

THE BUILT HERITAGE OF THE FORMER CROWN DOMAIN OF MALINI. CAPITALIZATION OF HISTORICAL VESTIGES

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Abstract

The Suceava County Crown Domain of Malini was the largest of the twelve rural estates that formed the Crown Domain. The most beautiful mountain road in the Kingdom of Romania crossed it. There were already two model peasant houses in the center of Malini in the first decade of the twentieth century. Each of the schools of the Crown Domain of Malini was equipped with a stage for public theatrical performances. The rich forest resources and the proximity to the Bukovina border have facilitated important transformations for the region of Malini, in particular in terms of the development of the village of Gainesti. The heritage of the Eastern Carpathians bearing the imprint of the Royal House could be the catalyst for a new tourist destination symbolically called the "Royal Heritage of the Eastern Carpathians".

Keywords: Crown Domain of Malini, history, heritage, potential, tourism

JEL Classification: Z32, O18

I. INTRODUCTION

The Crown Domain Institution was established with the publication of the Crown Domain Law in the "Official Gazette" no.53 dated 10/22 June 1884. Of the total twelve rural estates that formed the Crown Domain, the Suceava County Crown Domain of Malini was the largest. (*Crown Endowment*, 1884, p. 5) The Crown Domain of Malini was located in northern Romania, near the town of Falticeni, the capital of Suceava County, bordering Bukovina to the north and west and hosting the Cornu-Luncii customs point. (Boiu and Precup, 1906, p. 6)

At the beginning of the 20th century, the budget of Malini had substantial incomes, coming from the exploitation of the forests of the region and from the taxes paid by the many craftsmen who worked in the locality: carpenters, wheelers, blacksmiths, masons, furriers, and *suman* (traditional winter coat) artisans. (Ion et al, 2019, p. 306) According to official statistical data from 1899, Malini was the most populated locality of Plasa Muntele (nine localities), home to 6,317 people (General Census, 1905, p. 440). It is worth mentioning that the most beautiful mountain road in the Kingdom of Romania (see Annex 1) at that time crossed the Crown Domain of Malini.

This study aims to identify potential axes of sustainable development (European Green Pact) in order to introduce the remarkable historical heritage into the tourist circuit of this mountainous area by using various statistical and geographical information on the achievements of the coherent infrastructure from the beginning of the twentieth century, as well as correlations with the existing situation.

The subject covered by this scientific article has been addressed by several Romanian authors without including elements of geography, statistics, and sustainable economic potential, focusing on the area of the former Crown Domain of Malini (Malini, Slatina, Cornu Luncii).

II. BUILT HERITAGE ON THE TERRITORY OF THE FORMER CROWN DOMAIN OF MALINI

According to the 1897 Map of Communication Routes, Suceava County included three of the five mountain rural estates that were part of the Crown Domain: Malini, Borca, and Sabasa-Farcasa (*Atlas of Communications Routes*, 1897). The domain of Malini had a total area of 25,081.6 ha, consisting of Cornu Luncii, Zavoiul Lunca Moldovei and Malini Forest. The domain had borders with Bukovina on the north and west, Rotopanesti-Sasca-Baia-Bogdanesti on the east, and Dolia and the Crown Domain of Sabasa-Farcasa on the south (Boiu and Precup, 1906, pp. 12-14). Malini was formed by the villages of Gainesti, Suha, Valeni, Paraiele, Malini and Draceni (Slatina) (Ion et al, 2019, p. 306).

The route connecting Falticeni (county capital) with the Crown Domains of Sabasa-Farcasa, Borca, the Royal Domain of Brosteni, and the customs point to Bukovina, on the Bistrita valley, crossed the Crown Domain of Malini over a lengthy distance. The county road crossed the Sarul Dornei Pass, where communication routes opened towards both Bukovina and Transylvania. The importance of this communication route will determine its classification as a national road towards the end of the 19th century (*Map of communication routes*, 1897) (see Annex 1).

There was a temporary wooden bridge across the Moldova River between Falticeni and Malini in the last decade of the nineteenth century, which was to be replaced with a larger bridge downstream. (Crăinicianu, 1894, p. 147) The “Stanisoara road,” including the bridge over the Moldova River, was upgraded in the first decade of the twentieth century, stretching around 24 kilometers from Bapsa to Suha, as opposed to the old route (Nemtisoru-Nisipitu), which had steep slopes for about 12 kilometers. On this occasion, numerous carved stone bridges and road maintenance buildings with lacy granite facades were built. (Gorovei, 1921, pp. 75-76).

The creation of adequate living conditions for rural residents was an important direction for the modernization of Romanian society. In this sense, at the end of the 19th century, the *Regulation for the alignment of villages and the construction of peasant houses* was published. The Crown Domain's communities were encouraged to adopt Dimitrie Maimarolu's (architect of the Ministry of the Interior) peasant house model, and Ion Kalinderu (Administrator of the Crown Domain) advised the agents of the Crown Domain to contribute to the development of the localities in which they worked (*Annals of Architecture*, 1890, pp. 35-37). As a result, in the years 1890-1893, model peasant houses were built on the Domains of Busteni, Sadova, Malini, Segarcea, Rusetu, Gherghita, etc. For example, the amount necessary to cover the expenses for the peasant house-model built on the Malini Crown Domain was paid on July 3, 1891 (Ion et al, 2019, p. 333). In the first decade of the twentieth century, there were already two model peasant houses in the center of Malini (see Annex 6 and Annex 7). (Boiu and Precup, 1906, p. 56)

The first public school on the territory of the future Crown Domain was established on February 15, 1865, in a house near Slatina Monastery, to educate children from the villages of Gainesti and Draceni (Ion et al, 2019, p. 326). Later, in 1870, it was moved to the town hall of Gainesti. In 1887, under the Administration of the Crown Domain, the first School Savings House was established at the school in Gainesti (Ion et al, 2019, p. 327). The school premises in Gainesti (see Annex 4 and Annex 5) were built during the years 1890-1894 by the Crown Domain Administration and inaugurated by its head, Ion Kalinderu (Ion et al, 2019, p. 326). The Crown Domain Administration rebuilt the Gainesti School using bricks in 1898, thus ensuring much greater durability than at the beginning, when it was built of wood. (*School Monographs*, 1907, p. 154) The Administration provided all of the furniture and a substantial part of the teaching equipment for the school, as well as a library with over 600 volumes. Later, in 1904, the school had its own theater room where students performed plays when conferences were held for the villagers (*School Monographs*, 1907, p. 158). It should be mentioned that each of the

schools on the territory of the Malini Crown Domain was equipped with a fully assembled stage for public theatrical performances. For example, the school in Draceni had a mobile stage that was sometimes brought to the classroom; the schools in Gainesti and Valeni had fixed stages set in the classrooms, and there was a special building constructed for the theater next to the school in the center of Malini. (Boiu and Precup, 1906, p. 31)

On January 24, 1899, the first cultural society was established, called “D.A. Sturdza”, at the Malini Crown Domain. It was transformed from January 1, 1902, into an economic-cultural society (Ion et al, 2019, p. 32). Among the functional buildings in the center of Malini during the first decade of the twentieth century, the chancellery is worth mentioning, with the accounting office and the forest museum (see Annex 2 and Annex 3) (Ion et al, 2019, p. 55).

Major forest exploitations started at the Malini Crown Domain in 1887. (Boiu and Precup, 1906, p. 34) The inauguration of the Malini forest installations was celebrated on August 13, 1888, in the presence of Ion Kalinderu. On this occasion, a series of trips were made on the forest railway, with the stations: Alexandru Lapusneanu, Stefan cel Mare, Podul lui Traian, Carol I, Elisabeta, Ferdinand, Kalinderu, Lucsia, etc. (Stătescu, 1889, pp. 9, 14) Such excursions continued in the early 20th century, when the Malini Crown Domain was visited by members of the political elite of the time (see Annex 9).

The forest was exploited through logging centers organized in two series: series I Malini, leased to Vasile Tenov, and series II Negrileasa, leased to Gustav Eichler (Stătescu, 1889, p. 5). The logs were gathered at the top of the forest located on the Obcina Ciurnarna (Gainesti-Negrileasa) crest. With the help of a forest railway, whose main line was about 10 kilometers long in 1889, with several branches, the timber was transported to processing sites. The railway groundwork included many tunnels and bridges. This railway was powered by a locomotive of about 24 horsepower (Stătescu, 1889, p. 6).

From Obcina Ciurnarna the wood was lowered using a log flume of about 3 kilometers, then the wood was transported for about 9 kilometers to the central establishment in Gainesti by another forest railway. Another locomotive of about 16 horsepower powered this railway. The railway transporting the logs from the lower end of the flume to the central establishment in Gainesti crossed a 318-meter-long bridge, which the workers called Traian's bridge, used for transport over the Suvorata and Suha-Mica valleys (Stătescu, 1889, p. 7).

In the Negrileasa series, where Gustav Eichler was the entrepreneur, the wood was shaped in a sawmill plant installed right next to the border, on the territory of Bukovina, to avoid customs duties for the

transport of the processed material to Austria-Hungary (Stătescu, 1889, p. 8).

At the beginning of the 20th century, two sawmills were built in Malini. One of the factories in Malini, in addition to processing logs into boards, also had specialized workshops for the manufacture of resonance boards that were used as piano bottoms. The annual volume of resonance boards manufactured at Malini was about 30,000 pieces (Ion et al, 2019, p. 344) and went to all European countries, even America. There was also a lot of other various objects that used to be manufactured in Malini, all made of wood: chairs, tables, wheelbarrows, small carts, various toys for children, dolls, etc. A 22 km forest railway was built to bring the logs from the forest to this factory. The locomotives could not run on the existing 20 percent slope for two kilometers, so the wagons who went up were tied with a thick wire cord; this railway is called 'funicular' from Latin *funiculus* "a slender rope," diminutive of *funis* "a cord, rope," Romanian 'funie' (see appendix 8) (Ion et al, 2019, pp. 344-345), The funicular train from Obcina Ciurnarna was connected to the Gainesti-Fundu Negrișei railway of 20 kilometers (Domain Administration, 1906, p. 74).

In the first decade of the twentieth century, the forested areas on the territory of the Crown Domain of Malini were divided into three forest districts: Malini (5,374.5 ha.), Poiana Doamnei (8,157 ha.), and Gainesti (10,800.3 ha.) (Boiu and Precup, 1906, pp. 61-62). Plans were also established, for ten years, for the construction of 38.5 km of forest roads, as follows: Gainesti 23 km, Poiana Doamnei 9 km, and Malini 6.5 km (Boiu and Precup, 1906, p. 66). There were eight forester houses on the territory of the Crown Domain of Malini: three at Negrișea, one at Suha-mica, one at Petroasa sawmill one at Plaiul-Batran, one at Poiana-Doamnei, and one at Iesle (Boiu and Precup, 1906, p. 56).

The rich forest resources and the location on the border with Bukovina have facilitated the achievement of important transformations for the Malini area, especially regarding the development of Gainesti village. While in 1899 Malini included Gainesti and was the most populated locality in Plasa Muntele, in 1912, the two localities were separated, now both part of Plasa Moldova (Malini, with 4067 inhabitants, and Gainesti with 3553 inhabitants). These two localities together had a population comparable to that of the county capital, Falticeni, with 8637 inhabitants. (*Statistics of Book Scholars, 1915, pp. 166-169*)

III. OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HISTORICAL HERITAGE

The study on the built heritage at the Crown Domain of Malini near historic Bukovina shows that Malini, labeled tourist resort of local interest since

March 19, 2021 (*Romania has five new tourist resorts of local interest!*), can become the center of a tourist destination with many elements of uniqueness, to capitalize on the heritage and the infrastructure built in the Eastern Carpathians until the beginning of the First World War under the coordination of the Royal House. The potential of Malini as a tourist resort of local interest was also underlined by the Romanian government, which in February 2021 declared: "The municipality of Malini has a very rich and varied natural environment, suitable for the development of the locality and for tourist activities" (*Note on the motivation of the Government Decision, 2021, p. 11*)

The main advantages of Malini are given by the fact that the locality is currently connected by functional roads both with the former capital of the county, Falticeni (approximately 22 km), and with the current center of the county, Suceava, and Suceava Stefan cel Mare International Airport (approximately 40-50 km). Also, the modernization of the county road DJ 209B Borca - Sabasa - Malini, towards Stanisoara Pass, in Neamt County, is nearing completion. (*The Talien Road or Vitoria Lipan Road has received its final coating of asphalt!*)

A tool that has proved its usefulness in creating a tourist destination is the *Intercommunity Development Association (IDA)*. There are already models of good practice aimed at the sustainable development of mountainous regions in Romania, mainly by promoting and supporting tourism. ("*Țara Făgărașului*" *Intercommunity Development Association*) The heritage of the Eastern Carpathians bearing the imprint of the Royal House could be the catalyst for this approach through which important adventure tourism circuits can be developed on the territories of the municipalities that are part of the Crown Domain and the Royal Domain Areas in the Eastern Carpathians.

The leadership of the Malini administrative-territorial unit (ATU), together with that of ATU Cornu Luncii, Slatina, Borca, Farcasa, Brosteni, Crucea, Dorna Arini, and Panaci, could take the decision (*Emergency Ordinance on the administrative Code*) to associate for the establishment of an IDA, symbolically called "Royal Heritage in the Eastern Carpathians". The most beautiful mountain road in the Former Kingdom, TransStanisoara, which today crosses the counties of Suceava and Neamt, could be the main road that connects the points of attraction of this new tourist destination.

Considering that the municipality of Dorna-Arini (Dorna-Gura Negriș, former locality bordering Bukovina, on the Bistrița Valley) has been certified as a tourist resort of local interest as of October 22, 2020 (*Note on the motivation of the Government Decision, 2020, p. 13*), this new destination may also include the territory of the former Royal Domain of Brosteni (now Brosteni, Crucea), where ecotourism routes uniquely open both towards Bukovina (*Tara*

Dornelor Ecotourism Association) and Transylvania (*Harghita tourist routes*).

A list of specific measures for the enhancement of historic heritage elements should include:

- reopening a forest museum to include a zoological area - a reconstruction of the former deer park (*Romanian General Exhibition, 1906, p. 78*);
- reconstruction of the Administration houses (see Annex 2 and Annex 3)
- measuring and marking for ecotourism the former forest railway routes from Gainesti-Obcina Ciurnarna;
- measuring and marking for ecotourism the old communication routes Nemisoru-Nisipitu (between Malini and Stanisoara Pass) and towards the spring of Suha Mare stream (between Iesle and Valea Negrileasa);
- identify, preserve and signal the peasant houses built according to the model promoted by the Crown Domain Administration;
- open a village museum with an open-air theater;
- update the list of historical monuments in Suceava County, where currently there is only one objective mentioned for Malini - Nicolae Labis Memorial House; (*List of historical monuments 2015, Suceava County, p. 42*)
- Identify, preserve and highlight public buildings constructed at the end of the 19th century, which witnessed and survived two world conflagrations, such as the 1899 Malini Post Office building (see Annex 10), located in the proximity of the main tourist objective in the area, the Nicolae Labis Memorial House.

Following the example of Ocna Sugatag in Maramures, where there are 5 objectives declared as historical monuments and the Mara - Cosau - Creasta Cocosului area obtained the status of ecotourism destination in 2014, Malini can aspire to obtain the status of tourist resort of national interest around 2030 (*Note on the motivation of the Government Decision, 2020, p. 3*).

IV. CONCLUSION

The Crown Domain of Malini hosted the most beautiful mountain road in the Former Kingdom, which connected Falticeni - the Cornu-Luncii customs point - the Royal Domain of Brosteni - the Gura Negrei customs point, where communication routes were uniquely opened towards both Bukovina and Transylvania. The importance of this route of communication would determine its classification in the category of the national roads towards the end of the 19th century.

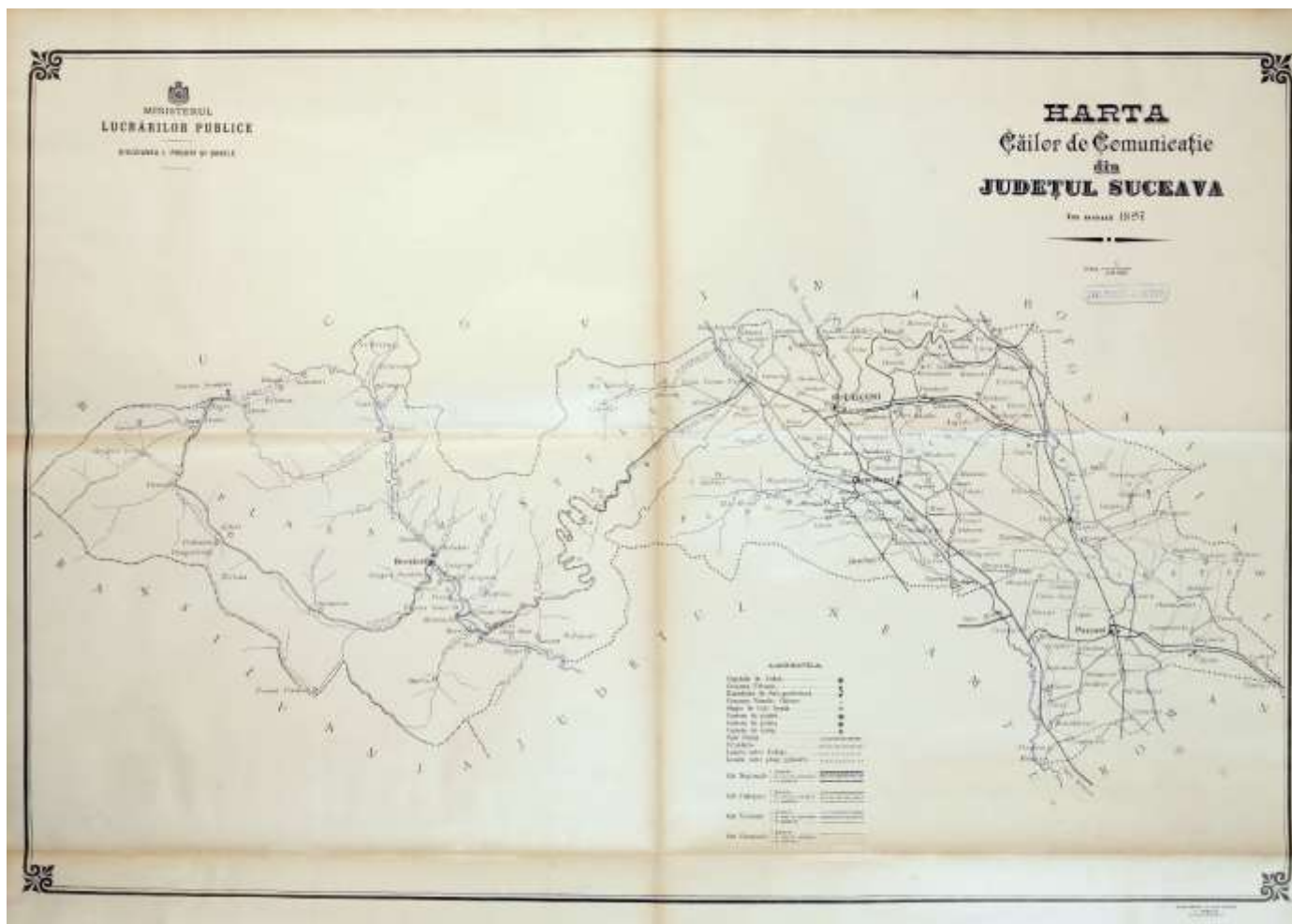
Among the representative buildings in the first decade of the twentieth century were the chancellery, the forestry museum, and two model peasant houses. Each of the schools on the territory of the Crown

Domain of Malini was equipped with a fully assembled stage for public theatrical performances.

Major logging began at the Malini Crown Domain in 1887 and the inauguration of the Malini logging facility was celebrated a year later. During the first decade of the twentieth century, the forested areas in the territory of the Crown Domain of Malini were divided into three forest districts: Malini (5,374.5 ha), Poiana Doamnei (8,157 ha), and Gainesti (10,800.3 ha.). Dozens of kilometers of railroads have been built for the exploitation of these large forest areas. The most useful and scenic route, where excursions were organized periodically, was the Gainesti-Fundu Negrilesei railway line, about 20 kilometers long, connected to the Obcina Ciurnarna funicular, at the Bukovina border. Woodworking generated a lot of wooden objects, such as chairs, tables, toys, dolls, resonance boards for musical instruments.

The main advantages of Malini are given by the fact that the locality is currently connected by functional roads both with the former capital of the county, Falticeni (approximately 22 km) and with the current center of the county, Suceava and the Suceava Stefan cel Mare International Airport (approximately 40-50 km). The heritage of the Eastern Carpathians that bears the imprint of the Royal House could be the catalyst for an initiative to create a new tourist destination, through an Intercommunity Development Association. The most beautiful mountain road in the Former Kingdom-TransStanisoara, which today crosses the counties of Suceava and Neamt, could be the main road that connects the points of attraction of this new tourist destination. A list of the main specific measures for capitalizing on the elements of historical heritage should include: the opening of a forestry museum; identification, preservation, and signaling the peasant houses built according to the model promoted by the Crown Domain Administration; measuring and marking for ecotourism the old communication routes.

Annex 1



Map of Communication Routes in Suceava County in 1897

Source: *Atlas of Communications Routes*, Bucharest, Graphic Arts Establishment „C. Ghiulea”, 1897



The Crown Domain of Malini – Administration

Source: Narcis Dorin Ion (coordinator), *King Carol I. The founder of modern Romania*, Vol. I, Sinaia, Peleş National Museum, 2019, p. 310.

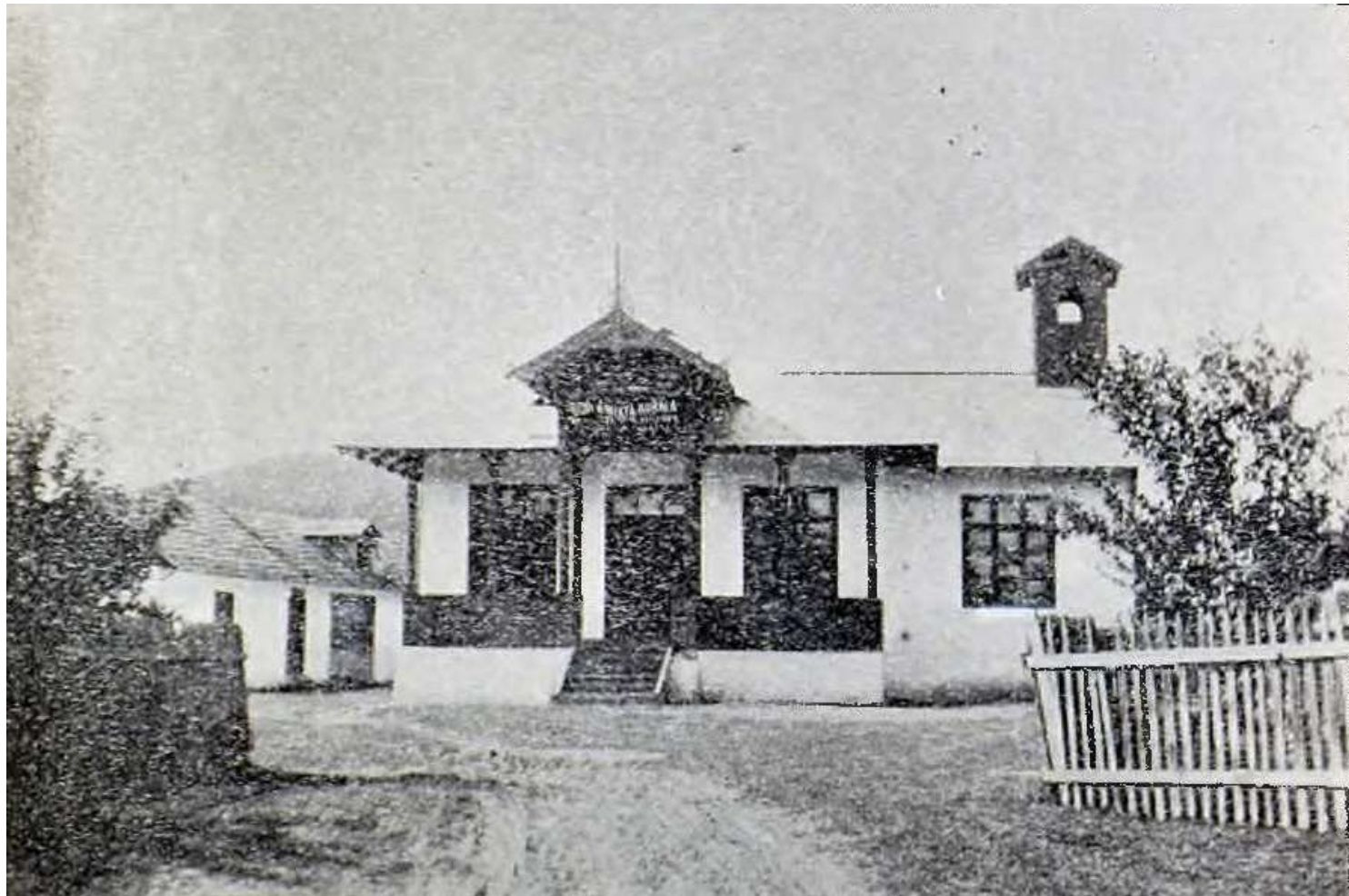
Annex 3



The Crown Domain of Malini – general view of the Administration houses

Source: Olimpiu Boiu, Alexandru Precup, *Monograph of the Malini Domain from Suceava County*, Bucharest, Gutenberg Press, Joseph Gobl, 1906, p. 9.

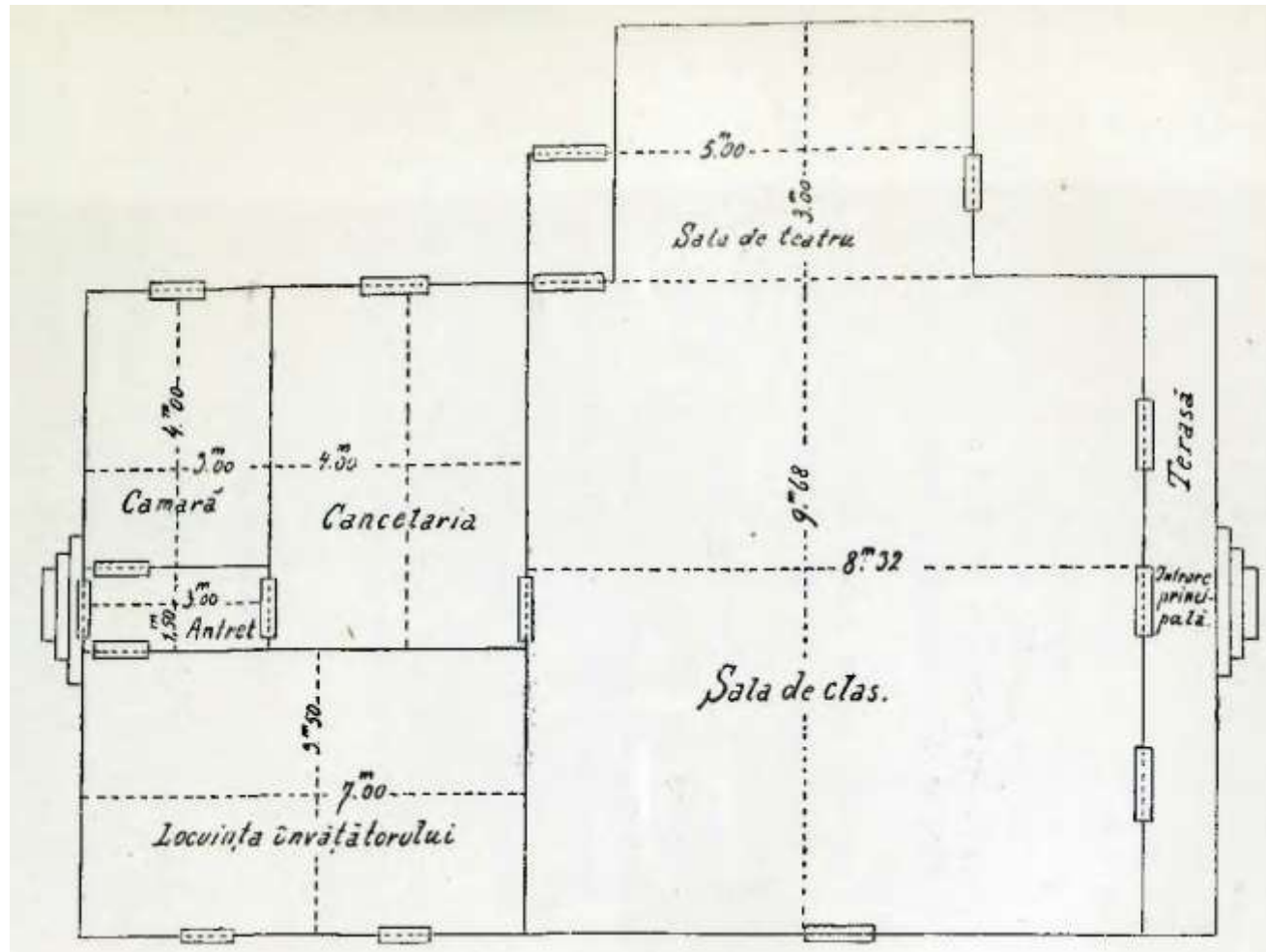
Annex 4



The Crown Domain of Malini – school and workshop in Gainesti

Source: Pavel Herescu, *Monograph of the school in Gainesti on the Crown Domain of Malini in Suceava County*, in *Monograph of the schools in Gherghita, Rusetu, Panaghia, Busteni and Gainesti of the Crown Domains*, Bucharest, Gutenberg Press, Joseph Gobl, 1907, p. 149.

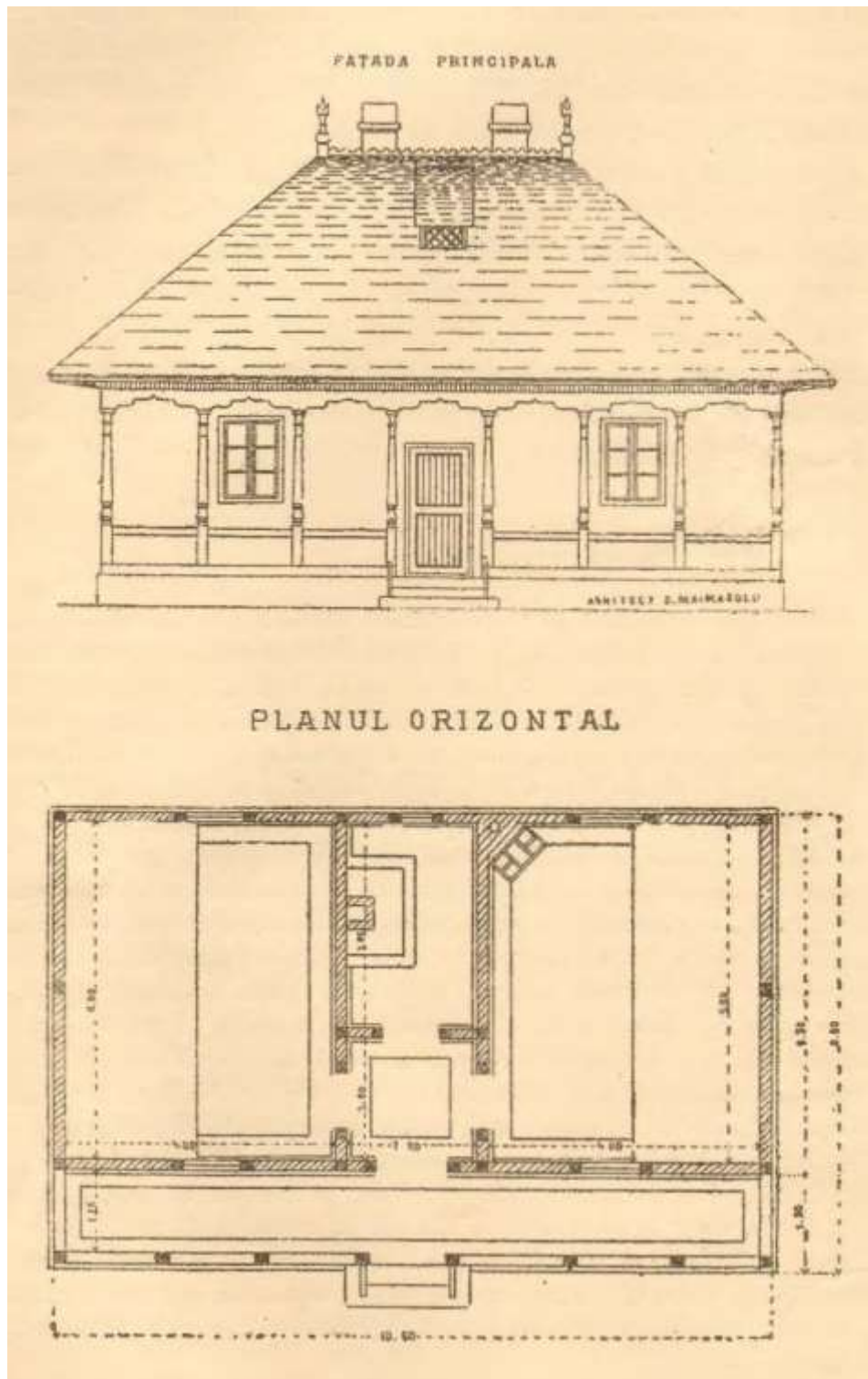
Annex 5



The Crown Domain of Malini – Gainesti School plan

Source: Pavel Herescu, *Monograph of the school in Gainesti on the Crown Domain of Malini in Suceava County*, in *Monograph of the schools in Gherghita, Rusetu, Panaghia, Busteni and Gainesti of the Crown Domains*, Bucharest, Gutenberg Press, Joseph Gobl, 1907, p. 155.

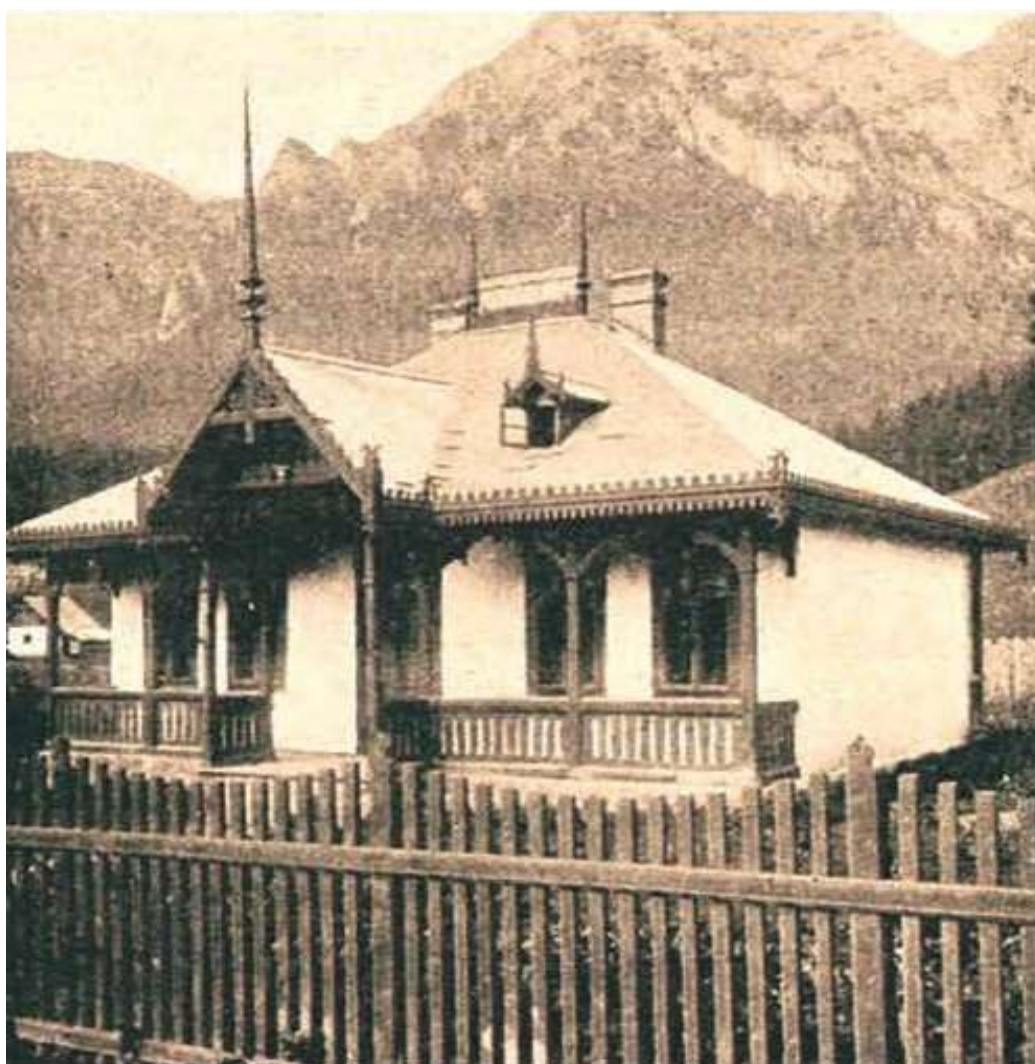
Annex 6



Peasant house project for the Crown Domain - prepared by Dimitrie Maimarolu, architect of the Ministry of Interior

Source: *Annals of Architecture Magazine*, year I, no. 2, 1890, p. 35-36.

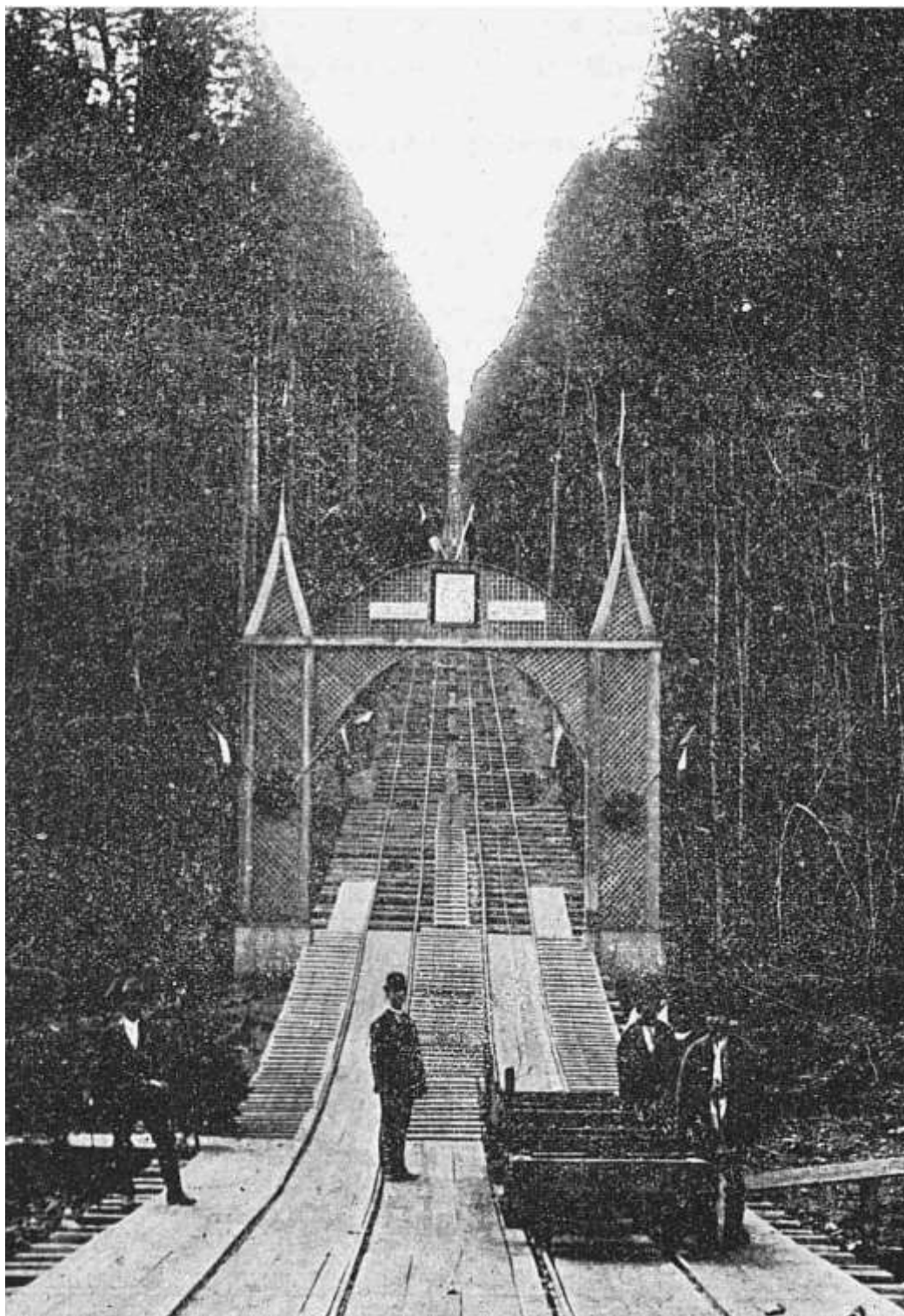
Annex 7



Model peasant house built at the Crown Domain of Busteni

Source: Narcis Dorin Ion (coordinator), *King Carol I. The founder of modern Romania*, Vol. I, Sinaia, Peleş National Museum, 2019, p. 333.

Annex 8



Double funicular railway at the Crown Domain of Malini. Obcina Ciumarna (Gainesti-Negrileasa)
Source: *Crown Domain Administration at the 1906 Romanian General Exhibition in Bucharest Catalogue*,
Bucharest, Carol Gobl Institute of Graphic Arts, 1906, p. 75.



Prince Ferdinand, Princess Maria, Ion I.C. Brătianu, and Ion Kalinderu visiting the Malini Crown Domain
Source: Narcis Dorin Ion (coordinator), *King Carol I. The founder of modern Romania*, Vol. I, Sinaia, Peleş National Museum, 2019, p. 345.



1899 Malini Post Office
Source: Personal archive, January 2021

V. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This work was supported by a grant from the Romanian Ministry of Research and Innovation, CCCDI-UEFISCDI, project number PN-III-P1-1.2-PCCDI-2017-0884/56 PCCDI/03.04.2018, within PNCDI III”.

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