

MARTOR



Title: “«Horea and Aurel Flutur» Ethnographic Museum”

Author: Vlad Manoliu

How to cite this article: Manoliu, Vlad. 2009. “«Horea and Aurel Flutur» Ethnographic Museum”. *Martor* 14: 195-200.

Published by: *Editura MARTOR* (MARTOR Publishing House), *Muzeul Țăranului Român* (The Museum of the Romanian Peasant)

URL: <http://martor.muzeultaranuluiroman.ro/archive/martor-14-2009/>

Martor (The Museum of the Romanian Peasant Anthropology Review) is a peer-reviewed academic journal established in 1996, with a focus on cultural and visual anthropology, ethnology, museum studies and the dialogue among these disciplines. *Martor* review is published by the Museum of the Romanian Peasant. Its aim is to provide, as widely as possible, a rich content at the highest academic and editorial standards for scientific, educational and (in)formational goals. Any use aside from these purposes and without mentioning the source of the article(s) is prohibited and will be considered an infringement of copyright.

Martor (Revue d'Anthropologie du Musée du Paysan Roumain) est un journal académique en système *peer-review* fondé en 1996, qui se concentre sur l'anthropologie visuelle et culturelle, l'ethnologie, la muséologie et sur le dialogue entre ces disciplines. La revue *Martor* est publiée par le Musée du Paysan Roumain. Son aspiration est de généraliser l'accès vers un riche contenu au plus haut niveau du point de vue académique et éditorial pour des objectifs scientifiques, éducatifs et informationnels. Toute utilisation au-delà de ces buts et sans mentionner la source des articles est interdite et sera considérée une violation des droits de l'auteur.

Martor is indexed by EBSCO and CEEOL.

„Horea and Aurel Flutur“ Ethnographic Museum

Vlad Manoliu

The village of Chișcău is situated in the Beiuș – Vașcău depression from Bihor County. Beiuș and Ștei are the nearest towns. The village lies at the very bottom of the Apuseni Mountains, near Peștera Urșilor (The Bears' Cave), the most famous cave in Romania. The huge number of worldwide tourists may have encouraged one of the village's householders to set up an ethnographic museum in this area. Aurel Flutur, nicknamed „Domnocu“, has been collecting old objects since he was 18. Today, at the age of 70, he owns over 2500 objects arranged and ordered in a museum structure in which the largest object is a 1907 locomobile, a most spectacular Gypsy cart adorned with 52 apotropaic snakes – as many as the weeks of the year, whereas the smallest object is a letter sent by Oneață, the last outlaw from Bihor (the end of the 19th century), while in prison. Sheltered in wooden houses and yards full of flowers, the Flutur Museum does not require money (admission is free), but only vivid attention and willingness to enjoy the memories of the place. It is a dynamic museum that rearranges itself as his master (this is a private museum) learns more about museography. Panels in several languages (Romanian, Hungarian, English and French) set up an ethnographic frame to the museum which is thematically organised in order to ease the visitor's access.

Here and there large photos prop up the pieces in a clarifying manner. It is a surprisingly rich museum whose establishment involved huge expenses paid by an ordinary man possessed of an uncommon passion for collecting.

The collection has developed little by little, overcoming both financial difficulties and scientific information gaps. Aurel Flutur is gifted with a great native intelligence and with a tireless passion for collecting. He gradually managed to get closer to people who helped him develop and channel his passion: the teacher and headmaster of the school of Beiuș – Darabanu; Prof. Nicolae Brânda, PhD (Director of the Municipal Museum of Beiuș); Ioan Godea (for a while Head of the Department of Ethnography with the Țara Crișurilor Museum of Oradea) and especially Prof. Aurel Chiriac, PhD (Director of the Țara Crișurilor Museum of Oradea). The latter offered him valuable help in both turning the collection objects into a museum and in its official recognition.

The Flutur Museum comprises objects specific to the Bihor area (the locals' life, customs and occupations) and to its extensions and relations.

Initially considered a strange and 'nonsensical' man who gathers and pays for useless objects, Aurel Flutur is today a man who has

gained the respect of both his village fellows and of the whole county. Apart from his museum (and also due to his contribution), work camps are organised here for children and students who study traditional objects and occupations. The commune's mayor does not support him, but the respect shown by everybody in the commune determined the Culture Inspectorate of Oradea to give him a hand. The Flutur Museum has gradually flourished and, according to Dr. Nicolae Brânda: 'It managed to overcome two systems at once, since nobody has given him anything. I hardly know anybody with such a steady passion. It's different when you have money. Not the same happens when you have to make strict calculations in case you want to buy an object... He started from scratch and has achieved what we can see today.'

In his presentation entitled „Man Sanctifies the Place“, Prof. Aurel Chiriac, PhD, states that

the museum stands for 'the effort made by a family who has shown for over 40 years a special interest in collecting the traditional heritage of the Romanian villages that belong to the ethnographic area of Beiuş.'

Aurel Flutur believes that: 'The museum is made by collections just as honey is made by the beehive.' The way in which he defines tradition is highly significant: 'Tradition means to know how to preserve the customs, the costume, the dialect and faith; everything you inherit from your ancestors. This is tradition. Bestow the highest honour on it and respect it... It is said that <Life was born in the countryside>.'

Coming from Bucharest as researchers eager to see the Flutur Museum, we left as friends of the „Domnocu“ from Chişcău, where we learnt to respect the real collector's passion and sacrifices, the merchant's skill and the main position of the responsible villager.









