



Traditional Architecture in Romanian Philately (III): Households from Drăguș, Dumbrăveni, Dumitra, Fundu Moldovei and Goicea Mică

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Author BVC designed the study, performed the literature searches, and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Author ALP managed the analyses of the study. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Traditional architecture occupies a central place in the soul and pride of all people and has been accepted as a characteristic and attractive product of society. As a utilitarian architecture, which possesses interest and beauty, it retains the history of society. At the same time, it is unworthy of human heritage if this traditional harmony is not preserved, which is, in fact, the core of the human experience. Acting somehow on the same principle of conservation, philately can be considered as a useful means of preserving the traditional architectural memory in Romanian cities and villages. To show that thematic philately implies in essence this aspect of the preservation of the memory of places, in the present study we appeal to various forms of representation specific to philately. In this context, the study aims to emphasize the beauty of Romanian traditional architecture in terms of thematic philately. We want to expose the architectural specifics from five areas - Drăguș (Brașov), Dumbrăveni (Suceava), Dumitra (Alba), Fundu Moldovei (Suceava) and Goicea Mică (Dolj) using stamps, entire covers, illustrated postcards, and other philatelic effects. We also aim to

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see if the pieces in question fully illustrate the zonal architectural specificity or only a part of it; equally, we want to show that philately can be a landmark in documenting today's young people about what was and is traditional architecture. Thus, they can be reoriented towards what is durable, specific to the area, without altering the local tradition of folk craftsmen where it sanctifies the place and ensures vigor at the agrotourism level.

Keywords: community; peasant households; philately; Romanian traditional architecture.

1. INTRODUCTION

Although modern architecture has replaced the vernacular, late traces still exist [1]. On the other hand, there is a problem. It has become visible that the vernacular is struggling to survive. In an environment dominated by modern and museum vernacular architecture, it is difficult to talk about survival.

Successful protection of the traditional environment depends on the involvement and support of communities. At the same time, continuous use and maintenance have an important word in this regard. Traditional architecture produces normality and understanding [2]. Thus, conforming to reality, finding balanced answers in harmony with experience and with real possibilities, rejects the facility of originality at any cost. It also creates "places" where the group becomes aware, so it can change and improve.

Traditional architecture has not been, is not, and cannot be universal. Universal is the ability to adapt its language by using the memory and ingenuity of the architectural manufacturer. Or by using the most advanced technology of the time and place of construction. No matter how complex the spiritual effort is and no matter how simple or sophisticated the technical means are, they remain invisible. In traditional architecture, the simplest technique, brought with an extreme refinement, acquires the maximum aesthetic value. Determined earth-materially and morally, traditional architecture is not subject to princely decisions and gratuitous taste. It has no vanity for the demiurgic gesture, it does not dilute politics, economics, or religion 2. It is a free, rich, open architecture, given to the user.

Preserving traditional creations is undoubtedly a challenge for communities, local authorities, and specialists. It is the architecture that can ensure the register of specific elements that should concern the factors involved in the design and authorization of constructions 3. The homes of those who have moved from city to country, as

well as those who have returned from work abroad, have nothing in common with those of the locals. It is normal for new or restored buildings to meet the requirements of our age, in terms of comfort. What worries us, however, is the loss of the unitary architectural landscape, attractive for both locals and tourists. We are currently witnessing the denial of tradition with long-term negative consequences for the local specificity.

A multicultural space such as that of the counties in Romania, composed of localities or components with specific Romanian, Saxon, Hungarian, etc. is a real resource, currently untapped and agressed [3,4]. The very principles of traditional architecture are affected, and far too little is capitalized by promotion. To promote these principles, as well as the immovable cultural heritage of the community, philately was used [5,6]. Having as a starting point a series of studies undertaken in the period 2018-2020 [7,8], we set out to review and analyze the traditional architecture in several areas. These areas, also presented in National Village Museum [9], are Drăguș (Brașov county), Dumbrăveni (Suceava), Dumitra (Alba), Fundu Moldovei (Suceava) and Goicea Mică (Dolj). Through this study, we want to see to what extent philately promotes households and zonal specificity.

Why this study ?! Why the relationship between architecture and philately ?! Because traditional architecture plays a significant role in the collective memory of society and heritage conservation. Therefore is thematic philately. From the combination of the two, we aim to show that we need a more in-depth analysis of the relationship between philately - as a means of a visual representation of architectural history and heritage conservation - and traditional architecture itself, especially when we want to know fully a certain ethnographic area. Moreover, we need this analysis of the philatelic-architectural relationship, when we are in the position of building our home, which can sometimes run counter to the local architectural

specifics. Knowing the history and memory of the place, through the prism of architecture immortalized in philatelic materials, such a deviation would be unlikely.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The description of the zonal specificity and implicitly of the architectural dynamism was made by referring to the information within the sites and catalogs with philatelic content. These include the Colnect platform, Delcampe, eBay, Occasions, PicClick, and StampWorld. In addition to this information, discussions with other collectors of philatelic material were also of real use.

The documentation regarding the elements of traditional architecture was made through the prism of consulting some specialized sites, especially those referring to the considered areas. The basis of all was the specialized information provided by the platforms dedicated to the Village Museum, as well as other sites with an indirect reference to the specifics of households in Drăguș (Brașov), Dumbrăveni (Suceava), Dumitra (Alba), Fundu Moldovei (Suceava) and Goicea Mică (Dolj)

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The Household from Drăguș (Brașov county)

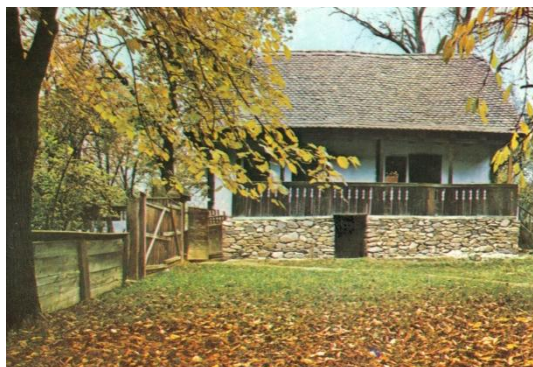
The territory between the peaks of the Făgăraș mountains and the Olt river forms a well-defined ethnographic area, called Țara Oltului or Țara Făgărașului. Documentarily attested since the 12th century, Țara Oltului is known since the early Middle Ages as an ancient Romanian land. In this place, the main occupations were agriculture and cattle breeding, which were the basis of the village's economy [10]. Early agriculture through

the "three-tarlale" system was closely intertwined with animal husbandry, an aspect also reflected by the proportions of the barn with the stable - relatively equal to those of the house.

Drăguș village is a gathered type village. The household consists of two main constructions: the house and the sura made of fir wood with a rye gypsum roof. The house, built on a stone foundation, with a cellar, has walls made of fir beams (carved on four sides and joined in a straight key), plastered, and whitewashed [10]. The gabled roof with a pinion on the small side has rounded tile roofs arranged in scales. Along the faade stretches the porch with shaped pillars in four edges and a railing made of perforated boards.

The plan of the house is asymmetrical, due to the different sizing of the component rooms: porch with pantry and living room, with a wardrobe. The heating system consists of an oven with a high basket, and a stove with tiles and hob, in the road room. The specificity of the interior is given by the furniture painted with floral motifs - dowry boxes, shelves with backrests and "hangers" for ceramics, placed around the room to serve to display bowls, plates, polka dots with polychrome decoration and glass icons, made by famous iconic craftsmen from the Făgăraș area.

Interior fabrics - carpets, walling, long "de cui" or short "grindare" wipes, placed on the beam, windows, and icons, delight the eye with a rich, geometric decoration (line systems) vegetable and floral, in a chromatic based on the relationship between red and black, with polychrome accents. In the decorative structure of the interior, the large number of pieces belonging to the main genres of popular creation (textiles, clothing, ceramics, glass painting, wood art) configures the style characteristic of the Făgăraș area.



(a) exterior view, distant plane, no other philatelic elements applied [11]



(b) exterior view, distant plane, no other philatelic elements applied [12,13]



(c) exterior view, distant plane, no other philatelic elements applied [14,15]

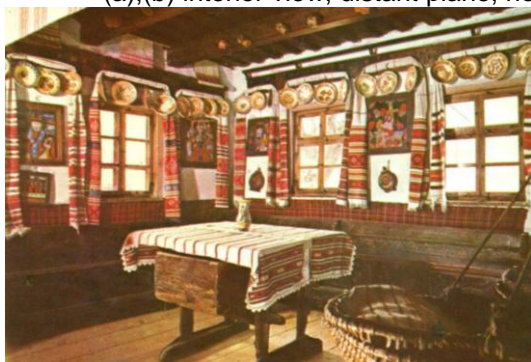
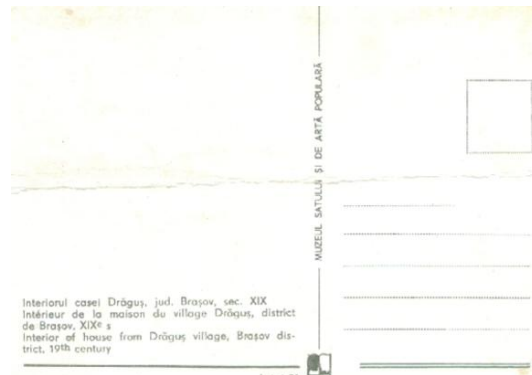


(d) exterior view, distant plane, no other philatelic elements applied [16]

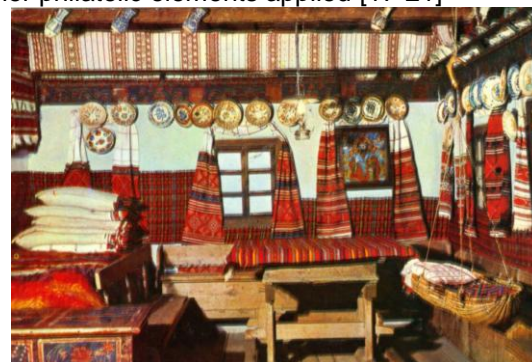
Fig. 1. Illustrated postcards representing the exterior of household from Drăguș (Brașov)



(a),(b) interior view, distant plane, no other philatelic elements applied [17-21]



(c) interior view without other philatelic elements applied [22]



(d) interior view without other philatelic elements applied [23]

Fig. 2. Illustrated postcards representing the interior of the household from Drăguș (Brașov)

3.2 The Household from Dumbrăveni (Suceava county)

Dumbrăveni village is located in the Suceava plateau, near the Moldavian Plain. The

settlement, formed in the 15th century on a plateau near Suceava, at an altitude of about 400 m, is of the gathered type. It has a higher concentration of housing along the way. The house in the Dumbrăveni area has a peculiarity

in the construction system [24]: the walls are made of pillars driven into the ground, connected by three straps on which are intertwined twigs arranged vertically, glued to the ground.

The four-sloped roof has rye straw covers, placed in the "jipilor" technique. At the edges of the roof, the sheaves are placed in steps, and at the ridge they are tied in pairs by braids called "cununi", resulting in a very pleasant decoration of the roof.

The plan of the house includes a median awning with two rooms and a low porch with pillars without a railing that extends on three sides. The cleanroom lacks a heating system, being inhabited only occasionally.

The kitchen is the place where the hosts carried out their entire activity. The oven occupied half of its space and designated the place where the food was prepared. But also where it slept. Among the simple pieces of furniture present in

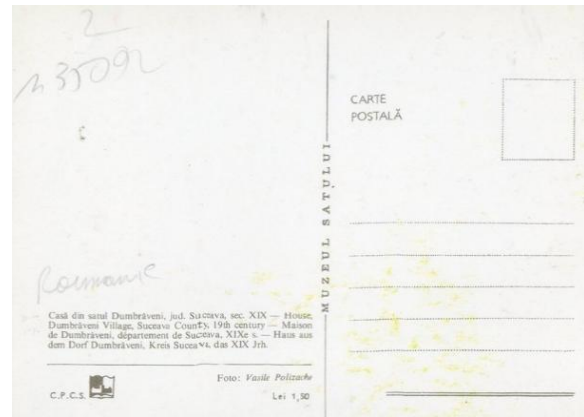
the house, the painted dowry boxes stand out, placed at the ends of the two beds.

Inside the house, there are also towels and lacquers decorated with stylized geometric and floral motifs. Both by its external appearance and by the preserved inventory, the Dumbrăveni house is inscribed with a distinct personality in the museum's patrimony.

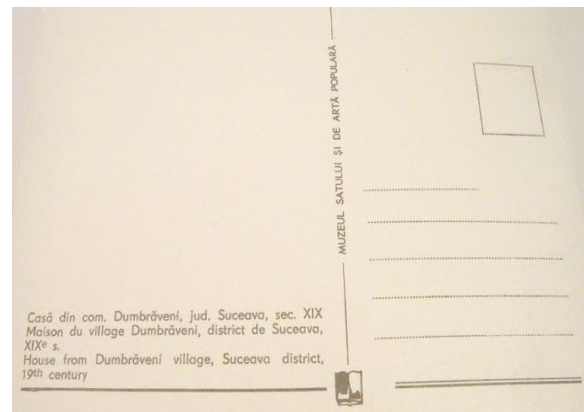
3.3 The Household from Dumitra (Alba county)

The village of Dumitra is located in the ethnographic area of the Târnavelor Plateau in Transylvania. The main occupation of the inhabitants, favored by the regional pedoclimatic characteristics, was the cultivation of cereals.

The Dumitra household is typical for this area and a certain social category - that of the "jeleri" peasants (free peasants, but with little land) 35, forced to work on large estates belonging to feudal nobles.

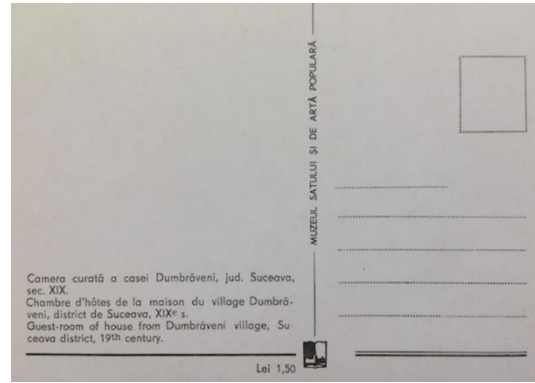


(a),(b) exterior view, distant plane, no other philatelic elements applied [25,26]



(c),(d) exterior view, distant plane, no other philatelic elements applied [27,28]

Fig. 3. Illustrated postcards representing the exterior of the household from Dumbrăveni (Suceava)



(a),(b) interior view without other philatelic elements applied [29,30]



(c) interior view without other philatelic elements applied [31]

(d) interior view, the support bearing the stamp with the face value of 20 bani from the philatelic issue entitled "Romanian Peasant Rugs", 05.10.1975, Bucharest [32,33], and obliterated with the special poststamp from the Philatelic Exhibition „Romanian Postage Stamp Day”, 15.11.1980, Focșani [34]

Fig. 4. Illustrated postcards representing the interior of the household from Dumbrăveni (Suceava)

The size of the house, the lack of large outbuildings, the small gate are just as many signs of this state of enslavement. The household in Dumitra village consists of the house, the corn basket, and the twig fence under the straw eaves, with two access gates.

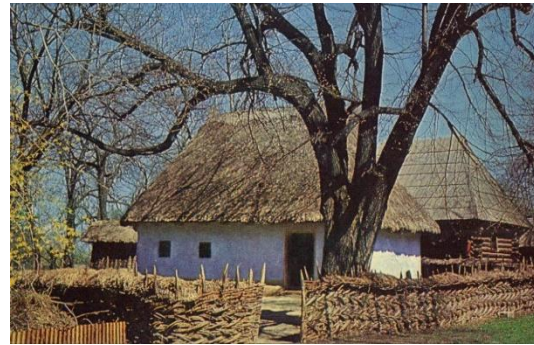
As a representative example of the traditional architecture in central Transylvania, the house preserves in the construction system the old Neolithic technique of the fence made of "clay boughs". This form the skeleton of the building, under a roof with sheaves of wheat "jipi" of wheat. The basket, made of woven twigs, resting on wooden soles is also covered with straw. The plan of the house includes a porch and a living room. In the hall, there is the oven with "băbură" - an ingenious construction made of twigs glued

with clay. It protects the thatched roof against fires [35]. The heating system, in the living room, consists of a stove made of tiles, with a hob for cooking. The artistic elements appear both outside the building - at the wooden gate with decorative motifs of ancient tradition (solar symbol in various variants, saw teeth), and inside the house.

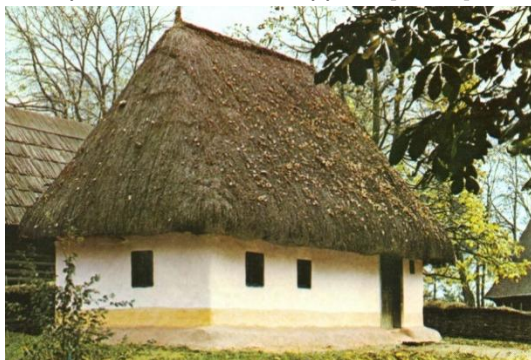
The living room is adorned with cotton fabrics with polychrome fabrics, with blue, red, and black predominating. Besides, there are various pieces of pottery ("cancee" and plates placed on the walls and beams) and icons on glass. The center of gravity of the room is the corner with the high bed, covered with several fabrics of wool and cotton. This aspect enhances the artistic value of the interior.



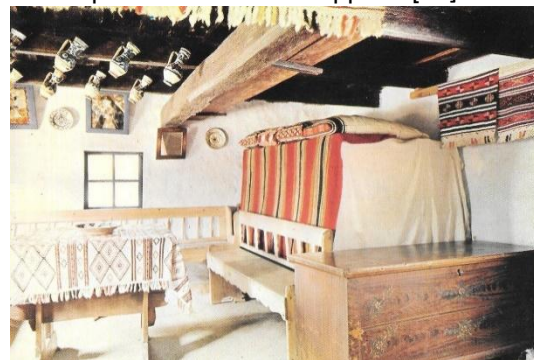
(a) exterior view, distant plane, no other philatelic elements applied [36,37]



(b) exterior view, distant plane, no other philatelic elements applied [38]



(c) exterior view, distant plane, no other philatelic elements applied [39]



(d) interior view with no other philatelic elements applied [40,41]

Fig. 5. Illustrated postcards representing the household from Dumitra (Alba)

3.4 The Household from Fundu Moldovei (Suceava county)

Fundu Moldovei, in the Câmpulung Moldovenesc area, is a representative commune for the mountain localities of Bucovina. The Câmpulung Moldovenesc area, with enchanting views and places with a large population since ancient times, had as main occupations the growth of large flocks of sheep, the exploitation of wood in the forest, the cultivation of textile plants on wide valleys and lower hills [42].

The household that illustrates this land includes an imposing gate by dimensions, under a shingle roof; a fence made of fir planks, mounted on stone boulders; a barn with a stable and a shed, with a haystack at the attic; a hut (summer kitchen similar to the pastoral shelters on the mountain hills); a house of fir beams, carved on four sides, with rounded edges, closed at the corners in a dovetail [42].

Raised on a foundation of rough stone boulders, the house has a central gazebo and a wide gangway with carved pillars and a closed railing. On the outside of the walls, the wood is

apparent, having, as a distinctive element of the area, a quadrilateral frame of white plaster arranged around the entrance door and the large windows. The interior plan includes a long room with double access, from the yard and garden, the large house or living room to the north, and the small house or stove and pantry to the south.

The heating and food preparation system is a complex construction, with a high pedestal, a hearth, and a chimney supported on two wooden or wrought iron pillars in artistic forms. The house has a bread oven with a sleeping area on top, with a hob later integrated into this type of stove. Ceramic pots are displayed in the corner behind the door. The war of weaving, not absent from the house of the Romanian housewife, is also present in this room.

The big house is a real art exhibition. As can be seen in Fig. 6 [43], we find two long benches, arranged near the wall under the windows, covered with larch; a table with strainers (tablecloth); two beds with plocades and laicers, with large and small pillows, a dowry box painted with floral motifs. Above the box and the bed, on

the north side, is suspended the top arranged with clothing - shirts, "catrințe", "suman" and "chimire". Leather boots are placed on the floor.



Fig. 6. Illustrated postcards representing the interior of the household from Fundu Moldovei (Suceava)

The real gem of folk art is the brass hammer pond. It is inlaid with a hard wooden horn tail covered with carved geometric motifs. Of particular interest are two pastoral musical instruments: the maple "bucium" wrapped in cherry bark, located on the wall in the hall, and the trumpet in the big house.

3.5 The Household from Goicea Mică (Dolj county)

The house from Goicea Mică comes from the plain area of Oltenia. It is a house from the end of the 19th century. With a dog shelter and a gutter fence behind it, it is specific to the Jiu area settlements. The main occupations of the area, since time immemorial, have been cereal farming, cattle breeding, and fishing [44]. Another specific occupation, practiced until recently, was the breeding of silkworms. Proof of this is given by a large number of planted nozzles and a variety of borangic fabrics.

Constructed of burnt brick, wood and finished with earthwork, with a gabled roof made of tile, facing the east street, the house has a wide porch finished with a small gazebo raised above the entrance of the cellar in the south corner, as shown in Fig. 7 [45]. It has a porch or a median "ogeac" with the stove of fire, the daily living room with the "blind" stove - "small house" - to the north, and the cleanroom or "big house" to the south.

Above the stove, in the corner opposite the entrance, a pyramidal chimney facilitates the

circulation of smoke. A "țest" of earth, several clay pots and wrought iron utensils, sit around the fire. Polychrome bowls, wooden "donițe" and copper pots with decorative inlays, wooden bowls, copper pans with chisel and hammered decor, a round table and low chairs like small triangular prisms, a cupboard and a few jugs with glazed decor, ceramic from Oboga - all make up the inventory of this original kitchen.

In the work room occupies an important place the war of weaving with yellow borangic fabric. Borangic handkerchiefs, towels and curtains, woven with beads and shingles, are the main objects in the cooking of the interior and in the wedding dowry of young girls. Bed linen, bark and quilts. Woolen rugs, carpets, and headboards with colorful rod beads, rhombuses, crosses, and pistachios, with stars and branches with pearl flowers and buds, cover the beds and walls of the two rooms, some arranged in piles stacked on dowry boxes artistically crafted objects with painted and sculpted decoration.



Fig. 7. Illustrated postcards representing the exterior of the household from Goicea Mică (Dolj)

4. CONCLUSION

The ethnographic document, illustrating the social state of the peasantry, but also the creative power, the households in this study are an architectural monument of some value. Although their presence in thematic philately is poorly represented, their uniqueness is not affected. The only element that suffered was the very image of the localities. In the absence of a promotion, the zonal specific cannot arouse the interest of tourists. Implicitly, it cannot develop harmoniously as a result of practicing the agro-tourism act.

As a result of the research undertaken, there is a weak concern for local and regional promotion through philatelic materials. In addition, even in these conditions, the identified and analyzed pieces are inefficient in presenting the image of the locality in question. The image of the local architecture is far too little captured. In the current context, the existence of philatelic materials to highlight the zonal specificity would have been an element that could have brought value to tourism activities. An illustrated postcard, no matter how inefficient it may seem, can convey as much as a simple thematic field trip. Maybe even more.

Also, a postcard can not only inform, but also guide the one who perceives it at its true value. A postcard immortalizing the architecture of the place can plant to the one who deciphers it the idea of conservation of appreciating what it was. At the same time, it can make him see and feel where the local architecture is going, and discover the secrets of what was to what is now in everyday reality. Drawing a parallel between the two visions of development, one can see not only the beauty illustrated in the postcard but also the immaterial problem of the local architectural spirit.

DISCLAIMER

The company name used for this research is commonly and predominantly selected in our area of research and country. There is absolutely no conflict of interest between the authors and company because we do not intend to use this company as an avenue for any litigation but for the advancement of knowledge. Also, the research was not funded by the company rather it was funded by personal efforts of the authors.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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