

On Ruins in 19th Century Romania

Horia Moldovan

Professor, PhD Habil., "Ion Mincu" University of Architecture and Urbanism, Bucharest, Romania
horia.moldovan@yahoo.com

Keywords: Romanticism; 19th century; Romania

The architectural ruin arose some interest among a narrow Romanian intellectual elite only after the beginning of the 19th century, and for more than a century it remained only a picturesque background for literary reflections or a support for the admiration of an often-idealized past. Interest in the cultural value of architectural ruins, and consequently their conservation – especially the archaeological one – matured later, only in the second half of the 20th century, a shift driven by the research and practices conducted by the Direction of Historical Monuments.¹ Once the institution was abolished in the 1980s, these preoccupations declined, leading to a rise in amateurism and superficiality, issues that continue to have a harmful impact to this day. The essay attempts to capture some aspects of the journey of the architectural ruin in the Romanian culture during the early-modern period, until the first decades of the 20th century.

The earliest approaches to ruins – either ancient relics or medieval vestiges – took shape against the backdrop of late echoes of Western Romanticism and of an incipient, often mimetic, local taste for the picturesque. The specific manners in which the architectural ruins were perceived, endowed with value and meaning or, conversely, sacrificed, are difficult to capture and categorize. The generative reasons of the various significant attitudes towards the ruins were diverse, amalgamated, and hard to identify, making them difficult to trace in a linear chronological path. Therefore, the study proposes several “perspectives” through which the ruin in 19th century Romania can be discussed: as an object of literary reflection, as a source of historical information, as a vehicle of memory and aesthetic appreciation, and as an instrument for political legitimacy.

The Romantic Perspective: The Evocative Ruin

As a depository of an idealized historical memory, the ruin was discovered in the first decades of the 19th century, with the cultivation of interest in this subject evolving alongside the reorientation of Romanian civilization towards Western horizons. In literature, it is considered that the beginning of the lyrics of ruins was catalyzed by the translations of the writings of Constantin-François Volney, *Ruines ou méditations sur les révolutions des empires* (Geneva, 1791).² Seven versions of these translations are still preserved in manuscript in the Library of the Romanian Academy.³ The genre was inaugurated by the young Wallachian officer Vasile Cârlova (1809-1831), through his poem *Ruinurile Târgoviștii* (*The Ruins of Târgoviște*, written

1 Ștefan Bălici, “Arheologie și restaurare în practica românească – adnotări la două situri antice: Histria și Tropaeum Traiani” [Archeology and restoration in Romanian practice – annotations on two ancient sites: Histria and Tropaeum Traiani], *Caiete ICOMOS* 3 (2012), 44.

2 George Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române de la origini până în prezent* [The History of Romanian Literature from its Origins to the Present] (Bucharest: Fundația Regală pentru literatură și artă, 1941), 126.

3 Oliver Velescu, “Preliminariile legii din anul 1892. Fapte istorice, juridice și deprinderi estetice” [The Preliminaries of the 1892 Law. Historical, legal facts and aesthetic skills], *Revista Monumentelor Istorice* 2 (1992), 6. Surely the subjects discussed by Volney were appreciated by the local intellectuals, ending up as part of a collective imaginary: *Dicționarul universal al limbei române* [The Universal Dictionary of the Romanian Language], published by Lazăr Șăineanu in a first edition in 1896, gave as an illustrative example for the word *ruin* not a Romanian one, but a quite unexpected one: “The Nineveh citadel.”

in 1828 and published in *Curierul Românesc* in 1830) – a meditation focused less on the transience of human creation and more on the instructive value of architectural fragments that were still conserved. Shortly after, in 1834, the Moldavian Alexandru Hrisoverghii addressed the subject in *Oda la ruinele cetății Neamțului* (*Ode to the ruins of the Neamț fortress*), criticizing those who were wasting the country's past by vandalizing the remains of the medieval fortification which "(...) is considered a monument of the Principality of Moldavia."⁴

As a pretext for romantic reflection, the ruin was also addressed in prose within the literary works of young intellectuals such as Grigore Alexandrescu, Ion Heliade Rădulescu, G.A. Baronzii, Dimitrie Bolintineanu, or Cezar Bolliac. They evoked a grandiose past juxtaposed with present decay, thus bringing their own contributions to the construction of a national consciousness. Naturally, in order to write about ruins, the latter also had to be directly experienced, with expeditions to the ruins often involving carefully planned tours. In the summer of 1842, Grigore Alexandrescu embarked on such a journey to visit the old monasteries of Oltenia, many of them in ruins after centuries of poor care. Impressions from his journey, which lasted more than a month, were published in 1844 in a descriptive prose, often embellished with precise details, while poetic meditations were reserved for elegiac lyrics.⁵

Towards the end of the summer of 1844, "out of a burning zeal for the restoration of the old monuments," Wallachian ruler Gheorghe Bibescu (1842-1848), who had been influenced by Parisian intellectual circles, embarked on a journey to visit the historical places and monuments of the country. The itinerary, the visits and the impressions gathered on site were reported by one of his companions, writer Simeon Marcovici (1802-1877), in a series of four "letters" published in the periodical *Vestitorul românesc* (*The Romanian Herald*).⁶ Marcovici's records narrated the ruler's journey in a romanticized manner, presenting the historical vestiges visited in scenes full of drama. One of these old monuments was Tismana monastery (Fig. 1), its description evoking vivid imagery:

"After an hour's journey through this foggy and ghastly valley (Tismana river valley), the eye is horrified by the colossal appearance of a rock hurled by a too strong hand into the side of a stone mountain, dug beneath by multitudes of natural caves, in various wild shapes, and torn by two cataracts which tumble in frothy torrents on groups of stones. (...) Here, on this rock, Tismana monastery is built, like a fierce and unapproachable fortress."⁷

Being in a state of ruin at the time of the princely visit, as were many others monastic complexes in the region, it was further "investigated" by Bibescu who "(...) has given orders to hastily renew the buildings, while trying to preserve as much as possible of the old character for the eternal memory of their blessed deceased founders."⁸ Following Tismana, Gheorghe Bibescu opened the construction sites for "rebuilding" the old monasteries of Bistrița and Arnota.⁹ Despite being denounced by the French general consul in Bucharest, Adolphe Etienne Billecocq (in office between 1839 and 1846) as a means of hiding the financial abuses of the

4 Radu Popa, *Cetatea Neamțului* [The Neamț Fortress] (Bucharest: Ed. Meridiane, 1963), 28. Extracted from the documents of the Moldavian Department of Internal Affairs.

5 Ligia Tudurachi, "Escapade romantice la ruine. Un 'turism' al trecutului" ["Romantic Getaways to the Ruins. A 'Tourism' of the Past"] *Caietele Sxtil Pușcariu V* (2021), 372. The prose of Grigore Alexandrescu – "Memorial de călătorie," "Cozia," "Tismana," "Mănăstirea Dintr-un lemn" – were published during 1844 in various periodicals, while his meditations are reunited in a volume published in 1847: *Suveniruri și impresii, epistole și fabule* [Souvenirs and Impressions, Epistles and Fables].

6 Nicolae Isar, *Sub semnul Romantismului. De la Domnitorul Gheorghe Bibescu la scriitorul Simeon Marcovici*, [Under the Sign of Romanticism. From Prince Gheorghe Bibescu to the writer Simeon Marcovici] (Bucharest: Ed. Universitară, 2003), 72-73.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid., 73.

9 Horia Moldovan, *Johann Schlatter: cultură occidentală și arhitectură românească (1831-1866)* [Johann Schlatter: Western Culture and Romanian Architecture (1831-1866)] (Bucharest: Ed. Simetria, 2013), 118.



Fig. 1: Tismana Monastery as seen from South-East before the beginning of the restoration works in 1847.

The drawing – published by Alexandru Ștefulescu in 1896, in the earliest monograph of the monastery – reproduced an anonymous watercolor, part of a private collection of a certain Gr. N. Mano

Prince,¹⁰ these endeavors were regarded by specialized historiography as the beginning of modern concerns and practices regarding the reevaluation of the architectural heirloom of the past. Furthermore, the construction sites initiated by Bibescu – although falling short of what would later be considered “restoration” in the 19th century – favored the involvement of the first professionals, who were trained in Western Europe, marking the beginning of a new chapter in the evolution of Romanian architecture.

Under the same romantic aura of evoking a glorious yet little-known history, the subject of the ruin had an episodic entry in the field of visual arts as well. It manifested in landscape painting, in the proliferation of lithographs aimed at educating a still narrow audience and, finally, in documentary photography. Thus, in 1838, the scholar Gheorghe Asachi, in search of a past full of teachings, visited Neamț citadel. He drafted the first plan of the ruins and, through the artist Felice Giani,¹¹ circulated an architectural restitution of it - grand yet fanciful - as an illustration of the episode of Ștefan cel Mare (Stephen the Great, 1457-1504) returning from the battlefield (Fig. 2). During this period, realistic representations of the Neamț ruins were also published, captured by Michel Bouquet (1841) and included in the album printed in Paris in 1848.¹² The subject was continued by Anton Kauffmann (Fig. 3), whose picturesque drawing,

10 Daniela Bușă (ed.), *Călători străini despre Țările Române în secolul al XIX-lea* [Foreign Travellers About the Romanian Countries in the 19th century], vol. V (Bucharest: Ed. Academiei Române, 2009), 67. “To cover up the embezzlement, the government, without being invited, announced the restoration of four monasteries in the mountains, as well as the Bishopric church in Curtea de Argeș. Unnecessary costs, going up to the sum of 5.000.000 piasters, served to hide the financial business of the church; but two-thirds of these expenses are fictitious; the details were entrusted to dishonest accountants, and the guild masters were excluded from the surveillance of the construction sites.” Adolphe Etienne Billecocq’s text is translated after *Le principauté de la Valachie sous le Hospodar Bibesco, par B. A., ancien agent diplomatique dans le Levant*, Bruxelles, 1847. The author wrote down an extended analysis of the financial problems of Wallachia during the governance of Bibescu and the absence of the Public Assembly (Parliament).

11 Ion Frunzetti, *Arta românească în secolul XIX* [Romanian Art in the 19th Century] (Bucharest: Ed. Meridiane, 1991), 233.

12 Michel Bouquet, Carol Doussault, *Album moldo-valaque, ou guide politique et pittoresque à travers les Principautés du Danube* (Paris: 1848), 5. The citadel was introduced with the explanation: “Forteresse de



Fig. 2: Gheorghe Asachi, "Ștefan cel Mare's mother refusing her son's entrance in the Neamț fortress in 1484," lithograph, c.1840. In the background of the scene whose central figure is Ștefan cel Mare, Asachi suggested a fantasized – idealized restitution of the Neamț fortress

Fig. 3: Anton Kauffmann, The Neamț fortress, 1845 (lithograph by J. Rey, published by Gheorghe Asachi in *Calendar pentru poporul românesc* [Calendar for the Romanian people], Iași, 1845)





Fig. 4: Ion Negulici, "Barbu Știrbei at the Acropolis," oil on canvas, c. 1839

engraved by J. Rey in 1845,¹³ was used by Mihail Kogălniceanu to illustrate the historical episode *Sobiețchi și românii* (*Sobieski and the Romanians*) in *Album istoric și literar* (*Historical and Literary Album*, 1854).

In landscape painting, which gained a certain autonomy towards the middle of the 19th century, the presence of ruins – whether as mementos or as scenic backgrounds meant to enhance the artistic significance – remains rather uncommon. Ruin as a subject of contemplation did not awake any particular artistic interest. In 1839, when Ion Negulici, recently returned from Paris,

Niamzö, d'après un dessin de M. M. Bouquet."

13 Sorin Iftimi, "Anton Kauffman, un pictor vienez în țările române (1840-1845)" [Anton Kauffman, a Viennese Painter in the Romanian Countries (1840-1845)] *Cercetări Istorice (serie nouă)* XXXIII (I2014), 154 and Remus Niculescu, "Gheorghe Asachi și începuturile litografiei în Moldova" [Gheorghe Asachi and the beginnings of lithography in Moldavia], *Studii și cercetări de bibliologie* I (1955), 94.



Fig. 5, 6: "Glorieta" and the artificial ruin built in Romanescu Park in Craiova

painted the portrait of the future prince Barbu Știrbei against the background of the ruins of the temple of Zeus the Olympian and the Athenian Acropolis (Fig. 4), he did so more to evoke the spirit of the classical tradition towards which young Romanian modernity aspired, rather than to exploit the poetry of the landscape. Similarly, in 1850, Gheorghe Tattarescu used the ruins of Trajan's Bridge at Drobeta in an imaginary Danubian landscape for the allegory "The Awakening of Romania" in order to emphasize the Roman heritage of the Romanian people.

While ruins became a staple in the inventory of the English picturesque gardens in the first part of the 18th century, delayed echoes reverberated in Romania only towards the end of the 19th century. Without relating in any way with the early romantic pursuits, but perpetuating the appetite for a certain type of picturesque, the planning of a public park in Craiova, based on the design of the French landscape architect Édouard Redont (1862-1942), began at the end of the century. This park was initially known as "Bibescu Park," named after the estate owner, and later as "Romanescu Park," named after the mayor who initiated the construction project in 1899. Even though the project was awarded the golden medal at the Parisian Universal Exhibition in 1900, its construction was prolonged, with the park opening only in 1903 in the presence of King Carol I.¹⁴ Apart from the "Glorieta" (Fig. 5) – a replica of the one erected in Parc des Buttes Chaumont in Paris almost four decades earlier,¹⁵ an imaginary projection of an inexistent past in post-medieval Oltenia – in 1905 the park is also equipped with an artificial medieval ruin, designed to conceal the water tower, as fanciful as its classic counterpart.

During the same years, another water tower was enclosed within the fabricated "Castle of Vlad Țepeș" (Vlad the Impaler) (Fig. 7), designed by architects Ștefan Burcuș and Victor Ștefănescu. This structure was part of the exhibition park, also designed by Redont, which opened in Bucharest in 1906 to celebrate the 40 years of reign of King Carol I. Intended as an idealized

14 Alexandru Mexi et al., *Prin parcurile publice din sudul României* [Through the Public Parks of Southern Romania] (Bucharest: Ed. Simetria, 2018), 82, see also Rică Marcus, *Parcuri și grădini din România* [Parks and Gardens in Romania] (Bucharest: Ed. Tehnică, 1958), 98-106.

15 Planned at the initiative of the prefect of Seine, Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann, according to the engineer Jean-Carol Adolphe Alphand's design, Parc des Buttes Chaumont in Paris was open to the public at the end of the ruling period of Napoleon III, in 1867.

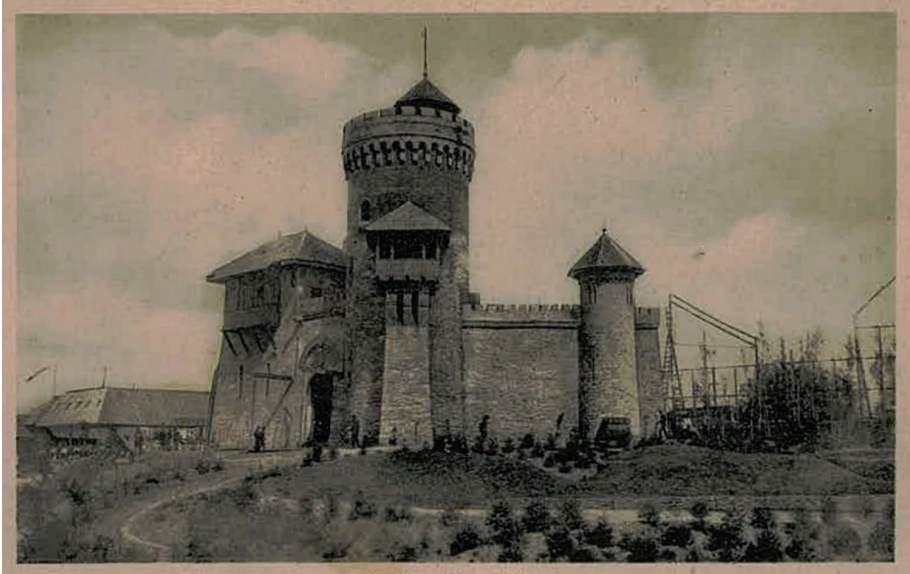


Fig. 7: "Castle of Vlad Țepeș" (Vlad the Impaler) from the Romanian General Exhibition, inaugurated in Bucharest, in the current Carol Park, in 1906

restitution of the fascinating ruin of the Poienari fortification alongside an interpretation of the Chindiei Tower from Târgoviște, the "castle" that dominates the exhibition park from the nearby high plateau – similar to the one built a year earlier in the Craiova – illustrated a late historicist taste. This design, rooted in a borrowed Romanticism, produced unexpected effects until the first part of the 20th century.

The Propaedeutic Perspective: The Ruin as Historical Testimony

Against the backdrop of an underappreciated aesthetic value of the ruin, its quality as a repository of information about the past prevailed, even if it was often unjustifiably idealized. After 1830, encouraged by a growing national consciousness, the increasingly lively interest in the research of history – largely compiled from its moments of glory – laid the foundations for a new chapter of early-modern Romanian culture.

Starting with the governing years of Russian general Pavel Kiseleff,¹⁶ the interest in the origins and legendary ages, shrouded in mystery, paved the way for the archaeology of the ruins. The establishment of the National Museum of Antiquities in 1834, under the patronage of the Central Administration of Schools (Eforia Școalelor) and housed at St. Sava School in Bucharest¹⁷ facilitated the transition from haphazard and often destructive diggings, to a more structured approach to research, grounded to some extent in scientific methodologies. The results of the early "archaeological journeys" in Oltenia by officer Vladimir Blaremborg (1811-1846)¹⁸ and his brother-in-law, Governor (*ban*) Mihalache Ghica, published in periodicals

16 General Pavel Kiseleff (1788-1872) led the Russian military administration of Wallachia and Moldavia between 1829 and 1834.

17 Constantin Iulian Ghiță, "Perioada romantică a arheologiei românești" [The Romantic Period of Romanian Archaeology], in *Primul secol de arheologie în România* [The First Century of Archaeology in Romania], ed. Alexandru Barnea (Bucharest: Ed. Academiei Române, 2010), 22.

18 Vladimir Moret de Blaremborg (1811-1846), of Flemish-Belgian origin, came to Wallachia as an officer of the Russian army in 1828. In 1830 he married the sister of the future ruler Alexandru Dimitrie Ghica (1834-



Fig. 8: Michael Bouquet, The Ruin of the pillar of Trajan's Danube bridge built at Drobeta by Apolodor of Damascus between 103-105 AD, captured in 1843

of the time (*Muzeul Național (National Museum)* or *Curierul românesc (Romanian Courier)*),¹⁹ represented a first step in the exploration of ancient remains in Wallachia. These efforts laid the groundwork of later studies by Grigore G. Tocilescu (1850-1909)²⁰ and those initiated by the Romanian Academy. Blaremburg's archaeological enthusiasm was not unique; the Moldavian historian and philologist Gheorghe Săulescu (1799-1875)²¹ also contributed significantly by studying the ruins of the Roman site at Barboși, near Galați, in southern Moldavia. In 1838, he published what is today regarded as the first Romanian archaeological monograph: *Descrierea istorico-geografică a cetății Caput Bovis (Capul Boului sau Ghertina) a cărui ruine de află în apropierea Galațului* (*The historical-geographical description of the Caput Bovis fortress (The Head of the Ox or Ghertina) whose ruins are located near Galați*).

During the same period, the surveyor engineer A. Popovici, exploiting etymology, attempted to prove the existence of ancient Roman settlements or forts at several sites in modern Wallachian cities. However, his efforts culminated in assertions that lacked evidence, including the suggestion that emperors such as Aurelian, Probus or Justinian originated from the region.²² Aside from highlighting the illustrious origins of the Romanians as direct descendants of the

1842), becoming one of the greatest landowners in the principality. Starting from 1832, Blaremburg was designated chief of the Engineering Office of the State (until 1846), and in 1841, through princely order, Blaremburg also received the title of "Logothete of Faith" and after "Vornic of Prisons," subordinated to the Department of Internal Affairs.

19 Amongst the works signed by Blaremburg are *Suvenire istorice și arheologice asupra României* [Historical and Archaeological Memories of Romania] (1836), *Ruinele Caracalului* [Ruins of Caracal] (1836), *Celeiu și Turnu* [Celeiu and Turnu] (1836), *Mormânt vechi găsit în România cea mică* [Ancient Tomb Found in Oltenia] (1836), *Știri din Lăuntru* [News from Inside] (1836), *Antichitățile pământenești* [Local Antiquities] (1837), *Vestiges d'antiquités romaines* [Remains of Roman Antiquities] (1842). For the complete bibliography of the archaeological writings of Vladimir Blaremburg, see also Dumitru Tudor, *Oltenia romană* [Roman Oltenia] (Bucharest: Ed. Academiei R.S.R., 1968) and Mihai Dim. Sturdza (coord.), *Familiiile Boierești din Moldova și Țara Românească. Enciclopedie istorică, genealogică și biografică*, [Boyard Families from Moldavia and Wallachia. Historical, Genealogical, and Biographical Encyclopaedia], vol. I (Bucharest: Ed. Simetria, 2004), 560, note 7.

20 Grigore G. Tocilescu (1850-1909) was a historian, archaeologist, epigraphist, folklorist and, from 1890, a member of the Romanian Academy.

21 Gheorghe Săulescu (1799-1875) professor at the Mihailean Academy in Iași, was a philologist, historian, poet and precursor of the Romanian archaeological school.

22 Paul Cornea, *Originile romantismului românesc* [The Origins of Romanian Romanticism] (Bucharest: Ed. Cartea Românească, 2008), 428.

Romans – an attitude promoted by the strong “Latinist current” – early research also brought into public attention the Dacians and their role in the later ethnic synthesis, their inclusion in the wider context gaining more and more significance by the mid-19th century.²³ One of the earliest figures to focus on the Dacian issue was Cezar Bolliac²⁴ (1813-1881), who dealt closely with archaeological vestiges and ruins, without basing his endeavors on scientific methods. His conclusions were often ridiculed by his contemporaries. For instance, in 1873, Alexandru Odobescu²⁵ (1834-1895) joined the discourse with his polemical article “Archaeological smoke exhaled from prehistoric pipes by a non-smoking man,” where he addressed the matter debated by Bolliac regarding the origins of smoking habits, spurred by the discovery of “prehistoric pipes” during archaeological excavations.

The dangers that threatened the “antiquities” were signaled to the government by Major Dimitrie Pappazoglu, the one who “(...) admired, researched and popularized, in his self-taught soldier’s limits, the Roman and Romanian historical monuments.”²⁶ In 1860, one year after the appointment by the Minister Al. Golescu of the Commission “for the knowledge and study of the religious monuments of the country,” with the consent of the Council of Ministers, a process of recording of all cultural assets was launched – albeit unsystematically – for the purpose of conservation of “(...) the archaeological and historical monuments located in the monasteries and which, from ignorance or malevolence of the administrators, are being destroyed at the loss of national history.”²⁷

On this occasion, the official role of “commissioner” was instituted to oversee all monastic settlements. According to documents from the Ministry of Cults and Public Instruction, this position was intended “(...) to be occupied by men with special knowledge, in order to go to all the monasteries, to visit them, and make inventories of all their objects,” and eventually to draw up a record as complete as possible of movable assets with significant value for the history of the country (“holy vessels, vestments, medals, coins, inscriptions, old books, manuscripts, documents of all kinds”²⁸). Alongside these inventories, the letters sent to the future inspectors launched the invitation to use the opportunity “(...) to study and describe the places where ancient fortresses might be located (...) and where there might be worth digging to uncover ancient objects with affinity to the history of the country.”²⁹

The extensive information gathered from the places visited were only partially synthesized and published by the commissioners. Cezar Bolliac covered Vlașca, Ilfov, Teleorman, and Romanai counties, Alexandru Odobescu, accompanied by the painter Henric Trenk, meticulously documented the places and monuments visited in Dolj, Mehedinți, Gorj, Vâlcea, and Argeș counties. Alexandru Pelimon was responsible for Buzău, Râmnicu Sărat, Brăila, and Ialomița counties. Lastly, Major Dimitrie Pappazoglu documented Olt, Muscel, Dâmbovița, and Prahova counties. The commissioners began their journeys with an “open letter of recommendation for all venerable abbots” through which the Minister brought to their attention the “noble purpose”

23 Lucian Boia, *România: țară de frontieră a Europei* [Romania: Borderland of Europe] (Bucharest: Ed. Humanitas, 2001), 30-36.

24 Cezar Bolliac (1813-1881) was one of the leaders of the 1848 Revolution, poet, promoter of archaeological studies and Romanian journalist. After the defeat of the revolutionaries, he went into exile, first to Transylvania, then to Constantinople and, finally, to Paris, where he stayed until 1857.

25 Alexandru Odobescu (1834-1895) was a very important man of culture, archaeologist, and politician. Starting from 1874, as a teacher of the University of Bucharest, he initiated the course of “archaeology of art,” in which he included (we may assume) general notions linked to architecture and Romanian architecture particularly.

26 Nicolae Iorga quoted by Velescu, “Preliminariile legii,” 8, and Sanda Ignat, “Inventarul C.M.I. (1892-1947) al monumentelor istorice” [C.M.I. inventory (1892-1947) of Historical Monuments], *Revista Monumentelor Istorice* 2 (1992), 21. The memorandum addressed the ruler in 26th July 1859.

27 The National Archives of Romania – Central National Historical Archives (N.A.R.-C.N.H.A.), Minister of Religious Affairs and Public Instruction (M.R.A.P.I.) Fund, file 120/1860, 4.

28 Ibid., 5.

29 Ibid.

that this action was supposed to have, inviting them to consent and “facilitate uncovering of much-needed sources that the history of the country needs.” Despite the shared enthusiasm, each of those involved in the record that begun in 1860 gathered and interpreted the information differently, depending on their own training and cultural interests. The consistency of the resulting material varied from one author to another, and the findings were only partially presented to the public.³⁰

In addition to the measures of recording the mobile historical heritage of Wallachia, painter Gheorghe Tattarescu launched a proposal regarding the study of a particular artistic heritage, namely that which constituted a valuable testimony for the reconstruction of Wallachian history: “extraordinary points of view and especially those that look into ancestral glorious deeds.” In July 1860, through a letter addressed to the Minister, Tattarescu requested the launch of an inventory and systematic copying of the valuable painting works in the country. This initiative aimed to substantiate the intention of creating an overview of traditional art. In the same manner as the commissioners in charge of recording the mobile heritage, Tattarescu sought approval for an “artistic journey to all the monasteries in the country, either consecrated³¹ or not, large and small, in order to copy everything that will be found, such as costumes, portraits, etc., because time and carelessness destroy them.”³² Without making any reference to the aesthetic value of this heritage – even though it undoubtedly was a high stake for the painter – the project was presented as

“(…) [one] of great interest for the history of the country, as well as for the formation of a precious collection for the use of painters who will deal with national subjects.”³³ (….) “The national feeling is very much maintained by historical souvenirs, by local traditions, by the representation of the past which can often be the stimulus for winning the future.”³⁴

The report was debated in the Council of Ministers and approved the same year³⁵. Thus, Tattarescu was designated to prepare a “national album” (Fig. 9) and to carefully record “valuable objects” (referring especially to religious paintings). The graphic material, which was to be executed in the technique of chromolithography, was never published. The numerous sketches drawn by Swiss painter Henric Trenk, who accompanied Alexandru Odobescu on his voyage, shared the same fate.³⁶

Even if not integrally published, it is probable that the inventories drawn up at that time were used by the state authorities in the takeover of the patrimony of the consecrated monasteries, in the secularization process started by the legislation adopted in 1863. The hypothesis is corroborated in Article 6 of the law, where it is specified that:

30 Pavel Chihaia, *Țara Românească între Bizanț și Occident* [Wallachia Between Byzantium and the West] (Bucharest: Institutul European, 1995), 212.

31 “Consecrated monasteries” were monasteries subordinated to orthodox religious settlements outside the country, from the Ottoman Empire, their heritage and income being at the disposal of foreigners. The practice of consecrating monasteries originates in the 14th century, the phenomenon ending in 1863, with the secularization of the monastic possessions.

32 N.A.R.-C.N.H.A., M.R.A.P.I. Fund, file 120/1860, 65.

33 Ibid., 66.

34 Ibid., 79.

35 S. Albu, “Un jurnal al consiliului de miniștri din 1860 pentru întocmirea ‘Albumului Național’ de către pictorul Gh. M. Tattarescu” [A decision of the Council of Ministers from 1860 for the preparation of the ‘National Album’ by the painter Gh. M. Tattarescu] *Studii și Cercetări de Istoria Artei* XII, 2 (1965), 342. The approval was issued on the basis of the report of the secretary of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Instruction, on July 18th, 1860. It was signed by B. Vlădoianu, G. Costaforu, B. Boerescu and I. Filipescu and subjected to validation by the prince Al. I. Cuza.

36 Teodora Voinescu, *Gheorghe Tattarescu. 1818-1894* (Bucharest: Academia Română, Publicațiile Fondului Elena Simu, IV, 1940), 36-37. Also see Aurelian Sacerdoțeanu, *Cercetări istorice și pitorești prin mănăstirile noastre acum optzeci de ani. Lucrările lui Al. Odobescu, H. Trenk și G. Tătărescu* [Historical and Picturesque Research in Our Monasteries Eighty Years Ago. The Works of Al. Odobescu, H. Trenk and G. Tătărescu] (Bucharest: Ed. Fundației Culturale „Mihail Kogălniceanu, 1942).



Fig. 9: Gheorghe Tattarescu, “The fortress of Vlad Țepeș (Vlad the Impaler), as seen from above, in a horizontal line towards Argeș” / the ruins of Poienari citadel in Argeș county, 1860

“(...) the government will take back from the Greek abbots the ornaments, the books and sacred vessels, with which the piety of our ancestors had endowed these settlements, as well as the documents that were entrusted to the abbots, all according to the inventories found in the country’s archives.”³⁷

The intentions and the actions of the 1860 campaign found continuity in the efforts of other Romanian intellectuals. For example, 15 years later, Titu Maiorescu, Minister of Religious Affairs and Public Instruction (1874-1876), dealt with the establishment of a new “section” of the National Museum in Bucharest, which received exhibits of old Romanian art that had been publicly highlighted in 1860.³⁸

The Cultural Perspective: The Ruin as a Patrimonial Component

Scattered measures to protect the architectural ruins have been documented since the 17th century. Appearing in different contexts, these early actions targeted certain monuments, the choice of which was often driven more by spontaneous piety than by a conscious awareness

37 Ioan M. Bujoreanu, *Colecțiune de legiurile României Vechi și Nnoi câte s-au promulgat pene la finele anului 1870. Legi, proceduri, regulamente, decrete, instrucțiuni, formularii, convențiuni, concesiuni, statute, circulare instructive, tablouri. Înăvuiță cu Pravila lui Caragea, legiurile principelui B. D. Știrbei, Codulu Civilu Vechiu alu Moldovei (Calimach), Manualu de Pravila Bissericescă și statutele coloniilor Bulgare din Bassarabia* [Collection of Romanian Legislation Old and New...] (Bucharest: Noua Typographie a Laboratorilor, 1873), 1796, Article 6 of *Lege pentru secularizarea averilor monasticești* [Law for the secularization of monastic assets] – *Decretul No. 1251 din 15 septembrie 1863*.

38 N.A.R.-C.N.H.A., M.R.A.P.I., Fund, file 120/1860.



Fig. 10: Michael Bouquet, Ruins of the princely court from Târgoviște

or assumption of their cultural importance. The cases we know of do not focus on measures taken to preserve ruins, but rather a “principled conservatism”³⁹ with regards to respect owed to predecessors and to stopping degradation by prohibiting the use of construction material for new buildings. Towards the middle of the 17th century, in a letter addressed to the logothete Racoviță Cehan, ruler Vasile Lupu (1634-1653) prohibited the use of stone from the ruins of the Princely Court of Ștefan cel Mare from Vaslui on the grounds that “(...) this is not an appropriate thing to do because it is not with honor.”⁴⁰ The same stake was held by the princely decree of 1777, which forbade the use of stones from the walls of the ruins of the princely court at Suceava.⁴¹ From the beginning of the 19th century, testimonies from concerned individuals regarding the rapid degradation of ruins with particular historical significance started to multiply. In 1800, the boyar Constantin Bugan, interested in the remains of the princely courts in Hârlău and Cotnari, drew attention to the fact that they “deprive themselves of cows and people.”⁴² In Wallachia, in 1813, the logothete Istratie Slătineanu from Târgoviște signaled the authorities that the ruins of the princely court “(...) should not fall into ruin and desolation.”⁴³

The earliest official concerns of systematic registration of ruins were concretized during the government of Pavel Kiseleff, for eminently pragmatic reasons. A first attempt referring to the medieval ruins was launched by the Wallachian Mitropoly in 1832, at the request of the Russian governor. Questionnaires were dispatched throughout the territory, requesting the recording of churches, even if they were in a state of ruin, but with a specific focus on those that preserved inscriptions.⁴⁴ Only those ruins capable of providing relevant historical information through their inscriptions were to be documented.

39 Andrei Pippidi, “În ajunul înființării Comisiunii. Rolul lui Nicolae Gabrielescu” [On the Eve of the Establishment of the Commission. The Role of Nicolae Gabrielescu], *Revista Monumentelor Istorice* 2 (1992), 72.

40 Al. Lapedatu, in *Buletinul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice* 1 (1908), 48.

41 Nicolae Stoicescu, *Repertoriul bibliografic al localităților și monumentelor din Moldova* [The Bibliographic Repertoire of the Settlements and Monuments of Moldavia] (Bucharest: Direcția Patrimoniului Cultural Național. Biblioteca Monumentelor Istorice din România, 1974), 794.

42 B. Zotta, “Bisericile din Hârlău și Cotnari. După un raport din anul 1800” [The Churches of Hârlău and Cotnari. According to an 1800 Report], *Buletinul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice* 76 (1933), 92.

43 V. A. Urechia, *Istoria Românilor. Curs făcut la Facultatea de Litere din București după documente inedite* [History of Romanians. Lectures at the Faculty of Letters from Bucharest, Based on Original Documents], VIII (Bucharest: Tipografia și Fonderia de Litere “Thoma Basilescu”, 1897), 375.

44 Paul Cernovodeanu and Alina Lazea, “Monumente istorice din Oltenia și Muntenia vizitate de generalul Kiseleff la 1832” [Historical Monuments from Oltenia and Muntenia Visited by General Kiseleff in 1832], *Studii și cercetări de istoria artelor XX*, 1 (1943), 169.



Fig. 11: Carol Popp de Szathmari, the princely court in Târgoviște around 1865, with the rebuilt tower in the background

The early practices of intervention on ruins also fit into the previously mentioned romantic atmosphere; they were not guided by the will of conservation itself, but rather by the need to preserve or create scenographies that reflected the imaginary of a select elite, as part of a shifting cultural paradigm that oriented towards Western horizons. The ruins of the princely residence in the former capital of the principality, Târgoviște, significant for the local historical imaginary, were visited by Gheorghe Bibescu in 1844. Surprisingly, it was not the former residence that attracted his attention, but the ruin of the tower near it (Fig. 10), with probable foundation in the 14th century and transformations in mid-15th century, during the reign of Vlad Țepeș (1448, 1456-1462, 1476).⁴⁵ Erected above the exonarthex of the early medieval court's chapel, the tower played several roles over the centuries. Initially serving as a dungeon during the 16th and 17th centuries, it was later transformed into a clock tower that announced the interruption of traffic at sunset, and from its vantage point the city would be monitored throughout the night.⁴⁶ One of the precise representations of the original ruin has been preserved from the early 1840s, thanks to Michel Bouquet.⁴⁷ Gheorghe Bibescu decided to repair the construction and entrusted it to the Swiss architect Johann Schlatter (1808-1865).⁴⁸ Schlatter considered keeping the old building:

“(...) in the project of the tower it was decided to keep all the parts of the old construction and to dress it only on the outside.”⁴⁹

45 Nicolae Stoicescu and Cristian Moisesescu, *Târgoviștea și monumentele sale* [Târgoviste and its Monuments] (Bucharest: Ed. Litera, 1976), 77.

46 Cristian Moisesescu, *Târgoviște. Monumente de istorie și de artă* [Târgoviște. Monuments of History and Art], (Bucharest: Ed. Meridiane, 1979), 56.

47 G. Oprescu, *Țările Române văzute de artiști francezi (sec. XVIII și XIX)* [Romanian Principalities Seen by French Artists (18th and 19th Centuries)] (Bucharest: Ed. Cultura Națională, 1926), 32. The lithography of Bouquet titled “Ruines du palais des princes à Tirgovischz” was published in *Album Valaque* in 1843.

48 From the little information regarding the youth of Swiss architect Johann Schlatter (1808-1865) we do not know if he was trained as an architect in an academic institution. However, Schlatter began his practice probably having as mentor Friedrich von Gärtner, one of the most important Bavarian architects from the first half of 19th century. The circumstances of Schlatter's arrival in Wallachia are unclear, yet it is certain that he settled in Ploiești around 1842, and in 1844 started his career as a “monastic architect,” position from which he coordinated the interventions on religious architectural heritage in Wallachia until the end of his life.

49 N.A.R.-C.N.H.A., M.R.A.P.I. Fund, file 109/1849, 131.

It is noteworthy that, after the construction site was opened, it became obvious that the building had undergone successive phases of construction, the risk of collapse being imminent. In such circumstances, the decision of rebuilding the base was taken, demolishing the tower and proceeding with the reconstruction "(...) with no additions being made to the plan of that tower."⁵⁰ The architect approached the reconstruction in a subjective manner, resulting in an image (Fig. 11) that borrowed elements from defensive medieval architecture of Western Europe. The final form bore little resemblance to the original building, indicating the divergence from historical accuracy in favor of artistic license.

The aforementioned "archaeological journeys" from the mid-19th century led by Cezar Bolliac, Alexandru Pelimon, Dimitrie Pappazoglu, Alexandru Odobescu, and, slightly later, by Gheorghe Tattarescu, contributed to the grounding of solid knowledge of tangible marks of the past, through their initial inventories and, in some cases, graphic recordings. However, the ruins later became the subject of institutionalized heritage concerns, albeit only in theory. In 1874, based on the conclusions of the incipient record of built heritage, the first steps to create a legal framework dedicated to the protection of historical built heritage were made. This was accomplished through the vote and promulgation by the king of the *Regulation for the establishment of the "Honorary Commission for Public Monuments"*⁵¹ whose purpose was to "register and conserve public monuments." One of the articles of the regulation detailed:

"Not only edifices that are still in use can be considered public monuments, but also *ruins of historical interest*, as well as monuments without a practical or known use. (...) The ruins that will be registered among the public monuments are brick and stone buildings, or from Antiquity, that is from the time of the Romans and before, such as: fortress walls, temples and houses, towers, bridge pillars, etc., or of the mediaeval and later times, such as churches, fortresses, palaces, towers, and any other *ruined buildings*."⁵²

Ruins as such (in the state in which they were found) were considered especially from the perspective of the information they could provide about the old architectural solutions or building methods. This contributed significantly to the expansion of knowledge in architectural history, a field that began to gain a certain autonomy only after 1870.⁵³ Nicolae Gabrielescu (1854-1926),⁵⁴ one of the most important Romanian architects involved in the restoration of historical monuments, drew attention to the errors made during the interventions on the ruins of the Sânniccoară church in Curtea de Argeș (Fig. 12): the trustees (administrators) of the church of Sf. Nicolae Domnesc (the princely court's chapel) in its vicinity, concerned with the maintenance of the monument in their care, had sacrificed the vault of Sânniccoară to use the resulting brick for "(...) a massive buttress to the princely church. Out of their lack of understanding they simultaneously committed two mistakes: they destroyed a ruin in order to distort a monument."⁵⁵

50 Ibid.

51 N.A.R.-C.N.H.A., M.R.A.P.I. Fund, file 7/1874, 16-17v. The document is dated April 6th 1874 and is signed by Prince Carol and the Minister of Religious Affairs and Public Instruction, B. Boerescu.

52 Ibid.

53 Răzvan Theodoreescu, "Artele vizuale în Academia Română" [Visual Arts in the Romanian Academy] in *150 de ani de învățământ artistic național* [150 Years of National Artistic Education], coord. Adrian-Silvan Ionescu (Bucharest: Institutul de Istoria Artei „G. Oprescu” / Ed. Universității Naționale de Arte, 2014), 11. See also in the same volume Corina Teacă "Istoria artei în context identitar românesc (a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea și începutul secolului XX)" [Art History in the Context of Romanian Identity (second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century)], 155-156.

54 Nicolae Gabrielescu (1854-1926), considered by Toma T. Socolescu "a cultivated self-taught man," and by Petre Antonescu, a graduate of an unknown school in Belgium, was the closest associate of French architect Émile-André Lecomte du Noüy, invited in Romania by Prince Carol I to restore some of the most important medieval religious monuments. After 13 years of collaboration, Gabrielescu started working alone on interventions on historic architecture, his most important work being the restoration of the bell tower of Golia monastery in Iași.

55 Nicolae Gabrielescu, "Publicul și monumentele" [The Public and the Monuments], *Analele arhitecturii și ale artelor cu care se leagă* I (1890), 3-4.



Fig. 12: Carol Popp of Szathmari, "The visit of Carol at Curtea de Argeș," 1868. The scene illustrates the first visit of Prince Carol I at Curtea de Argeș in the autumn of 1866. In the foreground of the image the ruins of Sănnicoară church are captured

Fig. 13: Carol Popp of Szathmari, "The visit of Carol I at Neamț monastery and fortress," 1868. The scene captures the stop-over of Prince Carol during the first visit in Moldavia, in the summer of 1866

Understanding the importance of ruins, in an article from 1890, the same Nicolae Gabrielescu used as example the popular conferences held in the middle of the ancient ruins of Rome for the education of an audience interested in knowing how to preserve ancient vestiges, in order to rhetorically ask if something could be done for Romania's own public: "(...) that asks, yells and does not quit until its churches are embellished."⁵⁶ Gabrielescu's writings were complemented at the same moment by other opinions that illustrated the maturing of attitudes regarding the need to maintain and to conserve the ruin. The words of Ștefan Ciocârlan (1856-1937) clearly summarize this state of mind: "We owe care to all remains. A ruin cleanly maintained does not rapidly crumble down, this way we can transmit it further to our descendants; in turn, maybe they will be able to care for it."⁵⁷

The Legitimizing Perspective: The Ruin as Pretext for Renewal

After the coronation of the young Carol,⁵⁸ medieval architectural ruins started to be seen differently, amidst diverse expressed attitudes. They became associated with decline and negligence, yet also emerged as a profitable pretext for a form of patronage which, lacking the symbolism of a traditional founding act, was meant to highlight the continuity and connection between the sovereign and a past foreign to him. Prince Carol's first contact with the historical heritage of the country where he reigned for almost half a century (1866-1914) was mediated by the *Archaeological and picturesque album of the monasteries of Argeșului and Vâlcea counties*, made by Henric Trenk during his "archaeological journeys" when he accompanied Alexandru Odobescu.⁵⁹ The prince received the album as a gift upon his arrival in Pitești, for the first meeting with the president of the Council of Ministers, Ion Ghica, in May 1866.⁶⁰ In the summer of the same year Carol made an extensive tour of Moldavia, followed in 1867 by one in Oltenia, the North of Dobrogea and the South of Bessarabia. The first records regarding the paucity of means to restore the monuments he had visited appeared in the prince's personal diary in 1867. However, his visits hastened tangible results, his early involvement

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ștefan Ciocârlan, "Clădirile vechi" [Old Buildings], *Analele arhitecturii și ale artelor cu care se leagă I*, (1890), 14.

⁵⁸ Carol (Karl Eitel Friedrich Zephyrinus Ludwig von Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, 1839-1914) became prince of Romania in 1866 and king in 1881.

⁵⁹ Alexandru Tzigara-Samurcaș, *Scriseri despre arta românească* [Writings about Romanian Art] (Bucharest: Ed. Meridiane, 1987), 154. The album produced by Henric Trenk, containing 110 plates, was donated by King Carol I to the National Museum of Art (Muzeul de Artă de la Șosea) in 1909.

⁶⁰ Sergiu Iosipescu, "Un întemeietor – Alexandru I. Odobescu (1834-1895)" [A founder – Alexandru I. Odobescu (1834-1895)], *Revista Monumentelor Istorice* 2 (1992), 67.

in architectural heritage issues being mentioned in the message addressed to the country's Legislative Assembly in November 1868:

"The means you have offered my government have enabled it to repair a great number of churches that were threatened to fall into ruin; however, there is still a lot to be done in this regard, and it is the duty of the country and the government to take care that sacred monuments erected by our ancestors are preserved in all their splendor, through which the moral feeling of the people is exalted and enlivened, and their hearts uplifted."⁶¹

In 1869, on his way to Iași, where he was going to meet his father, Prince Karl Anton de Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, Carol stopped at the Neamț monastery (Fig. 13), which he considered "(...) not only the first *lavra* of Romania, but also a historical monument of the country." Dissatisfied with the progress of the repairs started after the fire that had affected the monastic complex "which were executed in an unsatisfactory manner," in the letter sent from Iași in April 1869 to the Minister of Religious Affairs and Public Instruction, Carol ordered "to appoint an *ad hoc* commission composed of local men" led by the prefect, the abbot and himself "in order to give a personal impetus to the works."⁶² The participation of the prince and parliamentary support were illustrated by the assessment Carol had presented during the speech of November 1869:

"More than 24 churches and monasteries are rising from ruin today, to the glory of the Lord, especially the holy Bishopric Church of Curtea de Argeș, where the first and most difficult preparatory works were done this year in order to be able to start the radical restoration of this great monument of art and ancestral piety."⁶³

Without resentment regarding the alteration of the authenticity of the old constructions, immediately after the (re)consecration of the Bishopric Church of Curtea de Argeș (1886), during his speech in front of the parliament, the King declared:

"The reconstruction of the old monuments was one of the works that always attracted my particular attention. We greeted with happiness the day when the beautiful cathedral of Curtea de Argeș was given back to the divine cult, restored into splendor and beauty that raises the country in its own eyes. Soon we will celebrate the consecration of the metropolitan church in Craiova and the church of the Holy Three Hierarchs in Iași. A nation that respects its ancient monuments and especially those of Christian piety and faith has a secure and steadfast future."⁶⁴

Apart from the churches of the former monasteries of Curtea de Argeș and Holy Three Hierarchs in Iași, whose state of conservation allowed interventions that preserved the original substance in varying degrees, the ruins of the church of the old Mitropoly in Târgoviște (Fig. 14) (founded by Radu cel Mare and completed by Neagoe Basarab around 1520), those of Sf. Nicolae of the old princely court in Iași (originally built during the reign of Ștefan cel Mare in 1491-1492, and later altered and extended) and of Sf. Dumitru church in Craiova (Fig. 15) (reconstructed in 1651 on a site of a princely religious building likely founded after the beginning of the 16th century), were completely demolished. Given their state of ruin conservation was ruled out by the clergy, who were keen on returning these sites to their religious function. The reconstructions of the three churches, led by the French architect Émile-André Lecomte du Noüy (1844-1914)⁶⁵ and considered "restorations," were integrally foreign to the original

61 Dimitrie A. Sturdza, *Domnia Regelui Carol I. Fapte, cuvântări, documente* [The Reign of King Carol I. Facts, speeches, documents], I, 1866-1876, (Bucharest: Ed. Carol Göbl, 1906), 478.

62 Ibid., 510 and D. Onciul, "Regele Carol I^u Întemeietorul" [King Carol I, the Founder], *Buletinul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice* 28 (1914), 146.

63 Sturdza, *Domnia Regelui Carol I*, 547.

64 Velescu, "Preliminariile legii," 10.

65 For details regarding the biography and activity of Émile-André Lecomte du Noüy (1844-1914) also see Horia Moldovan, *Lecomte du Noüy: mărturii ale restaurării mănăstirii Trei Ierarhi* [Lecomte du Noüy: Testimonies of the Restoration of the Monastery of the Holy Three Hierarchs], (Bucharest: Ed. Dar

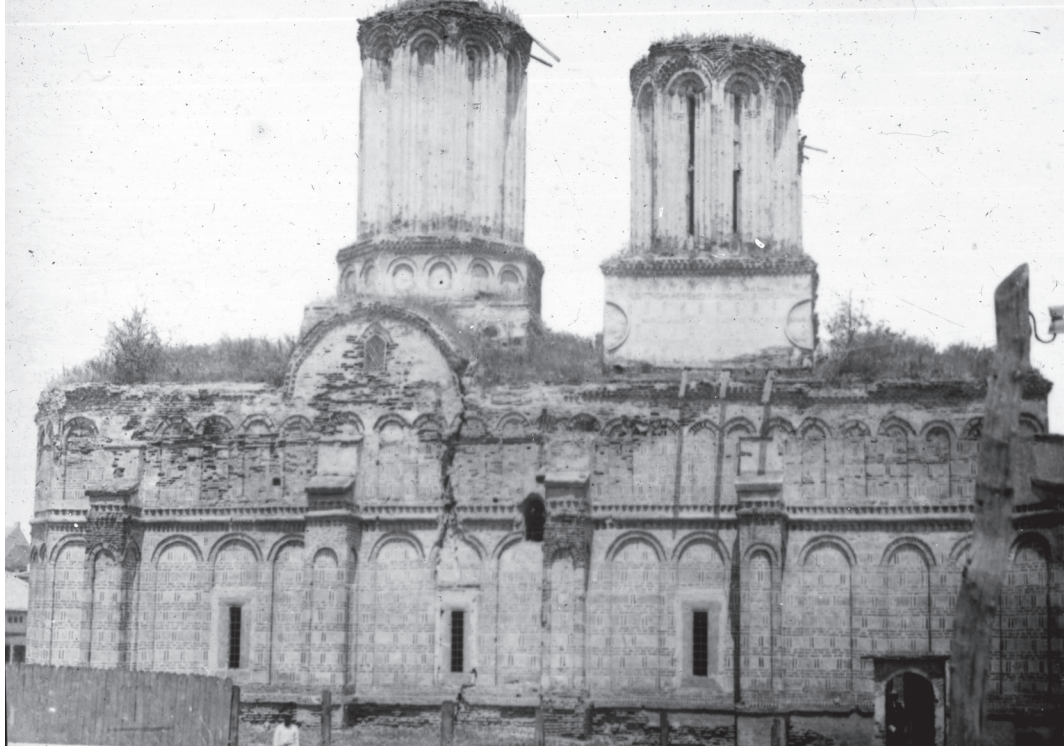


Fig. 14: The ruins Old Mitropoly in Târgoviște, photographed around 1880

Fig. 15: The ruins of Sf. Dumitru church in Craiova, photographed around 1880



solution. Neither the ambitions and expectations of the King, nor the pretensions of the clergy could justify the efforts or the results.

Despite the French architect's success in laying the foundation of a new stylistic direction in religious architecture, which aimed to synthesize and represent Romanian Orthodoxy⁶⁶ in modernity, the ruins of the old churches and their meanings were completely ignored, drawing in aggressive contemporary critiques and accusations. In April 1890, during the first meeting of the "Honorary Commission for Public Monuments" it was agreed that the construction sites led by Lecomte du Noüy had become a "national matter,"⁶⁷ which is why it was proposed to appoint an "(...) over-arbitrage, to examine and pronounce over these works, from an artistic perspective."⁶⁸ During this meeting, at Titu Maiorescu's proposal, the summoning of Henri Révoil,⁶⁹ "(...) stranger to the criticisms and polemics that followed in the country" was approved.⁷⁰ Referring to the projects for which his expertise had been requested, in order to excuse Lecomte du Noüy's search for the "primitive states" of the ruined monuments on which he had intervened, Révoil wrote:

"*Conserving* a monument means to keep it in its current state, which is, making it pass to posterity in the state it is in, limiting to simple consolidations. This is the program of Viollet-le-Duc and de Baudot in what concerns the church of Curtea de Argeș. *Restoring* a monument means something entirely different: it means to give it back its primitive state, the program then expands, and we must understand that the architect, when lacking reliable documents, is inspired, first of all, by what he has under his eyes and from what he can find in similar monuments. He must allow himself to embody the creative artist of the masterpiece and gather all the information that justifies his innovations."⁷¹

To conclude, in 19th-century Romanian culture, the concept of ruin was present to the extent that it served as a support for memorial reflections, as a source of historical information or as a pretext of legitimacy. Most often, these approaches were standing under the sign of yet another unsettled assimilation of Western borrowings. The relevance of the ruin, based on its intrinsic values, was discussed and addressed later in the century, primarily on a theoretical level, rarely with any concrete conclusions, materialized in preservation measures.

Publishing, 2019), chapter "Émile-André Lecomte du Noüy (1844-1914): schiță biografică", 4-14, Horia Moldovan, "Émile-André Lecomte du Noüy. Însemnări biografice" ["Émile-André Lecomte du Noüy. Biographical notes"] in *Istoria restaurării bisericii episcopale de la Curtea de Argeș (1863-1886)* [The History of the Restoration of the Bishopric Church in Curtea de Argeș (1863-1886)], ed. Nicolae Șt. Noica (Bucharest: Ed. Vremea, 2017), 118-124 and Horia Moldovan, "Émile-André Lecomte du Noüy: Medieval Architecture at the Beginning of Romanian Modernity," *Caietele ARA. Arhitectura. Restaurare. Arheologie*, 6 (2015), 155-174.

66 Carmen Popescu, *Le style national roumain. Construire une nation a travers l'architecture 1881-1945* [Romanian National Style. Building a Nation Through Architecture 1881-1945], (Bucharest: Ed. Simetria, 2004), 105.

67 *Restaurarea monumentelor istorice 1865-1890. Acte și rapoarte oficiale* [Restoration of historical monuments 1865-1890. Official documents and reports] (Bucharest: Ministerul Cultelor și Instrucțiunei Publice, Tipografia „Carol Göbl”, 1890), 226.

68 Ibid.

69 Henri Révoil (1822-1900), correspondent member of *Institut de France*, involved in the restoration of French historical monuments, is known for his study on Romanesque architecture in the South of France (*L'Architecture romane du midi de la France* (Paris, 1866-1873)) but also through long-term involvement in the construction sites of Romanesque-Byzantine churches Sainte-Marie-Majeure and Notre Dame de la Garde of Marseille, continuing the work of Léon Vaudoyer and Henri-Jacques Espérandieu.

70 *Restaurarea monumentelor istorice 1865-1890* [Restoration of Historical Monuments 1865-1890], 241. The Honorary Commission for Public Monuments – Report no. 3 (May 12th, 1890). The statement belongs to M. Kogălniceanu.

71 The letter addressed by Henri Révoil to the Minister of Religious Affairs and Public Instruction, on July 20th, 1890, in Henri Révoil, *Restaurarea monumentelor istorice. Rapoarte despre Catedrala și Reședința Episcopală de la Curtea de Argeș, Bisericile Trei Ierarhi și S-tu Nicolae din Iași, Catedralele Mitropolitane din Târgoviște și București, Bisericile S-tu Dumitru din Craiova și Stavropoleos din București* [Restoration of Historical Monuments...] (Bucharest: Tipografia "Carol Göbl", 1890), 2.

REFERENCE LIST:

- Albu, S. "Un jurnal al consiliului de miniștrii din 1860 pentru întocmirea „Albumului Național” de către pictorul Gh. M. Tattarescu.” *Studii și Cercetări de Istoria Artei* XII, 2 (1965).
- Boia, Lucian. *România: țară de frontieră a Europei*. București: Ed. Humanitas, 2001.
- Bouquet, Michel, and Carol Doussault. *Album moldo-valaque, ou guide politique et pittoresque à travers les Principautés du Danube*. Paris, 1848.
- Bujoreanu, Ioan M. *Colecțiune de legiurile României Vechi și Nuii câte s-au promulgat pene la finele anului 1870. Legi, proceduri, regulamente, decrete, instrucțiuni, formularii, convențiuni, concesiuni, statute, circulare instructive, tablouri. Înăvuiță cu Pravila lui Caragea, legiurile principelui B. D. Știrbei, Codulu Civilu Vechialu Moldovei (Calimach), Manualu de Pravila Bisericescă și statutele coloniilor Bulgare din Bassarabia*. București: Noua Typographie a Laboratoriloru, 1873.
- Bușă, Daniela (coord.). *Călători străini despre Țările Române în secolul al XIX-lea. Serie nouă. Vol. V*. București: Ed. Academiei Române, 2009.
- Călinescu, George. *Istoria literaturii române de la origini până în prezent*. București: Fundația Regală pentru literatură și artă, 1941.
- Cernovodeanu, Paul, and Alvin Lazea. "Monumente istorice din Oltenia și Muntenia vizitate de generalul Kiseleff la 1832." In *Studii și cercetări de istoria artelor, seria Arte plastice* 20, 1 (1943).
- Chihaiia, Pavel. *Țara Românească între Bizanț și Occident*. București: Institutul European, 1995.
- Ciocârlan, Ștefan. "Clădirile vechi." In *Analele arhitecturii și ale artelor cu care se leagă I* (1890).
- Cornea, Paul. *Originile romantismului românesc*. București: Ed. Cartea Românească, 2008.
- Drăghiceanu, Virgil. "Biserica Sf. Dimitrie-Craiova." *Buletinul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice* (1915).
- Frunzetti, Ion. *Arta românească în secolul XIX*. București: Ed. Meridiane, 1991.
- Gabrielescu, Nicolae. "Publicul și monumentele." *Analele arhitecturii și ale artelor cu care se leagă I* (1890).
- Gabrielescu, Nicolae. "Ruina Sânnicoară din Curtea de Argeș." *Buletinul Societății Politehnice* (1888).
- Ghiță, Constantin Iulian. "Perioada romantic a arheologiei românești." In *Primul secol de arheologie în România*, edited by Alexandru Barnea. București: Academiei Române, 2010.
- Iftimi, Sorin. "Anton Kauffman, un pictor vieneț în țările române (1840-1845)." *Cercetări Istorice (serie nouă)* XXXIII (2014).
- Iorga, Nicolae. "Orașele oltene și mai ales Craiova pe pragul vremilor nouă (1760-1830)." *Arhivele Olteniei* IV, 20 (1925).
- Iosipescu, Sergiu. "Un întemeietor – Alexandru I. Odobescu (1834-1895)." *Revista Monumentelor Istorice* LXI, 2 (1992).
- Isar, Nicolae. *Sub semnul Romantismului. De la Domnitorul Gheorghe Bibescu la scriitorul Simeon Marcovici*. București: Ed. Universitară, 2003.
- Marcus, Rică. *Parcuri și grădini din România*. București: Ed. Tehnică, 1958.
- Mexi, Alexandru et al. *Prin parcurile publice din sudul României*. București: Ed. Simetria, 2018.
- Moiescu, Cristian. *Târgoviște. Monumente de istorie și de artă*. București: Ed. Meridiane, 1979.
- Moldovan, Horia. *Johann Schlatter: cultură occidentală și arhitectură românească (1831-1866)*. București: Ed. Simetria, 2013.
- Onciu, D. "Regele Carol I^u întemeietorul." *Buletinul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice* VII, 28 1914.
- Opreșcu, G. *Țările Române văzute de artiști francezi (sec. XVIII și XIX)*. București: Ed. Cultura Națională, 1926.
- Pippidi, Andrei. "În ajunul înființării Comisiunii. Rolul lui Nicolae Gabrielescu." *Revista Monumentelor Istorice* 2 (1992).
- Popa, Radu. *Cetatea Neamțului*. București: Ed. Meridiane, 1963.
- Popescu, Carmen. *Le style national roumain. Construire une nation a travers l'architecture 1881-1945*. București: Ed. Simetria, 2004.
- Popescu-Cilieni, I., *Biserica Sf. Dumitru catedrala mitropolitană din Craiova*. Craiova: Tipografia Sfintei Mitropolii a Olteniei, 1941.
- Révoil, Henri. *Restaurarea monumentelor istorice. Rapoarte despre Catedrala și Reședința Episcopală de la Curtea de Argeș, Bisericele Trei Ierarhi și S-tu Nicolae din Iași, Catedralele Mitropolitane din Târgoviște și București, Bisericele S-tu Dumitru din Craiova și Stavropoleos din București*. București: Tipografia „Carol Göbl”, 1890.
- Sacerdoțeanu, Aurelian. *Cercetări istorice și pitorești prin mănăstirile noastre acum optzeci de ani. Lucrările lui Al. Odobescu, H. Trenk și G. Tătărescu*. București: Ed. Fundației Culturale „Mihail Kogălniceanu”, 1942.
- Stoicescu, Nicolae. *Repertoriul bibliografic al localităților și monumentelor din Moldova*. București: Direcția Patrimoniului Cultural Național. Biblioteca Monumentelor Istorice din România, 1974.

- Stoicescu, Nicolae, and Cristian Moisesescu. *Târgovișteea și monumentele sale*. București: Ed. Litera, 1976.
- Sturdza, Dimitrie A. *Domnia Regelui Carol I. Fapte, cuvântări, documente, Vol. I, 1866-1876*. București: Tipografia „Carol Göbl”, 1906.
- Sturdza, Mihai Dim. (coord.). *Familiiile Boierești din Moldova și Țara Românească. Enciclopedie istorică, genealogică și biografică*, vol. I. București: Ed. Simetria, 2004.
- Tudor, Dumitru. *Oltenia romană*. București, 1968.
- Tudurachi, Ligia. “Escapade romantice la ruine. Un “turism” al trecutului.” *Caietele Sextil Pușcariu V* (2021).
- Tzigara-Samurcaș, Alexandru. *Scrisori despre arta românească*. București: Ed. Meridiane, 1987.
- Urechia, V. A. *Istoria Românilor. Curs făcut la Facultatea de Litere din București după documente inedite*, vol. VIII. București: Tipografia și Fonderia de Litere “Thoma Basilescu”, 1897.
- Velescu, Oliver. “Preliminariile legii din anul 1892. Fapte istorice, juridice și deprinderi estetice.” *Revista Monumentelor Istorice* LXI, 2 (1992).
- Voinescu, Teodora. *Gheorghe Tattarescu. 1818-1894*. București: Academia Română, Publicațiile Fondului Elena Simu, IV, 1940.
- Zotta, B. “Bisericele din Hârlău și Cotnari. După un raport din anul 1800.” *Buletinul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice* XXV, 76 (1933).
- ***. *Restaurarea monumentelor istorice 1865-1890. Acte și rapoarte oficiale*. București: Ministerul Cultelor și Instrucțiunii Publice, Tipografia „Carol Göbl”, 1890.

Illustration credits:

- Fig. 1, 11, 15: © DITACP/UAUIM, The Alexandru Tzigara-Samurcaș Archive.
- Fig. 2: © “V.A. Urechia” County Library, Galați.
- Fig. 3: Gheorghe Asachi, *Calendar pentru poporul românesc* [Calendar for the Romanian people] (Iași, 1845).
- Fig. 4: © National History Museum of Romania.
- Fig. 5, 6: Photos by the author.
- Fig. 7: Postal card, c.1906.
- Fig. 8, 10: Michel Bouquet, *Album Valaque* (Paris, Goupil et Vibertéditeurs, 1843).
- Fig. 9: *Albumul Național* [The National Album], © National Art Museum of Romania.
- Fig. 12, 13: © National Art Museum of Romania.
- Fig. 14, 15: © DITACP/UAUIM, The Lecomte du Noüy Archive.