

DECORATIONS OF VEGETAL INSPIRATION USED IN THE STYLISTICS OF THE TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE OF BUCOVINA

DECORAȚIUNI DE INSPIRAȚIE VEGETALĂ FOLOSITE ÎN STILISTICA ARHITECTURII TRADIȚIONALE BUCOVINENE

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Abstract: *The world of plants has been throughout time a permanent source of inspiration for ornamental patterns. Flowers or parts of flowers, trees or just branches, leaves or fruit, alone or associated in various combinations, have been adopted as decorations and represented both through direct imitation and stylized. Their selection as ornaments has been determined either by the beauty of their form, or by the fact that they have – or they once had – a symbolic value. (Meyer, 1988). Usually, the folk ornamentation has adopted the drawings of the most popular plants, that which form the spontaneous or cultivated flora specific to Romania. The tree of life, the oak leaf, the vine leaf, the branch, the wheatear, the grape, clover, spindle, along with many floral patterns such as the tulip, rose, daisy, etc. represent the ensemble of the ornamental motifs of vegetal inspiration and define the entire stylistic universe of the traditional Bucovina house, as seen drawn in great detail and with great art on the decor elements, both inside and outside the house.*

Keywords: decorations, ornamental patterns, tradition, vegetal motifs

Rezumat. *Lumea vegetală a constituit de-a lungul timpului o permanentă sursă de inspirație pentru tiparele ornamentale. Flori sau părți de floare, arbori sau doar ramuri, frunze și fructe, singure sau asociate în diverse combinații, au fost adoptate ca decorații și redatate, atât prin imitare directă cât și stilizat. Alegerea lor ca ornamente a fost determinată fie de frumusețea formei, fie de faptul că au - sau au avut cândva - o încărcătură simbolică. (Meyer, 1988). În mod obișnuit, în ornamentica populară au fost preluate desenele celor mai cunoscute plante, a celor care formează flora, spontană sau cultivată, specifică României. Pomul vieții, frunza de stejar, vița de vie, ramura, spicul de grâu, strugurele, trifoiul, vrejul, alături de numeroase motive florale precum lealea, trandafirul, margareta etc., compun ansamblul motivelor ornamentale de inspirație vegetală ce definesc și întregesc universul stilistic al casei tradiționale bucovinene și pe care le regăsim redatate cu mare finețe și măiestrie în elementele sale de decor, atât la interior cât și la exterior.*

Cuvinte cheie: decorațiuni, tipare ornamentale, tradiție, motive vegetale

INTRODUCTION

The traditional houses of Bucovina surprise us through the abundance, diversity and picturesque of the adopted ornamental patterns. There is a large

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variety, both as pattern and as means of representation. We can find decorations that vary from a flower drawing to various vegetal combinations, from the small, discrete ones, often just suggested – met especially in the case of wooden constructions – houses, gates, fences, wells (fig. 1 a., b.; fig. 2) – to the elaborate ones, real applied laces, as in the case of the plastered houses from Ciocănești (fig. 5).

MATERIAL AND METHOD

To create this paper we have analyzed several homes from various parts of Bucovina, from the point of view of the decorations used – especially exterior ones of vegetal inspiration.

As research methods we have used: theoretical documentation, the case study method, analysis and synthesis of the obtained data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Without a question, the decorations of the old wooden houses present good sense in its pure, authentic form. This can be explained by the skills and talent of the folk artists of those times. At the same time, the use of these methods initially had a symbolic nature, especially the role to protect the entire home or to attract positive energy and bring luck, power, well-being and health. (Camlar, 2001) Within this context, the symbolic decorations have been positions in “key” locations and discretely represented. An example to this purpose is present in the Slobozia Sucevei village, where, despite the fact that the symbol of the tulip flower is carved on the side of the gate roof support element, a position that is not quite visible, it still has an evident aesthetical effect (fig. 1 a., b.).

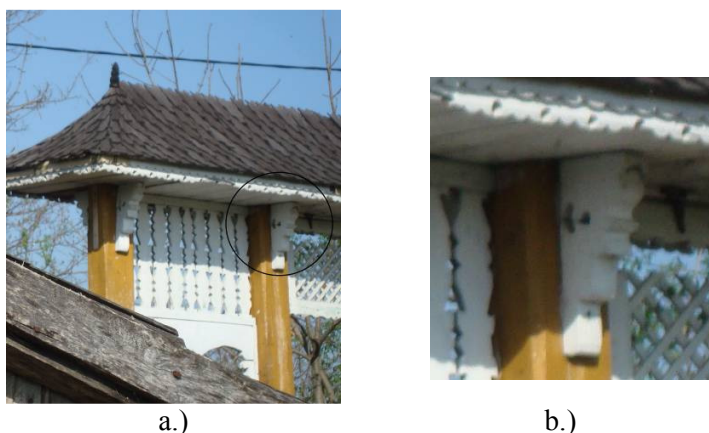


Fig. 1 - a.) Entrance gate in the establishment - Slobozia Sucevei village,
b.) tulip flower symbol – detail of roof console

The tulip signifies pride, hospitality, power and happiness. Even if it is considered to be a symbol specific for the Transylvanian decoration style, it is often seen in Bucovina, especially in wooden constructions.

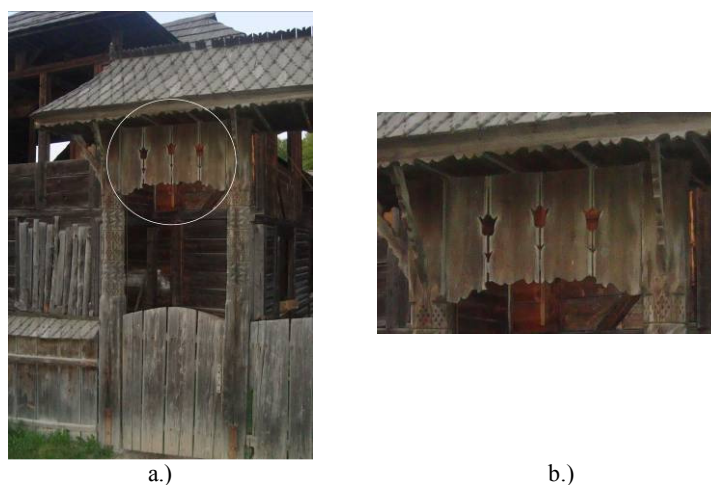


Fig. 2 - Entrance gate in a household from Cacica village, Suceava district, detail

Another suggestive example is presented in fig. 2 where the symbol of the tulip flower is carved, several times, on the wooden fronton above the pedestrian gate. The definitions of the detail, each floral symbol being located at the joining of the boards that make the fronton, offer it a note of elegance. Thus, through the position selected for the location of the carving, a simple constructive detail that of board joining has been offered value. The same method can also be observed in Fig. 3 where the fretted fronton of a Bucovinean gate is presented, a gate that is newer, of painted wood.

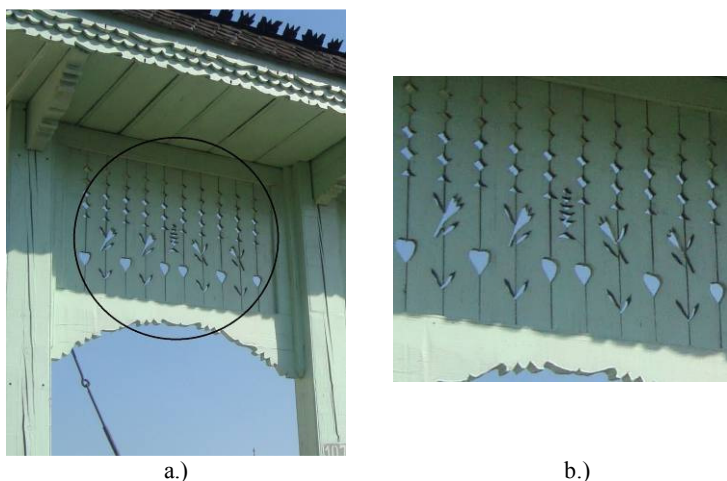


Fig. 3 - a.) entrance gate to the household - Marginea village Suceava district , b.) detail

Another decorative element, the triforium, is usually symmetrically created, with the central stylized image of the fir, here with the symbol of the tree of life.

A symbol often used in universal stylistics, *the tree of life* is also often met in Bucovinean ornaments. It appears in different ways, as a stem with flowers and leaves, as a flower in a flower pot or as a flower bunch in a vase. In Bucovina we find it under various images, on wood (fig.4) or in the pargeting (fig.5): as a three-headed flower, in symmetry with integral or schematic form. (Camilar M., 2002).

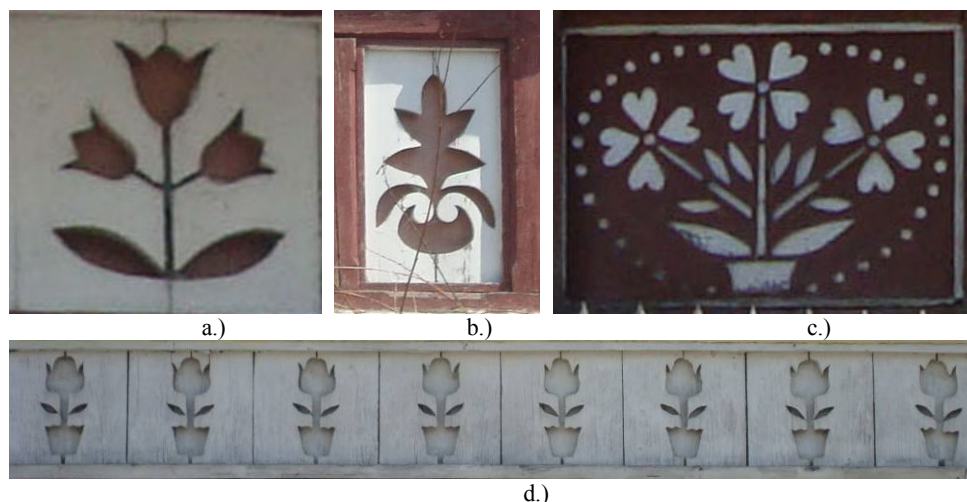


Fig. 4 - Representations of the tree of life symbol in Bucovinean ornaments (in wood)
a.) three-headed flower b.) fir c.) flower vase, d.) flower in a pot

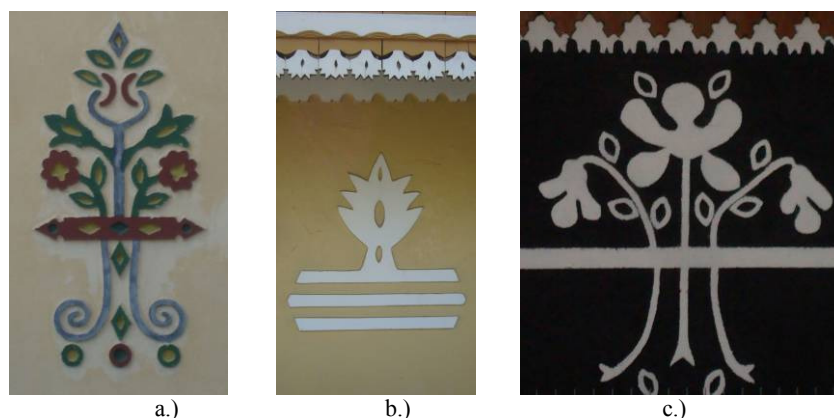


Fig. 5 - Representations of the tree of life symbol in Bucovinean ornaments (in pargeting)
a.), c.) flower bunch b.) fir

As the houses plastered on the outside started to become a majority in the Bucovinean area, the decoration of the facades has received new dimensions, new meanings. The decorations cover a significant percentage from the area of the facades, but unfortunately some of them have a questionable nature. The embroidery that is specific to the Bucovinean sewing style has been adopted by

the facades of the houses from Ciocanești, the result being a unique image, of high artistic value (fig.6).



Fig. 6 - Exterior house decorations Ciocanești village, Suceva district

At the same time, the interior of the Bucovinean houses abound in seamings and fabrics with vegetal motifs located both on the walls and on the floor. The

dominant colours are red, black and green, in very live colours. In the old houses that still exist; these still decorate the interior walls of the rooms (fig. 7).

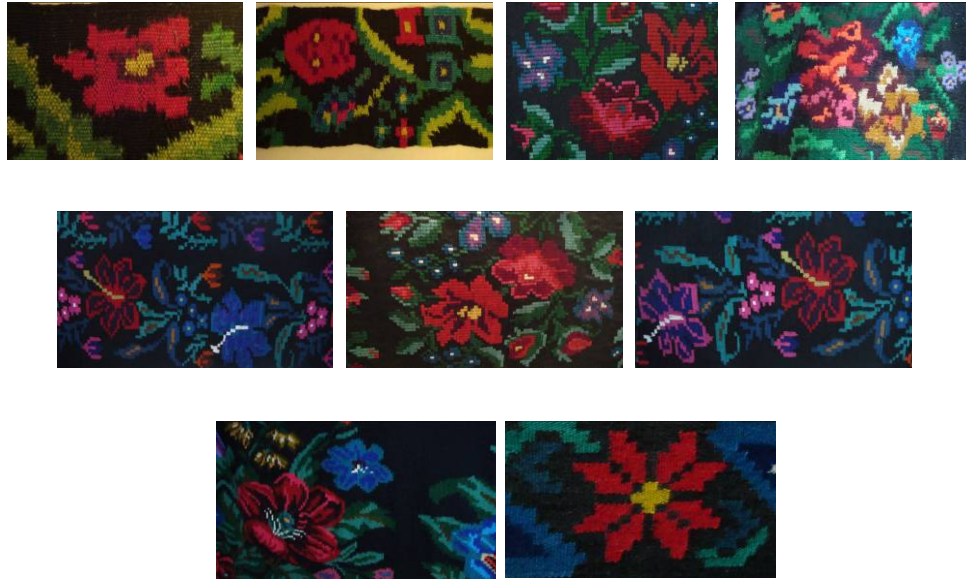


Fig. 7 – Fabrics used to decorate the interior walls of Bucovinean houses.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The Bucovineans, open and welcoming people, careful with their money and their words, God-fearing people, with respect for work, have kept their traditions from ancient times. Some of the villages of today show very little modern interventions.

2. Making the originality elements known under all forms of their expression is a scientific research mission, which well detailed and documented will help preserve and make these priceless elements public.

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