

# THE INVESTIGATION, PRESERVATION AND INTEGRATION OF VERNACULAR MONUMENTS AND ARCHITECTURAL PILES IN ROMANIA

D. GEORGETA STOICA

More than 100 years have elapsed since the first scientific concerns for vernacular architecture have taken shape due to the activity and personality of Alexandru Odobescu who, besides literary and archaeological topics, also took interest in the study of peasant creation.

He was not the only one who understood the scientific and educational importance of the less impressive creations achieved through the contribution of numerous generations and transmitted by tradition: we should mention other great scholars as George Barițiu, Ion Ionescu de la Brad and Petre

Wooden church of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, Plopiș — Maramureș  
Conserved in situ.



S. Aurelian. In that stage of the researches one cannot speak about the existence of a defined conception in the field of vernacular architecture, as each category of specialists, historians, art historians, geographers, physicians and ethnographers paid attention only to certain aspects of this architecture.

In the second half of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, and especially in the first decades of the XX<sup>th</sup>, vernacular architecture began to attract the attention of art historians who started their researches from the historical-aesthetic point of view. The result was the publication of albums of rural architecture where the side of the beautiful was emphasized.

The activity of Alexandru Tzigara-Samurcaș, that learned art historian and one of those who advocated the recognition of popular creation as a component of the treasury of Romanian civilization and culture, also included the field of architecture. He was the one who transported a peasant house built by the artisan Antonie Mogoș from Ceauru (district of Gorj) and rebuilt it in one of the rooms of the National Art Museum in Bucharest.

A series of albums whose authors were Dimitrie Comșa and Margareta Miller-Verghi brought the public in touch with informations concerning popular architecture, thus making it aware of the value of these monuments and of their specific character.

It was only in the third decade of the XX<sup>th</sup> century that one can talk about the methodical researches in this field, when four important works appeared at short intervals: N. Iorga, *L'art populaire en Roumanie, son caractère, ses rapports et son origine*, Paris 1923; Al. Tzigara-Samurcaș, *L'art du peuple roumain*, Geneva, 1925; G. Oprescu, *Peasant Art in Romania*, London, 1929. In these works, popular creation is approached from the historical point of view and the authors stress its continuity; its age-old seams can be traced as far back as the Bronze Age and its artistic traditions are related to those of Europe, of the Middle East and of the Eurasiatic steppes.

Coriolan Petreanu, Atanasie Popa and Florea Stănculescu are among the most distinguished authors of works on rural architecture.

Between 1908—1916 and 1942—1943, a series of particularly interesting articles and studies on historical monuments, including the vernacular ones, were published in the „Buletinul Comisiei Monumentelor Istorice” (Bulletin of the Board for Historical Monuments).

Great Romanian geographers, as George Vâlsan, Simion Mehedinți and Vintilă Mihăilescu studied vernacular architecture within the context of their speciality. Simion Mehedinți advocated the application of anthropogeographical methods to the study of vernacular culture and he asserted that: „...the geographical method, applied to certain characteristic details as the shape of the dwellings, their location, etc. is bound to bear fruits... A whole series of facts and relationships between facts will then come to the fore when these anthropo-





Vernacular architecture pile integrated in the tenement fund, Mediaș—Sibiu.

geographical or ethnographic documents will be pointed out on the map with their actual extent and their explanation will be looked for in their relationship to the area<sup>1</sup>.

In the second half of the past century, a certain number of physicians were interested in the building system, and in the comfort and hygiene of rural vernacular architecture. Particularly important are the works of Dr. Gheorghe Crăiniceanu and Dr. N. Manolescu<sup>2</sup>. They supplied precious data on the ground of serious researches *in situ*.

The ethnographic studies did not overlook the aspects and problems of traditional rural architecture, although the angle of approach sometimes differs from that of the art historians. One of the first works whose author was Tache Papahagi, *Images d'ethnographie roumaine*<sup>3</sup>, presents, among others, the architecture of all the areas inhabited by Romanians and Macedonian Romanians north and south of the Danube.

In 1926, the chair of ethnography and folklore was created at the Faculty of Literature of the Cluj University. Romulus Vuia, a professor who occupied this chair, studied and published remarkable works on the rural settlements and dwellings from Transylvania<sup>4</sup>.

The studies on architecture made great progress in the last three decades as a result of the systematic and planned activity of a group of researchers from the section of popular art of the Institute for Art History of the Romanian Academy, as well as those from the museums' departments of popular art and ethnography. The researches were directed towards the study of vernacular architecture in rural surroundings, and the result of the publication of those studies contributed to the definition of the characteristics of this architecture in Romania. For the first time, researches were carried out in all the regions, and especially in those which were less known.

<sup>1</sup> S. Mehedinți, *Aplicări antropogeografice în sfera etnografiei, istoriei și altor științe* (Anthropogeographical applications in the field of ethnography, history and other sciences), in S. Mehedinți, *Opere alese* (Selected works), drawn up by Prof. V. Mihăilescu, Bucharest, 1967, p. 249.

<sup>2</sup> Gh. Crăiniceanu, *Igiena țăranului român. Locuința, încălzirea, îmbrăcămintea...* (The Romanian peasant's hygiene. The dwelling, footwear, clothes), Bucharest, 1895; N. Manolescu, *Igiena țăranului român* (The Romanian peasant's hygiene), 1895.

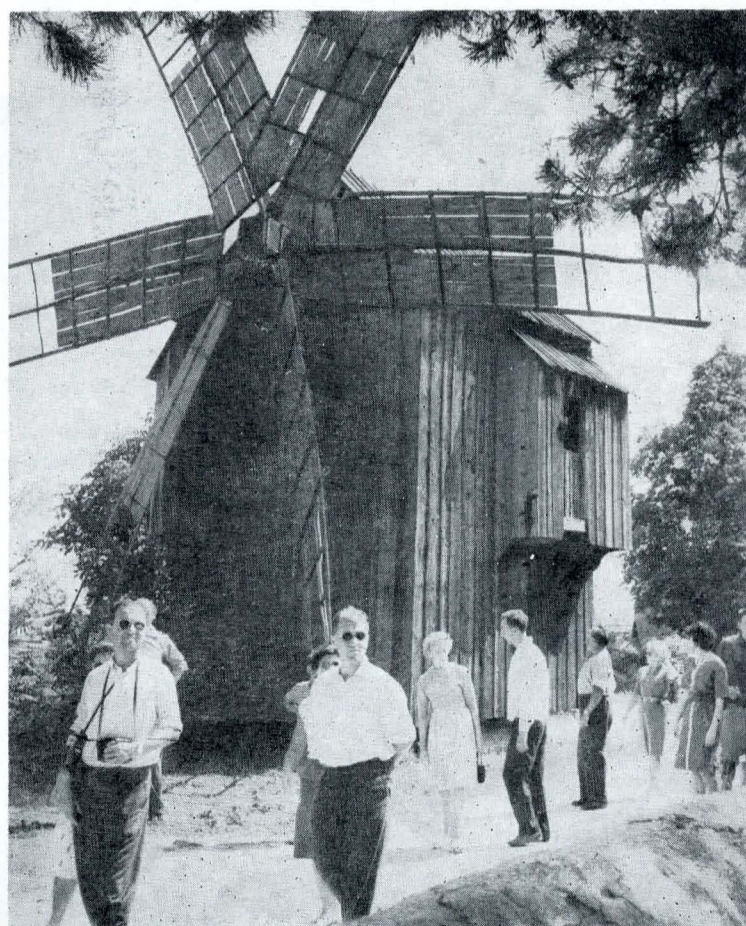
<sup>3</sup> T. Papahagi, *Images d'ethnographie roumaine*, I—III, Bucharest, 1928—1930.

<sup>4</sup> R. Vuia, *Le village roumain de Transylvanie et du Banat*, Bucarest, 1937; idem, *Satul românesc din Transilvania*, 1945. (The Romanian village in Transylvania).

At the same time, complete scientific archives were set up, including plans, surveys, photographs, slides. Their value increases each year as a consequence of the rapid process of transformation in the social and economic conditions.

A vast campaign of systematic gathering of data concerning rural architecture was also undertaken for the *Ethnographic Atlas of Romania*, a work of national interest which was begun in 1965 and was elaborated by the specialists of the Institute for Ethnologic and Dialectologic Researches of the Board of

XXth century wind-mill, Sarichioi — Tulcea. Rebuilt in the Village and Popular Art Museum in Bucharest.







„Hanul domnesc” (The prince's inn), XVIII<sup>th</sup> century, Suceava, arranged as popular art museum.

Socialist Culture and Education, in cooperation with the specialists from the museums of ethnography and popular art of the whole country. The data gathered along a period of ten years (including the publication of maps and volumes of

The “koula” of Ghiță Cufui, 1815, Broșteni — Mehedinți, arranged for popular art exhibitions.



comments), which also include precious informations on the present state of rural architecture, are centralized in a special archive.

On the ground of the vast documentary material resulted from researches in bibliography, archives and *in situ*, a series of works of general information including chapters on vernacular architecture, were elaborated. We shall mention among them: *Arta populară românească* (Romanian popular Art), worked out by a group of the Institute for Art History in 1969, *Etnografia românească* (Romanian ethnography) by I. Vlăduțiu, *Arhitectura interiorului locuinței țărănești* (The architecture of the peasant dwelling interior), by G. Stoica, as well as a series of zonal popular art monographies (Argeș, Vâlcea, the Jiu Valley, the Bistrița Valley, the Bîrsa Region, the Wallachian Plain, the Maramureș, etc.).<sup>5</sup>

Important researches were carried out also by the “Ion Mincu” Institute for Architecture from Bucharest, followed by the works of synthesis of professor Grigore Ionescu<sup>6</sup> and the particularly interesting studies of professor Al. Gheorghiu.<sup>7</sup>

Architects and ethnographers contributed to a series of works concerning the rural architecture in various parts of

<sup>5</sup> G. Stoica, M. Văgii, *Arta populară din Cîmpia Munteniei* (Popular art in the Wallachian Plain), Bucharest, 1969; T. Bănățeanu, *Arta populară din nordul Transilvaniei* (Popular Art in the north of Transylvania), 1969; G. Stoica, E. Secoșan, I. Vlăduțiu, P. Petrescu, *Arta populară din Vâlcea* (Popular Art in Vâlcea), R. Vâlcea, 1972; T. Bănățeanu, *Arta populară bucovineană* (Popular Art in Bucovina), Bucharest, 1975; P. Petrescu, *Arta populară din zonele Argeș și Muscel* (Popular Art in the Argeș and Muscel Zones), Bucharest, 1967; *Arta populară din Valea Jiului, regiunea Hunedoara* (Popular Art in the Jiu Valley, region of Hunedoara), Bucharest, 1963.

<sup>6</sup> Gr. Ionescu, *Istoria arhitecturii românești* (History of Romanian architecture), Bucharest, 1937; idem, *Arhitectura populară românească* (Romanian popular Architecture), Bucharest, 1957; idem, *Istoria arhitecturii în România* (History of Architecture in Romania), Bucharest, 1965; idem, *Arhitectura populară în România* (Popular Architecture in Romania) Bucharest, 1971.

<sup>7</sup> A. Gheorghiu, *Space, geometry, architecture*, in „Revue Roumaine d'histoire de l'art”, Bucharest, 1970; idem, *Rectangles parfaits dans les plans des édifices populaires roumains*, in *Revue roumaine d'histoire de l'art*, Bucharest, 1970; idem, *Scara de acces ca formă arhitectonică în arhitectura populară românească* (The entrance staircase as an architectonic shape in the Romanian popular architecture), in „Monumente istorice și de artă” (Historical and Art Monuments), Bucharest, 1976, 1.



Romania<sup>8</sup>.

In parallel with the researches and works dedicated to the rural side of vernacular architecture, researchers, architects, art historians dealt with some of its other aspects: urban architecture, "koula" (fortified dwelling), inns, private country houses, churches, bridges, wells, etc.<sup>9</sup>

As the researches into the vernacular architecture went deeper and deeper, the idea of its specific character became more apparent, as well as the fact that it was created by artisans, anonymous for the most part<sup>10</sup>, the representatives and keepers of a long-lasting tradition. These creations are important monuments which serve to understand the originality and creative power of the Romanian people, its capacity to achieve works of high artistic value, even in the hard conditions of long centuries of oppression; they bear witness of an age-old tradition, filtered through thousands of years of experience, which led to a remarkable refinement and perfection

<sup>8</sup> F. Stănculescu, A. Gheorghiu, P. Petrescu, and ot. *Arhitectura populară românească, Regiunea Dobrogea*, Bucharest, 1957; idem, idem, *Regiunea Ploiești*, Bucharest 1958; idem, idem, *Regiunea București*, Bucharest, 1958 (Popular Romanian architecture: region of Dobrudja, region of Ploiești, region of Bucharest).

<sup>9</sup> C. Joja, P. Petrescu (*Arhitectura urbană românească în secolele al XVIII-lea și al XIX-lea* (Romanian town architecture in the XVIII<sup>th</sup> and XIX<sup>th</sup> centuries), Craiova, in „Studii și Cercetări de Istoria Artei”, Bucharest, 1968, 1; C. Joja, *Specificul arhitecturii urbane românești* (The specific character of Romanian urban architecture), in „Studii și cercetări de Istoria Artei”; Bucharest, 1970; Panait Cristache, I. Scheletti, *Bisericele din Sălaj* (The churches from Sălaj), in „Buletinul monumentelor istorice, Bucharest, 1971, 1; V. Drăguț, *Monumentele și centrele istorice din România* (Monuments and historical centers in Romania), in „Monumente istorice și de artă”, Bucharest, 1975, 2; E. Greceanu, *Structura urbană a orașului Roman, mărturie a trecutului istoric* (The urban structure of the town of Roman, witness of the historical past), in „Monumente istorice și de artă”, Bucharest, 1975, 2; I. D. Ștefănescu, *Arta veche a Maramureșului* (Ancient Art of the Maramureș), Bucharest, 1968; M. Ispir, *Poduri vechi de piatră din Moldova* (Old stone bridges in Moldavia), in „Monumente istorice și de artă”, Bucharest, 1975, 1; M. Ispir, *Ratoșele din Moldova* (Moldavian roadside inns), in „Monumente istorice și de artă”, Bucharest, 1976, 1; I. Dumitrescu, *Un monument de arhitectură din veacul al XVIII-lea, Conacul Filipescu din Filipeștii de Tîrg* (An XVIII<sup>th</sup> century monument of architecture: the Filipescu country house in Filipeștii de Tîrg), in „Monumente istorice și de artă”, Bucharest, 1976, 2; I. Godea, I. Cristache-Panait, *Monumente istorice bisericesti din eparhia Oradiei* (Historical religious monuments in the diocese of Oradea), Oradea, 1978.

<sup>10</sup> We find sometimes on the master-girder, on the railings, on the door frame, clumsy inscriptions modestly notched by these artisans who knew better to express themselves through the monuments they built than in writing.



The "Greceanu koula", XVIII<sup>th</sup> century, Măldărești—Vâlcea, arranged as a popular art museum.

of proportions. They are true documents of the history of the Romanian people and they belong to the unitary stock of culture and civilization. The building technique, plans, elevation, interior architecture, decoration, all contribute to demonstrate this fact.



House of Ecaterina Teodorescu, XIX<sup>th</sup> century, Tîrgu Jiu—Gorj, arranged as a memorial exhibition.

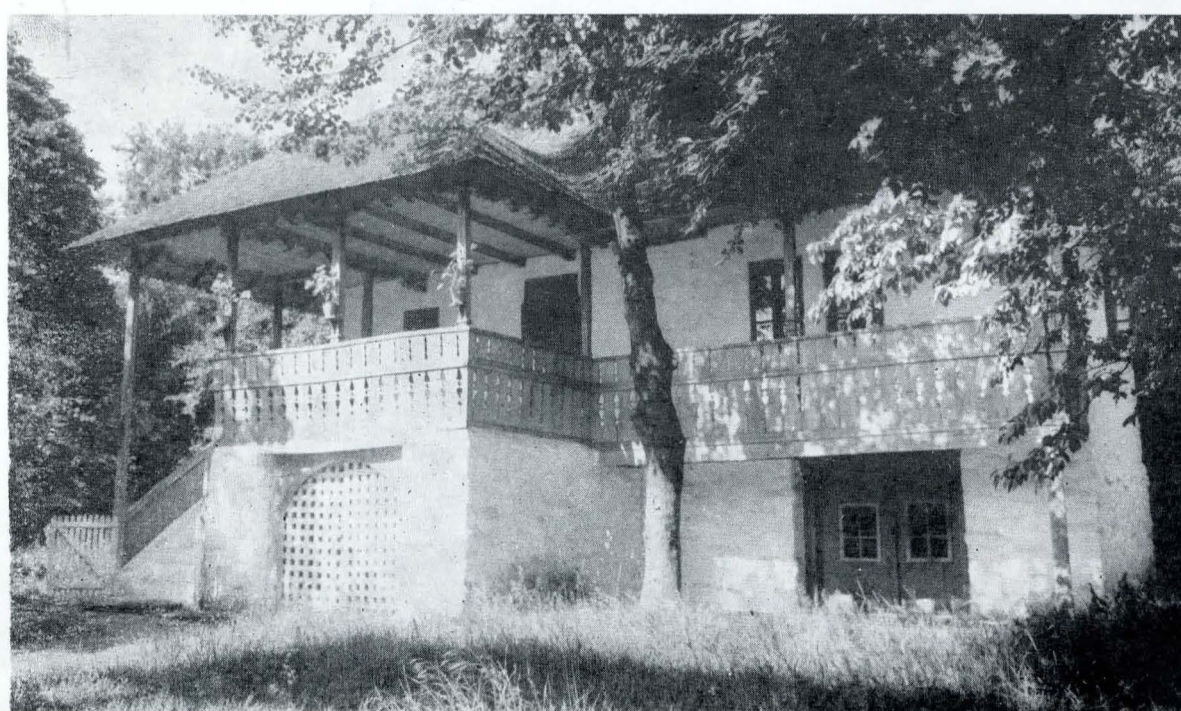




*Tudor Vladimirescu's koula, XVIII<sup>th</sup> century, Cerneți—Mehedinți, arranged as an exhibition of history.*



*Double-storied house, XIX<sup>th</sup> century, Curtișoara—Gorj. Rebuilt in the Village and Popular Art Museum in Bucharest.*



*House with a belvedere, XVIII<sup>th</sup> century, Chiojdu Mic—Buzău, reconstituted after the original in the Village and Popular Art Museum in Bucharest.*



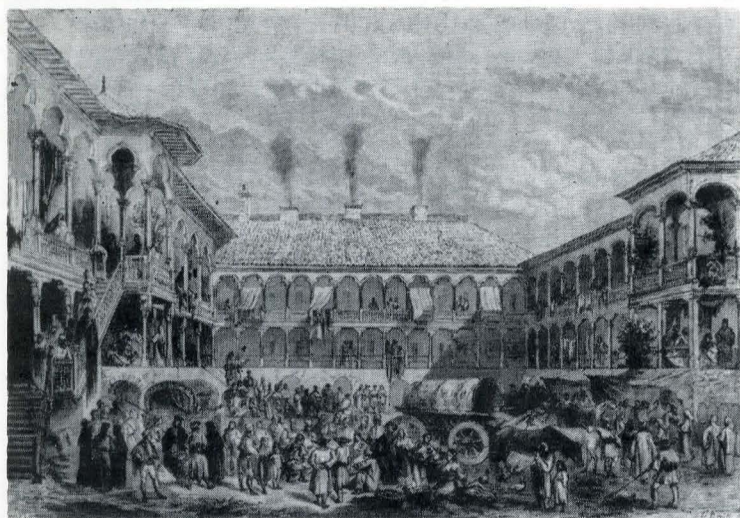
Through research and awareness, vernacular architecture acquired a new valency, which explains the concern for conservation shown by most of the researchers, already in the past century. In Romania, the idea to preserve the monuments may be said to have been born about the same time as the interest to investigate and know them. After a time of discussions and searching that followed this interest, the first law for the preservation of the monuments, elaborated by Grigore Tocilescu on Spiru Haret's initiative, appeared in 1892. The „Board for Public Monuments“ was created. In 1900 it was transformed and was called the „Board for Historical Monuments“.

The 1892 law was modified and improved in 1919 by the creation of the regional sections which contributed to the research and conservation of the monuments in the area.

For several decades, the great historian Nicolae Iorga kept an eye on the activity of the „Board for Historical Monuments“. His brilliant collaborators were Vasile Pârvan, Virgil Drăghiceanu, George Balș, Nicolae Ghika-Budești, etc. These foremost specialists contributed with works of capital importance to the knowledge of the fund of monuments and the actual salvation of many of them.

During this period, which was important for the elucidation of the principles and methods of restoration, as well as of the problems of organization, a special attention was given to the isolated monuments, but vernacular monuments and ensembles, considered less important, were in general overlooked, and their contribution to the delineation of the historically constituted physiognomy of any settlement, was ignored.

The Directions contained in the Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 661/1955 are the first normative act which regu-



„Hanul lui Manuc“ (Manuc's inn), XIX<sup>th</sup> century, drawing by Lancelot.

lates the situation of the monuments in Romania after the 23 of August 1944, actually establishing the importance of the monuments of vernacular architecture.

When law 63/1974 concerning the protection of the national cultural patrimony came in force, it was possible to approach a much wider series of problems, and that of the restoration of monuments of all categories became a task of extensive cultural outlook.

If we follow the history of the researches in the field of monuments, it becomes obvious that the interest for vernacular architecture, as a witness of the past and of the originality of the Romanian people, increased and ripened along a prolonged period, but it was truly understood only in the last decades.

As a result of the law concerning the protection of the national cultural patrimony, a vast campaign has been initiated for the assessment of the inventory of vernacular architecture monuments through the museums and district patrimonial offices. This inventory will be completed by the publication of the analytical repertoires of this patrimony.

At the same time as the monuments of vernacular architecture are investigated, inventoried and included in the list



Wooden gate, XIX<sup>th</sup> century, Berbești — Maramureș, rebuilt in the Village and Popular Art Museum in Bucharest.

of the monuments protected by law, the way they are implemented in the new buildings is supervised, so that the types of dwellings and the structure of the piles be conserved, in other

„Hanul lui Manuc“ (Manuc's inn) after restoration.







Architectural pile, Mediaș—Sibiu

words, that the whole existing patrimony be preserved without, in so doing, setting a brake to the natural development of the settlements.

In view of analyzing the present situation of this category of monuments in connexion with the complex ensemble of problems which are implied by their integration in the contemporary environmental buildings, certain objective factors have been assessed:

- tradition, considered as a set of conditions and rules specific to a given period, has disappeared for objective reasons;

- the need to build a great number of constructions of various types, most of which are too complex to make according to a traditional way of building (blocks of dwellings, social-cultural edifices, industrial buildings, etc.);

- the transformation of the way of life, mostly due to the change in occupations, requires a revision and a diversification of the conception of the habitat;

- introducing new materials leads to a change in the aspect of the buildings;

- contemporary civilization encourages originality: each man looks for the formula which meets best his socio-cultural requirements;

- isolated monuments or piles should have a renewed functionalism in order to remain viable and be integrated in the present way of life.

A new legislation which guarantees the preservation of the classified patrimony brought about, in the new conditions, the revival of a great number of monuments restored or kept in good state. In this way, vernacular monuments or piles became useful to society and adapted themselves to its needs. As it is impossible to make an exhaustive analysis of the Romanian experience in this field within the limits of the present study, we shall attempt to classify the monuments according to the methods used for their conservation and for their new function. We shall give a few examples.

According to the actual conditions of each monument or ensemble of vernacular architecture, different measures have been adopted in order to integrate them in the present way of life.

### Methods of preservation

1. Isolated monuments of vernacular architecture are preserved *in situ*: houses, "koule" (fortified dwellings), peasant technical installations, inns, wells, etc.

2. Piles of vernacular architecture preserved *in situ*: market places, streets, urban or rural centers.

3. Isolated monuments of vernacular architecture, rebuilt on another site: peasant houses, domestic buildings, wells, gates, technical installations, inns — as singular monuments.

4. Isolated monuments and piles of vernacular architecture displaced from their initial site in view of reconstituting ensembles within outdoor museums or "architecture reservations".

Each of these methods of conservation faced researchers and restorers with its own problems: the monuments had either to be cleared of the parasitical additions, or components which had surrounded them and had disappeared had to be rebuilt; the specific character of the historical area had to be re-established; the relations between the various components of the town structure had to be preserved; heights had to be graduated, the street network had to be followed, the initial plan of the settlement had to be observed, etc.

Only the wooden monuments of exceptional value which could not be sufficiently turned to account on the place of their origin were displaced, or those which remained outside the precincts of the settlements as a result of systematization or for which no adequate solution could be found to integrate them in the newly built ensembles. Over 1,000 monuments of vernacular architecture from the rural zone were saved in this way. They are now to be found either in the big outdoor museums — the Village and Popular Art Museum from Bucharest (1936), the Ethnographic Museum of Transylvania in Cluj (1929), the Museum of Popular Technique in Sibiu (1965), the Museum for Fruit and Vine Growing from Golești (1966), or in the architecture reservations from Bujoreni-Vilcea, Cârțișoara—Gorj, Timișoara—Timiș, Baia Mare and Sighetul Marmației—Maramureș, Focșani—Vrancea, etc.

The displaced monuments were selected according to criteria of documentary and aesthetic value and the surroundings have been reconstituted in the outdoor museums according to the structure of a typical settlement with the changes required by its new function; in the arrangement of the architecture reservations, account has been kept in general of the structures of the settlements specific to the relevant zones. At the same time as the monuments were rebuilt and if it was possible, a specific tree and flower plantation was undertaken in view of reconstituting the surroundings and restoring the aspect of the natural site. This recomposition of the ensemble has often renewed the ratio monument surrounding within the outdoor museum, it has reestablished the chronological stages





Vernacular architecture pile preserved in situ, Tilișca—Sibiu.



Vernacular architecture pile preserved in situ, integrated in the tenement fund, Băița.



View of a street in Mediaș. The monument is integrated in the tenement fund

of the evolution of the rural settlements, very often impaired because of their anarchic extension.

The complexity of the problems of the preservation and integration of the vernacular architecture among the surrounding buildings and in the contemporary way of life also implies setting off the historical fund by adapting it functionally and resetting it into the public circuit of some buildings and ensembles documentarily and aesthetically important.

By assigning a new function to it, each restored monument has become a point of attraction, a historical symbol integrated in the ensemble built today. This is the reason why, when starting the investigation and restoration of the monuments, account has also been kept of what their future function was to be.

Starting from the idea expressed by the great historian Nicolae Iorga who said that a monument „... contains in itself several achievements: a skill to build that is no more in use, a beauty that cannot be recreated and, besides, a more or less large amount of recollections, something out of people's lives“<sup>11</sup>, an attempt has been made to evoke the historical events and facts a monument represents through its new function. By integrating them in the actual aspect of the towns and villages, in terms of the historical background and the new requirements, the monuments of vernacular architecture have also become efficient means of patriotic and aesthetic education.

The new functions have been assigned on the ground of a graduation of the values and by analysing the actual conditions of each monument or architectural ensemble. Considered from the point of view of their integration by means of a new function, the monuments of architecture in Romania may be classified in several groups:

1. Monuments arranged as museums or exhibitions;
2. Monuments equipped for touristic ends;
3. Monuments integrated in the tenement fund;
4. Monuments of religious importance.

#### 1. Monuments arranged as museums or exhibitions

This category includes a real network of monuments — “koule” (fortified dwellings), private country houses, inns, peasant houses, etc., arranged as museums both to use the space available for the display of patrimonial pieces of particular value and to allow these monuments to be visited inside. Besides, the museums being institutions designed for the preservation of the national patrimony, the monument itself is consequently well maintained.

The arrangements within the vernacular architecture monuments may be grouped in three categories of museums, namely:

1.0. Monuments fitted for specialized exhibitions — history, ethnography, art — provided with show-cases and panels for the display of the works, according to the requirements of modern museology. Such exhibitions have been arranged in „Hanul Domnesc” (the Prince's Inn) from Suceava, the “koule” from Măldărești and Bujoreni—Vilcea, the “koula” from Curțioara—Gorj, the “koula” from Broșteni—Mehedinți, the Vergu-Mănăilă house in Buzău, etc.

1.1. Monuments related to the development of some important historical event or to the life and activity of personalities, arranged as a permanent or memorial exhibition, where the atmosphere of the period prevails: the house of Ecaterina Teodoroiu in Tîrgu Jiu, the house of C. Brîncuși in Hobița—Gorj, the house of Tudor Vladimirescu in Vladimir—Gorj, the house of Ciprian Porumbescu in the commune Ciprian Porumbescu in the district of Suceava, etc.

1.2. Representative houses furnished and provided with period pieces: the Hagi-Prodan house in Ploiești and all the

<sup>11</sup> N. Iorga, *Cum s-ar cuveni să se îngrijească monumentele istorice?* (How should historical monuments be maintained?), in „Semănătorul”, 14.XI.1904, p. 721.



monuments in outdoor museums and architecture reservations. This formula is very popular and very successful as it maintains the atmosphere of the period it represents unaltered.

The arrangement of these monuments raised for architects and museographers difficult problems because, sometimes, the exhibition themes countered the architecture of the monuments. The basic idea was to turn the monument to full account, so in arranging the exhibitions the most adequate solutions were adopted in order that the architecture of the monument and the exhibition might be perceived as a whole and concomitantly. In order to achieve this end in the best of conditions, the museum profile was determined, the proper theme was worked out, an original and at the same time unobtrusive design was applied so as to obtain a harmonious ensemble in which the monument and the exhibition should form a single unit.

## 2. Monuments equipped for touristic ends

The monuments of vernacular architecture which had been used as inns, hotels, restaurants, beer-houses, coffee-houses or shops, maintained in most cases their initial function after the interiors were previously equipped according to the requirements of the modern way of life and the relevant specific character.

Restoration and arrangements helped turn to account spaces considered as insanitary and contributed at the same time to maintain the specific character of each locality.

One of the most interesting examples of a monument ranged in this category is „Hanul lui Manuc“ (Manuc's inn). It is situated in one of the oldest parts of the town of Bucharest, in „Piața Unirii“ (Union Square); it was built presumably between 1804–1806<sup>12</sup>, it was restored and inaugurated on the 30<sup>th</sup> July 1971 and it is today a particularly picturesque spot in the center of the capital. Several separate pavilions joined in a harmonious ensemble display a history of the whole Romanian civil architecture. The various parts of the whole have been equipped to serve as an hotel, beer-house, confectionery, pastry-shop, various shopping centers, most of them in the style of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century. The architecture and functions of „Hanul lui Manuc“ make of it a part of the ensemble known under the name of „Curtea Veche“ (The old palace).

The restoration and arrangements carried out at „Hanul cu tei“ (The lime-trees inn), those on the Lipscani, Gabroveni and Șelari streets in Bucharest, at the Old Market in the town of Baia Mare and in the 6<sup>th</sup> of March Square in Sibiu, or on several streets of the towns of Sighet, Sighișoara, Mediaș, Cluj-Napoca etc., are only some examples of the use of vernacular architecture for touristic purposes.

## 3. Monuments integrated in the state tenement fund

The monuments in this category are generally of modest dimensions and they are divided into two groups:

3.1. Houses where only the façade has been preserved and the interior has been arranged according to modern confort requirements.

3.2. Houses whose interior architecture has also been conserved and where the necessary lighting, heating and sewerage systems have been fitted.

Generally, the abovementioned monuments form groups — village and town centers, streets or whole settlements

<sup>12</sup> Panait I. Panait, *Hanul lui Manuc* (Manuc's inn), in „Buletinul Monumentelor istorice“, Bucharest, 1968, 2.

— whose aspect is unified and where the subsequent buildings integrated themselves in the constituted ensembles. They are part of the tenement fund, namely they have maintained their initial function. Many Romanian towns have such centers and streets with similar dwellings: Mediaș, Sighișoara, Sibiu, Brașov, Cluj, Timișoara, Botoșani, Roman, Tg. Neamț, Călărași, etc.

## 4. Monuments of religious importance

A series of monuments of the cult, built of wood between the XVI<sup>th</sup> and the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, but which actually represent much older traditions, whose interior walls are often covered with paintings, have been restored and preserved *in situ*, keeping their initial function with certain microclimate restrictions. We shall mention a few of them: Bogdan-Vodă, Cuhea, Ieud, Rozavlea, Plopiș in the Maramureș, as well as others in the Cluj, Bihor, Gorj, Vâlcea and Vrancea districts.

Beyond their definite functions, all these monuments, restored or preserved in good state, are the witnesses of a millennial civilization and culture; they became the bearers of social or historical functions, they influenced the people's conscience, enriched their cultural and aesthetic outlook and embellished their lives.

Their value rests in the decisive part they play in the conservation of the specific character and individuality of the surroundings, of the town and rural ensembles, as well as in their functional utility. The Romanian State considers them as an integral part of the contemporary environmental buildings and is concerned with their protection and restoration in the spirit of the present scientific conception, as ensembles which should be integrally conserved and included in the daily way of life.

The confrontation between old and new sometimes inevitably results in losses at the level of urban and rural development, especially among the lesser monuments of vernacular architecture, because each society tends to express its own message through the buildings it erects. That is why the investigation and preservation of the monuments of vernacular architecture has become a highly actual problem at world level, a problem in which the ICOMOS and the International Board for vernacular architecture are called to assert themselves firmly.

Translation: E. Sturza

## RÉSUMÉ

Plus de cent ans se sont écoulés depuis qu'un intérêt scientifique pour l'architecture vernaculaire a commencé à se manifester en Roumanie, marqué par l'activité de plusieurs personnalités notoires: historiens d'art, historiens, géographes, médecins, ethnographes, architectes. Au cours de cette période, le problème a été abordé de différentes manières, en fonction de la spécialité des personnes en cause, de la période, de la conception prévalante. Au-delà des activités de recherche, d'inventaire et de classification des monuments sur la base d'une législation efficace, des résultats remarquables ont été obtenus aussi sous le rapport de la conservation, de la restauration et de l'intégration des monuments et ensembles vernaculaires conformément aux exigences de la société.

En fonction des conditions concrètes de chaque monument, on a adopté, d'un cas à l'autre, les mesures par lesquelles il puisse s'intégrer au mode de vie contemporain.

Modalités de conservation: 1) monuments d'architecture vernaculaire isolés, conservés *in situ*; 2) ensembles d'architecture vernaculaire conservés *in situ*; 3) monuments isolés d'architecture vernaculaire démontés et remontés sur un emplacement similaire; 4) monuments et ensembles d'architecture vernaculaire démontés et remontés dans le cadre de «musées à ciel ouvert» ou de «réserves d'architecture». Chacune de ces modalités de conservation a soulevé des problèmes en ce qui concerne: le dégagement des monuments, le rétablissement des caractères spécifiques de la zone respective, la préservation des rapports entre les différentes parties composantes de la structure urbaine, la hiérarchisation des régimes de hauteur, la préservation du réseau routier, le respect du plan initial, etc.

Les nouvelles fonctions des monuments restaurés ont été assignées en vertu d'une hiérarchie des valeurs et de l'analyse des caractéristiques de chacun d'entre eux. Du point de vue des modalités d'intégration en rapport avec la nouvelle fonction assumée, les monuments d'architecture vernaculaire de Roumanie peuvent être répartis dans les groupes suivants: 1) monuments aménagés comme musées et lieux d'expositions; 2) monuments aménagés dans des buts touristiques; 3) monuments assignés au logement; 4) monuments du culte. Par l'attribution des différentes fonctions, chaque monument est devenu un nouveau point d'attraction, un repère historique et artistique intégré au patrimoine actuel de construction.