

ZRC SAZU, UMETNOSTNOZGODOVINSKI INŠTITUT FRANCETA STELETA



## ACTA HISTORIAE ARTIS SLOVENICA

Artistic and Architectural Heritage  
of the Nobility Between Old and New Regimes

Umetnostna in arhitekturna dediščina plemstva  
med starimi in novimi režimi

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ZRC SAZU, Umetnostnozgodovinski inštitut Franceta Steleta  
ZRC SAZU, France Stele Institute of Art History

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Založba ZRC

Novi trg 2, p. p. 306, SI-1001, Slovenija

E-pošta / E-mail: [zalozba@zrc-sazu.si](mailto:zalozba@zrc-sazu.si)

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# Old Edifices, New Uses

## Three Residential Buildings of a Romanian Aristocratic Family and Their Destiny after 1930

**Silvia Marin Barutcieff**

Associate Prof. Silvia Marin Barutcieff, PhD, University of Bucharest, Faculty of Letters,  
Department of Communication Studies, Edgar Quinet 5–7, Bucharest,  
[silvia.barutcieff@litere.unibuc.ro](mailto:silvia.barutcieff@litere.unibuc.ro), ORCID ID: 0009-0008-7752-5274

### Abstract:

**Old Edifices, New Uses: Three Residential Buildings of a Romanian Aristocratic Family and Their Destiny after 1930**

1. 01 Original scientific article

The paper examines how three residential buildings, edified in Romania in medieval and early modern times by the members of the Golescu family, were repurposed during the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, that is, before, during and after the Romanian communist period. It considers the social and political circumstances in which the analysed examples of the Golescu residential buildings have changed owners, appearance and function during the last 80 years.

**Keywords:** Wallachia, Romania, Golescu family, residential buildings, family heritage, modern practices, musealisation of aristocratic heritage, donations

### Izvleček:

**Stare zgradbe, nove rabe. Tri rezidenčne stavbe romunske plemiške družine in njihova usoda po letu 1930**

1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek

V članku je prikazano, kako so tri stanovanjske stavbe, ki so jih v srednjem in zgodnjem novem veku v Romuniji zgradili člani družine Golescu, spreminjale namembnost in bile ponovno uporabljene v 20. in 21. stoletju, in sicer v obdobju komunizma ter pred in po njem. Pri tem so upoštevane družbene in politične okoliščine, v katerih so analizirani primeri arhitekture v zadnjih osmih desetletjih menjali lastnike ter spreminjali videz in funkcijo.

**Ključne besede:** Vlaška, Romunija, rodbina Golescu, rezidence, rodbinska dediščina, sodobne prakse, muzealizacija plemiške dediščine, donacije

## From Medieval to Modern: The Romanian Principalities and Romania

In 17<sup>th</sup>-century south-eastern Europe, the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia were remarkably artistically and culturally active. Although they had to send tribute to the Ottoman Empire in exchange for autonomy in appointing their own rulers, under Matei Basarab (1632–1654) and Vasile Lupu (1634–1653), the Danubian Principalities enjoyed a period of political stability, unparalleled during the previous two centuries.<sup>1</sup> This situation significantly impacted civil and ecclesiastical architecture, as proven by the edifices commissioned by the elite throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Towards the end of the century, Wallachia was governed by another prominent political personality, Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688–1714). The Brancovan style, which spread through Wallachia after 1700, was the artistic expression of the cultural program pioneered by the prince at the end of 17<sup>th</sup> century.

During the reigns of Matei Basarab and Constantin Brâncoveanu, a great number of princely and aristocratic residences, as well as churches and monasteries, were erected on these two Romanian territories. Local artists or others arriving from various regions of the former Byzantine Empire, during the exodus triggered by the fall of Constantinople,<sup>2</sup> were employed to work on their construction. Furthermore, in addition to the new projects of religious and secular architecture, both princes financed the rehabilitation of edifices erected by their political forerunners, thus establishing the first practices of intervention on historical buildings in the area under study.<sup>3</sup> During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this territory saw two revolutions: the 1821 uprising against the Ottomans and the Phanar regime, and the 1848 revolution, concurrent with the events sweeping across Europe in the same year.<sup>4</sup> The latter paved the way for the first union of the Principalities in 1859 and, subsequently, the emergence of another political entity, The United Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, still dependent on the Ottoman Porte, but enjoying greater autonomy than the two separate principalities in previous times. Sovereignty was not acquired until 1878, following the Independence War (1877–1878) waged under King Carol I, a descendant of the Catholic branch of the Hohenzollern family (Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen).<sup>5</sup> Under his reign, the United Principalities, which in 1881 became the Kingdom of Romania,<sup>6</sup> underwent a sustained modernization process in which the elites played a significant role.

<sup>1</sup> Wasiucionek, *Borders*, 120.

<sup>2</sup> Extensive scientific literature is dedicated to the issue of the artists' peregrination through the Balkans and the adjacent areas after the fall of Constantinople. See Gouma Peterson, "The Survival;" Chatzidakis, *Études*, 177–97; Garidis, *La peinture murale*; Drakopoulou, "Peintres de l'espace;" Lymberopoulou, *Cross-Cultural Interaction*. This artistic mobility also occurred in Wallachia and Moldavia, thus an important number of painters and other artists found professional opportunities at the courts of Romanian elites in the 16<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries. For example, a Greek painter is mentioned in an inscription from the main church of Topolnița Monastery (1673). The best-known case is of Constantinos who was employed by the Cantacuzenus and Brancovan family after 1680. Constantinos was the leader of the artists working at Hurezi Monastery, a group of painters that contributed to the birth and diffusion of the Brancovan style across Wallachia and the neighbouring territories.

<sup>3</sup> Moldovan, *Johann Schlatter*, 114.

<sup>4</sup> Hitchins, *Ionel Brătianu*, 4–5.

<sup>5</sup> Hitchins, *Ionel Brătianu*, 6.

<sup>6</sup> Hitchins, *Ionel Brătianu*, 8.



1. Ștefănești, the former residence of Golescu family, nowadays part of Golești Museum  
(photo: © Silvia Marin Barutcieff)

## The Golescu Family: A Brief History

The social elite to which the Golescu family belonged are the focus of the present study. My aim is to investigate the pre-war and post-war situation of three pieces of civil architecture—edifices commissioned by several generations of the Golescu family. These residences were built in the 17<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, respectively, enjoying a variety of users and owners throughout the years.

Golescu was one of the great boyar families of Wallachia, descendants of Baldovin, who died during the reign of Radu of Afumați (1522–1529). For more than three centuries, Golescu men held high administrative and political positions. Gheorghe/Iordache Golescu (1776–1848), a politician and erudite scholar, contributed considerably to the cultural sphere at the beginning of the modern era.<sup>7</sup> His innovative, reforming ideas were reflected in his concern with identifying and preserving Romanian cultural traditions and in his endeavours to provide his contemporaries with educational tools. His younger brother, Constantin/Dinicu (1777–1830), documented his journeys abroad in the first travel diary to be published in the Romanian Principalities (1826), under the pen name “Constantin Radovici of Golești”.<sup>8</sup> Alongside another Romanian intellectual, Ion Heliade Rădulescu, Dinicu founded The Literary Society (*Societatea literară*),<sup>9</sup> an institution intended to

<sup>7</sup> Iordache, *Goleștii*, 18–19.

<sup>8</sup> Golescu, *Însemnare*. For the importance of this piece of travel writing in Romanian literature and culture, see Angheliescu, *Literatura română*, 180–185; Drace-Francis, “Dinicu Golescu’s;” Vornicu, *Statui de hârtie*, 47–53.

<sup>9</sup> Turda, “Dinicu Golescu,” 104.

encourage Romanian-language schooling in an environment traditionally providing education in Greek. He sent his sons to study in the West, a decision that shaped not only their instruction but also their future career as politicians. In France, Germany and Switzerland,<sup>10</sup> Ștefan, Nicolae, Radu and Alexandru C. Albu, known as the Golescu brothers, together with their cousin Alexandru G. Golescu (Negru),<sup>11</sup> were educated in the spirit of contemporary European ideals. The family milieu, so favourable to intellectual development, as well as their training abroad,<sup>12</sup> prepared them for their leading roles in the major events of their country's history: the Revolution of 1848,<sup>13</sup> the international treaties forging the Union,<sup>14</sup> membership in the regency prior to the enthronement of Carol of Hohenzollern,<sup>15</sup> accommodating the king on his arrival in the country in 1866,<sup>16</sup> and championing Romanian liberalism.<sup>17</sup>

### Three Residences of Golescu Family as Part of Romanian Cultural Patrimony

The former main residence of the Golescu family stands in today's town of Ștefănești, Argeș county, 117 km from Bucharest (fig. 1). In the 19<sup>th</sup> century this estate, adjoining another aristocratic residence—that of the Florica estate, belonging to another influential Romanian family (Brătianu),<sup>18</sup> was surrounded by willows and covered in ivy and grapevine.<sup>19</sup> The historiography of architecture ascertained that, along with other buildings elevated during the time (Filipeștii de Pădure, Glogova, Herești), this residential complex pertains to the civil edifices that foreshadowed the Brancovan style.<sup>20</sup>

Golescu manor was built in 1640 during the reign of Matei Basarab, by the great treasurer Stroe Leurdeanu and his wife, Vișa of Golești, as shown by the inscriptions carved into the stone

<sup>10</sup> Iordache, *Goleștii*, 40–45; Angheliescu, “Dinicu Golescu,” XXVIII; Jianu, *A Circle of Friends*, 32, 117.

<sup>11</sup> Alexandru G. Golescu (Negru or Arăpîlă) was the son of Gheorghe (Iordache) Golescu. For his biography, diplomatic and political activity, see Iordache, *Alexandru G. Golescu*; Stanomir, *Așteptând revoluția*, 178.

<sup>12</sup> Fotino, *Din vremea*, 10; Iordache, *Revoluționarii Golești*, 11–13.

<sup>13</sup> Iordache, *Revoluționarii Golești*, 49–98. Nicolae Golescu was one of the members of the provisional government of Wallachia in 1848. See Hitchins, *Rumania*, 11.

<sup>14</sup> In a meeting held in Constantinople in August 1856, Ștefan Golescu explained to Eyre Evans Crows and his son the reasons that France and Great Britain should assist Wallachia and Moldavia in their aspiration for a union. In order to best make the case of the Romanian cause to the public in Britain, the two journalists published a few articles in the English newspapers of the time. See Jianu, *A Circle of Friends*, 324.

<sup>15</sup> Nicolae Golescu was one of the members of the princely lieutenantancy (*locotenența domnească*) who secured the political transition from the reign of Alexandru Ioan Cuza, the first prince of the United Principalities, to the reign of Carol I of Romania between 11 February and 10 May 1866. See Iordache, *Revoluționarii Golești*, 326; Hitchins, *Rumania*, 11; Stanomir, *Așteptând revoluția*, 182.

<sup>16</sup> During his travels from Düsseldorf to Bucharest in 1866, Carol of Hohenzollern, the new prince of the United Principalities, spent one night at the Golești residence. This prominent event for the Golescu's family is underlined by the existence in the mansion of so-called Room of the King. The visit of the prince is also mentioned in the memoirs of Cantacuzino, *Din viața familiei*, 63.

<sup>17</sup> Turda, “Dinicu Golescu,” 105.

<sup>18</sup> Nowadays the Brătianu residence is a public museum (National Museum Brătianu – Villa Florica) in the town of Ștefănești, Argeș county. Ștefănești includes also the village of Golești.

<sup>19</sup> Cantacuzino, *Din viața familiei*, 63. Ion C. Brătianu was a close friend of Golescu brothers, their companion in the events of 1848 Revolution, and together with them a promoter of liberal policies. Cantacuzino, *Din viața familiei*, 55–69.

<sup>20</sup> Moisescu, *Arhitectura*, 1: 41.



2. Ștefănești, the former Goleșcu residence, window with stone carved frames (photo: © Silvia Marin Barutcieff)

doorframes.<sup>21</sup> Damaged by the arson caused by Tartars in 1716, it underwent major repair work and alterations at the end of the same century, thanks to the great *ban* Radu Goleșcu.<sup>22</sup> As revealed by the archaeological excavations conducted in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the basement comprised two halls covering 247 m<sup>2</sup> (24 x 11.4 m). For the first time, at Golești manor, Wallachian architecture employed the *voûte d'arête*, a cross vault created by the intersection of two barrel vaults, a technique used later also for other nobiliar residences, for example, at Filipeștii de Pădure.<sup>23</sup> Further architectural innovations included the *loggia* on the northeastern side of the building, the porch set above the basement's entrance, and the vegetal reliefs of window frames (fig. 2).<sup>24</sup> This residence is mentioned in the memoirs of Paul of Aleppo, archdeacon and son of the Patriarch of Antioch Macarius, who visited the estate on 12 January 1657. He remarked on the majestic aspect of the manor and the many existing baths.<sup>25</sup> Today, a single room of the medieval structure is still

extant—the old workroom used by the forty-eightier Goleșcu brothers.<sup>26</sup> On the same estate, in 1646, the couple Vișa and Stroe Leurdeanu founded a church dedicated to the Holy Trinity (figs. 4–5), where an important stonemason of the time, Stoica, is known to have worked.<sup>27</sup> He was the same artist who had been in charge a few years earlier of the embellishment of the manor's windows. The residential estate, protected by a wall reinforced with four defence towers, also included the school established by Radu Goleșcu, re-opened in 1826 by Dinicu,<sup>28</sup> as well as the infirmary where the ailing villagers received medical care, the pavilion where Tudor Vladimirescu, the leader of the 1821 Revolution, took shelter before his arrest,<sup>29</sup> and a large park with fir trees, a pond, bushes

<sup>21</sup> Moiescu, *Arhitectura*, 1: 43.

<sup>22</sup> During the mentioned period the function of the *ban* designated a military governor. Stoicescu, *Bibliografia*, 1: 343. On Vișa of Golești, Stroe Leurdeanu and their great-grandson Radu Goleșcu, see also Lecca, *Familiiile boierești*, 255–57.

<sup>23</sup> Moiescu, *Arhitectura*, 1: 43.

<sup>24</sup> Moiescu, *Arhitectura*, 1: 43.

<sup>25</sup> Alep, *Jurnal*, 323–324.

<sup>26</sup> Information available in the main exhibition of the Golești Museum.

<sup>27</sup> Goleșcu, “Simbolica animală,” 600; Goleșcu, “Motive de animale,” 36; Moiescu, *Arhitectura*, 1: 43; Moiescu, *Arhitectura*, 2: 18. The artist's name, Stoica, was inscribed on a window frame of the edifice.

<sup>28</sup> Stoicescu, *Bibliografia*, 1: 343.

<sup>29</sup> Cantacuzino, *Din viața familiei*, 63; Neagoe, *Arnăuții*, 91–92. For the social and political events of 1821, see Mihai, *Revoluție*.

and flowers.<sup>30</sup> In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, a Turkish bath was also built there (fig. 3). Of its two rooms, one for cold water cleansing, another for moist heat, only the latter has survived to this day. The 19<sup>th</sup> century interventions on Golești included the creation of a wooden ladder that connected the ground to the first floor, an architectural element with both a functional and decorative role applied also at Buftea mansion, owned by the Știrbey family (1864).<sup>31</sup>

On 7 June 1939, the century-old residence of the Goleșcu family became a state-owned public institution: “Dinicu Goleșcu” Museum, by the decree of King Carol II (no. 296/7 June 1939), which expropriated the mansion and the estate of Goleșcu and set up a museum.<sup>32</sup> As direct descendants of the Goleșcu brothers no longer existed, in early 20<sup>th</sup> century the estate had fallen into decay, as photos taken at the time attest.<sup>33</sup> This pitiful situation was described in the memoirs of Sabina Cantacuzino, daughter of Ion C. Brătianu and friend of the Goleșcu family.<sup>34</sup> The decree issued by Carol II in 1939 transferred the estate into public patrimony, by turning it into a museum, as a means of preserving and perpetuating the memory of one the great families who founded modern Romania.<sup>35</sup> After the restoration conducted in 1942–1943, an exhibition was opened to display artworks and items in the family collection, as well as pieces of antique furniture.<sup>36</sup> In 1966, under the communist regime, a museum of viticulture and tree growing, with an open-air exhibition, was added to this pre-war institution.<sup>37</sup> Today’s museum includes a section dedicated to the Goleșcu mansion, another centred on the family’s history, an exhibition on the school established in 1826 and an ethnographic one (presenting items of folk art from Argeș and other regions). There is also the Turkish



3. Ștefănești, the former Goleșcu residence, Turkish bath (photo: © Silvia Marin Barutcieff)

<sup>30</sup> Cantacuzino, *Din viața familiei*, 63.

<sup>31</sup> For the description of this residence, see Ion, *Elitele și arhitectura*, 91–119.

<sup>32</sup> See the document concerning the management of Golești Museum, “Caiet de obiective,” accessed April 30, 2022, <https://www.cjarges.ro/documents/10865/952606/caiet+obiective+Muzeul+Golesti.pdf/c2062b52-fbc2-44ff-ab12-27802307dd3f>.

<sup>33</sup> A number of photos from the main exhibition shows the advanced state of degradation diagnosed in the 1930s.

<sup>34</sup> Cantacuzino, *Din viața familiei*, 64, 101.

<sup>35</sup> The Golești Courtyard is registered on the Romanian cultural heritage list as AG-II-a-A-13697.

<sup>36</sup> Stoicescu, *Bibliografia*, 1: 343.

<sup>37</sup> From 1966 the name of the museum has been Golești Viticulture and Tree Growing Museum (Muzeul Viticulturii și Pomiculturii Golești). The open-air exhibition consists of 36 households from various ethnographical areas, surrounded by fruit trees and vines, harvested and processed by traditional methods. A catalogue with the description of the exhibition was published in the following year. See *Ansamblul feudal*.



4. Ștefănești, Golești Church (photo: © Silvia Marin Barutcieff)



5. Ștefănești, Golești Church, detail with the entrance  
(photo: © Silvia Marin Barutcieff)

bath, the gazebo for surveillance purposes, and a section for temporary exhibitions. After the demise of the communist regime in December 1989, the museum opened children's workshops where they can learn arts and crafts and enjoy leisure activities (horseriding, old games revived). The old family residence has now opened a number of rooms to visitors: the workroom of the Golescu brothers, the room of Dinicu's wife, Zinca Golescu,<sup>38</sup> and that of their niece, Anica,<sup>39</sup> an Oriental room and another known as the *King's Room*, a result of the friendship between King Carol I and the respective family. During the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, a space designed in Oriental style with furniture and other artefacts was a constant feature across the elite's Romanian residences (like in the mansion of Brătianu family in Florica,<sup>40</sup> the castle of Filipescu-Kretzulescu family from Drajna or, later, in the manor in Micești).<sup>41</sup> One reason for this aesthetic option lies in the historical context: as mentioned previously, Wallachia was under Ottoman rule until 1877. The second reason is the synchronization between Romanian and Western cultures, with many European interiors incorporating the so-called *Turkish room* at the dawn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>42</sup>

This branch of the Golescu family died out in 1906,<sup>43</sup> while the one descending from Iordache Golescu continued through the descendants of his younger son, Alexandru G. Golescu (Negru). A graduate of the Ecole Polytechnique of Paris, he was alongside his cousins among the 1848 revolutionaries, and, after 1866, held various ministerial positions in several Romanian government cabinets.

Vasile Golescu (1875–1920), one of the ten children resulting from the marriage of Alexandru G. Golescu and Ecaterina Vlădoianu,<sup>44</sup> is remembered at his estate in Câmpulung. The estate came into being in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (1909) with the construction of his family's summer house, a one-storey mansion (figs. 6–7). This grandson of Iordache Golescu, alumnus of École des Eaux et Forêts de Nancy, created a terraced park, where rare species of trees and bushes were brought from abroad and planted around the mansion.<sup>45</sup>

The mansion was built after the sketches drawn by its owner,<sup>46</sup> under the supervision of architect Constantin N. Simionescu.<sup>47</sup> Its neo-Romanian style is characteristic of 20<sup>th</sup>-century architecture, south of the Carpathians: it combines Art Nouveau elements and local motifs borrowed from the tradition of the previous centuries. The features of this type of artistic modernity—porticos, stone columns, round arches or trilobate arches in shape of braces, wooden pillars, inspired by

<sup>38</sup> Zoe/Zinca Golescu (born Farfara, 1792–1879) was the wife of Dinicu Golescu and the mother of Golescu brothers. She passionately supported the ideals of the Revolution of 1848 in Wallachia and her sons' efforts in accomplishing this political and social project. Fotino, *Din vremea*, 4–7; Constantinescu, "Zinca Golescu," 159–160.

<sup>39</sup> Anica Davila married a physician of Italian origin, Carol Davila. He was the organizer of the medical service in the United Principalities. After his medical studies in Paris, he came in Wallachia in 1853, at the request of prince Barbu Știrbei. In 1856 he founded The Surgery School, later known as National School of Medicine and Pharmacy. See Cantacuzino, *Din viața familiei*, 66.

<sup>40</sup> The residence from Florica was erected in 1858 and modified in 1889. See Ion, *Elitele și arhitectura*, 154.

<sup>41</sup> See the manor of Istrate Micescu of Micești, in Ion, *Castele, palate*, 219, 330.

<sup>42</sup> Roth, "Oriental Carpet," 25–26.

<sup>43</sup> The last survivor of this family branch, Felicia Racoviță, the niece of the Golescu brothers (daughter of their sister, Anica) died on December 25, 1906. See Iordache, *Goleștii*, 413.

<sup>44</sup> Information included in the diagram of the family genealogy at the entrance of Golești manor.

<sup>45</sup> See "Pro Patrimonio Foundation," accessed January 23, 2023, <https://www.propatrimonio.org/home/golescu-2/>.

<sup>46</sup> Oprescu, "Relația personalitate," 180.

<sup>47</sup> Oprescu, "Relația personalitate," 180.



6. Câmpulung Muscel, Golescu Villa  
(photo: © Silvia Marin Barutcieff)



7. Câmpulung Muscel,  
Golescu Villa and its terraced park  
(photo: © Silvia Marin Barutcieff)

the Romanian peasant houses and Brancovan churches of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries and promoted by well-known architects such as Ion Mincu, Petru Antonescu, Nicolae Ghica-Budești, were widely employed in the artistic discourse of the Câmpulung villa.

With some disruptions during the communist regime, the property remained in the family until 2002. In that year the mansion as well as the dendrological park were donated by Irina Maria Golescu, one of Vasile Golescu's twin daughters, to the Pro Patrimonio Foundation, whose main objective is "safeguarding the natural and architectural patrimony".<sup>48</sup> Between 2003 and 2007, restoration work was conducted under the supervision of Caroline d'Assay, president of Pro Patrimonio, France. This project undertook to offer not only the memorial house of a family

<sup>48</sup> Pro Patrimonio was founded in 2000 as an international non-profit and non-governmental organization with branches in Great Britain, France and Romania.

that had played an important role in the history of modern Romania, but a living space as well, which could be simultaneously used and protected by the lovers of nature and beauty. Thus, the Câmpulung Goleșcu mansion follows the paradigm of inhabited patrimony, also put forth by this foundation in regard to other edifices. The house has a large lobby, a dining room, living room, kitchen, five bedrooms and three bathrooms; furnishings combine Art Nouveau design and elements specific to the tradition of the Argeș region.<sup>49</sup> The rooms can be rented by tourists when other cultural projects are not underway. During certain periods of the year, the house is employed for “creative residence” projects which provide writers, musicians, artists, the opportunity to work in a stimulating context.<sup>50</sup> Like Golești Museum, it regularly hosts workshops (education on patrimony, photography, arts, crafts), cooking contests, open-air evenings, motion pictures, etc.

The third edifice under discussion stands in Bucharest: it is the former Goleșcu-Grant residence, also known as Belvedere Palace or the Tower House (fig. 8). This building was erected in 1814 by Dinicu Goleșcu, on the outskirts of the town. On this vast estate, he also intended to build a girls’ school, corresponding to the boys’ school from Golești, but his death in 1830 delayed the project for a substantial period.<sup>51</sup> In 1850, the year of her marriage to Effingham Grant,<sup>52</sup> Zoe Racoviță (1827–1892), Dinicu’s granddaughter, became the owner of the Belvedere estate.<sup>53</sup> From the moment of his arrival in Wallachia in 1838 until 1860, Effingham Grant (1820–1892) was secretary of the Consul General of Great Britain.<sup>54</sup> Having ended his diplomatic career, the Scottish friend of the forty-eighters<sup>55</sup> became a businessman and set up the first foundry in Bucharest<sup>56</sup> and the first tobacco processing plant in Romania. With his sister, Marie Grant (Maria Rosetti),<sup>57</sup> Effingham Grant inaugurated the tradition of Romanian families of British origin.<sup>58</sup> Between 1865

<sup>49</sup> “Honest Goods,” accessed May 1, 2022, <https://www.propatrimonio.org/honest-goods/>.

<sup>50</sup> “Proiecte – Observatorul de peisaj Goleșcu – Accelerator de rezidențe creative,” accessed May 1, 2022, <https://www.propatrimonio.org/accelerator-de-rezidente-creative/>.

<sup>51</sup> Anghel, “Dinicu Goleșcu,” XXIII.

<sup>52</sup> Fotino, *Din vremea*, 142; Jianu, “Maria Rosetti,” 224. The wedding of Zoe Racoviță with Effingham Grant took place within Golești manor, see Constantinescu, “Zinca Goleșcu,” 165.

<sup>53</sup> Anghel, *A Historical Journey*.

<sup>54</sup> Jianu, “Maria Rosetti,” 224.

<sup>55</sup> Anghel, *A Historical Journey*. Effingham Grant (1820–1892) was a very good friend of the Goleșcu revolutionaries. While Nicolae Goleșcu took refuge in the British Consulate in 1848, Grant facilitated sending his letters to other revolutionaries. During the exile of Ștefan and Nicolae Goleșcu to Paris, he also maintained a sustained letter exchange with them, providing updates on the political events occurring in the country. It was also Grant who informed them that they could return to Wallachia in 1857, as soon as the sanctions against the forty-eighters were lifted. See Iordache, *Goleștii*, 86, 163–64, 170, 193, 205–6, 212, 218, 304.

<sup>56</sup> In 1872, Effingham Grant sold the factory. In a letter addressed to his wife on 27 June, his brother in law, C. A. Rosetti, mentioned the selling of the foundry and the possibility of a stable life in France for the Grant family, due to this financial settlement. See C. A. *Rosetti către*, 78.

<sup>57</sup> Maria Rosetti (Marie Grant) was born in 1819 in Guernsey. She arrived in Wallachia in 1838 and was employed by Colonel Ion Odobescu as governess for his children. In 1847, she married the writer and revolutionary Constantin A. Rosetti, member of the Wallachian branch of the Rosetti family. Maria Rosetti was the first Romanian female journalist and the founder of a hospital in Turnu Măgurele during the Independence War, in 1877. The painter Constantin D. Rosenthal, friend of the family, used her as a model for his oil painting *Revolutionary Romania* (Paris, 1850). See Lecca, *Familile boierești*, 419; Ioniță, “Din contribuția,” 422; Drace-Francis, *The Tradition of Invention*, 130; Jianu, “Maria Rosetti,” 224. For portrait of Maria Rosetti made by her husband, see Bacalbașa, *Bucureștii de altădată*, 21–22. See also Cantacuzino, *Din viața familiei*, 49–53.

<sup>58</sup> The most known children of Zoe and Effingham Grant were the engineer Robert Effingham Grant (1853–1926), the author of the Grant Bridge from Bucharest, and the painter Nicolae Grant (1868–1950).



8. Bucharest, the former Belvedere Palace  
(photo: © A. A. Buzatu)

and 1870, the Grant family modified the Golescu estate, remodelling its garden and lake. At the end of century, the beautiful park created by Zinca Golescu<sup>59</sup> still attracted the Bucharest elite, with King Carol I himself taking long walks through it.<sup>60</sup>

The building inherited by Zoe Racoviță from her grandparents was not permanently inhabited, as the Grants spent a number of years in France in order to offer their children a good education.<sup>61</sup> Today's architecture is the result of changes made around 1870 and other substantial alterations that occurred during the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. The beauty of the mansion, in the Belle Epoque period, was rendered in a painting authored by Nicolae, the youngest son of Effingham Grant, in 1884–1885. Entitled Belvedere Mansion in Bucharest

(*Conacul Belvedere din București*), this painting is the first known work of this artist and is part of the collection in the Golești Museum, alongside the boyars' portraits painted by him.<sup>62</sup>

In 1930, the former Belvedere Palace changed hands, as the last member of the Grant family donated the residence to the Romanian Education Ministry for charitable purposes.<sup>63</sup> Lady Stanca High School was founded on the estate, an institution dedicated to female instruction finally realising the plan of the first owner, Dinicu Golescu. The powerful earthquake of 1940 and the bombardment of 1944 also affected the Belvedere-Grant Palace. Before and after the fall of communism, the residence hosted a kindergarten,<sup>64</sup> then the Centre for Children's Placement (in view of adoption) of the Bucharest District.<sup>65</sup> Regrettably, during the communist period, the impressive park, mentioned in the accounts of many of the Romanian elite, ceased to exist.<sup>66</sup> In 2009, as a result of the petitions submitted by citizens attentive to historical and architectural heritage<sup>67</sup> and following a restoration process that lasted several years,<sup>68</sup> the edifice was included in the list of historic monu-

<sup>59</sup> Fotino, *Din vremea*, 7.

<sup>60</sup> Carol I Al României, *Jurnal*, 370.

<sup>61</sup> In June 1872, Effingham Grant successfully rented Belvedere Palace and its garden. See C. A. Rosetti către, 78–79.

<sup>62</sup> Boțoghină, "Pictorul," 328, 333.

<sup>63</sup> Olian, *Bucureștii sufletului*, 54.

<sup>64</sup> Olian, *Bucureștii sufletului*, 57.

<sup>65</sup> For references regarding the new purpose of the residence, see Olian, *Bucureștii sufletului*, 57. The presence of Belvedere Palace within the mass-media is reflected, in Iancu, "Conacul."

<sup>66</sup> Carol I Al României, *Jurnal*, 370. An extensive description of the garden, in Olian, *Bucureștii sufletului*, 54–55. See also Potra, *Din Bucureștii*, 208–209.

<sup>67</sup> The engineer Dan Ghelase initiated the process of including the Golescu-Grant residence in the official list of Romanian cultural heritage. See "Despre conacul Belvedere-Grant," accessed May 2, 2022, <http://a-craciunescu.blogspot.com/2010/02/despre-conacul-belvedere-grant.html>.

<sup>68</sup> "Conacul Belvedere."

ments and was repurposed.<sup>69</sup> Today it hosts the Centre for Recreation and Personal Development “Golescu-Grant Mansion”, as a subordinate department of the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Child Protection, providing various cultural, artistic, scientific, technical or sports activities to children and teenagers.<sup>70</sup>

## Conclusion

The residences of the Golescu family illustrate a situation shared by many such edifices in the Romanian patrimony. The old fortifications protected the lay and ecclesiastical buildings in this area and ensured their survival. Their presence was due to the need for defensive structures, to protect them against the countless Turkish-Tartar invasions during the Middle Ages. As documented in Wallachia in this early period, fortified buildings appeared in the second half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, with earthen and wooden bulwarks (Frătești, Basarabi, Coconi etc). They preceded the (much more durable) masonry fortifications of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>71</sup> The “antiquity” of these buildings, as well as the damage intentionally caused during domestic and international military conflicts, or the harm done by natural disasters (earthquakes, floods, etc), posed a threat to this type of architecture and damaged it significantly. Its survival depended on a number of factors.

The first one is the direct correlation between the continuity of aristocratic families and the continuity of their material patrimony. With the end of this branch of the family, once the descendancy of Dinicu Golescu no longer existed, it became impossible for the ensemble of buildings on their estate to be adequately preserved. Conversely, the perpetuation of successive generations of Iordache Golescu’s descendants allowed the mansion to remain (with some changes) a property of the family, even in the first part of the communist period when the political elites of Romania were expropriated, and most of their residences became properties of the state. Similar to many other aristocratic mansions, in the first part of the communist period (1948–1960), the Golescu estate of Câmpulung received “unwanted guests”, forcibly installed in the noble and bourgeois houses by the new political regime.

The second factor derives from the historical context of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. At the time, the emergence of the modern Romanian state entailed the establishment of many institutions intended for the conservation of history, cultural traditions, and collective memory. The enforcement of a legislation that regulated the protection of Romanian patrimony<sup>72</sup> created a framework allowing public institutions to intervene in order to safeguard the vestiges of the past, as happened with the Golești estate in 1939.

<sup>69</sup> The former residence of Golescu-Grant is registered on the list of Romanian historical monuments with number LMI B-IV-m-B-20955.

<sup>70</sup> See “Centrul de Recreere.”

<sup>71</sup> Moisescu, *Arhitectura*, 1: 13.

<sup>72</sup> The broad legislative framework provided by the Constitution of 1866 was amended through the juridical initiatives of the 1870s and 1880s, intended to protect the vestiges located on Romanian territory from natural disasters, vandalism or pillage. In 1860 the inventory of all valuables held by monasteries began, while in 1871 the first official project for the conservation of monuments was created, followed by regulations governing the functioning of the Honorary Commission for Public Monuments (1874). The last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century brought about a significant victory in both the cultural and the juridical realms: the promulgation of two crucial laws for the protection of the patrimony (one law concerning the conservation and restoration of monuments—1892—and another, concerning the identification of ancient monuments and artefacts – 1893). See Opreș, *Ocotirea patrimoniului*, 95–100.

The third factor concerns the practice of donations made by the political elite, a phenomenon with a long-standing tradition from the medieval era. After 1821, and especially after 1866, with the multiplication of modern practices in the Romanian society under a Western influence, the donations—previously directed mainly towards the ecclesiastical sphere—began to be increasingly diverted towards the civil sphere. Various categories of vulnerable persons (children, orphans, the destitute or the elderly) became direct beneficiaries of the social and educational projects undertaken by the elites. The recent repurposing of the former Belvedere-Grant mansion reiterated this communitarian tradition to which the Golescu boyars adhered enthusiastically in early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

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## Stare zgradbe, nove rabe

### Tri rezidenčne stavbe romunske plemiške družine in njihova usoda po letu 1930

#### *Povzetek*

V članku je predstavljena usoda treh stanovanjskih stavb, ki jih je naročilo več generacij družine Golescu. Rezidence so bile zgrajene v 17. in 19. stoletju ter na začetku 20. stoletja, skozi čas pa so zamenjale več lastnikov, ki so stavbe uporabljali v različne namene. Prvi obravnavani primer je dvorec, ki sta ga leta 1640 zgradila veliki zakladnik Stroe Leurdeanu in njegova žena Vișa iz Goleștija. Druga stavba, ki stoji na enem od bukareških posestev Dinicuja Golescuja, uglednega romunskega intelektualca in politika, je bila postavljena na začetku 19. stoletja. Leta 1850 je dvorec, znan tudi kot palača Belvedere, in velik vrt ob njem kot poročno darilo dobila Zoe Racoviță, vnukinja Dinicuja Golescuja, ob poroki z Effinghamom Grantom, tajnikom britanskega konzulata v Bukarešti. Tretji primer civilne arhitekture, obravnavane v tem prispevku, je vila v Câmpulungu, ki jo je leta 1909 uredil Vasile Golescu, vnuk Iordacheja Golescuja. Rezidence v Goleștiju in Bukarešti so v zadnjem stoletju doživljale številne spremembe. Na začetku 20. stoletja, ko neposrednih potomcev družine Golescu ni bilo več, je posestvo v vasi Golești propadlo, zato sta bila dvorec in zemljišče leta 1939 prenesena v javno last. Še pred tem, leta 1930, je nekdanja palača Belvedere v Bukarešti zamenjala lastnika, saj jo je zadnji član družine Grant podaril romunskemu ministrstvu za izobraževanje za dobrodelne namene. Nasprotno pa sta hiša v neoromanskem slogu in dendrološki park Vasileja Golescuja ostala v lasti Golescujevih hčera dvojčic vse do leta 2002, z nekaj prekinitvami v času komunističnega režima. V začetku 21. stoletja je zadnji potomec družine posestvo podaril fundaciji, katere glavni cilj je varovanje naravne in arhitekturne dediščine.

Preživetje te vrste romunske dediščine je bilo odvisno od številnih dejavnikov: neposredne povezave med kontinuiteto plemiških družin in kontinuiteto njihove materialne dediščine, rojstva sodobne Romunije in nastanka ustanov, specializiranih za ohranjanje dediščine, ter množenja in povečanja donacij, namenjenih civilni sferi, v 19. in 20. stoletju.