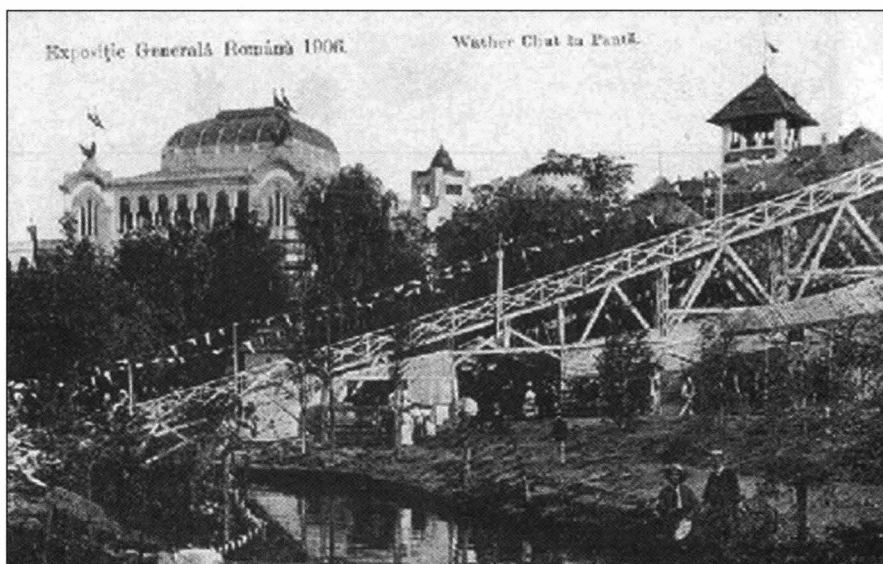


Fig. 4

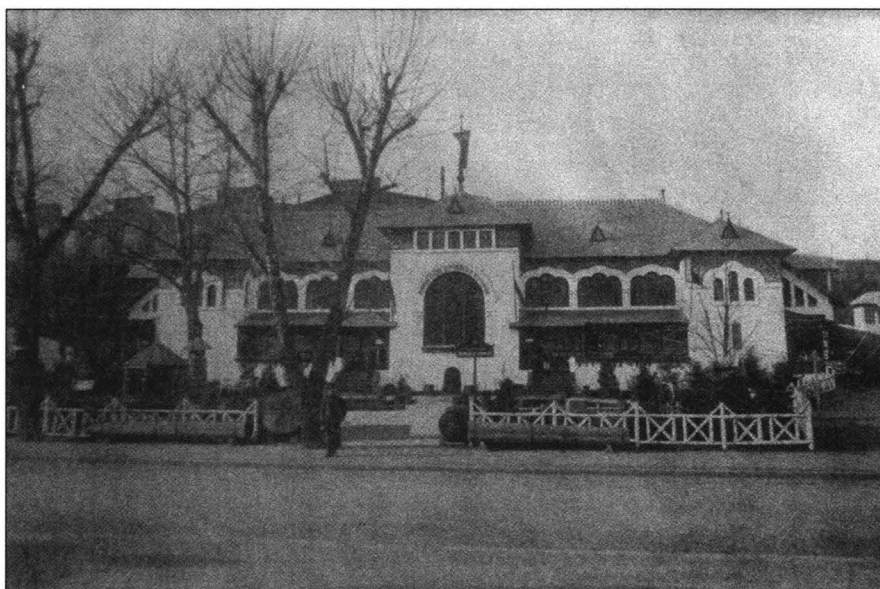


Fig. 5 - The main façade