



European  
Association for  
Architectural  
Education

CONSERVATION / REGENERATION  
THE MODERNIST NEIGHBORHOOD

EAAE Transactions on Architectural Education

Rodica Crişan  
Giovanna Franco  
Loughlin Kealy  
Stefano F. Musso  
Editors



# CONSERVATION/REGENERATION: The Modernist Neighbourhood

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EAAE - European Association for Architectural Education



ENHSA-European Network of Heads of Schools of Architecture



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This book presents the papers written by 47 participants after the 3rd Workshop organized by the Conservation Network of the European Association for Architectural Education in 2011 in Romania.

The workshop was attended by 51 participants from 22 universities, representing 8 countries: Belgium, France, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania and Turkey.

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Illustrations to the text were provided by the authors, organizers and editors.



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# Introduction

Conservation/Regeneration: the  
Modernist neighbourhood

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Rodica Crişan

Engagement: vision, thought  
and conscience

.....  
Loughlin Kealy







## CONSERVATION / REGENERATION: the Modernist neighbourhood

Rodica Crişan

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### The theme

In its broadest sense, the term Modernism describes the culturally and socially progressive trend arising from the wide-scale and far-reaching changes of societies in the late 19th and early 20th century. The 'traditional' became obsolete in the new economic, social, and political conditions of an emerging fully industrialised world. People assumed the power to create, improve and reshape their environment with the aid of scientific knowledge and new technologies. From this perspective, Modernism encouraged the re-consideration of every aspect of existence, from art and philosophy to everyday life and housing.

Modernism was mainly shaped within the rapid growth of cities, accompanying the development of modern industrial societies. Generated by economic and social requirements, the planned extension of the cities became a generous field for experimenting with new Modern thought in urbanism and architecture. The result were new urban tissues, exhibiting various innovative concepts at urban and building level:

- planned residential areas assembling historicist buildings in a picturesque architectural landscape guided by public regulations (such as the new Imperial District of Wilhelm II at Metz);



- autonomous housing ensembles for workers reflecting rigorous economic criteria and serialisation principles, but also the meeting of industry and nature in a beautiful and healthy environment (such as the model company towns Saltaire, Bournville, Port Sunlight, Creswell and New Earswick, in Great Britain; the 'Nouveau Quartier' in Mulhouse and 'Cité Ouvrière Menier' at Noisiel, in France; Colònia Güell near Barcelona, in Spain; or the new workers' housing developments at Essen, in Germany);

- few completely autonomous garden cities created as an alternative to the industrial city by combining the best of town and country living (such as Letchworth and Welwyn, in Great Britain);

- numerous garden neighbourhoods distinctively marked by architectural refinement and attention to landscaping (such as Hampstead at London, Hellerau at Dresden, Stockfeld at Strasbourg, Prozorovskoe at Moscow, Vreewijk at Rotterdam, Mežaparks at Riga and many others);

- new neighbourhoods resulted - in the interwar period - from the meeting of the garden city model with the public social policies of the time (such as the Siedlungen in Frankfurt, Berlin, Hamburg and Stuttgart, the new residential districts in Holland, France or Russia, and the Höfe ensembles in Vienna) which quickly adopted an architectural aesthetic informed by the precepts of the Modern Movement.

These Modern urban ensembles now represent a valuable heritage of our cities, a particular cultural landscape testifying to a remarkable period of urban history and exhibiting at times an authentic avant-garde dimension.

But the built heritage of the 19th and 20th centuries is particularly vulnerable because of its weak legal protection and low appreciation among the general public. In December 1989 a Council of Europe proposal put forward a range of activities and recommendations worldwide, partly focused on raising public awareness about Modern heritage. It is obvious that education, and architectural education in particular, has much to do in this matter.

The 3rd Conservation Workshop, held in 2011 in Bucharest, proposed that participants explore the theme of 'regeneration' and reflect on the contribution that conservation disciplines can offer to the urban life of the future. In this context, the particular case of the Modernist neighbourhoods was chosen. What are the values of such a place? Why should these values be preserved? Are they recognised by the contemporary societies? Do the Modernist neighbourhoods benefit from an adequate treatment within current urban regeneration processes? How does the general theory of conservation apply in this case? What is the relationship between conservation and regeneration in this particular case? Should we speak here about 'regeneration by conservation', or about 'conservation by regeneration'? Such questions and many others could be considered in relation to the Modernist neighbourhoods and the development of our cities. Therefore, three major topics representing the main aspects of the conservation/regeneration of the Modern parts of the cities were proposed for the workshop, to reflect on with regard to different levels and disciplinary aspects: the theoretical and methodological issues; the urban scale approach; the building scale interventions.





### The study site

The previous Conservation Workshop, held in Dublin in 2009, introduced the idea of the 'experiment': instead of presenting previously prepared papers, participants are asked to reflect on some key issues of conservation and on how they may be explored in teaching, through the investigation of a real site.

The workshop in Bucharest adopted the same kind of approach and a Modernist borough in Bucharest was chosen for on site investigation.

During the second half of the 19th century the population of Bucharest increased rapidly and a new period of urban development began, shaping in fact the modern city. During the early years of Prince Carol's rule, which started in 1866, Bucharest was equipped with gas lighting, railway stations, a horsedrawn tram system, a telephone system, several factories, boulevards, and representative public buildings, as well as large private residences. The National

Bank of Romania was opened in April 1880, as the first and most important in a series of new banking institutions.

Construction works significantly accelerated in Bucharest after the proclamation of the Kingdom of Romania in 1881. In 1883, flooding of the Dâmboviţa was stopped through the channelling of the river. New representative buildings were added and the skyline of the city increased in height. Limited use of electricity was introduced in 1882.

In the same period, the extensive vacant land in the northern green periphery of Bucharest made possible the arrangement of large parks near the lakes and the creation of a new residential borough, following modern principles of urbanism. The site proposed for exploration within the 3rd Conservation Workshop is part of this modern extension of the town, built between 1895 and 1940.

After the First World War, Bucharest – capital of Greater Romania since the state unification in 1918 – became an important administrative centre and experienced a spectacular economic growth which attracted massive immigration. The major real estate investments coincided with the return of young architects trained abroad, who brought with them Western avant-garde ideas and principles. On the other hand, certain groups of progressive intellectuals, of average to high incomes, adopted and supported the Modern Movement in their real estate investments.

During the interwar period, housing was a prevalent theme in the work of most architects who joined the Modern Movement. The result is a large number of residential buildings with outstanding architectural value having a major impact on the urban image of the modern city of Bucharest.





A local particularity is given by the fact that, unlike other European countries, in Romania the interwar Modern architecture was not associated with socialist ideology and mass housing. While in Europe Modernism was oriented towards minimal-comfort housing, in Bucharest luxurious villas and blocks with generous apartments were built in the interwar period, demonstrating the economic strength of Romanian society of the time, but also its spirit of openness to civilization and modernity. Some relevant examples of Romanian Modern architecture can be observed in the workshop study site.

Before arriving in Bucharest, participants at the workshop received general information and documentation materials on the chosen neighbourhood, through the workshop website.

A detailed presentation of the study site – its history and urban characteristics, a typological and morpho-stylistical analysis of its architecture, the current protection status of the area, as well as elements concerning the planning system and instruments in Romania and their evolution with a focus on protected areas – was made at the workshop by professors of Urban History, Theory of Architecture, Conservation and Urban Planning from Ion Mincu University. The first part of this book is dedicated to the description of the study site and includes papers written by these professors.

### The topics

Three topics addressing key issues of the conservation/regeneration of the Modern parts of the cities were proposed for participants' reflection: theoretical and methodological approaches, with regard to different levels and disciplinary aspects; urban planning, management, economic and social aspects, with special regard to tutorship and development; design as project and process of intervention on single buildings, with all their technical contents, goals and criteria.





*Theoretical and methodological approaches, with regard to different levels and disciplinary aspects*

Reflecting on this issue with respect to the study site, participants were invited to focus on several questions: What are the values of the place? Why should these be preserved? How could the theoretical boundaries of conservation/regeneration be established in this case and in general? What frames of reference are established through relevant international conservation charters and how can these be applied to this area?

*Urban planning, management, economic and social aspects, with special regard to tutorship and development*

Considering the urban level of the study site, participants were asked to reflect and debate on the following questions: What are the values of the place? Why should it be preserved? To what extent is the social structure vulnerable to foreseeable changes? How robust is the physical fabric in the face of developments within and around the neighbourhood?

*Design as project and process of intervention on single buildings, with all their technical contents, goals and criteria*

Focusing on the buildings in the study site, participants were invited to consider in particular the following questions: What are the values of the place? Why should it be preserved? Is the architectural inventory an effective instrument in the management of change? How are sustainable development strategies and the renewable energy sources represented in the site?



### **The structure of the workshop**

Following the structure of the previous one, the workshop in Bucharest had three main parts: given topics to be considered in the context of the chosen site; direct investigation of the site; post-workshop reflection and elaboration of papers for publication.

The participants came from 22 schools of architecture in 8 countries; they were mainly architects, but also urban planners, engineers, a stage designer and an anthropologist, of different ages, experiences and specialisations, from doctoral students to full professors, from theorists to technicians, all having in common an interest in the conservation of the heritage, as practitioners, researchers, and teachers.

During the workshop, the participants were organised in three working groups corresponding to the three proposed topics. Each group was guided by a teacher from the host university. The final reports on the working groups' reflections and discussions are presented in the second part of this book.



Different kinds of activities alternated over the three days – lectures on the chosen area, investigation of the site and visits to building rehabilitation worksites in the area, work in thematic groups followed by public reports and general debates – trying to create a challenging dynamic and interactive atmosphere, intended to stimulate participants' personal reflections.

The ideas born in the study site and developed in group reflections and debates were finally elaborated by the participants after a settling time and formalised in the essays written after the workshop.

### The contribution of the workshop

The essays written by the participants represent the main substance of this book; they include observations, reflections and opinions concerning the workshop theme and the study site, reflecting different cultural backgrounds, professional orientations, previous experiences and personalities. They compare the study case in Bucharest to other similar cases, move from experiment to theoretical elaborations, from theory to practice and vice versa, from particular to general issues of the Modern heritage and its conservation, and, last but not least, to specific missions to be assumed by architectural education. Gathered together, individual reflective moments give a big picture on a very complex subject, without exhausting it.

The workshop was not intended to give final and complete answers to all the problems encountered in the proposed theme and topics. The main purpose of the workshop was to stimulate thought and dialogue in order to encourage teachers to reflect on how they might introduce in their teaching the issues which were highlighted by the workshop. From this point of view, the meeting of the

conservation teachers held in Bucharest was only a start and the book arising from this experience is an open-ended outcome; it will hopefully stimulate further reflections and debates concerning new goals and methods of teaching conservation in architectural education, involving a wider number of teachers.







## ENGAGEMENT: vision, thought and conscience

Loughlin Kealy

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Picture the place: leafy streets with half hidden houses slipping decorously behind their veil of greenery or granting coquettish glimpses of corners, doorways and varied rooflines. All this with a palpable tension, where certain streets discourage the onlooker and intermittent traffic seems to search out the unwary. The stranger will always be a stranger here: the place is self-contained, tenuously connected to the greater city through frayed edges and the fractured wall of surrounding boulevards – Iancu de Hunedoara, Aviatorilor and Calea Dorobanților. The history of the place provides a precarious narrative, somehow normalising the discordances, much as the interplay between planting and built form masks the differences in scale, style, function and social structure that characterise this placid enclave. Its order is visible from the map, invisible from the street.

The sub-divisions that took place between 1895 and 1940 achieved a type of homogeneity that hides the complexity that only detailed study could reveal. The stranger's eye peruses all but may see little. It is possible to write about the conservation issues in this area of Bucharest because some of the issues, but not all, are recognisable from one's knowledge of other contexts or experiences. But one does this with a sense of the incompleteness of one's understanding. The stranger's eye may wonder at and cherish what has



**Loughlin Kealy**

become invisible, mundane, part of the tapestry of everyday life, even while remembrances of other places and contexts intrude to filter the evidence of the eye. And in that dissonance fresh light may be cast, forcing a re-examination of assumptions and reformulation of ideas.

Every place changes. Even when, to the stranger's eye, houses, streets, landscape, all seem to remain as they were, at their heart they may be different places. Very few of those that made the community a generation ago may be there still and the collective memory can be threadbare, accessed unevenly through record and anecdote. When that thread is thin, or broken altogether, what is left? Is it only the carapace of community life, the buildings, public spaces and gardens as they have endured? The answer makes a difference in how the conservator sees the place. Apart from historical record, the persistence (or not) of memory and realities of identity affect the role of the conservator – who cannot afford to be blind to them, particularly in the conservation of residential neighbourhoods. The eyes are, after all, the windows to the soul.

**A window to the soul**

*Like those birds that lay their eggs in other species' nests, memory produces in a place that does not belong to it [...]. Far from being the reliquary or trash can of the past, it sustains itself by believing in the existence of possibilities and by vigilantly awaiting them, constantly on the watch for their appearance.* (De Certau 1984: 86-97)

While the ingredients of urban conservation can be set out with some confidence, its processes follow few rules, and precedents provide uncertain guides to action in any particular circumstance. What we have are experiences, of building repair and renewal,





of civic endeavour, of concerned citizens in passionate action, of official intervention in pursuit of regeneration (economic or social, in which the historic environment is a clumsy instrument). And most pervasively of all, we have the almost universal phenomena of gentrification and aestheticisation – the Scylla and Charybdis that threaten every voyage on the barely chartered sea of urban renewal, and which have proved to be intractable contradictions.

While the theories of urban regeneration encompass many elements – rehabilitation of the social and physical fabric and public space, stimulation of economic activity, and so on – one fears that in many instances it has to do with something very different, more profound and problematic: an opportunity to create a trope of memory, an image that captures or evokes a past in which we find evidence of continuity. While the field of conservation must operate in such a context, and is conscious of the need to preserve the authentic evidence of change, it may find itself an unwitting accomplice in a wider public act of uncertain value. This essay will explore this idea a little further, reflect on the particular circumstance of the Modernist neighbourhoods of Bucharest, and consider some implications for teaching and research.

This creation of image has become important for today's societies, where memory has a diminishing utility and, in an almost dialectical way, assumes greater prominence in public discourse. At one level of purpose – that of underpinning a sense of identification of the citizen with the place – one can accept the project as being of the greatest importance. Memories are elusive, malleable, creative. Where the thread of connection is missing or has been lost, their re-creation easily becomes a social project that brings with it the risk of establishing a facsimile of memory based on constructed or borrowed images or selective narratives.

Boyer (1979) refers to the tendency of contemporary urban landscapes to be judged, and indeed constructed, by reference to inherited visual imagery, likens this to the 19th-century construction of '*tableaux vivants*', and associates the proponents of urban conservation with the phenomenon. In a powerful critique, she asserts that 'our sense of urban totality has been fractured long ago...'. None of us is immune to the unspoken, unarticulated *Weltanschauung*, as it evolves over time.

The preamble to the ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas (1987) refers to the UNESCO document, Recommendation Concerning the Safeguarding and Contemporary Role of Historic Areas (Warsaw-Nairobi, 1976), and defines conservation of such areas as being '...those steps necessary for the protection, conservation and restoration [...] as well as their development and harmonious adaptation to contemporary life'. We can observe that when the ICOMOS document was first drafted at Eger in 1984, it included text that was quite explicit about the dynamic nature of the urban environment: 'As living entities, and subject to cultural, social and economic evolution, historic towns and districts must inevitably change, as they have done in the past'. In the text as we have it today, that explicit phrase is not to be found. It can be argued that it is implicit, and so it may be, to those who have eyes to see. But it is not there. Perhaps it is going too far to see in its omission some kind of default setting, which, recognising the risks, tried to minimise them by rendering the context less explicit. Perhaps we are seeing an acknowledgement, elliptically, that while 'conservation' might have the same root meaning, from an operational perspective urban conservation is quite distinct from what is involved in the protection and transmission of individual buildings. But certain silences within the field of urban conservation suggest that we should look further.



Too often the success of an urban conservation programme results, as Boyer puts it, in a frozen celebration of the achievements of the past (Boyer 1979: 371). 'Historical phenomena portrayed as "heritage" are cultural treasures of art carried by the authorities in every triumphal march, and these treasures reek of omissions and suppressions'. Earlier in this essay, reference was made to the twin shadows that accompany urban conservation, those of gentrification and aestheticisation. These are virtually universal phenomena when regeneration programmes are implemented within historic urban areas. It is not difficult to understand why. However, it is seemingly very difficult for authorities to anticipate these phenomena, recognise them as problems to be overcome and to carry through appropriate measures against them. Perhaps they are seen as inevitable outcomes of something desirable in itself – a type of collateral damage in a wider war: aestheticisation fosters tourist interest, restoration increases property values and encourages investment activity – and both are often primary goals of regeneration. There is a danger, in conservation at all scales, of becoming implicated in an insidious travesty of history – a danger of which conservators are very conscious, and against which the bulwarks of conservation theories and methods are fortified by reflection and conscience. But the scale of works and, in particular, the timeframe of urban conservation renders the process less visible, especially when conservation action becomes subsumed into a larger, and indeed essential, process of renewal and regeneration. Regarding such broader considerations, conservators are often silent, at times complicit when pastiche reproductions are inserted, provided their detail is not positively objectionable. Much has been written about 'conservation-led regeneration'. Enough to know that, more often than not, the antinomies posed remain and the ideal remains an aspiration or a work in progress. However, what is also clear is that, where successes have been achieved, the local administration has

taken a proactive leadership role at multiple levels in the process. We will return to the matter later in the essay.

The essence of the '*tableaux vivants*' lay in two circumstances – the selection/composition that was offered to the public gaze, and the relationship of distance and passivity between the onlookers and participants. Distance between the observers and the observed is both physical and psychological. The observer is removed through conventionalised arrangements. In the case of the tableaux, there is a stage, proscenium, and the device of raising or lowering the curtain to commence or end the experience. And at a deeper level the psychological relationship is characterised by indifference on the part of the audience to the circumstances underlying the spectacle.

Avoiding the creation of 21st-century '*tableaux vivants*' involves going beyond understanding the inherited physical environment and into the realm of reflection, critical analysis and, perhaps, imagination. Boyer posits an alternative route: 'Suppose we say that history is the weave of difference [...] then traces of the past would open on difference [...] they would be the memory of rejected parts' (Boyer, op. cit: 373). The international charters relating to conservation of urban areas derive their primary impetus from the perception that historic towns and cities can also be considered as monuments, and that the principles underlying their conservation invoke the retention of their integrity and authenticity. Most fundamentally, the authenticity of urban areas also lies in their being the setting for the everyday lives of their inhabitants, and maintaining their integrity entails the involvement of the inhabitants of historic areas in their conservation. One could go further. Maintaining the authenticity of urban areas means engaging with issues that affect the social structure, and accommodating changes that will permit its 'harmonious adaptation'.



Given that the gentrification that accompanies urban regeneration (within which conservation occurs) inevitably involves the replacement of existing populations with new, wealthier inhabitants, we can conclude that a *caesura* exists between the perspectives and methods that the conservator applies and the context within which they are given effect. The answer does not lie within the field of conservation as a specialist activity, but rather in changing the context in which conservation is utilised. This must be an agenda if urban conservation is not to be a misnomer. The problem definition as the conservator might see it needs to encompass the communities in whose habitat the conservator works, in other words, the conservator must address the social as well as the physical fabric.

### Engagement

*A place belongs forever to whoever claims it hardest, remembers it most obsessively, wrenches it from itself, shapes it, renders it, loves it so radically that he remakes it in his image.* (Didion, 1979)

Few residential areas remain outside the influence of time and circumstance. All change. One generation replaces another and these areas undergo shifts and cycles of use related to changes in social, economic and political circumstances. The processes of adaptation are mirrored in changes to the fabric, sometimes overt, at other times discrete and almost imperceptible. Do we not try to conserve the story of change? At one level there is no discussion – retention of the patina of age has long been regarded as a key concept in distinguishing activities that conserve from those that simply renew. Historic areas and ensembles raise particularly complex questions in the retention of the evidence of change as against competing values that underlie different types of change. They also raise questions about time: at what point do changes stop being

part of evolution, and with regard to future accommodation of change – what ideas govern their future evolution?

With these considerations in mind, we can return to the neighbourhood under study. One of the qualities of the original layout of is that the differentiation between the public realm of the street and the private realm of the plot was visually permeable. This was an expression of the relationship between the private realm of the family and the public realm of the street that was considered appropriate, taking into account the nature of the place and the social standing of the inhabitants. As it matured, vegetation softened the boundary while also reinforcing the privacy of the occupier. One can also see an ongoing tendency to replace the original boundary treatment between public and private with types of boundary that consolidate the difference in territory, replacing a social boundary with a physically impermeable one. To the conservator's eye this damages the integrity of the ensemble. It represents a diminution of the original character of the place. Yet it reflects a phenomenon of the contemporary developed world: the intensification of the differentiation between public and private space has been seen as characteristic of societies that are transforming under the influence of globalisation. It has manifested itself in the gated communities of every city. The occupier's community can no longer be established by reference to the place in which she/he dwells. It comprises a network related to economic and social activity and information exchange, so that the individual does not need to feel part – other than in a general and inchoate way – of the community in which she/he resides. To feel otherwise has become somehow exceptional. What does a return to the original boundary treatment mean in this context?

Didion's insight strikes at the heart of the idea of cultural inheritance as it manifests in these Modernist neighbourhoods. It is clear that



the area itself has several communities, or at least several groups whose interests may be different. For some, the area as such may have little meaning beyond being the location of their workplace, or where they happen to be stationed for a period of time. For others, this place is home territory through which they walk, drive, rear their children. The fact that the area has been selected for special protection indicates that the local administration – at some level – has taken a type of ownership. And in a sense, the area is also owned by another group, one that rarely if ever visits it – the transnational community of those with an interest in built heritage, and who value its qualities out of a sense of high purpose and in the name of future generations. Within this *mélange* of interests, can there be any sense of the collective? It is hardly possible to speak of a collective memory, given the transformations that have occurred, and which have involved serial displacements of inhabitants. If regeneration is to take place in a way that embodies conservation values, the question has to be asked: who are the likely protagonists?

To have any chance of success, the usual dynamic of top-down leadership has to be reversed. The first and primary goal is to identify the various stakeholders and their interests, desires and needs. The purpose is to investigate the capacity of the place to support the communities, while retaining its cultural value. Retention of cultural value is what underwrites the engagement of the local administration, justifying the expense involved in terms of the return to the citizens, whether residents of the area or not. The key to the success also lies in identifying 'leverage' – situations where additional resources can be identified within the area or attracted to it, to support the expenses involved in the process. These expenses will include targeted financial incentives to retain such evidence of origins and evolution that are considered essential to maintaining the significance and cultural value of the area.

It is not difficult, from the stranger's perspective, to identify the overall structural requirements, and even some potentials. What is impossible is to know what can happen, and when, in the precise circumstances of this area, in this city. Even when one is familiar with the context, it is often not possible to set out a programme in anything but the sketchiest form. The overall goal of the process is the conservation of a living, complex community. Intermediate goals will emerge as the process develops. When one looks at precedents, one can see that all of the necessary ingredients for a successful campaign were never available at one time. In the study area, many essential elements (at the level of information and regulation) have been put in place. It is not clear whether there is a collective desire or capacity to use them in an effective way. So one returns to Didion's formulation and asks: who claims it hardest, who is to wrench it from its current state, and in what or whose image is it to be remade?

A related aspect of the issue is set out clearly, if radically, in an article, 'Archaeology in Annapolis', written a number of years ago; the decisions taken in conservation are essentially political and have to be considered from the perspective of who is empowered by them (Hoepfer, Leone, Parker, 1987). The conservator knows about protecting physical fabric from decay, repairing its defects while retaining the evidence of its life, and so on. But as a citizen it is essential to ask what version of history is being supported by the decisions taken, by the vision of the future that is embodied in both the outcome and the process of achieving it.

### Some questions for the Academy

The application of conservation principles to residential historical urban areas raises fundamental questions regarding the role of urban conservation and how it is taught and studied. The arena is





complex and there are generic questions relating to it that can be difficult to address effectively in the academic setting. In practice, urban conservation must find its place within the broader fields of urban planning and design. How these fields are configured from a professional or administrative perspective varies widely in different jurisdictions. The legislative and institutional frameworks within which conservation operates also vary from place to place, with a consequent impact on the actors involved and their powers (Pickard, 2001). To communicate the core ingredients of urban conservation within such diversity is a challenge.

So, what do we teach about urban conservation and in what academic setting can we teach it? Is our understanding of significance and authenticity limited to those aspects that are amenable to the application of the tools we have established for architectural conservation? Do we open the question to wider exploration? It is not justifiable that we transmit or permit a state of innocence about how social and cultural contexts can contribute to contemporary understandings of the built inheritance, or the means of conserving its significances.

The would-be conservator at the urban scale usually finds the sphere of conventional action to be limited. We have referred to the issue of community liaison and the appreciation of the requirements of daily life, but familiarity with the world of investment economics would mean that teaching would not stop at the level of anecdote and would ensure that approaches were not naive. One is not seeking expertise, but rather a developed awareness that prepares students for the world of interdisciplinary collaboration, in the expectation that they will have the confidence to engage proactively to ensure that conservation values get the best chance of survival.



In the discussion of Boyer's evocation of 19th-century '*tableaux vivants*' earlier in this essay, physical and psychological distance was identified as characterising the relationship between the observer and the participants, and it is in the matter of distance that the weakness of conservation action lies. All of the dogmatic texts on conservation of historic urban areas call for the active participation of the local community. There are skills involved and we have to ask ourselves how the academy addresses the need for such skills among its graduates.

From the research perspective, it may seem strange to say that the field has hardly been tilled. It is essential to apply a critical perspective when reviewing the literature on interventions within urban conservation. The key factor, and the one most difficult to capture, is that of the effects of the passage of time. While longitudinal studies are notoriously difficult to fund, it is possible for institutions that are engaged in teaching and research to identify relevant indicators and to instigate monitoring projects that extend over a number of years, with each yearly project being also self-contained. Difficult perhaps, and impossible without the vision and desire, but without such investigations we will be condemned to anecdote, celebrations of short-term successes and frequent, continuing lamentations.

### Concluding in the present tense

Too often, ideas of heritage endowment are suffused with sentimentality, nostalgia and passive experience. Historic buildings and towns become associated with enjoyment rather than utility, their fundamental *raison d'être* – their necessity as vehicles for the realisation of human purpose – replaced by packaged consumer-led experience as the setting for a pantomime of history. Historic

buildings continue to be buildings whose authenticity embodies their evolving uses; historic urban areas continue to be places whose authenticity lies in their residential, commercial and recreational uses, as well as in their historic, aesthetic and cultural values. Memory and love are not passive.

Memories achieve new meanings in new contexts. As such they become the foundations for future action, as well as being a reference point for the present. The task for the conservator is to avoid becoming a compliant operative, working within the preset limits of a defined sphere of action. Instead, the conservator must be, first and foremost, a critic, one who questions the definition of the project in terms of what version of history it supports and whose future is advanced.

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# The study area: a Modernist neighbourhood in Bucharest

The history and the urban characteristics of the study area

Nicolae Lascu

Modernist neighbourhoods in Bucharest: Typological and morpho-stylistical analysis of the Calea Dorobanților – Aviatorilor – Iancu de Hunedoara perimeter

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The planning system and instruments in Romania and their evolution with a focus on protected areas

Gabriel Pascariu





## The history and the urban characteristics of the study area

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The urban fragment selected as the workshop study area is situated in the northern part of Bucharest, outside of the administrative perimeter of the pre-modern city. It is currently bordered by three important boulevards of the city structure: Iancu de Hunedoara (part of the main ring road), Aviatorilor and Calea Dorobanților (Fig. 1).

The cadastral plans of the city made up to the end of the 19th century, show the existence of several routes (which were to become large city boulevards later on) separating large properties, most of them with unspecified use. With the exception of two landscaped lots belonging to noble residences, the others are unused or used for agriculture (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. The same urban area before the 'parcelling' process (historical plans of 1846 and 1895-1899)  
(2\_a: Cadastral plan of 1846 (Jung Plan), 2\_b: Cadastral plan of 1895-1899)





Fig. 1. The urban fragment proposed as study area (current situation)

At the end of the century, some lots were assigned different uses related to the beginning of the modernisation of Bucharest, for functions which were not allowed within the city: a brick factory, a mill, a rope factory and a tram depot. The last three were situated in close proximity to the Iancu de Hunedoara Boulevard, which was the administrative limit of the city at that time

The whole area became part of the administrative perimeter of Bucharest in 1895. It belongs to the territory surrounding the pre-modern city, as part of the gradual urban expansion that took place up until the Second World War. In this northern part of the city, most of the new urban territory gradually acquired residential use, marking the constant trend of settling the modern housing neighbourhoods outside of the old city. The current configuration of the urban area to which we refer is the result of the division of the large old properties into smaller parcels, at the end of the 19th century and during the first decades of the 20th century. The coordination of this 'parcelling' process was done by the municipality with respect for the regularity and continuity of the streets throughout the whole urban area. The complete modification of the entire area, accomplished through several planned 'parcelling' operations, took place between 1895 and 1940. The forty-five year period resulted in an evident homogeneity of the whole area, given by the prevalent residential function and the regularity of the urban pattern that was ensured by the planning process. Yet at a closer look the area proves itself to have a significantly complex character as a consequence of different factors among which the most important are: the evolution of the land division principles; the characteristics of the parcels according to their size; the evolution of the building typology; and the relationship of the area with the rest of the city.



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1. The area is relevant - through significant examples - with regard to the evolution of the 'parcelling' approach in Bucharest up until the Second World War: here one can observe the transition from land divisions solely with profit purpose and without any urbanistic guiding principles, to completely and strictly planned and regulated 'parcellings', can be observed here.

a. Most of the land divisions made in Bucharest during the 19th century resulted in elongated rectangular parcels, with the short side bordering the street. The geometric characteristic of later land divisions based on urban planning projects maintained for a relatively long time this manner of forming urban plots for residential purposes. The Blanc parcelling (about 1895) illustrates this kind of land division which can be considered traditional: the regularly traced streets define elongated rectangular islands divided in regular plots of about 10m in wide and 20m in depth (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3. Blanc parcelling, about 1895 (3\_a: Localisation of Blanc parcelling within the study area, 3\_b: Original plan of Blanc parcelling)

b. Filipescu Park (1912), designed by the Belgian Octave van Ryselberghe, displays a different land division principle. The elegant street pattern is drawn in such a manner that the owner (Alexandru Filipescu) keeps a large lot in the center of the area. The designed parcels have much larger street frontages than those of the Blanc parcelling, therefore a considerable variety of buildings was built up in this area. Small squares, at the neighbourhood scale, were also designed.

This parcelling project is one of the first in Bucharest to be accompanied by construction regulations concerning buildings' alignment, the distance between buildings and street, the distance between buildings and neighbouring plots, the maximum height of buildings, and the requirement to build only detached buildings (Fig. 4).

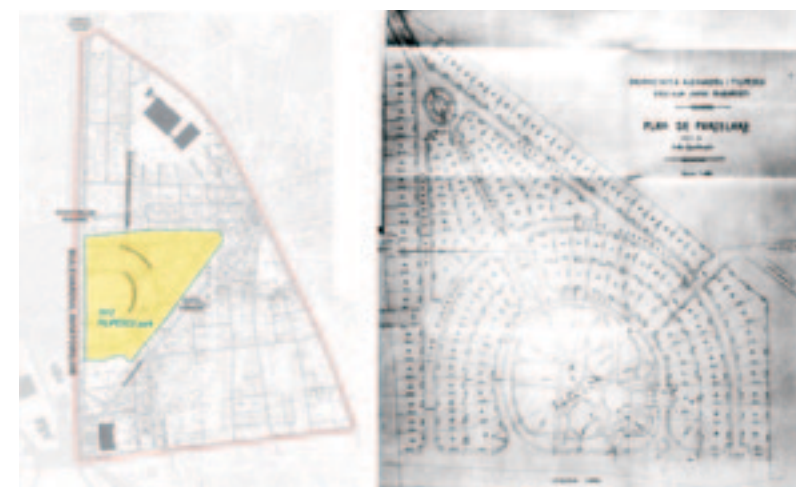


Fig. 4. Filipescu Park, 1912 (4\_a: Localisation of Filipescu Park within the study area, 4\_b: Original 'parcelling' plan for Filipescu Park, by Octave van Ryselberghe.)



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c. Bonaparte Park (1913) is the third parcelling made before the beginning of the First World War. It has a large extension and mostly completes the urban structure of the area through coherence of the street pattern, including the natural connection with the streets belonging to the earlier parcellings. At the junction with Calea Dorobanților, a small semi-circular square was also created, which quickly became an important landmark of the area. The plots follow the type of those in Filipescu Park, having considerably large street frontage and being close to square in shape (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5. Bonaparte Park, 1913 (5\_a: Localisation of Bonaparte Park within the study area, 5\_b: Original parcelling plan for Bonaparte Park.)

d. Several parcellings of different sizes were made during the First World War and in the years following its end: the parcelling of the 'Communal Company for Low-cost Buildings' (1916); the parcelling of the 'Edilitatea' Company (1922); Mornand and Eng. Teodorescu Park (1922); Gherghel parcelling (about 1925) and Zamfirescu parcelling (1925). All these parcellings establish a rational approach to plot formation, taking into consideration the plot sides' ratio adapted to some very different situations of land property configuration (Fig. 6).



Fig. 6. Parcellings made between 1916 and 1925

e. The last parcellings – Mornard Park (1928), the parcelling of the 'Moara' Company (1935), the parcelling of the 'Țesătoria Mecanică' Company I (1935), and the parcelling of the 'Țesătoria Mecanică' Company II (1940, the only one that was never actually built) – were designed according to the construction regulations of the municipality



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that imposed the plots' and buildings' geometry: the minimum area of a plot, the minimum sizes of its sides, the maximum site coverage, the buildings' heights, etc. Those regulations expressed the municipality's intention to ensure rational residential plots, but also hygiene conditions and aesthetics considerations. (Fig. 7).



Fig. 7. Parcellings made between 1928 and 1940

2. The second important factor is the average area of the plots in different parcellings (Fig. 8).

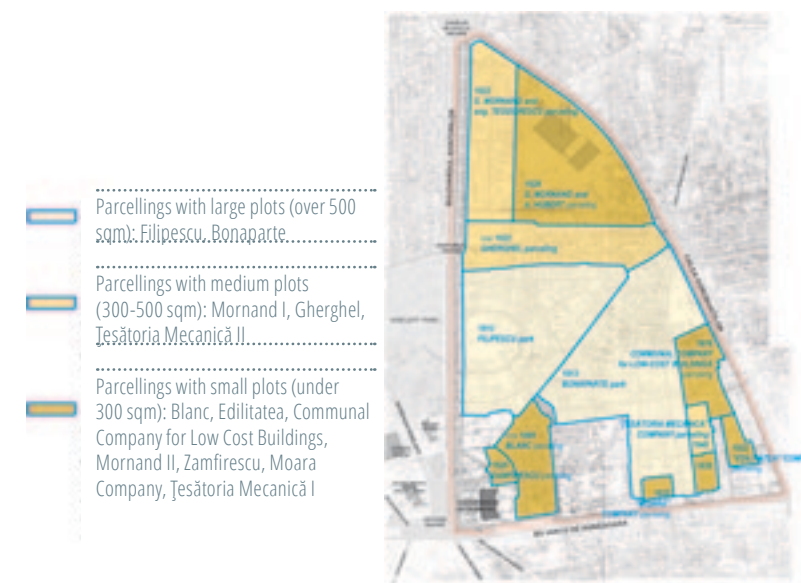


Fig. 8. Categories of parcellings by the average area of the plots

From this point of view there are three categories of parcellings:

- Parcellings with plots having an average area of over 500 square metres (Filipescu Park and Bonaparte Park).
- Parcellings with plots having an average area between 300 and 500 square metres (Mornand I, Gherghel, 'Țesătoria Mecanică' Company II).
- Parcelling with plots having an average area smaller than 300 square meters (Blanc, 'Edilitatea' Company, 'Communal Company for Low-cost Buildings', Mornand II, Zamfirescu, 'Moara' Company, 'Țesătoria Mecanică' Company I).



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Several observations can be drawn from the above. First of all, almost half of the area occupied by residential buildings is represented by the two parcellings with the largest plots (Filipescu and Bonaparte), located approximately in the middle part of the considered area. These are also the oldest parcellings in the area (except for the Blanc parcelling). On the other hand, the newer parcellings, realised after the First World War and located in the northern and in the southern parts of the area, have smaller plots. This evolution is the result of the general trend, at the entire city level, to rationalise the use of urban land, allocating smaller-sized plots for residential purposes. Secondly, these different configurations of the neighbourhoods (parcellings) point to a shift in the municipality's vision of the character of the entire area: from neighbourhoods of villas, luxurious residences for the wealthy social classes (corresponding to the largest plots) toward neighbourhoods (parcellings) for the middle classes and those of modest income (corresponding to the smaller plots). These different conditions generate different possibilities for building on the plots and a subsequent variety in the living comfort according to the social category for which a particular parcelling is designated. Thereby, we can say that the entire area is characterized by a social mixture reflected in the varied building typologies.

3. The dynamic of the changing building typology was determined by two distinct elements: the plots' shapes and sizes, and the restrictions concerning the buildings' height.

In the oldest parcelling (Blanc), the building typology is represented almost exclusively by narrow houses with the smaller side facing the street, due to the small elongated plots with narrow frontages (Fig. 9). The plot configuration inevitably led to building along one of the long sides of the plot; the entry to the building is made through a narrow courtyard open toward the street. In this way, the



Single-family house on Argentina Street



Single-family villa on Sofia Street



Single-family villa on Aleea Alexandru



Small apartment blocks on: Roma Street, Finlanda Street, Emilie Zola Street

Fig. 9. From single-family houses, to apartment blocks



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alternation of narrow buildings' façades and courtyards resulted in a characteristic of this parcelling; it states, once more, the affiliation of this first parcelling to the 19th century manner of occupying the urban land. All the subsequent parcellings, with plot shapes that are close to square, allowed a relatively high diversity in building typology, with various house-plan developments.

In certain parcellings, the large size plots allowed (until the First World War) the edification of some grand residences, veritable urban palaces, for single-family use. At the opposite extreme, the parcellings of the 'Communal Company for Low-cost Buildings' and of the 'Edilitate' Company were expressly built with the purpose of offering low-cost houses for low-income people; the 'Communal Company for Low-cost Buildings' even made an ensemble of standard buildings following the model of other similar ensembles already built in other parts of the city. Between these two extremes, all the other parcellings were intended for the middle class.

With regard to the height of buildings, it should be noted that in the interwar period, especially between 1930 and 1940, the maximum building height stated by the municipality regulations allowed the construction of two- to five-floor small apartment buildings on sites initially destined for single-family detached houses. Thereby, the density grew considerably, yet the typological complexity increased. This process continued after the Second World War, especially along the southern and eastern sides of the area where residential buildings of up to eleven or twelve floors' height emerged (on Iancu de Hunedoara Boulevard and Calea Dorobanţilor). After 1990 the increase in height extended throughout the area: we can find both high buildings grouped in certain parts (such as the condominium ensemble made on the land of the unbuilt 'Țesătoria Mecanică' II parcelling), and diffuse high buildings made on vacant lots or replacing demolished old buildings.

But most of the buildings in the whole area are single-family houses or buildings with multiple apartments, detached on their own plot or grouped in pairs, with variable heights, from single-floor buildings up to small apartment blocks with three to four floors above the ground floor. The best of these were built in the interwar period and display a large variety of architectural languages, from late Eclectic and Neo-Romanian, to Art Deco and high-quality Modernism. Among the authors, one can find some of the most prominent Romanian architects of the period: Horia Creangă, Duiliu Marcu, Petre Antonescu, Grigore Cerchez, Tiberiu Niga, Marcel Iancu, etc. In consideration of their exceptional cultural significance, some of these buildings were listed as historic monuments.

4. The prevailing functional character of the whole area has always been and still is the residential one. However, other different functions appeared over time. Concomitantly with the first parcellings, a city public transport tram depot was built near Iancu de Hunedoara Boulevard and 'Saint Vincent de Paul' Hospital was erected along with its church - still standing - on a plot owned by a charitable order of nuns ('Les Filles de la Charité de Saint Vincent de Paul') on Aviatorilor Boulevard. Also on the Aviatorilor Boulevard, close to Victoriei Square, Leonida Garage - one of the first garages in Bucharest - was built in the same period. The buildings with functions other than housing, made after the parcelling process was concluded, required the merging of several plots, thus changing the morphological structure of the area. During the interwar period, two major public edifices were erected: the building currently hosting the State Treasury of the 1st District on Roma Street (originally designed as the headquarters of the local financial administration) and the imposing building of the I.L. Caragiale High School, whose main façade overlooks Calea Dorobanţilor. In 1945, the first important office building was constructed within Filipescu Park, today hosting the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (originally designed to house the headquarters of the Central Committee of the



Romanian Communist Party). In the early 1960s, on an extensive part of the Mornand II parcelling, the headquarters and the studios of the Romanian Television Society were built, occupying a large area along Calea Dorobanţilor (Fig. 10). On Aviatorilor Boulevard a large area is occupied by the I.C. Parhon Hospital, including the old building of the former 'Saint Vincent de Paul' Hospital as well as new buildings of the 1960s.

The changes in the functional character of the area which first appeared in the interwar period were accentuated after the Second World War and later, after 1990, when a large number of residential villas were converted into embassies or ambassadors' residences, consulates, cultural institutes of some European countries (including the headquarter of the Romanian Cultural Institute), into political parties' headquarters, etc. Some new buildings for institutions have been recently inserted in the area, such as the building of the German Embassy and other buildings for offices. At the same time, several restaurants were established in some of the existing villas.

5. The relationships of this area to the city evolved together with the major transformation of the entire urban structure of Bucharest. Until the eve of the Second World War, the entire area – an aggregation of different parcellings with partially constructed plots – was open towards the main boulevards that bounded it: *Lancu de Hunedoara*, *Aviatorilor* and *Calea Dorobanților*. The only exception was the massive volume of the I.L. Caragiale High School. The major urban reorganisations from the 1960s (along the *Lancu de Hunedoara* Boulevard) and 1970s (on *Calea Dorobanților*) have significantly modified the relationship with the adjacent area, because of the construction of continuous fronts of new high-rise apartment blocks with commercial spaces on their ground floor; they form massive screens along the two major boulevards hiding the image of the significantly ‘domestic’ character of the old residential area (Fig. 11).



Fig. 10. Different other functions inserted in the residential area (in yellow) and the screen of high-rise apartment blocks built in the 1960s and 1970s (in blue) hiding the old residential area





Fig.11. Continuous fronts of high-rise apartment blocks along Iancu de Hunedoara Boulevard and Calea Dorobanților, hiding the old residential area

The defining characteristics of the whole study area – planned parcelings, homogeneity of the urban pattern due to the manner of land division, the coordinated construction of the buildings and the residential function – to which the historic value should be added (as material testimony of the residential neighbourhoods belonging to the first half of the 20th century) led to the listing of seven parcelings as ‘protected urban areas’ among others with the same status in Bucharest. These ‘protected urban areas’ are: Blanc parceling, Filipescu Park, Bonaparte Park and ‘Moara’ Company parceling, ‘Țesătoria Mecanică’ I parceling, ‘Edilitatea’ Company parceling, ‘Communal Company for Low-cost Buildings’ parceling, and Mornand Park. The related documentation was approved by the General Council of the Municipality of Bucharest in 2000, along with the General Urban Plan. The special regulations drawn up for each of these protected areas aimed to preserve their specific character by setting rules for interventions on existing buildings and for new buildings to be inserted.

Later, it was found that in practice the regulations were not protective enough, as proven by the various new buildings that contrast with the overall character of the area as well as by the interventions that altered the architectural character of some existing buildings. At the

same time, it was found that the status of ‘protected urban area’ is not strong enough to prevent the demolition of certain buildings unlisted but having obvious architectural and contextual value. Consequently, in 2005-2007, the studies concerning the protected urban areas of Filipescu Park, Bonaparte Park and Mornand parceling were revised. On this occasion, the architectural value of the buildings and their role in defining the character of the urban areas were reconsidered. The revised regulations for the protected areas mentioned were approved by the General Council of the municipality. Thus, the necessary conditions for a more restrictive control of the interventions were put in place.

As it looks nowadays, one could say that the whole considered urban area is characterised by a (still) stable equilibrium between its original functionality, largely maintained, and different kinds of aggression of modern city development, generating various disorders. These aggressions are due to such current phenomena as: the insertion of new functions that contrast with the residential character of the area; the increasing pressure of real estate values; the arbitrary demolition of existing buildings and the construction of new ones whose architecture contrasts – sometimes violently – with the general character of the area; the alteration of the original architecture of existing buildings (through arbitrary – and often unauthorised – transformations such as: the addition of new levels; total or partial removal/simplification of façade moldings and decorative elements; new dissonant finishes and window frames; façades painted in garish colours; etc). The poor maintenance of the public green spaces and the lack of the necessary parking places, making cars invade open spaces with other original designations, are also current problems of the area.

## Notes

Historical plans from the personal archive of the author.

Drawings by A. Udrea / Photos by A. Udrea and N. Lascu.





## Modernist neighbourhoods in Bucharest Typological and morpho-stylistical analysis of the Iancu de Hunedoara - Calea Dorobanților - Aviatorilor perimeter

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The historical neighbourhoods of northern Bucharest, bordered by Calea Dorobanților, Aviatorilor and Iancu de Hunedoara boulevards, provide a relevant sample of the typological and morpho-stylistical mosaic that characterises the Romanian capital – although the urban fabric has an incontestable homogeneity and the greater part of the built environment dates back to the first half of the 20th century, mainly to the interwar period.

The explanation for this great diversity lies not only in the variations in building regulations and urban compositional patterns adopted for each subdivision, but also in the programmatic intentions or the varied tastes of the promoters and owners, considering the predominantly residential character of the area. For instance, avoiding the monotony and uniformity of the functionalist neighbourhoods was an explicit wish of a group of owners who, in 1928, were demanding the authorisation to sell unified plots of the Mornand subdivision to single buyers, arguing that in this way, 'the aspect of the street would gain from the aesthetic point of view, and one would avoid for this neighbourhood the aesthetically harmful aspect of uniformity of the so-called cités ouvrières in the West'<sup>1</sup>.



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This original variety of architectural forms was increased with the postwar evolution, since the insertions and interventions on existing buildings introduced new scales, new architectural languages and new functions (especially multi-family dwellings, administrative buildings and, more recently, banks and office buildings) – still without gravely altering or damaging the coherence of the urban landscape.

A relevant analysis of the buildings in the area should follow the main criteria which explain its complex and diversified character: function, position on the plot, size and volume, morphology and style (in relation to the corresponding historical periods), and materials and colours.

## Functions

The studied neighbourhoods occupy an area of the former periphery of Bucharest, situated north of the ring belt of the city which marked its limits at the end of the 19th century (Iancu de Hunedoara, Ștefan cel Mare and Mihai Bravu Boulevards), and originally designed mainly for industrial functions. Following the concentric growth of the city and the land development for housing subdivisions, the functional character of the area has turned progressively from industrial to residential, and though slightly diversified during the interwar period and afterwards, yet remains predominantly residential until the present day.

Residential architecture comprises mostly modern urban types of one- or multi-family dwellings, from luxury villas and middle-standard detached or semi-detached houses to apartment blocks (low-, middle- or high-rise). Yet in the Louis Blanc subdivision, dating back to 1895 (the oldest of the area), one can still encounter

examples of the traditional urban vernacular type, characteristic of the second half of the 19th century in Bucharest, which are built on the small narrow plots of this subdivision: the so-called ‘wagon-house’, developed longitudinally with a lateral access and attached to a lateral limit of the plot, with a pitched roof and often having a projecting emphasised entrance (Fig. 1).



Fig.1. Argentina Street

Functions other than residential generally occupy large plots positioned at the periphery of the area, in the proximity of the major arteries: public buildings (housing the State Treasury, a financial administration building, office headquarters, a hospital, a high school) and a tram depot dating back to the interwar period; the studios of the Romanian Television Society and artists' ateliers from the Communist period; banks and corporate headquarters built after 1990.



### Position on the plot, size and volume

Function is actually closely related to the size and volume of the buildings, thus generating a mixed functional and volumetric criterion which goes beyond the frontiers of the established chronological and stylistic divisions. The height and the horizontal dimensions (mainly the street front, but also the lateral ones for the oblique perspectives) are important, since they were initially limited to a domestic scale by the building regulations of each subdivision, and usually respected. One can notice that the large-sized buildings (apartment blocks or public administration buildings) of the pre-1990 period usually do not create disturbing contrasts because they have sober façades, most often set back from the street alignment and/or fragmented (Fig. 2), while their materials and colours are compatible with the traditional ones used for most of the original residential buildings of the area. On the contrary, the post-1990 interventions are often aggressive, with their overscaled dimensions and strident finishes.

A distinct typology based on a volumetric criterion might classify the overall volumes of the buildings into compact volumes, perceived as monoblocks even if some have slight projecting or recessed components (Fig. 3), and articulated volumes, assembling several components with various geometric shapes (Fig. 4). Each of these categories can be diversified according to the roof type: flat or pitched, with sloping angles under or above 30° (Figs. 5-8). The irregular, aleatory succession of these different types of volumes contributes to the picturesque touch of the area. However, one can sometimes notice small groups of buildings of the same category, which confers upon the respective segment a certain homogeneity and specificity.



Fig. 2. Artists' ateliers, 33 Pangrati Street



Fig. 3. Duiliu Marcu – 1 Muzeul Zambaccian Street



Fig. 4. 29 Muzeul Zambaccian Street



Fig. 5. 17 Muzeul Zambaccian Street



Fig. 6. 44 Paris Street



Fig. 7. 13 Muzeul Zambaccian Street



Fig. 8. 1 Muresanu Street



Fig. 9. 13 Muzeul Zambaccian Street



### Chronological and morpho-stylistic categories

The studied area displays a diversified palette of morpho-stylistic formulae, being a predominantly residential zone, in which the varied preferences and tastes of the clients played an important part. This is why it is difficult to identify a dominant stylistic note among the numerous architectural trends and models that have been adopted, all the more so because many imported orientations and tendencies manifested themselves in Romania later than in Western Europe, in combined formulae or cross-fertilised with local and regional traditions.

The whole area started its development at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, and consequently the only available chronological landmarks, which define clear transformations and ruptures with the previous period, are the two regime changes of 1945 and 1990. The period between the beginning of the century and 1945 provides the most important body of architectural production in the area. Most architects practising in this period had a Beaux-Arts training, which explains their versatility and skill in operating in various stylistic idioms and adapting to the preferences of a public little attracted by the radicalism and austerity of the International Style.

In the oldest subdivision, Louis Blanc, the urban vernacular dwelling is currently associated with a popular urban style, characterised by simplified classic mouldings and window-frames, stucco simulating banded rustication and projecting decorative eaves (Fig. 9). This local traditional style often appears in combination with elements borrowed from the repertoire of the Western styles (Neo-Classicism, Academic or Picturesque Eclecticism) (Fig. 10) or of the national style.



Fig.9. 22 Argentina Street



Fig.10. 4 Argentina Street

Academic Eclecticism, mainly based on French school models, appears especially in the first stages of the studied subdivisions (Fig. 11), before and during the First World War, turning later on into a refined post-Classicism, an echo to the imperative of the *retour à l'ordre*, which after 1910 unified in a major trend the various reactions against the ostentation of belle-époque architecture (Fig. 12).



Fig.11. Oromolu House, 6 Aviatorilor Boulevard



Fig.12. 38 Londra Street

Probably the most pregnant presence in the area is that of a 'modern' Picturesque Eclecticism inspired by different traditions and reflecting the variety of tastes of the owners, from the renewed tradition of the Domestic Revival, indebted to regional models of Western and Central Europe (Figs. 13-14), to the Mediterranean traditions en vogue in the 1930s, which revisit successfully the Italianate



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taste of early 19th-century English Picturesque and feature Tuscan, Moorish, Venetian or Neo-Byzantine motifs (Figs. 15-16).



Figs. 13-14. 2 Sofia Street; 7 Rabat Street;



Figs. 15-16. 39 Londra Street; 21 Paris Street

Modern Regionalism, apparently connected stylistically to the vein of Picturesque Eclecticism, addresses various vernacular traditions not only on a purely morphological level, but by interpreting them in an essentialised modern spirit, aware of the necessary relationship between architecture, site, local culture and human behaviour. The examples in the area, most frequently inspired from the Mediterranean, Balkan and Romanian vernacular traditions, are characterised by the use of gutter-tiled cornices, wooden pergolas, projecting eaves with wooden decorative brackets, wrought iron grilles, bay windows and large calcio-vecchio surfaces (Figs. 17-18).



Figs. 17-18. Zambaccian Museum, 21A Muzeul Zambaccian Street; 3-5 Mora Street

The Neo-Romanian style – a synthesis of elements and motifs deriving from the national repertoire created in a Beaux-Arts spirit – is a common presence in the area, in spite of its cosmopolitan ambiance. The former free interpretation of the local traditions in an eclectic and picturesque manner gives way to a more rigorous selection of the vocabulary (Fig. 19) and towards the end of the interwar period to a modern orientation, gradually permeated by Modernism or Modern Regionalism, and less interested in expressing a national identity than in reaching the authentic spirit of the national tradition (Fig. 20).



Fig. 19. 34 Londra Street



Fig. 20. Octav Doicescu – 2 Emile Zola Street



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The Secession style appears less frequently, but the only relevant example in the area, the monumental villa at 14 Aleea Alexandru, follows consistently the Viennese models with their specific vertical partition of the façades and massive volumes treated in a Classical manner, displaying stylised orders and geometric ornaments (Fig. 21).



Fig. 21. 14 Aleea Alexandru

The Art Deco aesthetic, originally created in France, but widespread in Europe and the United States, enjoyed a remarkable success in interwar Romania, mainly in residential architecture, which is more sensitive to the fluctuations of fashion and taste. Art Deco architecture, understood as a temperate and accessible avatar of Modernism, tolerant towards tradition and mass culture, could not fail to be present in the stylistic palette of the area. It appears in various formulae, from late Parisian Eclecticism (Fig. 22) to the dynamic moderne, marked by an Expressionist imprint (Fig. 23), and the International Deco, which assimilates the rigour of the International Style (Fig. 24).

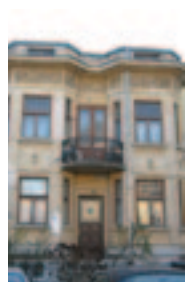


Fig. 22. 39 Aleea Alexandru

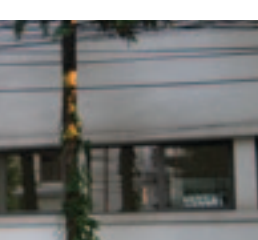
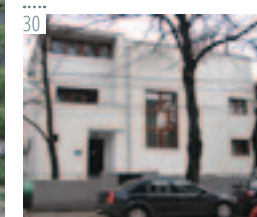
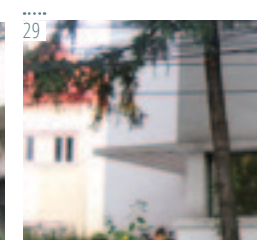


Fig. 23. 19 Roma Street



Fig. 24. 13 Rabat Street

Modernism is highly represented in the studied area by works of the most prominent figures of Romanian interwar architecture. Versatile and eclectic spirits, indebted to a Beaux-Arts education, they usually adopt a moderate tonality, balanced, cordial and permissive in relation to tradition, although subscribing to the agenda of Progressive Modernism (Figs. 25-27). The simplicity of the Modernist works in the area is always sophisticated and attentive to textures and details, thus expressing a lust for continuity between tradition and modernity, and integrating successfully with the surrounding architecture (Fig. 28). Even in the case of the few pieces of genuine International Style designed by Horia Creanga or Marcel Iancu, the expression of Radical Modernism is filtered through refined compositional or detailing patterns deriving from the Beaux Arts tradition (Fig. 29) or the conjunction of fine arts and architecture (Fig. 30).



Figs. 25-30. Duiliu Marcu – Bușilă Villa, 1 Rabat Street; Tiberiu Niga – 41 Aleea Alexandru; Henriette Delavrancea – 44 Londra Street; Jean Valeanu – 33 Argentina Street; Horia Creanga – Bunesu Villa, 12 Aleea Alexandru; Marcel Iancu – 36 Grigore Mora Street



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The period between 1945 and 1990 is less representative for the studied area, since most of the plots had already been occupied with buildings during the previous period.

The Socialist realism of the 1950s is illustrated by apartment blocks (34 Zambaccian Street - Fig. 31; 35 Grigore Mora Street; 21A Roma Street) and a series of buildings for artists' ateliers (27-29A Pangrati Street - Fig. 32) which adopt a simplified Classical language with horizontal banding, rustic ground-floors and a sober ornamentation of the cornices, window frames and portals.



Fig. 31. 34 Muzeul Zambaccian Street



Fig. 32. Artists' ateliers, 31 Pangrati Street

The return of Modernism in the post-Stalinist period left few traces in the area: multi-family dwellings with a neutral treatment, and the complex of Romanian Television which introduced a radically different, larger scale, but is fortunately screened by the rich vegetation of its large plot (Fig. 33). Furthermore, the rare insertions dating back to the 1970s testify to the brutalist influence combined with the quest of a specific national expression imposed by the Ceausescu regime – resulting in the recourse to traditional materials (wood, brick), pitched roofs and freer, more sculptural forms (Fig. 34).

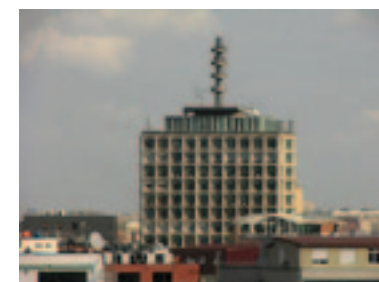


Fig. 33. Romanian Television Studios, Calea Dorobanti



Fig. 34. 66 Aviatorilor Boulevard

The post-1990 period brings noxious interventions on existing buildings (Fig. 35), even on listed ones, and insertions that usually create negative contrasts of overall size, scale of the architectural elements, material and colour. The bank headquarters on Calea Dorobanti brutally overwhelms the surrounding buildings and streets (Fig. 36), while new office and apartment buildings create flagrant dissonances by their size, uncontrolled composition and aggressive commercial style with large glass surfaces, prominent projections and strident materials or colours (Fig. 37).



Fig. 35. 62 Aviatorilor Boulevard



Fig. 36. Grigore Mora Street



Fig. 37. 23-25 Grigore Mora Street

Nevertheless, exceptions can be observed which manifest a certain respect for the context and visible intentions of interpreting the existing forms in a contemporary idiom (Fig. 38-39).





Figs. 38-39. 27-29 Grigore Mora Street; 20 Louis Blanc Street

Beyond this great variety of morpho-stylistic expressions, the dominant formulae seem to be those belonging to an updated Picturesque Eclecticism based on the Domestic Revival and Mediterranean styles, but also Neo-Romanian models, having in common sloping roofs, complex articulated volumes and a rich range of materials, techniques and details. The weight of soft Modernism – also including the Art Deco aesthetic – is, however, important, and therefore the specific character of the area is defined by the interwar buildings with alternating prismatic and pyramidal volumetries, various morphological elements and elaborate detailing.

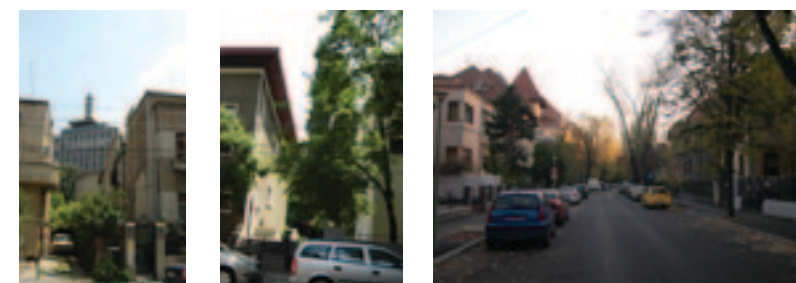
To conclude, the neighbourhoods in the studied area represent an architectural reservation in which the multitude of stylistic expressions create an eclectic mosaic, homogenised by the regularity of the urban composition, the predominant use of traditional materials, and the presence of vegetation (Fig. 40).



Fig. 40. 26 Grigore Mora Street

The open regime of the fronts creates a spatial continuum which allows visual communication between spaces and constantly renewed perspectives, plus the excitement of continually discovering new forms. The urban landscape is characterised by a unifying visual permeability, successively filtered by interpenetrating planes – a quality given by the alternation of built façade screens and semi-transparent screens of vegetation and fencings (Figs. 41-43).

The result is a coherent urban space, picturesque and at the same time ordered, with a global identity which encourages the affirmation of individual identity.<sup>2</sup>



Figs. 41-43. 30-32 Grigore Mora Street; 36-38 Grigore Mora Street; Londra Street

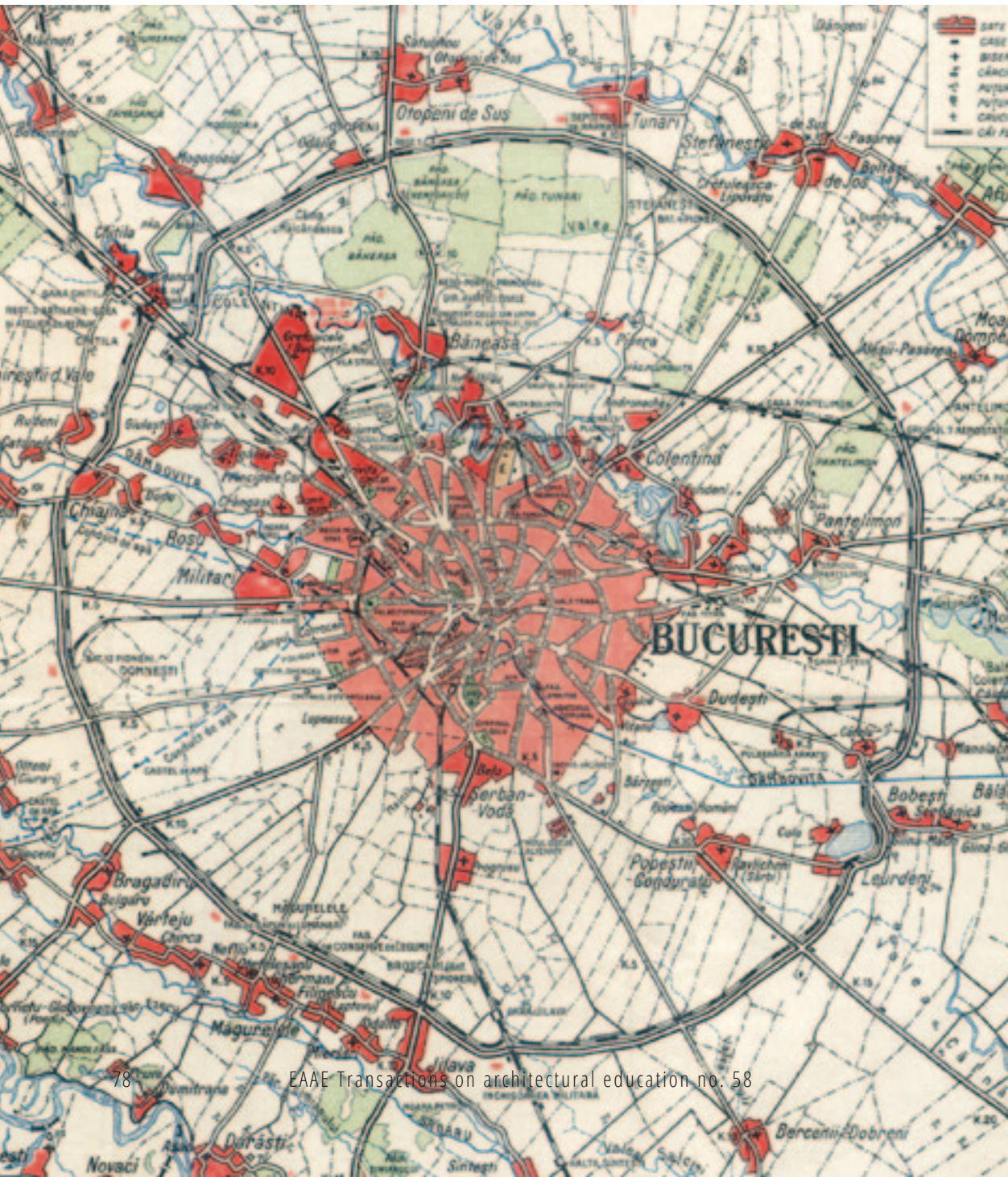
## Notes

1 Request addressed to the Municipality by a group of landowners, in File 545/1939 ("Works, studies, plans regarding the situation of Mornand subdivision. The Decision of the Technical Commission of June 25, 1928"), Archive of Bucharest Municipality (PMB), PMB/sector I / Yellow fund (author's translation).

2 For further information, consult the historical studies in: Definirea regimului tehnic al construcțiilor supuse autorizării în zonele protejate și în zonele de protecție ale monumentelor, în scopul protejării patrimoniului architectural și urbanistic al municipiului București (Definition of the Technical Status of Buildings Subject to Licensing in Protected Areas and in Areas of Preservation of Listed Monuments –for the Purpose of Protecting the Architectural and urban Heritage of Bucharest) – ZPC/Protected Area 48 – FILIPESCU SUBDIVISION; ZPC/Protected Area 49 – BONAPARTE SUBDIVISION; ZPC/Protected Area 53 – MORNAND SUBDIVISION, [www.pmb.ro/servicii/urbanism/zone\\_protejate/def\\_regim\\_tehnic.php](http://www.pmb.ro/servicii/urbanism/zone_protejate/def_regim_tehnic.php)

Photos by Mihaela Criticos





# Conservation and the City The dichotomy between economic development and urban identity. Case study: the 'protected areas' of Bucharest

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Eight years ago, the MA students from the University of Edinburgh invited me to deliver a conference on the topic of 'Collision in Cities'. I spoke then about the 'consumption of space' and the 'spaces of consumption', quoting a paper of Mark Gottdiener (Consumption of Space and Spaces of Consumption), published in 'Architectural Design' in 1998. Obviously, my presentation was oriented to the 2003 situation of Bucharest. I presented two aspects of the new usages of the city land and landscape: the first explained the way in which democracy was understood by the land or building owners, in fact the idea of using the property by neglecting the surroundings, as well as the city; as for the second aspect, I highlighted the adjustments of the extant buildings or spaces in order to confirm to the idea of profit. I also used the term 'consumerscape'. I did not know at that moment how the situation would evolve.

In fact, it changed dramatically.

The value of the square metre in Romania increased at an almost unbelievable rate. It became easier to buy a plot of land in Hungary or Bulgaria – not to mention Sardinia for instance – than



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in Romania. On either side of the Romanian borders, a building or development site of the same kind, type or area doubled its price.

As one can suppose, as a capital city, Bucharest is at the top of this speculation. The result is the perception of the urban space as a potential source of profit, and very quickly this became the only way to look at it.

### Short history of the city of Bucharest

The city was born at the crossing of a commercial road with the river Dâmbovița. A modest citadel assumed the destiny of defending the economic activity developed by merchants. So, the birth of the town is similar to the birth of any other medieval city. It was first attested as such in 1459, six years after the fall of Constantinople. The proximity of these two dates could be significant; it could explain the growing development of the town as being related to the removal over the northern border of the new Ottoman empire of activities that were specific to the former Byzantine capital (Fig. 1).



Fig.1. Plan of Bucharest, 1770. (Kriegsarchiv, Vienna).

The 17th and 18th centuries were important for Bucharest's development, based upon its flourishing trade activities and reflected in its urban configuration. The concentration of population is mainly due to its status of capital city, but also to its importance as an Orthodox capital, attracting Orthodox refugees from south of the Danube. The regulations then in force were inspired by Byzantine laws dating from the 14th century, and they seemed well adapted to local traditions and the existing institutional framework.

The modernisation of the town – begun by the Russian administration in 1830-1831 – consisted of the application of urban regulations concerning planning, control of growth and administration of the city, breaking away from the former Byzantine regulations. The new wave of development was supported by strong economic activity, reflected in the increasing density of buildings. Large-scale urban operations were initiated, beginning in the late 19th century, in order to transform the town following the pattern of contemporary European capital cities. The process – consisting of adherence to an urban policy based upon aesthetic, functional and economic rules inspired by the Occident – goes on until 1944 (Figs. 2, 3, 4).

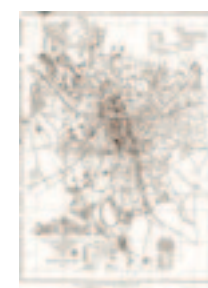


Fig.2. Plan of Bucharest, 1893. (Romanian State Archives, Bucharest).



Fig.3. Plan of Bucharest, 1923. (from: Maior Mihai C. Pântea, 'Planul și ghidul orașului București').

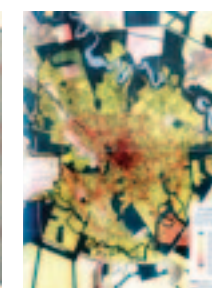


Fig.4. Bucharest Master plan, 1935-1938. (Romanian State Archives, Bucharest).



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Things changed after 1944. I have to mention: the abolition of private property; and economic planning adhering to the rules of the 'socialist economy' – meaning generally the arbitrary decision of political rulers. We needn't forget the ideological opposition to terms like 'free market', 'economy of consumption' or 'profit', which were banished from the vocabulary. The result of this so-called economic policy led to the freezing of those economic mechanisms that are intimately and naturally involved in the life of towns. To this must be added the social factors – the vanished peasants' private property, as well as the growth of the city industrial sector that determined the removal of the population from villages to cities, especially to Bucharest. From there, the severe shortage of dwellings was solved by the construction of huge districts of blocks of flats, built by the state (and remaining state property). These dwellings were more and more uniform, inadequate both to the habits and needs of the newly arrived people, and to what we could call a decent lifestyle. No less important is the cultural alteration induced for two or three generations by the above-mentioned factors. The only positive quality of these large urban operations lay in the fact that the new districts of blocks of flats were generally placed outside the city, as it was conceived and realised before the Second World War (Fig. 5)



Fig.5. Bucharest district built around 1980. (<https://maps.google.com>).

Briefly, these are the main features of the urban context into which the 'free market', 'private property' and 'consumption' burst.

It was obvious to the urban planners that the city was totally unprepared for what was to follow in the years after 1990. So, they began by looking at the other European cities and their regulations.

Inspired mainly by the French regulations for urban development, they tried to establish an urban development law, taking into account the extant values expressing the city's identity (Fig. 6).



Fig.6. Plan of Bucharest, 1989. (UAUIM Archives)



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### The new legislation after 1990

Following the principles of the interwar Urban Development Plan, urban planners initiated and defined in 1999 a new PUG (Urban General Plan). It includes the development rules for 94 declared 'protected areas'. At that time, they considered that such areas, mainly residential, would represent an enormous interest, due to the obvious quality of life they offered, in huge contrast with the way of living imposed by the previous built block of flats (Figs. 7, 8).



Fig.7. Plan of Bucharest; in red, the protected areas. ([http://www.pmb.ro/servicii/urbanism/zone\\_protejate/](http://www.pmb.ro/servicii/urbanism/zone_protejate/)).



Fig.8. Aerial image of a protected area (<https://maps.google.com/>)

In this respect, the protected areas were defined as 'urban areas in which the preservation of the characteristic cityscape determined by its natural features, historical structures, typical building stock and variety of functions must be safeguarded'.



The studies incorporated the following components:

A. a written section, dealing with two aspects:

1. the definition of the area limits, its contour, as well as the following elements: general character of the area; building density; building types; and their average dimensions
2. the regulations the new buildings should respect in order to preserve the character/identity of the area. It must be mentioned that – to the authors' way of thinking – to protect an area does not mean that development is excluded; it is permitted, even encouraged, in some specific conditions, differing from area to area. It is important that the new intervention preserves, even enhances, the defined specific character/identity of the area

B. an operational plan for the area: the cadastral plan on which were marked the limits of the area, the position and type of the building line along the street, and the historic monuments (Fig. 9).



Fig.9. Operational plan of a protected area as it was defined in 1999. ([http://www.pmb.ro/servicii/urbanism/zone\\_protejate](http://www.pmb.ro/servicii/urbanism/zone_protejate)).

The regulations were accepted by the municipality, as well as introduced as conditions in the Historic Monuments Conservation law. However, nobody noticed that a stipulation of the urbanism law mentioned that every building not classified as a Historic Monument could be demolished and replaced by a new one.

Only in 2006 was a phrase introduced in the revised Historic Monuments Conservation law indicating that, even if a building was not a classified monument, one could refuse its demolition on the basis of its own value or of its value within the protected area.

It was obviously not enough, and the arbitrary (or interested) judgement of one or another officer in the municipality could – and often did – give the approval for demolition.

Two other elements entered the game. Firstly: the large amount of money coming from the European Union states – often together with a developer. Meanwhile, one must remember that generally, the buildings from the protected areas used to be state or municipal properties, having been taken from their private owners in the 1950s. Around 2000, the illegitimate owners were obliged to give them back to the heirs of the people who originally built or bought them before 1950. On the one hand, their physical condition was very bad because of 50 years' lack of maintenance and inappropriate use; on the other hand, the heirs lacked the financial ability to repair or consolidate the structure of the buildings. They preferred to sell them to the newly arrived above-mentioned developers.

Unfortunately, the judgement of the urban planners was only a hope; for many owners, the increasing value of the land, as well as the building 'boom' were – and still are – prevailing over the quality of life provided by such areas. New, large, high and 'glossy' buildings began to replace the Bucharest houses, transforming the streets into corridors, deprived of personality.



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In this situation, the architect-in-chief of Bucharest decided to reinforce the protection of such areas by imposing stricter rules for possible interventions. And this was our project, from 2005 to 2007 ('Definirea regimului tehnic al construcțiilor supuse autorizării în zonele protejate și în zonele de protecție ale monumentelor, în scopul protejării patrimoniului arhitectural și urbanistic al municipiului București'/'Study defining the statute of the buildings belonging to Bucharest protected areas, enabling the conservation of the urban and architectural heritage of Bucharest'. This was a collective project, coordinated by the author of this paper).

### The pilot project

The project did not mean a change to the existing protected areas, but a refinement of the previous studies, in order to prevent the abusive demolition of the buildings and their replacement with inappropriate new structures – proposed by the owner and permitted by the local administration.

In fact, our pilot project, regarding twelve different areas, was based upon similar European experiences and comprised two parts.

The first was the urban analysis, done simultaneously with the inventory of the buildings, analysed one by one. The urban analysis – focusing on the urban development which determined the actual structure of the areas – helped us to make a more precise definition of their identity-forming characteristics. As for the buildings' inventory, it was elaborated in order to highlight their intrinsic qualities, as well as their contribution to the specific identity of the area.

The second part consisted of the use of the first stage evaluation in what we termed 'the attitude'. In the contexts of the already

established protected areas, we marked the buildings classified according to three categories:

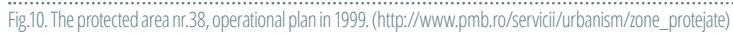
- Fully protected objects – structures assigned top priority with respect to their appearance and quality. They could not be demolished (red).
- Partly protected objects – referred to average protection of structures of high quality with respect to their appearance; mainly protected in these cases are the scale, the street wings of the buildings and the facades (orange).
- Objects not worthy of preservation – due to their inappropriate or even harmful architectural and urban presence in the area. They may be modified and partly or entirely demolished (grey).

Green spaces forming part of the personality of every area are also marked as belonging to the first category, that of full protection (Figs.10, 11).

For ease of use and control of the implementation of the proposed rules, we invented a sort of mechanism to be put into practice. According to this, the plan of the protected area is to be accompanied by a presentation of the street facade of every object, mentioned with its street (postal) address and marked with the same colour as in the general plan. Moreover, we elaborated in the same way a list of postal addresses of all the buildings belonging to the area (Figs.12, 13).

Finally, every building marked as fully protected has its own separate file, illustrating its address, position in plan and the main elements which determined 'the attitude' towards it (Fig. 14).







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These graphic presentations are supported by a very simple explanation of every category concerned. It is also stated that the documentation of any intervention proposed in the area should be accompanied by a study evaluating the affected building or buildings, from the point of view of their intrinsic qualities, and of their contribution to the area's specific identity.

### A parallel history – the real one

In 2000, all the municipalities were obliged to define the limits and to establish the rules of conservation/development of the protected areas; just a few of them did so.

In 2004, the Ministry of Public Works issued an Order governing the ways of applying the regulations on the conservation and the use of the development potential of the protected areas. Only the Bucharest Municipality elaborated such regulations in 2005-2007 – as a 'pilot project' – for 12 of the 94 protected areas of Bucharest; three other areas were added only in 2011.

Day after day we are witness to new demolitions of valuable buildings belonging to the 'protected areas'; the 'EU structural funds' are almost always cited as requiring this kind of sacrifice...

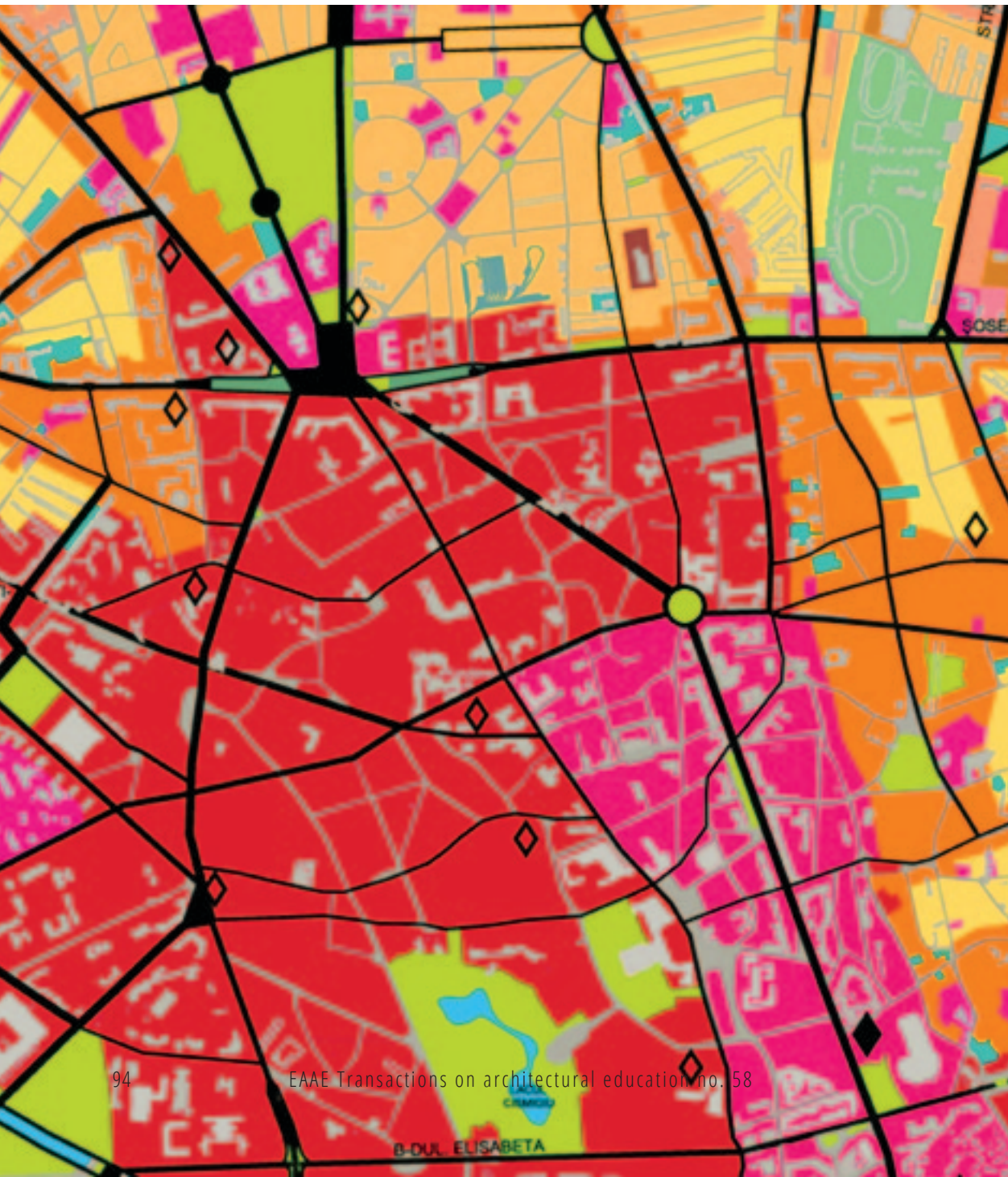
And there is more: one must see the project by the Zaha Hadid team for a building placed into one of the most valuable 'protected areas' in Bucharest. The text presenting the project says that the new building 'will be unlike anything else in Bucharest'. One must agree with this affirmation (Fig. 13).

As well, it must be regarded in the context of occurring the same year of the ICOMOS declaration on the 'preservation of the spirit of the place', adopted at Québec, Canada, October 4th 2008.



Fig.13. Zaha Hadid project in Bucharest, 2008. (<http://www.zaha-hadid.com/architecture/dorobanti-tower/>)





## The planning system and instruments in Romania and their evolution with a focus on protected areas<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction

The aim of the paper is to present a brief but global overview of the present Romanian planning system and its specific instruments, emphasising its main characteristics in relation to the approach to historic areas. For more than two decades after the fall of the Communist regime, the planning system has undergone a continuous process of reforms and transformations, for which December 1989 was the turning point. Once the previous 1974 systematisation law was abolished, new rules and instruments had to be set up and implemented. However, the profound changes within Romanian society led to an even more complex review of the urban and territorial planning issue, which went far beyond rules and instruments. Major challenges in the field also referred to the development of a new institutional framework, to specific education and training in the field, to the very definition of the spatial planning profession, to the need for permanently increasing the capacities of new central and local administrations to handle and master the urban and territorial development. Within the transition period, 'from a total control to a freedom of decision' (Urbanismul 2010<sup>2</sup>), over the last 20 years a new legal framework was set up together with



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new planning instruments, a planning school has been created, the profession of urban planner was defined and recognised and many other changes, all these within a process of continuous adaptation to a changing society and to the demands of European integration. The following lines will underline the major aspects and elements of this period, pointing out some of its relevant gains and shortcomings with a focus on the issue of protected areas.

### A new legal framework

Systematisation was perceived by Romanian society but also by the Western ones as one of the most powerful symbols of the Communist regime, responsible for the destruction of a large part of the built heritage of towns and villages and for the brutal re-shaping of the urban environment. Important historians such as Dinu Giurescu describe systematisation as being responsible for 'the destruction of the traditional urban constructed area almost in its entirety and its replacement by tenement apartment buildings and the resettlement of the entire rural population' (Giurescu 1989:68). In December 1989 'Systematisation Law' (58/1974) was abolished and 'systematisation' overnight became 'urbanism' or 'territorial and town planning'<sup>3</sup>. However, its replacement and the reconstruction of the legal framework proved to be difficult and to last longer than expected. In fact, until 2001 the legal framework for spatial planning was rather fragile, and regulations in the field were mostly coming from other areas: construction, transport, environment and human health. The setting up of the legal system can be divided into three stages: the first decade of transition, the '90s, when some preliminary 'bricks' were added; the first part of the second decade, the 2000s, when a number of important laws were issued; and the last few years, characterised by attempts to

reform and improve the system. During the first stage, after a short legal void, the Law 50 for issuing of building permits was approved in 1991. References to urban plans and to urban permits are made as well as to historic monuments and their protection area (Law 50/1991). Shortly after the law was issued, in November 1991, the 91st Ministerial Decree (MD) defined the new planning instruments at local and territorial levels and their content. Although during the first half of the decade a draft of a new Planning Act was prepared and even discussed in a meeting with representatives of the European Council of Town Planners (ECTP), its discussion for approval by parliament was continuously postponed.

During this first interval, a General Urban Regulatory Framework was issued by Government Decree (GD), which defined some general rules for urban planning. Planning activity is also influenced by other laws concerning land restitution (1991 Land Law), quality of construction (1995), expropriation for public utility (1994), and public property, cadastre and publicity (1996). It is characteristic of this period of time that the status of spatial planning is associated with the building sector. By the end of the decade those activities meant to set up a new and comprehensive framework for urban and territorial planning increased. First, guiding documents for the elaboration of urban plans (general, zonal, detailed) were published, and the concern for protected areas and heritage in general was established by two legal documents: a Governmental Ordinance for the protection of historic monuments (GO 228/24.11.2000) setting up specific areas of protection, and a law for approval of PATN Section III – Protected areas (Law 5/2000), which demanded specific methodologies and the elaboration of zonal plans for the protected areas of historic monuments of national importance. However, due to the fact that this legal requirement was not subject to penalties and was not accompanied by the necessary resources, its implementation was not effective.



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The accumulated actions of the first decade of transition and the steps forward in view of European integration led to a better definition of the domain at the beginning of the new millennium. The new Territorial and Urban Planning Act issued in 2001 clarified and enforced the planning instruments and public responsibilities. The new law provides an independent status for spatial planning, which is no longer seen as subservient to the construction sector. In the field of heritage protection, also in 2001, the previous GO became a full law (Law 422 for the protection of the historic monuments), in 2002 parliament ratified the European Landscape Convention (Law 451/2002), adopted in Florence in 2000 by the Council of Europe, and in 2004 a complete list of historic monuments was published in the OJ (MD 2314/2004)<sup>4</sup>. New regulations and guidance were issued for monuments of international importance, and central and zonal commissions for protected areas were set up, providing a consultative role by the public responsible bodies. The legal framework is completed with new and stricter environmental legislation, due to the European Union (EU) requirements, with a significant influence on spatial planning activities too.

Although the legal framework develops and becomes more complex it cannot keep up with the dynamic rhythm of the transformation of Romanian society. Its shortcomings were becoming obvious during the second half of the decade and attempts are being made at improving, correcting or reforming the system. Significant debates, relevant studies and even an audit of the legal system have been done for the purpose of elaborating a comprehensive Code of Urbanism. By 2008 revisions of the Planning Act were made, mainly aiming to raise its effectiveness and reduce the derogation procedures. It also provided new planning instruments and specific responsibilities for the protected areas.

## Institutional changes

The institutional framework for spatial planning can be followed at two levels, central and local, as well as in two different social environments, public and private. It may be also discussed and analysed in relation to decision-makers, professionals and communities. During the last two decades opposing processes can be observed: dissolution of the old structures and relations; and construction and reconstruction of new ones. Whereas the process of dissolution was much faster due to the rapid and brutal changes of the social, economic and political environments, construction and reconstruction proved to be more difficult and not necessarily continuous and progressive.

At central and local level new institutional responsibilities were set up from 1991, based on the principles of local autonomy and decentralisation. The importance of spatial planning as a public policy was recognised and clear attributions were set up by the law for local administrations<sup>5</sup>. Urban and territorial development should be done according to plans that have to be approved by the local authorities and implemented accordingly. Within the mayoralties at all territorial levels (county, town, and commune), special planning departments or offices were created, usually subordinated to a chief architect supported by advisory technical commissions. Full responsibilities for approval and implementation of planning schemes are given to local authorities (some particular areas of international, national or strategic importance being exempted). At central level, spatial planning remained an important sectoral policy and was part of specific in-line ministries.

As elaborators of the plans, professionals who were grouped until 1989 in big public institutions, working as part of large



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multidisciplinary teams, were forced to shift towards smaller private consultancy and design companies, mainly mono-specialised, as the old structures were dismantled during privatisation processes. The former multidisciplinary teams were slowly replaced by networks of small specialised firms. At central level, a national research institute for spatial planning – Urbanproiect – was actively involved in the restructuring of the field, especially during the first 10 to 15 years. Later on it was affected by a slow decline and became a part of one larger National Research Institute for construction, architecture and planning<sup>6</sup>.

Although a great deal of effort was made, as can be observed, to replace the old system and set up a functional one, the results were not satisfactory. The fragility of the institution building is often seen as being one of the main problem of the whole planning system, as 'institutionalisation is in fact the means which ensures control within the process of using and respecting the legislation' (Urbanismul 2010<sup>7</sup>). The weak involvement of state control in the planning process, the low level of urban culture of the administrative staff, the lack of institutional cooperation, and the overlapping of competencies are among the identified weaknesses of the responsible public institutions. At central level it can be noted that over the two decades the importance of the domain has diminished. This started in the '90s with its representation first by the National Commission for Territorial and Urban Planning and then by the Ministry of Public Works and Territorial Planning. After being initially represented by a commission of ministerial rank, then by a department within a ministry in the 2000s, the domain was represented by an ever-smaller directorate in Ministries whose major focus was Transport, Housing, Public Works, Construction, Tourism or more recently Regional Development<sup>8</sup>. As other fields developed and EU directives were also implemented, planning responsibilities

were shared among several central bodies such as Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Heritage issues are shared with the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, which is involved in the technical advisory process and certifies the right of specialists/experts to make studies and projects concerning the protection of historic monuments (divided by several categories: research, archaeology, urbanism, architecture, gardens, structural issues, etc.).

The institutional system, which is seen as a key element for the good functioning of spatial planning in general, is weakened by fragmentation of tasks, lack of cooperation, under-financing and corruption: 'Public bodies are eroded and infiltrated by 'ambassadors' and 'moles' of the private sector and as a consequence are put to work for private interests. There is no culture of public interest...' (Urbanismul 2010<sup>9</sup>). As most of the tasks concerning the elaboration of development plans at all levels are externalised, a big responsibility belongs to the professionals who are to be found within private firms and also in research units belonging mostly to universities. In this sector there is an uneven territorial distribution of professional competencies as well as among companies, which sometime deeply affects the quality of the planning documents. In order to provide better control in this area, in 2005 the Register of Romanian Planners (RRP) was set up.

### Educational and professional identity

The setting up of the RRP was foreseen by the Planning Act since 2001 and is part of the process of establishing official recognition of the profession of urban planner, which did not exist as such before 1989. This process began in the early '90s along two parallel planes: one related to specific education in the field and the other



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related to its official recognition in the national Classification of Occupations<sup>10</sup>.

Early attempts at professional recognition were already made in 1991 when an Association of Professional Urban Planners in Romania (APUR) was set up. Later on, an Association of Urban Planners was set up in the city of Cluj Napoca, and then in the second decade of the transition period, young professionals from various fields established active NGOs in the field of planning or planning-related issues. It may be noted that most of these NGOs got actively involved in matters related to heritage protection which became a very sensitive issue especially after 2000. In 2008, a number of NGOs signed a mutual understanding (a 'Pact for Bucureşti') as an expression of concern for the urban development of the capital.

The planning association (APUR), although not very active and present in public life, got involved in the processes of establishing the new legal and institutional framework and had a strong influence in the promotion of the new educational system, the recognition of the profession and the setting up of the RRP. By the beginning of the 2000s its membership in the ECTP was also accepted. The setting up of the RRP in 2005 as a public autonomous body under the supervision of the line ministry was a milestone in defining the identity of the profession. The new institution became responsible for managing the right of professionals to sign territorial and urban planning documents, or parts/chapters of them, and by that means to ensure the quality of planning activity. As a token of the multi- and inter-disciplinary features of planning, the register was opened to various professions besides planners: architects, landscape engineers, geographers, civil engineers, economists, sociologist, ecologists, historians et cetera. By the end of 2011 the registered number

of professionals was above 1,850, of whom 1,400 were architects. Special positions are provided within the RRP for professionals who can get the right to develop and sign studies for the protection of the built heritage and studies of urban history as parts of a planning document. The RRP was also empowered to recognise the professional qualifications in the field of spatial planning and as a competent authority and user of the European Internal Market Information System (IMI)<sup>11</sup>.

Obviously the recognition of the profession of urban planner had to be supported by specific higher education provision. It could be said that the most significant progress was made in this field. It started in the Ion Mincu Institute of Architecture, early in the 1990s by developing a short three years' higher education programme. Later on, in 1997, a Faculty of Urbanism was set up, with a programme of five years' duration plus one semester for graduation projects. As a follow-up the Institute became the University of Architecture and Urbanism in 2000. As of 2010, eight cohorts of students have graduated bearing the title of 'urban planner'. For the last three cohorts a specific landscape programme was also introduced, aiming towards a specialist education in landscape planning. Since 2005, the faculty began to implement the so-called Bologna system<sup>12</sup> and split the educational programmes into two cycles: a first one of 240 ECTS awarding a Bachelor degree and a second of 120 ECTS<sup>13</sup> awarding a Master degree (see Fig. 1). The first Bologna generation of urban planners graduated in 2010<sup>14</sup> simultaneously with the last generation of the previous system. Due to the new system, the planning education system became quite diverse and more specialised at the level of the second cycle. Master programmes are now being developed not only in Ion Mincu University, but in several other universities in Bucharest and in other cities (Cluj-Napoca, Iaşi, Timişoara).



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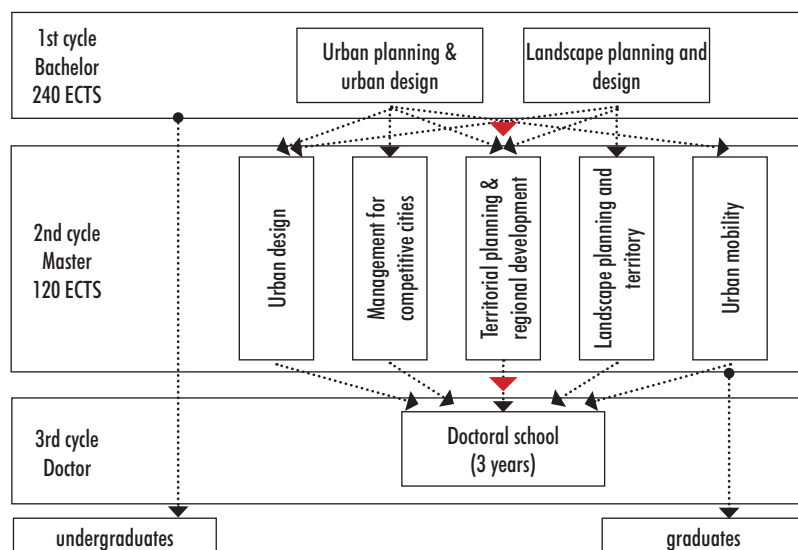


Fig. 1. The present educational system in planning at Ion Mincu University

## The planning instruments

The last, but not the least, important piece of the 'puzzle' of the planning system is represented by the planning instruments. They are in fact the legal means leading from conception to concrete development, via the planning and building permit issued on the basis of the plans. The new system of planning instruments was put into place in the early 1990s and remained practically unchanged until now. It provides two main categories of plan-making strongly related to territorial levels. The so-called urban plans refer to local and sub-local levels, whereas the territorial ones refer to upper administrative levels as seen in Fig. 2. Whereas territorial plans have a guiding/strategic character, the urban plans are regulatory/operational in nature and are accompanied by urban regulations, which, once approved by the local councils, can be enforced as a

local planning law. Due to their operational character, the urban plans have a much stronger influence than the territorial ones in the reshaping of the built and non-built environment. However, territorial plans are also important as they set up and identify the main development objectives and the potential conflicts between development and protected areas.

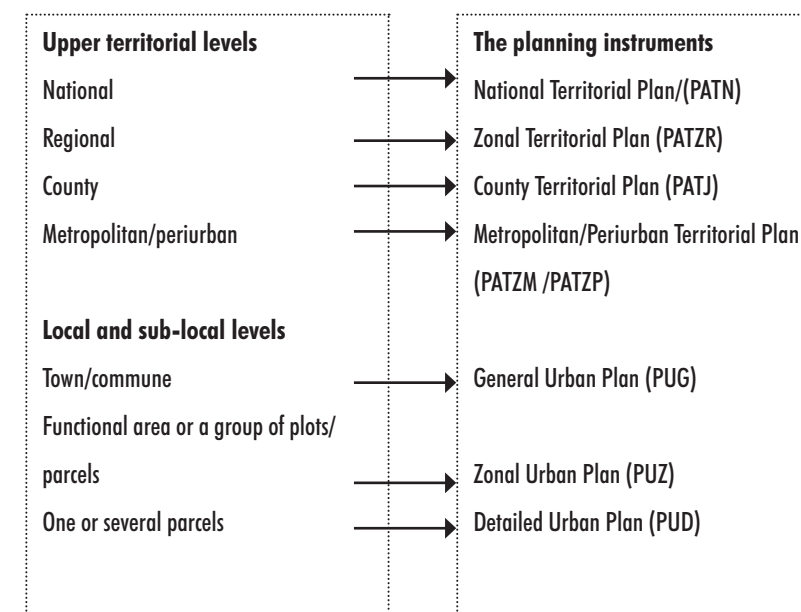


Fig. 2. The planning instruments in relation to the different territorial levels

The basic principles of the system of planning instruments as it can be deduced from Fig. 2 is that provisions set out at upper levels are compulsory for the lower levels. Horizontal and sectoral correlations are also mandatory.

In relation to protected areas, a positive example of a planning instrument at territorial level is the already-mentioned Section III



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of the National Territorial Plan for natural and built-up protected areas (Fig. 3), aimed at protecting and valorising the national heritage. Among other things the document is setting up areas for the protection of historic monuments (HM), requirements for specific studies to delineate their protection areas, for specific methodologies for the planning documents in protected areas, for the elaboration of planning documents for protected areas and for specific urban regulations and for protection and conservation measures. It identifies over 500 architectural monuments and structures (in 14 categories) and over 150 archaeological sites (in 11 categories).

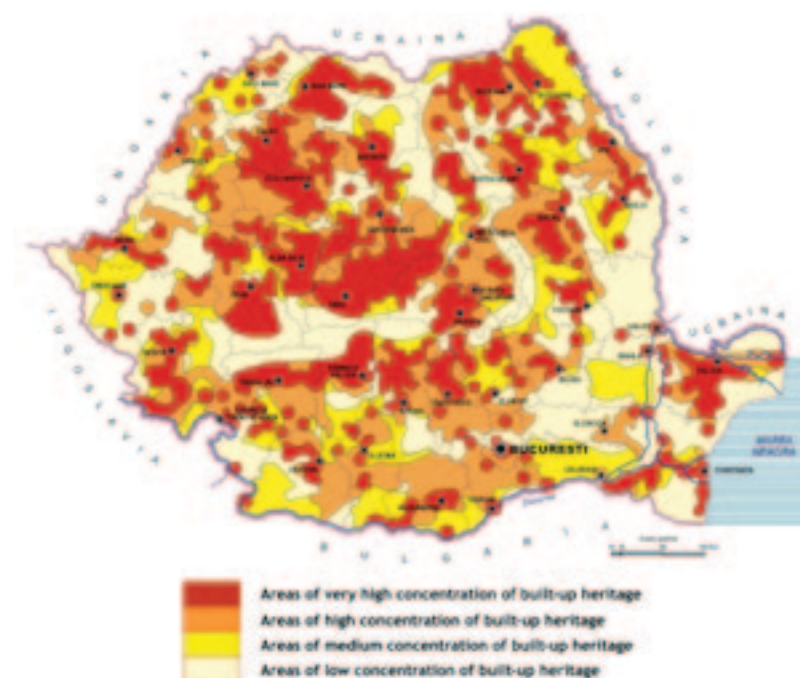


Fig. 3. Concentration of built heritage at the level of the national territory according to the National Territorial Plan – Section III (Law 5/2000)

As a follow-up, in 2004 a methodology for the elaboration and general content of the planning documents for protected built-up areas (zonal plan for built-up areas) was issued<sup>15</sup>. Its main provisions refer to:

- basic principles for approaching the planning process in protected areas in urban environments;
- specific definitions;
- methods and techniques for the effective elaboration of the planning documents;
- specific content and graphic representation of the planning documents in protected areas;
- its relationship with other planning documents (PUG or PUD);
- description of the necessary conditions for approval of the planning document;
- responsibilities concerning the initiation and implementation of the plan;
- transitory conditions for issuing the planning/building permit;
- specific urban regulations (image of the building, pavements, protection elements etc.).

The methodology refers to zonal plans – which are the most important planning instrument for historic protected areas – defined as zones where ‘there is a sum of valuable constructions needing protection’. It is important to mention the specific approach proposed, which includes as main steps the elaboration of a general historic study (on a larger area), the delineation of the protected zone, the zonal historic study and an urban study aiming to emphasise the relationship to the other urban areas. The methodology describes



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in detail the written and drawn content of a zonal plan for a protected area, and introduces as a very important element a set of four types of dossiers: documentary dossiers, evaluation dossiers, dossiers of the historic zones and dossiers of the protected zones (includes buildings, public spaces and other categories – green areas, fences etc.). It also introduces the concept of a 'historic dossier of the locality' which should be part of the PUG. One important contribution of the adopted methodology is that the previous arbitrary protection zones set up by Law 422/2001 are to be replaced by well-defined areas based on scientific studies.

Although very progressive, the methodology for zonal plans in protected areas has proved to be complicated and difficult to implement in practice. Since its approval a limited number of planning documents were elaborated, most of them initiated and financed by the line ministry. In general, local authorities were reluctant to make use of this instrument due to its costs and complicated procedures. The special zonal plan for protected areas must be seen as an instrument aiming to fight against the so-called derogation planning<sup>16</sup> which was blamed for the unsuccessful transformation and rather chaotic development of territories and settlements during the post-Communist period (Figs. 4-7).

To counteract derogation planning, which was contradicting one of the basic principles of the planning system – the top-down influential hierarchy – a slow reformation of the legal system began in 2008, by significant successive revisions of the 2001 Planning Act. These revisions enforced the role of the public bodies in the planning process, set up severe limitations for subjective changes of the planning regulations, and added some specific provisions for planning instruments in areas with historic monuments, including the following:

- the zonal territorial plan for localities with historic monuments listed as 'world heritage';
- the PUG for localities with historic monuments listed as 'world heritage';
- the PUG for towns and communes with listed historic monuments;
- the zonal plans for central areas of cities and towns;
- the zonal plans for protected areas covering more than one administrative unit;
- the zonal plans for protected areas with historic monuments listed as 'world heritage', or just listed.
- Responsibilities of the line ministries and government, for technical control or approval in the field of protected areas, have also been extended.



Fig. 4. Effects of derogation planning in Bucharest





Fig. 5. Effects of derogation planning in Iași



Fig. 6. Effects of derogation planning in Bucharest



Fig. 7. Effects of derogation planning in Bucharest

## Conclusions

As the short description above indicates, the Romanian planning system is quite complex and developed. Besides legal acts and regulations, institutions, educational programmes and specific instruments one might add other influencing elements, such as current approval procedures, land ownership, real estate market, the use of European Structural Funds and many others. Obviously its re-configuration is not complete after more than twenty years of democracy and free market economy. This interval of time can be split into different stages of evolution: a first 'romantic' decade (1990–2000) of reconstruction of a spatial planning system, followed by the consolidation of the system and 'turbulences' in the 2000s and finally by a third stage of rethinking the system after 2008, which



is still ongoing. Sometimes the interval is simply split into two: the pre-accession and post-accession periods. In many cases, observers see the first decade as a reparatory one, trying to correct and alleviate the mistakes of the Communist age, followed by a period of 'derogation planning' during the post-accession building boom, which created even worse problems than the previous ones (Urbanismul 2010<sup>17</sup>). 'The final accounting is not encouraging as seen from the real image offered by the Romanian towns and cities, by their peri-urban areas, by the rural areas or at the scale of the larger geographical areas' (Pascariu 2011). The reconstruction of the planning system is still facing a lot of challenges, of which the safeguarding and conservation of historic areas remains a very important one.

## Notes

1 This paper was developed on the basis of the presentation done during the third Workshop on Conservation organised by EAAE – ENHSA NETWORK on 'Modernist Neighbourhoods: Conservation/Regeneration' in Bucharest, 6-9 October 2011.

2 Comment of arch. Șerban Popescu-Criveanu.

3 Mostly inspired by the French model 'aménagement du territoire et urbanisme' and also close to the Italian form 'pianificazione urbanistica e territoriale'.

4 Up until then a List of Historic Monuments had been issued by the National Commission of Historic Monuments, Structures and Sites in 1991-1992.

5 A first law was issued in 1991 (Law 69), which was later revised and replaced in 2001 (Law 215/2001).

6 Since 2010 the Institute was part of a unification process of several institutes and became URBAN-INCERC (National Institute for Research and Development in Constructions, Urban Planning and Sustainable Spatial Development).

7 Comment of prof. arch. Alexandru Sandu.

8 During the last decade, there has been the following succession: 2001-2003 – Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Housing; 2003-2007 – Ministry of Transport, Constructions and Tourism; 2007-2009 – Ministry of Development, Public Works and Dwellings; 2009-2010 – Ministry of Regional Development and

Housing; and since 2010 the Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism.

9 Comments belong to prof. arch. Doina Cristea, prof. arch. Peter Derer, arch. Sorin Gabrea, arch. Andrei Luncan, arch. Simona Munteanu.

10 Classification of Occupations in Romania (COR) was introduced in 1995 and put in accord with international and European standards in 2009 and 2011.

11 Law 200/2004 for recognition of diplomas and professional qualifications for regulated professions and the Gov. Emergency Ordinance 49/2009 concerning the freedom of settling down of service providers and liberty to provide services in Romania, modified and completed by Law 68/2010.

12 A new educational system essentially based on two main cycles adopted by the EU countries on the basis of the declaration signed in Bologna in June 1999 'On the European Space for Higher Education'.

13 European Credits Transfer and Accumulation System.

14 Due to the fact that the first series of the Bologna system had a first cycle of three years only.

15 Published in OJ (Monitorul Oficial), Part I nr. 125bis of 11/02/2004.

16 The expression refers to the fact that due to some permissiveness of the legal and procedural system, an inferior type of plan (PUZ or PUD) could change the urban regulations provided by a superior one (the PUG for instance).

17 Comments of prof. Doina Cristea, prof. Peter Derer, prof. Constantin Enache, conf. Radu Radoslav.

Photos by G. Pascariu

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# Reports on the working groups' discussions regarding the problems of conservation/regeneration of Modern parts of cities

Report on the discussions  
regarding topic A: The  
theoretical and methodo-  
logical approach with re-  
gard to different levels  
and disciplinary aspects  
Hanna Derer

Report on the discussions  
regarding topic B: The  
urban planning, manage-  
ment, economic and so-  
cial aspects, with special  
regard to tutorship and  
development  
Gabriel Pascariu

Report on the discussions  
regarding topic C: Design  
as project and process of  
intervention on single  
buildings: technical con-  
tents, goals and criteria  
Mihaela Criticos





## Report on the discussions regarding topic A: The theoretical and methodological approach with regard to different levels and disciplinary aspects

Hanna Derer

*Ion Mincu University of Architecture and Urbanism, Bucharest, Romania*

The group was invited by the Scientific Committee of the workshop to focus upon the following three questions:

1. What are the values of the place? Why should these/it be preserved?
2. How does one establish the possible theoretical boundaries of conservation/regeneration in this case and in general?
3. What frames of reference are established through relevant international conservation charters/how can these be applied to this area?

The discussions developed by the group resulted in the following observations: it was considered that the first question (termed 1.a. in this report) should be asked together with one targeting the non-values of the given area (termed 1.b.), in order to approach the problem regarding the boundaries of or between 'conservation' and 'regeneration'. Also with respect to that subject (identified here as 2.a.), the group debated the definitions of the two given concepts (described as 2.b.). But considering that even if professionals are



able to surpass terminological differences and, in the end, find the necessary agreement required in order to evaluate and intervene in an optimum way in such areas, the group consented that education is still lacking, especially regarding knowledge and awareness of the cultural values that such an area may embody (a topic depicted as 2.c.), and which certainly is the case of the specific study area in Bucharest.

As some topics could not be addressed as well as participants wished during the intensive workshop in Bucharest, the debate continued by e-mail until the 25<sup>th</sup> of October 2012. Thus some parts of the following text are accompanied by references, in order to record the input of the particular group member who considered that specific idea crucial in order to draw conclusions.



### 1.a. 'What are the values of the place? Why should they/it be preserved?'

The key quality was defined as identity validated by patina. Features that, being culturally valuable, should be preserved, are described at the urban scale, that of the architectural object and that of the detail.

At the urban scale there is a genuine unity in variety, characterised as follows:

- the 'island' character – the area is an entity simultaneously integrated in the town and independent of it;
- function(s) – residential as in the initial concept, political and cultural institutions added after the Second World War;
- the street network, preserved and reflecting the historic evolution, including street names;
- the parcelling itself, preserved and reflecting the historic evolution;
- the historic built fabric, constructed according to the initial building regulations with respect to position on the plot and height and showing a large variety of architectural style;
- the historic vegetation, both in public and private spaces, planted according to the initial building regulations;
- key relationships as between public space and private space, the borders between public space and private space, and the historic fences erected according to the initial building regulations.

At the scale of the architectural object the high quality of design is expressed:

- in historic volumes, as dimensions and proportions, according to the initial building regulations;



- in the historic façade compositions coherent with regard to the specific style;
- the position of historic voids and the ratio between these and 'walls', coherent with regard to the specific style;
- the historic architectural vocabulary, coherent with regard to the specific style.

At the scale of detail, there is high quality in the refinement of concept and in execution:

- the historic artistic vocabulary is simultaneously rich and coherent with regard to the specific style;
- historic building materials and structures, most still probably authentic;
- historic finishes and textures, coherent with regard to the specific style;
- historic colours, coherent with regard to the specific style.

#### 1.b. (But) how can the non-values of the place be described?

The key statement in this case is that the basic threshold for conservation/regeneration relies on eliminating non-values by preserving values.

Material 'non-values' include many of the new buildings, improper interventions on historic buildings, the lack of maintenance both of the public and private space, and a deficiency of landmarks/reference points.

Immaterial 'non-values' include: poor social life in public spaces, due also to meagre spaces designed for this purpose, as well as

to insufficient facilities to encourage social life in public spaces<sup>1</sup>; some incompatible functions (such as the tram depot), as well as a need for contemporary compatible functions; lack of identification of contemporary users with the historic tissue and the lack of advocacy for the area – i.e. a deficient recognition of the cultural values embodied in the area.



#### 2.a. 'How does one establish the possible theoretical boundaries of conservation/regeneration in this case and in general?'

The key consideration refers to the optimum balance between conservation and development. Specifically with regard to this area, the process of eliminating the non-values by safeguarding the values should also take into consideration:

- the need to raise the awareness of the values, with respect to the expectations of the contemporary users and those of the developers, and related with;



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- the concept of 'comfort' as understood in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, both in the material sense (such as the need for security or energy saving) and the immaterial sense (such as the need for residential privacy).

### 2.b. How to define 'conservation' and how to define 'regeneration', both in general, but also in a specific culture and/or for a specific site?

The key consideration in discussion was the need to surpass terminological disparities entailed by different languages, cultures and/or philosophies.

With respect to this aspect, it is obvious that whenever concepts like 'preservation', 'conservation', 'restoration', etc., as well as the relationships between them, are used in an international context, they have to be defined first of all as a goal – an attitude towards cultural heritage, or as an instrument – to achieve the given target or to materialise the specific attitude. Only after such a process does a constructive discussion become possible. Otherwise, for instance, the notion of regeneration may be understood as the renewal or reforming procedure of an urban area and consequently may mean implicitly the destruction of cultural values<sup>2</sup>. This example also indicates the fact that one and the same concept may be used sometimes exclusively in its 'urban' sense and thus may be considered improper when applied at the scale of the architectural object or even of that of the architectural detail.

As a matter of fact, the notion of regeneration not only has its roots in urban planning, but has been avoided by the international conservation charters<sup>3</sup> (which rather use the term 'integrated conservation') exactly in order to stress the need for authenticity (of

place, design, building materials and techniques and/or of craftsmanship) related to given cultural values, as well the requirement to retain these (in all the cases the preservation principles have to be observed). Moreover, the concept of regeneration seems to be used predominantly in relation to urban policies and to aim primarily at the social and economic aspects of settlement fabric – a reason why, within the process of revitalising, cultural values are often disregarded<sup>4</sup>.

### 2.c. The role of education

The key statement consists in the fact that both professionals and communities need to increase their knowledge in identification and definition of the cultural values in order to raise their awareness of their heritage.





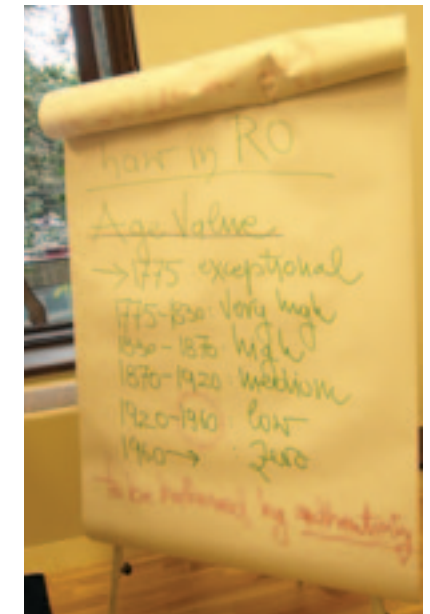
Hanna Derer

### 3. 'What frames of reference are established through the relevant international conservation charters/how can they be applied to this area?'

The key consideration in this case is the relationship between generally accepted guidelines and the ways these have to be applied in a specific case.

Several international conservation documents, starting with the Athens Charter (1931) and ending with the ICOMOS Charter on the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites (2008) are, in one way or another, relevant for districts conceived and/or built in the modern age. Among these documents, the European Charter for the Architectural Heritage of 1975 is perhaps one of the most important international documents ever adopted, as it defines and enforces the concept of 'integrated conservation' as a principal means of ensuring the optimum balance between preservation and development<sup>5</sup>. Also, the Venice Charter, adopted in 1964 by the II<sup>nd</sup> International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments, has to be mentioned as the central document that has initiated the extension of the notion of 'historic monument' from single buildings and (concentrated) ensembles to the scale of fragments of settlements or even to whole towns and villages. Consequently, the preservation strategy had to develop in order to include economical, social, administrative and juridical aspects<sup>6</sup>. In this sense, maybe the most recent relevant international document is the European Landscape Convention, issued in 2000 by the European Council (controversial as the concept of 'landscape' may still be), which underlines both the dimensions of landscapes (to be respected even if ordinary or degraded) and the importance of community involvement in their recognition, awareness and preservation as a means to define cultural identities and to ensure the quality of life<sup>7</sup>.

On the other hand most of the international conservation standards do stress the fact that the concepts and principles they comprise should be carefully adapted to national and/or local specifics. In Romania, where, for instance, buildings dating from the period between 1920 and 1960 are considered of low age value, a relevant example in the adapted use of generally accepted guidelines is linked to the concept of 'authenticity' – used (in this country) to balance that cultural identity criterion. Consequently, although the given area is rather 'young', since it is largely genuine in setting, urban planning and architectural concept(s), in building materials and techniques as well as in craftsmanship, its overall cultural value may be considered higher than otherwise<sup>8</sup>.



In fact, an interesting conclusion of the debate is the fact that international conservation documents have been considered important, but only with respect to the methodological approach and the legal measures needed in order to safeguard cultural heritage<sup>9</sup>, as, with regard to concrete interventions, suggestions for physical actions must rather be extracted from the experience of successful operations. These were often fruitful because the inhabitants involved themselves in the process, at least in raising awareness of the given cultural values<sup>10</sup>.



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## Notes

1 A nuance underlined by Patrizia Dellavedova.

2 An idea underlined by Annunziata Maria Oteri and by Giuseppina Pugliano.

3 A remark stressed by Annunziata Maria Oteri.

4 An observation of Giuseppina Pugliano.

5 A comment formulated by Annunziata Maria Oteri.

6 An idea emphasised by Giuseppina Pugliano.

7 Idem.

8 The author of this text expresses her gratitude to Claudine Houbart and Stéphane Dawans, who have supported her in formulating this idea clearly for those not acquainted with the Romanian law.

9 A statement by Giuseppina Pugliano.

10 An observation pointed out by Annunziata Maria Oteri.





## Report on the discussions regarding topic B: The urban planning, management, economic and social aspects of the question with special regard to tutorship and development

Gabriel Pascariu

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The composition of Group B was multinational and multidisciplinary. Professionals from six countries having a diverse background took part and brought valuable contribution to the debates. Although the group was dominated by specialists in conservation and restoration, the participation of an architectural designer, a landscape architect, an anthropologist and architects specialising in heritage policy or housing, as well as of a couple of urban planners, enriched and enlarged the content of the discussions and led to a more integrated approach to the main issues of the workshop.

During the second day of the workshop the members of the group took part in the site visit of the study area. During the visit the group focused more on the southern half of the area, which raised a lot of comments and questions related to the state of the buildings, quality of the public spaces and sidewalks, quality and maintenance of the vegetation, the appearance of the fences and of elements of urban/street furniture (street lamps, traffic lights and signs, bollards, waste bins etc.). A number of statements were made within the group during the first meeting session in the afternoon of the



day, related to the richness and complexity of the area visited and to its particular identity. A number of issues had also been pointed out concerning the aggressiveness of some interventions, the bad maintenance of the sidewalks and public spaces in general, or the presence of a gated community.

### Global overview and main issues

The initial discussions turned around other issues such as the role of the public administration and of urban planning in conservation areas, the relation between public and private, and the awareness of the inhabitants about the heritage and cultural values of the neighbourhood. In fact it became obvious that the group quickly became very sensitive to the intrinsic qualities of the area and certainly because of this a very critical perspective was developing and the group was able to list a number of problems going from global aspects to details, such as:

- the feeling of 'island effect' due to the weak or inconsistent connections to other neighbourhoods and to the city in general;
- the apparently low level of awareness and urban culture of the inhabitants/local community concerning the values of the conservation area;
- the supposed weak involvement of the local public authorities apparent in the weaker quality of the urban spaces and the visible permissiveness of interventions at various scales (urban, buildings, facades, fences);
- the threats coming from the changes of the urban landscape, which do not preserve the existing traditional character;
- the lack of adequate parking places in most of the area;

- the low quality and level of maintenance of sidewalks, pavements and public spaces in general;
- the low quality design for public lighting and of the traffic signs and street indicators (signalétique)/advertising etc.;
- the use of inadequate materials and colours in the case of the new interventions;
- the existence of overhead wires and cables affecting the general urban landscape.



The visit paid to the site raised questions about the existence of social issues. It was noticed that some parts of the area are inhabited by lower-income groups and that there could be some social disparities inside the area. It was noticed that the area was not very lively and that it might be a reflection of a rather aged population.

The general opinion was that the area is quite valuable and represents a 'very rich and specific repertoire of architecture' (Renata Picone) and has preserved a good ratio of building to vegetation, which makes it



## Gabriel Pascariu

resemble a garden city model. However it was considered that there are obvious signs of alteration and degradation and aggressive or inadequate interventions in the area, indicating the specific vulnerability of such 20<sup>th</sup>-century neighbourhoods that are subject to insufficient protection and higher permissiveness. It has been noticed that the area has not yet defined a very precise identity, but rather several identities (Maurizio De Vita), which reveals a higher complexity.

### Towards a more structured approach

The work of the group and the discussions became more structured and oriented once the group was asked to answer a number of pre-defined questions, presented below:

1. What are the values of the place? Why should it be preserved?
2. To what extent is the social structure vulnerable to foreseeable changes?
3. How robust is the physical fabric in face of developments within and around the neighbourhood?

The answer to the first question started with a list of the values of the area as it follows:

- complexity of urban spaces and architectural languages
- the balanced mixture of green areas and buildings
- the richness of the architectural details
- the urban texture, especially the design of the street network
- the legibility/readability of the historical/political evolution of the area
- the mixité at the level of social structure
- the combination of identities

As can be seen, the qualitative evaluation done by the group emphasised the diversity of social, architectural and urban features of the area, and the balanced combination of these. It has been agreed that the area as a whole can be seen and understood as an evolving experiment of architecture and materials. The initial design/urban composition of this area of great sensitivity and inspiration, has been much appreciated. However, it is mainly the diversity of characteristics that causes the vulnerability/fragility of the area to inappropriate or even aggressive interventions. The preservation of this subtle combination of elements and values was seen as being important for several reasons:

- firstly, it provides a specific authenticity to the area and a potential identity at the level of the district and city which should not be lost;
- secondly, it represents an important record of collective memory, a 'historic and cultural' document, which also increases the economic value of the area; and
- thirdly, because this combination of characteristics makes it a very liveable area, represents its general attractiveness and makes it 'beautiful to live there' (Renata Picone).

It has been also underlined by the participants that the area could become more significant at city level if its identity were better revealed, preserved and promoted, and that there might be still certain aspects to be studied and understood – for instance, the significance of the local toponymy (naming of the streets) in relation to collective mentality and history (Chloé Salembier) – which might contribute to a more complete overview and valuation of the area. It was considered that there are obvious reasons for conservation of the area and that such action should be also considered positive from a social and economic point of view as it leads to job creation (Nino Sulfaro).



The second question was referring to the social vulnerability of the area and its exposure to changes that can be foreseen. The answer to this question was seen as being difficult due to the scarcity of the information in this field. The social issues of the area cannot be found in specific studies and social inquiries, so that the only considerations about the social weaknesses and risks were based on direct observation and common knowledge of the area by the locals. It has been noticed that there is an apparent weakness in social communication, possibly due to the weak attractiveness and maintenance of public spaces and to the lack of functions enabling and encouraging social contacts (clubs, community centres, cultural centres, etc.) and that the area can be seen as one with a low level of social cohesion.

The group agreed that the visible changes and interventions in the area indicate a lack, or at least a low level, of awareness about the values of the area on behalf of the local inhabitants and that implies a low feeling of identity too. These two weaknesses could be responsible for, and describe a certain fragility of, the social structure, which seems to be endangered by gated communities (in the southeastern part of the area) and by the functional changes reducing in general the weight of the residential areas in favour of tertiary functions (mostly offices and restaurants).

A unanimous conclusion referred to the necessity of improving the social survey of the area as a stronger basis for the improvement of the planning process too. The anthropologist of the group suggested the use of one of the two fundamental methods: either the inductive one, which starts from statistics, inquiries, interviews, observations, stakeholders analysis and goes to problem identification; or the deductive one, which sets up initial hypotheses to be

verified on the ground. Considering the existing "state of the art", the latter was seen to be more feasible.

The exposure and fragility of the social structure could become a weakness and even hamper a conservation policy and its specific actions. As it can be asserted that 'you conserve what you know', it seems to be of utmost necessity to improve the general level of information and knowledge about the area – not only in relation to social aspects but to the urban fabric in general – and to promote this knowledge widely.

The third question challenged the robustness of the urban fabric in relation to recent and potential developments within and around the observed neighbourhood. While the social structure appeared as being rather fragile and exposed to changes, the group's general opinion converged on the idea of solidity of the urban structure and built-up environment in spite of the undergoing changes. This solidity relies on at least three elements: the good quality of buildings and urban fabric, the high capacity of functional adaptation of the buildings and the existent powerful network of public spaces – seen as a backbone of the area, although not very well maintained. However, this robustness is threatened by the aggressiveness of some new interventions, by inadequate functional conversions, by social and economic transformation sometimes incompatible with the character of the area, and last but not least by radical changes to the buildings themselves. It has been considered by the group that if such threats get out of hand, the 'resistance' of the general urban fabric could be subdued, and according to another delegate's expression, the area could become subject to 'Disneyworldisation' (Renata Picone).



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### Fragilities and weakness of the planning system

Besides the previous issues and questions, the discussions within the group revolved around matters related to the planning process, effectiveness and instruments. It was agreed in general that despite the existence of certain urban studies and detailed regulations, there remains room for improvement and completion of planning instruments in the case of specific conservation areas. The improvement should start from specific surveys for conservation areas (analysis of the urban fabric, focus on materials, lighting, pavements, textures, mixité of functions etc.) to elaboration of a specific plan of conservation, developed by detailed plans which must regard very particular aspects such as surfaces/facades as very important and complex elements (Maurizio De Vita).

Improvements to the planning process in general were discussed and the following aspects were considered as being important and subject to change and improvement at legal and institutional levels:

- developing the conservation rules
- a better and more clear relationship and hierarchy of different plans (general, zonal, local)
- higher integration on a greater scale (it was noticed that a larger unique conservation area at city scale can be set up, considering the neighbouring areas<sup>1</sup>; see fig. 1)
- the necessity of a multi-scale intervention, including private and public responsibilities
- a growing role of public administration in managing the area and an incremental subordination of private intervention to general public regulations

As it can be seen, a clear emphasis was put on the implementation of the plans and not only on the elaboration of the planning documents. Public support and the involvement of the local communities

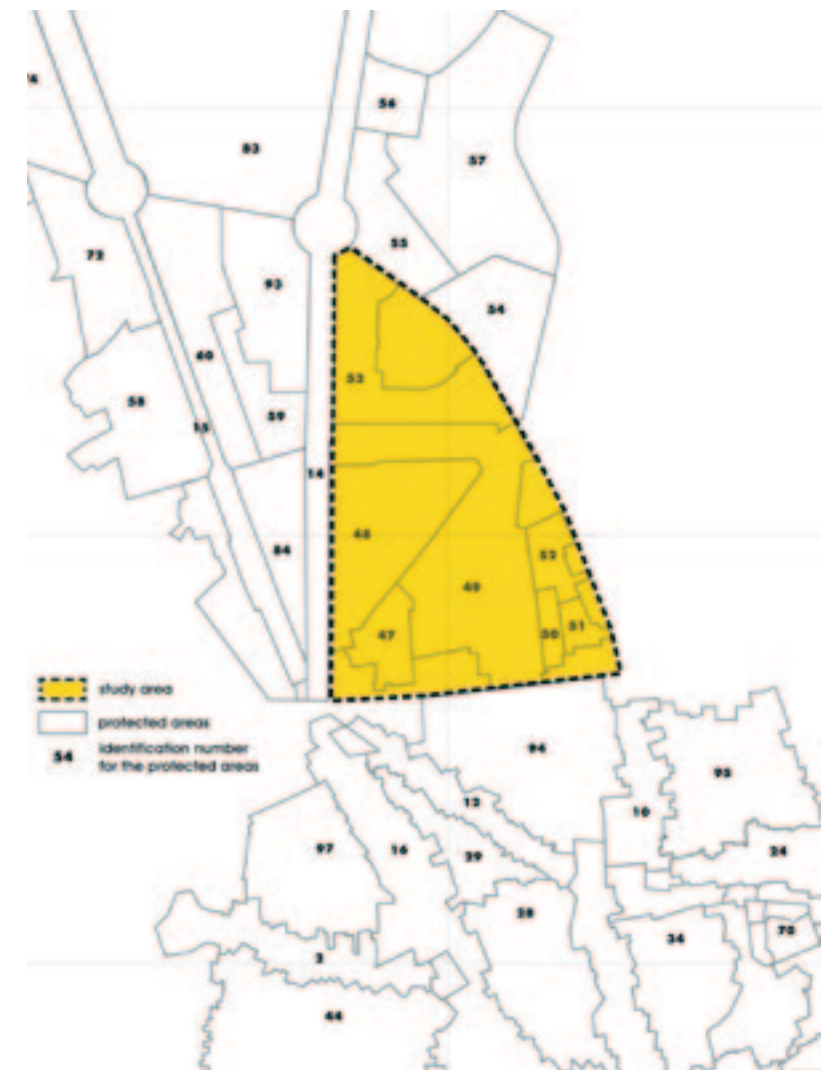


Fig. 1. The study area within the larger context of the surrounding protected areas as defined in 2000



through participatory planning were considered important in order to create sustainable neighbourhoods (Chloé Salembier). The involvement of the locals is, however, strongly connected to the raising of awareness by the education of the public in general and that of local inhabitants in particular.

The involvement of the public administration and the setting-up of a coherent and integrated policy for the conservation area were supported by all members of the group, including the necessity of setting up public-private partnership mechanisms and adequate financial instruments for the conservation areas. The role of the public bodies, but of the professionals too, was seen as important in relation to guidance for conservation, control, economic incentives and investments in public spaces. Participatory planning and more effective public policies, together with increasing the owners' awareness of the common values, could be the key actions towards a successful planning approach to conservation areas.

### A number of final proposals

Final considerations were made within the group in relation to academic education in the field of conservation in modern architecture neighbourhoods and to the development of a 'flagship' project in the area.

The educational issue was seen as sensitive and specific, and the general idea was that 20<sup>th</sup>-century architecture and Modernist neighbourhoods must be seen in a wider context and taught through comparative and cross-experience case studies. Particular attention should be given to technical aspects, languages, materials, designs and traditional structures. It was agreed that these matters should be subject to masters-level or postgraduate levels, as they need a more developed capacity for synthesis and correlation.

The educational issue was extended also in relation to the general public, having as a major objective the development of the knowledge and skills to appreciate modern architecture, through comprehensive guides to modern architectural heritage, values, and similar experiences across Europe, including explanatory rules for maintenance and intervention. The potential active role of NGOs in the field of heritage protection was also mentioned.

As for the 'flagship' project, particular attention was drawn to the existing tramway depot in the southern part of the area, which was seen as an important land reserve that could be subject to a complex conversion type of intervention (see figs. 2-5). It was regarded by the group as a good opportunity for urban regeneration and for developing a project which will bring significant benefits to the whole area. The area for which the present general urban plan (PUG<sup>2</sup>) suggests 'low-density residential area' can become a focal point of the whole area, a real gateway to the conservation area, which could make a better connection to the central city area to the south. Several concrete proposals were made, most of them converging towards a development of mixed functions for public use such as information points, exhibitions, museum, commercial areas, restaurants etc., which will transform the site into a real invitation to visit the area.



Fig. 2. Aerial view of the tramway depot (source: <http://maps.google.com/>)



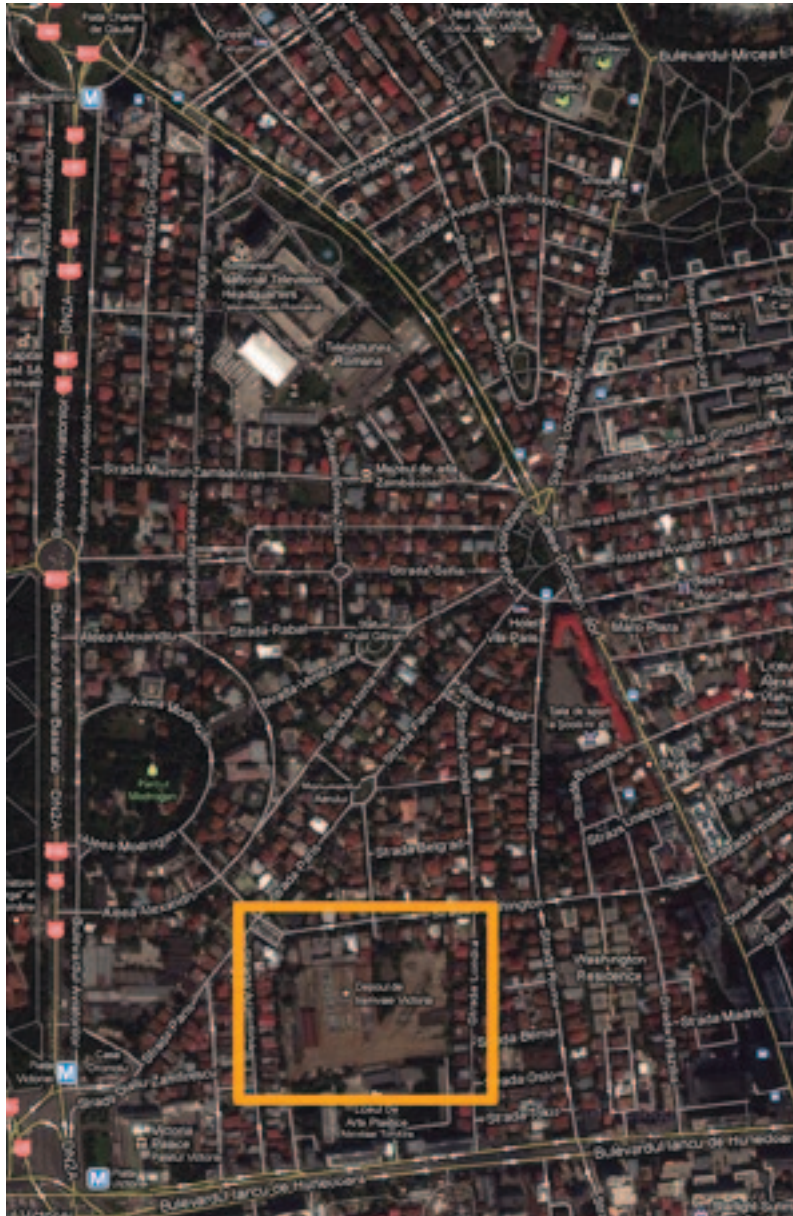


Fig. 3. The location of the tramway depot (source: <http://maps.google.com/>)



Figs. 4-5. The tramway depot



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## Notes

1 In 1999, an Urban Zonal Plan for Protected Areas in Bucharest was drawn up by the Ion Mincu University of Architecture and Urbanism as a support for the PUG.

2 PUG is the acronym of the Romanian 'Plan Urbanistic General' (General Urban Plan). The PUG represents the main spatial planning instrument for managing the urban development of an urban or rural settlement in Romania and a basis for granting planning permission. Its role is defined by the Spatial Planning Act issued in 2001.







Report on the discussions regarding topic C:

## Design as project and process of intervention on single buildings: technical contents, goals and criteria

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Participants concerned with interventions on single buildings agreed to spend as much time as possible in the field, in order to get fully acquainted with the diversity of situations that could be identified in terms of spatial relationships, typo-morphology, style, materials and detailing, state of conservation, presence or absence of interventions, etc. However, since a focus on individual objects cannot be allowed to lose sight of their relationship with the urban space, the debate within the group started with remarks on the qualities of the site as a whole, thus encountering the opinions formulated by the other groups.

The discussions addressed the main themes proposed to the workshop participants and particularly to the group concerned with issues of intervention on individual buildings: the values of the place and the necessity of their preservation, the architectural inventory as an effective instrument in the management of change, sustainable development in the area as introduction of renewable energy strategies. Other related problems were approached as well, mainly the relevance of proposing the area under discussion or similar ones as subject matters for design and conservation/restoration projects in the process of architectural teaching.



### The values of the place and their necessary preservation

The question regarding the values of the place generated an animated dialogue and resulted in a rich amount of observations, many of which coincide with those formulated by the other groups. Comments on this topic proved to be homogenous and unanimously agreed upon by the group members, who chose to organise their observations in terms of a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis, evaluating the studied 'parcelling' from the perspective of conservation/regeneration objectives.

The strengths or strong points of the area lie primarily in its architectural and urban values, as well as in its characteristic diversity, coherence and liveability. The group members agreed on the high quality and variety of urban compositional patterns, as well as of architectural expressions, materials and technical skills. There were remarks concerning the typology of single plots, very different in size and proportions, allowing a multitude of dwelling formulae – from low-cost housing developments to luxury villas and from one-family houses to high-rise apartment blocks – and also other compatible functions, usually related to the peripheral major arteries of the area.

Differences in urban regulations determined various relations between buildings and plots, yet the predominant situation is that of the recessed detached or semi-detached houses having their own gardens, which, together with the street planting and the planted squares or circuses, create a strong sensation of 'greenness', a characteristic that was generally appreciated. The presence of vegetation, together with the regularity of the urban fabric (distinct for each historical subdivision) and an undeniable homogeneity of scale, provides unity and coherence to the whole area, in spite of the eclectic variety of architectural idioms.

The remarkable qualities of architectural design and execution displayed by most buildings were also noted, both on site and during the discussions. The authors of the projects were generally Beaux-Arts-trained architects, versatile professionals who proved to be capable of working in any style desired by their clients and of mastering the art of detailing. The great variety of techniques and materials, as well as the elaborate, carefully executed details, also contribute to the value of the buildings and of their components.

The perception of the site also focused on its liveability and the attractiveness of the 'quality of life' it provides by virtue of the considerable weight of vegetation, the picturesque diversity of the urban landscape, the friendly domestic scale and the relative absence of high-rise buildings, along with the above-mentioned architectural values. All these factors also determine the strong global identity of the area, acting as a general framework which articulates the local identities of the original subdivisions or of specific micro-zones (chronologically, functionally or stylistically determined) and the individual identity of each building.





Proximity to parks and to the city centre, as well as to major arteries and public transport might be added to the strong points, together with the high socio-economic standing of the studied area, which originally characterised only its central part (the aristocratic district developed around the circular nucleus of the Filipescu garden), but which gradually extended to the entire site, mainly after World War II.

It was suggested that the status of protected area ought to contribute to its value, although, as shown by a large number of recent interventions, the specific urban regulations of the zonal plan seem frequently infringed upon by derogations in planning – a problem which must be considered a serious threat to the preservation of the cultural resource of the site.

The main weaknesses observed by the group members pointed both to authorities and users. The discussions highlighted the lack of good example on the part of the state – for instance in controlling the interventions or in the maintenance of public spaces.

Other remarks concerned the lack of appreciation of the material quality of the place and its economic potential, as well as the lack of identification of the inhabitants with their heritage, manifested as an absence of preoccupation with the values of the place. A possible explanation would be the lack of education of the Romanian public on built heritage, doubly problematical when considering the more recent periods (interwar and post-war).

There were also comments regarding the difficult access to archives and the public suspicion towards the drawing up of inventories and surveys – representing serious obstacles for the objectives of conservation and regeneration activities.

However, among the main opportunities offered by the studied area, the group identified the existing inventories, already drawn up by

the Department of History & Theory of Architecture and Heritage Conservation of the Ion Mincu University in partnership with the local authority, and their public accessibility on the official website of the municipality of Bucharest.

Remarks were made concerning the value of the site as subject matter for the educational process and as an arts and crafts research base.

As to the future development of the zone, the group discussed its potential for regeneration, either regarding material aspects at the scale of the individual buildings and plots (conservation, modernisation, adaptation to the latest requirements) and of the whole area (the possibility of increasing its social amenity through the redevelopment of existing misused spaces, e.g. the tram depot), and immaterial aspects, such as recovering and reviving the sense of appropriation of space from its users.

The whole group agreed that the main threats are represented by the pressure of the real estate speculations, very aggressive because of the high rating of the area, and the lack of respect for the law, generating noxious interventions which culminate in mutilations and demolitions of valuable buildings.

One might add the requirements of technology and energy efficiency measures, as well as the desire of wealthy owners to add new technologies and equipments, resulting in the alteration of both substance and image of the urban space and of every single building or plot.

The rendering opaque of fencings was also perceived as a threat for one of the main values of the area, the visual permeability and transparency of boundaries. The owners' tendency towards raising high opaque walls around their properties and especially towards the street contradicts the specific open character of the area and



the original building regulations (which imposed transparent metallic fences with low masonry parapets), as well as the present regulations for the protected area.

Other observations referred to the gradual gentrification of the area and the subsequent social segregation from the surrounding zones, which is maintained and even increased by the latest interventions (e.g. the new exclusive condominium in Finlanda Street).

### **'Architectural inventory' as an instrument in the management of change**

A thorough analysis of the area cannot be conducted without inventorying its components and characteristics according to relevant criteria (chronology, population, typology of urban fabric, function, volume, facades, etc.). Discussing the possible role of such inventories, the group agreed that architectural inventories can be used to generate a methodology or guidelines for intervention at various scales (urban, individual plot and building, details and materials). Further discussions emphasised the necessity of constantly updating the inventories via survey work and deeper levels of analysis.

At the urban scale, conservation/regeneration strategies become more substantial when based upon inventories concerning the evolution and the historical record of the area, population structure and status (sociological criteria), way of life and induced behavior (anthropological criteria), physical context and relationship to the city, as well as the main features of the urban fabric, functional characteristics and compatible uses (architectural and urban criteria).

At the scale of the architectural object, decisions and interventions can be largely inspired and facilitated by existing inventoried typologies regarding: past and present social use(s); compatible use(s) in the material context; geometric characteristics of the plots



(dimensions and proportions, frontages and fences) and buildings (position and surface related to the plot, dimensions, roofing); scale and massing; architectural language (vocabulary and morphology, composition, style); technical and infrastructural additions, etc.

At the scale of details and materials, interventions can find a solid support in the information contained in existing individual surveys of materials and construction techniques, or in evaluations of the rates of decay and repair (to include structure and finishes), as well as in inventories concerning the compatibility of materials (old and new).

As mentioned before, such inventories fortunately exist for some of the constituent protected zones of the studied area (Filipescu, Bonaparte and Mornand), being part of a study elaborated by the Department of History & Theory of Architecture and Heritage Conservation of the Ion Mincu University, which is posted on the site of the municipality.



The group members remarked on the necessity of making the inventories publicly accessible, which in this case is partially done, and appealing to users. A greater visibility might be achieved by founding information centers on heritage problems (on the French model) and organising exhibitions or other events capable of raising the interest of all the urban actors (users and general public, local administration, architects and contractors). Popularised inventories might thus influence indirectly the regeneration process of a historic area by contributing to the change of mentalities towards an increased awareness of the cultural value of built heritage.

### **Principles of sustainable development in the area: the introduction of renewable energy strategies**

Another question proposed to our group was the anticipation of an appropriate response to the studied area with respect to emerging urban issues, among which sustainable development and the introduction of renewable energy strategies are now of particular interest, according to the latest E.U. recommendations.

A simple fact we should remember, as was unanimously agreed, is that older buildings generally follow good passive design principles and the materials used are sustainable in themselves. Masonry



walls, small openings compared to the solid surfaces, pitched roofs with projecting eaves are energy-saving devices frequently encountered in the studied area, also offering the possibility of increasing the sustainable character of the buildings, for instance by means of insulating the attic level or doubling the windows inside and leaving apparent the original frames.

It was also observed that existing services often have the potential to be reused or enhanced through minimum intervention, at the same time being preserved as part of the cultural heritage.

Other remarks referred to the open areas of the plots, which provide opportunities for discreet additions of services and energy-saving equipment (heat pumps, for instance) without impacting on the existing fabric and setting.

Further discussions showed the necessity of establishing facts related to fabric (walls and roof) performance through careful assessment, and of monitoring micro-climate conditions before issuing guidelines for a sustainable development of the area.

### **Observations concerning education**

Finally, the debate approached the issue of the educational potential of the workshop theme. The conservation and regeneration of modern boroughs is a common provocative issue in most European cities, generally confronted with problems of redevelopment of districts of the last century and the lack of respect for the heritage of the recent past. In particular, along with specific cultural, historical and urban-architectural characteristics or determinations, the proposed site in Bucharest offers both good and bad, appropriate and inappropriate examples of interventions (insertions, extensions, restorations, renovations) – rich didactic material and a substantial subject for reflection and design.



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Strategies for the conservation and reuse of 20th-century neighbourhoods: limits and potentials  
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# Strategies for the conservation and reuse of 20th-century neighbourhoods: limits and potentials

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## Introduction

The conservation and regeneration of modern neighbourhoods is an issue in most European cities. Many of them have the same characteristics and similar issues to the proposed site in Bucharest. They are parts of the city comprised of buildings with different characteristics in terms of architecture, materials and construction, the result of a progressive juxtaposition of parts developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In Bucharest, the area is situated in the northern part of the city. It is triangular in form and is bordered by three major boulevards: Aviatorilor, Calea Dorobanților and Iancu de Hunedoara. It was included within the administrative perimeter of the city in 1895. The parts which make up the area differ widely in terms of both urban design and architecture, but also in their economic and social development. They range from: the Blanc parcelling made in 1895 and portions made before the war – Filipescu Park (1912), Bonaparte Park (1913) and the parcelling of the Communal Company for Low-cost Buildings (1916) – to sites created in the 1920s and 1930s – the



parcelling of Edilitatea Company and the parcelling Mornand and Eng. Teodorescu (1922), the Gherghel and Zamfirescu parcellings (1925), the Mornand II parcelling (1928), the parcelling of Moara Company (1935) and the two parcellings of Țesătoria Mecanică Company (1935 and 1940). Among them, three areas are protected: the Mornand, Filipescu and Bonaparte areas. The principal use of the site is residential: luxury villas, for example in the Filipescu Park, condominium buildings several storeys high, housing, etc. The area has great complexity both in morpho-typological terms and in the architectural languages present, which range from late Eclectic to Art Deco and Modernist (Harhoiu 1997: 58-79 and Cinà 2005). Many buildings were designed by prominent architects such as Duiliu Marcu, Horia Creangă, and Marcel Iancu (Popescu 2004: 205-326 and Machedon, Scoffham 1999: 32-57).

Over time the area has undergone several transformations: the appearance of some new buildings with various functions; aggregation of several plots, so changing the morphological structure of the area; and the conversion of residential villas into embassies, cultural institutes or the headquarters of political parties. There is ongoing demolition work, decline, the need to adapt structures to the standards of comfort and housing expected by a new generation of inhabitants and the small alterations continually being made to structures. All these raise the question of how to protect this architectural heritage. The aim is to consider how inevitable and necessary transformations can be governed on the basis of shared criteria, by outlining new conservation strategies aimed at identifying the appropriate instruments for ensuring full recognition of the need to safeguard both the architectural characteristics of individual housing units (as material testimony of the past) and the appearance of the area.

### **‘Organisation of Knowledge’ as an instrument in the management of change: the Label of ‘Twentieth-Century Heritage’ in France**

Safeguarding a heritage as vast as that produced in the 20th century calls for the definition of new instruments to cope with the issue. The question facing all contemporary Western societies is: how can one guarantee a sufficient level of recognition, conservation and historical memory with regard to the most significant examples of a heritage which is often undervalued, yet is substantial and in need of alterations/adjustments? One of these new instruments is the ‘*Label du Patrimoine du XXe Siècle*’ developed in France by the Ministry of Culture in 1999<sup>1</sup>. This is designed primarily as an instrument to increase awareness and knowledge, and is based upon methodical examination and widely representative sampling. Unlike the planning constraint of listing as an historical monument (Guillot 2006: 43-74), this instrument does not entail consequences of a legal nature. Its aim is to highlight the values and aspects inherent in the building, raising the awareness of all the players involved in decision-making about the future of this part of the legacy. The procedure for ascribing the *Label* to a building is headed by the regional services of the Ministry of Culture, and the *Label* is applied by the prefect of the region after a review of documentation by a scientific advisory board. This fact-finding process, more complex than an inventory, is accompanied by cultural events. The first step in the process consists of drawing up a list of buildings considered significant under a variety of criteria: representativeness of the work in relation to a series; importance of the architectural and construction program that produced it; spatial, morphological and typological innovations and the importance of the architect; the modes of reception of the work; its conservation status; its level of ‘authenticity’. During the drafting of this list, all the players involved



(local administrations, communities, the owners, architects, scholars, researchers, universities, etc.) have opportunities to share knowledge and initiatives already underway, providing an opportunity to rediscover works and places that may seem modest, have been forgotten or associated with negative events. In France, for example, there is the case of the suburbs built in the second half of the 20th century, with their noted social problems. More than ten years after its creation, the *Label of 'Patrimoine du Siècle XXe'* (Goven 2009: 34-41) is widely known, particularly in the area of Paris Ile-de-France, in the south of France in Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur and in the Rhône-Alpes area. Today more than 1000 buildings have been '*labellisé*', in addition to the 1,500 listed as historical monuments (Toulier 1997). For example, in Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region two campaigns of '*labellisation*' were carried out in 2000 and 2006-2007, and about 200 buildings are now '*labellisé*'.

Besides providing a phase for understanding the buildings more fully and collecting data about them, it is an opportunity to disseminate this knowledge in order to exert a real and concrete influence on the decisions and projects that define the future of the architectural heritage. Given that the *Label* itself is intended to result in neither advantages nor constraints, an important priority from the start was the use of all available means in order to communicate information to the widest possible public throughout the territory as a whole. This involved the use of public events, special signposts, exhibitions, books, press and media, conferences, photographic campaigns, DVDs, films and models.

Since 2002 there has been regular growth and development on a special internet site listing all the structures labelled as '*Patrimoine du XXe Siècle*' and the main studies relating to each<sup>2</sup>. This is an issue that, by definition, has to be viewed in the long term, yet the

policy of knowledge, conservation and reuse of the architectural heritage of the 20th century promoted by the Label has already produced positive results, including some on the operational level. Two examples could be the estate of the church in Pantin by Denis Honneger (Monnier 2003: 31-34) and Les Mûriers estate in Manosque (Alpes-de-Haute-Provence) designed by Candilis-Josic-Woods in 1962-1963. The first one is an estate built with prefabricated systems (1953-1978), designed by Auguste Perret's pupil, Denis Honneger, within the programme '4,000 flats for Paris area' begun in 1952 (Radouan, Texier 2010). It was '*labellisé*' in 2008. The second estate was '*labellisé*' in 2000, and in 2005, after more complex historic studies and surveys, the owners with Direction régionale des affaires culturelles (DRAC)<sup>3</sup> made recommendations for the preservation and reuse of the estate. After a long '*mise au point*', these recommendations became the references for new projects on the estate buildings and they are enclosed in Zones de protection du patrimoine architectural, urbain et paysager (ZPPAUP) of Manosque. (Figs. 1-4)



Fig. 1. Plaque of the label '*Patrimoine du XXe siècle*', designed by Agence Canal (Patrick Rubin and Valérie de Calignon).





Figs. 2-3. Buildings in 'quartier de l'Eglise' (Pantin, Seine-Saint-Denis) by Denis Honegger distinguished with the label 'Patrimoine du XXe siècle'.



Fig. 4. 'Les Mûriers' ensemble (Manosque, Alpes-de-Haute-Provence) by Georges Candilis, 'labellisé' en 2000.

### Special guidelines for the protected cultural heritage: the case of the Honneger buildings in Geneva

Several examples of strategies can be adopted to govern the transformations taking place with regard to parts of the city possessing architectural and urban values, coherence and liveability. One such case is that of the 'Honneger buildings' in Geneva, Switzerland. This was the achievement of three brothers who collected numerous commissions in Geneva, working in favourable economic conditions and equipped with adequate instruments for project oversight and implementation (a business organisation that brought together the skills of architect, civil engineer, production control and financial management). In the post-war years they built around one-third of the new housing stock – amounting to about 9,000 homes – as well as numerous office buildings, commercial facilities and workshops. More than any others, their work exemplifies the construction of the 'ordinary' within the expanding city and its periphery (Balxert estates 1957-1962, built with prefabricated 'system Ha' [Delemontey 2010: 148-169], the Cité Carl-Vogt 1960-1964, Cité Carol de Lancy 1958-1966, etc.).

The production of the Honneger brothers is very different from that present in Bucharest. These are buildings of reinforced concrete, collective housing built to meet the growing need for housing in Geneva between 1945 and 1965. There are also differences in the context in which these buildings were designed and implemented, the methods of construction, the architectural language and socio-economic context. But the factor that unites these two cases is the complexity and breadth of the aspects requiring protection. It could thus be interesting to analyse more closely the path that led to the definition of guidelines to govern the transformations necessary to reuse these buildings. The Service Cantonal des Monuments et des



Sites (SMS) of the canton of Geneva commissioned the Université de Genève<sup>4</sup> to carry out a research project, posing the question of how these buildings were to be conserved. The first step was to supply an account of the sites where the Honegger brothers had worked, with a complete inventory of their important works within the territory of Geneva, in a way analogous to the approach adopted in Bucharest.<sup>5</sup> In the case of Geneva, fifty-two 'objects' (individual buildings or ensembles) were identified, documented and inventoried. These profiles were then inserted in the computer information system for the Geneva Region (SITG) and can be consulted online.

Parallel with this inventory, a bibliographical and archival research project was conducted on the output of the Honneger brothers. After that, the second topic was a critical reading and qualitative evaluation of these objects. The latter were assessed on the basis not only of architectural qualities, type, construction technologies and ensemble characteristics, but also on their state of preservation. They were classified in accordance with the criteria for architectural assessment applying in Geneva.<sup>6</sup> The aim of the research was to identify recurrent issues and problems, and a series of recommendations (Graf 2010: 214-229) was put forward which took account not only of the various (often conflicting) interests involved, but also of a concern for practical use, financial economies and preservation of the architectural heritage. A series of specific recommendations were produced for those buildings identified as 'outstanding'. For all the others, general recommendations were formulated aimed at preserving the principal features (spatial, constructive and material) that identify these buildings as part of the production of the Honegger brothers. The principal topics dealt with were: respect for the typology of the housing; identifying any possibility of grouping apartments, for example those with a single

orientation; preservation of morphology, materials, finishes of the shared areas (entrance, stairs, exteriors); regulation for horizontal extensions and added levels; specific information regarding alterations of the façades, including diagnostics prior to alteration; respect for polychromy. Recommendations on how to comply with regulatory requirements (thermal insulation, noise, safety) were also included. (Figs. 5-6)

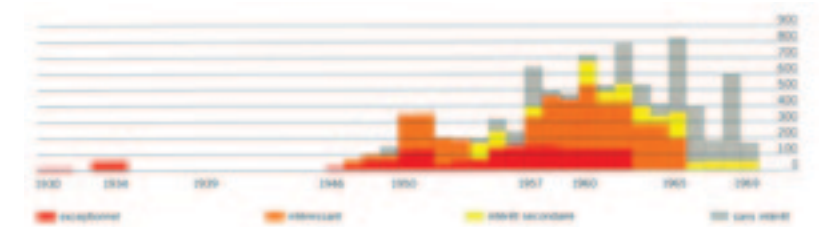


Fig. 5. Qualitative evaluation of buildings by Honneger brothers (Graf 2010)



Fig. 6. 'Cité Carl-Vogt' by Honneger brothers, Geneva, 1960-1964



## Conclusion

Precise in-depth knowledge of Modernist neighbourhoods, like the area in Bucharest, should highlight their physical characteristics, the materials and building techniques that went into their construction, and above all, the context within which they were designed and produced. This, together with careful evaluation of the nature and degree of their decay, is the necessary basis for making decisions with regard to the future of Modernist neighbourhoods. Part publicly owned and part privately owned, these structures have varying characteristics, hence there has for some time been recognition that specific steps should be taken to protect them. This does not mean that they should be turned into museum exhibits or that research based on archive designs and period photographs should be applied to resurrect some 'original state' in which all evidence of the passage of time has been erased. Instead, the aim is to consider how the inevitable and necessary transformations might be 'governed' on the basis of shared criteria, with full recognition of the need to safeguard both the architectural characteristics of individual housing units and the overall appearance of the area. The aim is to develop a specific instrument that could assist in a decision-making process involving the various partners who will play a role in the future of the buildings – the owners, authorities, architects and specialists appointed. Thus, examination of the architectural heritage finds practical application and becomes 'knowledge in action'.

## Notes

- 1 The 'Label Patrimoine du XXe Siècle' was developed on 18 June 1999 with a circular subsequently integrated with additional texts.
- 2 Internet site: <http://www.paca.culture.gouv.fr>
- 3 Since 1977, the Ministry of Culture is present in every region in France as Directions Régionales des Affaires Culturelles (DRAC).
- 4 The Service des monuments et sites commissioned the Université de Genève to conduct research to identify the most appropriate means to protect the Honegger

heritage. The research was conducted by Franz Graf, with Yvan Delemontey and Philippe Grandvoinet, from January 2006 to February 2008.

5 In the case of the Bucharest area, an 'architectural inventory' exists. It was made by the Department of History and Theory of Architecture and Conservation of the Heritage at Ion Mincu University, in partnership with the local authority.

6 This is a scale of four values: buildings 'of no interest', 'of minor interest', 'of interest' and 'exceptional' buildings.

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## Authenticity between social awareness and conservation: a case study in Bucharest

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From a bird's-eye perspective of the present-day map of Bucharest, the striking similarity in size between the 'Aviatorilor neighbourhood'<sup>1</sup> and the historic city centre becomes evident. The neighbourhood, unlike the city centre, is characterised by a coherent urban design layout, involving an articulated path network, texture and enclosure, relationship between the soil and the buildings. This area, in comparison with other central zones of the city, was only partially modified by the major urban interventions that distorted substantial parts of the Romanian capital under the Communist regime<sup>2</sup>, and also subsequently by urban dynamics driven by the growing real estate speculative interests<sup>3</sup> after the 1990s (Figs.1-3).



Fig.1. Romanian National Television Headquarters realized during the Communist regime: an urban insertion in the residential area.





Figs. 2-3. One of the urban limits of the residential area: apartment buildings realized during the 1980s'.

When lowering the observation point to eye level, an impressive feature that the observer notices is the high quality of the buildings and the urban features. The overall impression is somewhat comparable to that gained by visiting the Village Museum<sup>4</sup>, where vernacular buildings from all over Romania were collected and reconstructed

in an open-air museum. The 'Aviatorilor neighbourhood' can be considered a peculiar residential architectural Romanian catalogue, representative of the interwar period, interestingly retained in situ and currently still in use. It in fact represents a living account of how local architectural traditional themes and influences from the European experience of that time have been assimilated, interpreted and interpolated in parallel with the search for a national style. The area represents not only an extraordinary document that describes the recent history of Bucharest, but it also





represents a legacy with international value due to its 'articulated continuity' (De Vita 1996:12) which characterised the 20th-century European architectural and technological culture.

This case study provides an important opportunity to reflect on the two terms *regeneration/conservation*, possibly to be accepted as two aspects of the same issue – the future transmission of the constructed heritage. In this context regeneration refers to all those operations which address the overall improvement of urban life, including promoting strategies for the development of awareness, appreciation and enrichment of the neighbourhoods' specific features. According to this perspective, the conservation procedure delimits the perimeter within which the hypothetical processes of regeneration should be articulated. It has to encompass all those operations that are strictly necessary with regard to needs and uses and, at the same time, ensure that all the changes in function maintain the maximum possible material permanence.

In spite of the fact that our case study is almost an unicum in the European scene, an analysis of the 'regeneration strategies' implemented in different European modern neighbourhoods can be useful in understanding the different levels of action required and the interaction between various social, political and cultural actors.

The cited examples, though apparently not interrelated, bear common features such as the broadening of the object to be preserved<sup>5</sup>, the realisation period, the employment of techniques and materials different from the ones used to date, and the social impact of the preservation process. Most importantly, what unites these case studies is illustrated by the constant 'state of transition' of the built urban environment, subject to continuous renewal due to both the improvement in living standards and to wider urban dynamics<sup>6</sup>.

Some of the main issues to be faced during the preservation process lie in the lack of awareness and in the scant recognition of the patrimonial values by its inhabitants, by the community that inherited the built heritage and which, through its daily use, considers it replaceable and alterable. These issues are also evident on the part of the authorities, specialists<sup>7</sup> and the academic community. From the perspective of the recognition of such heritage, different approaches were taken on complementary fronts: first, a 'pedagogical' action was initiated, aiming to increase social and cultural awareness of the inhabitants, then the tools and the methodology needed in order to understand and interpret the urban tissue were deployed by specialists. These actions had as their major goal an increased access by society to the information regarding these urban areas.

For example, in Pessac sustained attention towards the district of the *Cité Fugès* by Le Corbusier (Taylor 1973; Boudon 1983) reawakened and consolidated collective pride, resulting in socially coordinated actions aimed at managing the intervention processes, and attending the private commissioners interested in the future of the area in specific and technical choices. Another exemplary case can be found in Lyon, at the *États-Unis* site (Chenevez 2006; Peghin 2010), where the population itself opted for an on-site conservation process featuring the safeguarding of the original residential function, instead of accepting the demolition-reconstruction cycle<sup>8</sup>.

However, many objective difficulties are still present, most prominently the lack of adequate economical resources and of appropriate preservation instruments<sup>9</sup>. Moreover, the wide dispersal of the area's property tends to favour individual building interventions without taking the context into account. Often, an out-and-out gap between the inhabitants' needs and the conservation of the general urban design can be found, alongside the material



consistency of the buildings. The creation of an *ad-hoc* organisation was sometimes necessary in order to guarantee a coordinated management of the preservation strategies. One of the main aims of this committee was to devise some possible economical and moral inducements for individual situations, and to develop appropriate regulation as a result of negotiations between inhabitants, public institutions and organisations<sup>10</sup>.

Nevertheless, individual actions or speculative interests can be predominant during the implementation of 'regeneration strategies', as in the case of the Prenzlauer Berg district of Berlin (Urban 2009), a residential neighbourhood built between the second half of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th, extraordinarily surviving the destruction of war and the subsequent political events. During the 1990s, the district was deeply disfigured in terms of its spaces, functions and physical consistency, under strong pressure from refurbishment, economic opportunities and growing tourist attractions<sup>11</sup>.

Such approaches often find an alibi in the interpretation of the term 'authenticity', which represents an aspect that helps to define the cultural value of the object in need of protection, together with historical and architectural importance and integrity. If we consider architecture as an autographic art and not allographic<sup>12</sup>, authenticity is not possible without a clear physical attestation. All changes and human actions stratified in the life of the building should be interpreted as moments of a process that help to define the uniqueness and irreproducibility of the material document (Dezzi Bardeschi 1994:61-72).

Other positions seem to emphasise a meaning of the word authenticity that is more closely linked to formalistic aspects<sup>13</sup>; in those cases, the restoration goal often becomes to return to a supposed initial

building condition of unity. In particular, it was, and in some cases still is, a recurring attitude to give priority to retaining only formal and volumetric aspects in the case of 20th-century heritage preservation. This attitude often involves the elimination of important examples of innovations and the cancellation of physical traces, marks of the technological evolutions of the last century.

Going into a further detailed consideration of the patrimonial authenticity and its application to the Romanian context, it becomes imperative to understand both the cultural environment and the background where this concept is defined. Due to cultural relativism, the local interpretation of authenticity can produce both a disputable permeability of interventions and interpretations of what cultural values represent for the society that inherited that patrimony (Cantacuzino 2001:16). An example that raises the issue of authenticity in the Romanian cultural and academic environment at different levels and points of view can be found in the 'Aviatorilor neighbourhood', labelled as a protected built area by the local administration<sup>14</sup>. One of the distinctive features of this area, which raises some debates over the conservation issues, is determined by the coincidence of a high number of architectural masterpieces protected by the national monuments law and other buildings considered of 'medium and low cultural values'<sup>15</sup>.

Romanian national legislation<sup>16</sup> favours the safeguarding of both individual buildings and assemblies of buildings deemed of great value to the local and/or national culture (historical and formalistic value are most prominent), a tutorage that is made possible to accomplish through the inventory and listing methodology. Therefore, everything that ends up being inscribed in the national monuments list, from single buildings to whole urban/rural assemblies/sites, falls under the legal protection of the state, enforced by the intervention of various protection bodies as defined by the Ministry of Culture.



However, in general but also in particular regarding our case study, the architectural masterpieces listed and protected by the national legislation cannot be fully understood and appreciated without taking into account their built environment, determined by the same urban, architectural and social principles. Without the integration of all the aspects of this complex background, the 'Aviatorilor neighbourhood' could not have been declared a protected built area of Bucharest. The recognition of valuable built urban zones of Bucharest and their label of protected areas introduces wider and more complex issues in the field of patrimonial preservation, regarding not only buildings as individual entities, but also the complex connections and relations between all the various urban and architectural features. Taken together, all these define the urban landscape characteristics whose preservation is desired.

Even though the 'Aviatorilor neighbourhood' was in fact recognised as a valuable urban area representative of a particular moment of the city's history and development, representative even of a certain social way of living that is difficult to find and identify nowadays, the urban regulations that are attached to the urban zone plan elaborated here are addressed to the individual buildings and guided by a formalist approach. Thus, to each building is assigned a certain cultural value during the assessment process: the listed buildings are considered of 'high cultural value' and are thus to be preserved; the buildings assessed as being of 'medium cultural value', mostly on the basis of historic and artistic relevance, may be subjected to limited transformations, while those buildings considered of 'low cultural value' are not subject to any kind of restriction regarding possible interventions. In the more general context of an extensive urban area, emphasising each architectural creation as something of extraordinary value (or not) results in the establishment of a dilemma that needs to be resolved before any

intervention in the built environment could ever be accepted or authorised by the local authorities.

Which building is to receive protection priority and based on which legislation, national or local? In the case of valuable urban zones, should the discussion and studies be oriented towards individual aspects of each building or towards their impact on the general urban context?

In this complex decision-making process, the need to introduce another terminology has arisen. In fact, in the field of urban and architectural preservation the concept of 'ordinary architecture'<sup>17</sup>, has become widespread in recent years.

At a first glance, this concept could be seen as the basis of a new theoretical framework for the Romanian approach to the preservation of the built environment. However, a closer look at a minority of theories announced and published during the 1970s would reveal that this principle is not completely new. Obviously, these approaches were elaborated in a different political context than that of contemporary Romania. During that time, in fact, entire historical centres were threatened by demolition due to the national modernisation process initiated by the Communist regime. In fact, many Romanian specialists were fighting for the protection of the built urban areas through the pages of the *Arhitectura* magazine. Some of the newly formulated ideas were actually directed towards the necessity of saving only what was considered of 'high value' (Ionescu 1972; Curinschi 1975), but there were also theorists affirming that saving only what was of high cultural value was not enough, because of the importance of the built environment as also defined by the 'less valuable' buildings (Drăguț 1976).



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Similar issues, similar ideas and similar intentions are found again decades later, in a different political and economical context, which is nevertheless facing the same patrimonial issues: what to save and what to demolish from the urban areas undergoing the modernisation process. But nowadays the modern urban dynamics are mainly influenced by real estate speculation, in a general context where private property has gained primacy of rights over the public interest. In fact, starting from the middle of the 1990s until recent years, Bucharest was deeply influenced by the privatisation process of all the state properties (Cinà 2005), and by the fact that this process included also the retrocession of private properties in the residential areas like the Aviatorilor neighbourhood. This ended in complicated, long drawn-out legal procedures, determining a real fight over property rights in this well positioned urban area of Bucharest, and resulting in some cases in the abandonment or, on the other extreme, the abusive use of the dwellings.

Being the private owner of an historical monument means to be monitored by the local and national bodies responsible for safeguarding the architectural heritage. While this was simple enough in relation to listed 'high cultural value' buildings, interventions in the non-listed buildings of the study area were generated by the use of the private property, deeply affecting the urban transformations. This phenomenon is evident in the contemporary architectural insertions appearing in the area due to the demolition of some private properties, non-listed and non-protected buildings. The new architectural insertions were mainly generated under different criteria from those of architectural and urban preservation, including and not limited to the personal taste of the owner, complete ignorance of the urban context of the insertion, or real estate speculation (Figs. 4-6). All these (and more) factors taken together can lead to an overall change in the balance of functions of the residential area.



Figs. 4-6. Examples of aggressive contemporary architecture realized in the studied area after 1990; a visible threat for the area's urban qualities.

Nowadays, the local legal recognition in Bucharest of its valuable urban areas can be considered a step forward from the theories of the 1970s: inventory and protection methodology are applied in order to catalogue the built environment, and to determine the rules of urban and architectural intervention (urban regulations). Our case study is included in this process. Nevertheless, the inventory methodology applied allows for a theoretical line between high and low historical and artistic quality of a building, indirectly giving rise to a possible threat to the urban area in its urban regeneration process. In fact, the demolition of many buildings deemed less culturally valuable might end up in complete urban architectural and social change of the area as it is known, possibly influencing also its label of protected built area.



To initiate a *conservation/regeneration* process for the Aviatorilor neighbourhood, it would be desirable to act on several levels, on the one hand addressing academic and professional education in the field of conservation, and on the other, encouraging a variety of social initiatives oriented toward the education and awareness of the community that has inherited this legacy.

All the case studies analysed and presented in this article illustrate the need to create a specialised group having as its main goal the safeguarding of this particular urban area, dealing with its particular issues. This group could act as a 'social platform' where different actors can intervene and negotiate the urban transformations and conservation of this heritage – officials from the local administration, specialists from the academic world, the inhabitants, and social and cultural associations interested in the preservation issues of Bucharest's protected areas. This body could stimulate the potential requalification of the micro and macro spaces in the area (Figs. 7-8), transforming them into important social points serving both the neighbourhood's community as well as Bucharest's inhabitants in general. But it could also play an important role in the future studies of the neighbourhood, helping and stimulating them to improve the assessment process through an inventory oriented towards material criteria. Also, a specialised commission set up within the neighbourhood body, with the capacity and willingness to offer specialised advice, could regulate and promote the urban and architectural interventions in the site.

As regards the approach to conservation, even though the Romanian cultural background has so far sustained the formalistic approach, it would be interesting and beneficial to look at the intervention project as an instrument capable of ensuring the quantity and quality of the information gathered, controlling in this way, and the impact on the built environment (Bellini 1985). Thus, the destruction and demolition due to the lack of knowledge should be brought under control, also generating a more objective debate regarding what aspects of the urban area should be preserved and how.



Figs. 7-8. Micro and macro spaces possible to be used in the process of the neighbourhood's potential requalification.



## Notes

1 Due to the fact that Aviatorilor Boulevard does not only represent one of the 'visual' limits of the studied area, but also an important urban reference on the map of Bucharest, the authors have decided to entitle the case study during this article as the 'Aviatorilor neighbourhood'.

2 In comparison to the destruction of a significant part of the Bucharest historic areas during the Communist regime, the urban transformations which occurred in the studied area can be considered limited and concentrated on its boundaries. Such examples can be illustrated by the National Television Headquarters' site, or by the high apartment buildings on the edge of the Iancu de Hunedoara Boulevard.

3 The residential vocation of the area, the social extraction of its inhabitants and the relevant rule of the private property have in some way been to the benefit of the 'material' and 'formalistic' conservation of the neighbourhood, limiting, up to this moment, speculative aggression to just some areas.

4 Muzeul Național al Satului "Dimitrie Gusti".

5 The preservation issues correlated to the matter of the modern neighbourhoods and of the so-called 'ordinary architecture' are approached and debated by the academic community mainly due to the widening of patrimonial meanings, from an urban and architectural point of view. For example, the creation in 1988 of the Do.Co.Mo.Mo. International Association concerned with the issues of modern heritage coincided with the UNESCO inclusion in its list of such testimony.

6 In this sense it has to guarantee, through specific instruments, the temporary condition of the objects, avoiding the illusion of their unlimited duration or 'immortality'.

7 By specialists the authors mean not only architects, but also urban planners, economists, sociologists, art historians. In the matter of architectural and social studies Boudon (1983) used the instruments of the social sciences to investigate the outcomes of architectural and urban plans. In Pessac, during the studies initiated over the neighbourhood, the research subject was oriented towards the neighbourhood's inhabitants and their opinions.

8 For these reasons the site received a prize in 1991 from UNESCO, as a model for the social implication of the inhabitants in the preservation process and for their capacity to transmit culture in a popular and uncomfortable context. Other similar cases are the Werkbundsiedlung Roter Berg in Vienna, where, together with conservation of the residential function, a little museum of the neighbourhood's history has been created; the city centre of Le Havre, completely rebuilt by Perret after the Second World War and where the local population has played a fundamental role in the definition of new urban identities; Ivrea, where an important social awareness campaign has been initiated, aimed at cataloguing the modern heritage of the city and to create inhabitants' consent and participation in elaborating the preservation policies.

9 However, the legal preservation instruments cannot guarantee a solution to the problems. The listed buildings procedure in fact does not guarantee collective awareness of the heritage.

10 Some examples in this sense are: the MAAM in Ivrea – Ivrea Open Air Modern Architecture Museum; the Association du Musée Urbain Tony Garnier in Lyon; and the Welwyn Garden City in England.

11 This example presents some similar aspects with respect to our study case, such as the same political and economical transition from socialism to capitalism that affected the property status and social structure inside the residential area. During the 1980s there was a proposal regarding this exact neighbourhood in order to promote its preservation, including among other things, the creation of a 'museum of urbanity'.

12 Architecture is considered an expression of human activities which are always characterised by specific time and material coordinates. According to this perspective, a building is not reproducible without losing its meaning. Thus the concept of authenticity cannot be understood as a return to an original building condition. A building's 'materials' and 'transformation dynamics' are determined by all autographic signs realised during time possible to certify and attest their presence. As Dezzi Bardeschi observed (2008, 195-198), the notion of 'material authenticity' is coherent with the concept of intangible cultural heritage, declared in the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2003. The definition of authenticity is thoroughly explored by Nelson Goodman (1968; 1996:834-35), in connection with the distinction between allographic and autographic arts. In the case of the latter, authenticity depends not on the formal aspects but on the history of production, an aspect that is not imitable or transferable in any copy or reproduction.

13 These positions have, through a formalistic attitude, influenced the approaches to the 'modern heritage', threatening in this way its main architectural features to be preserved. Such an attitude was also encountered over time on the Romanian preservation background as regarding the built heritage in general.

14 Through the initiative of the Bucharest administration, a certain number of urban areas were declared protected built areas in order to recognise their patrimonial values and thus to regulate and direct the urban interventions towards preservation. The studied area is included in this category due to the existence of protected urban zones with different urban and architectural features such as the Filipescu Parcelling Area and the Bonaparte-Mora Parcelling Area.

15 During the assessment process of the area, the inventory methodology used classified the buildings on three different levels of 'cultural values'. Of all listed buildings, those proclaimed Historical Monuments were considered to have 'high cultural value', while the others, in respect of their historic and formalistic relevance, were considered of 'medium or low cultural value'. (According to: CCPEC-UAUIM/DITACP. 2005 – 2006. 'Definirea regimului tehnic al construcțiilor supuse autorizării în zonele protejate și în zonele de protecție a monumentelor, în scopul



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16 National Monuments Law 422 from 2000.

17 [it.architettura minore, fr.architecture ordinaire]. One of the latest conferences organised on this theme: International seminar/Giornata di studio internazionale/Journee d'étude internationale: "Architettura 'minore' del XX secolo. Strategie di tutela e valorizzazione"/ "Architecture 'mineure' du XXe Siècle. Strategies de sauvegarde et Patrimonialisation", 13.12.2011/ Politecnico di Milano – DiAP (organizers: Carolina Di Biase, Francesca Albani).

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## Regeneration of urban space: an intrinsic process?

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### Introduction

The term pathogen is used to define all inimical micro-organisms, such as bacteria, parasites, viruses, fungi, etc. which assault the body. Pathogens are the sources of many diseases and ailments that can annoy, harm or even kill the body. The body is equipped with an immune system which protects it from threats of pathogens, which also minimises harm to the body and ensures its functioning while this protection process is ongoing. The immune system faces a problem with two aspects: the identification or detection of pathogens; and the efficient elimination of those while minimising harm to the body from both pathogens and the immune system itself. The detection problem is often described as that of distinguishing 'self' from 'non-self' (which are elements of body or pathogens, respectively). However, many foreign micro-organisms are not harmful, and an immune system response to eliminate them may cause damage. In these cases it would be healthier not to respond, so it would be more accurate to say that the problem faced by the immune system is that of distinguishing between harmful non-self, and everything else (Hofmeyr 2000:1). In order to function in accordance with this principle, the immune system faces, learns, and adapts to various types of pathogens, remembers them, and generates diverse protection systems for the body.



Contrary to what can be understood from this introduction, this paper is not aiming to present a medical issue. The intention is to remind the reader of the analogy between cities and living organisms, as has been done by many urban researchers in the past. The city dynamics caused by urban mobility, changes in housing and transport needs, developing technology, changing social life, economy and market influences generally act as aggressors which want to rapidly transform the physical environment of the cities, neighbourhoods and the existing building stock. Continuing the analogy, the 'immune system' of the city is expected to distinguish the offending agents, adapt and make them ineffective in order to maintain the city as a living organism. Can this be some form of conservation and regeneration? This paper aims to define, describe and discuss how such an immune system can be put in place in a neighbourhood.

### Neighbourhood as a social concept

Power (2007:17) defines the concept of neighbourhood as 'local areas within towns and cities recognised by people who live there as distinct places, with their own character and approximate boundaries'. Neighbourhoods help to shape people's lives because they do more than house people. They form a base for wider activities, providing many of the social services that link individuals with each other, giving rise to a sense of community (Power 2007:22).

The EAAE Workshop in Bucharest has been an excellent opportunity to explore a neighbourhood of significant and outstanding quality in terms of containing numerous artefacts which are admirable samples of Modernist heritage. The study area is a triangular-shaped urban context contoured and clearly hedged by three

main boulevards. The explicit characteristics of the neighbourhood have been defined, as confirmed by almost all participants of the workshop, as impressive, eminent, high-quality but quiet, not very lively and island-like in relation to the wider city.

Those characteristics of the neighbourhood, besides seeming harmless and peaceful, evoked an aggrieved and sad mood of spirit. Is this state of silence and isolation signalling uncertainty for the future? Will this high-grade neighbourhood come under aggressive pressure to transform? What can be done to preserve, conserve and regenerate this neighbourhood?

Coming back to the immune system, the theory reminds us that the answer lies within the question. If the city is a living organism, it shall reproduce its own protection (conservation) and regeneration systems. Academic, professional and administrative interventions should ensure the rapid, effective and sustainable function of this self-protection.

According to Jacobs (1965:122), a successful city neighbourhood is a place that keeps sufficiently abreast of its problems so it is not destroyed by them. However, an unsuccessful neighbourhood is a place that is overwhelmed by its defects and problems and is progressively more helpless before them. Problems of city neighbourhoods are exacerbated when much of their amenity, social mix and liveliness are depleted by the movement of people, retail and work into the other areas. This movement breaks down local networks and contributes to a continuing social polarisation, which is marked by the growth of gated communities, small examples of which are seen in the study area.

The decay of the neighbourhoods is linked therefore to social segregation, and the loss of the senses of community and belonging



of its residents. Numerous research findings show that most people living in neighbourhoods under the risk of some form of decay tend to feel they have very little influence over what happens to their estate or area. An important concept to identify the status of the social structure of a neighbourhood is the concept of 'social capital'. The term has been initially used by Hanifan (1916:130), as quoted below from his definition:

*I do not refer to real estate, or to personal property or to cold cash, but rather to that in life which tends to make these tangible substances count for most in the daily lives of people, namely, goodwill, fellowship, mutual sympathy and social intercourse among a group of individuals and families who make up a social unit... If he may come into contact with his neighbor, and they with other neighbors, there will be an accumulation of social capital, which may immediately satisfy his social needs and which may bear a social potentiality sufficient to the substantial improvement of living conditions in the whole community. The community as a whole will benefit by the cooperation of all its parts, while the individual will find in his associations the advantages of the help, the sympathy, and the fellowship of his neighbors.*

According to Dekker and Uslaner (2001:4); the 'social capital' is about the value of social networks, bonding similar people and bridging between diverse people, with norms of reciprocity. Kearns (2003:41) explains how social capital is linked to neighbourhood renewal goals such as community empowerment, and to urban policy goals such as community cohesion. Power and Willmot (2007:5) use a practical framework to analyse social capital. Accordingly, to acquire 'bonding' within social capital depends on strong, intense personal relationships, offering mutual support,

understanding and exchange between people. Three main aspects are used to detect bonding social capital; people to count on, family links and friends. In order to acquire 'bridging' within the social capital, broader membership of groups working within the area or linking the local areas to wider services and structures are required. Social trust and the role of neighbours, involvement in children's schools, and participation in community events and groups are bridging activities between diverse people of the neighbourhood community.

### **An intrinsic regeneration based on social capital**

Over the last decade there has been a shift in urban policy around the concept of regeneration. While the period following World War II could be conceptualised in urban policy literature as the 'reconstruction period', terms like 'redevelopment' and 'renewal' came to the fore in the 1980s and 1990s (Smith 2011:9). As Rob Imrie and Mike Raco (2003:3) have identified, the associated approach in the 1980s and 1990s to urban policy was largely property-led. The concern was to make particular areas more attractive to corporate investors. The stated rationale for this was that such investment would create a 'trickle-down' of wealth into local communities. Whereas this approach is still quite powerful in developing countries, the theory of urban transformation seems to have become a more socially inclusive form of regeneration. Peter Roberts (2000:17) provides an initial definition of urban regeneration as: '...comprehensive and integrated vision and action which leads to the resolution of urban problems and which seeks to bring about a lasting improvement in the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of an area that has been subject to change'.



Together with this transformation of the meaning of the term, there has also been a lot of discussion around the concept of social capital – the quality and scale of social relationships, groups and networks. A graphic representation of relations within social capital is given below (Fig. 1) in order to suggest eventually a social capital and physical space relation outlining the regeneration principle.

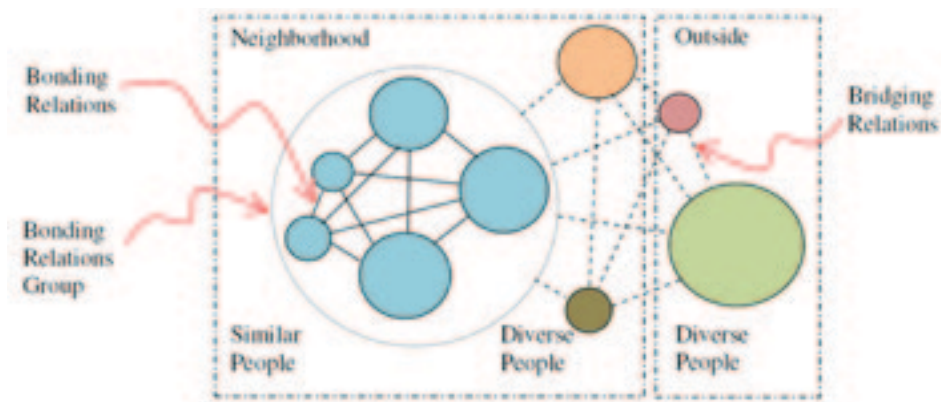


Fig.1. Social capital: bonding and bridging relations

The figure above and relevant explanations suggest the existence of three main groups which constitute the social capital of the neighbourhood. Those are: 1) similar people living within the neighbourhood; 2) diverse people living within the neighbourhood; and 3) diverse people living outside the neighbourhood (paying temporary visits to the neighbourhood concerned). The physical space regeneration as proposed in this paper depends on a three-stage methodology to rebuild social capital in order to consequently acquire intrinsic regeneration of the neighbourhood. The three-stage methodology consists of: 1) analysis and measurement of the existing social capital; 2) improvement of the social capital; 3) activation of the social capital to regenerate the physical neighbourhood. The last stage is expected to occur intrinsically. This intrinsic regeneration is in fact what needs to be put in place,

as referred to through the analogy of the immune systems of living organisms in the introduction of this paper.

Each of the above social groups and relevant relations are associated with a definite physical space level to be constituted from: 1) private space; 2) semi-public space; and 3) public space, as shown in Figure 2 and Figure 3 below. Besides being a part of the public space, the community centres are a somehow differentiated and elaborated form of space within the neighbourhood, the main function of which is to attract diverse people from outside of the neighbourhood – social group layer 3, defined above.

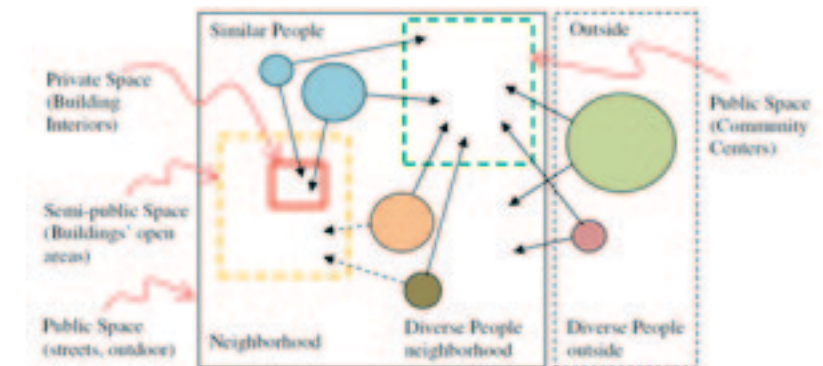


Fig. 2. Social capital and physical space relations



Fig. 3. Physical spaces



The different levels of physical space have different attributes that constitute the physical built environment to the scale and interest of the layer of the associated social capital. In the case of the neighbourhood of the study area, there exist numerous high-quality artefacts and architectonic elements for those who experience them at the expected location, as illustrated in Figure 4 below. The interior elements (such as 1 in Fig. 4), the semi-public area elements such as 2 and 3, façades, highly accentuated projections, other façade elements like 4, 5 and outstanding garden walls like 6 and 7 in Figure below are such examples.



Fig.4. Various architectonic elements at various experiencing levels

### Measuring social capital

This chapter proposes a methodology to measure, assess and define the existing social capital in the neighbourhood through a survey incorporating both observation and questionnaires. The resulting assessment shall incorporate the quantity and frequency of the social activities in relation to the physical milieu where those activities take place. As previously suggested, the social group layers are to be separately questioned/monitored in order to conduct such a survey. A graphic representation of the survey respondents/subjects in relation to physical milieu is given below in Figure 5.

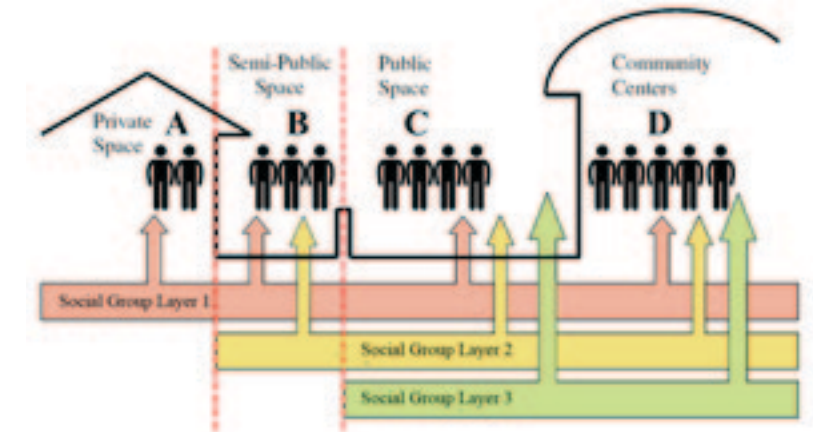


Fig. 5. Suggested analysis of social groups and physical milieu

The members of the social group in Layer 1 are those who have close relationships with other occupants of the neighbourhood, such as families, friends and neighbours. The suggested survey questionnaire shall aim to basically establish:

- How often members of a group are meeting in places A, B, C and D
- The average size of a group meeting in various places
- The activities performed during meetings.

The members of the social group in Layer 2 are those who are occupants of the neighbourhood (not necessarily households but also employees, functionaries of the commercial, administrative and cultural units/buildings situated in the neighbourhood). The suggested survey questionnaire and/or observations shall aim to basically understand and establish:

- How often members of a group are meeting in places A, B, C and D
- The average size of a group meeting in various places
- The activities performed during meetings
- Why and where do they come from, if they do not belong to local households.



The members of the social group in Layer 3 are those who temporarily experience the neighbourhood and facilities contained therein. The suggested survey questionnaire and/or observations shall be targeted to understand:

- How often members of a group are visiting the neighbourhood
- The motives of their visit
- Where they come from

The gender, age, socio-economic, socio-cultural, ethnic and other similar data related to the members of each group shall be generally recorded. The design of the survey shall produce a matrix (as shown below) to assess the quantity and quality of the existing social capital, where the first column lists the social group layers, the second the approximate size (number of people) in each group, and 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2B, 2C, 2D, 3C, 3D are numerical values obtained from the statistical evaluation of the survey results, for which higher grades represent a more affirmative state of social capital, and for which a specific methodology for computation shall be subject of further extensive research.

| Social Groups | Size of Social Group | Physical Milieu |   |   |   |
|---------------|----------------------|-----------------|---|---|---|
|               |                      | A               | B | C | D |
| 1             |                      |                 |   |   |   |
| 2             |                      |                 |   |   |   |
| 3             |                      |                 |   |   |   |

Fig. 6. Social capital matrix

## Regeneration of the urban space

Several proposals for neighbourhood regeneration (both related to the concept itself and to concrete examples for the study area) were discussed, developed and evaluated during the EAAE Workshop by and among participants. Some noteworthy and spectacular ideas have been put forward for the study area as reflected in the groups' Final Reports, such as introducing integrated conservation principles for concerned Modernist heritage, accentuating the educational aspects of the neighbourhood (as the neighbourhood contains a very varied and rich architectural vocabulary), rethinking the tramway depot as a community centre with the development of mixed functions such as info points, exhibitions, museums, commercial areas, etc. The need to improve public areas – roads, walkways, parks, green areas – in terms of physical properties was widely expressed.

Whereas the urgent need for conservation of this eminent heritage is desired by all participants, the inevitable prospect of change, transformation, and regeneration in some form are somehow admitted. This is rather consistent with the statement of Stouten (2010:54), who claims the current urban development and the production of space mainly takes place in locations of outstanding quality.

Regeneration, as intended here, shall describe any and all activities the consequences of which are likely to alter the physical, social, economic, and environmental fabric of the neighbourhood; whether at large or small scale, through public sector, private sector or individual initiatives, perceived either adversely or positively. The essential need is to understand the effects of such activities and interventions in terms of varying the measured social capital for the zone concerned. In accordance with the basic thesis of this paper,



the measured social capital and every scale/stage of regeneration activity is reciprocal, and each of them affects the other. These two processes are likely to occur simultaneously and they have to be carefully observed, and quantified in order to introduce accurate and timely interventions. For intended and planned urban regeneration initiatives, Roberts (2000:18) proposes that the process should aim for the simultaneous change of physical fabric, social structures, economic base and environmental conditions. Urban regeneration shall generate and implement a comprehensive, balanced and integrated strategy based on a proper analysis of local conditions, set clear, quantified objectives and make the best possible use of available natural, economic, human and other resources. The progress of the urban regeneration strategy should be properly measured, changing internal and external forces that act upon local areas should be monitored, and each step of the progress should seek participation and consensus amongst inhabitants and stakeholders.

The possible interventions in relation to and during the interaction between the regenerative activities and changes in social capital are depicted graphically below in the form of a flow chart (Fig. 7), as proposed.

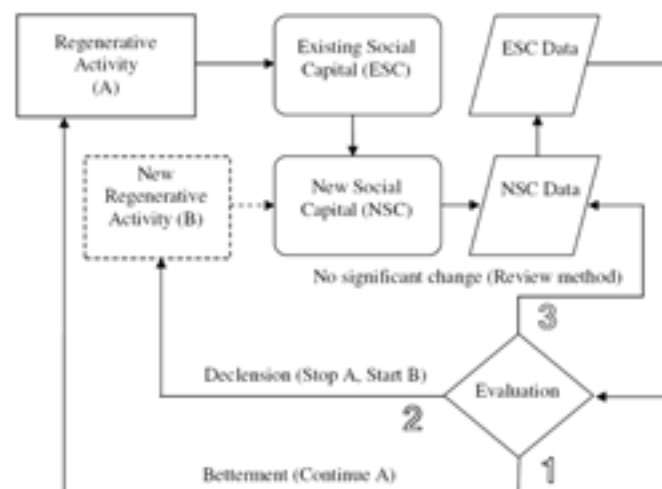


Fig. 7. Regenerative action-social capital interaction flow chart

It is considered that any regenerative action has an effect on the measured attributes of the existing social capital (ESC) and consequently creates an altered (new) social capital (NSC). The measured attributes of existing social capital are defined as ESC data, and those of the new social capital are defined as NSC data. There are three alternatives of intervention after evaluation/ comparison of those data. For the first alternative: if the evaluation indicates improvement the actual generative action (A) shall be continued; for the second alternative: if the evaluation indicates disimprovement, the actual generative action (A) shall be avoided and altered to another form of action (B). If the evaluation shows no significant change (third alternative), the data retrieval method shall be reviewed, as the method may not be efficient enough to measure the changes in social capital. It is a fact that any urban/ neighbourhood regeneration programme will change in line with altering conditions and circumstances. Additionally, one should recognise that different elements of the programme and the strategy will progress at different speeds. The methodology presented here requires all parameters related to the social capital concept to be measured continuously and precisely, with required remedies and improvement in the survey methods put in place in order to augment its efficacy.

## Conclusion

During and consequent to the EAAE Workshop in Bucharest, observations, evaluations and discussions around the study area have revealed the urgent need to develop tools, methods and a framework to ensure efficient conservation of the urban architectural heritage, especially for non-monumental architectonic estates and elements at buildings and neighbourhood level, the essential value of which is less appreciated by non-professionals. It is a fact that



unlike the monumental, archaeological, and the historical, the cultural significance of relatively new, Modernist heritage is not intuitively understood by the communities experiencing it. However, those communities are the key constituent for the survival and standing of such heritage.

This paper asserted the claim that the activity of regeneration is an intrinsic process, the dynamics of which are inherent in the daily life and activities of the community that experiences the neighbourhood in some form. Therefore, the concept of social capital is adduced and proposed as a tool which is used to measure and observe the state, progress and accuracy of any regenerative activity to take place in the neighbourhood. The concept of social capital is also considered to be a gate for any intervention to this intrinsic process, in order not to control, but rather to lead it in a direction to ensure efficient conservation of the existing heritage, together with a regeneration based on sustainable development and improvement of the urban tissue to be internalised, and accepted, by the community, which is expected to enforce their attachment to the neighbourhood.

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## Neighbourhoods in Bucharest: recognition, conservation and inheritance

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### Introduction\*

Speaking about conservation of the city<sup>1</sup>, our goal is not to conserve everything but to develop a restoration process that limits modifications and verifies necessities. Our task is not to put our brand on it, but to preserve the whole heritage.

If we judge transformation to be necessary, we should intervene through addition rather than demolition; such addition shall be 'modern', that is to say, expressed in modern shapes and language, evaluating formal and environmental compatibility.

In this sense we recommend the use of traditional materials integrated with modern techniques and design or, alternatively, new materials (that should not be too dissonant with traditional techniques) whose efficacy is well known. In the case of existing architectures, we have to pay attention to sustainability<sup>2</sup>, seeking 'non-conventional' choices characterised by the use of innovative typologies of environmental systems with high efficiency and technological relevance and by the use of renewable energy or passive cooling techniques, paying particular attention to the theme of energy saving and efficiency.



The architecture of urban expansions – recorded in Europe in the late 19th century – is characterised by different transitions: from traditional materials to new ones, from classical expressions to new languages, from Art Nouveau buildings to ‘proto-modern’ and modern architectural examples.

In addition it is characterised by the expansion of the historical city into new areas, ‘outside the walls’, and/or the diffusion of new functional types – often related to industrial or proto-industrial rationales, or, in the case of residential buildings, to a new example of living culture identified in the ‘cottage’ typology. These differences lead to several problems of intervention, associated with new technological characterisations, affecting also figurative aspects of individual buildings, different decay processes associated with modern materials and various environmental parameters and, last but not least, the processes of recognition and reappropriation by the community through the identification of a compatible re-functionalisation process that should be also useful in the design of a new city.

Perhaps this is the most difficult goal to achieve during the current historical moment – characterised by globalisation, a phenomenon generating progress in communications, production, economy and technology, in addition to its negative feedback in local/marginal dimensions.

Local realities are often unable to manage such changes because of cultural limits, lack of real instruments or simply inertia; as a consequence, external reference models have been adopted that are far removed from the local identity. As a result, the perception develops – especially in young people – that the local value is not remarkable. This perception is obvious visiting the neighbourhood in Bucharest: its diversity compared to the other parts of the town

– which followed the transformative model of other European or American towns (skyscrapers) – seems to lead it towards demolition. As against this, we should strengthen the local identity of this district, which is strongly characterised by several architectures realised between 1856 and 1990.

Today such neighbourhoods are also a positive example of calm life in a busy urban context, a singularity that should be preserved.

We must focus our efforts to work against this loss of esteem, since solely depending on the constraint<sup>3</sup> of legal protection can be insufficient; we have to develop a wider awareness of the cultural values of this neighbourhood. Obviously we refer to historical references, memory and humanism, as perennial values to people, even in these times of strong acceleration in science and technology.

### **Performance aspects and energy efficiency: technological contributions to restoration\*\***

In recent years restoration and conservation culture has changed in a natural evolution, passing from a protection-oriented attitude to a wide interest in valorisation<sup>4</sup>. This change has brought about a revision of goals, methods, tools and practices in the field of architectural heritage.

Valorisation is linked to the unavoidable notion of utilisation as a necessary condition for interest, maintenance, care. Today heritage is not considered to be a museum of itself, but it is reinterpreted through a conscientious and compatible use; a possible and necessary interpretation.

The sense of how a building is to be used is derived from the performances that currently characterise that particular building.



Utilisation should be subject to analysis and interpretation like other dimensions implemented within the scope of the project. We refer to an enhancement in how the building performs, while preserving the values of the existing heritage; the latter must be seen as an impelling constraint for any modification.

The constant contact with the heritage of existing buildings suggests the need to interpret the 'system of constraints' in a way that can shape the operations of change so that the intrinsic values of the heritage can be kept despite pernicious moments and operations.

The project can operate between the limits established by confronting the formal and architectural 'system of constraints' (that also incurs social, economical and urban values) and the identification of acceptable modifications.

The goal is to improve performances through the process of the project on the existing artefact: it becomes an action of reinterpretation and renewal. These reflections, carried out systematically, can suggest treatment alternatives: from repairs to restorations, from additions and changes to retrofit<sup>5</sup>. We consider that in the case of a building with a high architectural value and presenting a consistent material and formal phenomenology, its capacity for performance should be considered as the palimpsest of values to be preserved.

Central position in town, building personality, formal quality, security, strength, the low density with a rewarding relationship between green and built – these are features that converge in the judgment of value and esteem of architectural and urban heritage, although they are interpretable dimensions when viewed according to needs and requirements such as safety, aspect, comfort and usability.

Sometimes these values are not recognised and present anymore, and there is an urgency to the project and intervention. We do not refer either to a replacement of the building, a discard-and-restore intervention, nor to an operation limited to apparent formal values. We are talking about practices of interpretation, evaluation and integration of equipment, or the structural reinforcement of the existing buildings.

In recent years the need to think in terms of environmentally responsible actions aiming at environmental sustainability and energy saving<sup>6</sup> has been imposed. To those who work in restoration, recovery and re-use, it can be seen as a sort of physiological effect of their intervention, since all these bring about good practices in the conservation of energy (in the broadest sense of the word) and of matter. The energy-saving effect is the consequential outcome.

Reusing urban heritage, buildings and areas, ascertaining appropriate urban densification – often the settlement algorithm of a city throughout its history – healing and repairing rather than replacing, these are actions that symbolise a culture and a practice of thrifty and frugal uses of resources. Besides, this goal is advanced by recognising the building systems, devices and traditional materials used during the period of mass construction (in Europe from 1950 to 1990), their interpretation and renewal, the identification and contextual factors and good building that allowed for both quantity and experiment. So, we have to find not only well-constructed buildings, but also the culture that enabled the construction of good buildings.

In this field the environmental and technological qualities of the varied architectures realised in the last century are to be found in the use of appropriate materials and logical techniques (validated by on-site experimentation) and in the realisation of systems according



to environmental and climate aspects. Here are some examples: wooden roofs with a ventilated airspace where needed; protective roof pitches projecting to protect the façades from rainwater and excessive summer sunshine; consistent thickness of wall elements with a resultant thermal inertia; services systems that are well integrated and respectful of the spatial quality of rooms; systems of double windows for the purpose of winter and summer insulation; rooms' openings sized according to the effective sun exposure; shading loggias; functional reinforced concrete elements that are somewhat vulnerable to degradation after several decades.

Of course, it would be appropriate to consider here some driving objectives such as satisfactory operating levels, good levels of indoor environmental comfort (through retrofits on indoor enclosures where possible) and possible effective interventions, involving low-cost and low-impact actions.

Satisfactory performance levels and good levels of comfort can be obtained, first of all, by realising the full capabilities of the existing provisions that were already planned in the original configuration of these architectures, which are well designed and well related to a wise and refined architectural culture. Then, if it is necessary, we can intervene with minimally invasive design, using bio-eco compatible materials (according to the logic of Low Carbon Construction), preferably originated from traditional usage of local origin<sup>7</sup>. Design, concept, quality of architectural design and technology, industrial innovation and quality management – all can contribute to high quality intervention where enhancing the value and the not-so-high cost of materials, solutions and execution are not always discriminating factors. Besides, low-cost does not refer only to the intervention phase, but also to the phases of management and operation of the buildings. It should be related to the entire Life

Cycle Cost<sup>8</sup> and Life Cycle Assessment<sup>9</sup>. The notion of cost is to be understood in a broader perspective; not defined only by price, but also encompassing environmental and social costs which the community incurs in all real estate transactions.

At the neighbourhood level, the low density of buildings, the presence of green spaces and the integration of the green and built spaces with the services infrastructure express high levels of comfort and livability. Taken as a whole, these factors contribute to the quality of the architectural heritage while making it both very attractive and of a high real estate value – if we ignore the logic of speculation that lies in ambush.

The interpretation of these features, their protection and their promotion may, in addition, lead to consistent and sensitive interventions to allow neighbourhood scale strategies that aim at the creation of new infrastructure and new urban technological equipment that is integrated with the specific architecture. We could imagine a new concept of urban metabolism that, emphasising the proximity principle, implies a local circularity of the matter – with a different waste management system, a water cycle with a new kind of management of gray water and wastewater, and – why not – the possibility of local energy production from alternative sources like photovoltaic, microaerobic, anaerobic digestion, etc. with adequate equipment located at the micro-scale. But this vision should be implemented in historical areas in a careful way.

The district can become an experimental laboratory of conservation/restoration/regeneration/innovation. But first of all, prudence requires mindfulness, reflection and a great attention to the categories of compatibility, coherence and integration.



**Knowledge of material and technologies, compatibility and minimal intervention as resources for sustainable 'regeneration'\*\*\***

The observation of the context proposed by the current workshop provides an opportunity to reflect on goals, procedures and methodologies for a possible 'regeneration' which aims to preserve the values recognised in this historical urban area.

The settlement structure consists of a system of private or public housing parcellings; it was realised between the late 19th century and the first half of the 20th century in accordance with the idea of the garden city. It has great significance in that it has both an important role in the context of contemporary European experience and it represents an example of the reworking of local and traditional architecture.

The architecture in this settlement is characterised by buildings with elevations from one to three floors (excluding some rare cases with different heights). They are consistent in their basic features, despite the diversity of solutions, allowing us to perceive them as a whole. Urban continuity value is much greater in those areas that display a progression in architectural character than where strongly individual statements predominate. On the other hand, the latter are mostly protected by the current regulations and provisions for protected areas, and for those features that characterise the experimentation in Romanian architectural culture in the face of the emerging international style.

The current regulations for protection of the ensemble have succeeded in safeguarding the general urban scale of the settlement but, on the other hand, they do not seem to have affected material-technological-morphological maintenance of the single architectures in a clear and consistent way.

In the realised interventions we find a multiplicity of different approaches: demolition and replacement with buildings that feature extraneous expressions and contrasting type of settlement in comparison to the pre-existing; preservation of the external shell only and total stripping out of the existing interiors; demolition of existing elements and their replacement with formally similar but technologically modern ones; and restoration of the existing in the form of a reproduction (Figs. 1-4).



Fig. 1. Demolition and replacement with buildings that feature extraneous expressions and a contrasting type of settlement in comparison to the pre-existing.





Fig. 2. Presumptive preservation of the building shell only and total stripping-out of the existing interior.



Fig. 3. Demolition and reconstruction in historical style with modern technologies.



Fig. 4. Reproduction of original moldings.

From these examples there emerges evidence of a substantial indifference towards the understanding of material and technological features – inseparable parts of the architectural meanings.

The observation of the technological elements as constituents of the architecture (finishes, decorations, window frames), the general conditions of preservation and the methodology of intervention in relationship to such features, generate further calls for reflection.

The existing architectures may be divided into two basic types of constructions: the detached 'villa' type with 'rationalist' features and a flat roof, and the type of building reworking on local traditional architectures which is more serial in nature; the latter is frequently connoted by elaborate roofing structures and the use of wood in façades (at window frames and loggias).

The two typologies also introduce different approaches to external finishes and façade settings; the first typology is more experimental while the second one is more related to traditional local techniques, often defined by smooth plasters finished with white or sand-coloured



paint. In these cases the surviving examples of finishes show that generally the continuity of the surfaces has been conserved, with the deterioration of the painting layer only, or with a moderate presence of missing areas, underlining the high general level of performance and compatibility with the support of such finishes, validated by lengthy on-site testing. We can suppose that such a state of preservation has been assisted by the type of roofing, with projecting eaves that protect the facing materials of the façades (Figs. 5-6).



Fig. 5. Surface with a smooth finish; visible degradations only in the coating layer. Roofing with projecting eaves protecting the façades.



Fig. 6. Smooth plaster with moderate presence of missing areas. The general good state of preservation of the original plaster can be noticed. Roofing with projecting eaves.

Enclosing elements often provide complementary connotations to the figurative setting of the whole (singular design of the elements that are coherent with the formal delineations of the exterior). A traditional form of double-glazed windows (with separate exterior and interior frames leaving a large space between the two glass sheets), characteristic for the technological typology, can be observed in the façades.



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Instead, in most cases the interventions are orientated towards substitutive forms rather than towards approaches that prioritise a maintenance/conservative procedure, even where the existing material can be seen to be in a good state of preservation. Finishes are often renewed by treatments using roughcast forms or plastic coatings (Figs. 7-9) resulting in modifications of colours and textures (Figs. 8, 9). In some cases the simplification of the external features leads to a greatly diminished version of the original architecture (Figs. 10, 11).

Experiences in Italy, especially in sensitive environments like the Venetian area, have found other solutions in the approach to an equivalent range of problems with integration of the missing areas of finishes or of plaster surfaces, through alternative technical solutions.

The pre-existing enclosing elements are frequently replaced by elements deriving from current industrial production with the loss of the detail that is integral to the general image – and with a consequent reduction of the general architectural value (Figs. 12, 13).

The risk is that only the dimensional-urban aspects of the zones targeted by the regulations in act are transmitted to the future generations, erasing the complex meanings through a simplification that is extremely reductive of the significance of these architectures.

The reasons for such a variety of adopted solutions in the interventions on the individual works of architecture are probably traceable to the discretion exercised by individual decision-making protagonists involved in the implementation processes (owners and technicians, contractors) and in the general lack of a common and shared sensibility regarding local tradition's values and meanings.



Fig. 7. Plaster in good state of preservation, with visible degradation only in the paint layer.



Fig. 8. Preservation of original formal configuration and replacement of finishes with new ones, different from the original in type and colour.





Fig. 9. Replacement of the façade finish, with a new gray one; interpretation of the image different from the original.



Fig. 10. Example of neo-Gothic vocabulary in the settlement.



Fig. 11. A reductive simplification of the character of an existing neo-Gothic architecture.





Fig. 12. Original window design complementary to the architectural setting of the whole building.



Fig. 13. Replacement of the original windows with new ones deriving from current industrial production.



Extending the research and experiment conducted by scientific, cultural and professional entities (university, research institutes and practitioners) towards the maintenance of the material heritage of these buildings, with a synergistic involvement of commercial interests (contractors, tradespeople, manufacturers), may constitute a fundamental resource for the diffusion throughout the community of a shared culture with regard to the maintenance of an area's values.

The dissemination of the outcomes of such studies, as well as the support given to local initiatives, both of associations and public administration, may be tools for a re-appropriation of those indicators of identity that often seem to be lost in misunderstandings, uncritical generalisations and a standardisation process derived from globalisation.

The global drive towards the concept of sustainability (of life and building processes, involving prudent, responsible and conscious use of resources) is fully congruent with a methodology of maintenance that aims at reducing the processes of waste accumulation and creation of rubbish landfills. Such a dynamic could increase awareness of the endowment as a resource for a shared common identity – a bond connecting the local existing communities through the imperatives of maintenance and the exploitation of the potential of existing resources, reducing consumption both of territory and goods.

At the operational level of maintenance and sustainability, it seems opportune to establish more critically oriented methodological processes focused on interventions that prioritise the pre-existing, rather than to resort to inventories/manuals that, even if useful for the promotion of knowledge regarding techniques and retaining historical materials, risk becoming tools that normalise standard practices (in a typological-historical sense) that can be extensively and uncritically applied. These operational methodological processes must be distinguished into the following phases:

- analysis/knowledge accumulation: detailed survey, historical knowledge through research into technologies, installations and the technological culture of the time; scientific analysis to investigate the nature of materials and components;
- identification of tradesmen with technical skills and experience who can reintroduce traditional knowledge of building processes as a part of the local construction traditions, together with formulation of methodologies and materials specification relevant to the maintenance/preservation and the involvement of the industrial interests of the sector;
- localised and specific investigation on the observed pathologies and their causes, using appropriate mapping under qualitative and quantitative criteria, and later referring the findings to costs specific to the buildings in question;
- establishment of a campaign of study and critical evaluation focused on the performances of structures, technologies and materials, comparing the historical ones with the current commercial offer; the study should be conducted through experimental methods on selected buildings which are representative for the types identified throughout the whole town
- structuring of intervention planning which should aim towards the improvement of the existing technology in accordance with the ideas of complementarity and minimalism in design approach;
- critical inquiry into the reliability of new materials and technologies as they relate to those existing, in terms of compatibility and effectiveness.

Consideration of how to regenerate the existing architectures could therefore start from the necessary knowledge and evaluation of the pre-existing and enduring.



The relationship between technology of the existing endowment and new systems and innovative materials, instead of being based on an antagonistic/alternative model, could be based on mutual understanding, collaboration and reciprocal benefit, taking as a working principle that of complementing the existing through detailed design. Consistent with the theoretical/critical position within conservation, this approach would consider how the principle of minimal intervention could be operationalised in terms of principles of design, with regard also to those areas commonly considered to be simply technical operations.

Replacing mechanistic consumption with the logic of maintenance – derived from the knowledge of the materials used, the findings regarding their performance capacities and their potential for improvement – it would be possible to achieve an operational practice that harmonises concurrent requirements; the preservation of authentic material, sustainability of resources and processes, economy, recognition of the fundamental values of the community, by combining the preservation of the architectural ensemble significance with the values of enhanced performance and comfort, while limiting wastefulness of resources.

## Notes

1 \* Renata Prescia

We prefer to refer to the concept of conservation rather than regeneration, as recognised in the official text for protection in Italy, the so-called 'Cultural Heritage Code' (DLGS N. 42/2004): 'The conservation of cultural heritage is ensured through coherent, coordinated and planned activities of the study, prevention, maintenance and restoration' and the Charter of Krakow in 2000 'Principles for the conservation and restoration of the built heritage': 'Conservation is the set of attitudes of a community to make long-lasting heritage and its monuments. It is expressed in relation to the significance of the entity, with its associated values'.

2 We quote here the general definition of sustainability that reinforces the philosophy of this contributing: 'developments that satisfy present needs without

compromising the capability of future generations to realise their own needs' (UNCED Brundtland Commission), 'a development that provides environmental, social and economic services to all members of a community without threatening the effectiveness of natural, social and built systems, from which derive the provision of such services'(ICLEI).

3 We are talking about areas subject to restrictions as included in the Zonal Plan for Protected Built Areas (PUZCP) according to the Methodology for the elaboration and framework content of the planning documents for protected built-up areas, Published in OJ (Monitorul Oficial), Part I nr. 125bis of 11/02/2004.

\*\* Antonella Mamì

4 Valorisation: process of highlighting quality; fructification of the value of something. The valorisation assumes the double face of recognition and the transfer of value and, anyway, the new quality.

5 Retrofit: Interventions of posthumous adaptation put in place to make the object capable of situations, rules, standards that are agreed in time and that were placed in the original run. Retrofit technology can be considered an essential step in the construction and restoration work that sets it apart from restoration and rigorous conservation.

6 European Construction Technology Platform (ECTP): Vision 2030 & Strategic Research Agenda – Focus Area Cultural Heritage Public Version # 3 March 2008.

7 Ibid – § 5.4.4 – Targets and key performance indicators 2030

- Improvements in environmental conditions and indoor air quality in refurbished buildings for the sound conservation of moveable and immovable cultural heritage and for occupant satisfaction

- Reduction in dependence on fossil fuels

- Contribution to reduction of CO2 production

- Promotion of energy efficiency in historic buildings

- Minimisation of the use of natural resources and the impact on the environment through reuse and recycling of materials

- Promotion of maintenance of cultural heritage to avoid unnecessary repairs.

8 Cost of building life cycle. The life cycle consists of raw material extraction, manufacturing products and components, Transportation, Construction, Operation and Maintenance, Decommissioning and Demolition.

9 Analysis of the building life cycle. With this method we assume a vision in which all the processes of transformation are taken into consideration starting from raw material extraction to disposal of products at end of life.

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## Modernist boroughs: conservation of historical values and urban design

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### Introduction

As a scholar in conservation and as a long-time professor at the University of Naples, I agree with Roberto Pane, my eminent professor, when he said that the activity of a specialist in conservation does not exhaust itself in a critical, philological and constructive experience. This is the reason for me to think that the third workshop on conservation in which we are engaged is evidence of the will to apply to concrete issues the theories that have been evolving and been revised for decades, both in Europe and in the whole world.

My contribution is just an introduction to what Andrea Pane and Valentina Russo will explain later, pointing out the aims reached through the work done last October in Bucharest.

I would make some observations about the problems of conservation in Romania, starting from a personal experience I had while taking part in an International Congress several years ago in Bucharest.

It is remarkable that the third Congress of the *Union Internationale des Femmes Architectes*, entitled *Proposals and Cooperation of Women Architects for making the New Urban Areas more friendly* (Casiello 1972), took place in the same city in September 1972 as the event set up in October 2011. Forty years have passed, the





political conditions in Romania have hardly changed, the discipline of conservation has undergone a significant evolution since the second half of the 20th century, but some of the problems are still the same.

Since I participated in the first congress and I have been engaged with the results of the workshop, I think it is useful to make some observations on the conservation/regeneration theme, including the problem of the humanisation of urban tissues, reaching a 'new quality of life' both in the centre and in the suburbs.

The observations of the Romanian architects in the 1970s enable us to understand that the problems related to the best use of heritage, both urban and architectural, were faced with the culture of that period. Today, instead, we tend to compare the experiences of different countries and to verify on-site how to solve the urban problems, relating the parts we want to protect to a territorial plan. In fact, it is known that territorial planning has to consider ancient and/or historical parts of the city in a larger context, adapting these homogenous areas to the present needs without compromising the design or the meaning they have assumed since their original configuration.

In the 1970s there was a rapid process of transformation in Romania, based on the general political direction regarding socio-economic development of the country. At the 1972 congress, Mariana Vereanu, a specialist in town planning, noting that town planning, architecture and civilisation in general were in a state of crisis in many countries, pointed out the reasons for this process that anyway tend to preserve the life in many urban spaces. However, this purpose has not always been applied in those years: in fact, in Bucharest as in Bulgaria, for example, they realised the Village Museum, a kind of museum *en plein air* that added to

the advantages of saving some monuments the disadvantages of creating fictitious environments, which never previously existed and that inspired only a sense of regret for what was lost.

Forty years later, with this international workshop, the problems are posed in a totally different way, and still Romanians take into consideration the experience gained by other nations with positive results both in the technical and the social fields. On this subject it has to be emphasised that in the past fifty years the problem of conservation and protection has been extended to encompass environmental values: 'Environment – as Roberto Pane said – that is the result of a current production, that has its own civilisation, that has its own qualification also in an aesthetic and unanimous way' (Pane 1988:21).

Moreover, at the 1972 congress Ioana Grigorescu explained some theoretical principles of restoration, and informed us attendees that in the period between the world wars, a Romanian school of restoration was established and that it has been carrying out important contributions. After World War II, in 1952, the Directorate for Historical Monuments was re-instituted, bringing several functions together in one central organism, from inventory to scientific research, from study plans to the execution of work.

In Romania in the 1970s, some restorations were made reconstructing *in style* whole buildings (or parts of them) which had been destroyed, based on documents and projects. For example, an early 19th century inn (Hanul lui Manuc, 1806-1808) was partially rebuilt in the centre of Bucharest, referring to ancient lithographs. In contrast, in the same years, Hungary showed a wider sensitivity towards monuments partially damaged or destroyed following wars and foreign occupations:



*This situation – as Ferenc Merényi wrote – led the Hungarian architects to devote all their attention to even the smallest remaining fragments, fragments that in other countries with a more fortunate story, would not be, perhaps, of any importance. This is why experts are trying, using all the resources of modern architecture, to present original correlations of these architectural fragments, to make the impression of space, mass, surface and original forms without compromising, however, the authenticity of the restored monument, with imitations and falsifications. (Merényi 1972:32).*

So, Hungarians dealt with the problem of the combination between the new and the ancient parts in a critical way, adapting to the cultural debate throughout Europe and, especially, in Italy.

Ending these short considerations, I would like to come back to problems of a more general kind that can be useful to the interventions to be made in the Bucharest study area, too.

Roberto Pane has always struggled to defend the sense of memory 'precisely represented by the great voices of the past – whether they are plastic expressions that occur in stone or in the color of a painting, of a table or a text by Plato, or a great poetry' (Pane 1988:26). And the city 'as an organisation and stratification of social life, just cannot renounce its memory, all the great works, the choral environment' (Pane 1988:31).

So, even in quite recently founded neighbourhoods, such as some in the city of Bucharest, memory is represented both by the architecture of great value and by urban paths that have both their own autonomy and their own precise meaning. And if it is true that urban planning is always evolving to respond to new needs that arise from time to time, it is also true that the preservation of stratification cannot and should not be overwhelmed by practical

needs that can be satisfied without taking the risk of altering or denaturing the meaning that places have assumed over time. As Corrado Beguinot writes, 'In the future city we will restore, even with the preservation of the testimonies of the past, the semantic thickness of the central places' (Beguinot 2009:146). The city of the future, therefore, must also take into account the history of suburban areas of the city, to be understood as a whole, and this can be achieved with proper planning solutions:

*Planning must aspire to resolve, in synchronous forms, both the problems of new aggregations and those of conservation. No longer, therefore, the megalopolis and its unlimited and repressive quantification, without human meanings as at the exclusive service of profit; and not even the ancient centers intended as anachronistic shelters of nostalgia. (Pane 1987:19)*

### **The recognition of historical values: urban design and architecture**

The history of Romanian architecture was marked by significant changes between the second half of the 19th century and the end of World War I (Giannantonio 2006:349), due to relevant political factors: the creation of the Romanian Principality (1866), later the Kingdom of Romania (1881), and the unification of 1918 when the country reached its largest geographical extent. During that period many new public buildings were erected in Bucharest, together with new residential districts, such as the workshop's study area set in the northern part of the city. In fact, the large district bounded by Bulevardul Aviatorilor, Calea Dorobantilor and Bulevardul Iancu De Hunedoara appears as a significant example of this building process, started with the first parcelling in 1895 and carried out during the 20th century.



The study area exhibits a complex system of values, beginning with its strong urban design, which is still clearly recognisable today. From the first Blanc parcelling (1895), through the later Filipescu Park (1912) and Bonaparte Park (1913), one can notice the influence of European town planning, in particular from France, a country where many Romanian architects had studied. This influence is particularly evident in Filipescu Park, a parcelling planned for the well-off class. Both in Filipescu and Bonaparte Park one can find numerous values related to urban design: firstly the street grid work and its toponymy, inspired by foreign cities and countries, which fits well with the present 'diplomatic' character of the area. Secondly, we could mention the good layout of the streets – with large pavements and trees – the historic vegetation and the correct dimensioning of the construction plots of the villas (Celac, Carabela, Marcu-Lapadat 2005:107). All these values are related to the original, strong urban design which had marked the town planning of the area; an urban design that appears today as a relevant point to consider in any policy of conservation/regeneration.

On the other hand, moving outside Filipescu and Bonaparte Park, one can find the effects of the subsequent parcelling of the area, carried out after World War II, which has partially altered the original urban design. In fact, during the 1960s, two major changes were brought about: the large compound of Romanian Television and the numerous new residential and commercial blocks built along Calea Dorobanților and Iancu de Hunedoara boulevards, which produced the effect of a screen, hiding the original 'domestic' identity of the urban fabric. This process is still continuing today, showing a high concentration along the boundaries of the area, where the new buildings appear in volumetric and architectural contrast with the original character of the urban fabric (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Bucharest, study area of the Workshop. The glass curtain of the new building on the right side contrasts with the "soft" modernist block on the left (photo A. Pane, 2011).

Among the so called 'non-values' of the study area we have to mention also the large tram depot, set in the southern part of Bonaparte Park, which appears like a void cutting the urban fabric in two. At the same time, this area has a high potential in term of regeneration. In fact, the relocation of its present use could provide the opportunity to install many public services that are lacking, at present, in the adjacent residential areas.

According to the presentations by Nicolae Lascu, Gabriel Pascariu and Anca Brătuleanu during the workshop, the protection of the urban values of the whole district dates back no more than a decade. Only in 2000, after the aforementioned alterations made since the 1960s, seven parcelling zones were listed as 'protected urban areas' by the municipal authorities, who recognised the strong identity of their urban design. The protected areas, according to Law 5 of 2000, were defined as 'areas in which the preservation



of the characteristic cityscape determined by its natural features, historical structures, typical building stock and variety of functions must be safeguarded'. In this phase, the criteria used to list the protected areas were quite general – such as the 'urban coherence, the constitutive elements and the specific identity of the urban fabric'. Unfortunately, the new status of protection did not prevent the old buildings from being demolished; ones unlisted, but having good quality in terms of architecture.

Therefore, after the approval of Law 422 for the protection of historical monuments in 2001, a new study of the whole area was carried out in 2005-2007 with the cooperation of Ion Mincu University, which led to the revision of the protection criteria in Filipescu Park, Bonaparte Park and Mornand parcellings. The result was a significant increase of listed buildings, in particular in Filipescu Park, where the map shows many buildings in red (high protection, which means compulsory conservation), some buildings in yellow (medium protection, which means possible interventions) and a few buildings in grey (no protection, which means that demolition is still permitted) (Fig. 2).

Strictly related to urban design, the architectural scale appears as the second important category of values in the study area. As previously mentioned, also in this respect Filipescu Park seems to be the most significant area in the whole district. In fact, Filipescu Park includes the largest number of valuable buildings in terms of architecture, appearing as a living record of Romanian architecture's history in the first half of the 20th century. This statement is confirmed by the *Bucharest architecture and modernity* guide, which highlights eleven relevant buildings in Filipescu Park out of seventeen relevant buildings in the whole study area (Celac, Carabela, Marcu-Lapadat 2005:103-118).

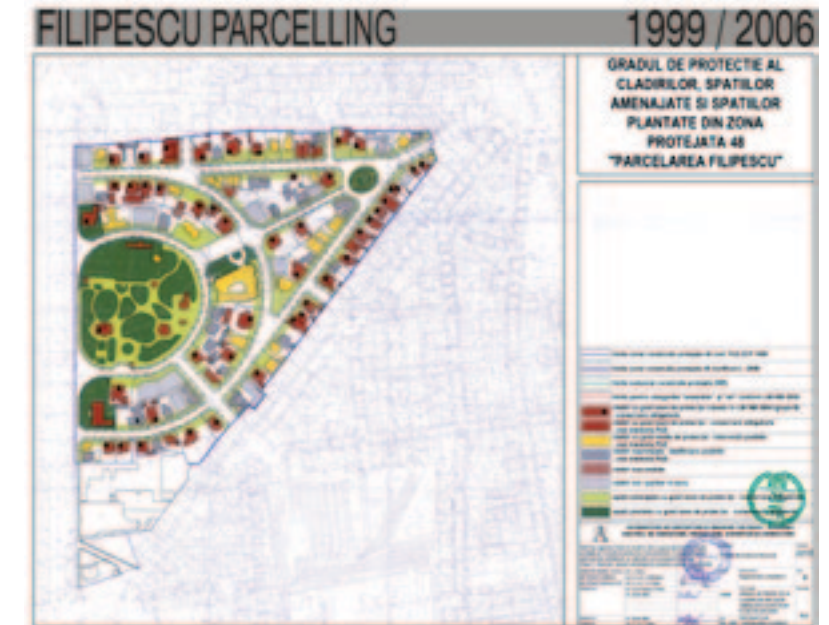


Fig. 2. The Filipescu Park in the map drafted in 2005-2007 by the Ion Mincu University group in order to revise the protection criteria. In red colour the protected buildings, in yellow colour the medium protected buildings (possible interventions) and in gray colour the unprotected buildings (demolition allowed).

Therefore, Filipescu Park seems to host, like a full-scale architectural exhibition, the most significant examples of about three decades of Romanian architecture, from 1912 to the late 1930s. In fact, a simple walk through the streets of the area gives any visitor the opportunity to clearly understand the rich production and the rapid evolution of modern Romanian styles, starting from late Eclecticism and developing to 'modern' picturesque Eclecticism, *Sezession*, neo-Romanian style, modern Regionalism, Art Déco, 'soft' Modernism and, finally, to the International Style. Among these different styles, we can find many examples in Filipescu Park, like Vila Brâncoveanu for the neo-Romanian style – listed in the *Bucharest architecture and modernity* guide – or the numerous villas in picturesque Eclecticism style (Figs. 3-4) and the relevant Vila Bușilă, designed by architect Duiliu Marcu (1932-33), which appears a good example of 'soft' Modernism.





Figs. 3-4. Bucharest, study area of the Workshop. Two examples of 'picturesque eclecticism' style (photo A. Pane, 2011).

Above all, we must mention the outstanding building of Vila Prager, designed by architect Arghir Culina (1931-32), which appears to be one of the best examples of Art Déco style in the area, and perhaps in the whole city of Bucharest. At present the villa hosts the Syrian embassy and – like many other valuable villas converted into diplomatic buildings in Filipescu and Bonaparte Parks – it appears in a good condition in terms of maintenance (Fig. 5). On the other hand, recent works of conservation seem to have altered all the original plasters, substituting them with newer ones without any care for authenticity and compatibility.

Finally, we could say that the specific system of values that characterises the study area is a particular combination of the individual values of the architecture and the urban layout, often designed together during the original building process of the first decades of the 20th century. A very similar case can be found in Rome, in the 'modern' quarter of Garbatella and in the garden-city of Aniene (Fig. 6), both



Fig. 5. Bucharest, study area of the Workshop. The Art Déco building of Vila Prager, designed by architect Arghir Culina (1931-32), at present used as Syrian embassy (photo A. Pane, 2011).

designed by the famous engineer, restorer and historian Gustavo Giovannoni (Rossi 2005; Stabile 2001). As in the Bucharest case study, the two districts of Garbatella and Aniene, set respectively in the southern and in the northern part of the city, appear as coherent wholes that bring together urban design, toponymy, street layout and architecture, defining a modern 'urban heritage' (Choay 1999:130-151), which hardly needs an integrated policy of protection.



Fig. 6. Rome, Garden-city of Aniene (Montesacro). The original plan designed by Gustavo Giovannoni with engineer F. Garofali in 1920 (from Giovannoni, G. 1931. *Vecchie città ed edilizia nuova*. Turin. Utet)



### The identity and transformation grade for the study area

The strong delimitation of the study area, given by wide roads – Aviatorilor, Iancu de Hunedoara and Calea Dorobanților – as well as the evident juxtaposition, in the same area, of diachronic solutions in the ‘ground project’, are conducive to a clear recognition of the site and this is confirmed by the variegated interlacement of values. Therefore, in Brandi’s sense, the place – recognised, as has been previously delineated, in its historical and formal values as well as in the meaning of technical and constructive solutions (Brandi 1977<sup>11</sup>:3-8) – merits careful safeguarding. Nevertheless, for an analogical inspiration in regard to the present problems of garden-cities, it is interesting what Cohen writes:

*The urban and architectural corpus which protection and conservation is to think about becomes therefore extremely vast, from the moment where its demarcation includes not only the new cities, but also the garden-cities and the urban ensembles representing autonomous and identifiable fragments of the city. In a very wide approach, these formations can be defined as delimited and voluntary communities, in opposition to the sedimentary spatial relations coming from the long history of the agglomerations with continuous growth. (Cohen 2003:64).*

The widening of the problem, from architecture to the neighbourhood, inevitably involves the need for a refinement of the interpretation tools required to articulate the ‘sense’ of the site and of its ‘complexity’. In the case of the workshop study area, it is evident that complexity is the result of a symbiosis between physically perceived tangible values and intangible significance. The latter support the former and vice versa: in fact, how could we not link the intentions, the

architectural languages and the influences, with the ways these intangible components have been physically expressed?

Articulations in plan, juxtapositions of materials, varied treatments in finishes, use of the external vegetation and of the internal systems are just some of the physical means through which the designer and the user of the buildings have expressed their own ideas of living from the end of the 19th century until today.

On a theoretical level, therefore, the interpretation of the Romanian site shows the need to combine tested methods in historical and critical comprehension with some others – less used in the process of developing knowledge for conservation – that induce an understanding of the examined urban environment as a place of ‘instability’ rather than ‘a permanent’ mirror of the variation of needs in the patterns of living, and last but not least, in the social models that are concretised in the same place.

As the rare experiments conducted in newly formed urban heritage show, positive results in conservation seem to have been achieved only when the inhabitants have been made part of the conservative and transformative process. Communicating the knowledge of the significance of the site, reinforcing the awareness of its ‘historicity’ and, in parallel, understanding the perception of the site by the users themselves, are, in our opinion, the first conditions in the preparation of any subsequent action in the case of Bucharest too.

A significant reference in this regard is provided by what has been done in recent years in the Cité Frugès of Le Corbusier in Pessac (Boudon 1983; Giambruno 2003). As a model of the extension of the ‘*machine à habiter*’ to the urban scale, in 1984 the site



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was the subject of an initial study aimed at developing rules for safeguarding it as a whole.

The precise definition of the conditions of buildings and the collection of available historical documentation were accompanied, in the French case, by the acquisition of a unit of public housing in order to start a first experimental restoration site called Musée Frugès/Le Corbusier.

This work was followed by the drawing up of a set of admissible actions for the neighbourhood, prepared by a team of architects composed of M. Ferrand, P.J. Feugas and B. Le Roy, and assisted by J.L. Veyret, sociologist and professor in the School of Architecture of Bordeaux.

Also in that process the knowledge phase was of great importance, both in relation to the 'original' documentation and in connection with the operations that had been conducted after 1926. On the basis of a thorough analysis, therefore, a specific regulation for the protection of the urban complex, declared in 1995 *Zone de Protection du Patrimoine Architectural, Urbain et Paysager* (ZPPAU), has been enacted. Philippe Boudon, the author of extensive research into the neighbourhood and directly involved in the protection project, taking into account the various themes of the site – autography by Le Corbusier, paradigm of standardisation in housing, garden-city, etc. – wrote that the programme has been brought back from the particular to the 'global nature of 'dwelling' with all possible echoes in the lives of the inhabitants, in order to compare it with the architecture which, naturally synthetic, must integrate technical, aesthetic and human factors' (Boudon 1983:57).



Fig. 7. Pessac, Cité Frugès. An urban view after restoration works.

Progressively then, the protection programme of the Cité Frugès has been extended from architecture to the entire neighbourhood (Fig. 7) by restoring the multiple components of public space such as roads and sidewalk surfaces, lighting systems, green sections and fences, all meticulously designed by Le Corbusier (Veyret 1990:83).

The care developed over the years and the gradual extension of the restorations has led, as a significant outcome, to the increase of the sense of belonging to the site on the part of its inhabitants so that, in 2008, they applied for the inscription of the Cité Frugès into the UNESCO World Heritage List.

The awareness of the necessary compromise between 'stable' values and the demands of everyday life has accompanied, since 1983, the project of Adolf Krischanitz and Otto Kapfinger for the Werkbundsiedlung Roter Berg in Vienna (Krischanitz, Kapfinger 1986).



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In this case, the intervention has involved a group of buildings comparable to those analysed in the workshop, composed of about seventy family buildings of two or three floors and with gardens, dating from the early 1930s (Fig. 8).

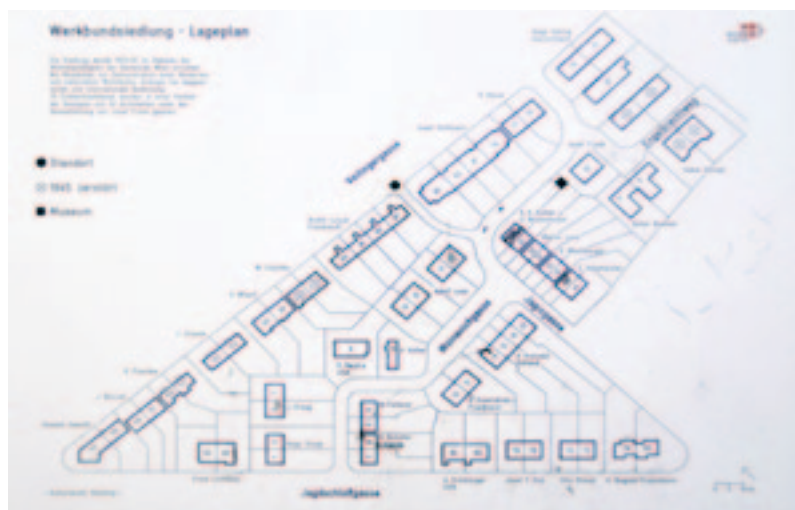


Fig. 8. Wien, Werkbundsiedlung Roter Berg. Detail of the urban scheme. The authors of the architectural plans are specified.

A state of widespread decay, the absence for several decades of any maintenance work and a fragmented adaptation of the building units had led protection agencies to declare it a 'conservation area' in 1978 and, later, to extend protection to single structures as well as to the entire neighbourhood.

Recognition of the permanence of a project at the urban scale, together with the interpretation of changes as the answer to mutated ways of living – and therefore the acceptance of the instability of the site (Figs. 9-10) – constitutes the specific aspects of the intervention carried out in the Austrian capital. As the planners explain, the experience has been characterised by:



Fig. 9. Wien, Werkbundsiedlung Roter Berg. A building by Adolf Loos. It is noticeable the way how inhabitants 'adjust' the architecture in relation to their particular needs.



Fig. 10. Wien, Werkbundsiedlung Roter Berg. Julius Jirasek's building after restoration works.

*an approach based on a differentiated assessment, consisting of mere renewal of elements, in the technical improvement of particular elements, in the acceptance of some changes that seemed necessary, in the elimination of certain alterations and in some reconstructions. It has been tried to preserve and emphasize the age of the various stages and interventions, providing a critical conservation of the monuments.* (Krischanitz, Kapfinger 1986:50)

The abovementioned experiences, in addition to the results of experimental operations within the Etas-Unis area by Tony Garnier in Lyon (Montaldo 2003:75-82; Peghin 2010:95-100), as well as the interventions carried out or in progress in the Italian context, such as in Ivrea or in Carbonia (Peghin, Sanna 2009; Peghin 2010:166-204), lead us to consider the significance of a variable identity in the places we deal with. The transitory value of a single concept of 'identity' and the continual transformation of the urban fabric of modernity call, today, for the exploration of the meaning of preservation in relation to the balance between conservation and modification, continuity and transformation.

This balance can be pursued, in the case of Bucharest, through a primary strengthening of the dissemination, to the community residents and to the entire city, of the cultural value of the site as 'urban heritage' as a whole rather than as the result of the sum of the individual values of its architectures.



The conservation of single objects, to be supported by well thought out guidelines for the identification of interventions, such as in the experiences mentioned above, may find a springboard and a better unity of intent if also accompanied by a regeneration of well-defined parts. This can be directed towards the integration of some 'urban gaps' or highly altered parts with architectural creations to balance collective needs, with established new functions, and to create a discreet dialogue with this highly sensitive place. Such would be the case, for example, with the site of Romanian National Television or with the area crossed by the tracks on Bulevardul Iancu de Hunedoara.

On the other hand, at opposite extremes, the risks of oblivion and of entombment in a museum can be reduced through the strengthening of continuity of transformation. Giving new energy and significance to the identity value of the site can be imagined, in the case study of Bucharest too, according to Derrida, who writes: 'The identities cannot be simply recognized nor stored but must be reinvented, continuously produced. The identity is affirmed – the French philosopher notes – when the building of the city and of the territory become collective works, that is when people who live in the territory are able to appropriate it in a participatory, conscious and creative way' (Derrida 1993:22, in Peghin 2010:394-40).

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The present paper is the outcome of collective work amongst three authors: part 1 is by Stella Casiello, part 2 by Andrea Pane and part 3 by Valentina Russo.

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## Building rehabilitation in the Modernist neighbourhood

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The houses built at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century generally exhibit innovative architectural expressions, experimenting with the new materials and technologies of the period. The buildings in the neighbourhood examined in the workshop are among the best examples. Often the houses have generous surfaces, large openings and flexible spaces. A common characteristic is the attention given to detail, designed with elegance and executed with good quality materials and workmanship.

In Romania, as in other European countries, the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were marked by the transition from the pre-modern techniques to the modern ones based on steel and concrete. In the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the establishment of Romanian cement factories and the start of the national industrial production of reinforcing steel bars stimulated the process; thus the traditional floors in wood, as well as the steel floors promoted at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, were extensively replaced by those in reinforced concrete.

Usually the construction of the low-rise residential buildings associated load-bearing brick masonry with reinforced concrete floors, but they were designed only to resist gravity loads, not earthquakes. Sometimes the buildings present vertical discontinuities of the load-bearing elements. The reinforced concrete floors do not have bond beams and the slab thickness is much less than what would be accepted today. The reinforcing systems, as well as the



compressive strength of the concrete, are below those accepted by current norms: usually the reinforcing bars are 6–8 mm in diameter at a spacing of 20–25 cm; the concrete is of low quality, with a compressive strength below 150 daN/cm<sup>2</sup>. In time, such intrinsic vulnerabilities, associated with the permanent vertical loads and under repeated strong seismic actions, have led to more or less visible damage and a weakening of the resistance capacity.

The current building rehabilitation works are meant to correct decay phenomena but also to satisfy the use requirements of the new owners, while ensuring users' safety.

The question of the structural safety is especially important (and threatening) in the case of the Romanian built heritage, which is confronted with strong earthquakes and restrictive Codes. As Bernard Feilden says, 'many times a historic building has the options of being destroyed by the Codes or by the next earthquake'.<sup>1</sup>

It is generally accepted that in restoration the minimum effective intervention capable of preserving the building's integrity and users' safety is the best policy; usually it can be put in practice by improving the existing structure and avoiding its transformation into a new one responding to contemporary norms. But often the engineer has to manage a very delicate equilibrium between conservation and transformation: sometimes inherent defects and/or an advanced state of decay ask for a 'hard' intervention; other times the prevalence of the transformation can be determined by extensive architectural modifications required by the client, imposing a radical structural intervention. Above all, the severe restrictions proper to a strong seismic area are constantly present.

In the following paragraphs we'll present four examples of rehabilitation of residential buildings in the workshop area, carried out between 2002 and 2012 and illustrating different situations.



Fig.1.1. Residential building on Emile Zola St. (1935)

**The first example** is a building designed in Neo-Romanian style by Octav Doicescu<sup>2</sup> as a private residence for Nicolae Caranfil, engineer and director of the General Company for Gas and Electricity in Bucharest. Building construction started in 1935, under the supervision of a famous engineer and contractor of the period, Emil Prager (Fig.1.1). It is currently listed as an historic monument of local interest.

In 1947 the house was nationalised and converted to an embassy. After 1990 it became the headquarters of a political party, until 2010, when the building was returned to the successors of the former owner, who subsequently sold it; the new owner intends to use the house as a family residence and has decided to invest in the rehabilitation of the building.

The villa has generous living spaces on two levels, a semi-basement intended for secondary functions, and a large attic. There is a large front garden and an inner court (Figs.1.2, 1.3, 1.4).





Fig.1.2. Ground floor plan (existing)



Fig.1.3. First floor plan (existing)

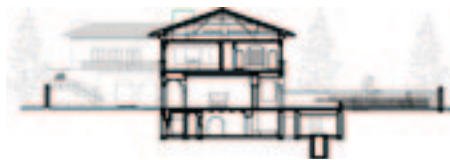


Fig.1.4. Cross-section (existing)

The house preserves the original finishes, decoration and integrated furniture (Figs.1.5-1.21).



Fig.1.5. Façade on Rabat St; view from the garden



Fig.1.6. Garden



Fig.1.7. Façade detail



Fig.1.8. Inner court view



Fig.1.9. Detail of mosaic in the inner court



Fig.1.10. Inner court view



Fig.1.11. Detail of wrought iron fence





Fig.1.12. Main entrance

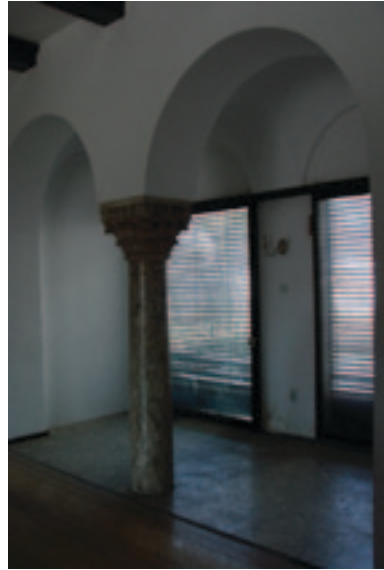


Fig.1.13. Ground floor interior view



Fig.1.14. Ground floor ceiling



Fig.1.15. Ground floor stone column

The building is generally well preserved; some decay symptoms (mainly due to deficiencies of the water drainage system) are locally visible.

Only minor changes were requested by the new users. The architectural rehabilitation project<sup>3</sup> preserves the spatial structure of the building and gives prevalence to conservation, proposing:

- few local modifications of partitions;
- the conversion of the spaces in the basement and attic;
- the restoration of the original inner and exterior decorations and artistic components (stone columns, decorative panels, balustrades, etc.), integrated furniture, windows and doors in wood and steel, inner and exterior floor finishes and pavements;
- treatments against rising damp, the removal of biological deposits and invasive vegetation;
- the substitution of the old services and equipment, with modern, more efficient ones;
- the restoration of the garden according to the original design.

The building structure is in masonry with reinforced concrete slabs and doesn't present major decay symptoms; it passed successfully through several strong earthquakes (three of them over 7 degrees on the Richter scale). However, the construction has some intrinsic vulnerabilities consisting of local vertical discontinuities of certain load-bearing walls.

The structural rehabilitation project<sup>4</sup> proposes interventions meant to correct the inherent defects of the building and to improve its overall seismic behaviour:

- the strengthening of the junction between façade and inner cross-walls by inserting reinforcing steel bars and epoxy mortar grout;





Fig.1.16. Ground floor fireplace

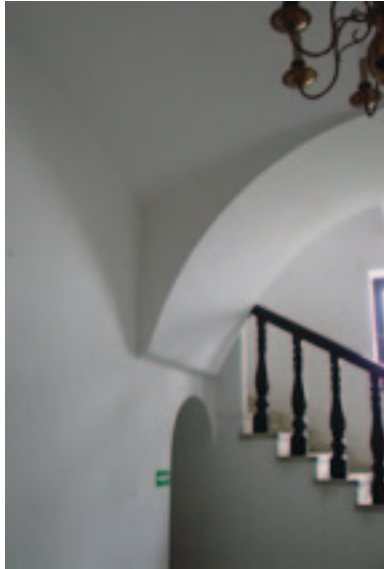


Fig.1.17. Interior staircase



Fig.1.18. Interior staircase



Fig.1.19. First floor wood paneling



Fig.1.20. Attic interior view

- the strengthening of the façade walls with polymeric mesh covered by hydraulic lime mortar;
- the strengthening of the walls on the first floor that are not directly supported on the ground floor and of the beams supporting these walls, with carbon fibre strips and fabrics;

The rehabilitation works have not yet started at the time of writing.<sup>5</sup> (Figs. 1.21-1.22)





Fig.1.21. View from the garden



Fig.1.22. View from Emile Zola St.



Fig.2.1. Residential building on Vasileorghe Blvd (c.1932)

The second example is a one-family villa built in 1932 for Nicolae Tabacovici, Director of the Statistics Department of the Ministry of War, in an eclectic style featuring some local Art Deco elements and a particular touch of traditionalism (Fig. 2.1).

After nationalisation the house became an embassy. In 2004 the building was returned to the successors of the initial owner, who sold it. In 2009 the villa became the property of the current owner, who decided to rehabilitate it for his family's residential use.

The building is protected as an historic monument of local interest.

The villa has a semi-basement, ground floor, one upper level and a high attic; it is surrounded by a large garden (Figs. 2.2-2.6). The construction is in load-bearing masonry with wood and reinforced concrete floors.





Fig.2.2. View from Sofia St.



Fig.2.5. Cross-section (existing)



Fig.2.3. Ground floor plan (existing)



Fig.2.4. First floor plan (existing)

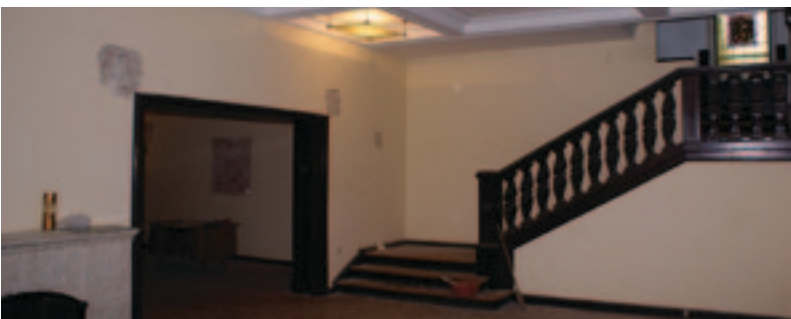


Fig.2.6. Ground floor interior view



Fig.2.7. Exposed reinforcing bars at slabs and beams

The diagnosis pointed out some inherent deficiencies:

- in the upper part of the building, the wooden floor is unable to restrain the walls' movement arising from horizontal actions, and in time the walls lost their verticality;
- the reinforced concrete floors over the semi-basement and over the ground floor have major intrinsic deficiencies:
- in the slabs and beams, the concrete cover is insufficient and on large areas the reinforcing bars are exposed and corroded (Fig. 2.7);
  - the concrete in the beams is segregated and has a reduced strength, thus the beams present cracks corresponding to the casting joints;
  - the beam stirrups are positioned at large distances, thus the beams lack shear resistance;
  - the end bearings of the lintels over the large door openings are insufficient;
- due to the soil settlement along the western façade (caused by accidental water leaks), the cross-walls present parabolic cracks; the rotation tendency of the façade is amplified by the outward thrust of the high roof.



The architectural project<sup>6</sup> focuses on conservation and restoration operations; it preserves the original spatial composition of the building, adapting it to the new use requirements through some local transformations (the creation of new wall openings and closure of other ones, the demolition of some partition walls, the introduction of new lightweight partition walls, the introduction of an elevator connecting the four levels of the building), as well as some rotations of the functions assigned to certain spaces and the functional valorisation of unused spaces (in the basement and attic). The existing exterior finishes and decoration elements are preserved, subject to the necessary restoration works. The interior finishes (which have been repeatedly replaced over time) have been substituted with new ones.

The attic was redesigned as an open space for rest and leisure; thus, the existing roof structure (with many vertical supports) was replaced with a new one with only four columns (Fig. 2.8)<sup>7</sup>; in this way the spatial flow has been increased, but certain walls now have to carry major concentrated loads.

The new heating and cooling equipment attached to the floors has significantly increased the loads to be carried by the building structure (Fig. 2.9).



Fig.2.8 . New roof structure



Fig.2.9. New heating and cooling equipment attached to the floors

The structural project<sup>8</sup> proposes interventions meant to correct the intrinsic defects of the building described above and to increase its strength capacity in order to cope with the supplementary loads brought on by the rehabilitation:

- the strengthening of the junction between façade and inner cross-walls by insertion of reinforcing steel bars and epoxy mortar grout;
- the strengthening of the inner walls with 5cm reinforced cement coating on both sides;
- the enlargement of the foundations;
- the stiffening of the wooden floor over the upper level with 5-7cm reinforced concrete topping (Fig. 2.10);
- the strengthening of the reinforced concrete floors by grouting with epoxy resins and placing carbon fibre strips and fabrics on the beams (Fig. 2.11).





Fig.2.10. Steel mesh for reinforced concrete topping on wood floor



Fig.2.11. Strengthening of RC floors with carbon fiber strips and fabrics

Geothermal heat pumps (inserted in the garden) and solar panels (on the far side of the roof) are provided.

The rehabilitation works to this project are ongoing (Fig. 2.12).<sup>9</sup>



Fig.2.12. Ongoing rehabilitation works



Fig.3.1. Residential building on Sofia St. (around 1920)

The third example is a 'cottage style' building dating from the first decades of the 20th century, illustrating the 'domestic revival' promoted by the Arts and Crafts movement and widely adopted in Europe at the time (Fig. 3.1). It has a free compositional scheme, a volume with strong reliefs such as bow windows, towers, loggias,



and an ornamental repertoire which interprets different regional and historic traditions (mainly Central and Western European). The building was designed as a one-family villa with semi-basement, ground floor, upper level and mansard (Fig. 3.2).

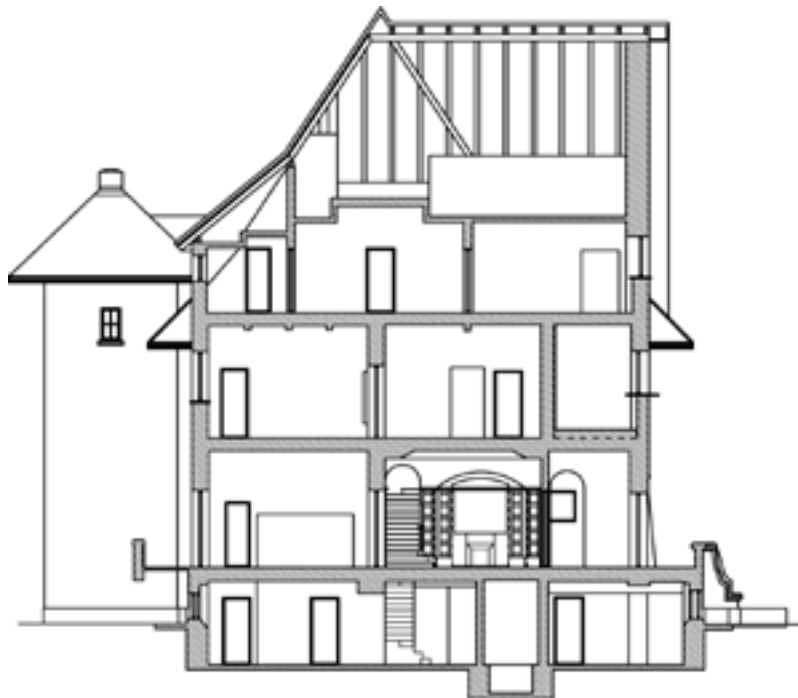


Fig.3.2. Cross-section (with old inner partition)

After the nationalisation the residential building was converted into an embassy. Nowadays the villa is protected as a historic monument of local interest. It is again a private property and has returned to its original residential use.

The construction is in load-bearing masonry with wooden floors and, in places, concrete slabs. The investigations which preceded the rehabilitation project identified a situation of major decay of the



Fig.3.3. Incoherent inner wall with old reinforcing steel mesh



Fig.3.4. Crack in inner wall

inner walls, repeatedly repaired after several earthquakes experienced by the building (Figs. 3.3, 3.4). In addition, the owners required major transformations of the interior spatial organisation. Therefore, the project proposed the conservation of the existing exterior envelope, the demolition of the inner walls and a completely new partition of the interior space (Figs. 3.5-3.10).<sup>10</sup> The technical solution was to create a peripheral load-bearing tube by constructing a reinforced

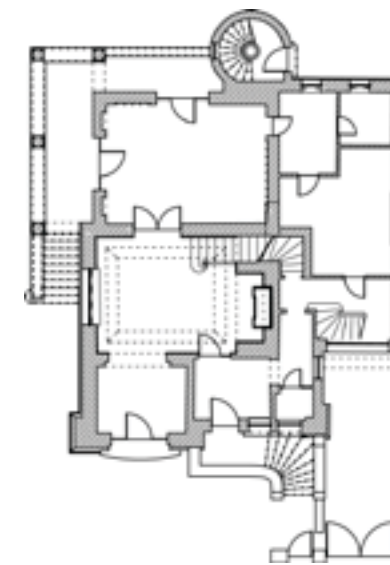


Fig.3.5. Ground floor plan with old inner partition

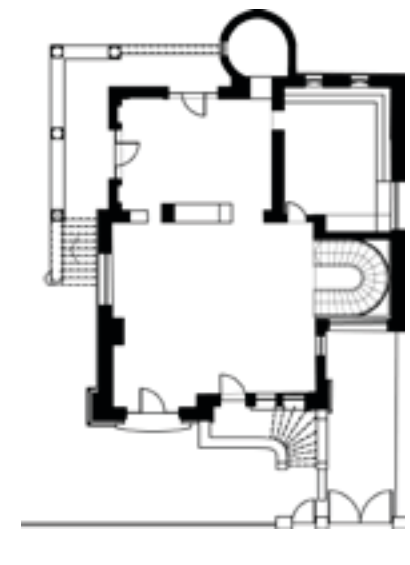


Fig.3.6. Ground floor plan with new inner partition



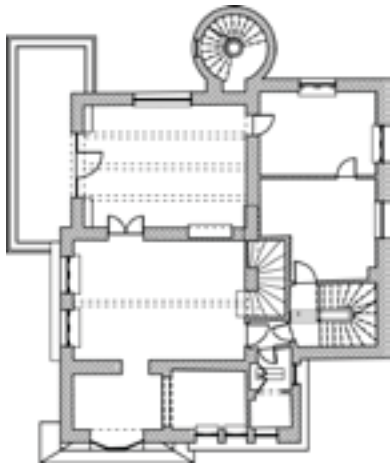


Fig.3.7. First floor plan with old inner partition



Fig.3.8. First floor plan with new inner partition



Fig.3.9. Mansard plan with old inner partition

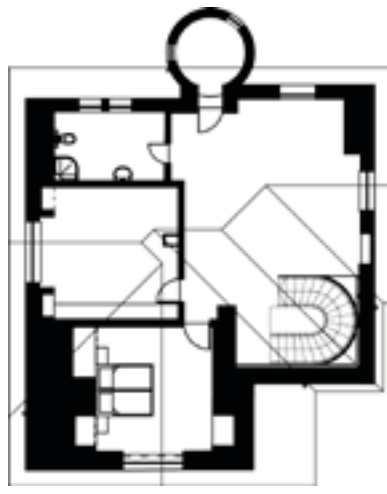


Fig.3.10. Mansard plan with new inner partition

concrete jacket on the inner side of the façade walls, and a new inner frame structure in reinforced concrete, allowing the requested flexibility of the space (Figs. 3.11, 3.12).<sup>11</sup> At the attic level, a new roof structure with trusses was realised within the same volume, eliminating the existing load-bearing vertical elements and permitting the requested flexibility of the space (Figs. 3.13, 3.14).



Fig.3.11. Peripheral load bearing tube in reinforced concrete



Fig.3.12. Peripheral load bearing tube in reinforced concrete



Figs.3.13-3.14. New roof structure





## Mircea Crişan

The original façades – including exposed brick, decorative elements and mouldings in artificial stone, wooden and metallic elements – were preserved rather well and required only localised restoration works and conservation treatments.

The rehabilitation works were concluded in 2010 (Figs. 3.15, 3.16).<sup>12</sup>



Fig.3.15. The building after the rehabilitation



Fig.3.16. The building after the rehabilitation



Fig.4.1. Residential building on Londra St. (1933)

The fourth example is a Modernist villa designed by Henriette Delavrancea–Gibory<sup>13</sup> in 1933, for Prof. Victor Vâlcovici, mathematician and member of the Romanian Academy (Fig. 4.1); his successors sold the house to the current owners.



The building has semi-basement, ground floor, one upper level and an attic. It is currently protected as an historic monument of local interest.

The construction is of load-bearing masonry with reinforced concrete floors consisting of a very thin slab (5cm) on beams (about 15 x 25cm) at approximately 60cm spacing.

In 2002 the building was rehabilitated for private residential use; the architectural project<sup>14</sup> preserved the original partition of the house; the attic was converted to living use and was designed as an open space for leisure (Figs. 4.2, 4.3).



Fig.4.2. Roof structure under rehabilitation

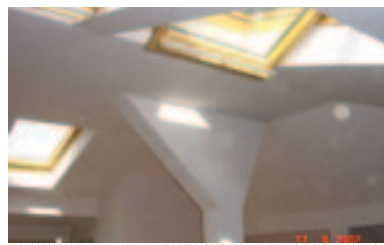


Fig.4.3. Attic after rehabilitation

The structural intervention<sup>15</sup> was dictated by the intrinsic defects and the damage to the existing floors and to some walls, as well as by the additional imposed loads due to the new use given to the attic.



Fig.4.4. Grouting with epoxy resins at reinforced concrete slabs



Fig.4.5. Strengthening of reinforced concrete beams with carbon fiber strips

The existing concrete floors over the ground floor and over the upper level were strengthened with carbon fibre strips applied to the damaged beams after previous grouting of the cracks with epoxy resins; the same treatment was applied to the beams over the ground floor supporting walls without vertical continuity (Figs. 4.4, 4.5, 4.6). On the masonry walls presenting thin cracks, diagonal carbon fibre strips were applied (Figs. 4.7, 4.8).

Original elements – such as window frames, doors, interior stairs and balustrades – were preserved and restored. The exterior cement-lime plaster was remade, preserving the original characteristics of composition, color and texture (Figs. 4.9, 4.10, 4.11).<sup>16</sup>



Fig.4.6. Strengthening of reinforced concrete beams with carbon fiber strips



Fig.4.7. Strengthening of masonry walls with carbon fiber strips



Fig.4.8. Strengthening of masonry walls with carbon fiber strips





Fig.4.9. Backyard façade in different stages of the rehabilitation works

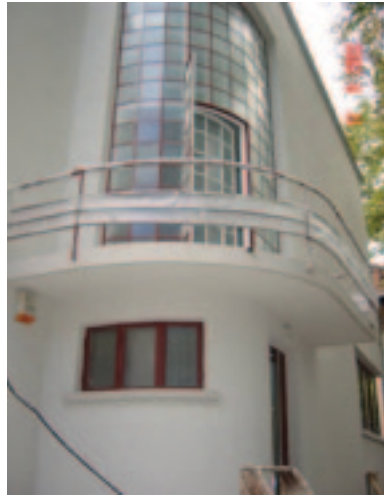


Fig.4.10. Detail of the main façade during the rehabilitation works



Fig.4.11. The building after the rehabilitation

## Notes

- 1 Feilden, B. M. 2003. *Conservation of Historic Buildings*. Oxford.
- 2 Octav Doicescu (1902–1981) is a well known Romanian architect, author of many representative buildings and residences in Bucharest.
- 3 Architectural project by arch. Cătălina Preda.
- 4 Structural project by eng. Mircea Crişan.
- 5 Survey drawings and photos provided by arch. Cătălina Preda.
- 6 Architectural project by arch. Virgil Apostol and arch. Ştefan Bălci.
- 7 The new roof structure was designed and executed by Wood Beton s.p.a. Gruppo Nulli, Italy.
- 8 Structural project by, eng. Mircea Crişan.
- 9 Survey drawings provided by arch. Virgil Apostol and arch. Ştefan Bălci. Photos by M. Crişan.
- 10 Architectural project by arch. Mihai Butucaru.
- 11 Structural project by eng. Mircea Crişan and eng. Vlad Petrescu.
- 12 Survey drawings provided by arch. Mihai Butucaru. Photos by Mircea Crişan.
- 13 Henriette Delavrancea-Gibory (1894-1987) is a particular personality within Romanian architecture, famous mainly for the villas she designed in the interwar period.
- 14 Architectural project by Tomniţa Florescu.
- 15 Structural project by eng. Mircea Crişan.
- 16 Photos by Mircea Crişan.





## Regeneration in (teaching) conservation

Rodica Crişan

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*Through architecture, a race, or rather a nation, always expresses itself instinctively. (...) Following this principle, it is natural to consider the configuration of a city as a foremost visual document when you want to know a civilization. Cities bear marked on them, in them, all the virtues, all the sins of those who have built them.*

*G. M. Cantacuzino, 1932<sup>1</sup>*

The neighbourhood chosen as study area for the 3<sup>rd</sup> EAAE Conservation Workshop is one of the most beautiful in Bucharest. Even if too 'young' to be considered of 'historical' value<sup>2</sup>, it is one of the most important components of the cityscape and a relevant cultural resource. Built at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it is the material testimony of a significant moment in the history of the city, recalling a period when Bucharest was a sophisticated capital with great economic power, with an avant-garde artistic movement, cutting-edge modernist architecture, and a social life which rivalled that of any other major city in Europe. Over time, the idea of comfortable living has been constantly associated with this residential area and so far it has preserved the main original characteristics at urban and building scale. A regeneration process<sup>3</sup> in its common meaning does not seem necessary, as the area has never been neglected or abandoned; on the contrary, it has always been considered an 'island of well-being' belonging to





Fig.1. New building on Praga St.



Fig.2. Thermal rehabilitation on Londra St: polystyrene and pink paint on façades.

the social elite. But a better knowledge of local history points out some particularities which could be associated with some unusual forms of 'regeneration' following two major historical events that caused disturbances and fractures in the neighbourhood's use: the nationalisation after World War II and the major political changes that occurred after 1989.

It is generally stated that the conservation of a historical area should assume the preservation of its social structure. Beyond other motivations, such an attitude can ensure the compatibility between the physical structures and their use. But in practice there are cases when this is impossible due to historical disturbances which disrupt any social continuity.

Throughout history, the capacity of social groups to define and constantly use certain spatial configurations generated the residential building typology; this means that a residential building type is determined by the 'cultural model' of constant users belonging to a certain social category. The regular activities and behaviours of the users (i.e. their 'living model') and the building typology are compatible as long as they reflect the same 'cultural model'.

A major historical fracture can lead to the brutal disappearance of a 'cultural model' as a consequence of the disappearance of a social class. The 'orphan' building receives new users but they are not always able to 'adopt' it in a proper manner; the 'living model' of the new users can contradict the building typology when their regular activities and behaviours reflect a very different 'cultural model'. Such situations can lead to arbitrary transformations (generating loss of quality and disorders at building and neighbourhood scale), especially when the new users ignore any cultural substrate of the building typology, considering the house only a 'commodity' meant to satisfy their needs and social aspiration.





Fig.3. Building rehabilitations on Londra St.

Originally built as a residential area that included both villas for the well-off and low-cost houses for the employees of various companies, the district in question knew its first major disturbances after World War II. As a consequence of nationalisation, the normal relation between buildings and users was broken. The neighbourhood was 'regenerated' as state property and became an exclusivist residential area for the favourites of the Communist regime; a large number of villas became residences of Communist leaders; some of them were converted into embassies or ambassadors' residences and other state institutions. When permitted to stay, the ex-owners became tenants, allowed to use only a small part of their old house, now divided into several dwelling units.

Following the major political changes of 1989, other events generated further disturbances. The buildings had been returned to the successors of the former owners, but many of them sold the

houses, often in a damaged condition, because they lacked the financial means to renovate and maintain them. So, many buildings in the area became property of a new generation of rich people with a different 'cultural model' to that of the original users. Thus, a new 'regeneration' process started spontaneously in the 1990s and is ongoing; it reflects 'all the virtues' and 'all the sins' of the new owners who are now renovating the old buildings or constructing new buildings after demolishing the existing ones.



Fig.4 a,b,c. Transformed house (mostly rebuilt), between two Modernist buildings by Horia Creangă on Roma St. and Paris St.





Fig.5. Transformed building on Paris St.



Fig.6. New building on Atena St.



Fig.7. Building rehabilitation on Atena St.



Fig.8. New building on Venezuela St.



Fig.9. New building on Aleea Alexandru St.

The area in question was always an enviable place and currently is one of the most sought-after residential areas, still exclusivist because of the high prices. Investments are not lacking and the neighbourhood is now changing its image. But is this spontaneous 'regeneration' process on the right path?

Performed by private operators with personal interests (and sometimes without a proper understanding of the intrinsic value of their houses and of the neighbourhood as a whole), the rehabilitation of several existing buildings, as well as the new insertions, cannot





Fig.10 a. New building under construction, replacing a Modernist villa with a large garden.



Fig.10 b,c. The Modernist villa demolished for making the new building in the previous image (Fig.10a).

be seen to have significantly improved the overall quality of the neighbourhood; the positive or negative impact is random. There are examples of good rehabilitation works, but also cases of arbitrary and aggressive transformations of existing buildings with a negative impact on the context; there are some well integrated new insertions but also many dissonant new buildings, often following unjustified demolitions (Figs.1-11).



Fig.11 a,b. On going transformation of a building on Aleea Alexandru St.



Fig.11 c. Original configuration of the building on Aleea Alexandru St. currently subject to transformation (from: <http://maps.google.com/>)



If the area now exhibits local incoherencies or even aggression signs altering the overall quality of the inherited neighbourhood, this is the reflection of a contradictory contemporary society missing its normal continuity. There is a deep fracture between the exponents of today's social groups buying and investing in the area, and the social categories which built this neighbourhood in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century according to their cultural model: the continuity was broken in the 1950s when the appropriate cultural model and axiological criteria disappeared together with the social classes.

The intervention of the public authorities is weak, poorly organised and too compliant in responding to private interests at the expense of a comprehensive vision of the urban development.

More so than legal weaknesses, the current problems of this area (like other historical areas in Bucharest) are generated by ignorance, contempt and private financial interests. 'Above all, land and property speculation feeds upon all errors and omissions and brings to naught the most carefully laid plans'.<sup>4</sup>

After fifty years of totalitarianism, the newfound democracy of the market brings new distortions and threats; above all, we should identify here the contempt for local cultural identity and the lack of community sense, altering the extrinsic values of the architectural heritage and leading to an extremely accommodating attitude towards arbitrary interventions to it.

Education has a major role in changing attitudes and making the necessary corrections to the axiological scale currently applied to the built heritage; as teachers and practicing professionals, we have to educate our students but now also our clients.

In schools of architecture, as in our society, the current system of values has to be 'regenerated', recovering and promoting the complex values of the built heritage, at building and urban scale.

From this point of view, in our schools it would be opportune to think about a 'regeneration' in teaching conservation, as today 'teaching conservation' means (or should mean) essentially teaching sustainability and wise management of resources. Nowadays teaching conservation has to exceed its traditional field of teaching about historical monuments and their restoration; it has to go down from abstract theory to concrete design lessons; the task of teaching conservation has to spread out from the conservation departments toward other disciplinary areas.

The value of the built heritage doesn't consist only in historical monuments protected by specific laws. First of all, our built heritage is a repository of 'reusable resources', material values to be rationally managed; within the built heritage, the architectural emergencies (usually listed as monuments), represent a special category, those of 'non-renewable resources', subject to specific restrictions.

'Sustainability' is currently integrated in schools' curricula. But we teach 'sustainability' mainly focusing on natural environment protection and the energetic efficiency of buildings. We often forget the material value of any existing building as a reusable resource (even if not 'beautiful' or a listed monument) and the negative environmental impact of the demolition and reconstruction.

We often omit from teaching the role of the social and cultural development in a sustainable society where '*...cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature*'.<sup>5</sup>



Local identity is not so much defined by historical monuments as it is by the large number of residential buildings composing our traditional neighbourhoods; even if the individual value of these 'modest' buildings doesn't justify their legal protection as monuments, their group value is essential for the local specific atmosphere, generating a particular living value; it defines a balanced, human-friendly environment which can contribute to a sustainable development.

A sustainability-led architectural education adds a new key to 'reading' our traditional neighbourhoods, highlighting those aspects which make them livable and sustainable.

A 'sustainable neighbourhood' is organised so as to enable all its citizens to meet their own needs and to enhance their wellbeing without damaging the environment or endangering the living conditions of other people, now or in the future.<sup>6</sup> This should be a leading idea in teaching architecture and urban planning.

The investigation of the concept of 'sustainable neighbourhood' (or 'sustainable community') has led to some interesting experiments and theories, mainly linked to major housing policies, but also interesting for understanding the qualities of our traditional neighbourhoods. Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk and Jeff Speck<sup>7</sup> elaborated six fundamental rules that provide 'a fully valid framework for the design and redesign of our communities'<sup>8</sup> in order to ensure their sustainability. It is notable that the six rules for a 'sustainable community' are generally met by the traditional neighbourhoods (as it is the case of our workshop area), over time proven to be 'livable' and thus proposed as a model for the new ones.

The six rules are:

*The centre:* each neighbourhood needs a centre, a place where one can find shops, commerce, social and cultural activities and government offices.

*The five-minute walk:* people should be able to satisfy the ordinary needs of life: living, working and shopping within five minutes' walk from their homes.

*The street network:* the street pattern should take the form of a continuous web with paths linking one place to another, so that people have the same incentive to walk and the same flexible choice about routes.

*Narrow, versatile streets:* where there are a larger number of streets (as in a traditional neighbourhood pattern) it means that traffic can be shared and streets smaller.

*Mixed use:* in the traditional neighbourhood pattern, the buildings on a street are used for different purposes.

*Special sites for special buildings:* traditional neighbourhoods usually make a special place for civic buildings (libraries, schools, town and city halls, places of worship).

Traditional neighbourhoods still matter in people's daily lives as they provide 'the sort of environment indispensable to a balanced and complete life';<sup>9</sup> in such environments, the lost sense of community can revive and become sustainable.

The school can help to regenerate values within contemporary society and it has to start by reconsidering its own system of values. It has to communicate to the students a new way of thinking about



the built heritage and a new manner of acting upon traditional neighbourhoods; it has to give to the future architects the necessary knowledge and skills to recognise the qualities of a traditional neighbourhood, to preserve and enhance them, even (or especially) when designing new buildings that must improve, not negate, the existing qualities of the area.



The architectural education has to bestow the competence to design and to advocate the integrated conservation of the built heritage, at object and urban scale. This is possible only by an integrated teaching approach of theory and design studio, based on the same system of values. Theory is necessary but not sufficient; design studio should integrate the theoretical knowledge in practical exercises of rehabilitation and new insertions in old areas, following complex criteria of sustainability. It should be considered that 'integrated conservation does not rule out the introduction of modern architecture into areas containing old

buildings',<sup>10</sup> but imposes specific conditions meant to preserve the particular character of an historical area; more precisely, the new insertion should respect 'all those material and spiritual elements that express this character, especially:

- a) urban patterns as defined by lots and streets;
- b) relationships between buildings and green and open spaces;
- c) the formal appearance, interior and exterior, of buildings as defined by scale, size, style, construction, materials, colour and decoration;
- d) the relationship between the town or urban area and its surrounding setting, both natural and man-made; and
- e) the various functions that the town or urban area has acquired over time.'<sup>11</sup>

Too often these elements are ignored, in school and in current practice, and the results can be observed in the town, even in areas officially declared 'protected', as is that chosen for our workshop.

Nowadays, a major task of architectural education is to enable future professionals to build a sustainable society; this involves an important shift in thinking about architecture in general and about built heritage in particular. In this context, teaching conservation must be regenerated; it has to look further than the restoration of monuments, toward the broader goal of preserving local values, material and immaterial, extant in traditional urban areas, even (or especially) when designing new buildings in old tissues. It has to expand from the preservation of architectural emergencies toward the preoccupation with rational management of built resources in general (with higher or lower cultural significance), paying special



attention to their re-use potential and accepting the contribution of ordinary architecture to the local identity. As part of a sustainability-led architectural education, 'teaching conservation' has to spread beyond the specialised (and theoretical) departments toward urban planning and the architectural design studio, in order to bestow in a coherent manner a more complex way of understanding the built heritage, and to confer to future professionals adequate competencies in working with this heritage without altering the qualities of our traditional neighbourhoods (even modest and not very old) and their 'livability'.



## Notes and references

- 1 Cantacuzino, G. M. 1932. *Arcade, firide şi lespezi*. Bucharest.
- 2 In Romania (and not only here), built heritage dating from the 20th century is considered of low age value.
- 3 In biology, regeneration is the process of renewal, restoration, and growth that makes genomes, cells, organs, organisms and ecosystems resilient to natural fluctuations or events that cause disturbance or damage. [[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regeneration\\_biology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regeneration_biology)]
- 4 European Council, 1975. *European Charter of the Architectural Heritage* (Amsterdam Charter).
- 5 UNESCO, 2001. *The Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity*.
- 6 From this point of view, the wrong way to understand democracy claiming that everybody can do what he/she wants with his/her money, with his/her house, on his/her site, is obviously unsustainable, but unfortunately a lot of recent examples showing the results of such attitudes can be given.
- 7 Duany, A., Plater-Zyberk, E. and Speck, J. 2000. *Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream*, New York. Cited by Smith, Mark K. (2008), in 'Sustainable communities and neighbourhoods. Theory, policy and practice'. [[www.infed.org/communities/sustainable\\_communities.htm](http://www.infed.org/communities/sustainable_communities.htm)].
- 8 Op.cit.
- 9 European Council, 1975. *European Charter of the Architectural Heritage* (Amsterdam Charter).
- 10 Op.cit.
- 11 ICOMOS, 1987. *Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas* (Washington Charter).





## Quelques considérations sur la préservation de l'authenticité des quartiers résidentiels modernes du nord de Bucarest

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### **L'authenticité : un critère incontournable**

Depuis que le souci patrimonial s'est imposé pour devenir institutionnel, la question de l'*authenticité* n'a cessé de tourmenter les conservateurs. C'est pourquoi, sans doute, cette valeur apparaît de manière quasi obsessionnelle, explicitement ou implicitement, parfois même à la manière d'une hantise, dans les chartes et autres grands textes de référence à l'usage des experts. Or, on le sait, la difficulté à définir cette notion fondamentale a parfois occasionné bien des débats - particulièrement quand des systèmes culturels semblaient s'affronter, comme à Nara - et cela au point de susciter un agacement certain, qui a, par ailleurs, conduit Françoise Choay (2000: 93) à écrire qu'elle souhaitait « que les disciplines patrimoniales abandonnent la rhétorique de l'authenticité au profit d'un ensemble de concepts opératoires ». Pourtant, il nous semble qu'on ne peut pas faire l'économie de ce qui reste à nos yeux - et cet avis semble bien partagé, nous le verrons ci-après - un « idéal régulateur » incontournable. Aussi avons-nous tenté de défendre ce qui reste pour nous, en ces temps de relativisme, une



valeur sûre et même une valeur *sine qua non* de la théorie de la conservation, en nous efforçant de clarifier certaines notions qui lui sont directement liées, à la lumière de la *philosophie de la logique* (notamment la théorie des identités, la question de la spatio-temporalité, etc.) ou encore de l'*esthétique analytique*, notamment celle développée par Nelson Goodman (1988) qui distingue avantageusement des régimes de falsification : autographie/ allographie. Pour le dire autrement, nous avons justement tenté de montrer qu'une théorie de l'authenticité se réfère précisément à ce que la célèbre théoricienne française appelle « un ensemble de concepts opératoires ». Mais pour ce faire, nous avons aussi laissé tomber toute prétention à donner une définition univoque, à visée universelle ou essentialiste à ce qui est plutôt un horizon qu'il convient de garder dans son champ de mire pour ne pas s'égarer dangereusement. Nous n'avons ainsi éprouvé aucune difficulté à faire nôtre cette manière de voir plus empirique que Nathalie Heinich défend et illustre dans *La Fabrique du Patrimoine* (2009). En effet, la sociologue ne se montre nullement embarrassée par « la multiplicité » et « l'ordonnancement complexe » des valeurs auxquelles recourent les spécialistes du classement, pas plus qu'elle ne considère comme un défaut le fait qu'« elles ne [soient] pas toutes conscientes aux acteurs ni explicables par eux ». Elle y voit une analogie - qui s'avère du reste très constructive - avec le statut que Bourdieu conférait aux « règles » dans *Le sens pratique* et nous la citons un peu longuement parce que cela nous paraît un argument décisif pour notre développement, puisqu'il vaut bien entendu pour l'authenticité qui nous occupe ici : « [Les règles] ne sont pas pour autant « irrationnelles », comme le voudrait une conception de la rationalité limitée à la pensée logique, parce qu'elles obéissent à de fortes contraintes de cohérence : n'importe quel objet ne peut pas être qualifié n'importe comment par n'importe quel acteur dans n'importe quel contexte, sous peine

de disqualifier radicalement l'auteur de la qualification - nous le savons tous » (2009 : 262).

Si la philosophie analytique nous paraît effectivement fournir des outils précieux pour clarifier certains concepts de base de ce que l'on pourrait appeler le « système logique de l'authenticité », la *sociologie compréhensive*, que Nathalie Heinich illustre dans son dernier essai (2009), montre utilement qu'il ne faut pas trop vite abandonner ce que Françoise Choay (2000) qualifiait rapidement et non sans connotation péjorative de « rhétorique de l'authenticité », sous le prétexte qu'elle fait place à une certaine indétermination, voire à une certaine part de subjectivité. Car, sur base d'un travail de terrain à caractère ethnologique - elle a travaillé à partir du détail des procédures, des propos enregistrés, des scènes et des gestes des conservateurs, la sociologue montre avec beaucoup de subtilité que cette théorie du sens pratique permet de déconstruire le couple oppositionnel subjectivité/ objectivité pour faire droit à une logique moins « rationnelle », en tout cas moins *rationaliste*, mais qui ne confine pas au « n'importe quoi », ce qu'elle appelle encore, et nous ferons nôtre cette formule, une « grammaire » sous-jacente aux représentations et aux actions du spécialiste et du chercheur.

Se référer à une « grammaire de l'authenticité » voilà qui pour nous est fort séduisant, parce qu'une telle conception des choses inclut l'idée que la norme peut évoluer progressivement en fonction de la société, qu'au-delà des règles générales peuvent exister des exceptions, mais aussi que certains accords (et ici nous jouons un peu sur les mots) se fassent en fonction du sens - *sens* qui ne peut s'apprécier que dans un contexte plus global. Or il se fait que le troisième workshop organisé par l'EAAE-ENHSA NETWORK ON CONSERVATION à l'Université Ion Mincu de Bucarest en octobre 2011 nous a donné l'occasion d'éprouver et de confirmer



certaines de ces intuitions. En effet, deux parmi les trois groupes de spécialistes chargés d'étudier la partie moderne du tissu urbain de la capitale roumaine (plus précisément les parcellaires du nord de la ville) ont insisté sur l'authenticité spécifique à ce district. Le groupe A mené par Hanna Derer, a même insisté dans sa conclusion sur l'importance particulière du critère d'authenticité dans le cas de la Roumanie :

*(...) most of the International Conservation Charters do stress the fact that the concepts and principles they comprise should be carefully adapted to national and/or local specifics. Regarding these in Romania, where, for instance, buildings dating from the period between 1920 and 1960 are considered of low age value, a relevant example in the adapted use of generally accepted guidelines is linked to the concept of "authenticity" – used (here) to balance this cultural identity criterion. Consequently, although the given area is rather "young", as it is largely genuine in setting, urban planning and architectural concept(s), in building materials and techniques as well as in craftsmanship, its overall cultural value may be considered higher than otherwise (Derer 2011: 4).*

En se référant aux quatre types d'authenticité définies par B. Feilden et J. Jokilehto dans leur *Guide de gestion des sites du patrimoine culturel mondial* (1996), H. Derer développe ainsi l'idée que le déficit d'historicité de l'architecture moderne aux yeux de l'administration roumaine en charge du patrimoine peut être compensé par un supplément d'authenticité du matériau, de l'exécution, de la conception ou de l'environnement, dont la présence est d'autant plus vraisemblable que le bien est récent. Si la forme de tautologie que recèle l'argument, par un raccourci faisant découler l'authenticité de l'intégrité<sup>1</sup>, ne nous a pas échappé ainsi qu'à plusieurs membres du groupe, personne n'a en tout cas contesté l'idée que le critère d'authenticité méritait ici un examen

particulièrement attentif dans une perspective de conservation de la zone étudiée.

A partir de cette idée, il nous est apparu comme évident que bien plus que par la qualité intrinsèque des éléments isolés - qu'il ne s'agit pas pour nous de nier, et nous y reviendrons - c'est par l'organisation et l'effet d'ensemble que se singularise notre objet d'étude. Bien que résultant de l'addition progressive de plusieurs lotissements, de 1895 à 1935, une série de constantes peuvent être mises en évidence, dans la manière dont se définissent les espaces publics et privés ainsi que dans l'aménagement de ceux-ci. C'est pourquoi l'*authenticité morphologique* à l'échelle des quartiers est à notre sens l'élément essentiel à préserver, tout en étant probablement le plus fragile en raison de la spéculation immobilière et de la pression de l'automobile mais aussi, et peut-être surtout, de la modification des pratiques sociales depuis un bon demi-siècle. C'est donc principalement sur cet aspect que nous centrerons notre réflexion, tout en consacrant quelques lignes à l'authenticité des bâtiments eux-mêmes.

### **De l'authenticité de l'environnement à l'« authenticité morphologique »**

Bien que dans leur *Guide de gestion* qui sert de référence à l'évaluation des sites roumains, Jokilehto et Feilden (1996 : 70) développent le concept d'« authenticité de l'environnement », dont l'une des « preuves » est la « valeur de paysage urbain », il nous semble plus approprié, dans ce cas précis, d'employer le terme d'*authenticité morphologique*, puisqu'il s'agit ici d'une zone « isotrope », sans point de référence dominant dont on pourrait considérer l'environnement et l'authenticité de celui-ci. En d'autres termes, l'environnement est lui-même le bien patrimonial, dont



il s'agit de mesurer l'authenticité, qui est liée, selon nous, à ses caractéristiques morphologiques.

De manière générale, en Europe, l'attention à la morphologie urbaine remonte aux années 1960, tant du côté des urbanistes que des conservateurs : alors que les premiers envisagent, après avoir durant la première moitié du siècle prôné son « amélioration » ou sa disparition, de tirer de la structure évolutive du tissu existant les principes d'aménagements nouveaux<sup>2</sup>, les seconds se détachent du monument isolé pour étendre la conservation à des portions du tissu urbain. Parmi les chevilles ouvrières de cette mutation, du côté des conservateurs, le belge Raymond Lemaire (1921-1997) joue un rôle important au niveau international dans la rédaction de textes doctrinaux mais également, au niveau national, à travers la réalisation d'une série de projets pilotes notamment en prévision de l'année européenne du patrimoine architectural de 1975, initiée par le Conseil de l'Europe. C'est ainsi qu'il co-rédige avec le bureau d'urbanisme Planning le plan de structure de la ville de Bruges, aujourd'hui inscrite sur la liste du patrimoine mondial, où sont synthétisés les principes mis en oeuvre dans ses projets de rénovation urbaine (Groep Planning 1976). Bien qu'ils s'appliquent, à l'époque où ils sont formulés, à un patrimoine urbain plus ancien et justement, anisotrope, ils nous ont semblé pouvoir constituer une grille d'analyse utile pour le cas d'étude qui nous occupe.

Dans le contexte de mutation qui est celui de la rénovation urbaine dans les années 1970, le plan de structure de la ville de Bruges se donne pour objectif de concilier le devenir de la ville avec le respect de son patrimoine et de ses spécificités structurelles, en d'autres termes - bien que le mot ne soit, à l'époque, pas employé explicitement - de permettre son évolution tout en préservant son authenticité. Comme dans la zone qui constitue notre cas d'étude, il s'agit de ne pas sacrifier à la satisfaction de besoins fonctionnels

et pragmatiques (la circulation, le confort, ) ce qui, comme on l'admet depuis peu à l'époque, est nécessaire à la satisfaction de besoins moins quantifiables, mais tout aussi essentiels à l'homme moderne : un cadre de vie à son échelle, propice aux rapports sociaux et à un ancrage historique et culturel. Afin d'objectiver cette approche plus esthétique que fonctionnelle, dont l'application à l'échelle urbaine peut paraître trop floue et relative, Lemaire décompose le paysage urbain en éléments objectifs, classés sous les catégories de « paysage dur » (enveloppe des bâtiments, voiries, mobilier urbain), « paysage doux » (parcs, jardins, verdure, eau) et « repères » (positifs ou négatifs), eux-mêmes divisés en sous-composantes pour lesquelles il propose des règles simples en matière d'intervention, avant de les synthétiser sous forme de plan d'ensemble. Sans prétendre arriver à un tel résultat, sa structure d'analyse servira néanmoins d'épine dorsale à notre réflexion, même si de nombreuses adaptations seront nécessaires en raison des particularités de la zone d'étude.

### **Le « paysage dur » : enveloppes architecturales, voiries, mobilier urbain**

Bien que le quartier résulte, ainsi que nous l'avons déjà mentionné, de l'aménagement successif de plusieurs lotissements par des commanditaires variés, l'ensemble présente une grande unité morphologique du « paysage dur ». A l'exception du dépôt de trams au Sud du site et du siège de la télévision nationale au Nord, toute la zone est occupée par les lotissements résidentiels établis selon des règles très semblables sur le plan morphologique, même si les lotissements les plus anciens (le lotissement Blanc, établi vers 1895 et mal conservé) et les plus récents (ceux de la Compagnie Tesatoria Mecanica, datant des années 1935-1940) diffèrent légèrement.



### Le front des voiries

Contrairement à la Ville de Bruges dont nous tirons notre méthode d'analyse, la zone ne présente pas de « mur urbain » proprement dit, au sens d'une limite claire tracée par les façades le long des voiries : la plupart des maisons sont isolées sur leur parcelle, ou parfois jumelées, et dans tous les cas entourées d'un jardin à l'avant, à l'arrière, et sur un côté au moins, même s'il est parfois très réduit. La continuité du front des voiries est toutefois assurée par un élément que nous n'hésitons pas à qualifier d'essentiel pour l'authenticité morphologique de la zone : la clôture des jardins. Celle-ci se présente sous la forme d'un mur de soubassement surmonté d'une clôture ajourée, le plus souvent métallique, plus ou moins ouvragée en réponse à des détails architecturaux de la maison elle-même (porte d'entrée, balcon). Une grille donne accès à la parcelle (Fig.1).

Ces clôtures jouent un rôle essentiel car elles assurent non seulement un effet d'ensemble aux rues malgré la diversité des styles architecturaux en présence - sur lesquels nous reviendrons - mais elles annoncent également le style de la maison que l'on découvre dans un deuxième temps : exemple très réussi d'une « unité dans la diversité », elles sont à préserver impérativement. Elles s'avèrent toutefois très menacées : en témoignent les greffes d'éléments opaques que l'on y observe en de nombreux endroits, voire les fils barbelés, dénotant une volonté des occupants actuels d'établir une frontière plus étanche entre espace public et privé (Fig.2), sans doute pour des raisons à la fois liées à la recherche d'intimité (les parcelles sont de taille réduite) et de sécurité (ce qui est très probant dans le cas des ambassades établies dans la zone).



Fig.1. Les clôtures des jardins, conçues en réponse à l'architecture des façades, jouent un rôle capital dans l'unité morphologique du quartier (Cliché CH, octobre 2011).





Fig.2. La dégradation et la transformation fonctionnelle des clôtures portent atteinte à l'authenticité morphologique de la zone (Cliché CH, octobre 2011).

### L'enveloppe architecturale

Ainsi que l'a très bien illustré le Prof. Mihaela Criticos dans son analyse typologique et morpho-stylistique de la zone en préalable au Workshop, les langages architecturaux en présence sont d'une diversité étonnante, allant de variations de l'éclectisme au modernisme en passant par des formes de l'Art Nouveau, de l'Art Déco et du régionalisme. Néanmoins, aucun effet disparate ne se dégage de l'ensemble, en raison de la régularité du parcellaire, de l'implantation des constructions et de leur échelle : à l'exception des constructions récentes, dérogeant aux principes qui précèdent en tous points, et qui sont par l'absurde une illustration de leur caractère incontournable (Fig.3), les maisons dépassent rarement deux étages (sauf sous la forme d'éléments ponctuels d'animation

comme une tourelle) et sont d'un gabarit grosso-modo similaire. La diversité de la forme des toitures est adoucie par la présence importante de la végétation (sur laquelle nous reviendrons) et constitue davantage un élément d'animation qu'un trait perturbateur.



Fig.3. Les constructions récentes ignorant les principes de la morphologie des lieux illustrent par leur caractère perturbateur l'importance de ces principes pour la perception de l'effet d'ensemble (Cliché CH, octobre 2011).

### Les voiries

L'aménagement des voiries est un autre éléments fédérateur du site : la zone de circulation automobile est flanquée de trottoirs, le plus souvent agrémentés d'arbres et clairement limités par les clôtures des propriétés que nous avons mentionnées plus haut. Si la similitude des aménagements des voiries participe à l'unité du site, elle est également à l'origine d'une faiblesse soulignée par le groupe de réflexion dont nous faisons partie, à savoir le



manque de points de repères et d'éléments d'orientation, même en termes d'espaces publics. En effet, à l'exception du parc Filipescu, très peu de lieux collectifs ont été aménagés, témoignant peut-être, avec l'absence quasi-totale de bancs publics, du peu d'intérêt porté à l'époque de la construction des lotissements à ce que nous considérons aujourd'hui comme essentiel : la présence de lieux de rencontre. Cette absence est selon nous un véritable trait morphologique de la zone, influençant la manière de la parcourir et le type de public qui y est attendu : au vu de la méfiance manifeste des résidents envers nos groupes d'investigateurs curieux lors du Workshop, il est clair que la zone reste à eux seuls réservée, telle qu'elle a été conçue à l'origine, et sans un important investissement dans la sensibilisation, en faire la promotion pour son caractère patrimonial ne pourra qu'attenter à la manière dont les lieux sont vécus par les habitants.

#### Le « mobilier urbain »

La dernière composante du « paysage dur », le mobilier urbain, brille ici, comme nous l'avons souligné ci-dessus, par son absence voire, si on élargit le concept aux poteaux électriques, par son caractère franchement perturbateur (Fig.4). Si elle s'explique par le jeu de la concurrence entre distributeurs, ainsi que nous l'a expliqué le Prof. Derer, l'accumulation de câbles électriques constitue néanmoins un élément de pollution visuelle très important. Dans une moindre mesure, on peut également mentionner, dans le même registre et à l'échelle des bâtiments, les tuyaux extérieurs reliant les maisons à la rue, les antennes paraboliques et autres boîtiers d'air conditionné (Fig.5).



Fig.4. Sans commentaire! (Cliché CH, octobre 2011).





Fig.5. L'accumulation d'éléments parasites nuit à la perception de la valeur artistique des immeubles (Cliché CH, octobre 2011).

### Le « paysage doux »

Bien qu'un seul parc agrmente la zone étudiée, la verdure y est omniprésente. Nous avons déjà mentionné les arbres bordant les trottoirs, dont nous avons souligné le rôle d'élément unifiant à la fois à l'échelle des rues et de l'ensemble des quartiers. La verdure est également présente dans les jardins, et devrait le rester pour les mêmes raisons : elle est cependant menacée par l'asphaltisation des abords de certains bâtiments et un manque d'entretien très récurrent, qui entraîne soit sa disparition, soit sa prolifération excessive.

### L'authenticité à l'échelle des immeubles

Il est bien entendu impossible de se pencher sur la question de l'authenticité à l'échelle de chacun des immeubles. Le sujet est en outre bien connu, et les critères développés par Feilden et Jokilehto (1996) s'y appliquent aisément. Il faut souligner que dans bien des cas, même si cela peut paraître cynique, le défaut d'entretien des immeubles en garantit, paradoxalement, et à défaut de la bonne conservation (donc de l'intégrité), l'authenticité de la conception, de l'exécution et du matériau. Quant à l'authenticité de l'environnement, les paragraphes qui précèdent ont démontré qu'elle restait en grande partie présente malgré les erreurs commises par les constructions récentes, heureusement peu nombreuses. Nous nous limiterons donc à apporter une nuance qui nous paraît particulièrement d'application dans le cas de la zone étudiée, en raison de la grande diversité des langages architecturaux en présence. Cette nuance nous est inspirée par la distinction opérée par Nelson Goodman (1988) entre arts auto- et allographiques. Alors que les premiers sont étroitement liés au contact direct de la main de l'artiste (peinture, sculpture : l'authenticité d'exécution prime), les seconds sont conçus par l'artiste mais pas nécessairement exécutés par lui (musique, littérature : l'authenticité de la conception prime). Cette distinction est nettement plus complexe en ce qui concerne l'architecture, que Goodman situe dans une zone floue d'entre-deux s'il faut l'envisager dans toute sa diversité spatio-temporelle. Les choses sont cependant plus claires si l'on envisage une période ou un style architectural particulier : ainsi, une maison Art Nouveau et une maison moderniste n'appartiennent-elles pas à une même catégorie et ne peuvent donc pas être évaluées et restaurées à l'aune des mêmes critères. Pour l'une, plutôt autographique, l'authenticité de l'exécution et du matériau seront tout aussi importantes que l'authenticité du concept, alors que pour l'autre,



plutôt allographique, l'authenticité du concept primera, matériau et exécution pouvant être adaptés sans nuire aussi fondamentalement à l'authenticité du bâtiment. Il convient à notre avis de tenir compte de cette nuance tant dans l'évaluation des bâtiments que dans les principes à définir pour leur restauration. De mêmes règles ne peuvent donc être appliquées à l'ensemble de la zone lorsque l'on se place à l'échelle des immeubles.

## Conclusion

Sans aucune prétention d'épuiser le sujet de l'authenticité appliquée à la zone étudiée, ces quelques considérations ont pour but d'alimenter l'argumentaire en faveur de la conservation de ces lotissements et de démontrer que leur valeur historique, considérée comme faible dans le contexte roumain, est largement compensée par une authenticité indiscutable tant sur le plan morphologique qu'à l'échelle des objets. Il convient cependant de souligner que les interventions récentes en matière de construction altèrent cette authenticité et pourraient même en avoir raison si elles venaient à se multiplier. Il est donc impératif que des mesures urgentes soient prises afin d'éviter que de telles erreurs se reproduisent à l'avenir, sans pour autant verser dans une « patrimonialisation » excessive des lieux, qui transformerait le site en une sorte de « musée du village » périurbain, où le touriste ou l'amateur aurait à portée de main toute la diversité de l'architecture résidentielle roumaine des premières décennies du 20<sup>e</sup> siècle. La clé semble être la sensibilisation, non seulement des habitants de la zone, mais également des pouvoirs publics qui doivent prendre conscience de ses valeurs irremplaçables, ce à quoi nous espérons avoir modestement contribué.

## Notes

- 1 Sur cette question, nous renvoyons à Stovel 2007.
- 2 Nous pensons notamment à l'école italienne de typo-morphologie qui se développe autour de la figure Saverio Muratori (1910-1973).

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## A workshop for restoring Modern architecture

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I shall begin with a few words on the use of workshops as tools for collective research that could provide the information required for restoring a neighbourhood of Bucharest characterised by its 20<sup>th</sup>-century architectural heritage. The workshop format is certainly the most effective and stimulating way of obtaining, on site, a sequence of related actions that set into action precise interactions on the topics brought into play; a shared journey that can be critically evaluated; ideas and proposals as to how they should be realised. The operative sequence of preliminary information, direct observation, discussion, personal reflection, further discussion and a first collective synthesis enriches the final contribution which in its turn interacts with the other contributions – but above all, it defines new points of departure for possible effective working models and innovative discussion.

I thought it would be useful to briefly recapitulate the meaning of our collective work, not only to underline the extraordinary, indeed unique, operational thrust of thematic workshops, but also to express the hope that this 'open model' for collective, international reflection will be repeated on other occasions, enabling students from different countries and with different fields of expertise to confront each other and to interact with one another on topics that belong to the international community.



A large number of extremely interesting and urgently relevant topics and skills were brought into play during the workshop and were tested by the difficulties of the site. These included:

- the theoretical and technical problems associated with the restoration of modern and contemporary architecture, both for individual buildings and open spaces and on an urban scale;
- the need to apply modern planning criteria to historical urban areas requires the acquisition of complex data that has to remain manageable in order for the restoration project to be designed;
- the relation between architecture and the urban landscape, defined as the best possible relationship between the search for identity, removal of decay, conservation work and contemporary additions;
- the increasingly urgent need for research and definition of rules which link together historic cities and sustainability;
- an evaluation of the socio-economic aspects of the programming, of the conservation plan and of other proposed transformations and their possible positive and negative effects on the local community;
- questions related to how to make the local community aware of their architecture and the need to conserve it;
- defining a realistic outline for the urban restoration project;
- these difficulties and case studies represent a potential, an opportunity for teaching about restoration, for training architects for the third millennium and for scientific research in general.

### The restoration of Modern and contemporary architecture

The disciplines involved in the restoration of modern and contemporary architecture and the *modus operandi* adopted have benefited from almost thirty years of critical reflection, research and testimonials of concluded restoration projects. The restoration of 20th-century architecture has also consolidated an awareness of a link between the nature of the heritage itself and the notion of International Cultural Heritage, with a gradual approach to the question of restoring modernity using international and multidisciplinary teams, founded on the essence of the genesis of modern architecture and the importance to the world of its assumptions and cultural models.

All of this has impacted on conferences, publications and practical restoration work:

- considerable attention has been given to this topic, which is part and parcel of the culture and practice of the restoration process; both aspects are extended towards new, indeed experimental, conceptual aspects and working models and processes;
- a new way of approaching the design and construction of 'modern factories', considering their genesis, their physical appearance, their parts and components in relation to the technological evolution of their time;
- awareness of the importance of Urban Restoration as applied to neighbourhoods built by modern architects;
- greater attention to and awareness of the importance of recuperating the history and the culture of the places created by famous modern architects and related modern products; further research into the defining characteristics of historical sources,



with particular attention given to the archives for modern and contemporary architecture;

- a gradual evolution of the question of the relationship between 'Restoration of the Modern Heritage' and 'Restoration of the Contemporary Heritage', i.e. the 20th-century architectural heritage;
- an increasingly diverse collection of studies relating to a vast number of projects for modern buildings – dwellings, infrastructure, institutional architecture and much besides – that trace their origin to the normative and technical updating of modern and contemporary buildings;
- increasingly refined techniques adopted/used for research, interpretation, graphic restitution and photography to represent and provide information on the forms of decay and structural instability of modern and contemporary works;
- the techniques of restoration associated with this particular sector of the discipline are being constantly updated as an ever-increasing number of restoration projects are brought to completion – and thanks also to experimental research work carried out in the universities, and to specific research and tests conducted on modern materials in various laboratories and by private companies.

### **Updating knowledge of the area under examination to ensure respectful, dynamic planning**

Preparing an analytic description of any territory is a vital step towards planning the future destiny and conservation of that area; we are studying an area that has strong 'positive' characteristics and a high-quality architectural heritage. This means a homogeneous

plan that incorporates clearly defined and inter-related research tools is required. These research tools include:

1. A study of the historical vicissitudes of the area using bibliographical and archival research (indirect documentation) and research on the architectural and constructive qualities of the buildings and open spaces (direct documentation) with constant reference to and comparisons with written documents, films and photographs and the information obtained from scientific observation of the materials, building components and finishes, the urban fabric, the distances and data on the dimensions involved.
2. A progressive analysis of the evolution of the area using a chronological sequence of urban scale maps and urban plans that start with the creation of the residential area and its first buildings, and continue until the present, identifying localised urban growth, transport infrastructure and the development, homogeneous or varied, of the various parts.
3. Historic research on how the area was connected with other urban areas and an analysis of transport in the neighbourhood throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century until the present day; to what extent and in what ways is the infrastructure shared with other important areas of the city (railway stations, airports, central areas, office areas etc.).
4. Research and analysis of historical land registry documents, noting patterns and variations of property ownership and the characteristics of the buildings.
5. Systematic preparation of files on the buildings using historical information and map research with thorough photographic



documentation and collection of information relating to the state of conservation of the structures, the façades, the finishes, of private open spaces (gardens, flowerbeds, paved areas, parking places); the form of the standardised file that should be used for this phase has yet to be defined.

6. The preparation of photo-plans (rectified images obtained from surveys done on the façades, combined to form a mosaic of high-definition digital photographs) that provide a continuous picture of the architectural details and character of the urban façades. These photo-plans can then be used to undertake a detailed material analysis and an analysis of the decay of the façades. Internationally recognised categories of decay should be used for this description (for instance the Italian Normal Recommendations 1-88 or the ICOMOS – ISC Glossary on stone deterioration patterns)
7. Files documenting open spaces such as roads, squares, clearings, parking areas should be prepared using detailed maps and analytic photographic documentation that is abundantly cross-referenced with the most recent maps. The files should include all necessary information on the structures found in these open spaces: for instance, the types of road surfacing, whether there are utilities or other infrastructure underground (drains, water supply etc.), the types of material used for the footpaths, the kerbstones, the flower bed borders, the light standards, the telephone and electricity poles and all the other elements associated with public and private infrastructure, billboards, street signs and sign posts.
8. A survey of the vegetation found in the public spaces: trees, shrubs, other types of plants and any grassed areas.

### **Alternative 'design therapies' for decayed urban landscape**

The restoration techniques adopted for historical buildings and monuments can be an extremely useful conceptual model for defining analytical and design instruments for understanding and mapping urban decay, and for outlining possible remedies. Indeed, the consolidated experience in this field should be used to create effective criteria and working tools for dealing with decayed historical cities or parts thereof.

Once the area plan described in the above paragraphs has been drawn up, the information it provides can be used to prepare an analytic representation of urban decay and design documents that reduce the impact on the landscape.

The analytic representation of urban decay should take the form of synoptic diagrams that show the plans of a single street, square or open public space, surrounded by open private spaces and the relevant street frontages. A database containing the information collected whilst preparing the cognitive framework can then be connected to these diagrams. The critical analysis of the forms of decay that are to be investigated in detail, with the same detailed, precise description that is generally provided when studying an historical object, becomes a tool that is vital for assessing which particular pathologies are affecting the urban area under consideration. This analysis has to penetrate what is not immediately apparent at a quick glance, even when a general condition of decay is perceived, and it has to provide information that is backed up with all the technical-scientific apparatus that our technical culture has made available.



The urban space conceals and dilutes the decay: because of its size, its extent is not always clear, so, as with other negative transformations, there is the tendency to relativise the decay, to dilute it among the plethora of messages/impulses and sensations that the open space propagates.

This means that the specific research task needs a multi-scalar approach: it has to provide a micro-analysis of each individual material and element making up the space, but at the same time this analysis has to be continually cross-referenced with the urban scene that surrounds and/or contains these materials and elements.

There has to be absolute continuity in the analysis of the material characteristics and the types of decay affecting the road surface, the kerbstones, the garden beds (with specific references to the types of grass, trees, shrubs, the hedges, the fences, manholes, gratings, road signs, the altitude of the road and the footpaths, the road infrastructure and the underground utilities. Every single item that was noted in the cognitive framework has to be evaluated in terms of its congruity or incongruity, its level of maintenance, its level of conservation, whether or not it has been tampered with and whether it is being used properly or not. These assessments should not be generic but should use a clear, pre-defined nomenclature to describe the different types and degree of decay, so as to identify the exact state of conservation and any eventual pathologies affecting the individual objects and elements, including their materials: asphalt, stone, items made of wood, of metal and of cement and so forth. Anthropic decay – decay clearly brought about by humans, be they technicians, residents of the area or passers-by – should also be included.

The analysis of the decay of the urban façades, an integral part of the synoptic diagrams, should include scrupulous, carefully

worded comments/annotations on photo-plans of the decay of the materials and the elements of the façades, with particular reference to facings, plasters, colours, door and window frames, roofing, decorative elements, down-pipes and storm-water drains and any other details characterising each single portion of street front in this part of the urban area.

This immediate comparison provided by scaled graphic and photographic documents that refer to a precise area of the urban fabric is a very valuable tool, not only for representing the state of conservation, the materials, the detailed comments and the references to the entire area being studied, but also because it provides references that are extremely useful when preparing the urban restoration project. It also facilitates the monitoring of decay over time, which means the situation can be periodically updated and assessed for signs of improvement or deterioration of the various types of decay.

### **Architecture, the historic city and sustainability**

The time is ripe for research and techniques associated with the possibility of using energy responsibly to interact with architecture and the historic city. This interaction needs to start with research and information relating to materials and traditional building techniques, which in themselves tend to be sustainable (so both the old city and the new with all the historic stratifications should be included). The historical environment is in fact an infinite cultural and environmental resource as well as accounting for a very high percentage of the world's architectural heritage.

For some time now, the principles and techniques that guide active conservation have posed the question of introducing modern



technologies both inside historical buildings and in culturally significant open spaces (squares, roads, gardens and parks), so there is an awareness of the dangers and traumas provoked by thinking exclusively in terms of performance and by adopting technologies without taking into consideration the surrounding fabric and material of the historic city.

The question of environmental-energy upgrading within a historic city has to date rarely been posed with the necessary rigour and respect for the principles of conservation and compatible efficiency. This research and the possible applications that derive from it tend towards a positive energy balance; this balance is obtained using criteria and techniques that vary according to the characteristics of the existing buildings and urban fabric, and follow the principle of compatibility between advanced technologies, historical material and the landscape. Bearing in mind the above principles, it is necessary to incorporate solar and photovoltaic technologies but also advanced types of insulation, internal panels and panels below the roofing, to exploit the thermal potential of water stored in wells and in the soil (geothermal energy) and other innovative technologies, always being guided by the principles of compatibility. When choosing the co-location, one has to carefully balance the need for positioning the technology appropriately so it does not damage the urban fabric but is nonetheless reasonably efficient. One has to be aware of the overall energy balance in the historical area. These questions must not, indeed cannot, be resolved by automatically adopting the technologies that offer the best performance, but rather by searching for the best possible interaction between advanced technologies and the sense of identity and historic heritage of the existing urban fabric. This means that the first step is to research the role and the potential of traditional materials and building systems with regard to the aspects of construction that are

relevant to the question of sustainability. The study and subsequent *modus operandi* of these aspects should be conducted within a framework of respect for the existing urban fabric and with a view to possible maintenance and restoration work.

It is important that preparations should begin immediately for setting up an international reference system for scientific, legislative and technical proposals dealing with sustainable buildings. This system should take into account everything that is relevant to extending and improving life in historic cities; a normative-technical reference system of this type could provide a series of incentives for city residents that take into account the compatibility of the measures proposed, and the willingness to use advanced technologies to upgrade the energy-environmental situation. Scientific research within an international framework should be the starting point for studying these topics.

An equally useful international dialogue could be based on the constant monitoring and critical comparison of already-known case studies and of previous experiences in restoring or transforming historic buildings. This would provide essential input for updating restoration projects and for teaching restoration to the new generation of architect restorers of the third millennium.

The possible measures to be taken in the historic city and the area considered might include:

- the conservation of the existing fabric and its most precious parts; this measure is inherently sustainable (the opposite of throwing away material, memory and urban culture. I shall deal with this aspect later on in this paper);
- the quality and the energy profile of public lighting: determine whether the light fittings are aesthetically appropriate for the



surrounding urban landscape; whether the lighting uses energy economically (LED lighting, metal halide lighting); whether the quality and gradation of the light enhances and harmonises the visual relationship with the architecture; whether it renders the act of moving through the urban space more pleasant;

- the quality and durability of the materials used for paving the footpaths and for surfacing the roads, and for horizontal surfaces generally, will depend on their physical-chemical properties, their capacity for absorbing the sun's rays and the extent to which heat is reflected towards the road and the surrounding buildings;
- ascertain whether there are trees along the roads and in the squares and whether the species are appropriate (consider maintenance requirements) and whether they will create shade in the summer months, thereby contributing to improving environmental well-being;
- the underground utilities (water supply, gas pipes, electrical and telephone systems etc.) need to be well maintained; energy flow needs to be carefully managed to avoid needless dispersion;
- assess whether the urban furniture such as benches, fences and children's play areas are sustainable and made of long-lasting and/or recyclable material; assess whether these furnishings could be made with recycled material;
- every existing element and every act of transformation needs to be evaluated from the point of view of its comfort and ease of use from the point of the residents: reaction to heat and cold, to the weather in general, and the tactile and sensory values of objects and materials;

### **The social and economic aspects of programming conservation and transformation**

The activities that have been described so far, and the design work which I will soon discuss, require close cooperation between experts in different fields with different training, on account of the multi-disciplinary nature of urban culture, of restoration and of planning that respects the identity of the particular area.

These activities are extremely useful, indeed essential, for understanding the area being studied, especially if they serve to define the following:

- the social composition of the neighbourhood and its transformation over time;
- the relation between the number and density of the inhabitants in relation to the dwellings and to the entire area both historically and in the present;
- the age groups present in the area, their habits and their needs;
- the lifestyle of the inhabitants and their use of public spaces;
- the modes of transport used in the area: further transport requirements;
- the presence of neighbourhood meeting places; assessment of the type of meeting place;
- the inhabitants' general perception of their neighbourhood (quality of life, affection for the area, cultural offerings, sense of belonging, relations with neighbours);
- the inhabitants' perception of the architecture and urban spaces in their neighbourhood (ideas about the conservation, transformation and maintenance of their neighbourhood, their



subjective identification with the spaces and formal and symbolic values of their dwellings, their or their family's relationship with the marks left by history and with the materials that make up the buildings they live in);

- assess the inhabitants' sense of 'value' and of 'valorisation' of what exists;

All this information and much more besides could be obtained from detailed historical research, sociological analysis, socio-economic research, interviews and questionnaires and direct observation on the part of sociologists, economists and historians, who would certainly lengthen this list of mine and who would provide a great deal more information about the 'consumers' or dwellers that would highlight the possible measures to be adopted.

### **The issue of cultural communication with those living in the area and with other possible consumers/clients or interest groups**

The research that I referred to in the previous paragraphs can, amongst other things, throw light on local residents' knowledge of and appreciation for the places and the architecture of the neighbourhoods where they live and work. The qualitative aspects and the real cultural value of a building or a historical neighbourhood are not always fully or correctly perceived by those who live there. Very often the vision is distorted by a mistaken sense of the 'value' of a place, which ignores the importance of that place in history or considers this role an obstacle to the 'modernisation' or the social 'emancipation' of the area. Sometimes when functional transformation (often of a commercial nature) is required, historical architecture is regarded as a constraint that can be surmounted only by its partial or total deformation or destruction.

Organising cultural initiatives within the neighbourhood may help residents to feel a sense of belonging, and such events will certainly provide information about the neighbourhood though, unfortunately, they are not always effective and their results may not be long-lasting.

Generally speaking, the greater the qualities of the neighbourhood the more successful these cultural initiatives will be.

Setting up an exhibition on the history of the neighbourhood and on the architectural characteristics and urban materials that characterise it, and holding this exhibition inside the neighbourhood in a place of significance, visible to all its residents, publicising the event with a wealth of images and information and holding meetings, discussions and presenting projects and ideas of students, artists, photographers etc. is very likely to result in an interesting encounter between those who live in the neighbourhood and their urban territory. Similar initiatives would certainly provide considerable information on the effective involvement, and on the perception of the neighbourhood, of those who live there and their relationship with the urban culture and the various ways this culture can be understood and conserved.

An exhibition on a neighbourhood of this qualitative level and with the information that such an initiative brings should have the characteristics of a multimedia itinerant exhibition which can travel to other similar situations or to cultural contexts and institutions (universities, local administrations etc.) that carry out similar types of research in Europe and the rest of the world.



### Project outlines for a possible urban restoration

In order to correctly and effectively plan measures for urban restoration, it is essential to define clear, universally valid rules regarding the *modus operandi*, the techniques, the principles underlying every action that aims to conserve, transform or integrate existing architectures and spaces. These rules should be developed within a general implementation plan for the area under study that identifies the priorities and objectives of the plan, combined with a modern conception of conservation: active, multi-scalar and multi-disciplinary. This plan should also clearly lay down the responsibilities of the public administrative bodies, the costs that will be paid for by private bodies or individuals, and the initiatives where private citizens and public institutions can both invest.

An implementation plan for an area as complex as that being considered should then define the measures to be taken that will reflect the homogeneity, the different identities and the architectural and urban characteristics of the neighbourhood, which should be sub-divided into homogeneous sub-areas to include both buildings and the public and private spaces therein.

### Implementation rules

It is necessary to define the principles and the goals of the programme for each homogeneous area; these will affect both the measures required for gathering information about the existing characteristics, and the restraints and the compatibility tests that proposed functional and material transformations to the buildings and the open spaces will have to pass. This highlights the need for and the wisdom of conserving the existing buildings, which are considered to be a collective resource, confining the requirements

for transformation within cultural and technical-scientific motivations, but without opposing anti-historically any changes that are compatible with the historical nature of the architecture and the urban places.

#### *Open public spaces*

The rules have to be valid for both public and private initiatives. In the case of open spaces the rules should deal with how to restore historical elements and materials; an appropriate use of materials for road surfacing, kerbstones, footpaths, manholes, light standards and other public infrastructure that respects the character of the place. Other aspects include the quality of artificial light (light is architecture), trees, benches, traffic signs, parking areas with a specific parking plan – every single element that forms part of that specific urban scene. This design work should develop together with a profound understanding of history in that neighbourhood. The design should be respectful of and coherent with the diverse characteristics of the neighbourhood but should also pay attention to the durability, sustainability and maintenance of the parts and their component materials.

#### *Buildings, public and private gardens, furnishings and finishes*

The implementation rules should clearly and strictly define what types of measures are allowed, what materials should be used, and what colours should be used on the façades and other parts of the buildings visible from the street. The modifications allowed on elevations and other external elements of buildings should also be laid down in these rules. These changes need to be considered from a landscape point of view and should be allowed only if they do not result in incongruous alterations to the buildings. These rules will also include the buildings as a group, the materials used for



plastering the façades, the door and window frames, the roofing, the decorative elements, the different types of fencing, the colours and materials allowed for painting, shop signs, external light fittings, doorbells, entry-phones and other complementary elements.

At the same time adequate rules should define limits and procedures relating to internal building work, touching on whether the use of the building can be changed, whether the original horizontal elements should be conserved, the need to respect decorated parts and to substantially maintain the floor plan in buildings of historic interest.

Rather than a rigid list of precepts and rules, there should be clear indications regarding the matters described above, well-defined and relevant implementation rules that are listed in the area plan with the obligation to prepare careful, detailed designs after completing very thorough historical research. Limits should be clearly stated – these are essential elements for setting in motion any transformation process and for the commission of experts who will examine and comment upon the designs within a framework of ‘certain rules’ and respect for the place.

The area plan should certainly identify criteria and perspectives for varying the use of the buildings, and should have the precise task of saving the residential character of the neighbourhood, with a very careful introduction of cultural collective functions. The creation of collective meeting places, available to all those living in the neighbourhood, as well as any potential visitors, is especially important. Great attention needs to be given to the requirements and expectations of young people and adolescents; a strong bond needs to be developed between their physical and intellectual growth and their affection for their city, its places and its history.

### Experimentation, teaching, international discussion

The neighbourhood, its ideas and problems, the various aspects of the analysis aimed at understanding the area, its protection, its regulation, its design understood as a ‘compatible’ inventive capacity, are such as to make this area of Bucharest a pilot study of didactic experimentation at the highest level, and of great interest to the world of architecture, conservation and urban culture.

It is to be hoped that professors and students of different nationalities will apply themselves to preparing design proposals for this neighbourhood: student theses, international workshops, conventions promoted by architecture faculties in different countries and a fervid circulation of ideas and results.







## Bucharest and Modernist neighbourhoods: instruments for the material conservation, rehabilitation and transformation management of 20<sup>th</sup>-century diffuse built heritage

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The decades between the 19th and 20th centuries have left us a wide and heterogeneous built heritage, with its peculiarities and contradictions. It strongly characterises the urban fabric, but too often its value is not acknowledged, resulting in demolitions or indiscriminate interventions causing radical changes. In facing the need to adapt to current requirements, the decayed fabric and the functional obsolescence of many Modernist neighbourhoods, often only the formal appearance is kept, while the 'material data' is destroyed or altered. This approach is in contrast to the conservation of historic built heritage, as if the latter had a higher value, both in terms of cultural witness and tangible value.

To guarantee the safety of Modernist heritage, so that it can adapt to the rapid transformations of society whilst keeping its qualities, the same criteria used towards historic architecture should be adopted. Every intervention should be based on a deep historical and technical knowledge, to assure compatibility. Broadly based



sensitisation is needed to make its value more recognisable, by means of tools that can be capable of spreading awareness on the issues of protection and conservation.

### **Conservation of Modern heritage: an open debate?**

The issue of modern architecture has long been directly associated with the Modern Movement and its strong departure from tradition, thus being disregarded by critics. In the recent decades it has gained relevance, becoming a topical issue, while its domain has widened, as the value of modern architecture has been acknowledged and an intense theoretical debate has developed over the principles of its conservation and transformation<sup>1</sup>.

The term 'modern' includes a wide array of buildings, produced by different architectural currents, at times in line with tradition, without being restricted to a precise time span or to acknowledged masterpieces, but extending also to 'minor' buildings or lesser-known designers which/who contributed to the making of cities and landscape between the 19th and 20th centuries.

The contradictions of this particular heritage lie in its encompassing modern age buildings, and claiming conservation of their witness value, and contemporary buildings which are involved in a process that has not ended, playing an active role in the life of the community. This accounts for the difficulties in acknowledging their value and, at the same time, for the rejection of the traces left by the passage of time – a sign of the ideological failure of the idea of an incorruptible architecture and an obvious conflict between 'newness value' and 'age value', as introduced by Alois Riegl. Moreover, the rapid evolution of the needs of the present day make this heritage obsolete even before it has become historic<sup>2</sup>, too expensive to maintain rather than worthy of being inherited by posterity.

The peculiarities of 'modern architecture' pose new theoretical and technical issues in the fields of protection, selection, reuse and conservation. Examples of this are the highly specialised and therefore not easily adaptable building typologies, or on the contrary, highly flexible typologies that have undergone radical changes: innovative materials and building techniques; faults in the design of technological details, posing issues of durability, obsolescence, non-reproducibility; works that are consciously designed to be transitory and interchangeable; the pervasiveness of the heritage, originating in an intense building activity that was unprecedented and which has never been sifted by the passing of time. Further issues concern social consensus, profitability, and opportunities at the architectural and urban design scales. It is very difficult to preserve such a high number of buildings in a rapidly changing society, without effective legislative means (which were often conceived to attain different goals), and without a thorough awareness of their documentary value, the lack of which leads the owners and users to consider such buildings replaceable and modifiable according to the changes in their living conditions.

Therefore, on one hand the buildings of the modern age bear a specificity compared to those of other periods in the history of architecture; on the other hand, the theoretical approach adopted should consider them on the same level as historic buildings, as unique and non-reproducible, sometimes even more fragile, and that should be preserved for posterity, thus applying to them the same methodological approach, principles and goals.

In fact, too often 20th-century buildings are considered purely for their visual qualities, and only their linguistic and morphological outer characteristics are kept. In the name of 'pure visibility' a *restitutio ad pristinum* is accepted, seeking an assumed original state, removing any later addition that spoils the building,



neglecting the actual matter that constitutes it: a clear example of this approach is the restoration of the Stuttgart Weissenhof Estate<sup>3</sup>.

In these cases the parts and elements of the building that show clear signs of their obsolescence are wholly remade, and what are considered faults in the design are corrected. This approach is often justified by the availability of documentation, and disregards the historic value of physical fabric as if its serial nature can make its reproducibility acceptable.

### **The issues of protection and conservation of modern neighbourhoods: a Bucharest case study**

‘In the social imaginary, Bucharest is not a destination for tourism, but rather a white postcard, that is reached by most without the images offered by advertisements<sup>4</sup>. It is generally believed to have been ruined by the interventions that took place during the Communist regime and by a heavy use of prefabrication, in a fashion similar to cities of the Soviet Union. Actually, to the eye of the tourist it appears to be characterised by a diversity of architectures that share the space, a layering of Eclecticism and Modernism, mostly influenced by European architecture, especially French<sup>5</sup>, alongside remains of Byzantine and Ottoman architecture and the globalised aesthetics of the recent buildings.

In this mixture, uncommon in central European cities, the study area situated just north of the city centre is notable for its richness of quality architectures still retaining a high level of historic significance. The urban fabric which neatly accommodates them is still intact and well readable. This kind of ‘garden neighbourhood’, developed between 1895 and 1940 through the parcelling of large estates, is internally characterised by different areas, planned at

different stages and with different layouts. The neighbourhood is part of a larger scheme of urbanisation started in 1865, comprising a number of new districts and interspersed with large city parks. In this neighbourhood public space is not defined through a system of squares and boulevards, but rather through tree-lined avenues, reflecting the local customs of meeting in the streets (Fig. 1).

The neighbourhood is mainly residential, and the largest part of it was built in the interwar period. It includes a variety of architectural languages, ranging from late Eclecticism to neo-Romanian, Art Deco and Modernism. There is a diversity of building types, reflecting the different social status of the inhabitants for whom they were intended, from detached villas to low-cost dwellings for workers, including works by notable local designers, often with well preserved details and materials. Nevertheless, the area leaves the impression of a rather homogeneous whole, thanks to the balance



Fig. 1. Aerial view of the neighbourhood



between built and unbuilt space, the widespread presence of vegetation, and the proportions of the buildings. It is a very well defined entity in the city and at the same time retains an internal quality that makes it almost independent from the city itself (Figs. 2, 3, 4).



Fig. 2. Eclectic style building type



Fig. 3. Modernist style building type



Fig. 4. Neogotic style building type



This 'unity in diversity' sums up the overall character of the city, and documents an important phase of its social and economic history. At the same time it makes it a true open-air early 20<sup>th</sup>-century architecture and urbanism exhibition, which, like similar examples in Italy and Europe, should be safeguarded. Its protection, though, poses a number of inbuilt issues, common to many neighbourhoods of the same period in different parts of the world (Figs. 5-7).



Fig. 5-7. Details

From the conservation point of view, the needs of urban development and living add up to the problem of obsolescence. If we exclude some more problematic parts of the Mornand area, apparent material decay is not such a strong issue as are the new interventions that demolish the building to remake or substitute part of it. Often such interventions, which strongly affect the architectural and formal quality of the buildings, are not supervised by a competent authority and are an answer to purely functional needs (new standards or rules, energy saving, accessibility, new building services...). Façades are altered in their materials, shapes or colour, with simplified decorations, substitution of fittings, addition of volumes, new exposed equipments (such as satellite dishes, air conditioners, untidy connections of telephone and electricity wires, etc.). Recent materials, alien to the constructional tradition and

logic of the buildings, are believed to appeal to inhabitants or to be a suitable correction of design mistakes. The decay is also due to a lack of maintenance, both in the single buildings and in public space, especially in pavings and urban services (open drainage, overhead wiring), which are particularly responsible for the visual untidiness (Figs. 8, 9, 10).



Fig. 8. Additions altering the original appearance of the facade



Fig. 9. Suspended wirings



Fig. 10. Additions altering the original appearance of the facade



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This state of things originates from different factors, mainly the inability of the local institutions to supervise the small scale transformations<sup>6</sup>, due to new housing needs and consumption patterns, but also the indifference of the individual owners to law or procedures, a lack of identification of the inhabitants with the historic fabric and a lack of acknowledgement of its cultural values. Without the proper means and a unitary design that can manage transformations, an individualistic logic prevails, at times in terms of unauthorised works, far from state of the art, apparently affecting 'minor' aspects, but that can substantially alter the quality of the buildings.

Another factor is the growing financial pressure caused by the real estate speculation that is starting to take place in some lots of the area, resulting in new buildings in marked contrast with its characteristic features (Fig. 11). At the same time, part of the buildings are converted to mixed functions (offices, embassy buildings, political parties' headquarters, restaurants) that are new in what was an essentially residential neighbourhood (Figs. 12, 13, 14).

This change is happening in other formerly residential quarters of the city, such as Cotroceni, developed after 1914, again characterised by eclectic buildings and a considerable presence of gardens, but now undergoing intense transformation, with eight-floor buildings being erected next to the historic detached houses. Another example, at a different scale, is the 20<sup>th</sup>-century Soviet heritage in Moscow, where some buildings that kept their original function (e.g. the Constructivist ministries) are in good condition because maintenance was minimal but constant, while investment projects involving change of function have led to a loss of authenticity – changing surfaces, fittings, floor layouts. Only the ruins, the completely abandoned buildings, are untouched, keeping their cultural value intact in a fragile condition<sup>7</sup>.



Fig. 11. Volumetric comparison between the old and the contemporary style





Fig. 12. Adaptation to other functions - Political party headquarter



Fig. 13. Adaptation to other functions - Restaurant



Fig. 14. Adaptation to other functions - Embassy

All of this carries a risk from the social point of view too, as the pressure undermines the social mix of different income levels, estate tenure and lifestyles. The main issue is how the authentic features of such heritage can be kept in a rapidly changing physical, functional and cultural context. Since the goal is not to crystallise this architecture, intervention should be directed towards preserving the unitary quality of the place. 'To preserve means to acknowledge these changes [...] designing the transformation without betraying the heritage that 20<sup>th</sup>-century architects have left us'<sup>8</sup> and acknowledging the value of memory, through the preliminary project of an orderly acquisition of knowledge which makes us able to assess the significant features of the built environment.

### Instruments, actions and policies towards protection and integrated conservation

Recent years have seen a growth in interest in these topics, and tools and methodologies for analysis and assessment have been developed by local institutions, universities or associations, even where the legislative or political background prevents an effective protection policy<sup>9</sup>. Some international charters, even when not openly addressing this specific issue, have led to a stronger methodological approach towards modern architecture<sup>10</sup>. Rather than recall these principles here, we are going to exemplify some actions at the urban scale, involving and sensitising the population regarding cultural values, with more or less successful results.

Given the breadth and diversity of this heritage, and also its quality, a process of selection must be carried out. It is based on recognising the material, cultural and historic witnesses that appear to be 'significant steps in the evolutionary process of a certain field of human activities' (Riegl), and that go beyond a critical judgement



solely based on formal, aesthetic or historiographic criteria. This identification of values, aimed at the protection of the built environment, needs to come from the awareness of the specificities of 20th-century architecture, where 'language' choices are made along architectural, technical and urban experimentations lines, as an answer to technical and socio-economic transformations.

Starting from this process of knowledge, it is possible to carry out an inventory, by filling in forms<sup>11</sup> and making thematic maps, including the physical, economic, social dimensions<sup>12</sup>.

The listing must be based on direct analysis of the buildings, on archival documentation both public and private, pictorial and bibliographical sources, historic manuals and newspapers, contextualising the single building in the professional culture of its time. Analysis can be carried out on different levels (single buildings or groups of buildings), depending on the complexity and the number of buildings. The detail level attained at these different scales will vary depending on the available resources, documentation and possibility of accessing the buildings. For this reason, the tools used should easily allow for updates. A cartography-based database, such as a GIS system, allows for an easy identification of each building and element, recalling and connecting specific information, and constituting a tool for the design of a protection, conservation and rehabilitation project.

Leaving aside the buildings that have been listed as national or international heritage for their exceptional significance, and for which there is very detailed information, for the Bucharest case it is more interesting to look at some examples of inventories at the urban and district scale, including a wider range of buildings and using simplified forms. Along with buildings of specific local designers, buildings can be grouped by typology, architectural language

or time periods<sup>13</sup>. In this way it is possible to identify the objects to focus on, and group them according to their common issues, making it easier to carry out the analysis and to plan actions. A catalogue of recurring building details, techniques and materials<sup>14</sup>, on which there is often a lack of documentation, makes it possible to identify the practices shared by buildings of a certain place and period, stimulates direct observation and supports appropriate and sustainable conservation practices.

For large-scale safeguard and protection it is impossible to rely only on restrictions which cannot be applied to every single building. It is therefore necessary to set up control procedures and tools, based on an accurate knowledge of the existing heritage and on specific regulations. Such regulations could accompany the already existing urban legislation, which is often too generic to be able to manage these transformations<sup>15</sup>. They should foster appropriate, mindful solutions by the designers, make data available rather than impose pre-established solutions, and encourage dialogue between the actors involved at different scales. Sometimes they could affect only specific zones, or single housing estates<sup>16</sup>, to draw attention to peculiar identifying qualities of 20th-century built heritage, leaving open the possibility of formulating appropriate solutions tailored to the specific case.

Along with these regulations, parameters for assessing whether interventions are appropriately carried out (guidelines, examples of technical solutions and analysis techniques) can be useful tools for designers, technicians and workers, to avoid common mistakes, point out the main problems and orientate choice towards compatible solutions that take into account this multiplicity of aspects: conservation, maintenance, and functional adaptation<sup>17</sup>.



Laws are not enough to stop uncontrolled transformation. The users and inhabitants of the heritage should be the first promoters of its conservation, through the acknowledgement of its identity value. A project of communication activities needs to involve the local population, owners and experts, to explain the meaning behind this approach and share the goals of conservation. Assumption of responsibility by the owners and inhabitants implies an understanding of the cultural value and the potential long-term loss (even from an economic point of view), learning alternative solutions that are oriented to soft adaptations rather than heavy substitutions. In the Bucharest case study this is particularly important, since most of the buildings are in private ownership and therefore the public administration cannot play an active role in the conservation works – nor would it have the necessary resources.

This process of sensitisation can be carried out through different activities, such as exhibitions, conferences, booklets, guided tours and participative initiatives<sup>18</sup>. There are various examples of this kind of initiative, carried out in European countries, among which a good example is the French project '*Label Patrimoine du XX siècle*'<sup>19</sup>. This is aimed at introducing 20th-century architecture to the public, through information panels and a freely accessible online database linking all the relevant information on buildings, designers and events. Its serves a purpose that is preliminary to any eventual conservation action.

A further measure could be the creation of an exhibition and documentation centre inside a significant and easily accessible building in the area, to explain its history and features, organising guided tours and exhibitions on the spot, serving as a source of sensible information on the conservation/rehabilitation of modern buildings, also for the locals. It could help in catalysing public interest and good practices, also towards the rehabilitation of public

space (paving, lighting, street furniture, etc.). An example is MAAM ('*Museo a cielo Aperto dell'Architettura*')<sup>20</sup>, situated in the city of Ivrea, which exhibits its heritage through guided tours. It includes a multifunctional exhibition space, to narrate the story of this important Italian industrial reality and the architecture that was designed for it. It carries out inventories and proposes conservation guidelines, to share knowledge with the local population, institutions and visitors.

Identity with place is closely connected to the inhabitants' ability and willingness to identify with it. Therefore, many different aspects play a substantial role in the process, ranging from social, economic, legal, administrative, planning and policy formation, as already expressed in the concept of 'integrated conservation' – a means to achieve an equilibrium between conservation and development, strengthening cultural identity and improving the quality of life. This also means that, without taking into account these dynamics, the aforementioned instruments can prove ineffective, depending on whether or not the project assumes a long-term perspective<sup>21</sup>.

A larger-scale example of integrated conservation was carried out in the historic city of Fez, where the effort was to achieve conservation through an improvement of the living conditions of its inhabitants, making conservation a goal of planning, as part of the urban development of the whole city, while at the same time spreading awareness on conservation objectives and linking institutional actions and inhabitants' initiatives.

A semi-private institution was created to pursue the project and raise financial resources, both from governmental and private funds. The project relied on a permanent local scientific team, along with various consultants on specific issues, using a specifically designed GIS system to manage information, a restoration laboratory to analyse conservation issues, and an urban socio-economic observatory. An



important point to be noted is that the inhabitants' collaboration started with the first interventions on dwellings, whereas previous initiatives on single significant buildings were seen as ineffective by the locals<sup>22</sup>.

A project at the neighbourhood scale that can be compared to the Bucharest case was carried out in the Istanbul Fener and Balat quarter with a community-based and participatory approach promoted by UNESCO World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS.<sup>23</sup>

The project was based on the assumption that, as an alternative to the option of a tourism-oriented restoration, the inhabitants could improve their living standards, preserving their heritage even with some small assistance. The project shows a series of problems and failures to be considered. First of all, the regeneration strategies were introduced through a top-down approach, with little community support. The communications with the locals turned out to be limited to information communication. There was a lack of functional strategies for balancing residential, commercial, and community services and for bringing together residents with different tenure status and income, so the increased appeal of the area produced gentrification, creating pressure on the local inhabitants to move out. Most important, the district municipality did not play a cooperative role, slowing down the project and failing to acquire the necessary skills. These are all threats that are quite evident in the Bucharest case.

These diverse examples serve to point out some of the difficulties that need to be strategically addressed in the Bucharest case, considering the peculiar local situation, estate tenures, the willingness of local administration to cooperate and all the different issues specific to the place. The conservation tools that we have been describing constitute the methodological basis to be adopted

within a sensible framework. The true challenge of the Bucharest case is reconciling development with a process of place and history identification. These aspects should be included in a common project that should primarily deal with the social dimension that underlies the conservation of the heritage and urban fabric. In this context, our case study could play an important role, exemplifying an approach towards rehabilitation and conservation where meaning, historic memory, and appropriation of intangible values could encourage the bridging of the cultural divide between the city's present and past identity.

## Notes

1 About this debate see, for example, Gimma 1993; Guarisco 1994; Barelli Livi 2000; Callegari Montanari 2001; Boriani 2003; Biscontin Driussi 2004; Pratali Maffei Rovello 2005.

2 Boriani, M. *'Obsoleto prima ancora che storico. Conservare il moderno?'*, in Boriani 2003

3 The quarter was declared a complex of historic value in 1958, but underwent massive restoration works in the 1980s, meant to restore its 'original' image of an iconic Modern Movement architecture but which was detrimental to the material authenticity of the buildings, losing some technical and constructional features in favour of adaptation to the prescriptions of current regulations.

4 Cinà 2005: 14.

5 With the 1859 national unification, the country entered the Modern Age, opening to European influences and taking the French Académie as the main architectural model. For this reason Bucharest became a real capital, known as the 'Paris of the Balkans'.

6 Most of the area is listed among the 'protected urban areas' in the General Urban Plan, with specific regulations aimed at maintaining its specificity with restrictions on interventions on existing and new buildings. Nevertheless, protection authority actions has proved insufficient to stop the ongoing transformations, as attested by new buildings in contrast with the specificity of the quarter, the interventions that have altered the characteristics of some existing buildings and the demolition of some buildings of clear architectural quality.

7 Zalivako, A. '2000-2006: Monitoring Moscow's Avant Garde Architecture', in Haspel Petzet Zalivako Ziesemer 2007.



8 Casciato, M. 'Sulla durata dell'architettura moderna'. In Canziani, A. 2009, pp.16-17.

9 For example, the 50-year limit for inclusion in the listings is frequently insufficient; often minor, widespread heritage is not protected by laws that only consider exceptional monuments.

10 The Athens Charter of 1931 and the Venice Charter of 1964 both mention the importance of 'prevention'. The Italian post-war debate produced the Gubbio Charter in 1960, stressing the need for new financial and juridical means to preserve historic cities. A true widened approach towards integrated conservation starts with the Amsterdam declaration in 1975, up to the 2007 ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites, stressing the importance of involving the population in the identification of the values of the built heritage. Strictly related to the modern is the 1991 Recommendation on the Protection of the XX Century Architectural Heritage by the Council of Europe.

11 These fiches generally include all urban data, facts about usage, architectural characteristics, materials, constructional techniques; a photographic report, about both the historical and present state, documenting the overall state and the details; archival and bibliographical references, information about transformation, change of function and conservation.

12 There are many experiences of inventories and listings throughout Europe, based on national or regional level laws. At the European level, Piero Gazzola was one of the first to work on what became the Italian ICCD IPCE forms, which he considered not merely a tool for the description of cultural heritage, but rather a tool for territorial planning. There are also local initiatives, and inventories promoted by associations such as DoCoMoMo, founded in 1990, which has offices in different countries to promote the conservation of modern architecture, and is working on an international inventory of modern heritage, with specific criteria (see also Quiroga 1996; Sharp Cooke 2000). In a similar way, ICOMOS and UNESCO are also interested, although with a narrower focus: on 'modern monuments'. The International Specialist Committee on Technology (Isc/T) is working on a database of competences on the technology of the Modern Movement.

13 See, for example, two different methods of building an inventory: Bütikofer Hauser 2001 and Graf 2010.

14 An interesting project is a database about different modern materials: SIMM - *Sistema Informativo sui Materiali Moderni* (Bosia, D., 'SIMM: uno strumento per la gestione del patrimonio informativo sui materiali dell'architettura del Novecento', in Biscontin Driussi 2004: 391-400); or a database about building techniques through the technical manuals (Lucat, M. 'Un database europeo interattivo per una diffusione critica comparata del sapere tecnico attraverso la lettura della manualistica', in Pratoli Maffei, S. Rovello, F. 2005, pp.149-153).

15 An example of this is the Structural Plan for Ferrara Municipality, a tool that includes specific guidelines for the protection of 20th-century architecture (Fabbri, R.

'Strumenti per la salvaguardia dell'architettura del Novecento: aspetti metodologici nell'elaborazione del nuovo Piano Strutturale Comunale di Ferrara'. In Canziani 2009: 328-340) or the 'Plan de site' for the Lignon Quarter in Geneva (Graf, F., Marino, G. 'Heritage, energy, economy: planned preventive conservation and thermal improvements to building envelopes at the Cité du Lignon satellite precinct, Geneva (1963-1971)', in Canziani, A. 2009: 216-227)

16 An example are the guidelines for the QT8 Rationalist quarter in Milan (Boriani, M. Toniolo, L. Bortolotto, S. Cazzani, Favino, P. Da Re, A. Marucco, G. Savioni, M. 'Conservazione e valorizzazione di un quartiere di edilizia moderna a Milano: QT8'. In Canziani, A. 2009: 359-369), or the INA CASA quarter in Cesate (MI), built between the 1950s and 1960s (Boriani, M. Giambruno, M. 2003).

17 Many parameters are to be managed: methods of intervention; techniques for the conservation of original elements; criteria for the removal of incoherent additions; chromatic choices; criteria for the design of recognisable yet compatible new additions.

18 Participation can be an important tool, as in the case of Corviale quarter in Rome, where a series of participative initiatives were carried out to address different issues, such as finding functions for unused space, identifying the needed facilities, understanding how to raise employment and social cohesion (Giovane di Girasole, E. 'L'evoluzione della Città: il recupero del moderno'. In Morrica 2009).

19 Instituted by the 'Circulaire n.2001/006 du 01-03-2001 du Ministre de la Culture et de la Communication'. See also the database on the website <http://www.culture.gouv.fr>.

20 The city of Ivrea saw, between the 1930s and 1980s, the design of a significant number of architectural projects, financed by Olivetti company, often with formal, architectural and typological experimentations, even social: canteens, summer residences, libraries, kindergartens, social services, workers' housing, etc. The project *Officine Culturali ICO* started in 1998, aiming at providing integrated tools for the rehabilitation of both the tangible and intangible heritage of the place. MAAM is part of this project. It is a 2km-long route that passes by and through some of the buildings with a series of information points and an 'information and welcome centre' for temporary events (Bonifazio, P. Scrivano, P. 2001; Giacomelli E. 2001. 'Una normativa per la salvaguardia del patrimonio architettonico del Novecento di Ivrea'. Milan, Callegari, G. Montanari, G. 2001: pp.93-103; Bonifazio, P. Giacomelli, E. 2007).

21 Cfr. Nanne Engelbrektsson. 'Il Patrimonio Culturale: verso un cambiamento degli approcci. Una analisi'. In Lucio Morrica (ed.). *Conservazione Integrata del Patrimonio Architettonico Urbano ed Ambientale*. CLEAN, Naples 2009.

22 Radoine, H. 'La conservazione integrata della medina di Fez: una valutazione ex-post'. In Morrica 2009.

23 See Akkar Ercan 2011.



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## Features of identity and *mixité* in a Modernist neighbourhood of Bucharest

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### Regeneration

Over the last few decades 'regeneration' has undoubtedly become a popular term when discussing strategies of intervention in existing urban and city areas. It joins a whole range of terms – 'redevelopment' (including conservational redevelopment), 'safeguarding', 'renewal', 'recovery' and its various aspects (maintenance, restructuring), 'reuse', 'refurbishment', 'requalification' and so on – which, in both Italy and abroad, have followed on from each other, each marking a particular phase in the debate regarding built-up areas.

The term 'regeneration' is widespread in a number of different fields. Advertising uses it for a variety of products: water, which is said to regenerate the body; diet, which 'regenerates' and re-forms the body; aesthetic medicine and dermatological products, which regenerate one's appearance, the 'surface' of the body. New-generation cosmetic products actually use the term within their very name, guaranteeing their ability to 'eliminate toxins', encourage the production of proteins and stimulate the regeneration of the epidermis. And in comic books or science fiction films 'a regenerative factor' or 'spontaneous regeneration' are superpowers possessed by characters whose wounds undergo accelerated healing, whose mutilated limbs grow back entire.



Phrases and concepts are constructed around words and their meanings. The word 're-generation' draws upon the possibility of re-birth, of restarting after a period of obsolescence, after the loss of functional capacity and vitality. Similarly, it also suggests generic processes that can restore youth, can erase the marks left by the passage of time (or, at least, make them less visible).

A definition that can easily be found on websites refers to the term as drawn from biology, where 'regeneration' is 'the ability to recreate lost or damaged tissue', with this concept then providing a 'model [...] to be applied to different aspects of human habitation such as urban environments, buildings...".

In this case as in others, the very success of the term means that its use extends beyond the organic framework within which it originated to become ever more generic. What is more, varying as it does between 'urban renewal' and 'sustainable improvement' (sustainability often seeming a mere synonym of 'regeneration'), 'urban regeneration' becomes a concept heavy with ambiguity<sup>1</sup>. Under regeneration, lost systems, it seems, can ultimately be 'regenerated' back into existence. At the same time, the term 'sustainable' is becoming a universal term to refer to anything that has the capacity to endure. And "the general public and even many non-experts in the industry define the word only as 'able to last' or the *capacity to endure*. The root words here are 're-' and 'generate' respectively, meaning 'again' and 'to bring into existence'. Thus the base meaning of 'regenerative' means the '*capacity to bring into existence again*'.

There is, however, a profound difference between a 'capacity to endure', which can be nurtured and prolonged, and the ability to 'bring something back to life'. And this provides the basis for reflection upon the conditions in which concepts and practises

relating to the term of 'regeneration' are applicable. I am thinking here, in particular, of densely characterised urban contexts which are still largely intact, one such example being the area studied in Bucharest; urban contexts which are undeniably an integral part of the history of architecture and city construction in the 20th century.

In identifying obsolete or abandoned industrial sites or manufacturing facilities as the very locus of regeneration (obviously understood in the sense of urban renewal), Gabriel Pascariu expressed justifiable perplexity with regard to the application of such an approach to the area chosen for study: the neighbourhood bound by the Aviatorilor and Iancu de Hunedoara boulevards (which meet at a right angle) and the wide curve of the Calea Dorobanților. For this site, total redesign involving radical demolition and transformation seems an improbable option. On the contrary, 'regeneration' here could involve a return to the original conditions of the area and its structures, eschewing the unsuitable interventions which have already in part transformed the buildings and functions of specific lots.

In the history of conservation, the second concept mentioned above – 'bringing back into existence' – has been widely reflected in theories and approaches that view restoration as *réfection à l'identique*, a notion whose heyday occurred in the 19th century but which still has a number of supporters and followers. Though with antithetical aims, both renewal and remodelling are practices of transformation that tend to erase the physical and material characteristics of the heritage left by the past, even just the recent past. From the anti-restoration movement onwards, various theories of conservation have stressed that what is lost as a result – in particular, the architectural features of urban buildings and sites – cannot be resuscitated once gone. So, if one is to envisage regeneration as a complex of choices, measures and operations



aimed at improving both the physical state of an urban area and the quality of life enjoyed within it, one might claim that one of the main thrusts of such a programme of regeneration must be conservational, with precise, well-designed and sharply focused intervention upon both buildings and surrounding spaces (gardens, tree-lined avenues, squares and communal spaces).

It would appear, therefore, that one should bring to bear the cognitive tools developed over the last few decades by the 'culture of restoration' in order to explore the notion of 'capacity to endure' which underlies the very concept of 'sustainable improvement' – a capacity which historical buildings and districts demonstrably possess by the very fact of their continued existence.

### Protected areas in Modernist Bucharest

A large part of the urban fabric that makes up the area under study is one of the areas protected under the terms of a 1999 law, which refers to 'areas in which the preservation of the characteristic cityscape defined by natural features, historical structures, typical building stock and variety of function must be safeguarded'. However, the law also recognises that protection of 'an area does not mean that development is excluded; it is permitted, even encouraged, in some specific conditions, different from area to area; it is important that the new intervention preserves, even enhances the defined specific character/identity of the area'<sup>2</sup>.

The preparatory material drawn up for the workshop highlighted the fact that the layout of the area under examination is the result of a creation of a series of land parcels (primarily residential in character) planned and developed in the period from 1895 to 1940. The largest such plots were designed and begun around the

time of the First World War, in an area rich in greenery and open parks that then fell outside the city's administrative boundaries (Filipescu Park, Bonaparte Park and, beyond Aviatorilor Boulevard, Kiseleff Park). The size of the lots varied – from 500m<sup>2</sup> to 300m<sup>2</sup> – depending upon whether the site was intended for upper-middle-class, white-collar or working-class housing, the latter comprising the lots managed by the Municipal Company for Low-cost Building.

Even after the political, economic and administrative upheavals that were part of 20th-century Romanian history, the original design is still reflected in the size of the lots and in the types of construction, most of which are detached houses: from opulent villas standing in their own grounds to small single houses which – here as in the rest of Europe – were one of the various forms of *habitation à bon marché* at the beginning of the century<sup>3</sup>. The lines of working-class houses are interrupted by larger plots intended for more opulent housing for managers, functionaries and white-collar workers. At eye level on the façades of a number of the buildings are plaques either commemorating those who commissioned these houses and the illustrious figures who lived within them, or indicating (with date and initials) the name of the architect – further traces of the society that initially built and inhabited these areas, at a time when the country was economically prosperous and open to the rest of Europe.

This residential suburb is undeniably a part of the renewal which the Romanian capital underwent from the beginning of the 20th century up to the period between the two world wars, becoming a city which in 1935 Paul Morand could refer to as '*Bucarest, un petit Paris au milieu d'un grand village*'<sup>4</sup> – a phrase that has been quoted so often it has become a commonplace, standing in stark contrast to the tragic events the country would see after the Second World War.



The models brought here by the French architects commissioned to work in late –19th-century Romania, together with important private and public buildings by young Romanian-born architects<sup>5</sup> such as Grigore Cerchez, Nicolae Ghica-Budești, Cristofi Cerchez, Petre Antonescu and above all Ion Mincu, who graduated from the Paris École des Beaux-Arts, would define the character of the city in the early decades of the 20th century, and their influence is also reflected in the neighbourhood under study here.

In the first half of the 20th century, in particular the interwar years, the history of Romanian architecture was marked by certain historicist revivals and the split between champions of a national vernacular (Petre Antonescu, Constantin Iotzu, Statie Ciortan, Toma T. Socolescu) and those such as Horia Creangă, Duiliu Marcu, Marcel Iancu, Henrietta Delavrancea Gibory and Octav Doicescu, who worked in a Modernist idiom.<sup>6</sup> This is clearly reflected in the buildings within this area, where the variety of architectural languages, forms and volumes, plus the disparate details of construction and decoration, mean these sequences of large- and small-sized lots form a sort of architectural catalogue, complete with illustrations to a scale of 1:1. The constant variations in these structures make this a sort of ‘constructed handbook’ to architecture in the period from the early 20th century to the late 1930s; this is undoubtedly one of the characteristics that defines the identity of the neighbourhood, and the one that first strikes any visitor here. Perhaps of all such characteristics it is the most relevant when it comes to drawing up a complex and demanding programme for the preservation and protection of the area’s architectural heritage.

Along its borders with the perimetrical arterial roads, the area under study ends in multi-storey blocks of flats, dating from a very different period in the political and economic history of both the city and the nation as a whole. These separate the residential fabric

of the pre-existing area from the intense flow of traffic along these roads. Overall, therefore, the area embodies the various and contradictory phases in the history of the city<sup>7</sup>. This is perhaps all the more significant and relevant when one considers the fate of the very oldest part of the urban fabric within Bucharest: largely destroyed to make way for the new socialist city<sup>8</sup>, this now survives in fragile, intermittent fragments that have yet to be studied with a view to re-connecting them to the city, to restoring their public and private use.

In a certain sense, the axis marked out by Calea Victoriei could be said to run through both the space and history of the city. Ending in the city square of the same name, at the beginning of the area under study here, that road seems to be recognised by most Romanians as the ‘old city centre’<sup>9</sup>, extending that centre to the edges of the Modernist neighbourhoods that were added onto it.

### **Culture as a mean of conservation/regeneration**

No European country has adequate legal instruments for the protection of entire neighbourhoods, in particular if these latter are ‘modern’ or date from the 20th century. Together with problems in reconciling private interests, there are also the obstacles one faces when trying to draw up public strategies capable of focusing efficiently upon the cultural and economic resources embodied within historical locations and architectural heritage. The end result is difficulty in effective intervention for the correct maintenance and exploitation of such areas.

It would be rather simplistic to offer any off-the-shelf solutions and recipes for action when one has merely spent a few hours studying the area in question, even if with the assistance and authoritative commentary of Romanian scholars. However, the documents that



summarise the first results of the study of Bucharest by scholars from various backgrounds and national schools are rich in ideas, provoking thoughts that might usefully be explored in further depth. Here I will mention only a few which seem of clear importance to someone who, like myself, has for some time studied themes relating to conservation.

The overall view of the area highlights certain critical points and also its clear potential, this latter including the re-use of the area of tram facilities, now disused, which could play a key role in bringing new life and development to the district; in particular, one should think of culture as 'a driver, a catalyst or at the very least the key player in the process of regeneration'<sup>10</sup>, in forms of intervention intended to serve the neighbourhood but also the city as a whole. Cultural and arts centres could link up with a network of activities on various scales, as well as with other services and locations where people get together. Such an urban project would take as its starting point a careful examination of the site itself, involving citizens themselves in that very process of examination and exploration. Explained step-by-step to the local inhabitants, this process of urban planning, architectural design and construction would perhaps enjoy wider support and participation.

The various faculties of the university, and its architecture faculty in particular, have a fundamental role to play here, which could start with a process of applied research: workshops, archive research and on-site examination, plus surveys and the collection of data to be organised in open-ended databases that would also be available to the local residents and the public at large. At the centre of this work should be an analysis of the built-up fabric in relation to green areas and public spaces. This should involve an examination of collective buildings and activities, plus a study of the materials and constructive techniques employed in the full range of houses

(from opulent villas to more modest homes). As Brandi recognises, it is these latter which are to be the object of conservation, which embody a 'culture of construction' that developed over almost a full half-century and has now come to an end. It is these features that make this, still one of the most special areas of the city, so fascinating.

The local inhabitants and general public could be involved in this process, which should aim at highlighting the qualities of an area characterised by the distinguished design of both whole and details, by the use of materials and techniques which, with a few opportune improvements, are still fully sustainable nowadays.

Charting the history behind the construction of these urban locations – in all the various senses of 'urban space' – could have two interconnected aims. On the one hand, it could become the basis for a shared culture; the more extensively the local population participates in this process, the more it will become an instrument of communication and exchange, the source of a renewed sense of belonging and local identity. And it could also provide the basis for a 'work project' that brings together the university, technical schools and specialised craftsmen in defining guidelines for measures that are concerned with both the protection (conservation) of the existing fabric and with schemes to integrate new services and facilities within what already exists.

It would serve to remind the city's inhabitants that the diversity which is one of the most striking features of this area reveals that *mixité* is one of the desirable qualities most frequently lacking in the urban areas built within the last few decades<sup>11</sup>. This diversity of building types, styles, materials, of functions and social categories should be the very basis of a new project of intervention which highlights the *raison d'être* behind their co-existence here<sup>12</sup>.



## Notes and references

1 Urban Regeneration: a process whereby one intervenes to give a city a new and competitive appearance. The regeneration of the city involves not only intervention upon physical redevelopment, which is necessary to rejuvenate the aesthetic image of the city, but also cultural, social, economic and environmental intervention aimed at improving quality of life (in full respect of the principles of environmental sustainability and social participation). Events can be one of the means whereby this great change is implemented ([http://www.tesionline.it/default/glossario\\_rigenerazione\\_urbana](http://www.tesionline.it/default/glossario_rigenerazione_urbana)).

2 See the presentation by Anca Brătuleanu (UAUIM Bucharest), 'The Protected Areas within the Study Areas, between Theory and Practice', no. 16. The PUG (Plan Urbanistic General) of Bucharest, approved in 2002, foresees the introduction of a series of protection indicators regarding 80 areas of historical, artistic, and environmental interest, including urban sectors characterised by the presence of eclectic and modern architecture from the 1930s and 1940s.

3 See, for example, Ch. Lucas, W. Darvillé, *Les habitations à bon marché en France et à l'étranger*, Librairie de la Construction Moderne, Paris (s.d., but 1913).

4 P. Morand, *Bucarest*, Plon, Paris 1935.

5 S. Vasilescu, *Una storia dell'architettura moderna in Romania*, 2009 (<http://www.culturaromana.it>)

6 G. Cinà, *Bucarest dal villaggio alla metropoli. Identità urbana e nuove tendenze*, Unicopli, Milan 2005, pp. 81-85.

7 'In the 21st century, 7 out of 10 inhabitants of Bucharest live in blocks of flats concentrated in huge housing developments that have been mostly built since 1950, in step with forced industrialization, collectivization of social life and control of individual views. What we see is a metaphor of the gulf separating two worlds [...]. At one pole we see the virtues of a traditional city, the quiet charm of a cottage overgrown with vine [...]. At the other pole we see a renunciation of historically validated architectural aesthetics in favour of a kind of angular modernity, poorly built and quick to deteriorate...' (M. Celac, O. Carabela, M. Marcu-Lăpădat, *Bucharest, architecture and modernity. An annotated guide*, Simetria, Bucharest 2005, p. 17). See also, G. Cinà, op. cit., pp. 78-79.

8 'It is clear, however, that the idea of a new 'socialist' city was (...) not just a slogan: it established the goal towards which all physical planning strove [...] Hence one can understand how such widescale demolitions came about, such massive intervention that deliberately ignored the existing urban fabric.' (N. Lascu, Preface, in G. Cinà, *Bucarest*, op. cit., p. 8).

9 This is at least what Tudor Octavian says in his short introduction to a recent volume that gathers together historic images of Victory Avenue, *Interbellum Bucharest, Victoria Avenue*, Noi Media Print, Bucharest 2006, p. 7.

10 G. Evans, Ph. Shaw, *The contribution of culture to regeneration in the UK. A review of evidence* – A report to the Department for Culture Media and Sport, LondonMet 2004, p. 4 et seq.

11 C. Avenel: *La mixité dans la ville et dans les grands ensembles: entre mythe social et instrument politique*. «*Informations sociales*», n.125, 2005, pp.62-71.





«To create is divine, to reproduce is human»<sup>1</sup>. Is an approach based on Cesare Brandi's theory possible for modern surfaces?

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The consideration I would like to begin with in this essay is based on remarks arising from the visit to an urban sector which to outward appearances need only be considered of minor importance.

Nowadays the 'Communal Company for Low-cost Buildings' parcelling (1916) which lies outside the perimeter of the protected areas of Bonaparte (1913), Filipescu (1912) and Mornand (1922) parcellings, appears as an urban fragment (Fig. 1) located among the wide spaces of the Caragiale High School, the main thoroughfare of the Calea Dorobanților and the semi-intensive parcelling of the 'Țesătoria Mecanică Company', built in 1940.

The different parcellings reflect the social status of their residents, both in the way they are structured and in the degree of lavishness of the dwellings: from the mansion as the standard for housing in Bonaparte and Filipescu Park, to the low-cost housing in the Țesătoria Mecanică parcelling and, on an extensive scale, in the 'Communal Company' one.



If the uniformity of the urban design seems to be the outcome of the planning criteria followed by the municipality (minimum dimensions of the sites, building location, height of constructions, enclosures and greenery), on the other hand, the heterogeneity of the individual buildings located in the 'Communal Company' parcelling represents a factor of great interest in the settlement.

A wide range of languages and styles (Neo-Romanian, Art Deco, Rationalist, Modernist, Eclectic) connotes the dwellings, which are detached and semi-detached, generally structured on two levels, almost entirely surmounted by hipped roofs or double-pitched roofs. The dwellings are usually swathed in greenery: the tall vegetation of the gardens enhances the urban quality and constitutes the aggregating factor between dissimilarities of height and typology to be seen in the surrounding parcellings.

Many of these buildings demonstrate remarkable qualities in matters of construction and aesthetics: these qualities have been obtained thanks to the confluence of traditional knowledge (as revealed by a skilful use of decorative materials and codes) and the experimental purposes, encouraged by the availability of technologies and materials coming from the first experiences of industrial production.

The experimentations with the new materials (in particular, the usage of reinforced concrete in loadbearing elements, such as beams and slabs, the placing of cement plasters and grés facings) based on the application of technologies linked to them, define an uncommon style of construction: this is applied on buildings only apparently traditional, and it offers to the city probably the first structures in a 'hybrid style' on a domestic scale.

The other fragments of the Modernist districts derive value also through the big names of the local architects who, between

1910 and 1940, experimented with the housing theme in those spaces (we refer to the works of Ion Mincu, Duiliu Marcu, Horia Creangă and Marcel Iancu, amongst others) (Celac, Carabela, Marcu-Lapadat 2009:103-118). On the contrary, the Communal Company parcelling retains the characteristics of a common heritage generated by 'architects without a name' and it finds its qualities in being part of a system even more than in the specifics of any single building.

The impossibility of tracing back the constructions of the Communal Company parcelling to the planning intentions of famous architects has turned the attention of the community and of the researchers away from this site, towards the better-known settlements of the middle and upper classes of the town. Paradoxically, this aspect has represented a form of conservation of the dwellings.

The Communal Company parcelling – considering also the clear differences between the foundation periods – could not be seen in the same light as the better-known experiences such as the Pessac district in Bordeaux (1925) or Weissenhofsiedlung in Stuttgart (1927). In the midst of the 1980s, these manifesto-districts of the Modern Movement have been subjected to interventions in order to fulfil a 'return to prototype' as described in the original projects: the conservation interventions carried out on these sites treated the buildings like icons detached from the original building materials which spread their image (Di Resta 2011: 217-222). In the matter of the conservation of modern buildings, the aim should be, instead, to duly avoid the imposition of a 'philology conducted on the text's skin' (Dezzi Bardeschi 1993)<sup>2</sup>, wherein the expendable and replaceable elements are represented by superficial facings (plasters and claddings), floorings, casings and systems that are, in general, the object of radical substitutions related to a misunderstood idea of technological updating.



The Communal Company parcelling represents the negation of the 'heretic district' that denies the building traditions (introducing flat roofs, pure volumes and banning every colour and decoration). It doesn't break with any kind of connection to the pre-industrial past, even on the matter of decoration: the ornament seems to be intended as a comforting attribute of the home environment, and this approach, from the use of the forms to the choice of the materials, seems to be the outcome of the sedimentation of traditional knowledge.

If, on the one hand, the identifying features of these building materials lived through the passage of time, on the other hand, the execution of belated or inadequate maintenance interventions are causing widespread problems of conservation, especially for the architectural surfaces.

The dignity and the documentary strength of this minor but pervasive heritage, free from the misconceived but still deep-rooted bond of perpetuation of the author's gesture, invite us to activate paths of knowledge that lead to specify some shared guidelines for the conservation of this fragile heritage that has a tangible presence within the urban area.

Undoubtedly, the conservation of modern and contemporary architectures raises uncommon technical and operative questions, mainly related to the decay mechanisms of materials and structures of industrial production. Despite these themes, it is probably possible to recognise a basic conceptual unity between the restoration of an historic architecture and the restoration of the modern one (Niglio 2008:5). This kind of unity seems to be found in terms of both the methodology and the approach related to the interpretation of the buildings:

*(...) if it is a simply reference to the architecture done today, which is modern the same way yesterday's architecture was modern in its time, it is only about stating a tautology, and therefore not even worth talking about. But the word 'Modern' is intended to recall new and positive values of culture and taste (...) endowed with validity.*

*When I hear talking about the defence of modern architecture, I wonder which could be the enemy to fight against, and it seems to me that it can be none other than the great number of so-called architects who like defining themselves as modern (Pane 1987:161).<sup>3</sup>*

The site chosen for our consideration forces us to extend the meaning of 'modern', as generally adopted, towards a reflection in terms of time, and not only in relation to the recognition of particular characteristics of aesthetics and materials (Taut 1929).<sup>4</sup>

The object of conservation intervention intended as 'modern' could not be defined univocally through the identification of technical and constructional features, or according to the utilisation of materials and languages derived from the industrial production. Most generally, it is referred to a foundation period, during which very heterogeneous architectures were built, often different from the programmatic orientations of the Manifestos: 'Why talk about restoration of the Modern if we are referring to Einstein Tower by Mendelsohn in Potsdam (built in 1920 but, in its majority, realised in plastered masonry in spite of the project which had planned its realisation in reinforced concrete. [Ed.]) while we don't affirm the same principle when we talk about the restoration of the bell tower of St. Mark in Venice, reconstructed during the decade 1903-1912, *how it was and where it was*, as a consequence of the collapse in



1902? Cannot the bell tower of St. Mark be considered a modern work [...]?’ (Niglio 2008:6-7)

The housing complex in the Communal Company parcelling represents a widespread heritage in a transforming context; its historical and documentary value resides especially in being by now an historicised case of an articulated housing scheme from the first part of the 20th century. The site could represent an occasion both for reflection on the criteria and the instruments for the restoration of modern architecture, and an opportunity to acknowledge the values pertaining to these dwellings.

When we confront buildings not yet heavily overwritten by their utilisation (Dezzi Bardeschi 1993:420), the ideal path should be to adhere to a knowledge condition (in the first place, driven by the education of the inhabitants to a perception of this heritage as one to be safeguarded) free from the spectre of the architect’s gesture conservation.

In this site, the scientific community could take the chance to verify, as it would for ancient buildings, a ‘laical approach’ related to the knowledge and the interpretation of the building inserted in a time *continuum*; as the ancient buildings, also the modern ones could be preserved through the traces stratified by time.

Although these principles are generally acknowledged in restoration theory, the damaged reinforced concrete surfaces and the plaster ones are often subjected to undifferentiated replacements in order to recover the presumed original image of the building.

Cesare Brandi has delineated the methodological and practical criteria about the conservation of paintings, but the theoretician often referred to architecture in his works. He dealt with the themes

of the re-establishment of the ‘potential unity’ in figurative contexts and of the neutrality of new integration filling the *lacuna*; relying on his theories, it is possible to find associations and common points between the conservation principles both of works of art and architecture.

These requirements seems to be particularly applicable in the case of the conservation of modern surfaces, by ensuring that all intervention could keep the ‘documentary value’ of these building materials.

In the field of the treatment both of missing plasters and wall paints, the conservation intervention should consider the topics of ‘integration’ as an outcome of the interpretation process, working in a critical way on the established relationships between the different parts that, on different scales, compose the building.

The conservation/restoration project should create new layers inserted in the sedimentation process of the history: these new layers ‘although they should be based on the conservation (of the buildings) cannot take place without a formal composition’ (Pane 1959), revealing various level of interaction between pre-existing parts and new ones.

The contemporary debate deals with the theme of the ‘language’ adopted by contemporary architecture in the field of conservation, usually by paying special attention to the insertion of new volumes, and taking less interest in the range of operations undertaken for conservation of historical surfaces. In operative terms, an accurate treatment of the missing areas, the choice to place new plasters or ‘scialbature’ on fragmentary surfaces, the identification of correct ways to realise integrations of mortar found on pre-existing structures, are all operations that impose planning choices able to deeply and irreversibly transform both the image and the meanings of built heritage.



In the last 25 years, some conservation/restoration interventions carried out on emblematic European cases of Modern architecture have had a common feature that lies in the choice to cancel 'the time included between the creation and the restoration' (Brandi 1977), thus denying the possibility of carrying out the intervention as a further temporal segment of the building.

In the specific case of Communal Company dwellings, the conservation interventions seem to be carried out with the aim to reach an abstract coherence to be regained at the expense of the preservation of the architectural surfaces; this approach is aimed at re-establishing a clear homogeneity in the treatment of the façades, but it doesn't preserve the document through its physical traces.

The houses located in the 'Communal Company' site (Fig. 1) show on their outermost layer – the 'skin of architecture' – the most



Fig. 1. Aerial view of the 'Communal Company for Low-cost Buildings' parcelling. (In: <http://www.bing.com/maps>).



Figs. 2-5. Deterioration mechanisms of plaster surfaces and decorative elements.

evident problems of conservation (Figs. 2-5): detachments and missing areas of plaster (generally made of cement); incongruous replacements of plasters and painting layers (normally based on the inhabitants' taste) (Fig. 10); advanced mechanisms of deterioration and disruption (especially linked to the expulsion of the concrete cover) of structures as pillars, girders, balconies and other concrete elements (Figs. 6).





Fig. 10. The incongruous refurbishment of plasters and wall paints, concentrated on single parts of the property, alters the unitary perception of the surfaces.



Figs. 6. Insertions in reinforced concrete. Phenomena of concrete cover detachment and oxidation of reinforcement bars.

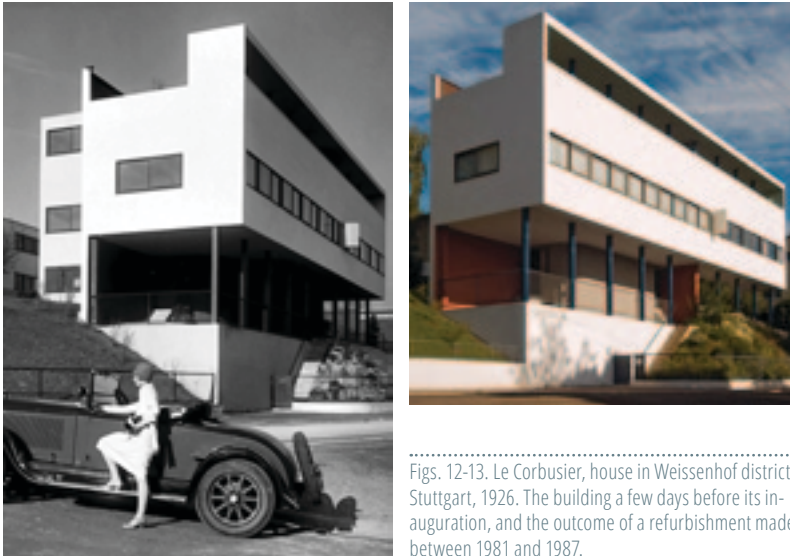
The chromatic and/or material refurbishment carried out on the surfaces often represent autonomous initiatives of the dwelling owners and the more they appear impressive, the more they are related to the recreation of decorative components, altering proportions, *chiaroscuros* and chromatic relationships with the surfaces from which they emerge (Figs. 7-9).

Contrary to what has occurred at the Weissenhof Colony (Figs. 12-13), the interventions carried out on the Romanian case studies do



Figs. 7-9. Results of material and chromatic refurbishment on mouldings and decorative elements.





Figs. 12-13. Le Corbusier, house in Weissenhof district, Stuttgart, 1926. The building a few days before its inauguration, and the outcome of a refurbishment made between 1981 and 1987.

not look at the re-appropriation of the original appearances, but they show a more essential willingness to come to a homogeneity of the façades. Moreover, these interventions do not necessarily take into account the entire building, but they are usually focused on the single portion held by the owners.

Some comparable results are well known through 'spontaneous interventions' carried out on the more famous buildings by Le Corbusier and Jeanneret in the Pessac district, where any trace of the time impressed upon the surfaces has been cancelled out (Fig.11).



Fig. 11. Le Corbusier, P. Jeanneret, residential district in Frugés (Pessac), Bordeaux, 1925. Results of spontaneous interventions on house surfaces, realised between the 20th and 21st century

In the field of the treatment of the missing and fragmentary areas, research should be able to propose an alternative to these established procedures in order to prevent reconstruction processes and to facilitate the legibility of the Modern surfaces: a shared instrument such as intervention guidelines dedicated to the conservation of the district, based on the belief that, for the protection of the buildings closest to our times also, thought can be directed towards the achievement of a 'potential unity' (Brandi 1977:13) of the fragmentary features. This approach is aimed towards the maximum conservation of building material and surfaces, but it raises important questions regarding the planning control of the aesthetic outcomes of interventions which have substantial effects not only on the building's potency as a document, but also on its image.

The theme of the treatment of the missing areas – as a meeting point between critical awareness and the creative phase – is part of the research debate that, while locating itself in the restoration field, addresses the question at a more general level pertaining to the architecture.

Certainly, as pointed out by Dezzi Bardeschi in 'Lacuna, rovina e progetto' (Dezzi Bardeschi 2004), the practical possibility of filling the missing areas through stitchings or replenishments depends on the extent of the missing areas: 'if, rather, it's about a limited and well bordered loss of matter from the context (for example, the detachment of a «geographical» surface of plaster from a façade) or the loss of an entire component of a considerable part of a built whole (thus it cannot be considered as a simple lacuna)'.

It's important to draw attention to the De Angelis d'Ossat position explained in the graph he edited in 1978 (Fig.14): he harks back to Cesare Brandi's remarks about the conservation of paintings and







## Notes

- 1 Ray 1983.
- 2 See also Dezzi Bardeschi 2004:421
- 3 See also Dorfles 2004:9
- 4 Taut summarised in five points the characteristics of the Modern Movement: «1.The first requirement in any building is to achieve the best possible use; 2.The materials used and the construction system have to be subordinated to this primary need; 3. The beauty consists in the direct relation between the building and purpose, the material characteristics and elegance of the building system; 4.The aesthetic of the entire building as a whole is without preeminent façades or plants or architectural detail. What is functional is also beautiful; 5.As the parts live in the unity of their mutual relations, so the house lives in relation with the surrounding buildings. The house is the product of a collective and social disposition» (Taut 1929).
- 5 Also published in De Angelis d'Ossat, G. 1995. Sul restauro dei monumenti architettonici. Concetti, operatività, didattica [On restoration of architectural monuments]. Rome. Pp. 93-118.

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## Lessons from Bucharest: cultural continuity, reversibility and attitudes towards change in the context of the conservation charters

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*Nam quodcumque suis mutatem finibus exit, continuo hoc mors est illius quod fuit ante / If anything is so transformed as to overstep its own limits, this means the immediate death of what was before.*

*Lucretius, De Rerum Natura, i. 670-1*

### Introduction

The subject of the recent workshop in Bucharest raised some very topical questions concerning the nature of change to our built fabric and the challenges we can face in managing that change. The urban study area lies close to the centre of Bucharest and consists of a relatively extensive piece of close urban planning comprising the Mornand, Filipescu and Bonaparte 'quarters', all of which share common morphological and socio-cultural traits as well as a remarkable consistency of architectural detail and form, despite the diversity of style and period. The *parcellaire* of individual plots



consists of a preponderance of private villas for the upper-middle classes of the day, built over a period stretching from the mid-19th to the mid-20th centuries. It represents a microcosm of architectural styles from the late Neo-Classical, through *belle-époque* Arts and Crafts and into the Early Modern period, its natural evolution being brutally interrupted by World War II and its subsequent stagnation under Communism. This remarkable patrimony has suffered due to the shifting political and economic circumstances that Communism and its aftermath have brought and lately, despite recent legislative protection, is under threat from a generalised flouting of the planning laws. The changes regarded as posing the greatest threats to the conservation of patrimony are generally those which disrupt continuity the most, with the simple tearing down of the monument representing the worst possible result in these terms. This is indeed happening here, as is the lesser charge of ill-informed changes, ranging from thoughtless extensions which disrupt the formal or material consistency of the place in question, to the introduction of excessive levels of services, leading to encroachment on internal volumes and the removal, or covering up, of excessive amounts of historic fabric in the process. And yet here change is inevitable. The middle classes of the Austro-Hungarian economic order that contributed to the development of this part of Bucharest are a thing of the past. A new social and economic order is in place and this is a coveted area of Bucharest. In the face of often radical change to its fabric, the area is generally retaining its residential vocation of large, comfortable villas on individual sites, suggesting that compatibility of use is not the fundamental conservation problem in this case. This paper proposes to examine the processes of change, both societal and material, against the backdrop of the Bucharest site, and ask questions of the conservation charters in this light.

### The reality of change versus the fear of change

Most human activities aspire towards the creation and the perpetuation of order. Ordered societies, ordered environments, ordered lives. Most of us see change as something that upsets this order and disrupts routines. We are prone to a tendency towards wishing that today and tomorrow will not be vastly different to yesterday, and much of our planning is based on assuming that our circumstances will remain stable enough for us to honour commitments wagered on future outcomes. In a caricatural way, this behaviour could be taken as a metaphor for what we expect our heritage to do. It must fulfil the role of temporal marker by providing a fixed reference in time against which the passage of the years can be appreciated. It must remain unchanged as a mark of respect to the ancestors who created it and to those who passed it down to us. Most importantly, it is often perceived to point backwards in time to an imagined golden age when life was somehow less complicated, less rushed, less prone to change, perhaps.

Why do we believe this? All of the evidence and all of our experience of life points to the fact that nothing remains in the same state for very long. Yet societies are seen to be generally resistant to many kinds of global changes in defence of this order. And when the need for change is admitted, the discussion is rarely about creating a better system through revolutionary change and more about just patching up the current one, however lopsided it might appear.

This is frequently the Western approach in any case, probably stemming from its traditionally Christian cultural world view where the temple, the noblest ornament in the city according to Alberti, came to represent built heritage in its highest referential sense. The cathedral building, including the act of its building, became the expression of a hierarchical relationship to a social order



and, by extension, to the Godhead. In the mediaeval city, 'old things provided reassurance'<sup>1</sup> and any notion of change to society meant an incitement to change the relationship between God and man, God and society. While much change in society over the centuries separates us from this period, it is tempting to believe that the special place that we as a society currently afford to the protection of church buildings is in some measure a survival of these beliefs. In the symbolic sense at least, changes to our built patrimony, because of the passions they can arouse, sometimes seem to represent this continuity of belief around the cathedral as the perfect representation in stone of the Godhead.

In Eastern countries, particularly those following Buddhist cultural and religious traditions, different attitudes to change are often found. Of course change can pose the same type of problems, to individuals and to societies – this is part of the human condition – but Buddhism generally holds that not only is change inevitable, but it is, in fact, the only thing in life of which we can be certain. This is why conservation in Japan can mean the 'maintenance in a perfect state' of a temple, not through preservation of the fabric as we understand it, but through regular replacement of all its parts so that it remains visually the same forever by being entirely rebuilt every 20 years or so<sup>2</sup>. How does that belief system relate to conservation as we know it here in the West, with its emphasis on the permanence of the *fabric* of the monument rather than its concept?

Since Ruskin, there has been a move away from our understanding of conservation as preservation; that conservation does not just mean keeping things in aspic or trying to protect them from future changes, although there will always be artefacts of such importance as to merit this approach. Preservation presupposes the 'passing-on' in a state of perfection of something that is to serve as an

example for all time by endeavouring to counter its effects. The result can only be temporary. On a philosophical level, it pitches the artefact into a war against the effects of time, a battle it will inevitably lose. Preservation also implies a form of cultural isolation because it requires the functional removal of the artefact from the mainstream of use, and indeed often from its original function as well. However, preserved things do not become immune to change, as the term implies. On the contrary, their very completeness renders them even more vulnerable to it because the 'perfection' of their current state can know no compromise. The passage of time progressively removes the thing preserved from the activities of life itself, and its increasing age, and by distancing it from the cultural conditions of its inception clouds our understanding of its historical meaning. The preserved artefact begins to occupy a limbo between life and death, like a building on life support, where the memory of its former functional existence eventually becomes myth. If, however, its survival is subject to a policy of *conservation*<sup>3</sup> where the possibility of change is not excluded, as distinct from preservation, the challenge becomes one of managing these processes of change, insofar as we can manage anything that has its basis in the future.

When we talk about conservation versus preservation, the debates that animated John Ruskin and George Gilbert Scott in the development of 19<sup>th</sup>-century heritage protection and which form the basis still of much of our current thinking on conservation, were very much of their time and place. The threats to ancient buildings that animated the SPAB<sup>4</sup> activists were very different to those which threaten our historic fabric today. We often define ourselves as living in the era of the greatest change that any civilization has ever known, and this is probably true. We are distancing ourselves more and more from the hands-off approach of Ruskin, but are



still left with the impression that there is a tendency in conservation discussion to rule things out without much recognition of the reality of the choices that must often be debated in the context of reuse. No charter says, for example, that if a building is about to be abandoned because it is functionally no longer fit for purpose it is better that it undergo necessary changes than that it become a ruin (nor should it). However, with all due respect to Ruskin's closely argued position on this matter, ruins tend to have less of a future than functioning buildings, and by comparison, cannot therefore embody to the same extent the 'full richness of [their] authenticity' that the Venice Charter espouses.

### What the charters say about design and conservation

There are many definitions of conservation throughout the charters but two of the most important are:

- the actions of 'passing on [our heritage] to future generations in the full richness of its authenticity', The Venice Charter<sup>5</sup>
- all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its *cultural significance*, The Australian (Burra) Charter<sup>6</sup>

However, all of the charters display some level of suspicion about the idea of changing the artefact through direct intervention. Venice, for example, says 'additions cannot be allowed except in so far as they do not detract from the interesting parts of the building, its traditional setting, the balance of its composition and its relation with its surroundings', which sounds like a principle based on a world where change is the exception rather than the rule. But that was in the early 1960s and it is interesting to note how the tone changes in the evolution of conservation thinking since then. The Burra Charter, for example, deals with the idea of a *compatible*

use, which at least suggests an admission of legitimate change via a new use. In Article 1.11 it defines 'compatible use' as meaning a 'use which respects the cultural significance of a place. Such a use involves no, or minimal, impact on cultural significance.'

Burra also talks about change in Article 15, where it states:

15.1: Change may be necessary to retain *cultural significance*, but is undesirable where it reduces cultural significance. The amount of change to a *place* should be guided by the *cultural significance*<sup>7</sup> of the place and its appropriate *interpretation*.

15.2: Changes which reduce *cultural significance* should be reversible, and be reversed when circumstances permit'.

This naturally poses the question as to what type of change, if any, would *not* reduce cultural significance, as well as its antithesis, which would suggest that certain changes can enhance it.

The Appleton Charter for the Protection and Enhancement of the Built Environment (1983) suggests via its title that positive change is possible (enhancement), though its context is wider than the single artefact as it deals mainly with the urban environment and it talks about preservation (in the American sense) which is really the wrong term for this discussion. However, it does propose the term redevelopment in the historic context, which it describes as being the 'insertion of contemporary structures or additions sympathetic to the setting'. This suggests a different approach to that of the enhancement of cultural significance whereby the quality of the intervention will be judged on its own merits and in relation to its effect on the artefact now, rather than how it may be perceived by future generations, which is at the origin of the reversibility concept suggested by Burra.



The Vienna Memorandum of the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO (2005) states that:

...urban planning, contemporary architecture and preservation of the historic urban landscape should avoid all forms of pseudo-historical design, as they constitute a denial of both the historical and the contemporary alike. One historical view should not supplant others, as history must remain readable, while continuity of culture through quality interventions is the ultimate goal.

This suggests a fusion of the previous approaches, perhaps by combining respect for the quality of the intervention with respect for its place in the life of a particular culture. It also posits the concept of 'continuity of culture', which brings the debate back to an appraisal of current actions in interventional terms and their likely effects over time.

### Shared cultural values

The Oxford English Dictionary defines culture as:

*'1. the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively...*

*2. the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society'.*

It is the second part of the definition which interests us the most when we consider the term 'continuity of culture', particularly in the current context of rampant globalisation and runaway technological change leading to a blurring of cultural differences. In real terms, the only culture that we can believe with any certainty to be continuous is the culture that we have received up until now, our present, which

has been passed on to us by our predecessors. Its continuity often has a physical expression, as represented by the artefact that has been passed on to us from its moment of coming into being (as a result of the cultural forces present at the time in which it was created) and any changes to it throughout its life. But continuity of fabric, although often a result of some level of cultural appreciation via the continuous nature of its preservation, does not imply that the cultural values which led to the creation of the fabric in the first place are the same cultural values which govern the making of new artefacts today, or which will lead to their being handed on to the future. Therefore, while the survival of an artefact into the present is usually as a result of a sharing by successive generations of at least some of the cultural values which led to its creation, the importance allocated to an artefact is only very rarely based on a sense of 'oneness' the current observer may feel with the essence of its original meaning in the cultural sense. It can therefore be argued that the term 'continuity of culture' is a shibboleth requiring urgent redefinition, particularly in light of global changes to almost all cultures and societies over the last 100 years or so. The most common quality currently entitling an artefact to a degree of respect is age, rather than any obvious representation of an earlier cultural world view that its 'style' or technological make-up might represent. A deeper level of understanding of its cultural content is usually limited to the researcher, initially at least, and the public is at best usually given an overview via a short historical synopsis or truncated account. In many cases we have no real understanding of the cultural or societal context that led to the artefact's creation and no way of ever fully understanding it. This is true of many national monuments in the Irish context, such as portal tombs or sites such as Newgrange and Tara.



If we do not therefore require conditions of cultural continuity or cultural significance in order to regard an artefact as having importance, why then do the charters insist on it? In practical terms, good legislation to protect heritage artefacts is more relevant than cultural continuity for ensuring the survival of the artefact. Another important aspect of a monument's survival is continuity of occupation in the functional sense. Both legislative continuity and functional usefulness are certainly more important qualities than cultural continuity for ensuring protection in practical terms.

### **The factors most likely to affect historic fabric when it undergoes change**

An appraisal of current built fabric in our Western societies in particular would suggest that we inhabit two very different built environments. On the one hand, we have many buildings from the pre-industrial era whose construction was primarily by hand and which involved little or no generation of un-recycled carbon and almost no fossil fuel use. These buildings still form a large part of our town and city-centre built fabric in Ireland, and the bulk of any buildings predating the 1920s. On the other are those buildings whose component elements have been largely or entirely factory-produced and whose construction is of pre-fabricated masonry units such as industrial brick or concrete block, steel or timber frames, or of reinforced concrete. These components frequently require industrial machinery as an aid to their fabrication and construction and are often sourced far from their point of use thanks to the relative cheapness of mechanised transport in the current world economy. The older building stock tends to be of simple construction, such as single-leaf stone or brick masonry, with timber floor and roof structures, timber joinery windows and doors, slate roofs and little or no servicing. Mortars and renders in this

case were almost always lime-based. Transport was expensive then and there was little lifting equipment apart from the horse and the pulley, so materials were generally sourced locally. Modern systems, on the other hand, can have a myriad of construction approaches, materials and assembly techniques. In the domestic context they may include a block cavity wall, composite timber products, metal or plastic windows, concrete or metal frames, various types of insulation material (particularly from the early 1970s), often quite extensive servicing requirements and cement-based mortars and renders. The nett effect of this cleavage in constructional cultures is one of gross incompatibility between what are effectively opposing technologies. The implications of not recognising these differences when intervening on historic structures can be quite serious. Even anodyne conservation works can become problematic. The areas in which these incompatibilities are revealed to the starkest extent concern the issues of materials, fabrication and servicing.

### **Materials and change**

Pre-industrial buildings used materials that were bedded in soft mortars and finished in breathable layers to accommodate movement and passage of water vapour. Their walls were sized not to a structural minimum in terms of thickness, but to a climatic mean so that they excluded full damp penetration over a seasonal cycle. This usually made them oversized in structural terms, which generally added to their stability through increased factors of safety and an ability to accommodate reasonable amounts of settlement while small fissures re-bonded naturally through the self-healing properties of lime. The substitution or replacement of these elements with almost any current construction 'equivalent' such as a cement mortar, concrete masonry or vapour barriers is almost certain to damage the artefact over time, sometimes quite dramatically over



relatively short periods. Much modern conservation work involves the removal of relatively recent material additions such as cement renders and 'dry' lining systems and their replacement with details that are compatible with the older materials and technologies.

### **Fabrication methods and change**

The way things are made nowadays can often pose another type of threat in the context of replacement or repair works. The appropriate detail may not be the most feasible one in the context of current construction practice. For example, hydraulic lime mortars may sometimes be chosen over a more compatible lime-putty specification because of their greater workability and faster setting times, mimicking those same qualities in cement-based mortars. Choices of this nature are often made on the basis of the primacy of the building programme and unitary rates at the expense of compatibility and authenticity. Often, the decorative character of the place can be compromised because a certain timber detail or plaster cornice cannot be easily reproduced or repaired, maybe because of a shortage of available skills locally, or due to budgetary constraints. While good crafts skills are by no means a thing of the past, there is a technological gulf between the way buildings were built then and how they are constructed now which frequently puts much of the necessary work of continuity out of the reach of all but the best organised and funded projects.

### **Servicing requirements and change**

However, as far as extremes of incompatibility are concerned, the most alien to the spirit and material of historic structures are services. The introduction of pipework, wiring and ducting into the

structure and volumes of older buildings will always have some degree of adverse effect on character and on fabric, and is possibly the most challenging issue after compatibility of use that designers face in the context of managing change. Not alone do services require vertical and horizontal distribution routes through existing fabric, almost always necessitating some removal of same, but they usually require outlets through external walls and roofs, thus affecting external character, and when in place can be a source of leaks or a risk of fire, with these risks increasing over time. Moreover, they require regular renewal, updating and additions, leading to further or increased distribution demands, chasing of fabric and external outlets, all of which can lead to continuous disturbance and gradual destruction of fabric over time. Current legislation often imposes them, regardless of their effects, while their very presence is *ipso facto* a challenge to the notion of the place's character, as the cultural meaning of the original did not usually include any provision for their introduction or use.

The Burra Charter's notion of compatible use, i.e. one which 'respects the cultural significance of a place' and which 'involves no, or minimal impact on cultural significance' must include the impacts accompanying a use which appears on the face of it to be compatible, particularly in relation to its servicing and legislative requirements. In Ireland, for example, the provisions of the Fire Regulations (Part B of the current Building Regulations) generally take precedence in practice over the requirement to respect character, and thus must be included at the initial stage of appraisal of compatibility of use. This is not always easy to achieve, given that the full detail of the fire requirements may only become clear at a later stage of the design process. The new compliance requirements for standard guarding heights, for example, may have destructive outcomes for historic handrails and balustrades, which in the case



of an older public building undergoing an upgrade might suggest that its continued use for reception of the public could be deemed an incompatible use if the 'cultural continuity' requirements exclude such changes. On another level, it could be argued that in the same way as old and new building technologies are incompatible, that old and new uses are too. A building which was built as a residence for a family in the Georgian era is not necessarily suitable for a modern family, without perhaps radical change to fabric and layout.

In 'On Altering Architecture', Fred Scott highlights this point when he discusses obsolescence in buildings (another way of describing a 'non-compatible' use). He says that 'it is the alteration in the rituals of occupation that will cause a building to be considered obsolete'<sup>8</sup>. For him, changing lifestyles in the residential context from one generation to the next are the main generators of change in our built environments.

When the differences between the original or earlier function of the building and its changed version become too great, not only do we risk major character-diminishing change, but we also risk its transformation into a ruin in the sense that Cesare Brandi defines it. He regards as 'ruin' 'anything which bears witness to human history, but under a different and almost unrecognisable guise compared to the ruin's former function'<sup>9</sup>. While Brandi's 'Theory of Restoration' is mainly concerned with restoration in the context of the work of art, he uses a building analogy in this instance to reinforce the idea that any artefact loses meaning proportionally to the degree of separation it undergoes from its former meaning.

Is it perhaps time to redefine the way we consider interventions on older fabric in conservation terms? Particularly in the case of significant buildings where respect of character is paramount?

If current conservation practice proclaims the importance of respecting all periods of a place's history (provided the additions have historical or architectural merit, and are not mere accretions, the removal of which is justifiable), and in a context where change is accepted as the norm rather than the exception, then should not the charters encourage the addition of high-quality interventions rather than insisting on reversibility as the underlying principle governing the addition? Reversibility suggests a fear of an adverse future reaction to the addition, but if the addition is of quality and has architectural merit, will it not in its turn be respected as another worthy addition from a previous historical period which adds value to the interest and integrity of the whole work? In fairness to Burra, it only suggests reversibility where the changes are likely to adversely affect cultural significance. But the effects of changes on character could be mitigated or even eliminated if the potentially damaging effects of incompatible materials, fabrication techniques and servicing are addressed in a conscientious way that reduces their impact to a functional minimum. Conservation theory should not admit to the possibility of somehow allowing for a temporary reduction of cultural significance against some vague promise of future reversibility. Almost any quality of addition will acquire some form of legitimacy over time even though it may lack quality in its own cultural terms. The issue of servicing and its impacts on older fabric is more likely to increase than to diminish over time, given technological advances and the increasing comfort-level requirements of our society. More thought is required by conservationists in this critical area, coupled with a fuller appreciation of the true implications of compatible use in light of the demands that developed, consumerist societies can place on older fabric.



## Notes

- 1 Blanquart, P., 1997. *Une Histoire de la Ville pour repenser la société*. In Chapter 4 on the mediaeval city, he discusses the need for security in an uncertain world, which the mediaeval city was developed to provide, and where everything from city walls to the rigour of social order was intended to reassure its inhabitants.
- 2 Stubbs, J.H., 2009. Time Honored; A Global View of Architectural Conservation. The reference is to the Ise shrine in Japan's Mie prefecture which 'has been ritually reconstructed on an adjacent site every twenty years almost without interruption since 690CE'. p. 267
- 3 The Burra definition of conservation is implied here, i.e. 'all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance'.
- 4 SPAB; the acronym for the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, co-founded by John Ruskin in 1877.
- 5 The Venice Charter, 1964 ICOMOS – preamble 'Imbued with a message from the past...'
- 6 The Burra Charter, 1999 Australia ICOMOS, Article 1.4 p2.
- 7 Idem. *Cultural significance* it defines as 'aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations'. Australia ICOMOS Inc 2000. The Burra Charter, Art.1.2, p.2
- 8 Scott, F., 2008 *On Altering Architecture*, p.5 Routledge
- 9 Brandi, C., 1963 *Théorie de la Restauration* p.53 (quote translated by F Duffy)

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## Patrimoine et développement urbain Lecture patrimoniale d'un quartier en devenir: Bucarest 2011

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Entre les boulevards lancu de Hunedoara, Aviatorilor et Calea Dorobanților à Bucarest, on découvre le site de notre étude comme une enclave sauvegardée, variée, riche de végétation, d'architecture, de calme et de vie. Elle est protégée, au centre d'une agitation assez impersonnelle due aux boulevards marchands qui la ceinturent, et à leurs alignements de halls d'expositions, de centres commerciaux, de bureaux, d'immeubles massifs et d'édifices imposants récents qui abritent quelques administrations ou institutions.

Intégrée aux travaux expérimentaux proposés dans le cadre du workshop III du groupe thématique de recherche Conservation de l'AEAA / EAAE au cours du séminaire 'Modernist neighbourhoods: Conservation/Regeneration' à Bucarest en octobre 2011, notre contribution consiste d'une part en un constat en forme d'état des lieux de cette zone, et se veut d'autre part être une sorte d'arrêt sur image dans le processus de la transformation de ce quartier vieux de plus d'un siècle.

Deux périodes majeures ont traversé la zone: sa construction dès 1895, quartier après quartier, avec des règles parcellaires et constructives chaque fois différentes et encore très lisibles, puis



sa cristallisation, suivie d'un changement des modes d'habitat à l'époque soviétique quand les mêmes appartements étaient soudain attribués à plusieurs familles, ou quand les maisons étaient construites dans une optique communautaire. Depuis les années 1990 la zone est au centre des grands projets de renouveau urbain.

La situation actuelle est assez instable. Le quartier pourrait, de par sa position géographique favorable, se fondre totalement dans la ville nouvelle à la faveur de destructions, ou bien à l'opposé se figer dans une sauvegarde pétrifiante.

C'est à l'aide d'un outil créé par le groupe de recherche IMAGE ET PATRIMOINE - une grille de lecture intitulée «Effacements 02, la ville» - que nous avons entrepris de comprendre le quartier en train de se faire, et de saisir sa situation au regard du devenir urbain de Bucarest. Cet outil distingue deux grandes sections pour saisir



Fig 1. Image et Patrimoine. Zone d'étude, Bucarest 2011.

l'actualité d'une ville : les traces de son bâti ancien, et l'apparition de l'architecture contemporaine. À Bucarest, sur notre cette zone riche d'un patrimoine architectural mixte, et notamment de beaux exemples de l'époque moderniste, le «regard patrimonial» soit à l'aide de la grille de lecture qui vise à révéler les stratégies d'apparition du bâti contemporain et les modes de résistance du bâti existant, confrontation qu'IMAGE ET PATRIMOINE s'attache à observer à différentes échelles, s'est révélé approprié.

«Effacements 02, la ville» que nous expérimentons à l'occasion du workshop de Bucarest est un outil, une grille de lecture de la ville en évolution. Elle a été créée et expérimentée dans différentes villes en Europe et dans le monde et continue d'être interrogée. C'est un outil évolutif.

### Image et patrimoine

Le programme de recherche Image et Patrimoine, interroge l'actualité du patrimoine bâti et des paysages à partir de l'image. Le questionnement, soutenu par une approche anthropologique, produit des outils interdisciplinaires tels des grilles de lecture iconographiques, des analyses thématiques et étudie les perspectives de valorisation des territoires à partir de leur patrimoine.

Image et Patrimoine expérimente une approche de recherche singulière fondée sur la fabrication et l'analyse d'images (dessins, photos, films, cartes). Produites librement par des étudiants à partir de l'observation d'édifices du patrimoine architectural et de leur environnement dans le monde, ces images transcrivent un regard déjà cultivé et sensible à l'architecture et au fait urbain en même temps qu'il reste subjectif et donc susceptible d'être révélateur. Il est à noter que les conclusions de chacune des phases d'étude étant données sous forme graphique, elles utilisent un langage iconographique qui favorise une réflexion interdisciplinaire.



## Bucarest

Bucarest est une ville de plus de 2 millions d'habitants qui s'interroge aujourd'hui sur les moyens d'une maîtrise de son développement, après une poussée urbaine et architecturale aussi explosive qu'anarchique, faisant elle-même suite à la brutalité qu'avait engendrée dans les années 1980 la création du Boulevard de la victoire et l'érection de la Maison du Peuple par N. Ceausescu, pour lesquels 1/5ème de la ville - soit pas moins de 520 ha situés en plein centre historique, ont été rasés.

Une réglementation urbaine a été entreprise en 1990. Devenue plus rigoureuse depuis deux ans, elle semble être observée. Les zones constructibles sont clairement établies, et une timide volonté de sauvegarde du patrimoine apparaît. Cependant, la ville subit les antagonismes entre production et développement au travers de grands projets de remodelage urbain qui soulèvent des oppositions virulentes.

De plus, la situation reste contrariée par les conséquences de la nationalisation de tous les biens en 1968 et la nouvelle possibilité de récupération qui ajoutent à la complexité des projets, tant individuels qu'institutionnels.

Bucarest cependant possède de nombreux atouts pour redevenir une grande capitale, active et agréable à vivre. Avant tout, son histoire, la variété de ses constructions et de sa trame urbaine, les larges espaces verts et l'équilibre imposé entre zones bâties et non bâties (65% et 35%) sont des avantages certains. Mais les politiques parfois contradictoires rendent le projet urbain de Bucarest difficile à percevoir. Elles subissent visiblement des pouvoirs économiques et une situation sociale qui sont loin d'être stabilisés. Certaines zones

du centre, cumulent les difficultés avec des propriétés nationalisées en déshérence, des baux souvent expirés pour des appartements qui se dégradent, des problèmes sociaux et communautaires divers... Même la gentrification, qui est souvent une voie de régénérescence des quartiers, est entravée à Bucarest par le manque de clarté de la situation juridique des édifices, qui rend tout investissement périlleux. Sans compter les difficultés bien réelles pour se déplacer en voiture dans certaines zones ou d'un quartier à l'autre.

## Le quartier Moderniste

La zone étudiée, située dans le périmètre administratif de la commune s'est développée à partir de 1895 par la planification d'une succession de parcelles, chacune marquée par un type urbain et constructif différent et destinées à des populations socialement différentes. L'ensemble obéissait à une réglementation municipale précise ayant pour objectif de rester en accord avec le plan général de la ville.

Le Blanc, le plus ancien des quartiers, est construit dès 1895 auprès des manufactures au sud, puis seront bâtis à proximité les quartiers réservés aux ouvriers, puis aux employés. Enfin les constructions les plus proches de l'actuel Parc Brâncuși, sur des parcelles plus larges situées de part et d'autre de la rue Paris, seront réservées aux classes plus aisées. À ces différents quartiers correspondent aussi des typologies de bâti variées, depuis de modestes maisons conçues pour une seule famille, à de grosses maisons de location pour plusieurs, voire à des petits immeubles locatifs de quatre à cinq étages. Enfin, le long des rues bordées d'arbres qui traversent la zone de part en part comme rue Paris ou rue Roma, d'importantes maisons bourgeoises sont édifiées. Certaines, sont classées et signées par des architectes renommés.



Si la taille de chaque parcelle à l'intérieur des différents quartiers est identique, le style des constructions y est extrêmement varié et donne des exemples de l'architecture roumaine régionale, du style Art Déco, et une représentation significative du Modernisme roumain qui nous rappelle un temps intellectuel et d'avant-garde intense de Bucarest au début du XXe siècle, encore en lien direct avec le reste de l'Europe.

Enfin sur la zone, quelques grands édifices communaux occupent des parcelles entières comme des lycées, des bureaux, un hôpital, ainsi que l'entrepôt des tramways qui tient une part importante entre les parcelles au sud.

Actuellement la zone reste principalement résidentielle, et quelques belles maisons sont occupées par des consulats, des ambassades et des représentations culturelles roumaines ou étrangères. De rares familles, protégées au cours des diverses périodes, ont réussi à se maintenir dans ces propriétés, réquisitionnées un temps pour y loger les collaborateurs de la municipalité. La tradition résidentielle qui se maintient, soutenue par la proximité de quelques services comme des écoles, pourrait jouer un rôle déterminant dans la sauvegarde du quartier.

### Collecte et analyse

Dans un premier temps, une collecte d'images (dessins, schémas, photos) a été effectuée, suivie d'un classement sous l'angle de la grille de lecture «Effacements 02, la ville» afin de faire apparaître les deux grands mouvements que sont les effacements et les apparitions du bâti.



Fig 2. Traces.

Soit, pour les effacements: les différentes traces du bâti ancien, les formes de la résistance et de la conservation.

Pour les apparitions: les parcelles dégagées considérées en devenir, les cohérences typologiques des constructions nouvelles par rapport à l'existant, les formes de la mixité des époques, et les surgissements de constructions nouvelles dans la ville à différentes échelles.

Puis, une analyse tente de mettre en lumière l'actualité de la zone d'étude et les attitudes du développement urbain.

La grille de lecture sur laquelle s'appuie notre analyse peut être détaillée ainsi:



**Grille «Effacements 02, la ville»****Stratégies d'apparition de l'architecture contemporaine****EFFACEMENTS**

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| TRACES :       | Ruines sous cloche<br>Traces de bâti<br>Édifices murés<br>Carcasses                                      |
| RÉSISTANCES :  | Maisons enclavées<br>Quartiers enclavés<br>Édifices  |
| CONSERVATION : | Réparations<br>Modernisation<br>Extensions (commerces, toits, interstices, garages...)<br>Ré-utilisation |

**APPARITIONS**

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| PARCELLES DÉGAGÉES : | Échelle édifice - Échelle quartier/ville   |
| TYPOLOGIE :          | Cohérence - Incohérence  |
| MIXITÉ DES ÉPOQUES : | Échelle édifice - Échelle quartier/ville   |
| SURGISSEMENTS :      | Édifices publics<br>Immeubles - Quartiers - Villes nouvelles<br>Voieries - Infrastructures |

**PARTICULARITES**

Les modes particuliers de la confrontation entre le passé et l'avenir  
- les signes bâtis du rapport à la mémoire.



Fig 3. Vendanges rue Paris.

**Expérimentation**

L'expérimentation a été menée sur la moitié Est et Sud de la zone, comprise entre les boulevards Calea Dorobanților, l'ancu de Hunedoara et rue Paris. À partir du Parc Brâncuși, nous avons procédé parcelle par parcelle suivant un parcours en boucle, longeant la limite Est vers le Sud dans un premier temps, et remontant entre rue Roma et rue Paris afin d'emprunter toutes les rues qui s'y trouvent. Nous avons observé les voies, les édifices et les jardins depuis la rue. Notre étude ne concerne donc pas l'intérieur des bâtiments.

**1. Rue Roma, rue Bruxelles.** Alors que la pointe Nord de cette zone contre le Parc Brâncuși, est intégralement occupée par l'édifice du Lycée I. L. Caragiale dont la construction a effacé toute trace des anciennes parcelles, la partie Sud bénéficie d'une situation enclavée et semble ainsi protégée. Les parcelles régulières sont





Fig 7. Rue Bruxelles



Fig 4. Béton et vegetation.

occupées par les maisons d'origine à un étage, de styles variés, sur des jardins étroits. Bien que les immeubles récents du boulevard surgissent très près, c'est le seul quartier où demeure une trace des anciennes voies pavées. La végétation ici est bien présente et les petits jardins familiaux sont riches d'essences variées et d'arbres



Fig 5. Extension



fruitiers. Les constructions sont entretenues, seules deux villas marquent le temps : l'une, abandonnée, est couverte de lierre, l'autre a été démolie, et sa parcelle vide jouxte une villa moderniste classée.

**2. La parcellisation de la Société Communale pour la Construction des Habitations à Bon Marché** est un ensemble de petits immeubles de styles différents, obéissant tous à des gabarits identiques. Les parcelles sont petites, parfois entièrement occupées par le bâti, quelques plantes grimpent encore sur les balcons. L'ensemble est entretenu et aucune construction nouvelle ne mite l'intérieur de la zone. En perspective cependant on constate que les immeubles modernes du boulevard Calea Dorobanților, aux pieds desquels se trouvent de grands halls d'expositions flambant neuf, ont déjà traversé la rue et bordent quelques parcelles pour une première occupation du quartier.

**3. Tout au sud, à l'emplacement des parcellisations Țesătoră Mecanică I et Moara** de 1935, l'ensemble des logements collectifs d'ouvriers ou d'employés est aujourd'hui enchâssé entre les imposants immeubles neufs du boulevard Iancu de Hunedoara au Sud et les maisons collectives de la rue Roma à l'Ouest. Le style des constructions est varié, présente de beaux exemples d'architecture moderniste, et l'ensemble est régulièrement entretenu. Leur accès est protégé par un accès en boucle qui fait qu'on ne traverse pas le quartier. Autrefois strictement résidentielles, de nouvelles fonctions occupent les maisons, comme des bed and breakfast ou des bureaux pour de petites compagnies, ce qui amorce une transformation dans la vie et les usages du quartier.

Rue Finlanda où les immeubles d'habitation sont un peu plus hauts, la vigne résiste et court parfois sur trois ou quatre étages. Dans

cette partie presque luxuriante, on relève de nombreux travaux de rénovation.

**4. En remontant rue Roma depuis le Sud**, les larges parcelles sont bordées de beaux arbres. On longe de grosses maisons ou immeubles d'habitation collective à trois étages, dont les cours cimentées remplacent toute végétation. En face au contraire, une série de parcelles est en pleine évolution. Elle garde son aspect d'autrefois, styles, gabarits et jardins, et de nombreux travaux de rénovation sont en cours. Cependant ils sont destinés à de nouveaux



Fig 6. Apparition rue Oslo



usages : des bureaux, des commerces ou des services. De même, une importante propriété qui occupait une parcelle entière entre rue Berna et rue Oslo a été rasée. Le parc et les communs sont remplacés pour 1/3 par une zone délaissée, 1/3 par un parking, et le bâtiment principal est occupé par l'administration fiscale.

**5. À la hauteur de la rue Washington**, on devine sur la droite, abrité derrière de hauts murs, un ensemble résidentiel récent qui occupe tout le centre de la parcelle. Moderne et très luxueux, fermé et surveillé il révèle l'intérêt d'une classe sociale aisée pour la vie dans ce quartier. Cette Résidence Washington n'a pas fait l'objet de destructions; il s'agit de la deuxième part d'un programme prévu à l'emplacement des anciennes Filatures Mécaniques réalisé en 1935 sur rue Finlanda et dont la deuxième tranche a été interrompue à cause de la guerre en 1940. Le terrain depuis lors était resté vierge. L'attribution de cet important terrain à des résidences semble un atout pour l'équilibre futur du quartier.



Fig 8. Rue Brazilia.

**6. Rue Londra**, dans sa moitié Sud, conserve une façade de vieilles maisons d'habitations hautes de six étages, aux cours étroites et cimentées. Elles cachent en fait les immenses terrains de la Compagnie des Tramways et du lycée Nicolae Tonitza qui occupent plusieurs parcelles. Ceinturés sur trois côtés par une ligne d'habitations, ces terrains et leurs constructions nouvelles ont tendance à s'étendre de l'intérieur. Déjà, les voies qui les traversaient à l'origine ont disparu et le Sud est entièrement bâti de hauts immeubles modernes.

**7. Ces terrains isolent le quartier Blanc**, le plus ancien (1895). Les rue Mexico, Argentina et Louis Blanc qui le structurent sont prises entre le boulevard lancu de Hunedoara et les premières villas de la rue Paris.

Pris en étau entre des manufactures, des zones d'entrepôts et un noeud urbain moderne, le quartier Blanc occupe un large triangle instable d'un point de vue du développement urbain. C'est véritablement un lieu incertain quant à l'avenir. Les rues régulières sont bordées de jolies maisons d'un étage, serrées sur leurs étroites parcelles. Elles sont souvent mitoyennes, avec peu de végétation; seules quelques vignes forment encore des tonnelles. Les maisons sont toutes dans un état différent. Quelques-unes sont abandonnées et se dégradent, d'autres sont habitées mais n'ont reçu aucun soin depuis des lustres. Au contraire, certaines ont été reprises, rénovées, modernisées ou présentent des extensions contemporaines sur les côtés ou sur le toit. D'autres ont été détruites puis reconstruites en style contemporain mais sur un même gabarit. Enfin surgissent sans aucun respect de cohérence, disséminés dans la zone, quelques immeubles neufs de cinq, six, jusqu'à huit étages. La zone se développe apparemment uniquement selon ses propres règles mais sa forte personnalité et son caractère résidentiel serré l'aident à résister pour un temps encore. En quittant le quartier



Blanc, pour un temps de nostalgie, on a pu assister à une vendange de raisin doré, dans un des derniers jardins cultivés de la zone sur la rue Paris.

**8. Plus au nord, le quartier Bonaparte** de 1913 est en plein remaniement. Les parcelles sont plus larges et les constructions entourées de jardins sont pour une bonne part entretenues, rénovées et modernisées, mais surtout requalifiées. Le quartier en effet, surtout dans sa partie Sud et centrale, est en train de faire une place grandissante au commerce et aux bureaux qui s'installent dans les bâtiments rénovés et transforment les constructions existantes en leur donnant un look contemporain, voire un nom américain (The Group). Quelques maisons ont été remplacées par des immeubles de rapport. La végétation disparaît aussi doucement au profit du bétonnage. L'inclusion d'architecture contemporaine dans le quartier est bien réelle, bien que menée dans le respect de la cohérence des parcelles et des gabarits ; le grignotage est plutôt typologique. Le quartier se transforme donc sans heurt, mais se transforme. Une vie nouvelle s'y développe et de nouveaux services et des restaurants y apparaissent...pour une clientèle nouvellement installée.

**9. C'est en remontant rue Paris vers le Nord** que l'on trouve de spectaculaires maisons bourgeoises - dont certaines sont classées; elles sont abandonnées, intégralement recouvertes de lierre, gelées en attendant de régler les problèmes de propriété, détruites ou transformées en ambassade ou en musée. Quelques-unes, abritées derrière de hautes grilles et une épaisse végétation, ont traversé le temps. Toujours habitées et entretenues, elles témoignent de la vie du quartier au début du XXe siècle. Déjà cependant celles qui jouxtent et longent le Parc Brancusi au Nord



Fig 9. Voisinage.



ont abandonné leur rez-de-chaussée aux commerces, cafés et restaurants qui n'hésitent pas à apporter en façade nombre de modifications et d'extensions.

## Conclusion

La singularité du quartier est manifeste, tout en témoigne: les parcelles régulières, la végétation, l'alignement des maisons ou des petits immeubles, l'absence de grands commerces. On a quitté pour un temps la ville moderne et il est clair, lorsqu'on y pénètre, que l'on entre dans un temps différent, abrité. Mais s'il résiste aujourd'hui, le quartier porte déjà quelques failles.

En premier lieu, l'intrusion de l'architecture contemporaine qui pourrait mettre en danger l'intégrité de cette zone historique se fait de façon subtile mais bien réelle. En accord avec la personnalité de chaque parcelle historique et de sa situation dans la zone, les modes d'apparition du bâti neuf et l'effacement de l'ancien sont divers :

- abandons et démolitions
- rénovations et transformations des édifices
- extensions
- bétonnage des jardins
- inclusion d'édifices contemporains en cohérence avec la typologie alentour
- surgissements et dépassements des hauteurs disséminés dans les parcelles

- encerclement de la zone
- grignotage par l'extérieur sur le côté mitoyen des boulevards périphériques
- expansion de parcelles par absorption de voiries mitoyennes
- requalification, changement de fonction de tout ou partie des résidences

Face à cette situation, les projets de sauvegarde rencontrent plusieurs obstacles. Certains viennent de la diversité même des stratégies d'apparition de l'architecture contemporaine, d'autres sont issus du contexte économique et politique.

La zone étudiée, au-delà de quelques bâtiments remarquables, doit son caractère à une mixité architecturale particulièrement riche. Elle le doit aussi à un code urbain précis - une répartition stricte de parcelles identiques, des gabarits de construction définis, et une végétation encore présente.

Sa sauvegarde se traduit aujourd'hui par la protection de quelques édifices signés ou témoins d'un style particulier. Ce mode de préservation point par point, à l'échelle de l'édifice, se révèle peu efficace lorsque c'est la particularité de chaque parcelle qui fait la richesse de l'ensemble. Cette zone est un tout, un bloc, une exception dans Bucarest dont il conviendrait de ne pas affaiblir les éléments au risque de voir s'écrouler une qualité urbaine qui tient entièrement à la coordination des particularités - à l'échelle de chaque parcelle comme à l'échelle de l'ensemble.

Cependant, à Bucarest la tendance est à l'unicité architecturale, ce qui va à l'encontre des projets de sauvegarde des zones mixtes.



Un second point rend les projets de sauvegarde difficiles à mettre en oeuvre. Il s'agit de la forte influence étrangère de l'architecture qui s'exprime ici alors que les enjeux nationalistes qui impriment les politiques de sauvegarde actuelles iraient plutôt vers une architecture traditionnelle.

Enfin, les conflits entre acteurs locaux dont les intérêts divergent freinent les initiatives. Il s'agit de ceux des promoteurs publics qui voient dans la préservation un obstacle au développement économique, et ceux des associations locales, dont les arguments culturels, économiques et vitaux ne manquent pas. Dans le même temps, alors que les conflits s'embourbent, les décisions de destruction sont rapidement mises en œuvre, ne laissant d'autre choix que la reconstruction.

La nature historique et politique, ainsi que la diversité urbaine et architecturale du terrain d'étude, posent autant de questions d'actualité pour le développement des grandes villes en Europe qu'elles soulignent les difficultés, notamment à Bucarest, de fonder une politique de sauvegarde qui coordonnerait les arguments contradictoires des institutions, des propriétaires et de la population. On voit là encore combien le patrimoine est devenu un des lieux du politique, au centre de tout projet de développement, et combien donc l'interdisciplinarité est nécessaire à fonder ces politiques.

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## The careful management of inevitable change: reflections on the workshop in Bucharest

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### **Safeguarding heritage at risk**

The area under study in Bucharest is an example of the residential neighbourhoods built in many European cities since the late 19th century, in zones of urban extension. These detached houses comprise an experimental laboratory of Eclectic and Modernist repertoire, responding to the new socio-economical and technological demands.

The defining characteristics of the study area – ‘planned parcelling, homogeneity of the urban fabric’, as well as historical, cultural and material values – led to the listing of seven protected urban areas (Lascu 2011). The distinctive values of the site were recognised by all the groups in the workshop, comprising the high quality of urban and architectural design, genuine unity within diversity, experimentation and accuracy of detail, among others<sup>1</sup>.

However, the status of protected area has not been sufficient to safeguard it from several threats, such as derogatory planning, real estate speculation, transformation, reconstruction, demolition or rapid decay<sup>2</sup>.



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Moreover, some of these problems can be extended to other areas of the city where 'destruction and unethical downgrading of monuments'<sup>3</sup> is pointed, as well as the call for more rigorous classification of valuable buildings.

Hence, as it happens in many European contexts, Modernist neighbourhoods in Bucharest are a *heritage at risk*, as they belong to a recent past that has not yet been sufficiently recognised or studied. It is neither properly protected by structures or laws that are designed to ensure its safeguarding, nor is it afforded due recognition by public opinion, so that it would be interesting to discuss ways of transforming this problem into an opportunity, by implementing proactive (and not reactive) measures for its safeguarding<sup>4</sup>.

As far as the public recognition of architectural heritage is concerned, the Romanian National Office of Historical Monuments has been developing interesting initiatives, such as: the creation of a *Historical Monuments of Romania* website, the *Bucharest Historical Monuments Interactive Map*, as well as an interesting participatory experience, *Marking monuments in Bucharest* (Figs. 1-3).

The interactive map of *Bucharest's Historical Monuments* (see: <http://www.apmnir.ro/map.php>) can be an operative tool for safeguarding and protection, if connected with the regulatory plans and the urban municipal policies.<sup>5</sup>

A note also on the potential of the inhabitants' participation and involvement, not only for the increase of their awareness of heritage, but also for the empowerment of local system and communities (which can guarantee both preservation and day-to-day maintenance) as a necessary means for the development, sustainability and maintenance of the sites (ICOMOS 2011).

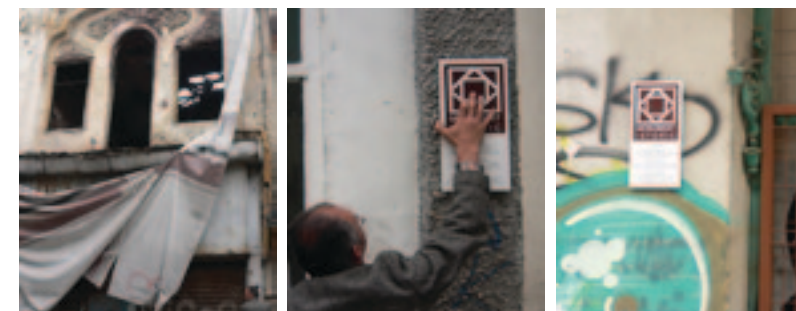


Fig. 1-3.- The project 'Marking monuments in Bucharest' [http://www.apmnir.ro/ro/APMINR\\_Asociatia\\_Prietenilor\\_Muzeului\\_National\\_de\\_Istorie\\_al\\_Romaniei-Proiectul\\_de\\_marcare\\_a\\_monumentelor\\_istorice\\_din\\_Bucuresti\\_\\_\\_prima\\_etapa-99.html](http://www.apmnir.ro/ro/APMINR_Asociatia_Prietenilor_Muzeului_National_de_Istorie_al_Romaniei-Proiectul_de_marcare_a_monumentelor_istorice_din_Bucuresti___prima_etapa-99.html) [accessed on 25/2/2012]

Particularly for the study area, those kind of initiatives are very important, as there is a general knowledge gap on 20<sup>th</sup>-century architectural heritage and it is urgent to proactively develop studies, surveys and inventories as essential tools for its recognition and protection, as well as for the management of change.

Hence, another important measure undertaken by the Bucharest City Hall with the contribution of experts from the 'Ion Mincu' University of Architecture and Urban Planning is the development of studies, projects and inventories on the protected areas of the city, comprising the modern neighbourhoods discussed in the workshop.

Those inventories are an important instrument for the recognition and safeguarding of architectural heritage, when conducted by multidisciplinary teams and comprising wide and detailed information, beyond historical or stylistic aspects: on previous interventions, transformations and uses; on composition and spatial issues (typology, scale, light, organisation, etc); on construction, materials and technical devices; on sociological and anthropological appropriation, etc. Those should be articulated and complemented



with accurate surveys and decay mapping, analysis of materials, and so forth. This information must be constantly updated by surveys in the field and it could also include some methodological guidelines for intervention.

In the recent debate on safeguarding and conservation, 20th-century architecture is one of the most prominent subjects. Among others<sup>6</sup>, the 2011 ICOMOS Conference on *Approaches for the Conservation of Twentieth-Century Architectural Heritage* laid out some useful guidelines for its safeguarding and conservation which are resumed in the *Madrid Document* (ICOMOS ISC20C, 2011). This document points out the cultural significance of 20th-century heritage, comprising not only its tangible attributes, 'including physical location, design, construction systems and technical equipment, fabric, aesthetic quality and use', but also its intangible values, such as 'historic, social, scientific or spiritual associations, or creative genius' (ICOMOS ISC20C, 2011: 1). It relieves also the importance of identifying and accessing 'all components of the heritage site, including interiors, fittings and associated art works' (ICOMOS ISC20C, 2011: 1).

Furthermore, this document calls for the recognition and promotion of the cultural significance of 20th-architectural heritage with the wider community, key audiences and stakeholders as essential parts of the conservation process, as well as to foster professional and educational training programmes on this heritage's conservation subjects.

In this field, the *Escola de Arquitectura da Universidade do Minho*, sensible to the emerging problematic, has promoted a PhD programme on *Architecture – Sustainability, Conservation and Technology* with an advanced knowledge seminar on Modern Architecture Conservation, which 'aims to spread best practices

and methodologies of intervention applicable to the conservation of modern buildings, whether they are classified as icons or, more simply, central places of our daily lives' (EAUM 2011).

### Conservation as management of change

The two houses visited by the workshop participants in Bucharest reflect two different approaches towards architectural conservation.

The first house (Figs. 4-5; House 1), follows a more conservative approach due to the owner's intentions (not a very common enterprise, as has been said). Based on prior diagnosis and accurate survey, it has been proposed to conserve the spatial organisation, the structures and the materials, as well as technical devices which are proposed to be reused or adapted to new requirements. This is an interesting example of the *management of change* which could



Fig.4.House 1. Exterior view from the backyard.





Fig. 5. House 1. Original heating device.

become a pilot and exemplary intervention with disclosure and dissemination on good practices for academics, technicians and civil society in general.

In the second house (Figs. 6-8; House 2) we observed the opposite approach, reflecting the owner's wish to have it equipped with all kinds of technology and comfort, as well as to ensure the most efficient use of energy and respond to new functional demands. Hence, the house was transformed and reconstructed in almost every element (with the same *image*, apparently) in such a way as to include a large amount of technical devices and a different spatial organisation.

The parallel between these two approaches reflects a dichotomy inherent to 20th-century architecture conservation/restoration: shall we conserve the material document or shall we restore the (iconic) image?



Fig. 6. House 2. New roof structure

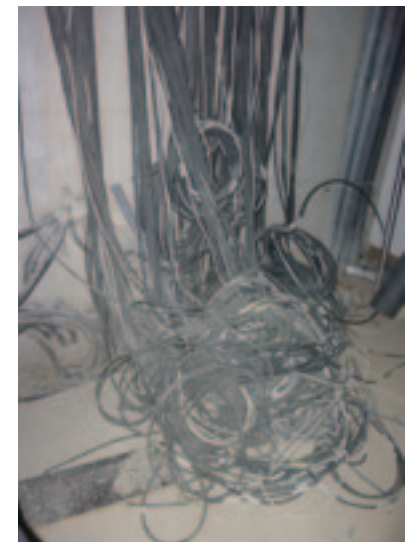
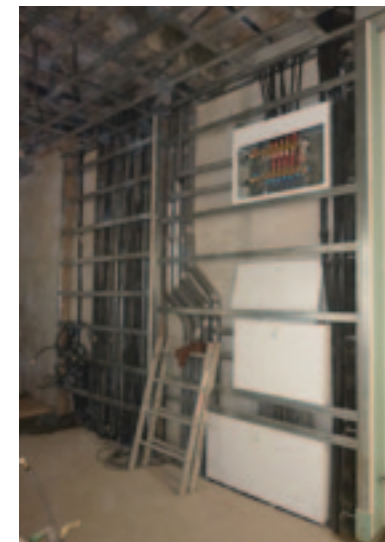


Fig. 7-8. House 2. New technical devices.



Considered a recent past, there has been a prevalent tendency, even in the most paradigmatic buildings, towards privileging the formal value recovered by restoring an *original* image and neglecting its material and intangible values – aging, uses, transformations – its integrity, its authenticity and its aura (Dezzi Bardeschi 1995: 12).

However, in the conservation of 20<sup>th</sup>-century architecture, as well as of more ancient buildings, *good practices* are about understanding all the cultural and material signs, maximising permanence and ruling transformations, not only of exterior image, but also of typological, spatial, material and intangible attributes. A more conservative position recalls the importance of having prior in-depth knowledge, minimising replacements and furthering the building's life cycle.

In this way, conservation planning requires an interdisciplinary approach, involving researchers and specialists in modern conservation technology, on non-traditional materials, comprising their condition and deterioration processes<sup>7</sup> using non-destructive methods.

When facing inevitable additions and interventions – namely, for the necessary adaptation of the building to new uses and requirements, as well as to the current regulations and comfort standards – it's important to consider the principles of contextual design in continuity with the pre-existing attributes (character, scale, form, setting, composition, proportion, structure, materials, texture, colour). These additions should be discernible as new or identifiable upon close inspection, 'but developed to work in harmony with the existing; complementing, not competing' (ICOMOS ISC20C, 2011: 4). Hence, the interior strength of the building should guide the intervention, namely by 'conserving the integrity of what exists' and 'making changes only punctually or exceptionally' (Siza 2011: 186,188).

Moreover, considering the vulnerability of modern heritage to accelerated deterioration due to material, formal and technological characteristics, preventive and planned maintenance strategies are the best preservation action for architectural heritage and the reduction of long-term repair costs (Canziani 2009). Ordinary maintenance can then be a useful instrument for preventing decay and material damage (thereby increasing preservation), as well as for improving local participation, education and employment by reactivating professional craftsmanship and constructive skills.

Furthermore, pressure for architectural heritage sites to become more energy-efficient is increasing over time (as we may see in the above-mentioned houses in Bucharest), so conservation should take into account contemporary approaches to environmental sustainability (ICOMOS ISC20C, 2011: 4). Nevertheless, it's important to consider that old buildings have good passive design systems (good inertia in their supporting walls, good thermo-insulation, natural ventilation systems), and that the existing technical devices have good potential for re-use, often with economic benefits and stronger respect for pre-existing values, as we saw in the first house in Bucharest.

This is one of the most problematic and threatening issues in safeguarding 20th-century architecture (Tostões 2011: 205), namely because of the current regulations and standardised building codes (e.g. accessibility, health and safety, fire-safety, seismic, and energy efficiency) which should be more flexibly adapted as they are often not adjusted to the site's climate conditions and they become very exigent to pre-existent building conservation. Moreover, technical devices should be attentively studied and evaluated as a material cultural sign, also because 20th-century architects concerned themselves with the integration of devices in the architectural



design – as one of the important features of the ‘total work of art’ (Gropius 1955: 3). This requires analysis and negotiation with the relevant authorities to avoid or to minimise any adverse impact on heritage, case by case.

Despite the recent prolific debate on this subject, there are still many questions remaining open for discussion: on the definition of authenticity – of image, material or progressive? (Jerome 2011); on the repair of different materials, on technical devices, on regulations and on energy efficiency and sustainability, among others. Hence, the need for previous knowledge, a case-by-case approach, ensuring that the design is in keeping with the building’s aura; all of these principles serve to remind us of Alvaro Siza’s statement that ‘the project is in the site’. Hence ‘managing change is an essential part of the conservation process to maintain cultural significance, authenticity and integrity’. (ICOMOS ISC20C, 2011: 3).

### Final note

The strong decrease of economical and ecological resources, combined with the effects of a globalisation strongly determined by standardisation and westernisation, generates forms of instability in human society. The new conditions point towards a change of paradigm in safeguarding and conservation, defined by the presence of new values for heritage – such as economic, ecologic, social and political (Roders 2007) – which largely transcend those defined at the beginning of the 20th century (Riegl 1903). Unfortunately, in times of economic crisis, heritage tends to be mostly considered for its economic value in a short-term perspective, overlooking authenticity and long-term local development.

In conclusion, the regeneration/conservation of modern neighbourhoods should consider the respect for the material and

intangible authenticity of architectural heritage, in articulation with the participation and empowerment of local systems and communities. In this way, heritage can play a major role in the creation of tomorrow’s society, particularly if it is connected with other networks on a global scale, increasing the quality of life by enhancing identity and self-esteem, as well as by promoting local and sustainable development for future generations.



Alvaro Siza’s recent conservation project for Casa de Serralves, an Art Deco detached house in a Modernist neighbourhood of Oporto, proposed to maximise the preservation of the existing building through a ‘surgical’ intervention, namely on the exterior plasters, windows and technical devices which are preserved with local and accurate reparations. (Photos kindly provided by A.O.F.- Filipe Ferreira.)



## Notes

- 1 Notes collected from the working group's discussions and from supervisors' reports.
- 2 The workshop groups identified different kind of problems in the area: gentrification and gated community; an aged population; the island character (due to the absence of connection with the city); a general lack of investment in the maintenance and in the quality of public space design (traffic, parking, cables, sidewalks, surfaces, etc); negative impact and integration of new buildings (scale, material, colour, design); heavy functional conversions; reconstructions and restorations; as well a general gap in education and recognition of this kind of heritage. Notes collected from the working group's discussions and from supervisors' reports.
- 3 'Bucharest's Threatened Heritage', <http://bucharestheritage.wordpress.com/already-demolished/> (accessed on 25/2/2012)
- 4 To solve this problem, some guidelines were posited by the working groups, such as the possibility of attracting younger generations, fostering social and functional 'mixité', investing in the quality of public space design and in its maintenance, improving regulatory framework in protected areas, investing in education and awareness of local communities (guides, guidelines, exhibitions, events), developing participatory practices on planning and conservation and exploring comparative cross-experience with similar cases in Europe. (Notes collected from the working group's discussions and from supervisors' reports.)
- 5 See the case of Oporto's 'Carta dos Bens Patrimoniais', which is articulated with the Municipal Regulatory Plan. (<http://sigweb.cm-porto.pt/MipWeb/> - accessed on 25/2/2012)
- 6 There has recently been a prolific debate on 20th-century architectural heritage documentation, safeguarding and conservation. Among others, DOCOMOMO, TICCIH, UIA and the Getty Conservation Institute have been promoting conferences, workshops, meetings and publications on these subjects.
- 7 An interesting study in this field is Di Biase, Carolina: 2009. *Il degrado del calcestruzzo nell'architettura del Novecento*. Maggioli. Milan. See also detailed bibliography in MacDonald, S., Ostergren, G. 2011. *Conserving Twentieth Century Built Heritage: a Bibliography*. Getty Conservation Institute: Los Angeles.

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## Sustainability and heritage: a challenge for contemporary culture

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### Introduction

The workshop that took place in Bucharest was distinguished by an interesting temporal shift (from ancient to more recent history) and by a shift in scale: from the single object or sum of buildings to the integrated vision of them in a whole urban context. This change made them more sensitive to, and more capable of, multiple complex meanings and values. This choice allowed the participants, from various European countries, each with their own cultural heritage (and not exclusively based on the specific disciplines of conservation and restoration), to come together to design a large fresco with the crucial help of local professors. This fresco combines the particulars of some clearly defined themes (making reference to cultural value, identity and conservation of material) as well as some more blurry issues. This fresco has the advantage of being able to present itself as an articulated story; expressing reflections, proposals, actions and wide-ranging programmes that take note (where it was possible to develop such ideas in such a short period of time) of the complexity of the themes, problems and actors involved.



### **From tradition to recent history: a look at the city of the 1900s**

When reflecting on the values, meanings and forms of change that took place in cities in the twentieth century, the issue is essentially one of 'historicising'. The urban heritage is the product of recent construction or modification, as a result of which we feel more and more embedded in a world of contemporary, simultaneous events and actions that tend to legitimise a given form of change in the name of progress. Then we have contemporary culture, with its latest revolutions in macroelectronics, microelectronics and now digital, which emphasises this sense of simultaneity, making us live in a world where time is reduced to nothing while space expands into infinity. This effect connects simultaneity with synchronicity, so that we have a sense of living in a present without end (Picon 2010; Andreta 2011)<sup>1</sup>.

Simultaneity and synchronicity therefore have certain repercussions in terms of our perception of recent urban history. They have an effect on the sense of memory; on the capacity or incapacity to maintain the twentieth-century city with a diachronic view of events; on the reasoning and methods used by the creators of this urban space. Often, the historiography of the twentieth century has focused on single masterpieces, individual actions. However, in so doing there is often a tendency to neglect all the other parties and events which have come to shape the narrative of a piece of work and an urban space (Olmo 2010: XX). If we move our focus from the work of architecture, or the historical-monumental complex, to the urban part (as occurred in the area examined), a complex vision, rich in significance, is emphasised. In this arena we are connected to the social construction of facts and not exclusively to a precise conception of time.

If we move our attention from the architecture to the city and from tradition to the 1900s, it forces us to ask the question: what is the meaning of cultural memory? Cultural memory, in fact, determines the form of change and what constitutes value in terms of our heritage, something which, in recent urban history, has gradually given way to that of purely monetary value.

### **Cultural memory and heritage value: the 'resilience' of a garden city**

How can you govern change so as to avoid the alterations that have characterised the recent history of the area (particularly where it borders the urban centre)<sup>2</sup> and that have provoked relative isolation? What value can we recognise in the site? To what extent can a so clearly defined urban fabric (even though the characteristics change from street to street) assimilate the modifications and transformations without undergoing external distortions in perception, significance and use? The permanence of function (mainly residential), as in the area under consideration, is not in fact guaranteed either over time or in terms of memory. Despite the fact that it is certainly important, tools are already in place at the University, and have been used by the pilot programme for the area, to evaluate the 'vocation' of the buildings. This process has selected those that will be conserved, partially protected or transformed/demolished (Bratuleanu, introductory lecture).

These are the problems which are very present in the contemporary arena. In the face of the environmental, social and economic risks of senseless development, the term 'urban resilience' has been coined. This term has been transferred from materials engineering<sup>3</sup> and ecology.<sup>4</sup>

When applied to social studies, the concept of resilience indicates the capacity of a group or person to allow for change without losing



their identity; it is a sign of the intelligence with which a community faces its difficulties. It is the ability to allow modifications to take place while managing to maintain its own roots, its own history, the connective fabric that sustains everyday life, the social exchanges and the symbolic system that sustains the entire community.

Parallel to this, the term resilience has also been appropriated by the study of environmental organisation, with regard to ecological development and urban livability. The resilient city modifies itself by responding with new economic, social and environmental changes which permit it to withstand environmental and historical pressures over time. Resilience has therefore become a vital part of sustainable development nowadays, primarily when considering organisational and management models of urban systems. However, urban resilience cannot be considered to be a spontaneous process, but is rather a necessary indication of the clear intention to recognise cultural identity and values. Social diversity provides a clearer, more striking picture of urban life and the relationship between living privately and living in a more communal sense.<sup>5</sup> The architectural value of the artefacts is the result of the excellent traditional architecture school, Beaux Arts. Firstly, it is modernist, and secondly, all their values revolve around a formidable example of the twentieth-century city, which for a long time determined the concept of the 'garden city'.

In fact the garden city continues to be the unsurpassed example (for the entire twentieth century) of the expression of the scale on which the design of the urban city is modelled; the balance between nature and artifice that aims to guarantee democracy, citizenship and efficiency of service while maintaining the urban roots of Western society. The garden city, although with obvious differences, contains both the residences of some of the upper class and also the middle and lower-middle class (Communal Company for Low-cost Buildings, Țesătoria Mecanică Company).

## Regeneration and sustainable growth

In choosing to change the scale of the object of work, a new term has been allowed into the game of contradictions that make up the titles of workshops dedicated to teaching conservation.<sup>6</sup> The precise term is 'regeneration', meaning and possible variations of which are the dedicated reflections of the organisers and participants.

Regeneration; rebirth; capacity for sustainable growth<sup>7</sup>: these are all terms that refer explicitly, for those concerned with heritage, to keeping an eye on future decisions.

The safeguarding and management of architectural heritage, both in terms of landscape and culture, by creating a balance between conservation and change, is really one of the key foundations from which it is possible to pursue the goal of sustainable development and growth. Sustainable growth, in this sense, overcomes any type of reasoning which merely evokes, or rediscovers (sometimes artificially), sustainability in traditional building processes able to provide an efficient and effective response to constructive, social and climatic problems.

More broadly, in fact, the discussion about the relationship between sustainability and heritage includes topics such as:

- the increase in cultural vitality, both in terms of tradition and local identity
- a long-term view on education regarding environmental responsibility and conservation of resources
- economic growth, such as sustainable tourism

The shared aims and interests of sustainability and historical and cultural heritage is not, however, devoid of contradictions. The



'short age' (Hobsbawm, 1994) that has only recently ended and the dawn of the new millennium that followed has brought with it some evidence of inherent cultural risks with regard to the issues of growth and development (apart from the more widely discussed problems of climatic change and environmental emergency).

### **Sustainability and heritage: contradictions and risks**

Technological innovation supports this delicate time of growth and sustainable development. For decades now, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has been an indispensable economic model based on knowledge and efficiency. Not by chance, and for even longer, it has been fundamental to the methodology and practice of conservation and restoration. In terms of conservation and the management of construction, for example, ICT has become a fundamental tool for the organisation of knowledge and management of complex assets,<sup>8</sup> as well as for managing the network systems and energy that extend to the urban sector in an intelligent way<sup>9</sup> - that is to say, smart grid, intelligent cities which possess autonomous home automation networks (to use the example of the flourishing Europeans projects and tenders).

Technological innovation is now also needed as a tool to help with the energy emergency currently afflicting the planet. This crisis is jeopardising the opportunity of giving future generations the time and space to suggest more balanced and sustainable modifications to the anthropic environment than we have done (Derrida 2008: 253).

The environmental crisis uses technology as an alleged instrument of salvation: to obtain higher levels of energy efficiency; to clear reductions in consumption and emissions of harmful pollutants

into the atmosphere; towards the progressive improvement of environmental comfort and optimisation of buildings' environmental performance as a whole.

Some likely scenarios that will shortly affect the building environment, not to mention historical heritage, can certainly be shared. With all probability, in the next few decades it will help to have a reversal in the way we produce and distribute energy, with a move from centralisation (by large producers) to diffuse decentralisation, specifically to the production of small quantities of energy which will then be consumed locally (Andreta 2011). This will give rise to more questions about the compatibility and possible integration of such models with the territory, landscape and urban environment.

It is the right time to start providing answers to these questions, even in terms of historical heritage. However, there is a risk of an excessive technicism, which threatens to promote the primacy of the idea of the 'new' at all costs, or simply to save fuel consumption.

The relationship between technological innovation and architectural and environmental research is still largely a process of the simple application of products and technologies – in other words, applied science (Arthur 2009) – which does not constitute real innovation. This often leads to an unbalanced relationship and a greater emphasis on just the technical components, which do not correspond to effective cultural advancement. Neither do they improve the capacity to assimilate and modify the technology to achieve higher long-term objectives (Staudenmaier 1985).

Contemporary architecture confuses technological innovation with the social utility of techniques needed to solve problems. The contemporary 'synchronic' account therefore contributes to a vision of technology assumed to have total value, and in so doing



it allows for a total separation of the planning of the work and the technology needed for knowledge of materials (Olmo 2010).

This is not however, a purely contemporary problem. In 1913 the new Theatre of the Champs Elysées opened in Paris. The enormous atrium, balconies and walkways were bathed in a splendid new atmosphere thanks to the lights that hung suspended by subtle glass cylinders, designed by Lalique and fuelled by the new electric lights. A few decades later, the hot, powerful, halogen light technology completely replaced the original lighting that was by then considered too feeble. However, the heat created by the lights overheated the Lalique glass and it exploded. In order to save them, a few decades on from then (around the 1980s) they were replaced with resin copies (Reichlin 2011: 18). Another twenty years after that and new LED technology could now allow conservation, directing the lighting system towards new forms of design and creativity.

### The result of technicism

In many European cities of the 1900s, and particularly in the area of Bucharest under consideration, the change is strongly influenced by the fluctuation in ownership between public and private.

Twenty years after the fall of the regime, the urban space of Bucharest is becoming an exceptional profit-making resource. The economic stagnation of the area has allowed its character to be preserved over time; however, the financial commitment required for its maintenance is not always something that can be sustained by private owners. After being reassigned to the original owners, many of those re-inheriting opted to sell to new developers. This shift brought with it a new burst of growth, however not necessarily in terms of regeneration.

During the workshop there were visits to two projects designed to recover residential villas. It was a construction site, in progress, with restoration work still to be undertaken (a single-family residential building on Emile Zola Street, 1935). The visit brought to light the different approaches that exist to tackle the issue of environmental sustainability, which on the one hand has to satisfy the requirements for internal comfort and on the other hand has to try to save resources. Identical requirements can result in vastly different responses, sometimes completely antithetical. The desire to put the buildings back as per the original plans, which are characterised by remarkable decorative elements (such as the grilles to cover the air ventilation holes), is undoubtedly motivated by the efforts to regenerate and give new life to the building structure and its 'vital functions'. (Fig. 1, 2)



Figs. 1, 2. Single-family residential building on Emile Zola Street, 1935. Details of the grille that covers the air ventilation holes and of the railing.



In the second building visited (a single-family residential building on Av.Gheorghe Demetriade Street, 1932) a powerful equipment plant was included, fuelled by geothermic energy and centrally controlled by intelligent control units, according to the most recent principles of home automation. This applauds the supremacy and power of technology but could conflict, inevitably, with the conservation of original material. (Fig. 3, 4)

Regarding the projects financed by new owners, we saw a stark contrast that was very incongruous with a large European capital. There was a physical and functional obsolescence of urban network systems (public lighting, for example) and an almost total absence of the maintenance of public spaces. (Fig. 5)

The examples are used to underline the theme of environmental sustainability and its most common definition in terms of energy efficiency of buildings and establishments. This cannot be separated from a wider definition that includes not only the technical choices that bear reference to the values associated with the cultural heritage of a twentieth-century city, or only economic gain, but also with regards to social values. The inherited assets, as demonstrated by the changes taking place in the area examined, are not impervious to the projection of individual and collective memory (Pedretti 2011). To govern growth responsibly, between regeneration and alternation, it should be questioned which rule will be able to effectively regulate the mechanisms of transformation on the one hand and maintain real meaning for cultural memory on the other.



Fig. 3. Single-family residential building on Av.Gheorghe Demetriade Street, 1932. Details of new equipments.



Fig. 4. Single-family residential building on Av.Gheorghe Demetriade Street, 1932. Details of new equipments.

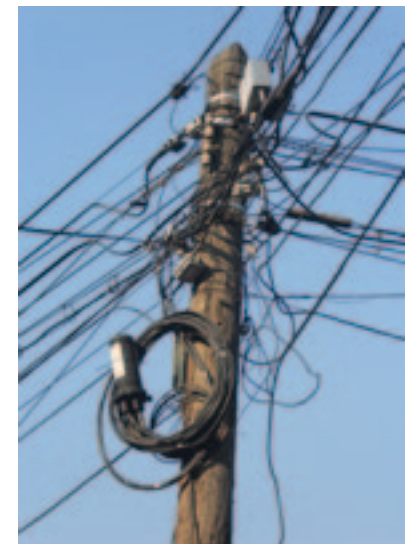


Fig. 5. Detail of the public lighting grid in the examined site.



### A new challenge for cultural heritage

The specificity of the architectural heritage, including that of a monumental character, the reasons for its preservation and the training of the people for its safeguarding, has been such that over the years technological innovation has remained on the outskirts of this field, both on an academic and professional level as well as in terms of public action.

The tardiness with which the cultural heritage sector in its entirety has dealt with the issue of environmental sustainability – for example, improving the level of eco-efficiency and saving resources – can be transformed from a weakness into a point of excellence.

Technological innovation in both large and small projects cannot do without the clear and shared objective of quality. This, however, certainly does not coincide with energy efficiency, or effective technical choices, but is only dealt with by the specialist who (not by their own fault, but rather as a result of their training) is often a long way from having effective knowledge or a real desire to respect the heritage with which they are dealing.

For this reason it is necessary to loosen some of the methodological and technical bonds in order to overcome the segmentation of competencies which up until now has been at play in this sector.

In particular, the importance of protecting and safeguarding the traditionally constructed heritage and its historical values must be maintained. However, at the same time it is desirable to set up a system of rigorously fundamental scientific knowledge relating to traditional and local constructive solutions for environmental behaviour, which until now have undergone little investigation.

Parallel to this we need to encourage reflection on the compatibility criteria between the objectives and the requirements of conservation (physical and testimonial) and the need for a significant improvement

to the traditional heritage building. This is necessary, not so much with regard to single manufacturers (a problem apparently resolvable thanks to the individual specific projects) but rather on the urban system level.

It is mainly for these reasons that the Cultural Heritage and Landscape sector, more slowly than others, is giving more weight to the importance of environmental technologies. This might even play a key role beyond the confines of this specific discipline; in the reporting of the discussions and research on a less reductive and more conscious plan for the various implications that the issues raised have for the human environment, both now and in the future.

This may contribute to an ever more necessary overturn in the objectives and cultural references which until now have been considered exclusive. Apart from the issue of conservation of resources, the concern for the protection of goods and the importance of suggesting research into new forms of compatibility may be pushed to the foreground.

The culture of restoration, in the broader sense, brings to the surface a set of values which help to bring back into the technical sphere the importance of understanding its role as a means rather than an ultimate end.

### Guidelines for sustainability; between innovation and creativity

Having studied the chosen area, which is considered to be a typical case in point, it seems necessary to propose guidelines aimed at combining conservation, enhancement, regeneration and sustainability. It is also important that the guidelines consider saving energy resources and improving environmental comfort, both of individual buildings and at an urban level.



In line with the recent guidelines for the sustainable conservation of historic heritage developed in Europe and North America<sup>10</sup>, Bucharest's problem regarding the sustainable regeneration of a whole part of the city can be tackled with the involvement of public administration, research bodies and technicians involved in both the design and implementation of the interventions. This should take place according to a vision that integrates different knowledge and specifications, not only in the area of conservation and protection, but also in terms of environmental certification<sup>11</sup>, energy audits and plant design. (Fig. 6, 7, 8)



Fig. 6. Changeworks, Edinburgh World Heritage 2008. Energy Heritage: A guide to improving energy efficiency in traditional and historic homes. A range of possible interventions on traditional windows.

**WINDOWS**

| RECOMMENDED   | NOT RECOMMENDED   |
|---|---|
| Maintaining windows on a regular basis to ensure that they function properly and are completely operable.<br>Cleaning and repairing historic windows when deteriorated. | Respecting to maintain historic windows and allowing them to deteriorate beyond repair with the intent that they must be replaced.<br>Replacing historic windows and replacing them with new windows for perceived improvement in energy performance. |
| Weather stripping and caulking historic windows, when appropriate, to make them weather tight.  |   |
| Installing interior or exterior storm windows or panels that are compatible with existing historic windows.   | Replacing repairable historic windows with new insulated windows.   |

**Recommendation (21)** Historic exterior storm windows have been well maintained and continue to perform as intended.

**Recommendation (22)** The new multi-pane interior storm window was carefully matched to the exterior window to maintain the historical effect of the historic window.

**Recommendation (23)** A historic wall and roof can be repaired and does not justify replacement of the window.

**SOLAR TECHNOLOGY**

| RECOMMENDED  | NOT RECOMMENDED   |
|--|---|
| Considering viable solar technology only after implementing all appropriate measures to improve energy efficiency of the building, which often have greater life-cycle cost-benefit than on-site renewable energy. | Installing on-site solar technology without first implementing all appropriate measures to improve its energy efficiency.   |
| Ensuring whether solar technology can be used successfully and will benefit a historic building without compromising its character or the character of the site or the surrounding historic district.              | Installing a solar device without first analyzing its potential benefit or whether it will negatively impact the character of the historic building or site or the surrounding historic district. |
| Installing a solar device in a compatible location on the site or in a non-dominant building or addition where it will have minimal impact on the historic building and its site.                                  | Placing a solar device in a highly-visible location where it will negatively impact the historic building and its site.   |
| Installing a solar device on the historic building only after other locations have been investigated and determined infeasible.  | Installing a solar device on the historic building without first considering other locations.   |

**Recommendation (24)** Solar panels were installed on the roof of the historic building, which is a non-dominant building and has a minimal impact on the historic building and its site.

**Recommendation (25)** New exterior solar panels have been installed on the historic building, which is a non-dominant building and has a minimal impact on the historic building and its site.

**Recommendation (26)** New exterior solar panels have been installed on the historic building, which is a non-dominant building and has a minimal impact on the historic building and its site.

Figs. 07, 08. Grimmer A.E., Hensley J.E., Petrella L., Tepper A.T. 2011. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service, Washington, D.C. Example of structure and contents of the guide.



The tools allowing for the preventive control of interventions in the form of guidelines have, for several years now, demonstrated an effective synthesis of the action taken by participating administrators and technicians – from owners to investors, administrators, developers and users of facility management services. A guide dedicated to the enhancement and regeneration of heritage according to the principles of environmental sustainability can, above all, act as a stimulus and promotion of a cultural behaviour that is shared by both the administration and the community, local or otherwise.

For this reason, a lot of attention was given in the workshop to the identification and construction of a system of recognisable and shared values. These are considered to be an essential basis for the formulation of guiding principles.

The study of architectural, material, structural and morphological characteristics also in historiographical terms forms the basis upon which to construct an information system. This system takes into consideration problems linked to both the conditions of conservation and the durability of materials and components, as well as stability, livability, effectiveness and efficiency.

Traditionally, this information made up the diagnostic activity in the field of conservation and restoration. At this point more data on the behaviour and energy efficiency of materials and components needs to be included. This must comprise information for plant design, which should be calculated theoretically (according to models developed ad hoc) in relation to climatic conditions and exposure and in comparison with the actual patterns of fuel consumption. The guide can suggest calculation models and contain results from sample buildings that have been chosen for their morphological, structural and plant design as well as settlement and climatic characteristics.

All this brings us onto the identification of some recurring problems. Despite the fact that we are working from the specificity of individual cases, it has allowed for the production of a response in the form of compliant and compatible technical solutions. From these one can then be chosen or expanded upon, case by case. The problem of the compatibility and permissibility of interventions makes up one of the most fundamental aspects of the guidelines. The issue of method, technique and strategy is in fact one of clarification (a priori, of the criteria, in a clear and not reductively prescriptive or excessively technical way) which will allow those responsible for the control of the building activity to retain a permissible intervention, or at least one based on principles of protection, enhancement and regeneration. It will also allow them to identify the effects of the intervention (visual, environmental and economic) on the heritage, urban fabric and environment.

The clarification of the criteria for when interventions are permissible or not may follow, in the hypothetical construction of a guide, the identification of possible solutions to problems of isolation of the external seals, both opaque and glass (ground floors, walls, doors, windows and roofs), with particular attention to the window systems which are so distinctive in the architecture of the early 1900s. These considerations should produce solutions that go further than just simply substituting more efficient components of the same shape<sup>12</sup>.

The problem of isolation efficiency of the building must not exclude the plant efficiency and must also consider efficiency at the urban network level (water systems and the supply of water<sup>13</sup>, heat, cooling and lighting): their integration should allow for a consistent saving of resources but should not neglect to consider the possibly invasive effect of new work on the structure of existing buildings.



Another interesting point is the possible integration into the building-plant system of renewable energy sources, primarily sun, wind and geothermic. The aspiration is for quality, not only in terms of fuel savings but also to open up the way for previously unpublished research on the integration of plant systems. The approach which seems most prevalent (for example, the installation of solar panels), both here and abroad, appears to be one of 'mimesis' or rather a minimisation of the predominant visual effects. (Fig. 9, 10, 11)



Figs. 09, 10. Bucharest, examined site. A simulation of the change of covering mantle in copper slabs (on the corner building) with an integrated solar system (to produce hot water).

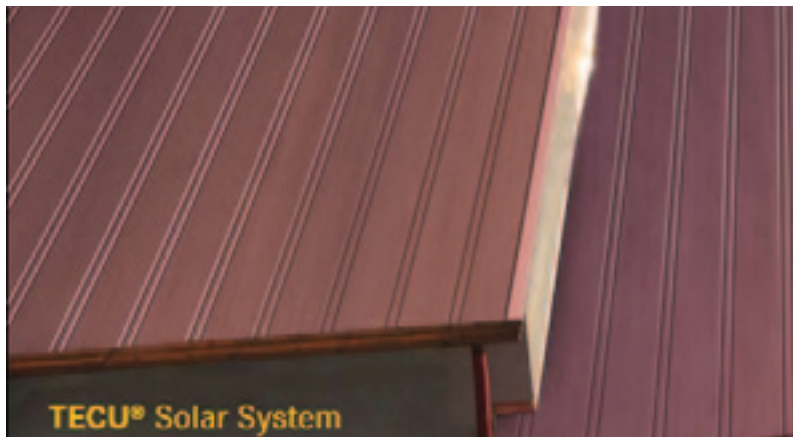


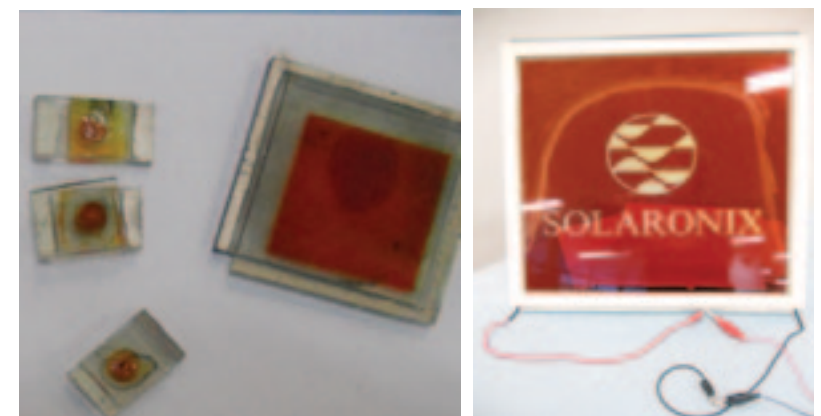
Fig. 11. Example of solar integrated technology, under the copper slab.



Figs. 12, 13. Bucharest, examined site. A simulation of the substitution of the canopy, made of glass or plastic, with a photovoltaic glass component.

However, the integration of new plant devices with new technology brings up other considerations concerning the relationship between conservation, innovation and creativity. (Fig. 12, 13)

The ever more frequent adoption of innovative technology and equipment powered by renewable energy sources in projects of conservation and redevelopment of historical heritage (old or recent) brings into focus the necessity of a creative approach. This should be developed in different forms from that which is commonly accepted at present.



Figs. 14, 15. Demonstrative solar cells photovoltaic, transparent and artificially coloured.



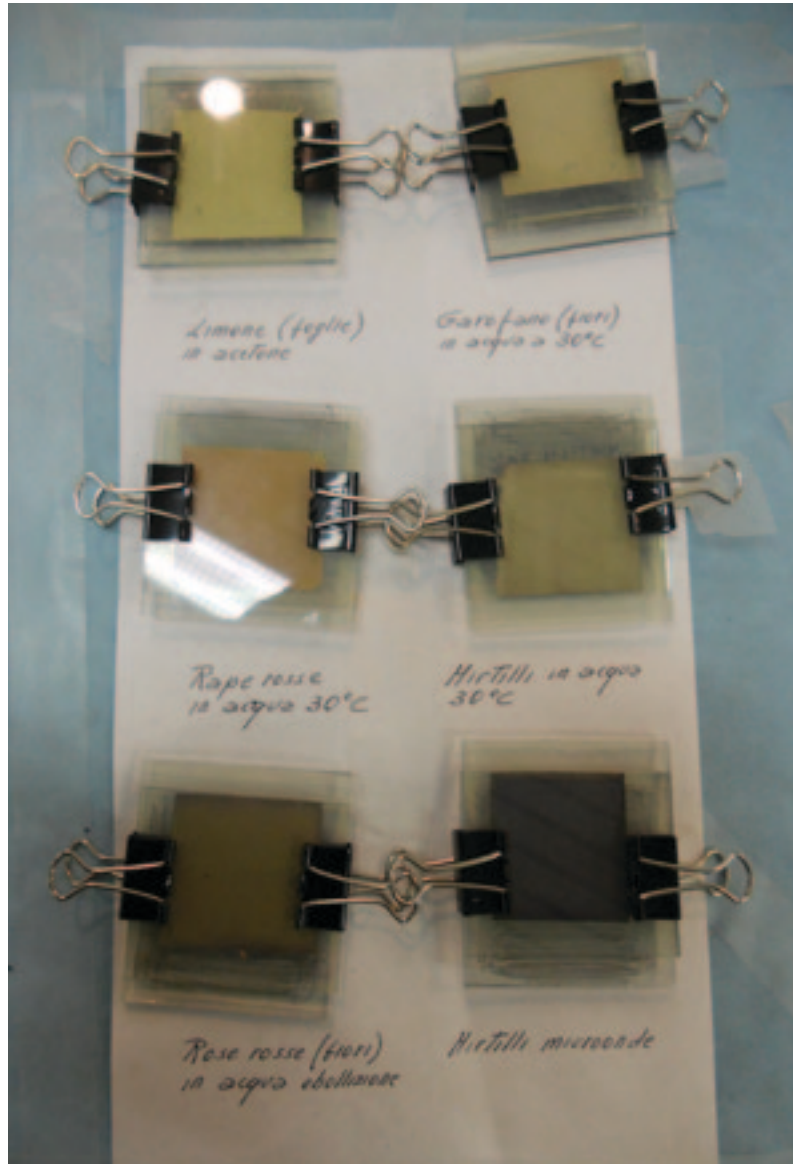
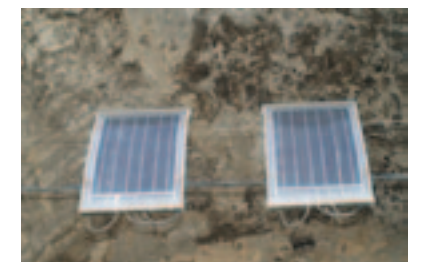


Fig. 16 Demonstrative organic solar cells derived from nature. From top to bottom (left column): leaves of lemon in acetone; red turnips in hot water (30°C); red turnips in boiling water. From top to bottom (right column): flowers of carnation in hot water (30°C); blueberry in hot water (30°C); blueberry in microwaves. (Fotosensorg project— CNR Sesto Fiorentino, Florence - University of Siena - EXERGY Arezzo)

Creativity can be expressed through the design of components that can be more easily integrated with traditional architecture. This can go hand in hand with the most recent experiments in the field of new materials, for example in the production of organic solar cells (Fig. 14, 15, 16), or a thin film which can attach to supports and act like a photograph-printing process, or elements in solar cells on a non-rigid membrane and therefore better adapted for the production of awnings and other additional elements. Creativity can be



Figs. 17, 18, 19 Portovenere, Eastern Liguria, UNESCO site. The Doria Castle seen from Island of Palmaria. The castle has been chosen as object of experimentation of an European Project, which result was the desing and intallation of the "Solar Flag", a public lighting system made of solar cells (photovoltaic).



expressed through research, in terms of design, into the possibility of integration with existing architecture, and not necessarily hidden from view, as suggested by some guidelines. (Fig. 17, 18, 19)

Creativity, therefore, should not be understood to be a spectacular gesture of research but rather as a process of organisation of information and knowledge, even if in unexpected ways (Lumer and Zeki 2011; Barrow 1995). Much of modern architectural research is dominated by unpublished work developed through processes of morphogenesis, and draws on digital technology. The culture of safeguarding and conservation, on the other hand, calls for a poetry of hidden space and values, revealing places and characteristics that have perhaps been forgotten due to the intelligent distribution of necessary additions (Reichlin 2011: 29).

## Notes

1 The synchronicity, the absence of sedimentary time, will often lead to self-referencing gestures in architecture, on a material that is seen as being capable of whatever type of alteration or transformation, such as that evident in the latest insertions in the area examined.

2 For example, in office buildings and in the National Television complex.

3 Resilience is the material's capacity to withstand external shocks without sustaining serious damage.

4 The concept of 'resilience' pioneered by Crawford Holling in the early 1970s, indicates the capacity of an ecosystem to restore homeostasis, or rather the conditions for equilibrium following an external intervention (like those of man, for example) that may provoke an ecological deficit. In his ecological version, the concept of resilience has tended to highlight and define the capacity of systems, natural or human, to absorb elements of disturbance, allowing for a process of internal reorganisation that is in tune with the external changes, in such a way as to preserve over time (though perhaps modified) its own structure and function.

5 Despite the impoverishment of the social and collective dimension is precisely one of the evident problems of the actual conditions of the neighbourhood examined it.

6 Conservation/Restoration, Genoa, 2007; Conservation/Transformation, Dublin, 2009.

7 The term is taken from the Brundtland Report, which satisfies needs without compromising resources for future generations and without, for the moment, limiting itself to a reduction just in terms of the green revolution.

8 This refers, for example, to the construction of indexes, archives, or information systems for urban and housing planning, as well as (suggested by the participants) the experiences in Northern Europe and North America associated with Building Information Modelling for the planning around existing heritage.

9 For example in projects associated with 'Smart cities' and 'Smart grids'.

10 Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (2011) *Sustainability and historic federal buildings*, Washington, D.C.; Canada's Historic Places (2010) *Standards and Guidelines of Historic Places in Canada*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; Changeworks, Edinburgh World Heritage (2008), *Energy Heritage. A guide to improving energy efficiency in traditional and historic homes*; The Vancouver Heritage Foundation, *New life Old Buildings. Your green guide to heritage conservation*, Vancouver; *Energy Efficiency in Traditional Buildings* (2010), Advice Series, Ireland; U.S. Department of Energy, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory & Kaufman Heritage Conservation (2011) *Energy Performance Techniques and Technologies: Preserving Historic Homes*; Grimmer A.E., Hensley J.E., Petrella L., Tepper A.T., (2011) *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service, Washington, D.C.

11 See, for example, Energy Performance Certificate, LEED, BREAM, LCA.

12 An interesting example of interventions on traditional windows is included in the Guide developed for the historic city of Edinburgh (2008): *Energy Heritage: A guide to improving energy efficiency in traditional and historic homes*. The problem of tampering with window frames of twentieth-century architecture is crucial, particularly with regards to the different dimensions in comparison to more traditional frames, but also the different materials and ways of opening the windows.

13 See, for example, *Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems*; this is particularly interesting for the 'garden city' examined, which is so rich in vegetation.

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## The preservation of modern architecture and the decay of new materials

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With the Industrial Revolution, the process of replacing traditional materials with new materials became one of the highlights of innovative building production: not only concrete, steel and glass, but also new methods of production for traditional building components such as bricks, artificial stone or wood.

One of the specific characteristics of modern architecture is that of innovation in materials and construction techniques, and significant consequential problems arise in the conservation and re-use of materials.

The use of innovative materials, compared to the traditional, now poses new issues relating to their conservation. Many experimental materials have not proven effective; some have been replaced by newer products with better performance, while others were simply abandoned in favor of cheaper materials.

Innovation in installation systems has further contributed to change the building itself: think of the impact of heating or air conditioning on the shape of buildings, or the use of materials and claddings in exterior, non-loadbearing walls, where a high heat loss was considered acceptable. All these innovations required many attempts, not always fully successful (hence heavy and unexpected phenomena of degradation), or they are currently



constrained by the specific problems of obsolescence (deterioration of reinforced concrete, metal windows, installation systems, etc), or they lead to health problems caused by materials formerly used enthusiastically, such as the asbestos-based ones. Moreover, new building methods and environmental conditions have also affected traditional material. They have changed the size, the specifications of components (such as natural stone or brick wall facings), and the conditions of use (lime plasters not resistant to air pollution replaced by cement plaster, lack of eaves able to keep rainwater off the external walls, flat roofs with difficulties concerning effective waterproofing, etc). The buildings that are part of the urban sector of Bucharest under examination confirm this.

The municipality of Bucharest, on the basis of studies performed on its behalf by the Ion Mincu University of Architecture and Urbanism, has since 2000 provided specific protection standards (HCGMB no. 279/2000) for many urban areas, mainly relating to the identification of the buildings included in the list of monuments and the relationship between the lot and public space, and the determination of the functions allowed for the buildings and planning criteria.

With later resolutions (Definition of the technical system of construction in protected areas – Phase I – 2005, HCGMB no. 34/2009), adopted unfortunately only for some of the areas covered by earlier studies, each building has been classified by identifying its architectural value and consequently the level of protection to be undertaken in relation to it. Five protection categories have been set: the maximum degree, which provides for mandatory preservation, was extended from the buildings already included in the list of monuments (Group A) to other buildings also considered worthy of the highest preservation (Group B); for the buildings included in other classes only partial protection or no protection at

all are foreseen, and only respect for the street frontages, for the surrounding spaces and for the spaces for public use is imposed. A specific regulation clarifies the terms of the protection. The vast majority of cases are limited mainly to the exterior aspect, and nothing is said about the preservation of the used materials and of the building interiors.

All urban sectors located in the area under examination, i.e. the triangle of blocks between Calea Dorobanților, Iancu de Hunedoara Boulevard and Aviatorilor Boulevard, were included in the classification of 2000, and were identified with different numbers between the compartment n.47 and the compartment n.53. The further, more detailed classification of 2009 concerned only three of the seven sectors, namely n.48 (Filipescu parcelling), n.49 (Bonaparte-Mora) and n.53 (Mornand).

What is clear is the substantial amount of buildings which have been included in the second classification in the range of buildings to be preserved, in addition to those already included in the first list. Moreover, the need for a partial preservation has been stated for a very considerable number of other buildings.

This is demonstrated by the number of listed buildings in the first list compared to that of the second. For example, in sector 49 (Bonaparte-Mora), virtually all buildings, except a small number, were included among those to be protected, albeit to different degrees: in fact, to the 62 buildings included in the first list with the highest degree of protection were added almost as many (57) with the same degree of protection, and 160 with a degree of partial protection. The same applies to the sector 53 (Mornand): with the new classification 42 buildings were included in the list of maximum, and 57 of partial, protection. So, it means that today some 100 buildings are protected, as against only 7 buildings included in the classification of 2000.



And in the Filipescu area, which is the most prestigious area parcelled on the basis of a plan of 1912, where buildings were designed by leading architects of the time and built in the period between the two world wars, many of them were protected from the first list, which in fact included as many as 41. But even here the protection has been widely extended, because in the new classification 21 other buildings were considered worthy of total protection and another 25 of partial protection.

In summary, it appears that in the second phase the aim was to protect not only individual buildings, but broadly the entire building stock considered with its surroundings, thus preserving the unitary image of the urban sectors, and trying to minimise demolitions and replacements that would irreversibly alter the appearance of this area. It is clear that the purpose was to preserve the image of this part of the city, as the standards of protection, expressed in detail in the *'Regulament Adițional'*, are especially related to the external appearance of buildings, making possible compatible changes in their use and making even very heavy interventions. A comparison of the urban plans showing the protected buildings before and after the second classification makes this intent clear (Figs. 1, 2).

The fact that throughout the urban area under consideration there is a significant disparity between the protection of the three sectors included in the second list and the other four sectors is quite serious, because in reality there is no great difference in value between the various architectural and environmental areas of this part of the city, except perhaps in the case of area 50 (Țesătoria Mecanică) where extensive substitutions occurred in the post-Second World War period: the construction of a dozen large buildings, out of scale in size and height, has irreparably compromised the structure of this parcelling. The same type of replacement buildings, moreover, are present on almost all frontages facing the great Eastern and Southern boulevards.



Fig. 1. Comparison between the buildings inserted in the 2000 (left) and 2005 (right) protection list of the n.49 - Bonaparte-Mora parcelling. In the 2005 list nearly all buildings were classified, as worth of the maximum (brown) or at least of simple (orange) protection.



Fig. 2. Comparison between 2000 (left) and 2005 (right) listed buildings of the n.53 - Mornand parcelling. Even here, where nearly no building was at the beginning considered worth protection, in the second phase a great amount of buildings were included in the list.

Although the buildings within the whole area are in very different styles, ranging from French Eclectic neo-Classicism to Art Nouveau, to Deco and to Modernism, the substantial homogeneity of the



sector is provided by the typology of the buildings. All have only a few floors, mostly built for a single-family and with a small green space adjacent.

Almost all of them arose in the first half of the 20th century and their materials, even in buildings apparently going back to traditional Romanian constructions, are often the typical innovative materials of that period.

So in many buildings the structural elements of floors are in reinforced concrete, windows and doors consist of metal frames, and exterior finishes and decorations are in artificial stone.

Many of the buildings with horizontal structural elements in reinforced concrete and walls in masonry have the typical horizontal cracks corresponding with the slab position, due to the different thermal expansion of the latter in relation to the structure of the wall. When this happens in buildings that have a flat roof at the top, often waterproofing is lost and a subsequent leakage occurs, rainwater penetrates and the underlying renders and walls are washed out, and in some cases a considerable damage takes place (Figs. 3, 4).

Special mention must be made of metal windows and doors. Many buildings are equipped with these elements, but the problem of energy saving – very important given the present situation – raises doubts about their conservation, unless they are deeply transformed in order to make them suitable to support heavier glazing and insulating gaskets, indeed difficult to be inserted. In those cases where the restoration has already been performed, the old exterior window has been coupled with a second internal element of modern technology, thus overcoming the problem even at the price of a relative heaviness of the intervention.



Fig. 3. The building, scraped off plaster and decorations, shows a vertical traditional brick masonry, coupled with concrete slabs and lintels.



Fig. 4. The plaster of the façade is marked by many dark drippings due to leakage of the terrace insulation over the concrete slab.





Fig. 5. The wooden intrados of the eaves of a building. The leakage of the drainage system, hidden in the cornice, has caused the strong decay of this part of the roofing.

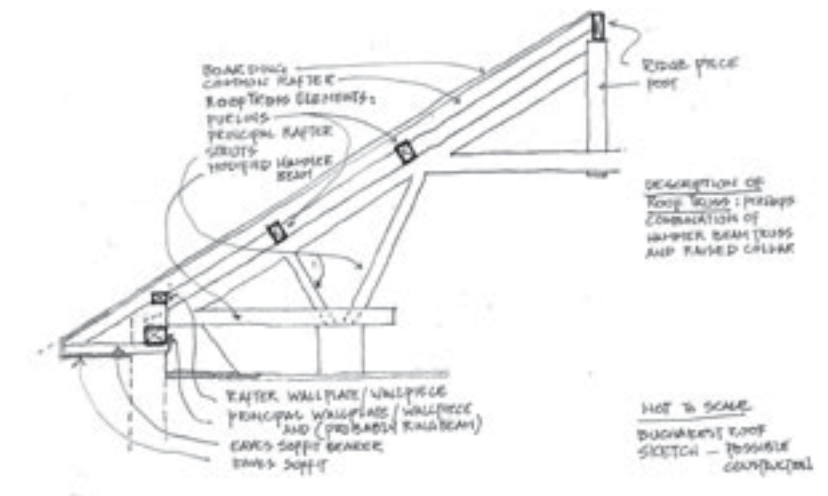
A peculiarity of the traditional-style buildings is given by the tremendous overhang of eaves, usually with a flat wooden soffit (Fig. 5).

In the visited building located in Strada Emile Zola 2, it has been possible to see the support system of the large wooden outer horizontal eaves. A wooden beam, located under the trusses, is inserted into the masonry and serves as their support; but the most important use of this beam is to fix the timber elements below, used as corbels to support the eaves, as is made clear by the long row of timber elements heads visible under this dormant. The whole roofing system is completed by a superimposed planking and a metal cladding above (Drawing 1).

The roof carpentry of this building is particularly interesting. A series of wooden structures comparable to coupled transverse trusses, resting on the perimeter walls and intermediate low supports,



Fig. 6 The roof carpentry of the building of Strada Emile Zola 2.



Drawing 1. Scheme of the elements of the carpentry and of the system used to support the eaves (sketch by courtesy of L. Kealy).



sustain the above purlins and rafters, with a strange complexity made to free the passage in the central part of the attic. The weakest point of the whole structure consists in the support of the hip rafter, which is suspended and apparently labile (Fig. 6).

On the other hand, the skill of the carpenters in working with wooden elements is well understood if we think of the traditional building system of Romanian vernacular architecture; this consists mostly of wooden buildings in which very complex carpentries are always used, as can be seen in many buildings of the Village Museum.

In this same visited building, special attention is to be given to the equipment. The solution adopted for heating, with heating elements embedded in the floor in correspondence with the doors and surmounted by decorated metal grids, is certainly relevant. The necessary adaptation of the systems that has to be done in the restoration works should attempt not to destroy so sophisticated and special a solution (Fig. 7).



Fig. 7. The heating system of the building, located under the floor in correspondence of the fixtures and hidden by refined cast iron grids.

More often, in fact, very invasive works are needed in the case of adaptation of services which are inevitably inadequate for today's needs. Even in this case, however, sometimes the will to insert hyper-advanced equipment involves a total distortion of the building and often also a risk for its stability, unless heavy reinforcement works are carried out. However, this would be useless in a sense, due to being actually dictated only by the excessive changes made in renovating the original building.

In the building of Strada Emile Zola 2, the interior flooring is equally valuable and refined, ranging from precious marbles to real mosaics made on-site, to wooden floors laid on laths and often also equipped with perimeter colored bands. Even the outdoor paving is equally distinguished, in some places made with cobbled strips flanked by stone slabs (Fig. 8).



Fig. 8. The on-site made mosaic floor at the entrance of the house.



Also well preserved is the interior decoration, with wooden panelling, stuccoes and marble fireplaces, where even some of the old lighting elements still survive.

But all this apparatus, in rather Classical taste, is placed to decorate a building in which the structural elements, or at least the horizontal ones, are made of reinforced concrete, to prove once more that the building technology was up to date, despite appearances.

In fact, the concrete beams were clad in wood and decorated to simulate a traditional structure, and the ceilings were made with plastered wire mesh placed under the reinforced concrete slabs where, according to the samples made visible, the iron bars are unfortunately heavily corroded (Fig.9).

Particular attention has to be paid to surface finishes. In general there is a particular care of the external surfaces, despite the diversities due to different levels of quality of buildings which took place from the very beginning because of the parallel variety of

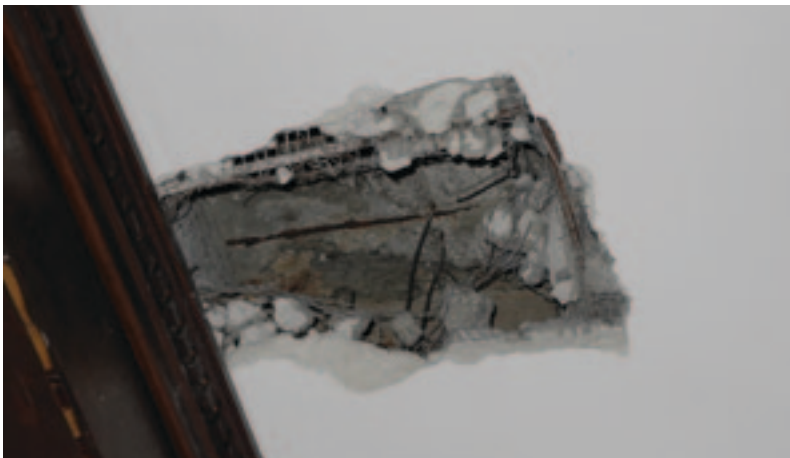


Fig. 9. Detail of the floor structure of the living room. The beam, in concrete, has been covered by wooden boards and enriched by moulding. The hole in the ceiling shows the real structure: plaster on iron net, suspended to the concrete slab.

parcelling quality. In fact, in addition to areas highly prized, such as that of the Filipescu parcelling (where today, by no accident, many embassies and commercial headquarters buildings are located), there are also areas expressly devoted to housing for the middle class, as is the case with the Blanc parcelling.

Only few buildings have brick cladding, as most of them are covered in plaster and artificial stone. In any case, particularly elegant is the special treatment of some of the brick façades, mostly located in Filipescu parcelling.

The very refined façade of Bușilă Villa in Strada Rabat 1, built in 1931-32 by Duiliu Marcu, has in its lower part a very regular pattern of rows of headers alternating with rows of stretchers, while the upper part, including the last row of windows and a white smooth cornice above, is inspired by the brick claddings with decorative relief typical of the Maghreb area, such as those existing in the buildings of Tozeur in Tunisia, or the Seu of Salamanca (Fig.10).



Fig. 10. The refined upper part of the Busila Villa brickwork, with the relief motif made with projecting rowlocks alternating with couples of stretchers.



Equally refined are the claddings of the villa, built in 1934 and also by Marcu, located on the corner of Bulevardul Aviatorilor and Strada Muzeul Zambaccian, and of the building of Strada Atena 14, where the veneer of thin bricks is topped by a hipped roof whose cornice from the bottom appears like a strongly projecting thin plate, and where the door of Classical style is framed by an arc interposed with a true marble filigree (Fig.11).



Fig.11. The main door of the building of Strada Atena 14. The brick facing, made by very thin elements and relatively thin joins, contrasts with the marble framing, of a rather classical style, of the openings. Exceptionally fine is the marble grid around the entrance door.

Particularly extensive is the use of artificial stone, often worked with tools traditionally used for natural stone. In fact it is common to find façades with the surface treated as false ashlar: these, delimited by a deep incision, often have a smooth edge band and the central area texturised by a bush hammer. The same attention is also given even where there are more complex elements, like some columns in which a small astragal and a neo-Byzantine capital almost modelled as a fretwork is superimposed on the fully bush-hammered shaft (Figs.12, 13).



Fig.12. The false ashlars in artificial stone of a façade in traditional Romanian style seem worked with the same tools as real stone ashlars.



Fig.13. The cladding in artificial stone of the column and of the above arch, texturized with a bush hammer, is now detaching and appears particularly difficult to be restored.

The decorations in artificial stone characterise the majority of academic and traditional style buildings, and most of them do not seem to be made on site but consist of prefabricated elements



Fig.14. The cast stone decorating a stair parapet, over a wall in false ashlars.





Fig.15. The refined flower motif in cast stone placed as a frieze at the top of the building, in correspondence of a bow-window. The chiaroscuro of these elements contrast with the flat plastered surfaces of the rest of the façade.

applied to the fronts and the openings of buildings. Moreover, even if most of the mouldings are made on site, some also seem to consist of precast elements. This shows the great use made of this type of decoration and of the large existing repertoire on the market at that time (Figs.14, 15).

The problem of their degradation and their replacement is quite serious, because these materials are no longer available on the market and each time a specially-made reconstruction is necessary.

Thus it happens that, in the renewal of a façade, the decorative elements are left in place although the plaster is completely removed. On the contrary, at other times, the decorative elements are removed and the render is kept (Figs.16, 17).

The degradation of the elements in cast stone, common to a large number of buildings, involves a substantial risk to the image of this urban sector.



Fig.16. In the intervention, the plaster has been removed and only the relief decorated elements have been preserved.



Fig.17. The artificial stone capital has been lost and the restoration of the façade requires to make a replica, preferably casting a mould of the remaining capital.



Equally, many plasters, whose finely worked surfaces are almost unique, are in danger of being eliminated by the practical impossibility of their difficult reproduction, such as arises in the case of even small lacunae or gaps made in order to update the older services.

Moreover, the range of renders with different textures on the façades is very large: together with the smooth plaster, there is a very wide variety of rough plasters of different grain-embossed finishes, executed with very different tools. In general, these are rough and chiaroscuro effects on surfaces, side by side with flat and clear profiles, mouldings or fields, that highlight openings, edges, special contours or decorative elements of the façade (Fig.18).



Fig.18. The façade has been enriched by the juxtaposition of contrasting surfaces: the rough render, the smooth cornices and moldings and the chiaroscuro of the cast stone elements.

In some cases there is a simple plaster in which the very fluid layer of mortar has been roughened – the textured surface produced by a float resting on it in a direction perpendicular to the wall - with a high contrast between the parts treated this way and the smooth mouldings and decorative elements finely treated in relief. In other cases, the technique involves smoothing with different pressures a plaster rolled out rustically and with parts in relief, so that varying degrees of roughness and a final chiaroscuro are obtained (Figs.19, 20).



Fig.19. The particular texture of the render highlights the cast stone elements placed on it.



Fig.20. Particular with a rough render aside very elaborated columns and frames and basing on smooth colored moldings.





Fig. 21. The rare plaster of the upper level of this building, made putting on a rough render many flashing big quantities of mortar, then flattened, with the final effect of a series of irregular flat circular shapes on a rough bottom. This upper part of the façade and the above protruding eave, a classical cornice with even dentils, has a strong contrast with the lower, smooth, part of the façade.

Usually the rough surface is placed in contrast with flat parts, but sometimes two different stipple surfaces are adjacent, using the textures with the same meaning as the superposition of orders in Classical architecture: the lower part is very rough, while the upper is always less coarse (Fig. 22).

Some buildings have a special plaster in which the surface is

In all of the urban area a wide variety of plasters and renders are present and their richness and number is of particular importance, not only for the façade aspect but also for the whole environment.

In the exterior plasters of the buildings a whole gradation of surface roughness, from the smooth and flat plaster, usually painted, to pebbledashed surfaces, with all the intermediate ranges of apparently unrefined surfaces, may be found (Fig. 21).



Fig. 22. Two renders of different roughness are superposed, divided only by a flat fillet.



Fig. 23. The irregular shadowing of the surface given by a render only partially flattened.

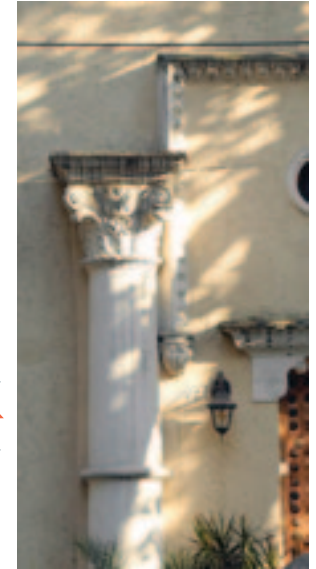


Fig. 24. The almost flat plaster of this façade makes it difficult to understand that the plasterwork is nearly the same as the previous, and that the main difference consists in having brought to a deeper level the final flattening.

characterised by a continuous succession of flat areas with irregular cavities, probably made with the old manual machines used to spray the mortar, which was followed by a slight float finishing and a thin painting. The resultant effect is that of a flat surface with a particular chiaroscuro due to the discontinuous criss-cross voids (Figs. 23, 24).

Different levels of the final *chiaroscuro* effect are also found here, depending on how much the surface has been flattened. In some cases the surface is almost a continuous succession of voids; in others, where on the surface only occasional voids appear, indicate that the initial technique was the same, and only the following flattening process was different.

Here too, we see that the practical impossibility of integrating the gaps with a new plaster similar to the existing one causes an improper intervention, or is the premise for the future that the existing plaster is to be demolished, despite the fact that it is in general remarkably well preserved.



This is well shown by what has happened to some of these façades, where the missing areas of plaster have been filled with a mortar apparently made with cement, and this addition violently contrasts with the rest of the surface, heavily altering its initial high quality level (Fig. 25).



Fig. 25. The lack has been “repaired” with an improper mortar, damaging in an irreparable way the façade.

Among the others, the building of Strada Argentina 33 is worth highlighting. Here the plaster of the façade is prepared adding to the mortar fragments of a transparent and shiny material, probably a micaceous mineral. This causes the plaster to shine and sparkle in many places (Fig. 26).

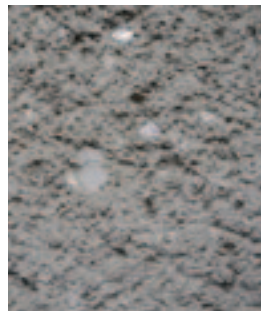


Fig. 26. The plaster with the inclusion of small shiny elements, probably of a micaceous nature.

In the same building there is an extended use of a polished cast stone made with crushed marble; this artificial stone is used, for example, to coat the walls bordering the courtyard from the street (Fig. 27).



Fig. 27. Detail of the terrazzo cladding of the low fence wall of the building.

The terrazzo technique made and polished in place, at the time widely diffused in Italy, is now virtually lost, and in this building the many elements now decayed are particularly difficult to recover.

Moreover, in this same building, which has an interesting irregular plan, there is one of the finest examples of an iron corner window, where the linearity of the vertical post is rhythmically interrupted by

sequences of sets of three horizontal elements, all framed by a thick rectangular frame (Figs. 28, 29, 30).

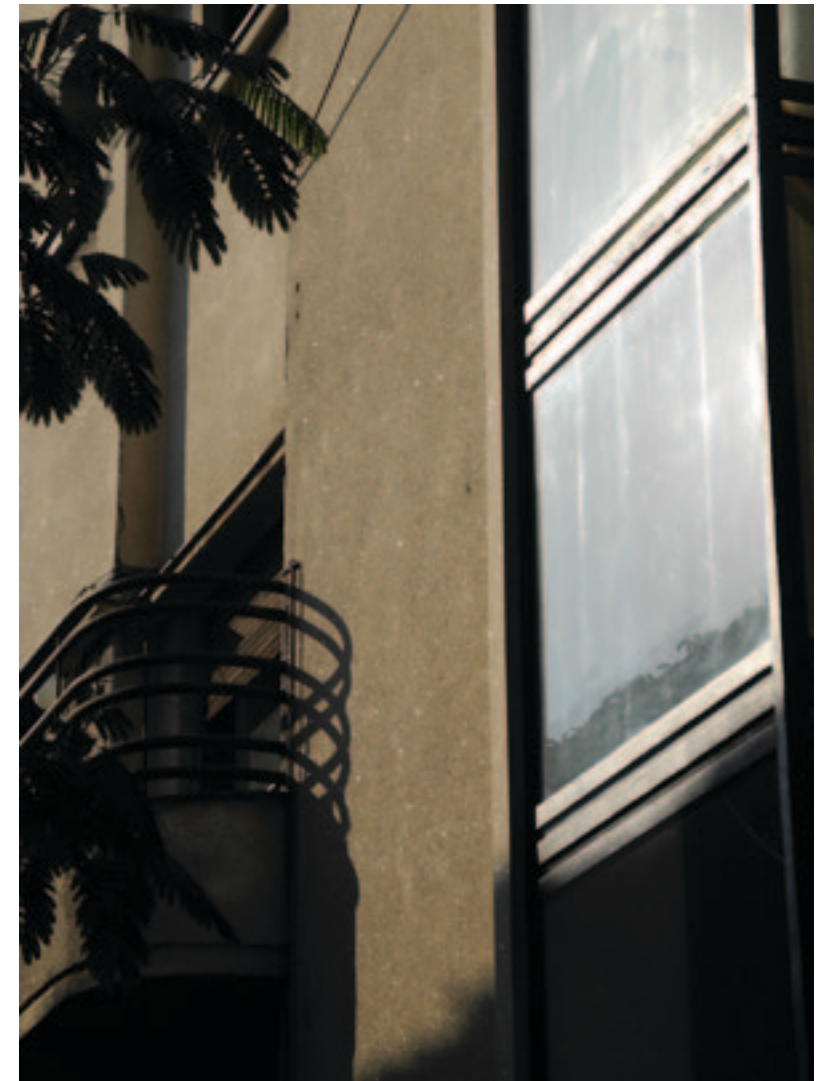


Fig. 28. The facade of the building of Strada Argentina 33, with its plaster including spare spots shining in the sun, its elegant corner window and the typical curved balcony.





Fig.29. When making the new render, simply rough, the masons have partially covered the rich frieze at the top of the façade.

In conclusion, at the moment it appears rather difficult, given the situation of the Romanian legislation and standards, to give an appropriate level of preservation for the sometimes exceptional quality of the inner spaces and materials, but the '*Regulament Aditional*' should take into consideration, at least, the preservation of the external surfaces.

As we have seen, the richness of the exterior finishing of the buildings has great importance in giving this part of the city its high value.

If no consideration were given to the existing materials and plasters, the refurbishing works that – more or less, sooner or later – will involve the entire building stock, the value of this area,

and the expressed purpose to preserve its image will fail. The very heavy interventions allowed by the present *Regulament*, trying to minimise demolitions and replacements, will lead to a complete transformation in the appearance of the buildings, because of the impossibility of reproducing many of the ancient plasterwork techniques. The appearance of this area will irreversibly be altered and its unitary image, given also by the richness and variety of the exterior surfaces, will decrease in value.

In any case, a first attempt to preserve the area will be made by at least extending to all the remaining sectors the same detailed classification adopted in 2009 with the second resolution, and which is unfortunately related only to three of the seven urban sectors.



Fig.30. The kind of works made on this building, in particular the concrete curb at the top of the walls, makes it impossible to preserve the original fine plaster. The building, at the end of the works, will have a quite different aspect from its initial status, thus contributing to decrease the variety, and hence the richness, of this part of the town.



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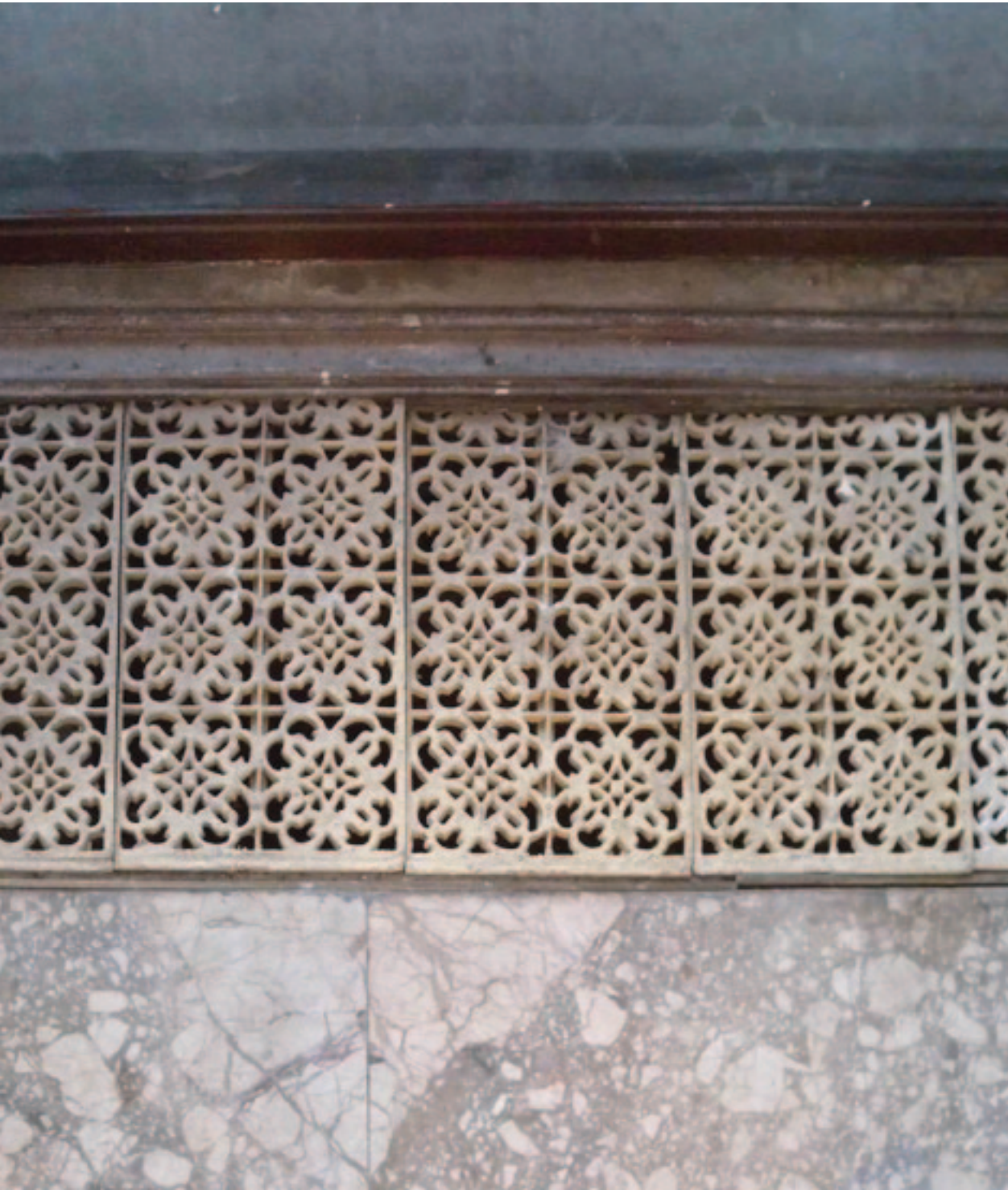
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## Energy saving and architectural heritage protection in a Modernist neighbourhood

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Any protection strategy must nowadays increasingly take into account the necessity of reducing energy consumption. The relationship between energy and architecture, between energy and cities, is a global question. We must get used to reading and describing the existing urban landscapes through the energy key. In this perspective it is also necessary to develop new multi-disciplinary tools and to bring experts and the public closer to this different approach. This is the objective of a recent French research programme<sup>1</sup>, which, rather than individual technical solutions, invites us to consider the consequences of new energy standards on urban living and on built heritage. Only an overview and the awareness of the public can avoid inadequate piecemeal visions, which can strongly distort the interpretation of the data and which suggest choices and practices that, by solving just one component of the problem, can frequently aggravate the other ones. A reduction and a redistribution of energy consumption clearly needs to decrease the material production. A more careful control of the consumption of sources and energy is needed, and at the same time it is necessary to focus on the change of behaviour and on alternative productivity, exchanges and ways of life. Even if the French program – unsurprisingly – does not speak of heritage protection, this is one of those challenges that cannot be missed: heritage protection has by nature the task of



balancing multiple needs. Reconciling the permanence of use with the defense of historical memory is an interdisciplinary task and a specific requirement for heritage protection as well. Moreover, this new challenge concerns one of its most contested and controversial areas: the neighbourhoods and urban areas and more modest and recent buildings.

In this sense, the urban fragment of Bucharest between Aviatorilor Boulevard, Calea Dorobanților and Iancu de Hunedoara Boulevard offers a significant possibility of validation. The inventories which have been used to select and protect the buildings, in varying degrees, have hitherto assessed the architectural heritage following the most basic and general categories of architectural history. The decorations, especially on the façades, and the architect who designed them, are frequently considered the almost exclusive assessment parameters and used as the basis of legal measures of protection, often partial. Even the printed inventories, widespread in all European countries, extensively refer to the categories of art history; however, the urban history and, more generally, historical sciences play an equally important role. They are the mirror of a public opinion which has both the habit and the material instruments to defend its identity even in this field. In Bucharest, in the commission of the public authorities, the wish to have a most flexible instrument is evident: formal or stylistic values to be safeguarded can be contrasted by the economic value of investments; against a language understood by few people, arguments that have a strong hold on the greater public are used. The substance of buildings and their structural components are rarely taken into consideration; they would allow us to clearly measure to what extent listed buildings are preserved.

The evaluation of the energetic aspects of the protection could also introduce different, but not less clear, economic parameters,

including the energy consumption and the actual energy savings in the heating or cooling which would result from works, even demolition.

The daily practice of building protection and the use of the exemptions seem to empty of content even the cautious protection measures now in force. Evoking a surely relevant problem, as energy could maybe seem unrealistic or still immature in the context. It might instead be used to show that protection also involves practical problems, that it affects the daily life of inhabitants, that it is part of a process of civil development. Moreover, an already open question would be anticipated: all over Europe, energy saving is proving to be a dangerous tool to circumvent the requirements of architectural heritage protection, an 'objective' instrument to legitimise any sort of proposed destructions. The existing buildings must, almost all over Europe, deal with norms for energy saving thought for new construction. The absurdity of these parameters has imposed a widespread and systematic recourse to more or less extensive exemptions. But a conceptually less precarious defence is necessary. The specific, and still unrecognised, qualities of the built heritage must be highlighted. Starting from the physical characteristics of existing buildings would permit more efficient measures, even from a technical point of view.

One may ask why, on this ground, we are still at the first steps. Forty years have passed since the limitation of energy consumption has motivated substantial transformations on existing buildings. It started in the 1970s. In Western Europe it was necessary to reduce oil consumption, for political and economic reasons. The battle against air pollution in the most dense urban areas proceeded in parallel, and required the abandonment of fossil fuels with higher sulphur content and the adoption of more efficient boilers and burners. The most common and visible interventions consisted



of replacing windows. In the same years, not casually, the know-how related to the maintenance of these wooden or iron devices went astray. Their complex layers were developed between the 18th and 19th centuries: from the inside, the blind shutters, the double frames with glazing, the exterior shutters or jalousies... Since heating by convection was prevalent, all efforts were directed either to decreasing the 'cold-wall' effect produced by the glass surfaces through the use of insulating glass, or to hindering air exchange through the windows. New and serious obstacles to human comfort were often determined, and sometimes decay mechanisms of building surfaces started. Moreover, the lost window frames were often of excellent quality and fundamental in defining the appearance of buildings, especially those of the modern movement, where the architecture found in the technical constructive detail is a privileged means of expression. In Eastern Europe, the economic logic then in force and the indifference to pollution have avoided this step: the replacement of the window frames in our neighbourhood is the result – still sporadic – of imported opulent models and of the weakening, also here, of the practice of recurrent maintenance.

Along the streets, door and window frames still reflect, in their different characteristics, the stages of the progressive urbanisation of the area. The Kastensfenster – the double-glazed shutters on one fixed frame, typical in Austro-Germanic regions – characterises the more modest homes of the first parcelling Blanc (1895) (Fig.1). The 18th-century French *croisées* with their partitions 'à petits bois' are replicated in the main residences of Filipescu Park. In buildings that were heavily influenced by the themes of Romanian regionalism and its variations, or by the Art Deco style, the complex design of window frames continues the plot of the façade decorations. Metal frames are rarer: in the villa in Sofia Street, which now houses a



Fig. 1. House with Kastensfenster in Blanc parcelling.

restaurant, they were mounted outside on a circular veranda, and the interior is insulated from further internal wooden window frames (Fig.2). Especially in the 1920s and '30s, the iron is reserved for semi-public spaces that are not heated to the same extent. The fixed windows of the atria and stairs, in general in multi-flat buildings, are extended to multiple levels: the design of partitions, and often the glass colours characterise the façades but at the same time show a direction for use. In buildings more moderately or more boldly Modernist, the simple schemes and the disappearance of the partitions in windows and doors correspond to a greater technical complexity. The size of the glass sheets increase and the movements become more sophisticated, as in the triple window frames of the villa in Strada Rabat. In background research, French and German manuals of the 19th and early 20th century are recommended, and later, the bible of modern windows represented by the two Adolf Schneck volumes *Fenster* and *Türen* (Schneck, 1932 and 1933).





Fig. 2. House in Strada Sofia: verandah with iron windows frames.

The surface of the façades thus explains a sort of history of the relationship between energy and housing: the double windows are always present in the Belle Époque buildings. Over the 1920s exceptions are allowed: the most widespread and efficient water heating systems allow a greater importance to be assigned to the heating systems with indoor climate control. Also the relationship with natural lighting changes in the houses most observant of the Modern Movement's grammar: vertical windows, which favour the penetration of the solar radiation within the room, are replaced by strip windows, or by a series of contiguous windows. Their height is always minor; a solid surface spans from window lintel to the floor. The villa in Strada Rabat is again significant here; it shows a traditional architectural language (Fig.3), but is evolved in its construction technique: the large sliding glass door of the living room, which must establish a continuity between interior and exterior, is accompanied by a heater placed in a niche in the floor,



Fig. 3. House in Strada Rabat: garden front.





Fig. 4. House in Strada Rabat: grille of heating system.



Fig. 5. Verandah and double windows frames.

below a grille, along the entire length of the window, balancing the cold-wall effect with a hot air layer (Fig. 4). Between the 19th and 20th centuries, such a solution had spread in the heating of museums: it served to avoid clutter, visual and physical, of the radiators, but it was strongly criticised (Stegemann, 1914. pp. 135-136).

Especially the relationship between solid and void in the wall changes, beyond the requirements of the building regulations, and is accompanied, in the early 20th century, in the richest homes but also in parcellings of affordable housing, by many kinds of overhangs, balconies, bow windows, small lodges. Surely the heat exchanging surfaces are multiplied, but are rebalanced by wood panelling, by blind shutters, or, in case of verandas or conservatories, by their function of intermediary space between inside and outside. Here, towards the inhabited rooms, double window frames sometimes appear (Fig.5) It is important that this function is confirmed, otherwise the different use would result in an improper consumption of energy. Even the accurate laying of wooden frames often gives rise to a better insulation in comparison to substituted frames, which, by virtue of the thermal bridge that is often created in their installation by the deficient connection to the walls, lose the advantage of gaskets and insulating glasses. The increase of the glass surfaces, evident between the 19th and 20th century, is the result of a constant improvement in the production of glass and the equally constant decrease in costs. Even the profiles of the frames were mass-manufactured and their assembly was simplified, but the performances are those of the most sophisticated 18th and early 19th-century window frames, although the old handmade accuracy was lost. Through the windows gleams the 19th-century aesthetic of hygiene, more focused on ventilation and natural lighting than on heating. It has been pointed out that the



perfect airtightness is not very influential upon comfort, and the air space between the two window frames allows air to penetrate more slowly, avoiding the cold draft. The alternatives – forced ventilation or air conditioning – are more expensive. Instead in the private houses the systems of natural ventilation are rare, requiring large volumes and characterising the profile of the 19th-century public buildings, whether they are displayed, whether they are dressed as domes, towers or other elements from architectural history. These systems are connected with pollution caused by lighting fires, especially of gas lighting, and they progressively decrease with the spread of electric lighting since the 1880s. In residences, this apparatus was characterised by pipes similar to parallel chimneys serving a single room with a winter mouth near the floor and another summer outlet near the ceiling. In Bucharest, a more detailed survey on the most complex buildings has still to be done to find such sophisticated networks.

A further impetus to the development of more refined models came from the field of museums and conservation of works of art, where the last decade has produced an important change from which more general effects on architectural heritage derived. Values considered as optimal were only the result of successful experiences (Luciani, 2010) and less extemporary observations have replaced them with the concept of historical climate, i.e. the conditions in which the objects have been preserved before the introduction of artificial control of environmental parameters. Also in this case it was noticed that air temperature and relative humidity values were not as important as the dynamics of their variations. The need to replace parameters with actual models of the thermal and hygrometric behaviour of buildings was confirmed, especially when the volumes and construction features are unusual. Famous cases have been instructive, such as that of the Neues

Museum in Berlin. Here, display cabinets and partial air conditioning related to the huge amount of visitors are not so much the result of refined considerations on the relationship between building, objects and environment. However, the heating system was designed on this essential condition, to guarantee the widest respect towards the material consistency of this troubled ruin, something unusual in these cases, and original solutions were not verified by applying usual parameters (Thiele, 2009). A model of the actual hygrothermal behaviour of the building was reconstructed (Rahn, Thomas, Riemenschneider, 2009). The celebrity of this case has certainly helped to support the thesis already mentioned, and has more generally established on a scientific level that only the study of single cases can lead towards the most effective choices.

The ancient architectural heritage, now a limited percentage of the existing buildings, for obvious quantitative reasons can only contribute in a very reduced scale to the overall energy saving. On the other hand, the best-made buildings among that heritage survive, and, if correctly interpreted and managed, are relatively efficient from an energetic point of view. The 20th-century heritage is more complex, because it was often also experimental in this aspect. The energy deficiencies are real and often give rise to over facile arguments to motivate in a neutral way large replacements or demolitions. The urban fragment of Bucharest largely reflects common – but not the extreme – ways of building in the 20th century. Modelling the hygrothermal regime of these buildings in a way closer to their actual behaviour could then give elements of comparison useful in many other cases. An example is the transmittance of the different kinds of masonry, certainly quite common. It would be very interesting, for example, to measure the different ways that building affected energy consumption over time. A refined model allows us to better identify the soundest additions which can significantly improve the



insulation and/or the thermal inertia, in particular in the roofing or in attics. The protection and preservation of cultural heritage was indeed described by Riegl as a sort of negotiation between different qualities and requirements in order to find the right balance. From this perspective, the guidelines drawn up in 2011 (perhaps not by chance) by the Österreichische Bundesdenkmalamt<sup>2</sup> and concerning also 20th-century heritage, may mark the overcoming of rarely successful, when not controversial, experiences. A series of practical indications, progressively upgraded by treasuring current researches, could be at the same time a suggested way forward and a hindrance to the most harmful transformations. However, the articulation of the volumes, the exposure of single buildings, their reciprocal position in parcellings, and the vegetation itself are significant in determining the thermal regime of the buildings. Free-standing houses have, of course, more exchange surfaces in relation with overall living space, and any global evaluation of thermal requirement based on real measurements certainly could put the thermal deficiencies of these low-density neighbourhoods back in its right perspective. After all, this pattern of parcelling and these building types widely characterise the expansion of Bucharest until the Second World War.

Precise information on a building's hygrothermal regime is very precious when planning its heating and cooling systems. Since the 1970s, a paradoxical parallel can be found between the efforts to reduce consumption and the need for comfort and climate control. This parallel can be increasingly seen, not only in buildings such as the skyscrapers that are consciously designed -- with low inertia and isolation, but also in solid masonry buildings. The consideration of summer cooling has been increasingly added to that of heating. This trend was confirmed in the 1990s due to the gradual increase in summer temperatures. The consumption is very

high though concentrated in short periods. The lack of centralised systems and the spread, in private and public buildings, of low-capacity devices with low efficiency, worsens the urban climate. The disorder is well represented by the external condensers randomly distributed even on the façades of monuments. The great sizes of air systems and the replacement of floor or ceiling coverings in the construction of more advanced radiation systems impose heavy masonry works or substantial changes to the interiors. The features of masonry structures are not yet adequately exploited. In this sense, a contribution comes from a niche sector, that of the smaller museums and churches, where the restoration of works of art damaged by heating systems and their operating costs have significant costs in relation to available funds. Wall radiant heating (Temperierung, or tempering) – basically, the old Perkins system – can have a limited impact on the masonry – two copper pipes at the base of the walls – and reduce consumption (Grosse Schmidt, 1992), although even in this case, some destroy plasters and masonry with useless wall chasings, mainly to hide its installation.

Also old heating systems, frequently still existing, should be carefully studied and can be a resource; they can seem inadequate for today's current standard requirements, but they may be used to integrate, in limited periods and in extreme conditions, more updated systems. After all, the technical systems, as part of the material substance of the buildings, have significant value as testimonies, and therefore have to be protected. Masonry ducts, the cast-iron radiators and less frequently the iron piping, can often be used. Boilers, pumps, and machinery in general are more subject to wear, and were often replaced in the past also. In private houses, 19th-century stoves or fireplaces developed the innovations introduced by Franklin and later by Rumford. Excepting the open furnace, the sophisticated systems of heat utilisation are the same,



and stove and fireplace coincided. The present production has often replicated them identically, except for the special glass sometimes screening the fireplace. The huge tiled stove in the aforementioned villa in Strada Sofia does not lack for parallels in Bucharest houses of the time. The fireplace and the stove by their position and their shape determine the design of rooms, according to standards that have slowly evolved from the 16th to the 18th century. Even the Moderns hardly abandoned them, as observed with benevolent irony by Pierre Saddy (19) when showing how unsuccessful were the attempts to adapt radiators and air vents in similar figurative roles.

Explicit protection of this aesthetics of energy in interiors is obviously problematic, except for isolated and exceptional cases, designed by the most famous architects and often partially reassembled. However, taste and fashion have saved, and will continue to save, even though not systematically, many material testimonies. Heritage protection can in any case take this opportunity. It is not by chance that one of its most distinguished exponents had formulated the concept of relative artistic value.

## Notes

1 *Ignis mutat res: penser l'architecture, la ville, le paysage au prisme de l'énergie*. Ministère de la Culture et Communication, Ministère de l'Ecologie, du Développement durable, des Transports et du Logement, Atelier international du Grand Paris, Veolia Environnement, IEED VeDeCom (2010-2013).

2 *Richtlinien Energieeffizienz am Baudenkmal*. 17 March 2011.

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## New 'openings' on the district: the role of frames in the perception of the façade

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The process of urban 'regeneration' that is occurring in the large block situated between Aviatorilor Boulevard, Calea Dorobanților and Iancu de Hunedoara Boulevard forces us to reflect seriously on the concept of 'urban preservation', an issue which was raised on several occasions during the workshop. The meaning given to the term 'preservation', its application to specific types of buildings and to some architectural and decorative details may lead us to partial approaches, both to projects and to their implementation. In an environment where 'preservation' means safeguarding physical matter and, through this, the immaterial values handed down to posterity, the extension of the term from its application to a single building to the larger urban scale cannot alter the term's basic theoretical foundations<sup>1</sup>.

'Urban preservation' cannot therefore renounce safeguarding single buildings, including their decorative and architectural finish as well as the fixtures and fittings, which form integral parts of the building transformations that occurred in the last century. In this situation the question therefore arises of establishing the relationship between the preliminary phase of investigation into the district and its single buildings, a programme of periodical maintenance and a project of preservation, where this is necessary.



A preliminary process of investigation and initial study takes on yet greater importance in dealing with a case study as complex as this: where the dimensions of the district, the variety of different types of buildings, and the complexity of the urban dynamics involved will all play determining roles in safeguarding the object of our study. The impressively varied nature of the buildings in the district has been a characteristic since their construction; this variability is matched by the equally varied range of inhabitants, both in terms of income and lifestyles. This 'dyscrasia' is still very evident and is tending to repeat itself on a new note where the largest and most elaborate buildings are now being taken over by a wealthy middle class, while houses originally intended for the working class are being taken over and slowly restored to accommodate an ever-growing middle class. The original hierarchy of the district is therefore being repeated, although at a different level, and through these changes, a process of 'regeneration' is taking place which has not, until now, been controlled. It is not, therefore, a paradox that the buildings which are most representative of the district – namely the monumental villas which are being re-adapted to commercial headquarters or, more often, to private residences for wealthy owners – give rise to the greatest concerns regarding their preservation. The builders, after paying large sums to purchase the property and to complete the building works, rarely consider the historical importance that the original building represents, whereas it is still possible to see original plaster and finish in the working-class houses that are not more modest than the others.

The position of the district, convenient for all transport facilities, close to the most important administrative centres, offices and banks, and its infrastructural thoroughfares clearly generate a certain appeal for investors. The fact that other parts of the town are characterised by anonymous buildings dating back to the old regime adds to its

appeal. Taking a simplified view of the situation, we can distinguish three different levels (or scales): first the district must be compared to the urban fabric of other similar areas in Bucharest, then the homogeneous lots (as regards typology) inside the district should be examined, and finally the buildings (sub-divided into single dwellings). These three levels of recognition should be preserved from obvious alterations via appropriate intervention, both on the urban and architectural scale. The process of disintegration of this recognition has its origin in construction projects, even the most minute and seemingly insignificant, involving buildings in the neighbourhood: the replacement of gutters, adding fences, new paints and so on, without mentioning the probable changes that have occurred in the layout of the rooms, architectural finishes and interior decoration.

Further to the considerations expressed in the abstract, during my visits in situ I paid particular attention to certain fixtures and fittings, namely exterior window and door frames which contribute to defining the various 'faces' of the district.

The frame is a fixed and opening structure that delimits and seals the opening in a wall, and more rarely, in this district, becomes a screen which delimits a volume (Fig.1). This bald definition of the term cannot explain the impact that different frames have on buildings and on the people who inhabit them. In the first place, frames as structural elements have undergone a technical evolution that has brought about significant improvements since the first half of the 18th century. The large leaded glass windows which were designed by Filippo Juvarra for Palazzo Madama in Turin are an outstanding example of a building technique that had reached its highest level of specialisation; these frames then gave way to modern frames of French origin, whose mouldings and other construction devices improved the seal when closed and consequently the levels





Fig. 1. This interesting modern building still retains the metallic glass window at the corner of the staircase: it is certainly a recognizable element for the inhabitants of the building, unlike the windows of the houses, all replaced by modern wooden frames of windows.

of interior comfort<sup>2</sup>. Currently the 20th-century frames are mostly well preserved in the buildings of the district: they represent the outcome of a technical evolution which dates back to the 19th century; and can be regarded as semi-industrial products, with a significant contribution being made by local craftsmen. These frames are neither innovative nor exclusively a local handicraft. They were not designed to be used elsewhere in Romania, but were rather derived from foreign patterns, whose origin is perhaps to be found in the catalogues<sup>3</sup> of French and German firms. Evidence of technological details is to be found in the papers of International Exhibitions and reports written by Romanian architects during their study-travels to French and mid-western European academies (as it is recorded in numerous publications)<sup>4</sup>.

However, great attention was given to improving the technical aspects of frames and their performance, which is probably of vital importance in Bucharest, where the winter climate is harsh – in January the average temperature is two degrees centigrade below zero. In fact, this climate is clearly reflected in the district where we can see examples of double- and even triple-glazed units.

An example is the first villa situated in Strada Rabat, which dates back to the 1940s. This clearly shows the attention paid to the thermal performance of the frames in both living and service rooms: units are made up of two parts (the external one is extremely thin, the internal thicker) which provide good performance as regards heat dispersion and change of air, following a model widely used in mid-northern European countries. A particular detail, widely used but frequently unnoticed, is the use of an internal foldable frame: two shutters each containing a glass panel which can be united using two internal hooks; these create a sealed airspace which improves the thermal insulation (Fig. 2).





Fig. 2. Image of detail of the triple window in the villa in Strada Rabat, 1940 's.

It seems an archaic solution that has adopted traditional technologies to achieve the same performance requirements as industrial glazing fixtures<sup>5</sup>. The frame can therefore be a cypher through which we can read the evolution of manufacturing techniques: in the same building there are in fact many other elements that illustrate the boundary between the industrial solutions and more traditional construction techniques as applied in luxury homes. The false vaults produced using metal framework and a thick layer of cement plaster, and the heating system hidden below the floor (and flanked by traditional fireplaces), although seemingly unconnected, are part of a unique and unified design. As mentioned earlier, we must also consider the role of the window from the point of view of the perception of the architectural work (in its volumetric ratios, its design, the ratio between opaque and transparent openings, etc.), its interaction with the rest of the building in developing an architectural language, and also through



Fig. 3. The building in the image shows how minute changes or replacement of windows contribute significantly to altering the balance of a building, although already subjected to changes through the addition of different storeys and changes to painting.

the technical solutions and detail adopted. In this context, changes even to a single component can irrevocably alter the perception of the building and therefore the transmission of both its tangible evidence and intangible meanings. It is therefore necessary to contextualise the issue of the windows in a broader vision of a protection programme including plastering, volumes, paint and so forth.

Examples of tampering with the building are countless. In Strada Sofia, perhaps the most dramatic example demonstrates the anarchy which has typified construction projects that are slowly distorting the appearance of the neighbourhood (Fig. 3). The main façade of the building is clearly altered from its original symmetry by an extension to its height, the painting (and perhaps even the plaster) have different finishes, the drainage system is clearly compromised and even the windows have been heavily altered. The



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most obvious differences occur in the type of doors and windows used in the raised part of the building, where a single frame has replaced the old windows with two opening panels, and the four different colour panes corresponding to the various units housed in the building – a real ‘patchwork,’ the result of maintenance and construction projects totally unrelated to the material composition of the building and its architectural features (both in terms of internal distribution and in the composition of the volumes). The anarchy of the measures implemented by developers should be brought back within a framework of restoration that protects, as its first priority, the character of the original façades and finishes. Examples of changes disconnected from their context, as mentioned above, occur very frequently in the neighbourhood, especially in the terraced housing and multi-family dwellings originally destined for the lower economic classes. In the case of the dwelling in Strada Brazilia we find no extension or significant transformation to the building, but the replacement of doors and windows and the painting of a part of the façade (Fig. 4): the visual impact of the change once again shows the absence of a consistent design (both at the urban level and the individual building) and the lack of a culture of restoration by the planner. But ignoring the choice of colour, once again it is the windows which show design choices made without proper consideration: the adoption of double-glazed windows in the restored part and replacement in the existing buildings with a ‘similar’ style (but with doubtful success) and two arched openings which have been filled with rectangular frames, perhaps in PVC.

The comparison with recent images from Google Street View (dated March 2009) shows that the transformation processes are gradual and concern individual building elements (now windows, then render, then perhaps eaves), without a coherent plan. The



Fig. 4. In both buildings you can see the effect that minute changes may have on the fronts of buildings: in both cases the construction projects, in addition to substitution with different window styles, are lack a consistent conservation project.



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painting of the exterior is still in progress (in fact the house is for sale) and the upper floor has had all the windows replaced, while they are still partly preserved on the ground floor.

The solution regarding windows is also part of a more general and complex analysis that also considers meeting minimum requirements for comfort and the ways people live. In particular, the issue deserves further study regarding comfort conditions, allowing assessment of the issue in all its complexity. It is simplistic to try to deal with such a varied issue, based only on technical parameters that indicate the performance of individual building components, without considering the quality of construction, installation or the interconnections within the building complex. In buildings as varied as in this case study, an in-depth knowledge of the buildings, their structural organisation and individual building elements can provide useful information for a general improvement of energy performance. Only the application of a coherent system of modifications can ensure the best solution for each individual building. The replacement of antiquated single-pane windows with double-glazed units and other modern techniques will not necessarily represent an improvement in energy performance and therefore a more comfortable environment during the winter months: the thermal isolation within the unit, heat loss through poorly insulated surfaces, replacement of the plaster, reduction of the ventilation in some parts of the houses, and internal humidity control are just some of the factors to consider in a coherent energy improvement project.

The insertion of new double-glazed windows to replace the originals, even where these are in good condition, cannot therefore be the only possible solution to the problem of thermal comfort in homes. This practice, as much as could be seen, seems widespread in the district and in the luxury villas under renovation. In Strada Sofia,



Fig. 5. Presumed comfort requirements suggest to homeowners the need to replace windows and even the addition of exterior shutters.



the designer has chosen to demolish and rebuild the entire building envelope, rather than improve performance by exploiting, for example, the thermal inertia of the walls. Similarly for the frames: it is considered simpler and more effective to replace the frames with new units which are air- and water-tight, without considering that correct ventilation of rooms, for example, prevents the formation of condensation of moisture on the plaster and, in the long run, of mould. The building in Strada Bruxelles, which is another example of a wider issue, juxtaposes two different choices in the same building (Fig. 5); the tenants upstairs have chosen to equip their homes with double-glazed doors and windows and external shutters, in sharp contrast with the neighbouring ground floor. Perhaps heat loss towards the attic, where there may not have been any change, led the owner to this rather questionable choice (not only in aesthetic terms). Solutions for improving indoor comfort while preserving,

where possible, the interior fittings are now numerous and verified. The neighbourhood itself gives examples in this regard, for example, with the double and triple windows of some houses; this solution could easily be extended to homes where it is currently lacking (Fig. 6). Clearly we do not propose the conservation of the whole district and its façades; each case must be subject to its own particular design process. In cases where the existing doors and windows are completely unrecoverable,



Fig. 6. The technical design solutions identified in the district exhibit an enviable variety, the image shows an external grill integrated with a glass frame to form a second window.



Fig. 7. Replacing windows with double glazing is to be found in many buildings in the district. The size of the window frames and the presence of fake brass work, together with the loss of other architectural finishes adds to the loss of the particular characteristics of the entire district.

substitutions may be permissible of course, but leaving open the possibility of a design that limits the changes, insofar as possible. The choice must not be towards the slavish copying of the pre-existing window frame, which in this case could be improved in its components, but rather to a compromise, for example, between the thickness of modern frames of doors and windows and the more elegant original – a compromise that has nothing to do with industrialised windows designed to ape lead or brass frames (Fig. 7). A separate issue regarding the maintenance of 19th- and 20th-century windows present in the neighbourhood merits discussion: the only hope for the survival of these artefacts is through the constant care of their components – wood, metal, glass and joints – so that their thermal performance and physical preservation are guaranteed as long as possible. The scheduling of maintenance at regular intervals is recommended as a first step to limit repairs to individual components of windows, or rather their replacement;



a solution which checks only those aspects of performance, continued efficiency of windows (resistance to infiltration by water and air, isolation from the external climate, maintenance of the mechanisms of opening and closing of the doors) in itself helps to guarantee their preservation and proper use, limiting the possibility of substitution (Fig. 8).



Fig. 6. The technical design solutions identified in the district exhibit an enviable variety, the image shows an external grill integrated with a glass frame to form a second window.

The problems of urban re-generation can therefore find a solution only through 're-education' regarding the maintenance and conservation of buildings in the neighbourhood specifically, and the whole city – a re-education that must be directed towards various sections of society, from those commissioning the work (with all the varied social backgrounds), contractors and especially designers. At university level the architect must acquire the basic knowledge needed to effectively implement the protection of historical buildings in their many forms. It is a cultural re-education which in the medium-term could provide, as a direct consequence, an authoritative influence on the choices made by clients who are generally lacking in knowledge, both from a technical but also a cultural perspective, regarding the preservation of historical artefacts. A knowledge and understanding of historical buildings requires the analysis and comparison of the buildings, their architectural finishes, the history of the buildings,

their construction techniques, their transformations and their uses. In this sense a thorough analysis of the district, including the analysis so far carried out in the urban areas (i.e. the scale of the neighbourhood) by students of the local faculty of architecture, could provide a body of data and analysis useful for checking and implementing a form of protection of external aspects. Faced with a hostile attitude from residents (even taking pictures of the façades is often interpreted as a violation of domestic privacy), the protection of the external fronts of buildings, which has been present in building regulations since the early 19th-century planned city in most of Western Europe, could be a satisfactory result. Of course the protection of the building should not detract from the protection of the structure as a whole. The façades also provide an indication as to the distribution and shape of the internal structure; the design and finish of the frame can often be 'read', to see beyond the opaque walls of masonry into the internal structure of buildings and identify typical environments (living rooms rather than simple shared stairwells). The first step in the protection of windows and façades should therefore be based on knowledge of the components through a 'catalogue' that accurately identifies the buildings and their corresponding façades both towards public roads and onto private spaces. This is not the place to give an outline for a project for such a register, which should be based on the case study and on a broad participation by both the university and public agencies responsible for protecting buildings, as well as the local government. The catalogue should include, however, the minimum target of a comparison between the existing situation and what is documented in the original archive drawings so as to identify, contextualise and date in a broad context the different types of windows. Only after having reconstructed an overview of the types of fixtures and the transformations that have occurred throughout the neighbourhood will it be possible to devise and implement programmes for protec-



tion, programmes not to be limited to binding regulations, which in practice are often disregarded. The dissemination of this information through its publication, exhibitions, the organisation of meetings and visits to the neighbourhood, institutional workshops and conferences and via a range of channels of communication could instead allow the direct involvement of local residents and designers<sup>6</sup>.

## Notes

1 As Prof. Amedeo Bellini has recently stated during his *lectio magistralis* which was held at the Politecnico di Milano, the term 'preservation' does not admit any use of adjectives: in fact, any other term would alter the meaning of the word and its theoretical foundations, having recourse to detrimental (damaging invasive works) in whatever way. (Amedeo Bellini, 'Conservazione e fruizione del patrimonio architettonico: un problema etico'. *Lectio Magistralis* held at the Politecnico di Milano on 17 January 2012.)

2 The technical manuals of architecture record at the end of the 17th century the main types and techniques for the construction of windows, designed because of the cost of glass for the magnificent residences and public or religious buildings; the French, in particular, became major promoters of technical innovation. See the manuals on this subject by Charles D'Avilier (1691), by François Blondel (1698), Bernard Forest de Belidor (1729) and later, the Treaty of André Roubo Jacob (1769-1782). Among the few studies on windows refer to Sabine Lietz (Lietz 1982). For the past century see the text edit by Franz Graf and Francesca Albani (Graf, Albani 2011) and Maria Conte's PhD thesis (Conte 2009).

3 A catalogue of the main types of modern windows was assembled by Adolf G. Schneck (Schneck 1932).

4 See the texts written by Fabienne Chevallier and Carmen Popescu on the identity of Romanian architecture at the end of the 19th-century (Chevallier 2006: 261-283 and Popescu 2006: 285-313).

5 Among the many considerations of historiography, Schivelbusch debates about that history of illumination based on the 'technological evolution'; Schivelbusch's considerations on the 'technological evolution' are associated with the changes in social structure, renewed industrial processes, the symbolic and political meanings of artificial lighting and economic issues (Schivelbusch 1994).

6 The process of analysis and research on the historical centre of Genoa, initiated and perpetuated by the local faculty of architecture, has demonstrated how coherent dissemination of knowledge can become an effective programme to protect historical buildings.

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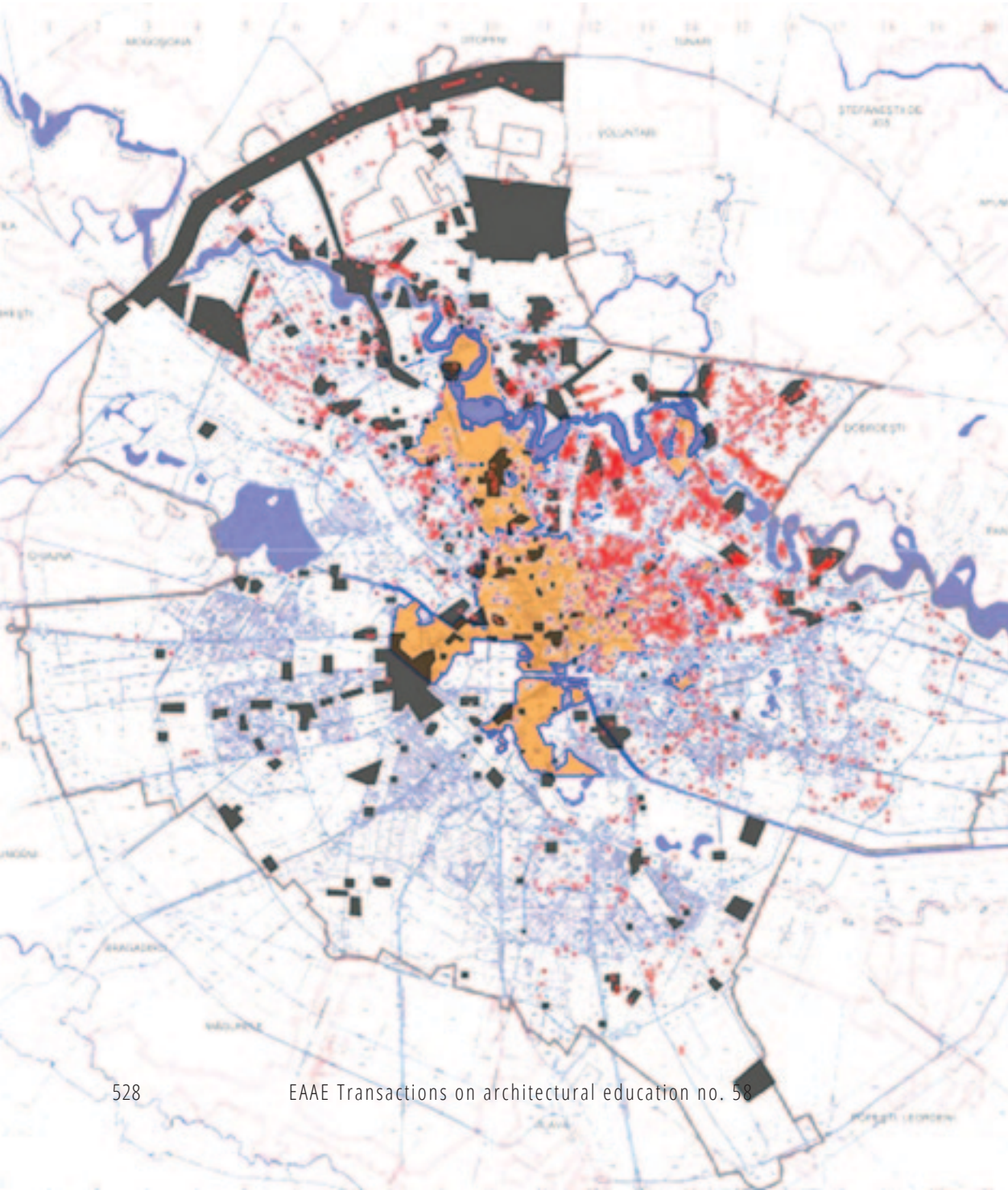
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# The sad story of the protected areas in Bucharest<sup>1</sup>

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*To protect an area does not mean that the development is excluded; it is permitted, even encouraged, in some specific conditions, different from area to area; it is important that the new intervention preserves, even enhances the defined specific character/the identity of the area.*

Anca Brătuleanu, 2011<sup>2</sup>

## Introduction

Although protected through a series of restrictive regulations concerning use, height, and built volume, 'protected areas' differ from the category of 'protected historic sites' in that they do not stipulate the conservation and protection of specific structures or artifacts, but rather of the character that brings cultural value to one entire area. Other names for this urban reality are 'diffuse heritage', or 'domestic architecture'. In the present paper, we refer to 'protected areas' and not to the 'sites/ensembles', nor to the individual buildings classified as historical monuments and listed as such in the official documents. We make this distinction because there is a difference in their legal status and this difference is actually the base for the hypothesis of the present paper. Listing



ensembles or sites is based on the intention for conservation. It is presumed that the 'protection' in the diffuse heritage areas allows new interventions with the condition of being sympathetic to the existing characteristics. It is precisely this delicate balance between preservation and new insertions that makes the interventions in such places so challenging.

The protected built areas are to be defined at the local level, through a combination of technical input and community representatives' agreement (urban policies) since their protection status is not granted only through the argument of the professionals, but also through the recognition of their importance expressed in the votes of the decision makers of the local council. But what is the meaning of 'protection' for the two categories of actors? Do they both understand protection in the same way? And is there consensus over the concept inside a group of actors? It is therefore a fact that their real protection depends very much on the recognition and acceptance of their importance by various actors.

The present paper will discuss the case of Bucharest with a special focus on the area that was proposed for analysis to the participants in the EAAE Conservation Workshop in Bucharest entitled: 'Modernist Neighbourhoods: Conservation/Regeneration'. The workshop discussions, and especially those of the Group B which concentrated on 'The urban planning, management, economic and social aspects of the question with special regard to tutorship and development', helped a more nuanced understanding of the concept 'regeneration' when applied to this specific urban reality of the Modernist neighbourhoods.

## The area

If it is generally accepted here that 19th-century buildings are valuable heritage (especially for the case of Bucharest, which does not have a lot of older buildings), the Modernist neighbourhoods are not perceived by the general public as contributing to the identity of the city. This is actually one of the reasons why it is even more difficult to ensure the conditions for interventions that allow the preservation of the existing character of the area. We make the assumption that the general opinion is influencing the decision-makers and the real estate market dynamics, and that the general opinion may be influenced by the discourses of the professional community.

Our hypothesis is connecting the decision-making processes and the professional activities of architects and urban planners in general, with a special focus on the Modernist neighbourhoods in Bucharest: **as long as there is no shared understanding among these two main stakeholders' groups of the fact that development and protection are not antagonistic approaches, the future of these areas is not secured, and regeneration through respectful interventions is rather impossible.**

But both decision makers and most of the professionals unfortunately associate the term of development with new buildings, with enlarged streets, with large-scale infrastructure. Urban regeneration that will allow both restorations and new insertions is not perceived (yet) as bringing income opportunities to professionals and votes for politicians, and urban regeneration public programmes do not occur in the protected areas, because there is not enough shared knowledge about it amongst the stakeholders.



### The sad story

In Bucharest, there are no examples of urban regeneration programmes as coherent set of actions initiated and coordinated by the local public authorities in order to improve certain areas defined as priority for reaching strategic objectives. Even though, in 2000, the team of professionals who elaborated the General Master Plan had given not only the regulations, but also some strategic orientations, the local public administration did not follow these directions through its specific instruments.

The former industrial sites have been converted exclusively through private initiatives mainly into residential ensembles with highly dense collective housing buildings, and no concern for public equipments such as schools, proximity services, etc. Important sites for intermodal transportation nodes or for major public equipments that would have insured a sustainable mobility scheme or a functional coherence of the city were not 'saved'. Private ownership rights were more important than public interests and there were no legal and financial means to increase the chances of public interest measures to be pursued.

As for the 'protected areas', there are no success stories, but there are instead several examples of emblematic failures. Not only that new massive buildings were allowed to appear and spoil the character of these small-scale, charming areas, but the 'protection' was not manifested in public action for the restriction of demolitions and even less for incentives concerning the rehabilitation of the old buildings.

It seems that, instead of a coalition for the heritage protection between the decision makers and the professionals, we have witnessed the results of two un-legitimated coalitions. The architect

and the urbanist were paid with private funds for bringing arguments in favor of intrusive new developments. Instead of working for the 'common good', the professionals have been struggling to get for the client the biggest return of investment rates. The public authorities did not have the will or the financial resources to hire professionals who would make the life of the 'private side professionals' difficult. The high quality of public space was secondary in both the professionals' and the public authority's preoccupations. And when the investor was presenting very profitable private projects for approval to the authorities, the public authorities gave up too easily in negotiations. The local councils and the technical commissions did not use the building permit procedures for getting some public interest advantages.

The General Master Plan of Bucharest (PUG) approved in 2000, has integrated the regulations issued one year earlier and entitled 'PUZ Zone protejate' (Urbanistic Zonal Plans for Protected Areas). This document was binding together a number of 98 perimeters, with various characteristics from the morphological, functional and historical perspective. These protected areas have two possible protection statuses: protected areas with a high level of value and maximum protection, where the existing values have to be preserved, and protected areas with important values where the character and the street structure have to be preserved. The interventions in both categories have to be subject to the analysis and agreement in the Commission for Historical Monuments of the Ministry of Culture. (Fig. 1)

In the dynamic years of real estate booming (mostly from 2005 to 2009), the urban regulations for the protected areas were constantly challenged and punctually changed to adapt to the investment plan for one parcelling. Too much tolerance towards the new buildings was shown by the members of technical commissions





Fig.1.1 Part of the 'PUZ Zone protejate' (Urbanistic Zonal Plan for Protected Areas) of 1999 including the area of the workshop: Filipescu Park, protected area no.48



Fig.1.2 Aerial view of Sofia and Rabat streets (<http://www.bing.com/maps/>)

and public servants with decision over the building permits, since it was considered unrealistic to believe that protected areas should all be preserved. **There were no incentives to preserve, but there were legal mechanisms to get the demolition permit even for a listed historical monument.**

The urban planning law was subject to contestations from civic organisations precisely because it was too flexible in allowing private individual interests to be accommodated, sometimes against the common interests<sup>3</sup>. Very soon after its approval by the general council of Bucharest<sup>4</sup>, the PUG was contradicted through smaller zonal master plans that were initiated by private investors and many of these small PUZ were placed in protected areas (Fig.2). This was made possible through the Urban Planning Law of 2001, which allowed private investors to initiate and finance urban planning documentations that would suit their purposes. The legislators presented as argument the fact that there are limited local budgets in some cities, and development has to be especially welcomed in these cities. The logic was that if developers have the funds to pay for studies and propositions for new regulations, this should be accepted in order to enable development for poorer cities. It was meant to make room for exceptional situations that, unfortunately became the rule, and this 'private urbanism' was practiced everywhere in Romania, no matter how big or small the local budget.

There is a major shortage of publications and official reports concerning the effects of the derogatory practice in the protected areas in Bucharest. From our knowledge, there are no dedicated research studies aimed at evaluating the status of these areas and at comparing their current situation to the one from before the granting of their protection status. There are dedicated sections to these areas in the recent study<sup>5</sup> entitled '*Audit of the urban*



*development in Bucharest from 1990 to 2010: for the definition of the development directions from the perspective of the mediation between public interest and private interest'. The protected built areas have an important place in this study precisely because of the strong confrontation between the private individual interests and the common interests of the city to preserve its cultural values that were to be promoted by the public bodies.*

The methodology for the elaboration of any Urbanistic Zonal Plan (PUZ), no matter whether the initiator was a public body or a private person, requests preliminary analysis and technical studies in order to establish a solid basis of argumentation for the

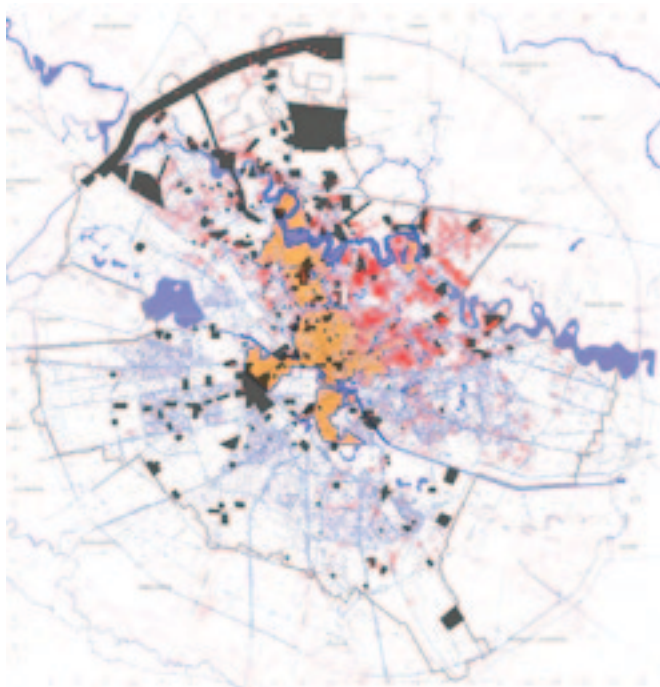


Fig.2. Superposition of derogatory approved documentations (in red) on the General Master Plan (PUG) of Bucharest – 2011 situation.

proposed changes. These studies are supposed to also provide a basis for the delimitation of the zone for the urban documentation. In principle, it is the entire area that is affected by the change. But the current practice was very much limited to the parcel where the private person wanted to change the urban indicators, usually in order to increase the allowed volume and the built surface (Fig.3). This approach was made possible with the excuse that there was not enough of a legal basis for regulating all the properties of a larger area, when the initiative of the derogations belonged to a private body, even though the privately initiated PUZ was getting through the approval process during which the public authorities had a say.

The professional practice of the architects and planners who wished for the preservation has demonstrated their concern for imposing rules and regulations that would lead to the protection of the

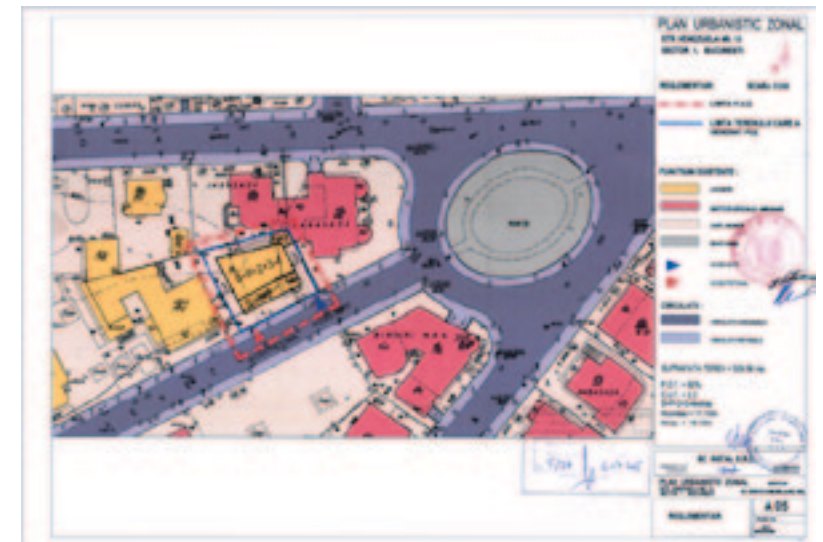


Fig.3. Examples of 'parcel focused' Urbanistic Zonal Plan (PUZ): Aleea Alexandru and Venezuela Street, both in Filipescu protected area.



heritage. One could see though that, when there were legal ways of avoiding or changing the regulations, and when the exceptions became the rule, the focus on the regulatory aspects is not efficient. The influence of the professionals' group in the decision-making processes has been very limited and with little impact on the protection and the regeneration of the old parts of the city of Bucharest. Very few architects are actually interested in taking public position and getting into the political arena. The difference between politics and policies is not obvious to many of them and they wish to stay away from political games for power. It is rather obvious that there is no unity in the professional community and that very few architects and urbanists have a strong professional deontology. The professional organisations haven't succeeded, in our view, in offering to their members both the ambition to work for the 'common interest' and the protection for doing so, sometimes against their clients or against decision makers. There are many possible explanations for the relative weakness of the professional organisations, related to the fact that all organisations in Romania have been struggling to find their way in an emerging civil society. Also, the liberal practice was building itself and the strong competition among the architecture and urban planning companies was probably not very helpful for having unity, especially in a guild where the ego is very strong.

The Romanian heritage legislation is based on the principle that heritage is of common interest and therefore needs institutionalised protection, but there is also a lot of confusion as to the responsibilities of the public institutions, and a very low level of law enforcement. No punitive measures are included against the local authorities who chose to ignore governmental ordinances, and even laws imposing, for instance, the inventory of green spaces, or just the counting of the blocks of flats. The law approving the natural

and cultural protected areas of national importance was stating that local authorities are obliged to finance and insure (with the support of the central authorities) the studies for the delimitation of the areas listed in the law, within a period of 12 months. After their delimitation, local authorities were supposed to have specific urban planning documentations for these areas, elaborated in respect to methodological frames for *PUZ-Protected areas*, issued by the Ministry of Transportation, Construction and Tourism<sup>6</sup>, as tools related to the Urban Planning Law. There are also official methodological frames for the elaboration of the historical studies that are the basis for the definition of areas to be protected. These instruments explain in detail the necessary studies and the procedures for the elaboration of a Zonal Urban Plan for a Protected Area. **The PUZ for protected area methodology would have been a very useful instrument, if it were followed closely by the professionals in their work, or by the public authorities' filters when issuing permits.**

The legal framework for built heritage and the connection to the professional practice during the Communist regime was analysed by Gheorghe Patrascu and Irina Popescu Criveanu in a publication entitled '*Heritage, Historical Centres and Local Development – cooperation between France and Romania*'.<sup>7</sup> Among the positive aspects of the Communist period, they list the creation of a good 'restoration school' between 1962 and 1977, with professors who were educated abroad, mainly in Rome. In this group of experts, important attention was paid to the identification of urban tissue with cultural value, and also there were studies and projects for the restoration of historical centres, seen as complex operations. Unfortunately, the Communist Party imposed the restructuring of the city centres in order to erase the past and demonstrate the force of modernity through new architecture, and consequently



many cities witnessed great losses of heritage. These demolitions were permitted due to the fact that, in the same year as the famous Systematisation Law (1974), the laws concerning built heritage were replaced by a very schematic legal act. After 1977, the Historic Monuments Direction disappeared and no financial resources were dedicated to heritage. It is only in the academic environment that the preoccupation for built heritage continued. Criveanu states that without real practice, and because of this hiatus in the field, an entire generation of architects and planners that are nowadays at the peak of their professional career are lacking experience in restoration and urban interventions in historical tissue (Patrascu, Criveanu 2007: 41).

After the fall of the Communist regime, and to the present day, we can also speak about lack of coherence between the legal frame for heritage and the one for territorial and urban planning or the public administration. As previously mentioned, a pro-active attitude of local public municipalities was missing in negotiating with the private sector. One possible explanation is that there are no legal frames specifically designed for public-private partnership in urban interventions or any formal instruments for urban scale operations.

The law concerning the authorisation procedures for the building activity has dramatically changed several times since 1991, and we can speak about periods of time when coordination was lacking between the general procedures for building permits and the specific procedures in the protected areas. For the city of Bucharest, the legal responsibilities were even less clear, as Bucharest is assimilated to a county level for many administrative issues. A lot of confusion was made possible through numerous changes in the laws, but also through the abuse in the interpretations of these laws<sup>8</sup>.

The Ministry of Culture has established a special section of the National Commission for Historical Monuments that is entitled Section for Urbanism and Protected Areas. It is a consultative body, and it has the role of analysing not only the technical documentations, but also the historical studies that are part of the preliminary work before proposing urban regulation documentations or demolition/construction technical documentation. The Ministry of Culture has also county-level Directions for Culture and National Patrimony, which are decentralised public services, reporting to the General Direction and relying upon counsel from a Regional Commission that is established for several neighboring counties.

Illegal situations are very hard to document and prove without the support of the Ministry or the State Inspectorate in Constructions, or the Discipline in Construction services of the Municipality of Bucharest or of the administrative sectors. These structures should be the first ones to signal and take measures for punishing illegal interventions. Instead, they resist the requests for information coming from heritage protection organisations and from people who have decided to spend their free time and energy in chasing bulldozers.

### Is this the end?

Up to now, the activists wanted the buildings to be preserved and rehabilitated without caring much about the fact that not every owner has the means to do so. They were encouraged to see the owner as responsible for the wellbeing of a heritage building, because the heritage law<sup>9</sup> sustained the same principle: the owner is responsible for the historical monument. But, as we have seen, in the case of protected areas, the buildings do not have the status of a historical monument, and the obligation for the owner to



preserve it is less clear. The activists raise arguments on long-term perspective related to identity values, and the right of the citizens to live in a beautiful city. No one should complain about the lack of pragmatism of these people who are defending ideals and who are driven by the ambition to make the world a better place, and are willing to offer their time and energy in street protests against the demolition of an old building. The owners of the buildings placed in the protected areas also have a legitimate position: they would like to have more freedom to use their realty or to be compensated for the limitations of these property rights. And those who have pride in being in an area with cultural value would like to have public authorities' support for preserving the elements that contribute to this value. They expect to have at least some information, if not technical support or subventions<sup>10</sup>.

The local councils of Bucharest (neither the General City Hall council, nor the City Hall councils of the six districts) have never voted for decisions to give owners any incentives, tax reductions, subventions, or technical support. They have never required the rehabilitation of façades in the protected areas, nor imposed the preservation of historical monuments. But they have constantly voted for derogatory plans in these protected areas, initiated by private investors, which increased the land use indicators, allowing massive new buildings to be legally built, and indulging the individual interest of real estate developers even when in obvious conflict with the public interest.

We consider that even a brief analysis of both public authorities' and professional community's performances is showing mainly failures. These two groups have moral and legal responsibilities for sustainable urban development and are supposed to impose and encourage the other actors towards heritage protection, among other requirements of sustainability. But for now, only a small

group of professionals has been carrying messages on sustainable development to other actors and, as a consequence, there is still limited knowledge on the processes, tools and responsibilities related to that.

If the voices of the professionals had more 'volume' and more pressure was placed on the decision makers, then the local authorities would have done more in terms of policies and programmes for the built heritage. This could go the other way around: if the public administration had more concern for the protected areas, then the professionals' help would have been requested and the urban planners would have worked more to generate urban regeneration strategies to answer the expectations of the civil society as well as those of the owners. But the influence of the professionals' group in the decision-making processes has been very limited and with little impact on the protection and the regeneration of the old parts of the city of Bucharest. The fact that few architects want to take public positions on these matters, and their disinterest in the relationship between politics and policy has been referred to earlier.

Many authors state that the most appropriate administrative level where urban policies have to be elaborated, debated and decided is the local level. And here, nowadays, public administration has to constantly ensure not so much the application of norms, but the frameworks for discussion and reconciliation of the interests of a multiplicity of stakeholders. The mission of public administration is no longer to impose top-down rules, but to create synergies among organisations and actors in the city so that common projects can be realised. Therefore, together with the experts, the decision makers have to push the stakeholders towards agreement, and to work on the limitation of dysfunctional aspects and on ensuring coherence. In Ascher's words: 'Public authorities have to make the others do instead of doing' (Ascher 2001: 93)<sup>11</sup>, but they also have to



permanently evaluate, control, correct, and find the right incentives or sanctions so that the stakeholders find their place in the overall scheme. **And they may do so only with the help of professionals.**

Our assumption is that the professionals do have a real privileged position that allows them to improve the thinking frames of the other stakeholders. But are they capable and willing to encourage the cooperation between various experts, local council representatives, public servants, NGO representatives, businessmen and -women? They understand the space better than other groups. Yet do they have the required capacity of understanding social and political issues? Do they have the necessary tools for really working together with social sciences experts in order to include community and societal values into spatial interventions? Do they have the understanding, motivation, and interest to encourage public participation and cooperation of all the urban stakeholders in order to build inclusive urban policies? Are they interested in fighting for a stronger position in the equilibrium of power to decide the future of their city?

The international workshop of EAAE in Bucharest had a topic to develop in Group B: *The urban planning, management, economic and social aspects of the question with special regard to tutorship and development*. The education of both architects and urban planners is of major importance in order to give positive answers to all the above questions.

## Notes and references

1 Reflecting on the workshop theme and its investigation area, this paper integrates the results of a previous research project of the author, entitled *Parallel discourses on urban policy and the Romanian urban planners: between EU principles and local contradictions* (October 2009 - June 2010) financed by a New Europe College (NEC) grant.

2 Extract from the introductory presentation of prof. Anca Brătuleanu entitled 'The Protected Areas within the Study Area, between Theory and Practice'.

3 In August 2008, Governmental Ordinance no. 27 brought limitations for derogatory plans in the protected areas (Article 18 of the Ordinance, that was modifying Article 47 of the Urban Planning Law no. 350/2001). If one owner/developer were willing to change the urban regulations for a plot which was part of a protected area, then the whole area should have been subject to a new regulatory zonal plan. One year later, when the Ordinance was validated as a law, this limitation was not accepted in the parliament.

4 Decision of the General City Council of Bucharest no.269/2000

5 Tender organised in 2010 by the General City Hall of Bucharest. The selected elaborator was a team formed by the Association for Urban Transition (ATU) and SC Quattro Design SRL. The author was the project manager.

6 Regulation issued in 20/10/2003 by the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Tourism, published in Monitorul Oficial, Partea I nr. 125bis in 11/02/2004, elaborated by the Research Institute for Urban and Territorial Planning 'Urban Proiect' under the title 'Methodology concerning the elaboration and content structure of urban planning documentations for built protected areas'.

7 Pătraşcu, Gh. and Popescu-Criveanu, I. 2007. 'Histoire comparée des législations, des outils de protection du patrimoine et des autorisations des travaux en France et en Roumanie'. In Hubert, S., Nădejde, M., Ortiz, M. (ed.) 2007. *Patrimoines, centres historiques, développement local: la coopération franco-roumaine*. Bucharest. p. 41. The volume was published in 2007 as a result of two co-operation conferences previously held in Târgovişte (2004) and Sibiu (2005).

8 One example for the law's misinterpretation or abuse was the fact that chief architects of municipal subdivisions (sector) were asking for a permit from the Museum of History of Bucharest (a structure of the Ministry of Culture) and this permit was accepted as an official document of the Ministry of Culture. In this way, the National Commission and the Direction were avoided.

9 Historical Monuments Law no.442/2001

10 Results of the surveys made by the Resource Centre for Public Participation (CE-RE) within the project 'In Search of Lost Bucharest'.

11 Ascher, F. 2001. *Les nouveaux principes de l'urbanisme*. Paris. p. 93





## The workshop on Modern architecture and new conservation problems

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The understanding of buildings and the conservation problems they pose achieves a fuller completeness if we also take into account the operational methods of the various construction groups who built these edifices. This aspect assumes an even greater importance for architecture completed during the periods of great changes, such as the period between the middle of the 19th and 20th centuries, when iron and concrete introduced new construction skills and ways of organising work to the construction ambit. This led to an unstoppable transformation of traditional building and construction sites, with the result of almost exceeding the traditional systems.

Until the middle of the 19th century theatrical architecture served as a type of catalyst as far as the centuries-old construction tradition was concerned. The building site served as a moment of synthesis between the project, materials and the specific operational activity with which the architectural edifice was constructed. In the field of wooden structures, it is only necessary to think of trusses which provided an opportunity to cover large spaces, similar to single-roomed churches in which the stage boxes, the stalls and the stage co-existed. These wooden structures were often simple constructions, with a central king post flanked by braces placed in contrast with the struts. These often equalled and sometimes even exceeded the size of even the biggest medieval cathedrals in span.



An evolution of no lesser importance in the use of wood can at times be seen in the plastered reed vaults usually placed above the stalls, where arches with a substantial span were assembled by the use of riveted beams. In the pillars and in general in the squared stone ashlar masonry, a capacity to work the surfaces by chisel or by toothed chisel was displayed, comparable to that of the greatest examples of the previous eras. The domination of the structures was also expressed in the maximum thinning of the brick walls lining the stage boxes, where brick walls with a head thickness of 15cm were sometimes more than 10m high. The macro structures of the past in the ecclesiastic buildings of the mendicant orders were perpetuated as large enclosures where the elements of the theatrical space, such as the stalls, the stage boxes and the stage were placed.

The decorative parts of the walls and ceilings were enriched with gypsum and plaster mouldings, referring to a tradition common in the 17th century. All the solutions adopted in the past for flooring, such as marble, mosaic, tiling or similar, were re-proposed with countless figurative or geometric variations. The use of glass reached its apex with the impressive chandeliers at the centre of the roof of the stalls.

In other words, that which in the past had been tested in the churches and palaces was reproduced and elaborated in theatrical architecture in the form of construction knowledge. This persistent knowledge had been handed down to reach new expressive results and solve problems which had not found a solution in the ecclesiastic spaces. These were problems such as the quality of acoustics with the peculiar shape of the stalls surrounded by stage boxes, the diaphragms obtained at floor level with all wooden floors, and the coverings with plastered reed vaults.

Knowledge of tradition in the field of structures was brought to unsurpassed success in the slenderness of the structures, with the pavilion vault and the surmounting spire of the Mole Antonelliana in Turin (1863-1888). The vault was built with a double shell with slender walls, interlaced with twisted arches, transversal arches and perimeter arches, while the walls were joined with the masterful use of metallic ties co-planar and transverse to the surfaces (Jodice 1985: 232-238).

In the Church of Sainte Geneviève in Paris (now the Panthéon), built during 1757 to 1780, a construction started by Soufflot, changed many times and completed by Brébion and Rondelet, the use of ties was so widespread and varied to the point where it almost became 'reinforced masonry'. This result was reached by joining the knowledge of traditional construction with a deeper understanding of the static behaviour of structures reached during this era, making use of specific resistance tests done on materials using specially invented machines (Bergdoll 2000: 24-31).

The fast growth in the production of laminated iron determined the conditions for a new architecture in iron and cast iron, under pressure from the dynamism of industry and the substantial funding tied to it. Iconic structures such as the Crystal Palace by Paxton, buffered by large windows, and the Eiffel Tower, completely changed the modality of construction. Prefabricated pieces were produced in factories and the industry itself trained the workers who would assemble the elements to carry out the work.

The chain leading to the creation of iron structures is thus dominated by industry and not by the place where the structure will be built, or in other words, the construction site. It is an unrelated process and even a reversal of the traditional, where the site is the hub of all activity. It was from the site that extraction works for the supplies of



stone were ordered and organised. The site entrusted the kilns with the production of bricks and requested processed iron from the blacksmiths. The site ordered what it needed from the workshops of the artisans, lime was often produced on site and the furnished material, particularly stone, was often furnished semi-finished, and had to be cut by stonecutters working before or after installation on the site itself.

The factory started taking on the same value as the site for many buildings. The site, as the place where design solutions coalesce with materials and construction techniques and operational problems are dealt with, lost a significant part of its meaning. The construction implications of possible variables had to be first discussed in the manufacturing context of the industry, which also took over control of the executive phase of the structure. The industry centralised the competence of the site in itself, from the processing of the construction materials to their installation. This is a new situation, not comparable to the builders of cathedrals. Notwithstanding their particular characteristic expertise, every construction site assumed its own specificity because of local workers and materials which still retained a dominant role.

The industrial production of materials interrupted an established and productive relationship between the arts which enriched, and made more complex and unique, the traditional site. The architecture of the walls was enriched by the addition of painting, sculptures (from the capitals to the altars, pulpits, statues, etc), works by glass artisans and works in wood. They did not give up enrichment, relying on tradition even on iron structures, with columns and capitals in cast iron and metal fretwork. These were impersonal elements, produced inside the chain of industries and exported in an international context, therefore not attributable to the ability of a craftsman. The realisation of the constitutive elements

of construction was out of context for the first time, as they were no longer the fruit of knowledge expressed by different cultures.

This was considered a limitation, and it was judged to be a mechanical naivety (Ruskin) to consider these buildings as 'architecture'. With the construction of the University Museum (1853) in Oxford they wanted to construct the central courtyard imitating Gothic architecture in appearance, and entrusted this project to F.A. Skidmore, the owner of a foundry in Coventry. He constructed bonded pillars made up of four smaller columns, of which those supporting the ogival transversal arches of the central space had a greater diameter. The shafts of the columns were bound by rings, while the capitals were composed of leaves and buds. The pillars continued over the impost of the arches with a single column, with the capitals simplified with four leaves, upon which rested a longitudinal beam with metal fretwork. Between the arches they inserted garlands of leaves of native and exotic plants, also in iron. The metal structures of the larger arches and of the roof were painted with floral and geometric motifs, again alluding to the painted wooden carpentry of the medieval churches.

At a conference on the theme 'On the Use of Metals in Church Building and Decoration' in 1854, Skidmore claimed that iron could be machined with a finish even superior to that of stone (a statement not alien to binding industrial requirements). At the discussion following the hesitant expressive results of the Crystal Palace, Henry Cole fought for a new alliance between art, business and industry (Bergdoll 2000: 211-217). It is no coincidence that the attempt to find a synthesis between modern and traditional materials took place in Oxford, where the Pre-Raphaelite movement was born.



Nonetheless, this attempt did not diminish the differences with traditional construction practices, as the decorative metal elements were mostly linked to the industrial chain for the production of iron. The mounting of prefabricated metal pieces became only the final act in the construction, expressing its structure and form. The loss of the variety of materials used, brought about by the use of a single, substantially codified material when the building is constructed completely in iron, is largely overlooked during discussions of iron architecture, which focused attention on problems of style.

In many cases, such as the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II (1865-1877) in Milan, which was designed by Giuseppe Mengoni, the iron construction site was not necessarily foreign to tradition, being integrated into the traditional wall construction site, which resulted in the structures adjacent to the large groin gallery being covered with glass. This brought about a synthesis that generated new skills in the development of the traditional site.

At the centre of the cross of the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II, Mengoni wanted to realise an octagonal space which could be inscribed in a circumference equivalent in size to the Dome of San Pietro. On this large room they raised a dome on a circular plan with meridians and parallels in metal (Jodice 1985: 266). Iron certainly offered the possibility of building large structures, probably at relatively low cost. In these conditions, materials like stone, bricks and wood were, for the first time, relegated to marginal roles in the execution of large vaulted structures. This signified a break in centuries of use and experimentation by construction yards, leading to a gradual loss of the extraordinary construction competence developed in this field, which allowed the artisans of the past to face new challenges in construction technique and size of structures by using stone, bricks, wood and mortar of outstanding quality.

The use of iron assumed a prevalent role in infrastructure projects but stayed marginal in housing construction, where the traditional construction site was able to take on the new opportunities offered by the iron industry. Metal beams were often used for garrets, together with stone and brick walls, while iron was only occasionally used for pillars (the iron structures built overseas deserve a discussion on their own). Iron was also used for doors and windows and allowed new lighting solutions with the use of large windows and skylights. Further applications were seen in the use of wrought iron for balconies, including verandas, railings and brackets and canopies over the entrances. Admirable examples of floral patterns, leaves and tendrils are found in some of the buildings constructed in Milan by Ernesto Pirovano, such as Casa Ferrario (1902-1903) and by Giovanni Battista Bossi, such as Casa Galimberti (1902-1905) and Casa Guazzoni (1903-1906) (Jodice 1985: 600-608). These opened the way for a field of applications that led to iron becoming a dominant feature of the field of architecture. It was a new role for iron, which until now had been traditionally used for cramps, ties or reinforcement rings. In the preceding centuries, the only metal with a highly figurative role in architecture was bronze. Here we think of the doors of churches or the large Corinthian capitals of the Cappella dei Principi in the San Lorenzo complex in Florence.

Simultaneously with iron, the production of cement started in the 19th century, opening the field to large-scale experimentation with reinforced concrete in the construction field, and the production of objects and finishes. In comparison with iron, its application in structures appeared to be even more complex due to a variety of problems. For cement, the quality of the materials to be extracted from the quarries, and especially the process of manufacturing in the factory, had to be codified. With regard to the design of concrete structures, it was necessary to understand static behaviour and the relative calculation methods.



Entirely new problems also appeared on site. Traditional construction could not supply the necessary expertise, so new figures appeared in this context, such as carpenters (who had to produce negative parts of the structure in different phases), metalworkers and artisans adept at producing and casting the concrete. All these operations were critical to the good quality of the structure, in terms of both the static profile and conservation of the structure (Di Biase 2009: 23-28).

With reinforced concrete it was possible to make a structural frame, which could then be bricked up with walls and windows. On the one hand, it is a construction process tied to the traditional site by virtue of being a manual process, such as the preparation of the formwork and the reinforcing bars, and pouring the concrete, even if supported by mechanical means, especially in more recent times. On the other hand, the organisation of the site and the nature of the artefacts introduced substantial innovations in the construction genesis of buildings, for the first time separating the execution of the structural frame formed by columns and floors from the wall structure. It was a massive change in respect to the traditional building site, where the vertical structure and the garrets outlined the entire structure except for finishes, which were done later. But in the case of external finishes made of exposed squared stone ashlar, the finishing of the surfaces was also included; connecting structure and form in a single constructive act.

This meant that the procedures established in the construction 'perfectly done' and literature that had accumulated on the subject, could not furnish any reference in the construction of concrete buildings. In this case it was up to the same architects and project engineers to identify the most suitable solutions for the variety of problems with different levels of importance that arose with the new architecture.

Typical in this respect is the story of Villa Savoye. Completed in 1931, with regular repairs in the few years up to 1937, the buyer sent numerous letters to Le Corbusier complaining about infiltration of water and humidity problems in various parts of the building. In 1940 Emilie Savoy judged the situation to be unbearable, to the point of having to abandon the building. This was followed by inappropriate use of the building, which aggravated the conditions of degradation (Di Biase 2009: 19-22).

The construction technique of columns and slabs spread during the third and fourth decade of the 20th century with the standardisation of building procedures, and also because of structural planning which had to establish the quantity and location of the reinforcing steel. For the first time, construction methods did not evolve from different traditions, but were imposed by substantially encoded criteria. In this way a character that could be described as culturally stateless evolved (which maybe was the intent of the major cement manufacturers). A similar outcome appears to be very consistent with the new frontier of international style, which demanded, especially during the time of greater orthodoxy, full autonomy from multiple architectural traditions.

Part of the varied production of various cements, destined for the creation of decorative elements (artificial stone, flooring, etc.) was destined for the traditional site, now rapidly changing but still using masonry as vertical structural elements. Between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century horizontal construction started making use of iron and reinforced concrete with brickwork, while the persistent use of stylistic elements in the façade was satisfied using mostly artificial stone, plasticised motifs in pre-cast concrete. This was done at the expense of working with stone or marble, which were perhaps too expensive in comparison with industrially produced elements.



This continuity of the wall-type construction method, still part of the building 'best practice' of the traditional construction, found ample use in urban construction up to the first decade of the 20th century, to satisfy the need for villas, buildings for apartments, offices and commercial activities which arose from changed economic and social conditions (Criticos 2009: 31, 39-52).

A profound change in the centuries-old traditional construction site took place in Italy after World War II, where a booming construction industry necessitated the widespread use of reinforced concrete, while masonry structures which continued to be built were generally no longer in stone or brick, but in industrial brick or cement blocks. The dimensions of these blocks corresponded to the thickness of the walls, allowing the use of walls much thinner than the traditional ones.

This caused the near-complete abandonment of the traditional site, with the progressive loss of construction practices handed down for centuries, the disappearance of skills and of artisans able to implement and understand the constituent materials. This led to an extremely negative effect, even in the field of restoration. On restoration sites it often happened that the only workers on site were those trained in the construction of concrete buildings, with the consequent inability to understand the peculiarities and delicacy of the layered historical context, lacking any familiarity with the operating methods of a restoration site and the underlying reasons for the conservation.

The conservation of modern buildings faces a dual challenge. On the one hand it has the task of studying the buildings, the constituent materials and understanding the phenomena of alteration, vulnerability and weakness and the lack of equipment making them suitable for compatible use and passing them on

to future generations. On the other hand, the detailed protocol to investigate conservation highlights the shortcomings and real construction defects of modern architecture, putting it in the best position to identify the rules of 'best practice'. Modern architecture would benefit from understanding its failures, according to an experimental criterion which had also substantiated the centuries-old building traditions of the past. The reasons for conservation thus become even more compelling, more powerful, as they are the sphere of privileged observation which could furnish new rules and instruments for the design and construction of new buildings that are less vulnerable than those of the first buildings of modern architecture, to be discussed with designers, technologists and structural engineers.

As part of a workshop, my study group has examined the Blanc parcelling and a portion of Filipescu Park. According to documents made available to the workshop, the first is an area created in 1895 and the second in 1912, but most of the buildings were constructed in the 1920s and 1930s. Both areas are characterised by villas and apartment buildings. The different buildings and their plots do not display large jumps in scale as far as dimensions are concerned. The whole area is therefore rather homogenous. Only Filipescu Park has been declared a protected area by the Municipality of Bucharest, but this does not appear to be justified judging by the character of the buildings which are of high value everywhere. In the same area changes of use occurred in the last two decades, with the establishment of embassies, consulates and representative offices.

One aspect of great interest in the area in question is the heterogeneity of styles which characterises the buildings. The vernacular elements, especially the small balconies and the eaves, are reminiscent of the use of wood in rural architecture (with evident references to local tradition which is very effectively documented



in the Village Museum in Bucharest), with references to stylistic features from various eras of architectural history, particularly from the 10th to the 17th century, or to outcomes already expressed by the Eclecticism of the second half of the 19th century. In some cases individual decorative motifs from the past are not extrapolated, assuming instead portions of the buildings: a parvis, a double arch surmounted by a small *loggia* and two single-lancet windows, which remind us of the pattern of a church front, mark the entrance to a residential building. To adapt this to fit the internal levels, it was necessary to cut the lower part of the *loggia* (Fig. 1). At another entrance there is a *pronaos* and for the same reasons it was necessary to completely eliminate the shafts of the columns, leaving a large arch placed on capitals (Fig. 2). It is out of scale and instead of being applied to individual decorative elements is applied to portions of buildings.



Fig. 1. Elements of a church façade can be noticed: the parvis, the portico, loggia and single-lancet windows.



Fig. 2. The arch is supported by column capitals: in this way it was possible to place it at the height of the ground floor entrance.

No less evident are the links to the late Art Nouveau and to the simultaneous development of Art Deco and the Rationalist movement. In some cases you capture singular anachronisms, such as in the case in which an Art Deco building has a decorative panel with decorative fretwork recalling themes from the 10th century (Fig. 3), or a three-lancet window and openings with twisted Ionic columns fitted with a modern external metal roll-up blind (Fig. 4), probably added at a later date; a solution also used by Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret in the Immeuble Clarté (1931-1932) in Geneva.

This coagulation of features finds its strength in its multiform density. It seems that what has been experimented with elsewhere from about the mid-19th century up to the '40s of the following century was expressed with great impetus in these buildings in a twenty-year window that closed this period.





Fig. 3. Fretwork panels interposed between quarter fluted columns.



Fig. 4. Triple lancet window fitted with external metal blind.

As far as it has been possible to observe during inspections, it deals with buildings still closely attached to the construction techniques and quality of the traditional construction site, with the added structural and decorative elements made available by the iron and cement industries.

The masonry structures, in the cases it was possible to verify, are in brickwork, but the use of concrete elements was also observed.



Fig. 5. Building with false openings of varying depths.



Fig. 6. Detail with corner column.

Through the masonry itself a play of light indentations and projections of the façade walls is created (Fig. 5), or even carving of the columns or bevelling in the corners (Fig. 6), repeated in the jambs of the windows. It recalls the solution for making corners in stone buildings of the 14th and 15th centuries. Garrets and balconies are in reinforced concrete and brick or beams. It is worth mentioning the projecting balconies, almost like a pulpit with a type of leaved bracket at the base, which in one case is lined up with the lintel of the window below, while in the other an extra bracket is wedged in between the leaves, which at the same time serves as a keystone of the arched window below (Figs. 7, 8). The resemblance of these balconies, all semi-octagonal and circular, with the pulpits of the Cathedrals of Prato and Santa Croce in Florence and that of San Bernardino in the Duomo of Perugia (Fig. 9) is rather curious. A further transposition of function can be observed in some window sills/window boxes, which with their shape and decoration echo the corbels of vaults (Fig. 10). In the name of an archaeological



Figs. 7, 8. Buildings with semi-octagonal and circular balconies reminiscent of church pulpits.



approach, heterogeneous elements like columns, cornices, lintels and a quatrefoil opening are assembled together – to mark an entrance (Fig. 11).

Further reference to traditional construction technique is found in a building with exposed brick walls, where the coupled-column *loggia* is formed by three segmented spherical domes. The arch system is composed of multiple overlapping brick arches and has the impost at the level of the haunch of the arch; up to this level the curvature of the arch was obtained by progressive overhanging of the bricks. The façade is filled with stylistic Gothic elements in cement: trefoiled balustrades (at the centre of the small arch the joint is visible), the *patere*, the lion on the lintel, the large lobed tile, and the small arches of the tower. The decorations of the niches are particularly notable, simulating *sgraffito* (Fig.12).

The capitals, almost always a liberal interpretation of those of the past, seem to consist of a single cement element and are only separate from the moulding in a few cases, both to simplify production and to allow greater freedom to combine elements. The figurative themes of the work are sometimes quite complicated, showing leaves, fruit, birds, griffins, etc. (Figs. 13, 14). The sources of the decorations are in

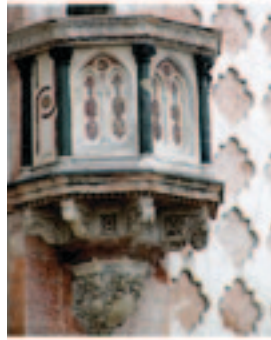


Fig. 9. The pulpit of San Bernardino, in the Duomo of Perugia, and the pulpit of the Duomo of Prato seen from above.



Fig. 10. Upper floor windows with corbelled sills.



Fig. 11. Entrance marked by columns, cornices, corbels and a multi-lobed opening.



Fig. 12. Walls enriched with patere and niches with sgraffito simulation.





Fig. 13. The joint between prefabricated pieces is visible in the horizontal cornice.



Fig. 14. Column bases with frogs and turtles.

some cases easy to detect, like some capitals and corbels inspired by those of Santa Sofia in Istanbul; the stylised leaves and the three round elements placed in the middle of the capital (Figs. 15, 16).

The re-use of Middle Ages bestiary to produce decorative panels and strips with griffins, lions and dragons is widespread. Panels decorated with scrolls, interlaced motifs and birds relate to the same period in time, and in particular to the early Middle Ages (Figs. 3, 17). These decorations were sometimes produced with prominent



Fig. 15. Capitals with decorations reminiscent of the capitals of Hagia Sophia.





Fig. 16. Capital of Hagia Sophia in Istanbul.

shapes and deep undercuts which very effectively simulated marble or stone works.

There is no lack of further classic references, with *ovoli*, seashells, acanthus leaves and capitals with leonine *protomi* (Fig. 18). They also drew from the architectonic orders with reference to fluted cabled motifs for the columns, for the decoration of the surfaces at the bases of the buildings or near the eaves. Quarters of cabled columns are used as window posts (Fig. 3). A motif of cabled columns in a more stylised form is found in the parapets of the terraces and at the base of buildings or on the entrance pillars (Fig. 19).

Contemporary stylistic elements are seen in pre-cast panels with ornamental Art Deco themes, characterised by carpets of leaves with fruit (Fig. 20), rays, fountains, seashells and stylised flowers (Fig. 19) (Criticos 2009: 177, 195, 197).

The decorative part of the examined buildings – facades, panels, lintels, column elements or pilasters – was most likely manufactured



Fig. 17. Panel with spirals, birds and bunches of grapes.



Fig. 18. Some works in progress show a lack of attention for the conservation of plasters and important decorative parts. After extensive demolitions and rebuilding, they often chose colours that are entirely foreign to the original characteristics of the buildings.





Figs. 19, 20. Art-Deco ornamental motifs.

with prefabricated cement elements, where assembly joints are clearly visible on some (Figs. 13, 20, 21). In the more plain elements, like the bases of columns or pilasters and cornices, the system of decoration has a superficial surface in mortar, probably applied to structural walls.

It is remarkable that in the extraordinary variety of decorative motifs that were used, variations of the same element were rarely detected, such as in the horizontal cornices where the stretched strips are twisted at regular intervals, and the variable of the leaf is introduced which encircles the cornice (Figs. 18, 22). The alteration of the materials has shown that, at least in some cases, the brackets of the balconies were prefabricated elements, free of a load-bearing function (which was entrusted to the floor of the balcony), with C-sections outlined by thin walls (Fig. 23).

In the traditional site the decorative stone elements were generally part of a massive, solid piece of stone, which despite weathering made it possible to save the decorative piece for a very long time. In the modern construction site, when weathering is accentuated, the loss of decorative elements is very fast because of the limited thickness of the prefabricated elements. Also, deterioration of the



Fig. 21. Decorations made with prefabricated panels.



Fig. 22. Decoration at the base of the eaves with twisted belts, reproduced in other buildings with small variations (see fig. 18).





Fig. 23. The brackets under the balcony are in prefabricated elements with thin walls.

mortar can cause detachment of the decorations from the masonry (Fig. 24).

The refined processing of cement plasters would merit a discussion on its own. They sometimes remind us of the traditional, with the imitation of stone facings, but have also found a modern expression with special elaboration of the surface texture, often varied even in the same building to obtain different effects of light and colour (Figs. 6, 25).

The survey of the buildings located in Blanc parcelling and Filipescu Park shows that the mixing of modern and traditional construction has resulted in a wealth of architectural solutions and decorative details, which also assumes a unique character. All the prefabricated decorative parts were created by industrial companies which in

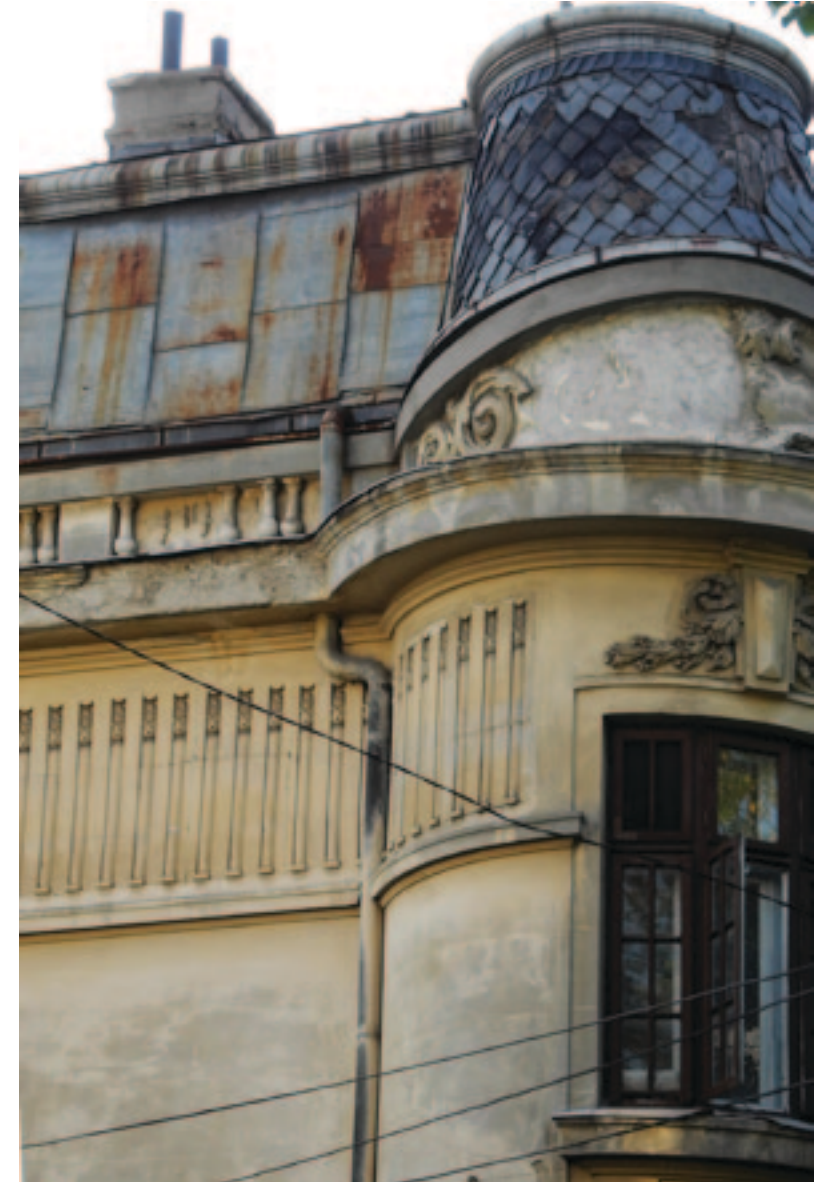


Fig. 24. The prefabricated decorations with balusters and scrolls, placed at the base of the roof, have been partly lost due to the mortar decay.





Fig. 25. Many buildings are characterised by particular plasters.

all probability do not exist any longer. These pieces are therefore unique. Many were made with special processes from cement which is no longer available, and with skilled workers whose abilities were probably similarly lost over time.

The survey and filing work, already initiated by the public administration in Bucharest, is the ideal opportunity to highlight the characteristics and vulnerabilities of each building and the relevant context, with a detailed individuation of the characters,

the constituent materials and colours. Field investigation should be combined with research on designers, executive firms and the provenance of materials used.

A more detailed knowledge would have several positive implications. It would allow the documentation of the architectural quality of an important period of urban expansion in Bucharest very well. At the same time, it would provide the public administration with a potent cultural instrument with which to raise awareness among owners and designers (Fig. 18). If the requirements of the public administration for the protection of the buildings is accompanied by detailed background information and strong cultural arguments, they would not be seen by owners and designers as annoying constraints (to be avoided), but rather as useful information to understand the complex architecture and motivate the choice of preserving meaningful values, both evident and less evident, that characterise the buildings in the areas of Blanc parcelling and Filipescu Park.

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## Integrated strategies and specificity in the conservation of Modern neighbourhoods

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### Introduction

In recent years, the wide-ranging discussion about considering the restoration of modern architecture in the same light as the restoration of historic buildings has produced unsatisfactory results. In the field of restoration, while waiting to find a suitable position in which to locate protection of all that is 'Modern' – where we include all constructions built from late Eclecticism up to the Second World War – there is fertile ground for every imaginable experience: from restoration to transformation/replacement of original building materials, techniques and uses.

The situation becomes more complicated when we try to apply theoretical principles to the protection of modern architecture on an urban scale; that is to say, when we think not only about conservation of the single, modern building but also of neighbourhoods, or of a large part of a city. Interest in this topic is also well documented, in Italy and Europe, by the ever more frequent experiences of preservation, not only of the single architectures which characterise these areas, but also of the urban fabric. These modern, often significant, sections of cities, which arose between the end of the



19th century and the first half of the 20th, are not usually included in what we traditionally define as the historic city centre. On the contrary, due to the way in which they developed (rather than coming from a natural, spontaneous development, such as the historic part of the cities, they were carefully planned) and the age of the buildings, they are usually defined as modern neighbourhoods, neighbourhoods of Modernism (if we consider urban expansion since the 1930s), or as an 'historical centre of the modern', as, with an oxymoron, towns founded in the 20th century have recently been defined.

The matter is extremely newsworthy. In every city in Europe there are well planned examples of modern neighbourhoods, designed and built from late Eclecticism up to the Second World War: English garden cities or German Siedlungen are two of the many significant examples which are expressions of a new way of thinking about neighbourhoods and housing in relation to different social models. These neighbourhoods, initially born as expansions of cities, the suburbs, can today be considered a central part of the cities, as is the case with the parcelling in northern Bucharest.

In reality, there has been no verification of the possibility of managing the protection of modern urban fabric with regard to the theoretical principles of conservation alone: respecting the urban fabric, respecting the relationship between public space and private residence, respecting building authenticity by containing the loss of building materials, etc. However, it is not so obvious that intervention in modern neighbourhoods is a matter which belongs only to the world of conservation, just because significant historic, architectonic, but also social and ethical values, which should be preserved, have been assigned to these areas.

The workshop in Bucharest was an occasion to verify, by looking at significant experiences in Europe, whether the protection of modern neighbourhoods can be regulated by integrated approaches which gather different methods and actions.

### The parcellings in northern Bucharest

The vast urban settlement in northern Bucharest has been evolving, through successive parcellings, since the end of the 19th century. Due to the characteristics of its urban structure and buildings (Fig. 1), the



Fig. 1. Eclectic house in the parcellings in northern Bucharest.





Fig. 2. House in Letchworth, England.

settlement can be compared to the English city gardens of the first generation, such as Letchworth or Welwyn (Fig. 2), unlike districts in the style of Rationalism, where, from the 1920s the principles of the Modern Movement have been the subject of experiment. On an architectonic scale the neighbourhood is not uniform like the Rationalist quarters, as it presents a variety of buildings which are very different in style (from Eclecticism to Rationalism, from socialist Realism to Postmodern), technique and building materials. Finally, the social structure of the inhabitants is extremely varied. For these reasons it is very complicated to look at improvement of the whole area only from the point of view of conservation. As the specialised bibliography shows, up to now the most systematic thinking on conservation of post-industrial residential heritage has addressed the peculiar sector of Modern Movement neighbourhoods. These are now considered to be the manifesto of Rationalist ideology, which ends before the Second World War. Unlike the enormous

post-war residential heritage, these neighbourhoods, like historic buildings, have by now been unanimously identified as monuments and improvement has been included, sometimes in a forced way, within the unity of method which guides other forms of restoration (archaeological, architectonic, pictorial, etc.). Difficulties in this approach are evident not only in the case of Rationalist quarters, but even more in relation to the more complex situation which we find in our case study, where problems of building material conservation are less important than social structure and urban fabric.

### Shared values

In the field of conservation, requalification of modern neighbourhoods should be based on a firm conviction on the part of society, of the values of modern buildings and neighbourhoods, at present usually considered less important than historic structures. People, conditioned by the age of buildings, will never agree on the question of values. In many cases, urban transformations involve buildings and urban fabric constructed after the Second World War, between the 1940s and 1960s. The relatively young age of these buildings does not justify respect for the authentic character of the buildings, in the general opinion.

In the case of the parcelling in northern Bucharest, as in many similar cases, there are relevant contradictions between the policies adopted by the Romanian government for the protection and enhancement of the area and what, in concrete terms, has been realised. Many parcellings, such as the Blanc parcelling or Filipescu Park, have been classified as a 'protected area'. This means that in these parcellings total demolitions of buildings (the higher risk, at the moment) are forbidden but, at the same time, transformations





Fig. 3. Building transformations in the parcellings in northern Bucharest.

are permitted, even encouraged, with the only restriction being respect for identity of the area (Fig. 3). This indicates a primary problem in defining the values of the area. During the workshop, it was clear that the recognition of these values is not widely shared. Even if private owners are aware of their house values, they do not appreciate the environment in which they are situated. Sometimes they do not even recognise the value of the garden around the house, which, in many cases, has been transformed into a car parking space (on the other hand, most of these parcellings were built when the private owners did not have a car) (Fig. 4). While the inhabitants may have little or no awareness of the values of the area as a multifaceted ensemble, neither is the local administration any more farsighted. Certainly it would be anachronistic to apply a system of rigid restrictions for the protection of the parcelling. Transformations are, correctly, permitted in the protected areas. However, as in other cases, short-term interests in economic



Fig. 4. Parcelling in northern Bucharest: missing car parking spaces.

development often win out over conservation of cultural heritage as a source of sustainable development in the long term. For local authorities and the population in general, priorities like water supply, roads, new buildings, better services and jobs cannot compete with protection of the past (Brătuleanu 2011). In the absence of a clear definition of the values of the area, the needs of the protected area are at risk.

Finally, on an architectonic scale, there are other aspects which influence the identification of values to be protected. Over time, industrialised constructive systems have revealed their ineffectiveness in terms of durability, plant and equipment efficiency and – less considered but no less important – efficiency of structure. Unlike historic buildings, in the case of modern architecture – built with building materials and techniques which apparently seem easy to replace – there is no apprehension in relation to preserving original



building materials and structures. In this sense, the case of the Kiefhoek neighbourhood, designed in Rotterdam by Jacobus J.P. Oud, is exemplary. Damaged by serious subsidence of the ground, some buildings have been demolished and rebuilt as they were (Canziani 2003). In the light of these thoughts, it is understandable that, rather than problems of physical decay, in the case of modern neighbourhoods further attention is addressed to the decline of the social models created by that housing structure. For this reason, in relation to modern architecture, besides authenticity of form, of construction, details, and building materials, the new, ambiguous conception of authenticity of the original idea has been proposed (van Oers 2003: 8).

### The need for transformation

The topic dealing with identification of values in modern neighbourhoods and architectures is problematic. First of all, as Jean-Louis Cohen underlines (Cohen 2003: 65), modern urban heritage is characterised by an urban and social system which is opposed to historic heritage. The latter is due to long processes of sedimentation over time while the former is, on the contrary, the result of projects scrupulously planned out. Over the centuries, a strong, even if evolutionary process of identification between inhabitants and settlement – the effect of a protracted and integrated relationship among people, urban fabric and functions – is realised. In modern times, the possibilities for people to identify with the place where they are settled, by recognising material and immaterial values, are not so diffused. It is relevant that, in many cases, to adapt modern neighbourhoods to personal needs, people often insert elements coming from local constructional traditions – as in the case of the Cesate quarter in Milan – or, in whatever way, taken from the past (Giambruno 2003: 95). The

example of the Weissenhof neighbourhood in Stuttgart, which was designed following the well-known five points of Rationalist architecture, is significant. In this case the residential buildings exhibit transformations that point out the failure of that ideology, and we are now wondering if it is correct or not to recognise in those sometimes relevant modifications – realised by private owners with the purpose of having more comfortable houses – a value to be protected (Cassani 2003: 21). Therefore, in the case of modern architecture, the problem of respecting the original idea is much more salient than for historical buildings.

It is relevant, in this sense, that permanence over time of the primitive social structure in modern settlements built before the Second World War is one of the parameters established by UNESCO for inclusion in the World Heritage List, as the example of German Siedlungen, included in the List in 2008, demonstrates (Sicklinger 2008: 22). The inclusion in the UNESCO list of these neighbourhoods, designed between the 1920s and 1930s by eminent architects such as Walter Gropius, Bruno Taut and Hans Scharoun, is actually based on the fact that these settlements still faithfully document the social-reformist policy of the Weimar Republic, the experimentations on new models of council houses and the exploration of original housing standards related to urban design and innovative architectonic solutions (Peghin 2010: 73).

It would seem, in consequence, that the values of these neighbourhoods are closely related to the persistence of primitive social conditions (and, subsequently, of the architectonic structure). However, this rarely happens, as the case of the Nemausus quarter, built in Nîmes between 1985 and 1987 and designed by Jean Nouvel and Jean-Marc Ibos, shows. Nouvel's innovative idea, which follows the utopian ideal of a life without restrictions, was to



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realise low-cost houses by using building materials and constructive techniques usually adopted for industrial buildings (steel plate as finishes, train fixtures as doors, etc.) (Fig. 5). The housing is in fact flexible, with large open spaces. However, even if many of the inhabitants – who, in spite of the original intention, are not all lower-class – appreciated the idea of living in a ‘designer house’, at the same time they have shown the need to give spartan houses more comfort, by transforming internal layout and fixtures.

It is clear that changing social needs in housing requirements also involved transformations. Generational changes, for example, are always followed by significant housing transformations. This is particularly evident in the case of the parcelling in Bucharest; many houses, bought by people more wealthy than previous inhabitants, brought about in many cases the complete transformation of the building, which is hidden under the apparently scrupulous conservation of the external façades. The topic of urban identity becomes more complicated if we consider that with regard to original structures, most modern neighbourhoods have been radically transformed. These transformations are rarely considered as added value (Cohen 2003: 67). In many cases, transformations depend on new, different uses, significant changes in family structure, or, as we have already said, in social structure. The debate is now mostly directed to the opportunity of preserving all these transformations or, on the contrary, to see if it is more acceptable to preserve only those which still permit us to see the idea and scope of the initial concept among the transformations (Cohen 2003: 67). In any case, it is clear that, in this field, every attempt to fix unitary criteria will be extremely difficult.



Fig. 5. Social housing in Nîmes, France: the “Nemausus” designed by Jean Nouvel.



## Strategies

Unlike restoration of a single building – a field in which architects and restorers are protagonists – many different disciplines are involved in the requalification of modern neighbourhoods and urban fabric. In these cases, planners play an important role, together with sociologists and economists, as urban regeneration is today considered a useful instrument in the fight against social degradation, and a significant economic asset. Involvement of such a number of experts, which in theory could be considered a resource, hides dangerous traps in practical experiences. Frequently, planners, sociologists, economists and architects assign very different meanings to the same word. The expression *urban regeneration*, for example, which defines the requalification of neighbourhoods or parts of cities, is extremely ambiguous. Urban regeneration is a method which links together techniques of planning for the requalification of urban fabric and buildings with social initiatives based on participation and communication. The purpose is to revive degraded or disused parts of cities with planned interventions in the public interest. Especially with regard to modern neighbourhoods and buildings, policies for regeneration and strategies for conservation rarely coincide. On the contrary, these interventions show that economic purposes generally take priority over cultural issues. In 1975, the Charter of Amsterdam for the protection of European architectural heritage already warned of the risks for conservation every time interventions, on an urban scale, were mainly based on economic aspects and problems of mobility. Only scrupulous town planning – which takes on, at the same time, problems of protection and development – might be capable of bringing urban regeneration (but we prefer to use the expression *urban transformation*) back into the field of conservation, here defined as an action which manages transformations. It seems evident, as a result, that it is not possible to assign such a complex topic – conservation of urban fabric – to the single competence

of restoration, as is specified in the Charter of Amsterdam: 'Preservation of architectural heritage mostly depends on the integration in people's life and environment and on the inclusion of conservation issues in territorial and urban planning'.

In concrete terms, International Charters have been practically ineffective. However, dealing with conservation/transformation of modern neighbourhoods, maybe we can reappraise it, by making topical and by translating into tangible strategic actions the concept of 'integrated conservation', which was specified in the Declaration of Amsterdam (naturally, by finding an agreement on the meaning of the word 'conservation'): 'Integrated conservation involves the responsibility of local authorities and calls for citizens' participation. The success of any policy of integrated conservation depends on taking social factors into consideration'.

In integrated conservation it should be possible to define the limits within which planners, economists, sociologists and conservators – with their specific competences – have to be able to manage transformations by effectively respecting the authenticity of modern urban fabric and buildings.

On the part of each involved subject, activating integrated strategies means the adoption of a flexible approach towards urban heritage and intrinsic values, following transformations over time along with people's needs. Among these issues, acknowledgment and projects have to coexist. To assume a strategic approach means to agree to change one's own action in accordance with the specificity of each single situation requiring intervention. It also means to be always wakeful, to be ready to leave all the doors opened for every element which has not been considered before (Gabaglio 2007: 311); it means, finally, to gather all the multifaceted actions for conservation/transformation of urban fabric into a 'modest plan'. The idea comes from the concept of 'modest state' – which





Fig. 6. Monte Carasso (Ticino district): old and new in the re-designed historical centre.

sociologists defined as a state which does not act to impose *a priori* ideas of technocracy and which does not work by applying restrictive rules but, on the contrary, acts to help the transformation of close organisations of human systems (Crozier 1988, Gabaglio 2007: 311). The 'modest plan' defines non-theoretical and syncretistic actions as it gathers different, sometimes opposite methods. Unlike those resulting from diffident or fearful choices, it is a careful plan.

This approach reminds us of the Luigi Snozzi experience in Monte Carasso, in the district of Ticino. Originating at the end of the 1970s from the idea of re-using an ancient convent in the historic centre as a school (to avoid construction in a suburban area), the Snozzi project was soon extended to the surrounding historic urban fabric, with the idea of increasing housing density by filling empty spaces with new constructions and by re-animating open, public spaces. Unlike a master plan, a sort of detailed plan equipped with essential rules was adopted. In opposition to the defensive approach of urban planners, Snozzi counted on the quality of design (Fig. 6). He shows that transformations and conservation can peacefully coexist in urban fabric when building materials and the language of new construction are able to dialogue with traditional places (Snozzi 1995).

### **'Life is always right': conservation and participation**

Focusing again on the architectonic scale, it is evident that the competence of the restorer is required. The time would appear to be right to propose, once more, the unity of method which is always defended by restorers as the only instrument for intervention on ancient, historic and modern heritage. As against what is commonly held, on the architectonic scale the restorer is not the only protagonist of interventions. This is evident if we only think about the importance of technology in relation to sustainable interventions in modern buildings,



the inefficiency of many of the building materials used by rationalist architects (and by property speculators during post-war reconstruction), re-definition of building materials and building performance in order to adapt to new rules on energy saving, and so on.

On an architectonic scale, conservation of the modern also involves further considerations. Accepting changes that had happened in buildings designed by himself in Pessac, Le Corbusier said that 'life is always right; it is architecture which fails' (Peghin 2006: 19). In this sense we have to conclude that inhabitants, that is to say users, are the real protagonists of modern neighbourhood transformations and, in a certain way, of conservation. The identification of values strictly depends on the relationship between people and the place where they live and on their integration. The case of some new English towns, which have been demolished as they became places of social decay and isolation, or, for the same reasons, the proposed demolition by local administrations of towering buildings in San Polo quarters in Brescia, designed in the 1970s by Leonardo Benevolo, or, finally, the case of the Vele of Scampia in Naples, are significant examples. On the reverse side, but similarly relevant, is the case of the Egeen Haard neighbourhoods in Amsterdam, designed between 1913 and 1920 by Michael De Klerk (Fig. 7). The houses are inadequate in terms of fixtures, equipment and internal layout. However, the inhabitants have so closely identified with the place they live as to propose protection. In Pessac's modern neighbourhood which in 1995 was declared *Zone de Protection du Patrimoine Architectural* (protected area), people asked the local administration to elaborate a programme to finance neighbourhood enhancement. On that occasion, a committee of inhabitants and technicians was founded to ensure that the problems of the neighbourhood were approached in a participative way (Peghin 2010: 69). Enhancement of the Pessac



Fig. 7. The Haagen Haard quarter in Amsterdam, designed by M. De Klerk between 1913 and 1920 (Collection of Netherland Institute of Architecture).

neighbourhood has consequently been carried out based on rules which, in a usefulness synthesis, have considered the inhabitants' needs, the original character and present conditions of the buildings (Peghin 2010: 59) (Fig. 8). Even if more limited, the Italian experience of the Canton Vesco quarters in Ivrea is also significant. People's involvement in the project of the local administration was the first step to making them aware of the value of the place where they live and to accept the restrictions imposed for transformations (Giacopelli 2003: 119).

In France, the topic of participation is a basic instrument for protection of modern neighbourhoods, as the case of the Etas-Unis quarter in Lyon shows. It was designed by Tony Garnier in 1920, following the utopian idea of the *Cité Industrielle*. In 1988, due to progressive decay of the neighbourhood, inhabitants, together with a group of artists, founded an association. The principal aim



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Fig. 8. Building transformations in Frugès neighbourhood, Pessac, France.

was to avoid the demolition of some buildings which had been programmed by the unthinking local administration. Artists also founded the association '*Cité de la Creation*' and created some murals on the blind façades (Fig. 9). Integration between art and housing, culture and decay was an original way to diffuse the historical and social values of the place, which had been ignored for a long time. The Musée Urbain Tony Garnier, officially supported by UNESCO in 1991, was an initiative which increased interest in the district (Peghin 2007: 95).

Finally, in terms of a relationship with the case study, it is appropriate to mention the English experience of the protection of the Welwyn and Letchworth garden cities, turned into 'conservation areas' in 1968 and 1974 respectively. In those years, policies for protection were based on urban plans, which tried to put conservation of urban fabric and buildings into the perspective of unavoidable



Fig. 9. Lyon, Musée Urbain Tony Garnier: murals on blind façade.



transformations. The control of the efficacy of these policies was committed to inhabitants. It is a participative process, founded on a correct management of urban growth, enhancement of public spaces and inducement of good practices in design in a judicious balance between conservation and transformation (Peghin 2007: 111). Unlike most interventions in buildings which are symbols of the Modern Movement, in the case of modern residential areas the aim of intervention is not the recovery of the original appearance. On the contrary, the needs of inhabitants often address projects towards less rigorous interventions.

In the case of Siedlung Onkel Tom, designed in Berlin by Bruno Taut, a catalogue of acceptable transformations has been compiled. The catalogue describes approved building materials and techniques which can be adopted in the case of transformation. In Onkel Tom, for example, modification of balconies, which have been commonly closed to enlarge houses (an indispensable need for inhabitants), was accepted as irreversible (Giamb Bruno 2003: 97). The same rule was adopted with regard to other necessary elements, which were not foreseen in Rationalist architecture, such as stores and protective shelters.

The process of people's participation in enhancement of modern neighbourhoods does not seem to be established in Bucharest. Besides, issues for which an intervention of urban regeneration is usually required (poverty, bad housing, slums and insanitary living conditions, high crime rates, high unemployment, high rates of drug and alcohol abuse, discrimination, low quality of life) are not found in the studied area. On the other side, we cannot ignore that the given area requires some interventions. Participation could ensure the continuation of the existing social models, by respecting the intimate character of the settlement and, at the same time, by integrating activities which are necessary in everyday life, such as car parking, shops, sports facilities and so on. Supported by incentives and awards for virtuous behaviour, this method could help to win

an important challenge: to protect modern neighbourhoods in the absence of rigidly imposed restrictions.

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# Identifying objectives and developing programmes in protected areas: a methodological approach

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## Introduction

The present paper proposes a methodological approach to strategic planning for a protected area, making use of the October 2011 EAAE workshop experience<sup>1</sup>. Strategic planning (STP) is a management strategy which refers more to a process than to a final product (FPDL 2000), and can be used by organisations in various fields of development, including spatial planning. To be efficient STP uses a number of instruments and methods such as the SWOT and PEST analysis<sup>2</sup>, driving and restrictive factors analysis, the Problem and Objective Trees, the Fishbone or the Venn Diagrams, the Logical Matrix Framework, different facilitating techniques and others, which enable participants in the process to better communicate and reach effective results. Since the 1980s and 1990s when the criticisms of the traditional approaches in urban planning intensified<sup>3</sup>, the different methods used by STP started to be used, especially in relation to urban regeneration and to long-term spatial development plans. The above-mentioned methods and instruments proved to be useful, especially in the early stages of the planning process when a more accurate identification of the strategic objectives in relation to well-defined problems is usually needed<sup>4</sup>.



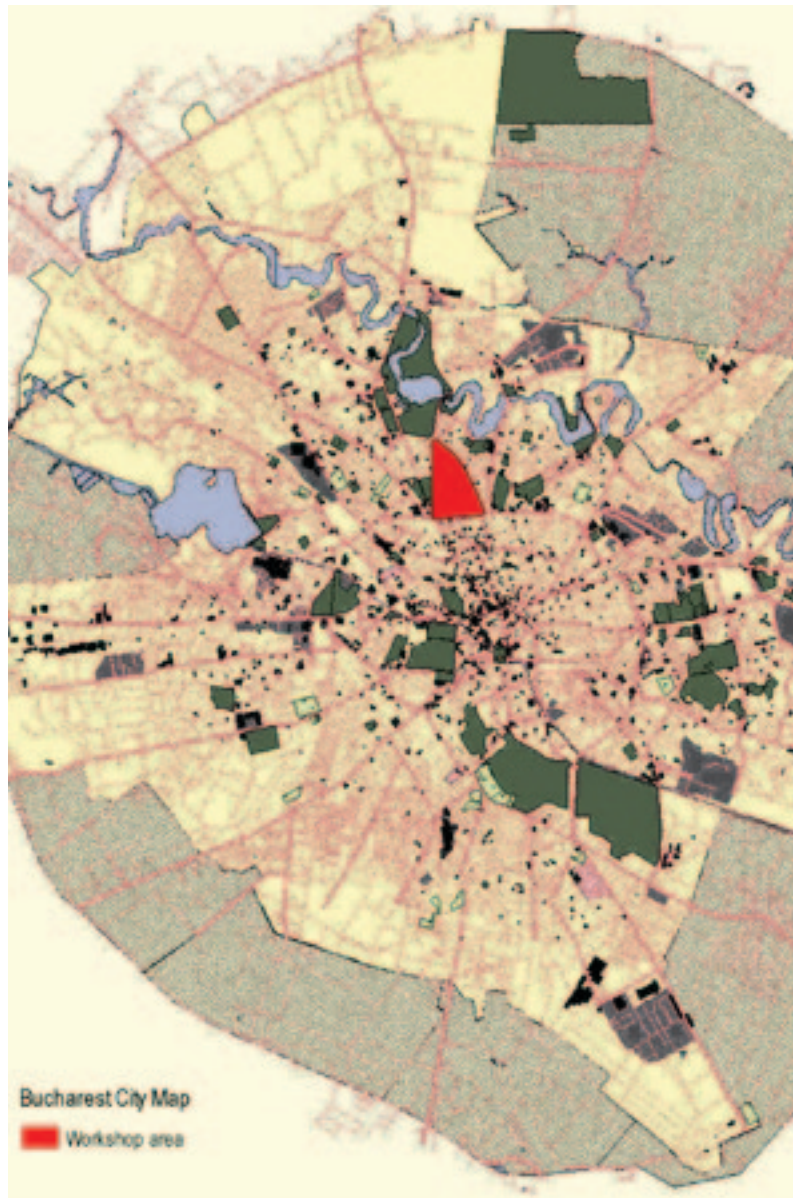


Fig. 1. The study area within the city limits

The area which has been the subject of study, reflections and debates during the workshop is located in the northern half of the city (Fig. 1) and is an area with a valuable heritage of the first decades of the 20th century, which benefits from the status of a protected area<sup>5</sup>.

However, this status is not sufficient to ensure true conservation of the area as defined for instance by the Washington Charter<sup>6</sup>, which states among other matters that 'conservation of historic towns and other historic urban areas should be an integral part of coherent policies of economic and social development and of urban and regional planning at every level'.

The present status of protected area is a first level of protection, forcing new constructions or additions to respect a limited number of regulations such as height limits, percentage of the built-up area or land-use coefficient<sup>7</sup>, allowing certain activities only, parking or fencing conditions and defining types of interventions<sup>8</sup>. What the area lacks is a development plan and a medium- or long-term strategy, defined programmes and a constant monitoring and promotion which could allow the area to be well maintained, evolve according to some principles and directions, become dynamic and alive and better understood and acknowledged.

A strategy and a development plan would say what has to be done and not only what is not permitted. But, how is one to define adequate strategy, objectives and programmes? For the purposes of demonstration, the present paper will try to show how these could be reached by using specific strategic planning instruments.



### Using SWOT analysis to define a strategy

As it is known, SWOT is the acronym of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and represents an analytical instrument currently used in strategic planning. The so-called SWOT analysis is used as a basis for identifying solutions and efficient planning of actions in strategic management, by enabling a synthetic overview of the main dysfunctions and potentialities of an area or domain to be drawn. It can be successfully used in spatial analyses and can help in setting up objectives and priorities for intervention. SWOT operates with the internal and external environments. In the case of the spatial analyses and of our specific area of interest, strengths and weaknesses will refer to everything that is related and belongs to the area itself, whether physical, social, economic or natural environmental aspects, whereas opportunities and threats are mostly related to institutions, general policies and regulations, general public opinion, financing, real estate market, availability of statistics and other similar issues.

The evaluation below of the internal environment is based on the existing knowledge and information about the area emerging from existing studies as well as from the field observation and evaluation processes that were developed during the workshop. The strengths and weaknesses are structured into eight different fields of analyses, so that the main characteristics can be better revealed, leading to a more accurate diagnosis.

The analysis of the external environment is based on the general knowledge about the current Romanian legal, institutional and regulatory framework and on the potential influence of markets and EU policies. Sometimes it is quite difficult to define an opportunity or a threat, due to subjective perspective on certain facts and influences. For instance, the present-day financial and

| Field of analysis                                    | Strengths   | Weaknesses   |
|--|---|--|
| Location   | Peri-central/close to the city centre<br><br>Good accessibility by car and public transport<br><br>Located in the northern wealthy area of the city   | The area is surrounded by big boulevards acting as physical barriers   |
| Urban infrastructure                                 | Good quality of roads<br><br>All technical utilities are available  | Bad maintenance of the pedestrian areas  |
| Built environment                                    | Good quality architecture<br><br>Good quality materials and techniques<br><br>Richness of architectural details<br><br>Most of the buildings are in good condition  | The alteration of the initial shape and image, due to technological improvements   |
| Social environment                                   | Social mix from medium to upper levels<br><br>Medium-high educational level<br><br>Low level of criminality<br><br>Safe area due to embassies and other institutions in the area and good public lighting | Potential social segregation (development of gated communities)<br><br>Aging of the local community<br><br>Lack of identity feeling and weak social cohesion<br><br>Lack of CBOs (community-based organisations) |
| Economic environment                                 | Development of high quality restaurants and cafeteria   | Low level of economic activities   |
| Green areas  | Good coverage of the green areas  | Bad maintenance of the green areas   |
| Cultural values                                      | Historic urban values and legibility of the urban texture and evolution<br><br>Built-up heritage values (historic monuments)<br><br>Cultural and educational institutions                                 | New aggressive interventions of a different character  |
| Composition and other aspects (image, planning etc.) | Valuable urban composition pattern<br><br>Unity of human scale and global coherence<br><br>Good image and attractiveness<br><br>Liveable area   | Decay of the public spaces and urban amenities<br><br>Alteration of the image due to inadequate interventions like opaque fences, aggressive colours or materials<br><br>Weak identity at city level             |



economic crisis, which began in 2009, can be seen as a threat for the development of the area due to cuts to resources, but also as an opportunity for setting up a sound and sustainable strategy for the area.

| Opportunities  | Threats   |
|--|---|
| The status of protected area   | The pressure of real estate developers to go beyond the regulations                                     |
| The detailed inventory of the built-up heritage and existing studies on the area   | The weak interest of the local authorities for cultural values  |
| The high level of information and knowledge about the area   | The weak management and marketing capacity of the public bodies   |
| The opportunity of European Funds for urban regeneration, for heritage protection and conservation and for tourism development | The weak knowledge about the values of the area at the level of the city global community               |
| The new trends in the European Union urban policies promoted by the Leipzig Charter and Toledo Declaration                     | The lack of reliable information about the inhabitants and their social status (lack of social studies) |
| The increasing concern of professionals for the area as a valuable record of a Modernist neighbourhood                         | Lack of available statistics at local levels  |
|  | A general weak urban culture of the inhabitants and local administrations                               |
|  | The lack of any promotion and branding of the area and its heritage                                     |
|  | The weakness of the existing planning instruments   |
|  | The lack of a local development strategy and of an integrated development programme                     |

The SWOT is a first stage in defining the strategy. On its basis a diagnosis can be set up and then objectives can start to be defined. However, the SWOT in itself is not usually sufficient, as it provides a rather static image. A sound diagnosis should consider potential trends and the interconnected effects of all different driving or restrictive factors . As the limited space of this paper does not allow further development, we shall present the main strategic options to be followed.

Strategic analysis and programme identification

The above SWOT analysis indicates that the area has a lot of strengths and a good and valuable development potential, but is vulnerable to external threats, which seem to overwhelm the available opportunities. In order to build a strategic approach, one has to consider the role and balance of identified driving and restrictive factors. Based on the SWOT analysis, the strategic options are the result of the following options:

|            | Opportunities       | Threats             |
|------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Strengths  | + / + (max. – max.) | + / - (max.– min.)  |
| Weaknesses | - / + (min. – max.) | - / - (min. – min.) |

The strategic options can go from maximisation of potentials and opportunities (offensive strategy) to minimisation of weaknesses and threats (defensive strategy) or to combinations of these alternatives. Having in mind the results of the SWOT, it seems reasonable at the first glance to select a ‘max-min’ type of strategy, which is one that will focus on the strengths of the area, while trying to counteract and avoid the existing threats. However, the selection of the most efficient strategic approach is not an easy one. It depends a lot on the entity that develops the strategy and is aiming to implement it. The options can be quite different if the initiator and responsible body is a private-based organisation or a public one, or if the public one is central or local, or if it is a combination of such entities within a private-public partnership (PPP). In fact no strategy can be defined and discussed in the absence of an organisation which takes the responsibility. The initial STP theories developed by Ansoff in the 1960s, and analysed later on by Mintzberg and others, were referring to companies, to corporate organisations. In



the 1980s Bryson discourses about STP in non-profit organisation. In spatial planning it is difficult to connect a certain city area to an organisation, unless we see the Local Public Administration (LPA) as the only and omnipresent one. Yet in the case of the specific areas the LPA cannot face all challenges, and special bodies must be created. Within the urban environment there are a lot of so-called urban actors that have interests and can play a part in developing certain areas.

### Involving the right actors

In order to identify the right actors, the current technique used in STP is the 'stakeholder analysis', which takes into consideration the following criteria: interests, resources, the capacity to mobilise resources and relative position. In order to do the 'stakeholder analysis' one has to identify the actors first, which can be of three different types: public, private and community based organisations (CBOs). In urban planning strategies, actors from all these sectors are usually involved, each making different contributions to the process. It must be noted that involving the community – sometimes called the 3rd sector – has become very important in recent decades. In fact, its importance is already underlined by the Washington Charter: 'the participation and the involvement of the residents are essential for the success of the conservation programme and should be encouraged. The conservation of historic towns and urban areas concerns their residents first of all'.

The list of actors that could intervene in the process can include the following entities: the LPA of the 1st District of the capital city, the municipality (the City Hall of Bucharest), the line ministries responsible for spatial planning and cultural heritage, academic and professional associations, active NGOs in the field of urban

development and heritage, local cultural, social and educational institutions, private sector and CBOs. Without entering into a detailed analysis, an intuitive Venn diagram (see Fig. 2) could suggest, as initiator and main responsible body, the City Hall, and as partners the District Mayorality, professional bodies and some local cultural and educational institutions.

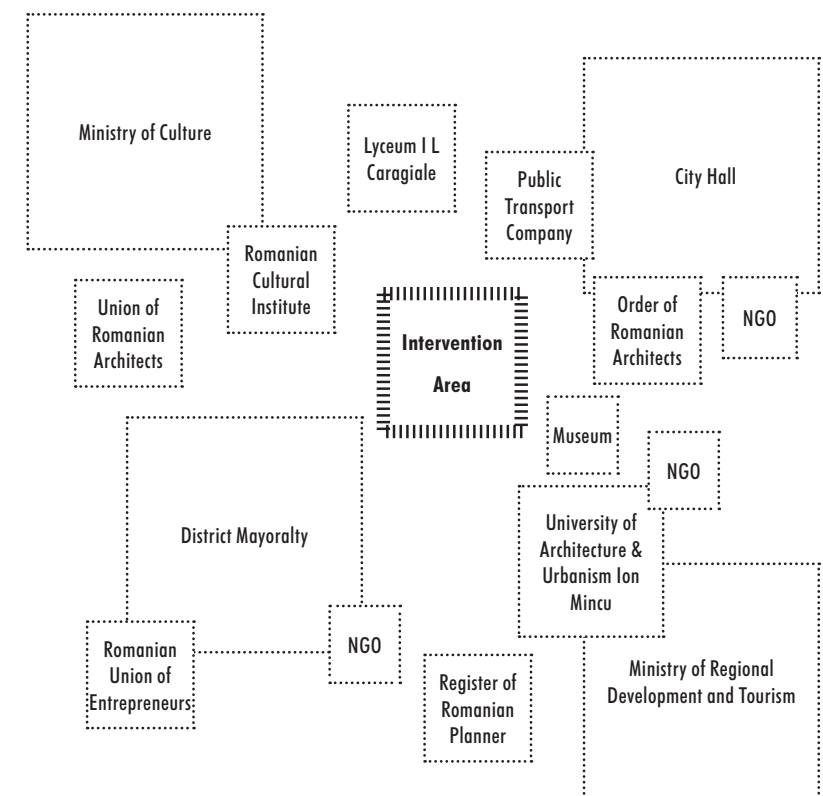


Fig. 2. The Venn diagram showing the size and position of the main urban actors in relation to the study area



Considering the existing availability of European Structural Funds to support urban regeneration, heritage rehabilitation and tourism development, a PPP coordinated by the City Hall of Bucharest (an eligible beneficiary for EU funds) could be the best alternative. In this case it is more likely that a 'defensive – offensive' type of strategy will be adopted, which will be oriented towards problem-solving and will try to make use of the existing opportunities. This option can be seen as more realistic, having in mind the role of the public administration and its limited resources.

### Identifying objectives

From the SWOT analysis, it can be noted that there are no big or acute economic, social or environmental problems. The main problems of the area in general can be related to a certain loss of identity due to a slow but continuous process of alteration of the traditional character through small and isolated interventions. This problem can be connected with the bad maintenance of the public spaces, a less stringent building control, in spite of the status of a 'protected area' and with an inadequate attitude of the owners and of the local community in general. A strategy should be addressed to solve problems of a strategic importance. Usually such problems are those that might intensify in a rather short period (one to three years), could largely affect the community and have a cultural, social, political or ecological significance (Bryson 2002).

One technique recommended in STP is to set up objectives starting from inter-related problems and identify chains of causes and effects. The 'fish-bone' diagrams or the 'problem-tree' are instruments often used to build such chains. For the purpose of this paper a 'problem-tree' on three levels is designed, which starts from the idea that one major problem of the area is its weak identity and recognition at city level, which in the end hampers the area in achieving greater recognition and promotion relative to its valuable urban and architectural heritage.

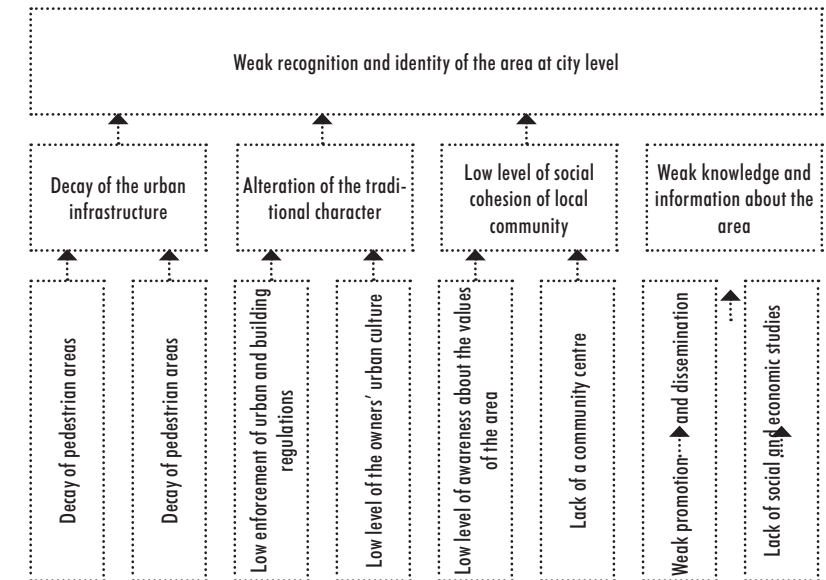


Fig. 3. The problem tree of the study area

The 'problem tree' is designed as a chain of causes and effects, each problem on a lower level being a cause of a problem on an upper level. If problems are transformed into objectives, then those on a lower level become means for reaching an upper-level goal. For instance, by developing studies on social and economic aspects of the area, the knowledge and information about it will be more complete. Also, by disseminating the information about the urban history and architectural values of the area within the local community, an increased awareness will be reached which will contribute to a strengthened social cohesion. It may be noted, in fact, that the 'problem –tree' should be developed on a fourth and maybe fifth level, in order to get to the primary causes and to better define the means of intervention and thus, the right goals for the strategy.



The three levels of the 'problem –tree' can be easily transformed into an 'objective tree', as shown in the example below. The resultant 'objective –tree' describes a potential strategy, having as a major objective the enhancement of the cultural identity of the area and greater recognition at city level. The strategy can be also seen as an intermediate one within a longer term, aiming towards international recognition. The general objective can be reached if specific objectives are fulfilled, such as the rehabilitation and maintenance of public spaces, preservation of the traditional character, increased social cohesion and improved knowledge and information about the area.

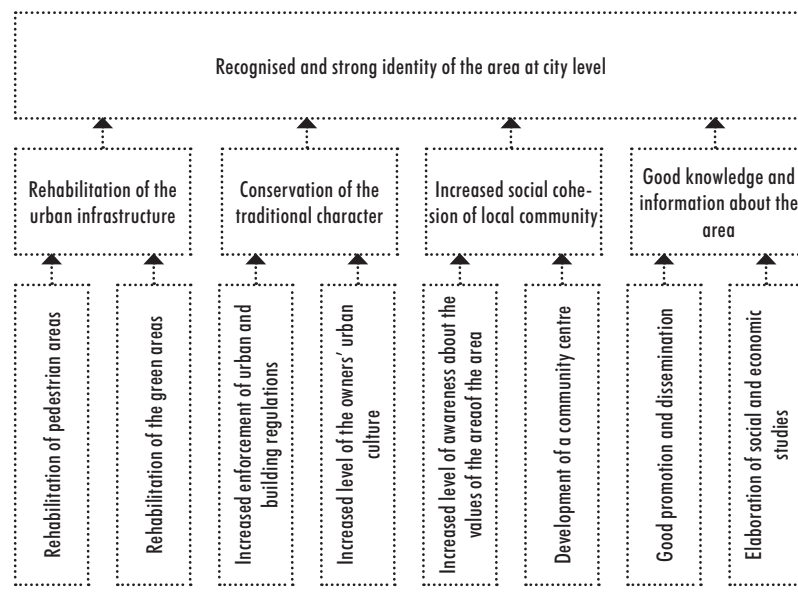


Fig. 4. The objective tree of the study area

To be sustainable, the strategy should involve the community directly or indirectly (Bryson 2002). The premises of the proposed strategy are that the public administration is willing to ensure the status of the area, which is adequate in relation to its urban and architectural value, and that the local community will be willing to participate in the project.

Yet defining the strategy and its major objectives is not sufficient to achieve results. It is necessary to build consensus, to get support from the inhabitants and to set up a larger partnership and an efficient institutional arrangement. The latter is especially important to make the partnership operational and to ensure a sound and successful implementation. The current alternatives regarding the institutionalised management of the implementation process are:

- full responsibility of the leading partner (District Mayorality);
- shared responsibility between leading partner and other important partners;
- transfer of responsibility to a newly created special body (a Local Development Agency for Modernist Neighbourhoods, which might be located for instance in a future community centre).

It must be said that successful implementation will also depend on external factors that are listed as opportunities and threats and which sometimes need to be assessed within a risk analysis (EC 2004). A simplified overview of the implementation stage can be provided by another STP instrument known as the Logical Matrix Framework (LMF).

### The Logical Matrix Framework (LMF)

The LMF, often called the Logframe Matrix, is an analytical and management tool, which is very effective 'when understood and intelligently applied' (EC 2004:18). It is a practical tool recommended for use during the implementation stage. It is usually composed of four columns and four rows which summarise the elements of a strategy, programme or project, namely the hierarchy of the objectives, the key critical external factors and the means of monitoring and evaluation (indicators and sources of verification). The example below is done for one programme only that can be drawn out from the strategy, and which refers to the conservation



of the traditional character. The 'preconditions' (sometimes called assumptions) are factors outside the direct control of project managers and which have the potential to impact negatively on the project (EC 2004:31).

|                     | Programme description   | Indicators                                       | Sources of verification            | Preconditions                        |
|---------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| General objective   | Recognised and strong identity  | The area became a city label                     | City Hall promotion materials      |                                      |
| Programme objective | Conservation of the traditional character   | The area got a status of conservation area       | City Hall decision                 | Urban legislation improved           |
| Results             | R1. Increased enforcement of urban and building regulations                                     | 95% of the interventions respect the regulations | Reports of the Planning Department | Technical Commission do its job well |
|                     | R2. Increased level of the owners urban culture   | 75% of the owners better informed                | Local public inquiries             | Local owners are getting involved    |
| Projects or actions | R1.1. A more strict and detailed urban and building regulation plan                             | A new development and regulatory Urban Plan      | Local Council Approval             | Resources are available              |
|                     | R1.2. A Local Urban Observatory to stronger monitor the area                                    | Observatory set up                               | Juridical documents                | Location issues are solved           |
|                     | R2.1 Issuing and disseminating an educational brochure about the history and values of the area | 1,000 brochures printed                          | Official reports                   | Resources are available              |
|                     | R2.2 Issuing and disseminating an educational brochure about how to build and maintain the area | 90% of the households informed                   | Table with signatures              | There is a support of local NGOs     |
|                     | R2.3. Debates and conferences   | 10 events organised                              | Reports and media                  | There is willingness and support     |

The Logframe Matrix can be developed for the whole strategy and for each specific programme. To be completed, activities and projects should be identified during the early stages of preparation of the strategy. Of course estimation of the resources needed, responsibilities and communication issues should be also considered. Once objectives, programmes, activities, resources and responsibilities are established, the Action Plan must be designed, showing the timeline of the implementation stage. An Action Plan can, however, be prepared for the first stages of the elaboration of the strategy in order to better define the timeline of the preparation stage, which could easily take between six months and two years.

## Conclusions

The strategic approach described is based mostly on the existing opportunities identified, such as the European Funds, and an increased awareness on the part of the professionals about the values and problems of the area. It must be noted that within the Romanian environment there are some important obstacles to be overcome, of which some of the most important are: the inertia and low interest of the public bodies concerning urban cultural values; the lack of CBOs and in general the weak capacity for community development; and last but not least the weak ability and capacity for building sustainable and reliable partnerships and efficient institutions.

It has to be mentioned too that sustainability can be reached if the strategy is not only implemented, but also followed by new urban policies on a longer-term basis, which should include in our case: a stronger survey of the area's development and monitoring



of the way the conservation status is respected; promotional and educational actions; good maintenance of the public spaces; and achievement of a good and comprehensive database on the area.

It is also important to add that a development strategy should be accompanied by a spatial perspective, not necessarily a current Urban Zonal Plan, but rather an illustration of the statutory plan (which exists anyway). The spatial perspective should encompass a larger area in order to find solutions for improved connectivity and functional integration with the surroundings, and to identify potential locations for interventions. Such an area is to be found in the southern part – the site of the tramway garage – and could be the subject of a conversion and regeneration project which could become a connection point to the city centre.

In the end it can be concluded that a STP process for a conservation area is more or less similar to those for other situations in terms of steps and techniques, but nevertheless some specific elements can be noted: the opportunities provided by European financing for areas with a significant cultural heritage and touristic potential; the rising awareness of professional groups about Modernist architecture; the importance of the educational and cultural elements; and the great necessity of getting the local community involved. The approach should also emphasise the idea that conservation and protection is not only about restrictions, but mainly about development, albeit a controlled, guided and oriented one!

## Notes

- 1 Modernist Neighbourhoods: Conservation/Regeneration, Bucharest 2011.
- 2 SWOT is the acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, whereas PEST stands for Political, Economic, Socio-cultural and Technological factors. Reference to SWOT, PEST or Porter Five Forces analyses can be found in works of Philip Kotler (1998) *Marketing Management – Analysis, Planning, Implementation, and Control*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, or Pearce and Robinson (2005) *Strategic Management*, New York: McGraw-Hill.
- 3 A turning point in that sense can be considered the UN HABITAT International Conference on *Re-appraising the Urban Planning Process as an Instrument for Sustainable Urban Development and Management* held in Nairobi in October 1994.
- 4 Most of the instruments and methods used in STP are described in various manuals and handbooks referring to the topic. The manuals published by the European Commission for Project Cycle Management are quite useful and detailed.
- 5 A protected area or zone is defined by Law 5/2000 approving Section III of the National Territorial Development Plan as 'natural or built-up areas which are delineated, either geographically or topographically and contain valuable natural or cultural elements and are so declared in order to protect and conserve the existing heritage'.
- 6 Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas adopted by ICOMOS General Assembly in Washington DC, October 1987.
- 7 Land-use coefficient represents the total number of built-up square metres (of all levels over the ground and underground levels higher than 1.80m) divided by the plot area of the building (as defined by Law 242/2009, which modifies and completes the 2001 Planning Act).
- 8 In 1999 an Urban Zonal Plan for protected areas in Bucharest was elaborated. In 2006 some of the protected areas benefited from additional regulations, including the workshop study area.
- 9 One simple definition of Strategic Planning is given by Mintzberg in his book 'The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning', published in USA in 1994: 'the use of formalized procedures and the existence of an articulated result, leading to a specific way of an integrated system for decision-taking' (Mintzberg 2008:33).
- 10 Both documents were adopted during the informal meetings of the ministries responsible for spatial planning in the EU. The Leipzig Charter was adopted in May 2007 and the Toledo Declaration in June 2010.



11 A driving factor is one that can help to reach a certain goal, whereas a restrictive one is the one that hamper it. The terminology comes from the 'field force theory' developed initially by Kurt Lewin and used in social psychology.

12 Igor Ansoff (1918-2002) is an American engineer of Russian origin who is considered to be the father of strategic planning, who developed a method for strategic decision in 'Corporate Strategy', published in 1965.

13 The Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism and the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage.

14 'Ion Mincu' University of Architecture and Urbanism, Union of Romanian Architects, Order of Romanian Architects, Register of Romanian Planners.

15 For the sake of this paper it is assumed that political conflicts are avoided or alleviated.

16 Validity of the objective should be checked by the so-called 'SMART' grid: that is to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-targeted.

17 It was developed in the late 1960s to assist the US Agency of International Development to improve its project planning and evaluation system.

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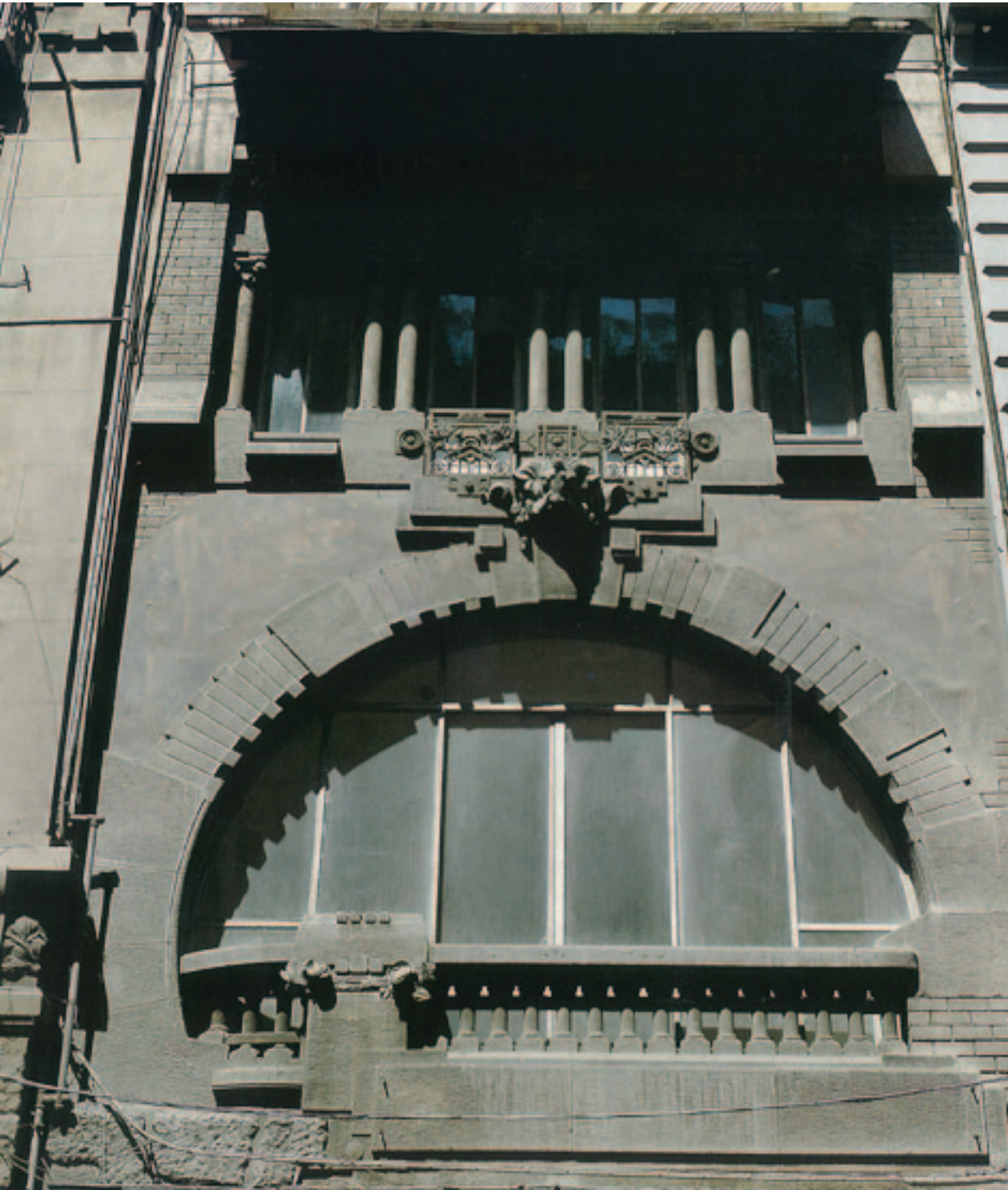
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## The Modernist borough of Bucharest and the 'Rione Amedeo' in Naples: Questions of conservation and development on an urban scale of a private residential heritage between the 19th and 20th century

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The Modernist borough of Bucharest and the so-called 'Rione Amedeo' in Naples (Italy) present a valuable urban and architectural heritage, built at the close of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century. Just like similar cases in several European towns, this heritage is now to be assessed in terms of innovative contemporary requirements, opportunities and serious risks.

Most buildings in these neighbourhoods are villas, apartment blocks or flats built in the interwar period. Their architecture displays a wide variety of styles, ranging from late Eclectic and National styles to Art Deco and Modernism. Some of these buildings have been listed as historical monuments (Celac, Carabela, Marcu-Lapadat 2005; Gravagnuolo B., Gravagnuolo G. 1990; Scalvini, Mangone 1990; D'arbitrio, Ziviello 1992; de Seta 1999).



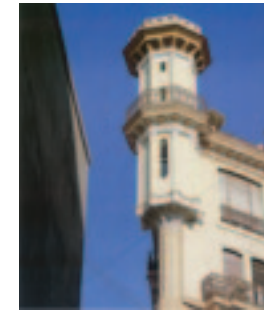
Both the boroughs in Bucharest and Naples are significant parts of the two cities, marked by a prevalent private residential character, and their architecture shows a strong relationship with decoration. In fact, between the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, architecture was firmly linked with the decorative arts.

Therefore, both the boroughs have similar identity values: creativity, strong architectural signs, a well-balanced relationship between built heritage and the planting. All these values have to be preserved or restored (if lost) against the new interventions – mainly refurbishments – that are today affecting both boroughs. In fact, even a refurbishment work could often lead to a high loss of the former values and the identity signs, considering that frequently this private heritage is not listed and the criteria of the works tend to respect more the functional needs of the owners than the conservation issues.

Thus, it is worth reflecting on the possibility of drafting *Safeguard Plans*, issued from an interdisciplinary work among restorers, planners and politicians (Miarelli Mariani 1993; Giannattasio 2003; Giamb Bruno 2007). According to a recent trend that we can find both in Romania and Italy, the *Safeguard Plans* have to be related to the whole district and have to consider the borough as a work of art and not as a sum of single buildings (Russo 2011). But, above all, the plans have to put the conservation issues before the mere regeneration, which risks satisfying only the 'comfort' needs of modernity and sometimes conflicting with preservation.

A specific topic concerns the urban public spaces in these strongly private areas: they often appear very different from the buildings in terms of quality and they are not perceived to have value by the inhabitants. The town planning and the conservation policies have to be intended as strategic means to restore the identity signs and to

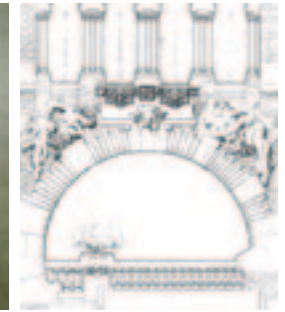
Rione Amedeo, Naples



The angle tower of Palazzina Velardi on Rampe Brancaccio.



Helicoidal staircase at Palazzo Mannajuolo.



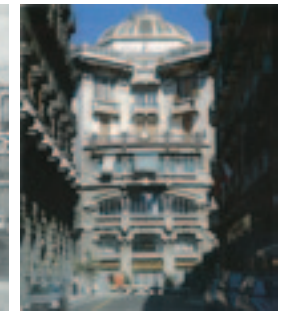
Façade of the neo-Romanic shop in via Filangieri, designed by Arata to replace the small tower initially imagined. (Archivio Mannajuolo).



The small shop in via Filangieri.



The shop-house for Leopoldo Gatti in via Filangieri, in a drawing where the small tower still exists. (Archivio Arata, Piacenza).



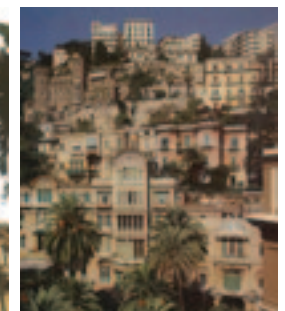
Overview of Palazzo Mannajuolo.



The Palazzina Ricciardi in Parco Margherita n. 36.



Grand Hotel Eden.



Overview of Grand Hotel Eden from Piazza Amedeo.



re-establish the former quality of these sites. According to Pier Luigi Cervellati: 'The quality of life, city and job is not what we pursue as an aspiration of our modernity, of our future? Conservation looks not only towards the historic city, even if it's the only way to preserve it. Conservation is essential to build the urban and natural environment of the future' (Cervellati 1991).

In the workshop held in Bucharest we reflected on issues that have had an impact on the integration between conservation theory and practice in Modernist urban areas. The aim of our group was to explore the contribution that conservation and restoration disciplines may make towards the urban life of the future, and to the regeneration of our present-day towns.

The present configuration of the Modernist borough of Bucharest resulted from the parcelling of the former extensive properties. The entire area was completely modified through several planned parcellings – including Filipescu Park (1912), Bonaparte Park (1913), etc. – between 1895 and 1940 (Lascu 2011). These parcellings differ considerably amongst themselves with regard to their urban design, size and plot typology, thus reflecting the social status of the occupants for whom they were originally planned.

The first core of Rione Amedeo in Naples was built from 1871 in the western part of the city, in order to host a brand new building type: the rental dwelling, that was the main purpose of the middle class after the Italian Unity (1861). Afterwards, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the voids left among the plain 19<sup>th</sup>-century dwellings, were filled by the new 'Liberty' houses, which strongly increased the architectural quality of the borough. The main architect of that period was Giulio Ulisse Arata (born in Piacenza), who opened his building office in Naples in 1908 with the engineer Ricciardi. These two men built the main buildings of the whole borough, among which Palazzo

Mannaquolo stands out, whose elliptic staircase is one of the identity signs of the Neapolitan 'Rione' (F. Mangone, 1996).

The predominant functional character of both Neapolitan and Romanian areas has always been the residential one, but various functional destinations of new and old buildings have progressively altered the character of the areas. In the Bucharest borough, the first important building that hosted a public function was the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, built in the Filipescu Park in 1945. Thus the Modernist borough is a residential district marked by a private character, housing the members of the upper and middle classes, being both elderly and wealthy, such as diplomats and politicians. This fact alone sometimes generates problems in the practical application of protection laws and urban regulations, in view of rich private proprietors who aim at upgrading their buildings to the present requirements of comfort.

After 1990 a large number of residential villas were converted into embassies, such as the German one, or ambassadorial residences, consulates and cultural institutes. At the same time several restaurants and cafés were accommodated in some of the existing villas, and commercial/business enterprises were housed on the ground floors of the new buildings. Also the office buildings are being developed in increasing numbers, so it is possible to see changes taking place on a local scale. In the coming decade this aspect will bring about a greater mix in the borough in keeping with the revitalisation issue.

This slow process of expansion of the service industries has affected also the so-called 'Liberty Street' in Naples. However, the Neapolitan case shows a strong commercial character, which has been marked in the borough from the origin, offering a valuable commercial street to the new inhabitants of the middle class. As a result, the Rione Amedeo has been marked by a functional *mixité* in its two centuries of life, which guarantee an urban life all day long.



In the Bucharest borough, the analysis of the characteristic features and values of the site highlights, first of all, a balanced relationship between the green areas and the building heritage (Figs. 1, 2, 10, 11) – the mono- or bi-family villas and greenery inside and outside the single plots – both between the streets and private houses. Hence, the Modernist borough of Bucharest has been considered by some as an interesting example of the *garden city* as introduced and theorised by Ebenezer Howard in the opening decade of the 20th century.



Fig. 1. Bucharest, modernist borough. An example of a neo-romanian building (Photo R. Picone 2011)



Fig. 2. Bucharest, modernist borough. An example of late eclectic villa with a balanced relationship between the green and the built up (Photo R. Picone 2011)



Fig. 3. Bucharest, modernist borough. An example of a villa in picturesque style with conservation problems in the outer plasters (Photo R. Picone 2011)



Another significant value of the area on an urban scale is the complexity of urban spaces and architecture languages (Figs. 3, 5, 9, 10), the urban texture, especially the design of the street network, the legibility of the historical evolution of the area, and the combination of identities (Pascariu 2011). The high quality of architectures (architectural styles), and the richness of the architectural design and its details contribute to the consideration of the study area as a very rich and



Fig. 4. Bucharest, modernist borough. An example of a villa in picturesque style with conservation problems in the outer plasters, detail (Photo R. Picone 2011)



Fig. 5. Bucharest, modernist borough. An example of a villa in picturesque style (Photo R. Picone 2011)

specific *repertoire* of 20<sup>th</sup>-century architecture for private housing, which is not easy to find in other European cities with this quality and this quantity.

Both the Rione Amedeo and the Modernist borough in Bucharest show a strong relationship between the idea of the solidity of the urban structure of the area and the good quality of the architecture and the urban fabric. The high capacity of functional adaptation confirms that both areas in their entirety may be seen and understood as experimentations in urban composition, architecture and materials in continuous evolution. However, it is mainly this very diversity of characteristics that exposes the vulnerability/fragility of the area in the face of inappropriate or aggressive interventions. For both the case studies, the aim of good urban policies and conservation strategies should be to preserve this combination of values and elements.

The approval of Romanian Law no. 5 in the year 2000 allowed the listing of seven parcellings of the Modernist borough of Bucharest as 'protected urban areas' in order to preserve their specificity by setting restrictions on interventions on historical buildings and for the introduction of new architecture (Fig. 6). The law identifies natural and built-up cultural areas of national interest, and has the aim of protecting upgrading and turning the natural and built



Fig. 6. Bucharest, modernist borough. A new building recently added in substitution of an older one (Photo R. Picone 2011)



heritage to good account. The law requires specific studies in the protected areas, in order to define the perimeter of the area, the specific planning methodologies, the drawing up of planning documents, urban regulations and measures to be taken for protection and conservation.

In 2001 the approval of the Romanian Law for the Protection of the Historical Monuments has allowed the listing of many plots of Modernist boroughs, especially those recognised as 'a material testimony of the residential neighbourhoods belonging to the first half of the 20th century'. This aspect has led to the listing of eleven buildings in Filipescu Park alone (Celac, Carabela, Marcu-Lapadat 2005: 93-109). On the other hand, many buildings are still unprotected and the urban regulations do not ensure any real protection. In fact, the status of 'protected urban area' was not enough to prevent certain unlisted buildings from being demolished, although they possessed obvious architectural and contextual merits. In the meantime, the approval of the European Landscape Convention (in 2002) and the publication in 2004 of the historical monuments list (updated in 2010) have disseminated an awareness for the urgent need for more restrictive regulations and urban policies. Therefore, in 2005–2007, the studies concerning the protected urban areas of Filipescu Park, Bonaparte Park and Mornand parcelling were revised, by reconsidering the architectural value of the buildings and their role in defining the character of these three urban areas. Finally the revised and more restrictive regulations were approved by the General Council of the Municipality of Bucharest.

The fact is worth highlighting that the documents which form the general structure of the Zone Plan for protected areas (PUZCP) – necessary for analysing the characteristics of the area on an urban scale and for inferring the project's guidelines – are founded

basically on historical analysis, without any concern for the state of conservation, decay or maintenance of the buildings and the public areas. The Zone Plan and the local urban regulations come about only from historical reflections, like the 'zone historical study' and the 'general historic study', without any observation of the critical state of the area and the consequent protection and safeguarding strategies.

Even in the Neapolitan case, the Variante al Piano Regolatore Generale, approved in 2004, identifies the area of the historic borough of Chiaia and Rione Amedeo – that is its original core – within the historic centre. But, also in this case, the status of 'protected area' does not guarantee the preservation of each building against inadequate transformations which in Naples arise from the commercial issues, above all. Nevertheless, the recent extension from 50 to 70 years of life for a building to be listed, prevents the preservation of some significant examples of late Modernist architecture of the 1950s which mark the area today.

Generally, we recognized the preservation of values as important, as it provided a specific authenticity to the area and a potential identity at the level of the district and the city that should not be lost, representing an important document of a collective memory. Moreover, the preservation could increase the economic value of the whole area, creating job opportunities, as this combination of values represents its attractiveness, making it 'a pleasant place to live'.

The Bucharest borough shows the following critical points:

- the apparently low level of awareness and the urban culture of the inhabitants and of the local community concerning the values of the protected area. It has been emphasised that the area could become more significant at city level if its identity



were better revealed, preserved and promoted. It is necessary to work on the toponymy, and to promote events that reinforce the memory and awareness of the site;

- the poor involvement of the local public authorities due to the poorer quality of the urban spaces;
- the failure of the local public administration to control the interventions on the heritage at various scales (e.g. urban buildings, façades, fences);
- the 'island (insularity) effect' of the borough due to insufficient connection with other neighbourhoods and with the city centre. This problem generates 'gated communities';
- the low quality and the poor level of maintenance of public spaces, sidewalks and pavements. This produces a poor attractiveness of collective sites and the lack of (social) functions encouraging social contact (Fig. 8);
- the lack of adequate parking spaces throughout the area;
- the low level of design of the general lighting system, and also of traffic signs, street indicators, bollards and waste bins;
- the low attention paid to the preservation of architectural building exteriors. There are many signs of deterioration and degradation even on the outer plaster of listed buildings, indicating a specific vulnerability to such 20<sup>th</sup>-century neighbourhoods, subject to insufficient protection and aggressive or inadequate/inappropriate interventions on account of excessive permissiveness (Figs. 3, 4, 9);
- the results of changes in the urban landscape, which are not preserving the existing traditional character (Fig. 7);
- the need for regulations for the overhead aerial cables that spoil the general urban views;
- the area appears not very lively, even during the day.



Fig. 7. Bucharest, modernist borough. A new building recently added in substitution of an older one which alters the material and volumetric character of the context (Photo R. Picone 2011)



Fig. 8. Bucharest, modernist borough. The low quality and poor level of design and maintenance of public spaces (Photo R. Picone 2011)



Fig. 9. Bucharest, modernist borough. An example of a modernist building with some problems of conservation (Photo R. Picone 2011)





Fig. 10. Bucharest, modernist borough. A villa recently restored (Photo R. Picone 2011)



Fig. 11. Bucharest, modernist borough. A villa recently restored visited by the workshop group (Photo R. Picone 2011)



Fig. 12. Bucharest, modernist borough. An example of late eclectic villa with a balanced relationship between the green and the built up (Photo R. Picone 2011)



Fig. 13. Bucharest, modernist borough. A villa under restoration where the textures and surfaces are being hardly substituted (Photo R. Picone 2011)



Fig. 14. Bucharest, modernist borough. An example of eclectic mono-familial villa (Photo R. Picone 2011)



Fig. 15. The workshop group during the classroom debate in the "Ion Mincu" University of Architecture and Urban Planning of Bucharest (Photo R. Picone 2011)

It is possible to extrapolate from among these problems certain fundamental issues to be tackled in succession, namely: the role of public administration; the potentiality of urban planning in conservation areas like the Modernist borough in Bucharest and the Rione Amedeo in Naples; the relationship between public power and private property; and – last but not least – the inhabitants' awareness of their neighbourhood's heritage and cultural value.

A low level of awareness also implies a low level of identity, and could be used to describe a certain fragility of the social structure of the area. As one may observe that 'you conserve what you know', it seems necessary to improve the general level of knowledge among the inhabitants about their own area.

It appears clear from all these observations that the planning instruments in the case of specific conservation areas must be improved through studies which would start ranging from specific surveys for restoration (analysis of urban fabric, focus on material, pavements, structural and plant-design technique, textures, mix of function, etc.) to the elaboration to a specific plan of intervention which has to consider highly specific features such as façade surfaces, etc.

A multi-scale intervention is necessary, including private and public responsibilities, the setting-up of a partnership mechanism, and the necessity for reinforcing the role of public administration in the maintenance of public spaces, and for incrementing the subordination of private intervention to general public regulations.

In this way a successful planning approach to the conservation areas requires that the public plays its own part in providing guidance for conserving the heritage, for the control of interventions, economic incentives and investments in public spaces.



Within this basic choice certain points of interest have subsequently emerged in the Modernist borough in Bucharest necessitating work in order to achieve a sound planning of the protected area:

- to work on the public spaces, in order to enhance their quality, and to make them more attractive as hosting centres for communication and social gatherings (cultural centres, cafés, restaurants, clubs, etc.). The existing tramway depot in the southern part of the district could become the real 'gate' of conservation areas and could offer an adequate area to host the required public functions;
- to expand the *mixité fonctionnelle* of the area, in order to reduce the residential function and to increase services;
- to give more identity to the site, and work also on toponymy;
- to make provision for meeting places for the elderly and children (young people) in order to enhance the viability and lively atmosphere of the district during daytime hours;
- to improve the social outlook of the area;
- to make provision for economic support from the government for the restoration of listed private houses which respect the protection criteria implicit in, and relating to, the urban instrumentation.

All these points should be duly focused in the 'good practice' (Giamb Bruno 2002) guidelines for intervention in the Modernist boroughs (Giusti 2006) which, starting out from the Bucharest case, may represent an exemplary model of reference for many European cities currently grappling with the need to conserve their identities and the values of their Modernist districts, but at the same time with the need to permit a measured transformation, appropriate for implementing these necessary modifications most consistently.

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## The different approach between conservation and regeneration in historical urban areas: the Dorobanți neighbourhood in Bucharest

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The conservation and regeneration of Modernist neighbourhoods was the main theme proposed during the workshop held in Bucharest in October 2011, considering its relevance to solving the problems of redevelopment of last-century districts, in relation to the lack of respect shown in many European cities for the heritage of the recent past.

The proposed site in Bucharest, with specific cultural, historical and urban-architectural characteristics, offers a relevant case study with examples of interventions (new insertions, extensions, restorations, renovations) and it has to be considered an important occasion to reflect on conservation themes.

Starting from the workshop experience of the specific study area, located in the northern part of Bucharest, this paper aims to reflect, first of all, upon the theoretical and methodological aspects of the central question of the workshop: the sensitive relationships between the actions of conservation/regeneration in historical urban areas and cultural heritage; similarly about the fundamental terms of



preservation, conservation and restoration, which are too often used as synonyms in an international context; and also referring to the role of charters and preservation laws in conservation.

In addition, the study area will be examined on the basis of the site visit, of the meticulous analysis of documentation produced by Ion Mincu University of Architecture and Urbanism, and also with the support of bibliographic research. Finally, starting from this rigorous historical study, some observations and operational proposals will be made, related to the sustainable future prospects of the area.

With regard to proposed relationships between conservation and regeneration as they relate to historical urban areas and cultural heritage, it has to be noted that these two approaches are completely antithetical because of their very different goals.

The 'conservation' concept is, first of all, founded on cultural awareness in relation to solid theoretical issues of conservation/restoration disciplines.

From this perspective, conservation is a fundamental goal of a work of restoration carried out on our heritage, because we have to transfer to the future its cultural value as a material document and a palimpsest of historic stratifications.

Conservation, in turn, is guaranteed through the tools established by the preservation processes (for example, the preservation laws and preservation plans, but also the inventory of cultural heritage, etc.).

In the Italian Restoration Charter of 1972, preservation was defined as 'any conservative action that does not imply a direct intervention on the object'.

The term 'restoration' refers instead to direct intervention on the object, carried out, always and only, on the original material, shape and structure, with all the attendant risks of error and damage and thus with all the prudence that demands, through various technical-scientific operations and validated by a historical-critical and aesthetic methodology, to conserve its material integrity and to transfer its cultural values to the future.

Thus it is possible to define the fundamental principles that would aim current restoration works towards minimum intervention, distinguishability, reversibility, respect for material authenticity, chemical-physical compatibility and durability of materials and techniques, in the awareness of the uniqueness and non-reproducibility of cultural heritage (Carbonara 2009: 28).

A restoration design, starting with an in-depth analysis (historical research, combined with a survey) of the object that reveals its characteristics and values, attends to the preservation of existing structures and genuine materials, with deep and rigorous respect for all historic stratifications, together with the design of new elements and structures.

In particular, interventions can address structural consolidation, actions to mitigate the decay of finishes, possible new additions, insertion of new services, introduction of new architectural elements on different scales, following a suitable and coherent approach which respects not only what we have inherited but also contemporary needs, without employing mimetic solutions, fake reconstructions and also without pursuing an unfeasible inalterability.

This rigorous methodology has to be applied both at urban and territorial scale, with an equivalent level of preservation, not only for the monuments with exceptional historic-artistic value, but even



for historic buildings with an environmental value and related urban tissue. So it is possible to define this approach with the term 'urban restoration'.

In contrast, the concept of 'regeneration' presents as its main goal the social and economic revitalisation of urban areas.

In many cases, above all in the Anglo-Saxon countries, urban regeneration policies comprise the renewal (but also the 're-establishment', 'refurbishment', 're-use', 'restyling', 'rehabilitation', etc.) of historic contexts and related buildings, adapting them to new uses, often in ways that are incompatible with the real conservation of this heritage.

So, starting from this approach, it is possible to find a common methodology in urban regeneration plans that often are based on different levels of preservation between monuments and historic buildings, associated with the different values ascribed to them. This gradation of preservation, is in fact also present in the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada, 1985) as well as in the Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas (Washington, 1987) (Fiengo 1990).

Under ever-stronger economic pressures, these activities drive historic areas towards new projects and development that is only apparently sustainable. In fact, development that is not able to guarantee a role for memory, history and the value of traditions – and on the contrary considers them a brake on economic growth – is not, obviously, sustainable. Moreover, the regeneration concept at the scale of the individual buildings related to their material aspects is even less sharable, because any architectural object is unique and irreproducible, and so its material regeneration appears impossible.

Another interesting problem which must be examined is the role of charters and preservation law in conservation. It has to be accepted that these international documents are in general very important in defining an appropriate methodological approach towards interventions. But above all, the legal measures and their implementation are the most relevant tools towards obtaining effective safeguards for our heritage.

The international charters contribute to clarifying the question relating to recognising the cultural value of the urban areas built in the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> and first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In fact, it has to be remembered that the Venice Charter (1964) is the starting point for theoretical considerations about a preservation concept, extending from single monuments to environmental values, defining an original urban and territorial dimension of conservation, and inclusive also of the most recent urban areas. So the extension of the preservation object implied the definition of a modern strategy, based not only on historico/critical and technical themes but even on social, economic, administrative and juridical aspects (Fiengo 1990).

Starting from the principles defined in the Venice Charter, the European Charter of the Architectural Heritage and the Declaration of Amsterdam promulgated by the Council of Europe in 1975, identified for the first time the concept of 'integrated conservation' - the result of the combination of restoration techniques with the correct choice of appropriate functions - as one of the most important purposes of urban and territorial planning.

The limitations imposed on the use of heritage by conservation requirements are the basis for the application of the sustainable development concept, defined at the end of the 1980s and consisting in conjugating the fundamental motivations for conservation with development and innovation needs, in a balanced way.



Conservation, in fact, is particularly advanced by a use of the cultural and natural heritage that is, however, sustainable and is accomplished by planning policies based on preservation and balanced and appropriate development, accounting for economic and social needs.

To an even greater extent, another most recent and important document, the European Landscape Convention (Florence 2000) assigns proper juridical status to landscape and preserves the overall landscape dimension of each national territory without limiting preservation to specific landscapes of exceptional value, but including both the outstanding parts and the ordinary or even degraded ones. This process is supported mainly by the involvement of local communities in landscape policy, based on the recognition of landscape values, considered as a fundamental step in raising widespread awareness in relation to cultural identity and the quality of life of a place (Pugliano 2010).

The area of the Modernist neighbourhoods in Bucharest, proposed during the workshop experience, represents an interesting case study which can clarify some theoretical and methodological aspects in relation to the concept of conservation as 'cultural value recognition' as regards recently developed urban areas, and how this idea must also be the starting point for all planning policies.

At the same time, the Bucharest area is an emblematic one in setting out the conservation/regeneration problem, because in spite of its status of protected area it is possible to observe numerous bad interventions – above all, new insertions in the pre-existing context - under the pressure of real estate speculation.

The urban area under analysis is situated in the north of the city. It is bordered by Iancu de Hunedoara Boulevard, Aviatorilor Boulevard

and Calea Dorobanților, and is part of the administrative division 'Sector 1', one of the six into which the municipality of Bucharest is divided. It is a large part of the Dorobanți neighbourhood which today extends between Piața Charles de Gaulle, Piața Victoriei, Piața Romană and Lascăr Catargiu Boulevard.

The part of the Dorobanți neighbourhood which is the object of the study borders the zone of Herăstrău Park and its lake on its north side; the zone of Kiseleff neighbourhood with the related park to the west; the Primăverii neighbourhood to the northeast; and the Floreasca neighbourhood to the east.

The Dorobanți neighbourhood is characterised by the presence of two city landmarks at Piața Victoriei, into which Calea Victoriei and Calea Dorobanților arrive – both among the most ancient streets of Bucharest. Calea Victoriei was built at the end of the 17th century by the Prince of Wallachia, Constantin Brâncoveanu to connect his urban residence with his summer one at Mogoșoaia, located outside of the city to the north. This had different names over time (among them in particular Podul Mogoșoaiei) before adopting the present one, which celebrates the 1878 victory over the Turks in the Romanian War of Independence. During the 18th century and up until the 1930s, this important road hosted many buildings including iconic ones (Cinà 2010:28).

The second street, Calea Dorobanților, was in the past named Șoseaua Herăstrău because it connected the city centre with the northern area of Lake Herăstrău. Its present name is a tribute to the '*dorobanți*', soldiers who fought in the War of Independence mentioned above.

This event, ending after many centuries in total liberation from the Ottoman Empire, represented the definitive opening of the country



of Romania and of the capital to European influences, prevalently French. In terms of architecture, this transition was marked; this can be seen also in the study area by the work of French academic architects, who became authors of numerous buildings, as well as by the work of many Romanian architects who were educated in Paris (Cinà 2010: 64, Dezi 2005).

Another interesting urban fragment near the study area is Kiseleff Park, a first significant intervention that followed one of the first fundamental town planning instruments, the Organic Regulation of 1831, supported by the Russian governor General Pavel Dmitrievici Kiseliov – known by his name in French form, Kiseleff. This park, designed in the 1840s by the Austrian landscape architect Carl Friedrich Wilhelm Meyer, still hosts today the three interesting buildings of the museums of natural sciences, of geology and of the Romanian farmer (Celac, Carabela, Marcu-Lăpădat 2009:104-105). It is delimited by the main arterial route, Șoseaua Kiseleff, which was inaugurated in 1865 and in turn initiated the urban planning of the northern areas of the city (Cinà 2010: 32, 73, 79).

Further important arteries present in the area are: Aviatorilor Boulevard (at one time known as Șoseaua Jianu), which connects Piața Charles de Gaulle – so named after 1989 (Piața Jianu before World War II, and Piața Stalin after the war) – with Piața Victoriei and proceeds towards Bulevardul Lascăr Catargiu. *The layout of this street presents abundant vegetation that helps to preserve the overall picture of the boulevard and the admirable perspective of the monument dedicated to the memory of aviator heroes, Monumentul Eroilor Aerului (1935) by Lydia Kotzebue and Iosif Fekete* (Celac, Carabela, Marcu-Lăpădat 2009:107).

The study area became part of the administrative perimeter of Bucharest in 1895, as a consequence of the Law dating from the

same year establishing the boundary of the city and fixing new administrative limits, updating those set out in the 1831 Organic Regulation (Cinà 2010:188). The new legislation first of all established rules to define public space, a fact that is regarded as the most remarkable phenomenon in the city's evolution since the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The next step in the making of the city was the completion of residential settlements by dividing estates into lots, re-drawing land parcels with more regular divisions and regulated modalities concerning alignments, building heights, construction density and the architectural style to be used, set as the neo-Romanian style (Cinà 2010:189).

Between 1895 and 1940 and also later during the interwar period, when Bucharest had achieved the solid image of a European city, twelve historical districts were realised in the study area.

All these parcellings, with the exception of the oldest (the Blanc parcelling), were subject to the building regulations just mentioned, established by the municipality. These concerned the size of plots and the positions and heights of the buildings, as well as the boundary of the green areas and vegetation. The parcellings are very different in urban composition, size and shape of the plots and demonstrate the social status of the population through the various kinds of buildings, from low-cost housing developments for the employees of various companies to villas, and from one-family houses to high-rise apartment blocks.

Many of the buildings that present a large variety of architectural languages, from late Eclectic and neo-Romanian, to Art Deco and high quality Modernism, were mainly realised during the 1920s and 1930s.



In fact, in the years after the World War I, following the International Treaty of Versailles in 1919 which sanctioned the recomposition of Great Romania, the project for Bucharest as a capital city took shape, carried out through the 1921 and 1935 Master Plans (Cinà 2010:183). The new urban planning instruments, drawn up at relatively short intervals, introduced into the city two very different visions of urban space. The first was based on an urban aesthetic derived from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the second was founded on new aesthetics and functional standards derived from the Modern Movement (Cinà 2010:183).

The importance of the cartographic surveys, dated back to 1856, 1895-99, 1911, 1924 and 1941 must be underlined, as tools for the historical knowledge of the area, in order to recognize the pre-existing signs that from the basis on which to orient contemporary design (Fig.1).

In the 1895-1899 survey it is possible to discern the most ancient route within the area, the current Paris Street, already existing in an 1856 map, connecting the zone near Piața Victoriei with the part of the emerging Floreasca neighbourhood with its lake.

In addition, in the above-mentioned document we find the oldest parcelling, named 'Blanc' by its designer, the French architect Louis Blanc, the original gardens of Filipesco Park, existing in another form on the map of 1856, and the surviving tram depot area named 'Victoria', the oldest in Bucharest. Moreover, there are three industrial areas no longer in existence. One of these hosted a brick factory and was situated in the northern part of the area, where the buildings of Romanian National Television stand today. It was probably demolished to realise the 'G. Mornand and A. Hubert' parcelling in about 1928. In the southern part, near the current

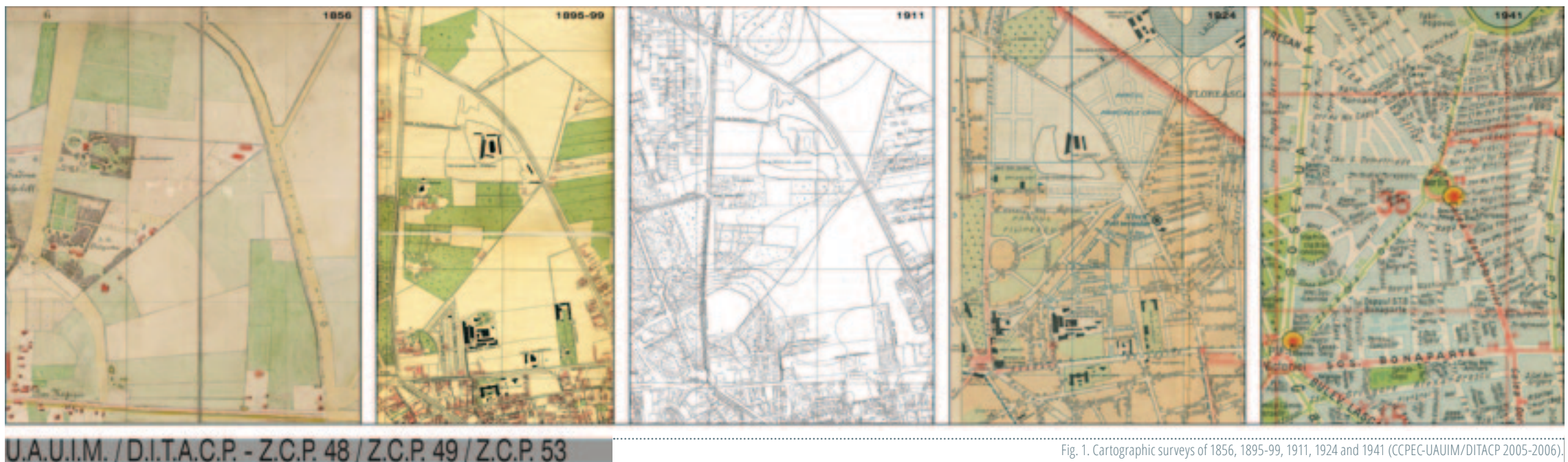


Fig. 1. Cartographic surveys of 1856, 1895-99, 1911, 1924 and 1941 (CCPEC-UAUIM/DITACP 2005-2006).



Iancu de Hunedoara Boulevard, there were other two factories. The first was demolished to build the 'Moara' Company parcelling in about 1935; the second was a rope factory up to 1935, when it was partially transformed into a textile factory, and partially demolished to host the first parcelling of 'Țesătorie Mecanică' Company. The second 'Țesătorie Mecanică' parcelling was never built, probably because the new design for the area had not planned for it. It should also be noted that the area with the textile factory was unfortunately recently transformed and completely occupied by a new condominium in Finlanda Street, a very dubious market-oriented operation.

On the map of 1924, one can see that the area had been already urbanised to a great extent, as a consequence of the 1921 City Master Plan. In this survey, the street names are still derived from those of the members of the Royal Family. Subsequent to the 1935 Master Plan, a change in the nomenclature can be detected in the map of 1941, the streets now dedicated to important capital cities of some countries representing the new Romanian diplomatic alliances following World War I.

Thus, in the document of 1924 the following parcellings are present for the first time: Filipescu Park (realised in 1912); Bonaparte Park (1913); Communal Company for Low-cost Buildings (1916) and Edilitatea Company (1922). The G. Mornand and eng. Teodorescu parcelling (1922), Gherghel parcelling (1924) and Zamfirescu Park (1925) are not yet built.

It should moreover be noted that the Sturdza building (Fig. 2), erected in front of Piața Victoriei by the architect Iulius Reiniqke in 1897 as the original headquarters of the Foreign Ministry, was damaged during World War II and demolished in 1946. In addition, the Saint Vincent de Paul Hospital, built by the Sisters of Charity



Fig. 2. The Sturdza building in Piața Victoriei, designed by the architect Iulius Reiniqke, built in 1897 and demolished in 1946.

along with its church, was later transformed into the I.C. Parhon Institute; the building of the hospital and the church are still today maintained on Aviatorilor Boulevard, as well as a large garage building, once Dimitrie Leonida property.

During the interwar period the most important transformations of the area took place, and two major edifices were erected: the building currently hosting the State Treasury and the building of the Ion Luca Caragiale High School, whose main façade overlooks Calea Dorobanților.

In 1937, the Victoria Palace was begun (Fig. 3), a result of an urban policy favouring monumentality for the most important junctions, such as the Royal Palace Square and Municipality Square, sustained by the 1935 City Master Plan (Cinà 2010:12). It is one of the most important buildings of the area, designed by the architect Duiliu Marcu (Fezi 2004). Owing to the damage brought about by the





Fig. 3. The Victoria Palace, designed by the architect Duiliu Marcu and built between 1937 and 1944.

1944 bombing, the works started again and were completed in 1952. Initially designed as a new building for the Foreign Ministry headquarters near the pre-existing Sturdza building (which was afterwards demolished), Victoria Palace was the headquarters of the Foreign Ministry and Council of Ministers during the Communist period and in 1990 became the headquarters of the first government of post-Communist Romania. In 2004, Victoria Palace was entered into the list of historic monuments.

In 1945, the first important office building was constructed within Filipescu Park, today housing the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

With the proclamation of the People's Republic in December 1947, Romania entered the USSR's political orbit and Bucharest suffered the consequences of the experience of a Socialist city.

In particular, the headquarters and the studios of the Romanian Television Society were built in the early 1960s on an extensive part of the Mornand II parcelling, occupying a large area along Calea Dorobanților; the I. C. Parhon Hospital was also erected in the same period.



Fig. 4. One of the 'screens' built along Calea Dorobanților boulevard during the Socialist period (photo G. Pugliano 2011).

Considerable urban Socialist restructuring was done in the 1960s along the current Calea Dorobanților Boulevard (at the time named Ilie Pintilie after the Communist activist, and even earlier named Șoseaua Bonaparte), and during the Ceaușescu regime of the 1970s, on Calea Dorobanților. This substantially changed the configuration of the adjacent urban space, due to the insertion of new blocks of flats with commercial spaces on their ground floors; they form a massive screen along the boulevard (Fig. 4).

After World War II and later, after 1990, there were other changes in the functional character of the area, when a large number of residential villas were converted into embassies or ambassadors' residences, consulates, and cultural institutes of some European countries. Recently, buildings for offices and luxury dwellings were inserted into the area. At the same time, several restaurants were arranged in some of the existing villas.

From here on, to fully understand the current urban situation, it is important to remember the main events that related to Romanian



planning laws and instruments after the fall of Ceaușescu, paying particular attention to the path towards a definition of protected areas status in Bucharest.

The year 1989 constituted the turning point for the spatial planning system in Romania. The Systematization Law was abolished. This was enacted in 1974 during the Communist regime of Nicolae Ceaușescu. It had begun as a programme of rural resettlement, aimed at extending modern facilities into the countryside, but in fact consisted largely of the demolition and reconstruction of existing villages, towns and cities.

In the early 1990s, 'systematisation' became 'urban planning', even though the legal framework for spatial planning was fragile until 2001.

The first phase of the definition of protected areas in Bucharest was set in motion in 1999. These were defined as areas in which the preservation of the characteristic cityscape, determined by its natural features, historical structures, typical building stock and variety of functions, must be safeguarded. In this approach, development is not excluded; it is permitted, even encouraged, but under some specific conditions which differ from area to area. It is important that the new intervention preserves or even enhances the defined specific character and the identity of the area.

This process was completed with the ratification of the National Law n. 5 the following year (L. n. 5/2000), which approved the third part of the National Plan for Territorial Development (Section III: *Protected Areas*), establishing the natural and built-up cultural areas of national interest, with the objective of their protection and valorisation.

All the municipalities were obliged to draw the limits and to establish the rules of conservation/development of the protected areas.

In relation to the situation in the study area of the Dorobanți neighbourhood, in 2000, the General Council of the Municipality of Bucharest approved (along with the Urban General Plan) the listing of seven protected areas (Fig. 5), along with others of the same status in the wider city, and the related operational plans were also drawn up.



Fig. 5. The seven protected areas of the Dorobanți neighbourhood, in 1999.



In practice, the regulations were not sufficient, as was proven by the various new buildings that contrasted with the overall specificity of the area, as well as by the interventions that altered the architectural character of some existing buildings.

It was found, in fact, that the status of 'protected urban area' was not enough to prevent the demolition of certain buildings which were unlisted but had obvious architectural and contextual values.

Another important event was the new Territorial and Urban Planning Law (L. n. 350/2001). It clarified planning instruments and public responsibilities, but unfortunately also allowed the approval by local public administrations of Urban Area Plans that permitted derogations.

Moreover, in the same year an important law (L. n. 422/2001) was enacted concerning protection of historical monuments classified into two groups (Group A, which includes valuable national and universal historical monuments; and Group B, which includes representative local cultural heritage). In 2002 law (L. n. 451/2002) was approved for the ratification of the European Landscape Convention.

In addition, the list of historic monuments was published in 2004, and this was recently updated in 2010.

In 2004, the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Tourism, now the Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism, issued an order regarding ways of establishing regulations for conservation and the use of the development potential of the protected area ('Methodology for the elaboration and framework content of the planning documents for protected built up areas PUZCP', *Monitorul Oficial* Part I nr. 125 bis of 11/02/2004). Only the Bucharest

Municipality followed it, for 12 out of 94 areas, as a pilot project in 2005-2007.

So, during this period the second phase of refinement of the 1999 regulations started, regarding the already established protected areas.

With regard to the study area, the protected areas of Filipescu Park, Bonaparte Park and the Mornand parcelling were revised. The work that finished at the beginning of 2007 was discussed and approved only in 2009 by the Municipality Council.

In addition, the entry of Romania into the European Union in 2007 with the availability of the EU structural funds – had caused new demolition of valuable buildings belonging to the protected areas.

Finally, two other important laws amending and supplementing the Planning Law n.350/2001 should be mentioned. The first, Law n. 289/2006, introduced specific provisions on public consultation for all plans of spatial and urban planning. Derogation urban planning and the unjustified amendments to the urban indicators were limited by increasing the authority of the local public administration and of the public interest as against private interest.

More recently, in 2011, an emerging Ordinance of the Romanian Government (E.G.O. n. 7/2011) for amending and supplementing Law n. 350/2001 was converted into the Law n. 162/2011. This had as its main objectives: to limit derogatory urban planning practices which led to incoherent development and uncontrolled extension of districts, generating malfunctions, significant costs for the local communities, occupancy of green spaces affecting the environment, as well as litigation affecting the legal security of investments; to discourage and eliminate the possibility of



modifying urban planning regulations for the purpose of legalising the situation of construction executed without a building permit or by breach of the terms thereof; and to provide express rules on the extension of the validity of general urbanism plans.

After this *excursus* on planning laws, it is possible to make some observations, through site visits and documentation analysis, about the functional character of the Dorobanți area, a sensitive question the answer to which can have a most important role in the sustainable future of this part of Bucharest.

In fact, it must be noted, the relationship between conservation and use/function is a central problem, because conservation certainly is not 'museum-ification' – but, on the contrary and even if it is paradoxical, the best conservation is ensured simply by a 'use', though it must be a 'compatible' one.

Through the urban and historic analysis, it is possible to deduce that, initially, the neighbourhood area was occupied by some factories, a tram depot and a garage, and then the residential function became the predominant character of the whole area. Over time, new functions were added: some relate to education and culture, among them three schools, various museums (the Zambaccian Museum, the National Museum of Maps and Old Books and the Dr. Victor Babes Memorial Museum) and the Romanian Cultural Institute. Other functions relate to administrative offices, for the two Ministries of Foreign Affairs and European Affairs, the Romanian Government, numerous embassies and the State Treasury. Other uses relate to hospital functions, the television headquarters and, in recent times, also to banks and business offices.

By comparing the findings of the historical research with the present context, some planning indications can be derived.



Fig. 6. Current aerial view of the tram depot area (<http://www.bing.com/maps/>).



Fig. 7. The tram depot area (photo G. Pugliano 2011).



First of all, it is possible to define the conservation of disused or degraded neighbourhood areas as the main contemporary need - in particular, the zone of the tram depot (Figs. 6-7), the oldest in the city - and also the restoration of the existing buildings with new compatible functions. In contrast, the urban plan of 2002 seems to foresee a residential function for this area, as it has been foreseen and realised for the nearby area of the textile factory, on which a new condominium has recently been built (Fig. 8).

Another indicator addresses the restoration of the building that hosted the Dimitrie Leonida Garage, dating back to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It must be noted that this building is not included in the protected area as neither is the nearby Oromolu House of 1927 (Fig. 9) listed instead as an historic monument.



Fig. 8. The new condominium in Finlanda Street, built on the site of the textile factory.



Fig. 9. Oromolu House in Piața Victoriei.

For this structure, it is necessary to ensure careful preservation because it seems that as a consequence of the Urban Plan it could be demolished and substituted by a skyscraper.

Besides, it is a relevant question related to the reinforcement within the urban area of the role of Paris Street, taking into account its historic value, in order to improve the connection of the Dorobanți neighbourhood with the nearby Floreasca neighbourhood and the lakes on the northeast side, and with Kisselef Park and its related museum on the west side. This design could also solve the problem of the island character of the Dorobanți neighbourhood, which arises due to the weak or inconsistent connections to other neighbourhoods and to the city in general.

Finally, this focus would ensure the maintenance and restoration, or often redefinition, of the boundary of the public and private green spaces.



Without a doubt, the Dorobanți area presents indisputable values in relation to its architectural and urban aspects, as well as to its characteristic diversity and coherence.

Nevertheless, there also some problems, above all those relating to the control of interventions both at individual and detail scale and at a large scale with new insertions.

In a sense, on the one hand, a reinforcement of the central role of the public administration in the urban planning of the conservation areas is to be strongly desired, in relation to guidance for conservation, control, economic incentives and investments in public spaces. Even more, it is necessary to set up public-private partnership mechanisms and adequate financial instruments for the conservation areas.

On the other hand, it is of great relevance to raise the inhabitants' awareness about the heritage and cultural values of their neighbourhood.

Finally, it must be said that the Bucharest urban fabric is now extremely fragile and, as underlined by Nicolae Lascu in the presentation of a recent book of Giuseppe Cinà (Cinà 2010:9-14), 'it is being attacked today by destructive interventions. But, to ignore Bucharest's history, starting from scratch yet again, means allowing the destruction of every foundational reference and the loss of its identity in order to build a new city, equal to every city that has no history'. Moreover, it is possible to share fully the strict judgment of the same scholar, when he adds to this that 'the new, current type of intervention on the city, very pervasive and insensitive to pre-existing elements, could have the same consequences as Ceaușescu's brutal operations, which were, at least, limited to a few areas'.

In conclusion, it is possible to see that, at present, the city of Bucharest is certainly looking for a new identity, but at the same

time it must be underlined that its future can be found through a sensible and modern approach, focused on the correct and prioritised respect for its meaningful and interesting past and on its important definitive repossession, in the awareness that, only by preserving the particular and historic identity of each place is it possible to find a new way towards standardised global cultural models.

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## Le patrimoine comme enjeu prospectif d'une urbanité reconsidérée à Bucarest

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### Cadre de la rencontre: le workshop à Bucarest

Octobre 2011, nous rejoignons l'Université d'architecture et d'urbanisme Ion Mincu dans le centre de Bucarest. Nous nous réunissons pendant plusieurs jours pour échanger nos points de vue, débattre, observer et discuter d'un quartier moderniste situé au nord-est de la capitale roumaine.

L'enjeu de la rencontre se situe autour des notions de *conservation* et de *régénérations*: dans quelle mesure sont-elles contradictoires ou complémentaires? Que faut-il conserver et pourquoi? Quelle est la «valeur» du quartier étudié? Comment trouver un équilibre entre *conservation* et *régénération*? Quels acteurs locaux, nationaux ou internationaux portent la responsabilité du patrimoine moderniste? Toutes ces questions sont abordées lors de discussions organisées sous la forme du workshop interdisciplinaire. Cette approche nous permet d'expérimenter un travail de terrain *in situ* dans le quartier étudié, et de questionner au fur et à mesure, et en groupe, les enjeux définis sur place, de manière inductive. Cette rencontre m'a permis d'approfondir ma recherche. En effet, depuis deux ans, je réalise un terrain ethnographique pour ma thèse de doctorat dans un quartier populaire au sud de Bucarest. Le site choisi par les



organiseurs, dans le nord, peut se définir comme un quartier aisé, bien différent de ce que j'ai l'habitude d'observer aux environs de *Rahova*. Néanmoins, malgré la distance spatiale et sociale de ces deux sites, il me semble que certaines questions, notamment concernant la *conservation* et la *régénération*, peuvent être mises en perspective à l'échelle globale de la ville de Bucarest.

### Le contexte: l'espace comme enjeu de pouvoir dans la ville post-communiste

Le terrain de Bucarest est particulièrement propice à un questionnement sur le patrimoine dans le cadre de la pédagogie de l'architecture en Europe. La ville s'est développée de manière très contrastée, à différents moments de son histoire. Elle a souvent servi l'idéologie dominante du pouvoir en place et comporte donc, plus que d'autres métropoles, différentes traces de ces changements de paradigme politique et économique.

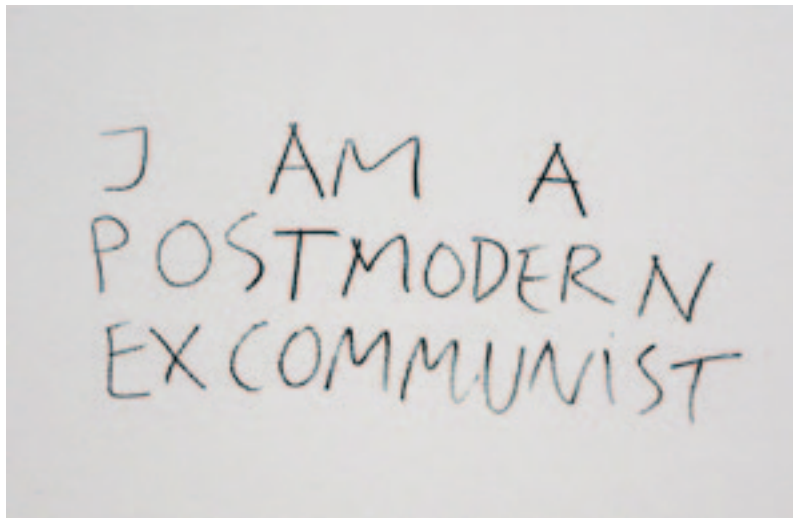


Fig. 1. Dessin Dan Perjovschi, *I am postmodern communist*, 2008.

Aujourd'hui, le pays connaît une période de transition entre deux systèmes idéologiques. Ce passage historique a un impact non négligeable sur la manière dont on pense et réfléchit à l'histoire passée. Certaines réalisations construites notamment pendant l'*epoca de aur'* constituent des fardeaux architecturaux et urbanistiques lourds à porter. La période communiste a énormément marqué les espaces urbains et le vivre-ensemble qui lui est associé. Depuis 1989, la Roumanie est entrée de manière violente dans le système démocratique. En 2007, le pays a intégré l'Union Européenne.

Ce contexte particulier de transition est à prendre en considération pour penser la *régénération* des espaces. Depuis la révolution, différents acteurs ont développé des visions et des discours sur le passé et le vivre-ensemble qui participent au débat démocratique renouvelé. Néanmoins, on constate d'une part, une tendance à s'approprier l'accès à certains espaces et à moderniser la ville rapidement, au détriment du développement d'un débat inscrit dans une temporalité plus longue sur le devenir commun de l'espace public et des citoyens. Et d'autre part, à une échelle globale, on observe une tendance à la relégation de certaines populations vers les marges sociales et urbaines. Les autorités publiques sont très peu impliquées dans la régulation des conflits qui opposent les nouveaux acteurs urbains de Bucarest. Ces nouvelles énergies de la ville pourraient être analysées sur le long terme pour comprendre les dynamiques à l'œuvre dans la société roumaine, qui tente de s'accommoder aux nouvelles contingences, tout en devant négocier avec un passé dont on dit souvent «qu'il ne passe pas». Le workshop proposé par l'EAAE fût, à ce titre, très propice à des préambules de recherche à ce sujet.





Fig. 2. Mișo Micușanu, Kasa poporului, 2010.

Cette représentation de la maison du peuple, construite par Ceaușescu dans les années 80, dont l'artiste a muré les fenêtres, exprime la complexité de la position des roumains vis-à-vis de la question du patrimoine.

### Description du quartier: une complexité élégante et éclectique

Le quartier choisi par les organisateurs pour l'étude est complexe à différents points de vue.

Trois grands axes délimitent la zone d'étude: le boulevard *Iancu de Hunedoara*, au sud, construit pendant la période communiste, constitue une frontière physique importante. Il est bordé de grands blocs avec des commerces au rez-de-chaussée et des logements aux étages. Les trottoirs sont larges et les voitures circulent sur

quatre bandes. Au milieu, sur le terre-plein, le tram chemine entre le nord et le sud de la ville. L'atmosphère est froide et structurée, elle contraste énormément avec celle des différents parcellaires qui se trouvent à l'arrière des écrans de blocs.

A l'ouest du quartier étudié, le boulevard *Aviatorilor* est pavé et bordé d'arbres, des promenades longent les axes autoroutiers qui relient le centre et l'un des plus grands parcs de Bucarest, le parc *Herăstrău*. Malgré les nombreuses voitures, la promenade y est agréable, beaucoup de promeneurs s'y rendent le week-end. Le boulevard est entouré de grandes villas: des sièges d'ambassades et de partis politiques ainsi que de grandes enseignes. Cet axe est un repère important dans la ville, il relie la place *Charles de Gaulle* à la place *Victoriei*, il est un des transits obligatoires lorsqu'on arrive à Bucarest par l'aéroport.

A l'est, on découvre *Calea Dorobanților*, une ancienne artère importante complètement transformée durant les années 70 pour participer à la métamorphose de la ville instituée par Ceaușescu. L'objectif à atteindre pour le dictateur était de se servir de l'espace urbain pour affirmer son pouvoir et l'hégémonie des idées du communisme nationaliste. Aujourd'hui, les magasins de luxe de grandes enseignes ont remplacé les magasins d'état et la jeunesse dorée de Bucarest se rend à *Dorobanți* pour sortir entre amis ou faire les boutiques.

Lorsque l'on avance sur ces grands axes routiers, on ne peut se douter qu'à l'arrière se cache un tissu urbain charmant, élégant et diversifié. Pour le découvrir, il faut s'aventurer dans les rues perpendiculaires à ces axes. Elles portent des noms qui nous renvoient immédiatement à notre urbanité européenne: *Londra*, *Paris*, *Roma*... etc. La toponymie des rues met en exergue la place de choix que Bucarest veut se réserver sur l'échiquier des grandes



viles européennes à partir de la révolution industrielle. Elle permet aux promeneurs de s'identifier à un patrimoine commun, celui des métropoles occidentales. Sur une carte datant de 1935, on peut s'apercevoir que les noms de rues actuels existaient déjà, presque tel quel.

A tout moment, on est subjugué par la diversité des typologies architecturales proposées. Les parcelles datent de la fin du 19<sup>ème</sup> et du début du 20<sup>ème</sup> siècle, elles font référence à une période de l'histoire de la Roumanie que l'on connaît peu en Occident, l'entre-deux-guerres, moment historique où les investisseurs coopéraient avec les pouvoirs publics pour aménager Bucarest. En effet, comme l'explique Ioana Tudora dans son ouvrage *La curte: grădină, cartier și peisaj urban în București*<sup>2</sup>, la période interbelique fût particulièrement propice au développement urbain. L'Etat, en instituant des lois urbanistiques, encourageait l'augmentation de la densité urbaine dans certains quartiers. A cette époque, les propriétaires cohabitaient avec les ouvriers dans de grandes villas ou dans de petits immeubles à appartements. A Bucarest, cette période est considérée comme un moment clé de l'histoire: «*Perioada interbelică pare să fi fost o 'golden age' a Bucureștilui (deși Epoca de Aur s-a vrut, ceva mai târziu, a fi cea a anilor '80). Putem vorbi astăzi de o nostalgie aproape generalizată față de această perioadă, marcată în primul rând de incredibilă efervescență culturală și de o reală apartenență a României la cultura europeană, în absența oricărui decalaj. Această absență a decalajelor culturale este valabilă și pentru dezvoltarea urbană și arhitecturală, precum și pentru legislațiile în domeniu. Regulamentele acestei perioade urmăreau practic transformarea radicală a Bucureștilui și modernizarea lui integrală*»<sup>3</sup> (Tudora 2009:48).

Lorsqu'on se promène, on observe des rues qui se croisent sans se ressembler. Elles dégagent néanmoins une étonnante impression d'unité et d'harmonie. Le paysage végétal de l'espace public répond à celui des jardins privés. Ces derniers constituaient des endroits intermédiaires agréables pour la sociabilité urbaine de l'époque, un entre-deux où l'on reçoit les amis et voisins pour discuter le temps d'un café. Cet espace intermédiaire permet de créer un rapport généreux entre espace privé et espace public et permet également aux habitants d'affirmer leur identité. Ioana Tudora nous parle des *curte* (cours communes) des maisons qui permettaient de développer une sociabilité particulière: «*Asistăm astfel la apariția unui nou tip de vecinătate, cel al oamenilor ce împart aceeași curte, vecinătate descrisă deseori ca 'o societate în miniatura, un cartier in sine'*»<sup>4</sup> (Tudora 2009:52).

Dans le quartier, on retrouve à la fois des villas de style néo-roumain, de petits immeubles d'habitations modernistes sur deux ou trois étages, de grandes demeures de genres éclectiques avec, ça et là des références au style français, à des détails architecturaux issus du monde méditerranéen. La promenade constitue un tour du monde, entre l'orient et l'occident, qui nous rappelle que la Roumanie a de tout temps été traversée par des influences diverses.

Partout, on marche sur la rue car les voitures empiètent sur les trottoirs. On croise peu d'habitants, chacun semble s'être réfugié vers les espaces privatifs sans prêter attention à l'environnement dans lequel ils s'inscrivent. Souvent, de longs fils électriques découpent le paysage et constituent des coupures visuelles qui tranchent avec l'effort architectural des demeures. Plus contrastées encore sont les rénovations. Elles semblent rivaliser de couleurs criardes et de matériaux peu adaptés au contexte. Les villas sont transformées en habitats de luxe ou réhabilitées par des



corporations qui tentent d'afficher leur réussite au travers de leur choix en matière de rénovation. Parfois au contraire, certaines maisons sont abandonnées parce qu'un conflit de propriété<sup>5</sup> freine le projet de construction.

On ressent donc bien la complexité que renferme ce triangle limité par trois grands boulevards. L'espace étudié implique différentes problématiques, à la fois sociales, architecturales, urbanistiques et paysagères.

### **Les dynamiques d'ouverture et de fermeture: les risques de l'«entre-soi» et les enjeux d'une société civile renouvelée**

Le workshop offre un terrain d'études qui nous permet de faire émerger différentes perspectives propres au quartier visité. Ces dynamiques observées localement peuvent être appliquées à une échelle plus globale, celle de la métropole bucarestoise et permettent d'analyser dans quelle mesure les tendances peuvent se refléter dans l'espace urbain et donc questionner la société roumaine.

Dans la suite de ce texte, nous allons tenter de présenter différents mouvements observés pendant le travail de terrain. Ces apports ne sont ni définitifs, ni rigoureusement vérifiés, ils ont néanmoins le mérite d'apporter une lecture renouvelée et *etic*<sup>6</sup> de l'espace urbain. Etant donné la durée restreinte du workshop, nous n'avons pas eu l'occasion de comprendre la réalité de l'intérieur, telle qu'elle aurait pu être exprimée par les usagers quotidiens du quartier. Il est important d'insister sur l'intérêt que peut avoir ce point de vue *emic* pour réfléchir au vivre-ensemble urbain. En effet, l'anthropologie est une discipline qui part d'un point de vue microsociologique

pour apporter une compréhension de la réalité à partir du sens que les habitants lui donnent. A l'avenir, la démarche de rencontre de ces points de vue documentés sur la ville, telle qu'elle se joue dans cet espace, permettrait d'approfondir les questionnements initiés lors du workshop. Pour cela, la méthode de l'«observation participante», privilégiée pour les études d'anthropologie urbaine constituerait une approche de l'intérieur, elle offrirait la possibilité de construire une exploration plus exhaustive de la réalité sociale étudiée.

Si l'on replace le quartier à une échelle plus globale, celle de la ville, il constitue une enclave et fonctionne comme une île «prospère» à l'intérieur du tissu dans lequel il s'inscrit. Cette considération fait émerger des interrogations qui, si elles peuvent paraître contradictoires, se rejoignent néanmoins sur la question de l'ouverture et de la fermeture.

D'une part, l'impression de cloisonnement du quartier permet de préserver le patrimoine et d'apporter une qualité de vie et d'espace intéressante pour les promeneurs et les résidents. Au fil des rues, les écrans de bloc des grands boulevards alentours protègent des pollutions sonores et visuelles de la grande ville. La séparation crée la sensation de flâner dans un village urbain, à l'abri des troubles extérieurs.

L'insularité apporte un sentiment de sécurité. Cela peut renforcer l'émergence d'un mouvement vers la fermeture à l'«Autre». Un système d'autoprotection pourrait faire surgir des mouvements de ghettoïsation, un lieu où l'on se sentirait tellement à l'abri, que toute énergie extérieure serait perçue comme un trouble à l'«entre-soi». L'espace urbain se diviserait sans s'interpénétrer pour former des zones de *fragmentation*.



«La ségrégation urbaine a pour caractéristique de séparer des individus, des groupes et des territoires, sans pour autant remettre en cause la ville en tant que système capable d'englober ses composantes. Prenant sens dans une lecture marxiste de la ville qui s'appuie sur l'idée d'une société divisée en classes et organisée autour de rapports de domination économique, la ségrégation voit sa portée heuristique se réduire à partir du moment où la ville se diffuse et se diffracte pour voir se multiplier les formes d'exclusion et de séparatisme. Dès lors, il semble plus pertinent de recourir à la notion de fragmentation afin de caractériser la ville postindustrielle engagée dans un processus qui multiplie les fragments urbains et invite à appréhender la ville autrement qu'en termes d'entité cohérente. La ville fragmentée a comme particularité de perdre sa capacité d'une part à créer de l'identité pour les citoyens, et d'autre part, à garantir la pérennité des liens sociaux. En outre, la notion de fragmentation semble plus à même de rendre compte des dynamiques urbaines de séparation actuelles que celles de segmentation, laquelle est davantage statique» (Stebe 2007:131).

Il est opportun d'observer que la fermeture au reste de la ville n'apporte pas d'ouverture des espaces domestiques vers l'espace public à l'intérieur du quartier. On peut même se demander si la zone fonctionne comme un quartier ou simplement comme une agrégation d'habitations hétérogènes:

«Cartierul presupune o densitate maximă de traiectorii și practici comune, cotidiene și neinstituționale (care nu derivă deci doar din obligațiile profesionale sau 'de servicii'), într-un minim de spațiu de proximitate. (...) Cartierul este deci un proces. Un proces social de apropiere a spațiului urban și nu doar - și nici măcar în primul rând - o morfologie urbană.»<sup>7</sup> (Mihailescu 2005:18).

Les zones intermédiaires, que sont les jardins ou les *curte* (cour) des résidences, sont très peu exploitées par les habitants. Comme si la fermeture au reste de la ville ne suffisait pas à sécuriser et qu'il fallait se retrancher encore plus loin dans la *privacy*, à l'intérieur des espaces privés pour renforcer le sentiment de sécurité. A ce titre, les clôtures qui entourent les demeures sont une marque de cette tendance à la fermeture. On ressent une attitude de camouflage, une volonté de ne pas montrer ce qu'il se vit dans les espaces privés et interstitiels. Pourtant, on sent bien que la transparence entre le paysage verdoyant des espaces publics et des jardins constituerait un atout majeur pour mettre en valeur les qualités urbanistiques et architecturales de la zone. Ici, on a l'impression que la création de l'«entre-soi» est confinée à l'intérieur des bâtisses et que la notion de voisinage a pratiquement disparu de la sociabilité du quartier.



Fig. 3. L'opacité des murs empêche l'ouverture du paysage (photo de l'auteur).



Un signe extrême de ce repli est la construction d'une *gated community* à l'intérieur de la zone. En effet, entre les rues *Berna*, *Washington*, *Roma* et *Brazilia*, un îlot complet, en friche jusqu'alors, a été transformé en résidence fermée. Les espaces de circulation sont réservés aux habitants et il faut montrer patte blanche pour entrer à l'intérieur de la zone. Il est possible que ce type de dérive s'accroisse dans le quartier, et ailleurs dans Bucarest, si les pouvoirs publics ne mettent pas en place rapidement une politique qui permettrait de questionner cette réalité. Au nord de la ville<sup>8</sup>, les résidences fermées constituent le mode d'habiter principal. L'enjeu est de réajuster l'équilibre entre les besoins de *privacy* des habitants du quartier et ceux de la sociabilité urbaine. Lorsque l'on sait l'importance que peut avoir la rencontre imprévue provoquée par la ville pour reconnecter des identités en conflit et produire du débat démocratique, on ne peut qu'espérer que les différents acteurs mettront en place des possibilités de mise en perspective des idées sur la ville et le vivre-ensemble.

Cette tendance à la fermeture et à la ségrégation s'accompagne d'une volonté d'ostentation de la réussite économique et sociale, au travers de la réhabilitation de certaines demeures. Dans ce cas, très peu d'éléments architecturaux d'origine sont conservés et si l'enveloppe de la bâtisse est sauvegardée, l'«âme» a disparu et le paysage prend des allures de parc d'attraction. Cette tendance se ressent partout dans la capitale roumaine, où on a souvent l'impression que le patrimoine est plus considéré comme un frein à la modernité que comme une possibilité de créer une identité commune et des ponts entre le passé et l'avenir. L'affirmation de l'ascension sociale au travers de l'habitat et l'adoption de vision du monde «à l'américaine» s'influencent mutuellement et entraînent une sorte de «disneyworldisation» du paysage urbain et des modes de vie. Ces tendances à la démonstration de la réussite sociale

contraste de manière forte, d'autant plus que d'autres bâtiments sont complètement à l'abandon et donnent aux espaces des allures de simulacre et de décor. L'hétérogénéité des initiatives personnelles pose donc problème et on ne peut s'empêcher de penser que l'individualisme ostentatoire fonctionne comme une catharsis face à la période communiste qui mettait en exergue le collectivisme comme valeur la plus noble.

Ainsi, comme l'explique Ana-Maria Zahariade, l'idéologie communiste et capitaliste produisent des espaces et des manières d'habiter complètement opposées:

«Dupa cum se reflectă în documentele oficiale, ideea programatică de oraș socialist este opusă orașul capitalist, acesta din urmă fiind produsul unei dezvoltări haotice a societății bazate pe exploatare, prezentând diferențe scandaloase între centru și periferie - cea mai evidentă expresie a inegalității sociale. În consecință, după cum se afirmă în mod clar în documentele oficiale, forma urbană moștenită este perimată și arhitectului este de a găsi o nouă formă a orașului, adaptată structural stilului de viață socialist precum și imperativului de eradicare treptată a urmelor vechii societăți. Orașul socialist va glorifica colectivismul vieții sociale, lipsit de segregare socială»<sup>9</sup> (Zahariade 2003:71).

Etant donné les oppositions qu'il peut y avoir entre la ville créée pendant la période communiste et celle engendrée par le libéralisme, comment est-il possible d'établir des ponts entre ces réalités contradictoires?



### Potentialités du quartier et de Bucarest comme creuset d'un débat sur un patrimoine commun et européen.

A un niveau local, il serait important de permettre aux habitants de créer un débat sur leur lieu de vie pour comprendre leur perception du vivre-ensemble. Cela aurait l'avantage de considérer, après des années de passivité collective, ce qu'il est possible d'envisager pour améliorer la qualité de vie des citoyens bucarestois. Ce débat ne pourra être mené qu'en présence de tierces personnes, qui auront comme objectif d'équilibrer les questions publiques et privées pour éviter que l'«entre-soi» ne l'emporte sur la sociabilité urbaine. A ce titre, il est important de remarquer que depuis plusieurs années, différentes initiatives citoyennes se constituent à Bucarest pour améliorer la qualité de vie en ville. *Platforma pentru București* regroupe une quarantaine d'ONG ; ensemble, ils ont entrepris un travail considérable pour la médiation des intérêts privés et publics dans la capitale roumaine. Ces associations de réflexion permettent de dépasser le sentiment de nostalgie à l'égard de la période interbelique. Ils sont des exemples de citoyenneté renouvelée dont d'autres villes peuvent s'inspirer pour penser des modèles associatifs qui recréent de l'espace public et de la démocratie après une longue période de traumatisme collectif.

En groupe, lors du workshop, nous avons observé que le quartier propose des potentiels à la fois à l'échelle de l'habitant mais également pour la ville. Si nous avons déjà mentionné l'intérêt d'un débat sur la cohabitation entre résidents, il nous semble qu'il serait également propice d'ouvrir le quartier au reste de la ville. Pour cela, l'espace serait mis en valeur au travers, par exemple, de promenades architecturales et historiques autour des parcelles du quartier. Bucarest est une capitale qui propose très peu de lieux pour la déambulation heureuse. En effet, les espaces de circulation sont totalement envahis par les voitures et le bruit. Souvent, à

défaut de mieux, on se réfugie dans les *Malls*, construits dans différents points stratégiques de la ville. Dans la zone étudiée, le potentiel de flânerie et de découverte est totalement à prendre en considération.

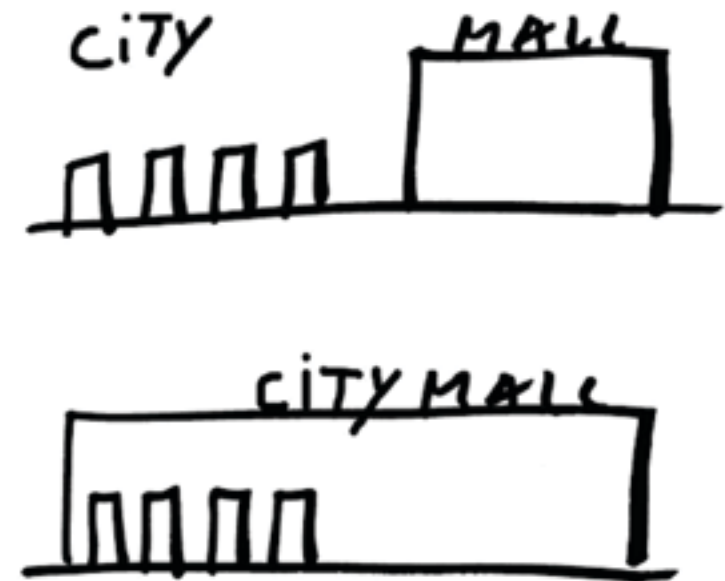


Fig. 4. Dan Perjovschi, *City mall*, 2009.

Ces lieux historiques pourraient permettre d'offrir des alternatives aux promenades de consommation, pour enclencher une fierté renouvelée du patrimoine urbain. Au sud du quartier, une friche industrielle de transport serait tout à fait adaptée au développement d'une initiative de réhabilitation, elle ouvrir des possibilités pour réunir les différents acteurs de l'espace urbain. La réhabilitation de l'espace considéré serait l'occasion d'initier un débat sur la



question de la réappropriation du patrimoine à Bucarest. Il serait possible de créer un partenariat qui rassemblerait des énergies complémentaires et contradictoires et qui réunirait des intérêts divergents. Cela aurait le mérite de créer un regard partagé et documenté sur le quartier et de mettre en exergue l'importance de la rencontre pour questionner le passé et le présent commun.



Fig. 5. Trois personnes âgées retrouvent de la sociabilité et discutent sur un banc à l'entrée du Mall à Piața Sudului.

Un auteur italien insiste sur l'importance de créer un projet social commun à Bucarest, au-delà des questions urbanistiques: *«The re-appropriation could occur through simple maintenance operations, re-usage processes or radical transformations of built and unbuilt spaces that would benefit the city of yesterday and the city of today; all interventions that should be coherent in a common project that is social before being urban planned. Precisely, a project of reconciliation with the country's own past and for the*

*re-appropriation of life spaces; and such a project should have at least three objectives: the recovery of the historic city; the re-qualification of the Socialist city; the healing of the fractures between the Socialist city and the historic one»*<sup>10</sup> (Cinà 2010:303).

Une des dernières questions qu'il est légitime de se poser dans le cadre d'un workshop européen concerné par la pédagogie, est celle de la responsabilité commune concernant la question du patrimoine. En effet, la construction d'une identité urbaine et européenne partagée et diversifiée ne pourra s'échafauder sans une réelle réflexion sur ces espaces qui constituent les traces et les marques de notre histoire. Comment doit-on les gérer? Quelles sont les entités qui pourront réfléchir à ces questions? Seront-elles locales, nationales ou transnationales? En quoi est-ce que le patrimoine de Bucarest ne nous concerne-t-il pas tout autant que celui de Bruxelles? Comment permettre aux citoyens de faire connaissance avec cette histoire qui est la leur? Ces questions concernant la responsabilité partagée du devenir de nos villes et des sociabilités qu'elles procurent, n'est pas cantonnée à Bucarest, elle concerne dans un même mouvement les citoyens ainsi que tous les citoyens européens. Bucarest, ville peu connue en Occident pourrait, à l'avenir, étant donné son histoire particulière et sa richesse architecturale et urbanistique, devenir un laboratoire social et urbain propice à la création de débats d'idées sur la construction d'une citoyenneté européenne au travers du patrimoine.

## Notes

1 L'«*Epoca de aur*» (l'âge d'or) correspond à la période du milieu des années 1970 à 1989.

2 La cour: jardin, quartier et paysage urbain à Bucarest

3 "L'entre deux guerres est l'«âge d'or» de Bucarest (même si on a voulu faire des années 1980 'l'époque d'or'). On peut parler aujourd'hui d'une nostalgie presque



généralisée concernant cette période. Elle est marquée par une effervescence culturelle incroyable et par une appartenance réelle de la Roumanie à la culture européenne, sans aucun décalage. L'absence de décalage culturel est valable pour le développement urbain et architectural, mais aussi pour les législations dans ces domaines. Les règlements de cette période prévoient en pratique la transformation radicale et la modernisation intégrale de Bucarest". (Traduction de l'auteur).

4 "Nous assistons à l'apparition d'un nouveau type de voisinage, celui des habitants qui partagent la même cour, elle est décrite comme une société en miniature, un quartier en soi". (Traduction de l'auteur).

5 En Roumanie, depuis 2001, suite à l'institution de la Loi 10 sur les rétrocessions, les anciens propriétaires dont les biens ont été nationalisés en 1948 peuvent entamer des procédures pour récupérer leurs propriétés. Cela entraîne des conflits d'intérêt importants et parfois, des procès très longs. Ces procédures de rétrocession ont un impact non négligeable sur la rénovation et le vivre ensemble urbains à Bucarest.

6 *Etic* et *emic* sont des termes utilisés en anthropologie culturelle.

- *L'etic* désigne la description d'une réalité en partant du point de vue de l'observateur extérieur.

- *L'emic* désigne la description d'une réalité du point de vue des différents acteurs d'un terrain social et culturel.

7 «Le quartier présuppose une densité maximale de trajectoires et de pratiques communes, quotidiennes et informelles (elles ne sont donc pas liées à des obligations professionnelles ou de travail), dans un minimum d'espace de proximité. (...) Le quartier est donc un processus. Un processus social d'appropriation de l'espace urbain et pas seulement - et pas au premier plan - une morphologie urbaine». (Traduction de l'auteur).

8 Voir à ce sujet: Matache, A. 2008; "Cartierele de vile - un spatiu identitar în peisajul de tranziție al Bucureștiului" in Mihailescu, V. *Of, București mei...*, București, pp. 101-119.

9 «Comme on peut le voir dans les documents officiels, l'idée programmatique de la ville socialiste est opposée à la ville capitaliste, cette dernière étant le produit d'un développement chaotique de la société basé sur l'exploitation, présentant des différences scandaleuses entre le centre et la périphérie - l'expression la plus évidente des inégalités sociales. En conséquence, comme il est clairement indiqué dans les documents officiels, la forme urbaine héritée est périmée et les architectes doivent trouver une nouvelle forme de ville, adéquate aux structures de vie socialiste et permettant d'éradiquer les hiérarchies de l'ancienne société. La ville socialiste glorifiera une vie sociale collective, sans ségrégation sociale». (Traduction de l'auteur).

10 "La réappropriation pourrait commencer au travers de simples opérations

d'entretien et grâce à la réutilisation ou à la transformation radicale d'espaces construits ou vides, bénéficiant à la ville d'hier et d'aujourd'hui; toutes ces interventions devraient trouver une cohérence dans un projet commun qui doit être social avant d'être urbanistique. Précisément, un projet de réconciliation avec le passé du pays et pour la réappropriation des espaces de vie; ce genre de projet devrait avoir trois objectifs minimums: la relance du centre historique, la requalification de la ville socialiste; la cicatrization de la fracture entre la ville socialiste et historique". (Traduction de l'auteur).

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## Preserving the identity of urban heritage: the safeguarding and development of a district of Bucharest

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### Introduction

The area of the city under consideration is located in the northern part of Bucharest, identified as the zone bounded by the following three principal thoroughfares: Ianacu de Hunedoara Boulevard, Aviatorilor Boulevard and Calea Dorobanţilor.

The present plan has resulted from a series of uncoordinated cadastral sub-divisions that were executed in a piecemeal manner. The absence of any unifying criterion has led to the formation of a series of building styles whose architectonic, material and urban composition express differences in social status as well as in approach to managing open spaces and in the constructions themselves.

This lack of any underlying unifying planning principle has led to the juxtaposition of various and sundry styles of building and construction materials, among which some examples of architecture stand out whose quality is sufficiently high to rank them as 'national monuments'. However, this overall heterogeneous picture is at risk from a further process of transformation – one that threatens to



bring about the disappearance of cityscape described above. This threat comes in particular from recently constructed building complexes whose main function is to house service industries, as well as from the conversion of elegant residences into embassies. The control of urban areas necessitated by consular activity creates an environment that is difficult to 'experience at first hand' due to the impossibility of free and spontaneous social activity.

Although forced to respond to this challenge, municipal planning regulators do not have the wherewithal to cope with all of the forces present on the ground. In particular, there has been a failure to counter speculative interests that frequently lead to the indiscriminate transformation of existing buildings, or to their complete demolition. While the ensuing new construction may follow a similar architectural style 'on paper', the radical change brought about by the construction process produces results that are unrecognisable (Indelicato 2004). Lack of regulation exacerbates the dangers inherent in choosing pseudo-historical forms. It leads to a use of colours that create garish combinations as each project is assessed on its own merits and not in relation to its urban setting. It abolishes the social contribution made by gardens, which become completely private areas, enclosed by impenetrable hedges or by fully opaque metal and plastic barriers.

The absence of proper management of shared spaces (streets and gardens) works against the opportunity to create social forums that are suited to nurturing a watchful civic spirit, which may in turn safeguard the lived-in urban environment.

What becomes clear in the light of observations made across the neighbourhoods comprising the urban area in question is the complexity of the architectural and functional characteristics that lend this district its particular identity. But equally clear is the aggressive nature of interventions carried out over recent years,

both in terms of urban planning, of built heritage and of the poor maintenance of public spaces. This lack of governance can only be corrected through the civic education of the residents, which must follow on from the training of town planners and awareness-raising among administrators regarding the identity-linked values of place.

### Recognising values

Identifying the values that have marked the area in a profound way means assigning power and fresh energy to architectonic and urban symbols and characteristics that set the location apart as different, cohesive and liveable.

The first thing that needs to be recognised is the 'historic value' of the district as a concrete witness to the plurality of members co-present within it. When diversity emerges, it highlights a common focus on details – be they decorative or typological – that testify to a special identity. This identity has been levelled by neglect, by lack of maintenance, by the absence of material acknowledgement of the characterising element of one architectural structure or another, and by obsolescence as technologies become outmoded.

In terms of city planning, recognition of historical parcelling and architectures allows an urban space to be safeguarded as a testimony to a past liveable space that is no longer recognised as such – at least not known as such by its present inhabitants. 'Social value' does not find communal relational spaces because these are not 'tended' by the local community: citizens do not feel they belong in the existing urban fabric and contacts flow into private outlets, or outside the local area. Practices, customs and activities do not inhere in a given context as its points of strength, but only 'lap at its edges', or are physically imposed without becoming vehicles for human relations.



### An identity to be recognised

The issues identified so far could be grouped together under the general heading 'loss of identity'. They are nonetheless deserving of a search for solutions to enhance the urban landscape; solutions that are to be considered as the product of a guided transformation of a space lived in by people and which enable these people to become actors who shape the space and take care of their habitat.

The dialectic that springs from this comparison between conservation and change can, if steered appropriately, be considered a resource to be used to save 20th-century cities from being lost to us utterly. This action does not aim to assume the demiurgic mantle of one who is aware of saving the area for posterity; what it does propose is a 'tending' of the local social dimension over time, guiding changes to a constructed expression of a plural and open potential. It takes on the task of defending, planning, nurturing and progressing with the transformation.

First and foremost, the proposed activity is that of recognising historic stratifications, which collaboration with the Ion Mincu University could further emphasise, identify and easily communicate through its privileged channels. As an active player in the integrated enhancement of the area, the University could proceed with cataloguing the architecture present both directly in the field and through retrieval of documentary archives. These could then be used as material for a widely available museum project involving an historic itinerary: an open-air museum, to be understood as the set of places and itineraries that together comprise a logically unified route through the city with the purpose of telling the story of its historical and architectonic stages and events. It is a scheme to bring inhabitants closer to their city, to show visitors the importance and the value of its architecture, to unify one or more actualities by contextualising them in a way that enables people to perceive them as part of a unified local entity, whose telling will restore

independence to historic-cultural and societal components (Artibani 1999; Lascu 2011).

The creators of the projects and works that may be encountered when walking around the streets of these neighbourhoods were mainly qualified Beaux-Arts style architects – versatile professionals who proved themselves capable of working in whatever style their patrons desired, mastering the craft right down to its details. The great variety of techniques and materials, as well as of detailed project blueprints, combine in adding value to the buildings and to their component parts. These factors also bring about a strong overall identity of the district as a general framework within which local identities are expressed either through the original sub-divisions or specific micro-zones (defined according to chronological, functional or stylistic criteria) or through the individual identity of each building.

The compilation of a catalogue would provide a complete overview of building stock present, of architectural characteristics and building types, of materials and variety, and would usefully be accompanied by knowledge of the state of repair as well as the causes of any pathology in progress. Such a cataloguing should not prove excessively costly to undertake as the area, although large, is bounded and clearly identified. The material thus acquired would take on a strategic value for the purposes of drawing up criteria for the preservation and safeguarding of this heritage.

Subsequent to this, a set of regular planned interventions should be identified for the maintenance of the architectonic character and functioning of the buildings. This will be a necessary and effective practice for the preservation of entire sections of the city. Retaining the efficiency of the urban infrastructure equals providing opportunities to avoid spontaneous and unorganised drifts in behaviour and to promote the recognition of that place, of those signs left by history as signposts on the arduous path towards restoration and preservation. These are guidelines that have to be laid down in order to proceed



with an attempt at charting the urban space; although partial and provisional, such a charting opens the area's 'identity' to decoding.

Maintenance cannot be an off-the-shelf practice. It has to be a heterogeneous and flexible action, constructed with the active participation of residents and institutional players in a framework of changing needs and nascent cultural awareness — often unperceived or not willingly understood in the name of economic goals that are so highly coveted because they are so laden with the elitist socio-economic values of global currency.

It is, of course, necessary that this input should spark a reassessment of open green spaces on the part of public administration, giving added impetus to a 'green feeling'. This is a feature that has been generally appreciated. Alongside the regularities of the urban fabric (with its distinctions between each historical sub-division), the presence of plant life adds unity and cohesiveness to the entire zone, which may become a centre of high residential quality. When appropriately maintained, shared areas of vegetation can boost an area's quality of life. In this regard, there can be no doubt about the positive effects of opening up overlapping spaces of inclusion, enabling private green architectural areas to be perceived as part of the general ways through the city, which already benefit from an abundance of planted trees. This richness is made sterile by the visual barrier of those stretches of fencing whose sole function is to mark off private property and to ensure a kind of protection against an outside perceived as hostile.

Governing maintenance also means regulating installations in ways that do not determine changes in architectural structure, thereby indulging impulsive drives for oversized energy efficiency solutions — the expression of status that turn out to have been above all a waste of shared economic resources. A prime example of this is the external mounting of heating and air-conditioning systems, an operation whose complexity demands the use of entire rooms capable of

housing the control mechanics, to which must be added the extra metres of tubing which snake around, entwine and cut through the supporting structures in every direction. This drive towards energy efficiency also takes the form of alteration to masonry work through the indiscriminate application of 'thermal overcoats' that obliterate exterior decorative richness. Efficient maintenance of existing technological solutions — which themselves often demonstrate a high level of artistic attention to detail — means thinking up new, non-hackneyed solutions. Instead of letting design be ushered in by the architectural features of a new build, a virtuous search should be undertaken, probably one for craftsmanship, which evaluates the possibilities of repairing and/or complementing historic technology with new one-off systems, i.e. solutions whose range of application is limited to one historic construction, or at most to a series of constructions sharing common architecture and fixtures.

### Seeing unique value in individuality

A first step towards the enhancement of the area is already being taken: there is an awakening awareness of the danger that the individuating signs of this urban environment are at risk of being lost. This is already to recognise the area's own identity and distinctiveness. So far, this act of recognition has been limited to academic circles. A possible explanation for this fact could be found in the general lack of education among Romanians regarding their built heritage — a lack that has been accentuated in recent historical periods.

Undoubtedly, a decisive role will be played by municipal policies, which is why collaboration with research institutions will be conclusive and successful if conducted in a consistent manner.

Beginning from the city-planning perspective, an initial move would be to set up locally an 'observatory across the landscape' capable



of identifying the main threats from within property speculation. These forces are highly aggressive and combative, due to the desirability of the zone and to a lack of respect for the law; this sees harmful operations leading to the mutilation, amputation and demolition of highly esteemed buildings, and with them of the city itself (Indelicato 2004).

A second aspect for verification is represented by the changes of use that have been introduced to old residences. These often impede social interaction in the immediate surroundings through police and security activity. A change of location, or a more restrained presence of embassies would not lead to moral panics at the sight of groups of tourists armed with nothing more than their cameras.

Moving on to the architectural perspective, decisions and interventions can largely be guided by compliance with the geometrical form of the cadastral parcels (the size and proportions of frontages and boundaries), with the forms of the buildings (positions and surface areas in relation to markings, size, roofing), construction materials, and architectural language (lexis and morphology, composition and style).

On the scale of architectural details and materials, interventions can draw on a solid body of informational support from research into materials and building techniques held by Ion Mincu University, which has yet to be distributed among professionals.

The methods for attaining these objectives are common knowledge: detailed town planning; planning of colour schemes; of green spaces; of traffic flows and of transportation, etc. It is incumbent upon the conscience of the political classes to aim for such socially worthwhile objectives. There can be no doubt that these actions are undermined by consolidated practices centred on speculation involving urban property and architecture. In this regard, it would be interesting to apply to the area under study the same methodologies

for research, project planning and execution as were used in the *Siedlungen der Berliner Moderne*, which enabled the need to modify the habitations to be reconciled with maintenance of the area's individual characteristics. If the operation is successful it would, without doubt, serve to trigger similar virtuous schemes in other districts of the city. It would, furthermore, be advisable to include the area on the UNESCO list of protected sites in order to create here, too, a kind of open-air museum tracing the area's evolution, along the same lines as has been experienced in the Carbonia project in Italy (Peghin 2010). This international recognition is the outcome of a broader policy of safeguarding modern residential heritage. The policy does not act upon local public opinion alone: the internationalisation of the social, economic and architectural value inherent in the area furnishes inspiration for new developmental projects that arise principally from the preservation of the area's identity as a value in itself.

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## City-Fragments: Some reflections on 'urban lacuna' in Bucharest

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Around 1976, Liliana Grassi elaborated her theory about 'grande lacuna' that we may translate as 'urban lacuna'.<sup>1</sup> That means that she posited at urban scale the complexity we have at architectural scale and asked how to deal with discontinuities in historical and cultural stratification. She meant by this term the element of discontinuity which the individual building can represent in an urban environment. (Crippa, Sorbo 2008)

This definition is important because it interprets the urban environment as an organism in which every element contributes to define the harmony.

In order to fix this problem we have to answer a few basic questions: what is the *architectonic* value of place? Should we conserve it? And why?

The analysis of the context is a very difficult one because it is hard to classify it. The methodological approach we use for buildings, like material or damage analyses, is unfit to reveal its complexity.

The architectonic value of a context-environment is a mix of *natural* elements (its essence as a geographical place, determined by materials, climate, etc.) and *cultural* ones (or, we should say, the way natural data are absorbed in a social system).



Cultural and natural data are mixed in context analysis and become necessary instruments to understand the complete identity of a place.

The natural – primitive data are more extended and less visible; that is why they are so difficult to grasp and to use in an architectonic dialogue, or for a conservation act, if it is not to be an embalming one.

The urban landscape we find today in Bucharest is heterogeneous. We have lost the indefinite value of a place for a generic and indefinite global value of a fragmented city. We deal with a crushed text.

You can respond to this fragmentation in two ways: one is to find that indefinite value and refer to it in design choices; the other is to go on with discontinuities, finding answers in new languages, following a new idea of the future city and keeping the ancient, more or less, as an accident.

In both cases we undertake an interpretative dialogue with the history of the city, in the first case giving a conservative response, or suspending, in the second, the investigative process in starting a new creative design action, which involves economical, political and social proceedings.

To acquire cultural and material data and give a name to the problem of Bucharest identity, the first step is to elaborate an urban design able to link spaces, and answer the second and third questions – should I conserve it and why? – in an operative

perspective related to needs and involved with the identity of the place.

In the Bucharest case study (focused on an area in the northern part of the city built between 1985-1940), cultural data has completely absorbed the natural data. The alternating political situation created stratified and different urban images. As in a Great Exhibition we find many architectonic typologies (National Style, Eclecticism, French and German influences, Art Deco, Modernism, *avant-garde*) each referred to different materials, also suggested by the villa's typology.



During the workshop sessions we referred to this fragmentation as an intangible value of the place, as a part of the contemporary Bucharest identity.



The point is to conserve this complexity as a stratified memory of the city.

So the answer to the second question – should I conserve it? – is positive. This fragmentation could be a new identity itself and to delete it means to lose the place itself.

But how can we conserve fragmentation? This is the hardest part of the process.

We may imagine two different perspectives in designing a solution for this part of the city: the owners' point of view and the public intention to harmonise the transformation of the city. This is particularly true in what pertains to the relationship between private property and public life, such as the transformation/alteration of façades, the changing of roofs, fences, green spaces and the introduction of new high quality facilities such as solar panels.

We know that a lot has been done, recently, to control this process: in 2000, Law no. 5 for the Approval of PATN Section III - Protected Areas; in 2001, Law no. 350; a catalogue of historical monuments in 2004 (many of them in this area) and, after 2008, revised regulations for protected areas.<sup>2</sup> But the possibilities for derogation planning are still problematic.

This may be seen as a lack of communication between public institutions and private owners or, at the same time, a lack of trust as the rules may easily be derogated.

It may be a solution to increase dialogue and give owners the responsibility of being a part of a high quality system and the obligation to preserve it as social issue. But how?

We discussed a lot during the workshop about the instruments needed to create awareness of the high architectonic value of the place, and a focal point is to educate about the architectonic value with multi-scale interventions.

First, establish interventions to improve the owners' pride with cultural events like exhibitions, public lectures, guided tours in a close collaboration between private and public. Second, give an important role to the school and university as the primary step in educating the public to respect and preserve the city. But this process of awareness building is futile when the public institution does not reveal its intention to engage in dialogue to create public spaces and more services as a mutual exchange. A serious programme is needed to raise the standard of living with political action towards social cohesion. This could be a first step in asking for a wider participation of the owners and towards creating the feeling of being part of a system and not a single initiative.

Of course this will not overcome the speculation-derogation planning problem but it will increase control, extending it from the public to the private realm. It is possible to master the balance between the public will and private obligation with a participation process when the public institution creates guidelines that allow the private interests to have a choice but not a prevaricating role.

In an operational perspective, the opportunity to paint façades or built-up fences without public control in an integrated building context or in a historical high quality parcelling (such as Filipescu park for example) creates strong fragmentations in the urban structure, and when it is done it is difficult to go back.



When the public declares its intention to preserve some core elements of identity this may collide with the private person's will to express their own taste and wishes. This is particularly true in Bucharest where there was a strong presence of the public sector in recent decades. That is why the dialogue with the private interests, giving them awareness of the value of all architectonic interventions in an urban contest (from the façades to the green spaces) could be a meeting ground between private and public.

Education in architectural culture is the focal point in administration for the preservation of urban values: if the citizen can recognise the value – an identified value in which he is involved somehow – he will want to preserve it as a collective memory.



## Notes

1 Liliana Grassi (1923-1985) was an Italian architect and scholar of architectural history and restoration. Grassi studied at Politecnico di Milano under Ambrogio Annoni. In 1947 she was appointed as Assistant and in 1964 Professor of Architectural Restoration at Politecnico di Milano. From 1950 until she died, she worked at the restoration of 'Cà Granda' in Milan, designed in the 15<sup>th</sup> century by Antonio Averlino known as Filarete (Grassi 1972). Grassi elaborated a conservation method where the culture and the history of the monuments are the basis of a critical approach to conservation design (Grassi 1960). Grassi developed the theory of '*grande lacuna*' during the 1970s, following the Venice Charter of 1964, but she never published it. Grassi's thoughts on the subject, developed through her lectures to students, are now published in the volume *Liliana Grassi e il recupero creativo della memoria storica*, with an Introduction by Giorgio Carbonara, Scuola di Specializzazione in Restauro dei Monumenti, Università degli Studi di Roma La Sapienza (Crippa, Sorbo 2008).

2 Some of the planning instruments to which we referred are: 2000, Law no. 5 for the Approval of PATN - Section III - Protected areas; 2001, Law no. 350, the Territorial and Urban Planning Act; 2001, Law no. 422 for the Protection of the Historic Monuments; 2002, Law no. 451 for the Ratification of the European Landscape Convention; 2004, List of Historic Monuments (updated in 2010).

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## The RE-generation: shared strategies to preserve urban heritage

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### Neighbourhood RE-generation in Bucharest

The global economic situation of recent years, with globalisation and de-industrialisation, makes the future of cities ever more uncertain. It can be assumed that the financial crisis will be an opportunity for a radical rethinking of the neoliberal model of urban development. However, it is not easy to outline and understand the effects of the crisis on urban dynamics: urban development increasingly depends on cyclical fluctuations and on trends of global economy and, consequently, reduces the possibility of local intervention in the mid- and long-term (Paone 2010:158).

The concept of urban regeneration has by now entered into the culture of town and city administrators and the term is used with increasing frequency in the lexicon of urban planners, architects, sociologists and citizens, in relation to various issues and proposals. In the most common definition, it is a set of activities that affects the structure and use of a town/city, involving not only spatial and physical changes, but also economic, cultural, social and environmental changes (Galdini 2009:11). Evans and Shaw define urban regeneration as the transformation of a place (residential, industrial or open space) showing signs of physical, social and/or economic decline,



or better, 'as the infusion of new vitality to communities, and places leading to long-term sustainable improvements to local quality of life in economic, social, environmental and cultural terms' (Evans, Shaw, 2004:4).

Questions regarding the architectural scale of the intervention, made particularly problematic by the ongoing debate on the 'restoration of the modern', lie beyond this paper. However, in an attempt to identify some regeneration strategies that can be implemented in the case of the northern parcelling in Bucharest, in the light of the clear recognition of the intrinsic qualities of the area (the quality of its urban fabric, the high ratio of green to built environment, the heterogeneity of historical and architectural models, etc.), it is interesting to focus the discussion on the social, economic and environmental impact and on the role that conservation can take on within intervention on an urban scale.

First of all, it should be noted that along with urban issues related to the global crisis, in the case of Bucharest mention should be made of the additional issues of processes of change, which have occurred in the last twenty years. Dealing with post-Socialist cities means reasoning about cities that, parallel to their communities, are trapped in a difficult transition made up of multiple components: transition from authoritarian rule of the planned city to a city of horizontal governance; from a factory town to a capitalistic city; from cities integrated in their national economies to globalised economic system cities. The apparent freedom of choice represented by the neo-liberal milieu, which has dominated the scene since the late '90s, has embodied the desire for integration into a consumer society and it was seen as a development strategy. This has generated in Bucharest, as in many other Eastern European cities, large spatial and social changes and clear urban fragmentation, consisting of, for example, new spaces for consumption and new comfort

requirements on an architectural scale (Rebernik 2006:237). The impact of globalisation is not only limited to the growth of economic insecurity and inequality: within neighbourhoods, elements emerge that express rejection of heterogeneity, which causes the spread of hedonistic, individualistic lifestyles, as, for example, some 'gated communities'. At the same time, others require more involvement in the processes of governing. All this raises questions about the effective role of the city as a mechanism of integration and as a place of democratic relationships, calling out instead to find elements towards which to redirect the management of urban spaces, intended as a balance between control and development.

### **The 'Re-' factors within urban scenarios**

One response to these issues may be found in Amartya Sen's theories, according to which the premise of each development is the so-called 'entitlements', that is, the empowerment of men to intervene actively in society: the development is intended as a process of expansion of freedom enjoyed by humans (Sen 2002).

The theory of 'entitlements' can be considered as a revolution in the economy, since it can better frame the goal towards which all economics tend, which is not limited to increasing income, but is also about improving the quality of life through the acquisition of new capabilities.

This possibility has now been significantly increased by the diffusion of the internet: social networks, playing a key role in communications and changing the way people relate and exchange information, ideas and news, are indicated as a possible factor in new processes of change (De Liddo 2011). Note, for example, movements such as 'We Rebuild', 'Occupy Wall Street', 'Reclaim the Streets', or



'Guerrilla Gardening' – all born as social communities – which claim the right to be builders of their lives, taking an active part in decisions related to the redistribution of resources and proposing a radical rethinking of the dominant models of development. In this context, in fact, terms such as re-thinking, re-consider, re-vision, re-direct or re-ordering are recurring; they are added to practices such as 'Vision programmes', which thousands of communities have been following in the last few years in the United States, discussing how to tackle the problems of growth, how to shape the future and how to control the dispersion of resources. The first edition of 'Edge City News', more than twenty years ago, reported on its front page: 'The '90s are the RE-decade. We must renew, rebuild, remake, revitalize, recycle, relocate, retrofit, resell, but never retreat' (Pellegrini 2003:23).

The so-called 'Smart Growth' is a term popularised in the U.S. during the '90s which refers to a set of policies for the management of urban growth and a set of principles for design (Pellegrini 2003:53). 'Smart' development implies the idea of sustainability, of saving on investment in infrastructure, leveraging existing services with a careful use of available resources, and budgets that are redistributed according to principles of fairness and quality of living conditions. Smart growth promotes forms of community where you can build a network of exchanges and meet basic needs. In the light of these principles, it aims – to name just a few examples – to limit outward extension, to foster mixed-use development, walkable communities and pedestrian-friendly development, downtown redevelopment, development of existing communities on infill sites and compact neighbourhood design, communities with a strong sense of place, and a stronger sense of community (CATS 2004).

These themes highlight, among others, how, in addition to its environmental dimension of sustainable development, there is

a growing interest in the economic, social and, more recently, governance dimension. Sustainable development, moreover, is based on economic, social and environmental objectives and intergenerational ethics, i.e. on ownership of the current society for future generations, for whom we undertake to provide feasible development opportunities not inferior to those of the present. From this point of view, the OECD Report of 2011 on the productivity of resources in the G8 and OECD countries outlines a new development model, which will not compromise the needs of future generations. The report identifies some elements which must take into account the sustainable development program and should be interpreted bearing in mind the principle of the so-called 3Rs: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. The OECD has combined a policy of 3 Rs with the concept of sustainable management of materials, targeting countries using a broad range of policy tools to stimulate environmental, economic and social development.

But the most significant qualifying factor is certainly the necessary participation of all social partners in taking an active and responsible role in sustainable development policies (OECD 2011) oriented towards reduction, recycling and reuse have more generally, therefore, the intention of promoting greater awareness of the community; the need to increase the quality of life in the future, supporting the principles of equity and reducing existing disparities. This orientation has led to the development of a series of ideas and proposals at an urban level, capable of adapting the concept of 3 Rs to the city with the intention of: 'recycling the city we have, aiming at the affirmation of modernity in that which pre-exists, and reusing what we have inherited, conserving when necessary, and promoting its adaption to current needs whenever possible' (Rio Fernandes 2006:254).



More generally, it may be noted how the spread of urban regeneration policies in recent years contributed several 'Re-' factors, above all the logic of re-use at the expense of growth. But not only these. Even the well-known paradigm of 'cultural planning' (Bianchini, Parkinson 1993), analysed according to the physical, economic and social dimension, can be traced back to instruments based on 'Re-' factors. To cite some examples, the regeneration of the physical environment can be carried out through the redevelopment of public spaces aimed at cultural events; the economy can be implemented through increased investment by both public and individuals and redirection towards enterprises in the cultural sector; social regeneration can occur through rethinking of the perception of places by citizens, and their re-inclusion in processes of change.

The challenge of urban 'regeneration/conservation' for the future could depend on many of these 'Re-' factors and on being able to really focus on the role of conservation within new urban development scenarios (re-connecting) and on patterns of community participation in the construction and recovery of identity through the narrative skill of the sites (re-narrating).

### Re-connecting

The financial crisis has also frequently been described through images referring to urban spaces: from enormous areas previously occupied by multinationals, to abandoned industrial areas, from financial cities, to homes for sale with no buyers, including historical centres occupied by activists. This can generate, according to some authors, a sort of 'dystopia' tied to the places (Paone 2010:153) and, with it, the temptation to delete a recent past with which many no longer share ideologies. Moreover, the fundamental steps of

recent urban history have been marked by the physical destruction of entire pieces of cities, as if it were possible to regenerate them through destruction. Consider, for example, the demolition of huge residential complexes that were designed according to the criteria of modern architecture. In March 1972, to cite a famous example, the first line of 33 buildings that made up the Pruitt-Igoe complex in St. Louis, Missouri was knocked down. For many authors this date marks the sunset of the modern utopia, the end of the social city that gives way to the fragmentation and chaos of the postmodern (Jencks 1977). However, erasing parts of a city is not limited to strictly ideological reasons. In this sense, the decline of Detroit is paradigmatic. This city grew due to the fortunes of mass motorisation and is now a desolate ghost town: the administration has decided to focus the regeneration of the city on a process of downsizing that is based on a plan to demolish the 120,000 buildings left empty (Paone 2010:154). Less programmed and with diametrically opposite objectives, in some European cities, many buildings of the 20th century are still sacrificed to speculation, for new building purposes, as they are considered 'recent' and no longer economically useful (Figs.1-2). This low consideration for modern buildings is widespread due to a lack of recognition of the testimonial value of the architecture of the 20th century. The Declaration of Amsterdam emphasised, for the first time in 1975, the importance of conserving heritage so that it cannot be said that 'part of man's awareness of his own continuity will be destroyed'. The architecture of the 20th century is, in this view, an essential link in the transition from pre-industrial society to contemporary: a fundamental key to understanding the evolution of architecture and society, which allows the community to find identity and a sense of belonging, through the preservation of continuity of the historic environment. In the light of this vision, the conservation of these buildings assumes the value of a connection between





Fig.1. Messina, Italy, 2010. A modernist architecture is demolished.



Fig. 2. Messina, Italy, 2011. A 20th-century factory is demolished.

contemporary and historic society, which gave rise to the urban shape of cities. The picture of the changes underway in Europe and the comparison of some experiences leads to the conclusion that a fundamental aspect of urban regeneration actions is surely the physical scenario that allows us to re-connect past, present and future. It must be noted, moreover, that despite the proliferation of social networks, the development of ICT services and a growing 'placeless' economy, cities continue to maintain their historic role as a source of creativity and innovation, communication and information centres and are increasingly seen as 'nodes of interconnection between global networks and territories' (DeMatteis 1997). Globalisation paradoxically increases the 'local' aspect of globalisation: on the one hand, we are witnessing a growing importance of the levels and processes of local and global, on the other, a decrease of national importance because of the growing process of decentralisation of government. The term 'glocalization' was coined to indicate the phenomenon of interaction of the space of places (local) with the space of flows (global). The cities take on the dual function of simultaneously embodying the local identity and community, and openness to the global world. The challenge of development is formed by the interaction between processes that occur at great distances and local characteristics: thus, the culture of a place can become crucial to the role that a city can play in global processes.

### Re-narrating

Also in the case of Bucharest, the theme of cancellation of parts of the city and the consequent loss of reference points for local identity is a real risk. Moreover, the city's history is studded with architectural changes due to destruction and reconstruction, from the terrible earthquake of 1977 to the manipulations of



Ceaușescu (Mitola 2008). The parcelling in northern Bucharest, which escaped erasure, does not today run the risk of being demolished, as the Romanian Government has classified the majority of the lots as 'protected areas'. However, the risk of radical transformations, which are allowed and encouraged with the sole indication of respecting the identity of the area, is high. As in many other European neighbourhoods, architecture is thus constantly the object of functional changes for re-use or simply to increase performances. The characteristics required for new functions, related for example to new technological systems and new spatial layouts, are implemented at the expense of buildings considered 'modern' and, therefore, well-disposed to transformations.

The search for appropriate functions and the compatibility of re-use are obviously crucial issues within the context of urban regeneration. Re-use can trigger cultural, economic and social



Fig. 3. Bucharest, Romania, 2011. An historical building well reused as book-shop.



Fig. 4. Beijing, China, 2000. A famous International coffee company inside the Forbidden City.

processes of valorisation if it is carried out through an approach of lowering costs in terms of genuineness of architectures and places (Fig.3); in a different way, one of the risks is the standardisation of re-use practices which, operating with the same criteria in different cultural contexts, deprive buildings and places of their local connotations (Fig.4).

However, I intend to confine the issues to the common trend of 'recreating the character of the past, but with modern facilities' (Corbos, Popescu 2011:22), taking into consideration how urban space can be improved and made more real, returning to the traditional concept of neighbourhood and community that, in the past, gave coherence, liveliness, stability and continuity to cities. Collective memory and identity are recovered through the appeal to traditional symbolic elements: over the last 20 years, culture has increasingly been characterised as an aspect of the



social construction of urban symbolic heritage. One source of this process is represented by physical elements, such as places, spaces and artefacts that house cultural facts and that, in turn, reshape the meanings attributed to the same places over time. This social construction of urban symbolism gives the city a unique, special character that identifies it in the eyes of those who live there and pass through (Porrello 2006:11). These circumstances, however, could correspond to *clichés*, aiming to find an aesthetic frame that controls the natural process of evolution of places (Harvey 1997).

Movements like New Urbanism, for example, adopt a vision with a nostalgic appeal to an abstract concept of 'community' as a panacea for social, economic and urban ills (CNU 2001). The offer of a reassuring, pacified urban dimension is not exempt from the risk of 'Disneylandization' (Baudrillard 1993) or the impression of commercial fiction, by laminating a stereotypical image of the historical city, in the offering of a still image that does not take into account the profound changes that have occurred in recent decades in our way of enjoying cities, relating with others, living in a private environment, and urban public spaces.

Consequently, the question is: how can we recover collective memory and identity of a neighbourhood?

New Urbanism has attempted to overcome the master narrative and monoculture inherent in large-scale projects, by carefully analysing 19th- and 20th-century towns and applying these patterns to sites and architectural codes: 'new development [...] should be integrated with existing patterns' (CNU 2001). Following this principle would help integrate new stories with existing places.

In this sense, the integration of new stories, embodied by new projects, with existing stories may develop as a new concept of

urban regeneration. This strategy could be consisted in re-narrating urban spaces through interactions between places, buildings, social and economic practices, stories and vernacular tales, with the aim of lending narrative power to neighbourhoods.

Narrative, in fact, is not only an issue of written or spoken language: architecture is also a way to tell the story of a community. Buildings are not only scenarios, but represent stories in themselves: these stories could refer to history of architecture through shapes and styles; or they can reflect the changes of the community by the material transformation they have undergone: old shop signs, bricked-up windows or consumption over time of an urban furniture element, can all tell stories of everyday life. At the same time, buildings may represent events that have marked the evolution of society: 'There is a building in Piața Revoluției that was partially destroyed during the revolution and is now preserved in a particular way: we have only the bricked perimeter of the old structure and inside there is a new glass structure. That was the place where the securitate took the arrested and the persecuted. In there people died and post-revolution Romania wants to remember this' (Mitola 2008) (Fig.5).

However, social practices can infuse meanings in places also without material traces: it is said that in a Parisian-style tobacconist's near Villacrosse passage in Bucharest, when buying a pack of American cigarettes, it is possible to receive in return the story of how cigarettes were used as bargaining chips during the Second World War. Toponymy and traditional place names also have also a role in establishing relationships between places and social practices: terms like *rive gauche* in Paris, *'beyond the fringe'* in Edinburgh, or *'di là d'Arno'* in Florence express a strong sense of identity of communities.





Fig. 5. Bucharest, Romania, 2011. Building in Piața Revoluției.

This interweaving of place and social practices is called 'narrative fabric' (Childs 2008:176). Taking into consideration the narrative fabric of a neighbourhood may allow planners to understand how users perceive urban space, and use this suggestion in creating urban regeneration projects.

However, the potential of 'narrative fabric' is not limited to past stories: it is possible to link past scenarios with contemporary urban life episodes or with stories invented by citizens. Urban planners could act like editors of magazines collecting multiple storytellers, rather than seeking to produce a plan under the control of a single concept design (Childs 2008:181). In this direction, some proposals to create anthologies of neighbourhood stories to help inform a project have been noted: for example, the handbook published by the Trust for Public Land, which includes essays by historians and novelists (Whynborw 2002); or the interesting project called 'America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places' carried out by the National Trust for Historic Preservation through videos in which people can propose to save a place that 'tells America's story'.

In recent years, user participation in the processes of recovery and production of narrative fabric has of course been supported by the spread of Web 2.0 technologies and in particular by '*digital storytelling*' practice. 'The Media Portrait of the Liberties' is one of the first experiences in this field. It is a collection of historic short tales about the Liberties community life in Dublin. Each tale is written by citizens and refers to a precise area of the neighbourhood; a GPS connection allows the reception of media in that place exactly. The tales are also organised in an upgradable and multi-branched structure that displays different plots according to different routes. Another interesting examples is the project 'The Organic City' which through personal portable devices (smartphone, notebook, etc.) allows the exploration of Oakland through the suggestions of tales in audio-video format created by the inhabitants of several neighbourhoods, referring to local historic events (Sulfaro 2011).

In the future, storytelling, Web 2.0 technologies and other forms of participation may be fundamental to create what Habermas called 'debating society, a place where users/tellers can negotiate urban changes (Habermas 1998).



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## Restoration or maintenance of architecture: protocols for the planning of a coherent project and for the work it precedes

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Over the last century, human geography as it applies to cities has undergone significant and fast-moving changes. In many European cities, large-scale building of entire neighbourhoods took place, which, following the town-planning strategies of the era, were layered onto the landscape, giving it new characteristics and creating particular uses for it. From this perspective, the choice of location for the workshop in the city of Bucharest, between Aviatorilor Boulevard, Iancu de Hunedoara Boulevard and Calea Dorobanților, seems appropriate. This area is one of the most representative of the changes that were taking place at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th. Within this area, from 1895 onwards, some distinctive subdivision layouts were used next to one other, giving rise to parts of the city in which there is a relative uniformity of building. But also, in particular in the more distant areas, a systematic replacement of the material consistency of the original architecture took place, with the introduction of other types of architecture with different characteristics and meanings. If we walk through the streets in these neighbourhoods, we can



discover meanings related to the history of the local architecture through observation of the work of Romanian architects who, it is evident, studied at the '*Ecole des Beaux Arts*.'



Fig. 1. An example of modern architecture that exhibits superficial deterioration.

The Rationalist period in Bucharest, exemplified by the architecture of Horia Creangă, finds its rightful expression in the way it frees architecture from useless decoration, but which here makes a statement that seems to betray its origins, perhaps because these are geographically distant from the driving force of the centre (Fig. 1). Romania, like Italy, was unified in 1861, and most of Bucharest was constructed after 1900. Here too, the opportunities for development offered by the discoveries of the 18th and 19th centuries led to sudden urbanisation and the consequent need to reduce construction costs for the buildings necessary for the functioning of the city, while at the same time providing good overall quality. The architecture here is a reflection of what was being debated at European level at the time, and the buildings of the period reflect different trends, although a permeability of the ideas of the Rationalist movement, which subverts traditional architectural language through the use of reinforced concrete, is always apparent. In some districts of Bucharest, just as in many Italian cities, cement mixes were used to simulate stone and create an urban image. Stone had previously been a characteristic of only the more important buildings. In Messina, after the earthquake of 1908, the problem of reconstructing a city – while at the same time giving it an urban quality at an affordable cost for that time – was solved by resorting to the use of artificial stone<sup>1</sup>. This was made with cement-based mixtures that included aggregates/sands and marble powder to obtain a finish that simulated stone. It was surface-worked in various ways, making it available at different prices.

Stucco mixes, in Bucharest as in Messina, were used for decorative work, with surface-working of the stucco making it mimic the texture of stone in the decorative parts of windows, pilasters, string courses and balconies, which, also being made of stucco, imitated carved stone (Fig. 2).





Fig. 2 Balcony in artificial stone shows its tough metal

Even buildings that embraced the ideas of the Modernist Movement conformed to the previous work of façade stucco-workers, with plaster surfaces being characterised by cement mixes, whose texture is to be seen on the surfaces. In more traditional buildings the stages of work allowed for different ways of working.

Decorations were generally made with the tip of a trowel, impressing perfect scoring on the mix which was not yet dry, in imitation of the joints between blocks of stone in a wall (Fig. 3). A different finish was given to each face of the fake stones, so that the difference could also be read at a distance, revealing the fake laying of the wall. In the case of decorative elements in relief the process of creation was different; these were made at the work site and then placed into their final position. The production methods used included the use of a decorative element which was copied by means of a plaster mould, providing a negative from



Fig. 3. Plaster shaped in imitation of stone.

which, in principle, an infinite number of pieces could be made, and through which the use of high-quality stone for frames, string courses, festoons and capitals could be simulated (Fig. 4). The attention paid to the external characterisation of a building was seen in the choice of aggregates/sands, which, in their variety and particle size, rendered the different surfaces of a building diverse, while at the same time ensuring a significant urban quality. Architecture thus becomes a witness to the cultural influences that led to its development, influencing planners, but also reflecting the social and environmental influences that determined the choice of architectural solutions employed to characterise the surfaces of a building from the perspective of urban quality. The significance of historical architecture refers precisely to these issues, the perpetuation of which, when the preservation of the characteristics and specificities of individual buildings is under consideration, is of fundamental importance for the protection of the values which are given substance within them<sup>2</sup> (Fig. 5).





Fig. 4. An example of the decorative works in formats out of the molds and then mounted on the façade.



Fig. 5. The paving sections of tree trunk juxtaposed. Note the reintegration with similar elements.

Globalisation has facilitated both the circulation of ideas and also a general contamination that must certainly be understood in a positive way. With regard to cultural heritage, however, this evolution has inherent within it some significant implications that make conservation of this heritage problematic. In cultural heritage, values having a link to the past are made concrete: the values of memory or of documentation, which seem opposed to values linked to progress and the contamination of ideas. Industrialisation has created a market where production has been directed towards solving problems connected with the chemistry of mixes, ignoring almost entirely issues regarding the appearance of the building, obtainable through different textures, materials and techniques that are the specific characteristic of different areas (Fig. 6).



Fig. 6. The restoration of the plaster with unsuitable materials also sends a negative value to its surroundings.



But the new materials carry a heavy price, not just for the surfaces of buildings but also for their structure. Indeed, one of the most traumatic aspects in the restoration of historic buildings is that related to seismic safety. In general, project planners adapt their structures to meet legal requirements, and consider that safety issues have thus been addressed, although, in the case of buildings constructed to other standards than those considered to be the norm, this sometimes proves to be insufficient<sup>3</sup>. In Italy it is admitted that satisfying safety requirements cannot be based on a formal adherence to the calculation imposed by the law, but that other aspects relative to the history of the building, to its physical condition, to previous work undertaken, to the seismic history of the building and to possible fissures in the building should all be taken into account.

All of this constitutes the basis on which a project of restoration work can be established, appropriate to the specificity of the building rather than conforming to a standard designed to be applied in a variety of different situations. The addition of plant and services systems to historic buildings is also one of the problematic issues which in our time create heated debate. During the workshop, a residential building and its work yard, lying within the area of study, was visited. The quantity of materials needed to provide adequate levels of comfort had necessitated significant changes. Given that the plant and services systems are indeed indispensable for ensuring that standards which are obligatory for the intended new use of the building are met, we believe that the way in which the new systems should be evaluated must be based on the consideration of least impact, in terms of making the fewest necessary changes required, and considering also that modern technology allows us to reduce the amount of cabling needed. It becomes essential to identify the procedures that can encourage architects to recognise and perpetuate the cultural values of a building, making respect

for the authenticity of the architectural object the primary aim. This will then influence the work to protect the historical building. If the objective that we set ourselves is the preservation of values, it is necessary to premise that, besides material values related to the physical building, there are also values that are not material, such as those related to building practices, oral sources, customs and, in a broader sense, to the region of intangible meanings (Fig. 7).

The recognition and the conservation of these values cannot be considered without also considering other conflicting requirements. It is only by confronting these requirements that a project can be commenced which will allow the different life stages of the building to be more easily identifiable, revealing limits and relative meanings. But to preserve the traditional cultural values of historic buildings, it is necessary to create a class of architect able to recognise the many significant characteristics of a historical building, and to carry



Fig. 7. The attic of a building in which the work in wood was made by masters, according to the rules of good building.



out work correctly without altering the traditional characteristics of such a building. If our aim is to hand down to future generations physical objects that we see as receptacles of meanings that our present-day culture deems important, it is extremely important that we should give some thought to the people whom we must teach how to carry out such projects. Students of a Faculty of Architecture in the future must be able to identify *how* and *what* to preserve. If *how* to preserve can be in some way defined as *what* to preserve, it must be in relation to the culture of the place. The international symposium held in Reggio Calabria in 2004, under the title 'Towards a pluralistic philosophy of conservation', highlighted that the meaning of restoration can be understood differently at different latitudes<sup>4</sup>.

A teaching experience which was part of the Restoration course at the University of Messina Faculty of Engineering in 2009-10 sought to make students aware of this. In the belief that the preservation of historical architecture, if it is to happen, must be obtained by work carried out on several fronts, it was considered necessary both to carry out more research into ancient materials and technologies and to improve our teaching of those people who will be involved in the future in this process as project planners. They have to be equipped with the cultural tools that they will need in order to make choices in a knowledgeable way. In fact, a project of restoration work carried out on a historical building can foresee the major parts of the conservation work, but it often does not foresee all the changes which will become necessary during the course of the work, with the result that much of the outcome is determined, in practice, by decisions taken during the progression of the work. It is only necessary to think of plasterwork tests where the choice of plaster will most definitely determine the outward appearance of a building and at the same time will significantly affect the urban image. It can be understood

that these choices cannot be left to the effect of different properties, but must adhere to a reference protocol.

In this regard, during the course of the workshop, it was proposed that a manual should be prepared that would include information and drawings of traditional architecture in Bucharest. This manual could then be used to provide guidelines for work to be carried out on the existing architecture. Guidelines can be an excellent instrument for providing knowledge about the traditional architecture of a particular place. However, at the same time they can be a dangerous source of information regarding the authenticity of the buildings if adopted uncritically on the part of the planners. It has indeed happened that manuals about preservation, which are important receptacles of different cultures and construction methods in a specific territorial area, have been used critically to plan work on a building. In this way the project is reduced to a choice based on a model, with selection being made of the most economically advantageous solution, leading to transformations that are not reflected in a modern culture of conservation of the architectural heritage of the past. It is true that investigations carried out on another building with similar characteristics can be an unequalled source of knowledge about the architecture, but such information should only be used by the planner to form initial ideas. The specificity of a historical building lies totally in its own authenticity, which, precisely because it took shape in contexts which were industrialised either only a little or not at all, means that specific areas of work, even if carried out by the same hand, give rise to different specificity, even within the same building.

If we were to investigate the needs that are at the roots of the conflict of interest existing between the need to protect historical buildings and that of land use meeting required standards, we could conclude that it is necessary to find a point of contact that



allows us to bring the two conflicting requirements together. It is true that the degree of development of a nation, which can be measured using indicators such as the development of networks (road, rail, water, etc.), will be greater the more the nation protects and preserves its cultural heritage. It seems opportune to consider in greater depth the requirements which determine the decision to carry out work on existing buildings. If cultural values are not identifiable in the building on which work is being considered, the only value necessitating consideration becomes a financial one, leading to a systematic renovation of the building, instead of a more appropriate preservation of the building's historical fabric.

Another aspect that affects preservation of historical heritage is related to the perception of the district by the local population: in other words, the desire that they have to establish their homes within the district that has undergone conservation work. With regard to this, the work of the local institutions is surely fundamental in starting up a renovation programme including provision of local services meeting required standards, and in general an expression of interest that is felt by the citizens to be a serious attempt to plan the future of the urban area. Conservation can only be pursued if the idea is shared by the population. All of this goes to emphasise the centrality of conservation projects for historical buildings within a logic which takes into account the different aspects of protecting local culture. The European Charter of Architectural Heritage, signed in Amsterdam in 1975, defined the concept of integrated conservation as the integration of restoration techniques with the development of administrative, financial, fiscal and social instruments appropriate for pursuing the aim of preservation and making the citizen the main reason for carrying out this work. The interaction between these factors regarding the decision-making process about the future of buildings can lead to a conservation

project and an outcome that is appropriate to the expectations of a culturally evolved society.

A valid model is held to be one in which the project states the objectives that are to be pursued, evaluating the degree of alteration that will have been produced after the work is carried out. If preliminary investigations and those carried out after completion of the work can provide evidence of the changes that occurred in the course of history, and the difference between the building's state prior to the work carried out and its state after the work, this will help to make clear what changes have been made. It is necessary, however, that everything can be checked, and possibly approved, in order to ensure the best possible result.

Taking into account the above considerations, the conservation project must be seen as a series of steps, each of which can add new data relative to a specific aspect of our knowledge. Each detail required by the initial investigation work obliges the planner to reflect on the results of the investigation, in such a way that he cannot but take them into account in the formulation of his project.

In the context of development of the city, investigations into the role of different areas can serve to guide subsequent fact-finding investigations, but they certainly do not, on their own, allow us to assess accurately the value of the buildings in those areas. Indeed, ironically, they may be an element of disavowal of the specific values of an individual building that, as a result, may lead to its demolition and replacement with a contemporary building. As previously indicated, it is important to draw up a reference protocol that specifies the investigations necessary for revealing the characteristics and cultural values which are given substance within buildings and within individual architectural elements; this is also important in consideration of the fact that such values, if not



identified and subsequently protected, are, over time, in danger of being lost forever.

In Italy, restoration initially focused on monuments, and only because of a growth in cultural maturity did the idea expand its horizons, arriving, in the 1970s, at a definition of *cultural heritage* as 'any material object showing evidence of civilization'.<sup>5</sup> Because of the specificity of objects which deserve to be preserved, it is not possible to predict ahead of time the variety of situations in which legislation should intervene to ensure survival of specific values. Therefore the only viable way forward seems to be the education of future architects and planners, and the establishment of appropriate investigation protocols which allow a comparison to be made between the characteristics a building has prior to work being carried out, and the characteristics that remain and can be evaluated after the work is completed.

It is interesting to observe that while every good piece of work carried out is the result of a good project, it cannot be equally taken for granted that a good piece of work follows a good conservation project, understood as one which guarantees the greatest possible survival of historical traces, being part of the cultural values that the building contains. Since it is difficult to determine what the cultural value of a building is, it is useful to compile project data based on a direct observation of the building to be investigated. These data should be developed to identify weaknesses and the transformation possibilities of the building. From the superposition of different thematic maps, a project can result that is able to take into account the characteristics to be respected. In the area under consideration at the workshop, the identity of each place draws its *raison d'être* both from the typology of the locale and also and especially from materials that characterise building surfaces and represent the place where the urban image takes shape, with its meanings and the memories that it brings.

The teaching experience mentioned above underlined the necessity of using specific investigation protocols on which to base projects, in such a way that a relative homogeneity is highlighted in the conservation work on the buildings in question. In this case the buildings were in Sicily, and showed a similar level of degradation. The experience also underlined the necessity of successfully transferring information collected *in situ* through the use of a common lexis (Figs. 8, 9, 10).



Fig. 8 – Metric and orthophotos survey of East elevation of the Formento building in Messina. Processed during the course of Architectural Restoration (AA.2008-09 – prof. Fabio Todesco) Degree in Civil Engineering, University of Messina. Students: Alessandra Cernaro, Carmela Malarbi, Roberta Parisi.



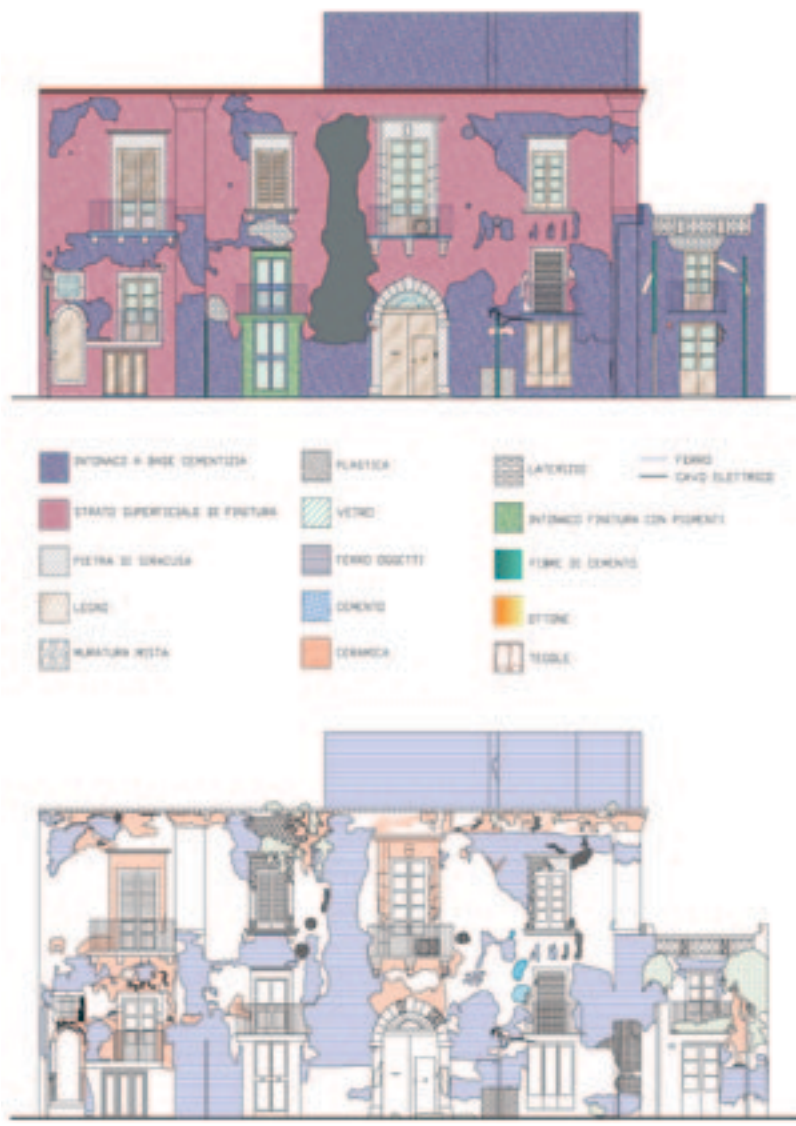


Fig. 9. Survey of materials with legend and survey of materials degradation.

| TABELLA DEI DEGRADI              |         |                        |   |  |
|----------------------------------|---------|------------------------|---|--|
| DEGRADO<br>(simbolo Norme UNI)   | RETIENE | ESEMPIO<br>FOTOGRAFICO | CAUSE   | INTERVENTI   |
| Alterazione cromatica            |         |                        | Inquinamento atmosferico (depositi di carbonio, ossidi, ecc.)                     | Trattamenti di ripristino cromatico con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente, a seconda della natura del degrado. Pulitura con acqua a pressione.                             |
| Delusione                        |         |                        | Interventi di restauro alterano la continuità di intonaco, intonaco, ecc.         | Rimozione del delaminato con acqua a pressione o con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente. Ripristino con intonaco o stucco a base di acqua o solvente.                       |
| Efflorescenze                    |         |                        | Trasporti di sali solubili da umidità di risalita, ecc.                           | Trattamenti della superficie con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente, a seconda della natura del degrado. Pulitura con acqua a pressione.                                    |
| Erosione                         |         |                        | Impatto meccanico da agenti atmosferici, inquinamento, ecc.                       | Pulitura della zona con acqua a pressione o con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente. Ripristino con intonaco o stucco a base di acqua o solvente.                            |
| Esfoliazione                     |         |                        | Movimento dell'acqua all'interno del materiale, ecc.                              | Rimozione del delaminato con acqua a pressione o con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente. Ripristino con intonaco o stucco a base di acqua o solvente.                       |
| Fritture/squarcio                |         |                        | Stress di trazione, compressione, ecc.  | Pulitura della superficie con acqua a pressione o con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente. Ripristino con intonaco o stucco a base di acqua o solvente.                      |
| Impermeabilizzazione             |         |                        | Trattamenti di impermeabilizzazione con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente, ecc. | Rimozione del prodotto di impermeabilizzazione con acqua a pressione o con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente. Ripristino con intonaco o stucco a base di acqua o solvente. |
| Macchie                          |         |                        | Trattamenti di impermeabilizzazione con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente, ecc. | Pulitura della superficie con acqua a pressione o con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente. Ripristino con intonaco o stucco a base di acqua o solvente.                      |
| Manifatture                      |         |                        | Trattamenti di impermeabilizzazione con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente, ecc. | Rimozione del prodotto di impermeabilizzazione con acqua a pressione o con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente. Ripristino con intonaco o stucco a base di acqua o solvente. |
| Pigmentazione                    |         |                        | Trattamenti di impermeabilizzazione con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente, ecc. | Rimozione del prodotto di impermeabilizzazione con acqua a pressione o con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente. Ripristino con intonaco o stucco a base di acqua o solvente. |
| Pulitura biologica               |         |                        | Trattamenti di impermeabilizzazione con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente, ecc. | Rimozione del prodotto di impermeabilizzazione con acqua a pressione o con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente. Ripristino con intonaco o stucco a base di acqua o solvente. |
| Pulitura                         |         |                        | Trattamenti di impermeabilizzazione con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente, ecc. | Rimozione del prodotto di impermeabilizzazione con acqua a pressione o con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente. Ripristino con intonaco o stucco a base di acqua o solvente. |
| Presepolimento di vegetazione    |         |                        | Trattamenti di impermeabilizzazione con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente, ecc. | Rimozione del prodotto di impermeabilizzazione con acqua a pressione o con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente. Ripristino con intonaco o stucco a base di acqua o solvente. |
| Rigonfiamento                    |         |                        | Trattamenti di impermeabilizzazione con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente, ecc. | Rimozione del prodotto di impermeabilizzazione con acqua a pressione o con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente. Ripristino con intonaco o stucco a base di acqua o solvente. |
| Schiumatura                      |         |                        | Trattamenti di impermeabilizzazione con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente, ecc. | Rimozione del prodotto di impermeabilizzazione con acqua a pressione o con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente. Ripristino con intonaco o stucco a base di acqua o solvente. |
| Rigonfiamento, distacco, mancata |         |                        | Trattamenti di impermeabilizzazione con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente, ecc. | Rimozione del prodotto di impermeabilizzazione con acqua a pressione o con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente. Ripristino con intonaco o stucco a base di acqua o solvente. |
| Degradazione superficiale        |         |                        | Trattamenti di impermeabilizzazione con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente, ecc. | Rimozione del prodotto di impermeabilizzazione con acqua a pressione o con prodotti a base di acqua o solvente. Ripristino con intonaco o stucco a base di acqua o solvente. |

Fig. 10. Legend of the board of degradation and elevation compared with degradation-causes-interventions.



In this sense, the inventory of existing historical buildings, which was already available for the area of the historic centre of Bucharest where the workshop was held, constitutes an important basis for all future actions of preservation/protection. Using this inventory, each individual building can be studied in detail, both from a static point of view and from that of protection of the urban image. The formation of a GIS platform could be considered, to which data relating to individual buildings could be added, in order to obtain a continuously updated interactive map. Measured surveys can be the first step used to introduce students to the physicality of a building, while a graphical depiction, using an appropriate scale, of what is found should refer to morphologies, defining both the shape and the size of the building, which in an appropriate scale can be constantly checked. A survey of the materials constituting the building is a further opportunity for study, serving to help understand in advance what logic the builders originally used, what raw materials were available to them, and in general the underlying architectural culture. From observation of the materials it is possible to note elements that lead to a better understanding of the context in which the original building was constructed. From a direct observation of artefacts, data relative to usage and repair work can be obtained, all of which elements add meaning to the city by making each individual building a unique and unrepeatable element, guaranteeing quality in the urban form. Even observation of degradation in individual contexts can allow us to make some reflections on the usages that characterised the life of the district in recent times. This should be with respect to a building seen as a single entity in which surface degradation can be seen – as distinct from structural deterioration, for simplicity of analysis – but where the organic nature of the whole is never lost from sight. The surveys and investigations can also be concerned with aspects having an ethno-anthropological nature, as in one of the examples

visited during the workshop, in the attic of which could be seen an articulated truss structure, showing the work of experienced shipwrights. Stratigraphy can provide information on the changes that have occurred during the life of the building, but may also give information about different layers of colouring, going back to the original one. Examined in this way, each building is a micro-history full of meanings that accumulate with our increasing knowledge. The sum of these micro-histories constitutes the urban reality in all its complexities, making it a unique and therefore valuable reality seen from a viewpoint that is balanced between past and future.

### Notes and references

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## Urban Intervention in a Modernist neighbourhood: case study of the Jianu area in Bucharest

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### Introduction

When approaching an urban intervention in a preserved area, one should understand especially those main characteristics that guided the spirit of the place throughout its history. A Modernist neighbourhood requires especially accurate attention to the soft elements that created the Modernist atmosphere that prevailed over time. 'The modern way of living' was pursued as a main objective at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century city project – the modern city project.

The Jianu area can be briefly described as a conjunction of twelve parcellings, derived from large 19<sup>th</sup>-century lands, owned by nobility, entrepreneurs or other private entities, divided with the common goal of creating comfortable houses in a beautiful and calm area of the city.

In order to understand the physical structure and the qualities of the Jianu area, it is necessary to look into the historical context that influenced its development, and to grasp the initial elements that imposed urban solutions and led to the present-day characteristics of the area.





In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Bucharest was firmly delimited, in the northern part of the city, by the ring road that included the Basarabilor Road (currently Nicolae Titulescu Boulevard), the Bonaparte Road (currently Iancu de Hunedoara Boulevard) and the Ștefan cel Mare Boulevard. The main routes, entering from the north into the city, were Herăstrău Road (currently Calea Dorobanților), Jianu Road (currently Aviatorilor Boulevard) and Kiseleff Road, which continued into the city as the famous Podul Mogoșoaiei (currently Calea Victoriei), after crossing the Mogoșoaiei city-barrier (in the location of nowadays Victoriei Square) (Fig. 1). The specific image



Fig. 1. The northern part of Bucharest according to Orăscu Plan, 1893

of Bucharest in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was one of a bohemian, calm city with private large house gardens and a skyline formed by the massive silhouette of trees. The Jianu area was an open terrain, not built upon, with a specific image as the city border/limit. Some typical functions for the adjacent part of the city were located here:

a sandpit; a mill (the State Stăncovici Mill); some factories (the Drăghiceanu and Cristescu rope and textile factory, the Cerchez brick factory); and the Bonaparte tram depot. The northern ring road was a preferred location for the main factories in the city.

The most important structural elements related to the urban life of the city were the tram depot, the Kiseleff Road, Bonaparte Road and the Victoriei Square.

The horse tram appeared in Bucharest in 1871. In 1881 there were only three main tramlines in the city, one of them being on the Bonaparte Road and on Calea Victoriei (Ionescu 1969:92). In the 1893 cadastral plan, the Bonaparte line is shown as one of the first lines, and the tram depot in the Bonaparte Road is shown for the first time on a plan.

The Kiseleff Road was set out in 1832 as a big alley included in the Kiseleff Park designed in 1843 by the landscape architect Carl Mayer. This new road was one of the most beautiful in the city, the fashionable walking area, and it was the place for traditional recreational activities such as the annual flower battles, the horse carriage walks (this was actually one of the most popular showing-off activities for the nobility of that period and it took place along Kiseleff Road and Calea Victoriei).

As a direct consequence of this representative role that Kiseleff Road had in the city, this area became the magnet for upper-class image activities: luxurious summer gardens and restaurants, immense residential and ballroom villas, palaces for the rich and important personalities. These contributed to the specific cachet of the area as one for high-class society. Along the Jianu Road we can find several famous residences such as the one of Ioan Manu, from the noble family of Popești-Leordeni and Budești, a residence that



later hosted the Millionaires Club Ball, became the house of the first Communist prime minister Petru Groza, and later the Embassy of Argentina (Pippidi 2008:10). Also on this road was situated the house of Mihai Ormolu, an interwar Romanian politician and the governor of the National Bank of Romania. In the Bonaparte Road area there were villas owned by army generals and army officials, and on Aleea Alexandru St. there were the houses of the main factory owners and bankers of the interwar period, such as Nicolae Malaxa and the Bușilă family. One of the most impressive and defining buildings of the area was the Sturdza Palace, owned by Prince Sturdza, son of the Prince of Moldavia, built in 1898-1901 in Victoriei Square. This palace became later the headquarters of the Foreign Affairs Ministry until 1945, when it was demolished (Ion 2008:70). In 1937, closely behind the Sturdza Palace, began the construction of the new official headquarters for the Foreign Affairs Ministry, according to the plans of the architect Duiliu Marcu. Also, very close to this newly formed neighbourhood, there were located two royal residences: Princess Elisabeta Palace, built in the Herăstrău Park between 1936 and 1937, the place where King Mihai signed the act for abdication in 30 December 1947, and the Kiseleff Palace, built in 1910 by the Candiano Popescu family, then bought by the royal family and redesigned between 1914 and 1925 as an official residence for Prince Carol. From 1925 until 1930, the palace became the residence of Princess Elena of Romania, mother of future King Mihai I, who lived here between 1930 and 1940.

The toponymy of the streets speaks eloquently of the general character of the Jianu area as a representative part of the city. In 1926 the streets were named after the royal family members – northern Blanc Alley was Queen Mary Street (currently Paris Street); the rest were named after Romanian royal figures: Mircea, Ileana, Elisabeta and Elena. In the interwar period, as the national

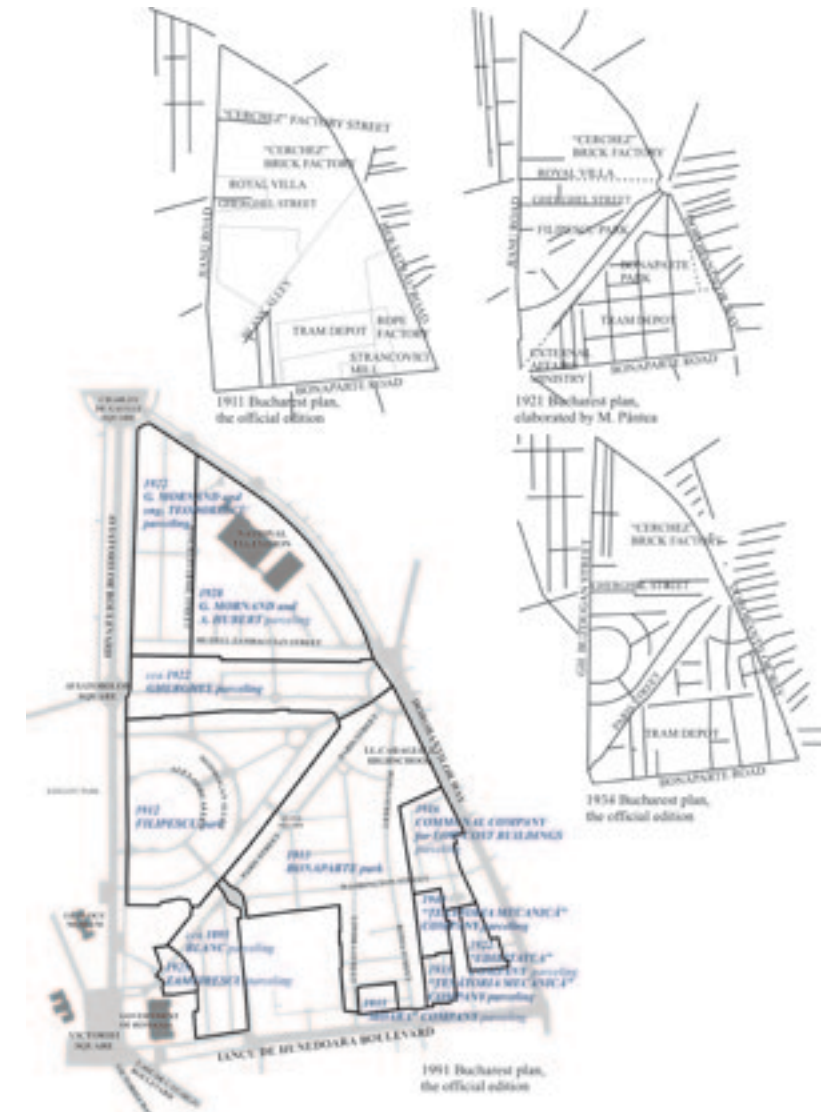


Fig. 2. The evolution of Jianu area

- 2\_a Jianu area according to the 1911 Bucharest plan, the official edition
- 2\_b Jianu area according to the 1921 Bucharest plan, the edition of M. Pântea
- 2\_c Jianu area according to the 1934 Bucharest plan, the official edition
- 2\_d Jianu area according to the 1991 Bucharest plan, the official edition



relationships with the allied countries improved, the City Hall decided to rename the streets after the capital cities of the allied or neutral friendly countries: London, Washington, Roma, Praga, Belgrad, Bruxelles, etc. The street forming the main axis of the area was named Paris, in honor of the Versailles Treaty.

Before 1878, Victoriei Square was named 'The End of the Bridge', as the main street of Bucharest ended here, formerly known as Podul Mogoșoaiei (Mogoșoaiei Bridge), and currently as Calea Victoriei. In 1920 a public competition was launched for the design of the Victoriei Square, which stated among other matters that, from the architectural point of view, it should be perceived as a closed space with its walls in harmony with the environment. The idea of a closed space was promoted with the role of guiding perspective views towards Basarabilor Road, Bonaparte Road and Colțea Boulevard, along the main focal points (the Triumphal Arch) or routes (Kiseleff Road and Jianu Road) by using columns and gates. Also, as Victoriei Square represented the gateway to a public alley-park (Kiseleff), it had to be decorated with vegetation and public monuments (Arhitectura 1920:27) (Fig. 2).

### The parcellings

The Blanc parcelling (Fig. 3) was the first in the Jianu area. The architect Louis Blanc divided the vacant sites in Pațanghel property by a clear rule: all the houses were arranged along Blanc Alley (at that time all three streets inside the parcelling were named the Blanc Alley A, B and C). This system was rapidly adopted for many parcellings in the city. The portion of the street in the north of the parcelling became part of Paris Street, and its role was to connect Victoriei Square to Dorobanți square. This urban intervention was achieved by destroying the Sturdza Palace's garden.



Fig. 3. Blanc parcelling  
3\_a Blanc parcelling according to 1911 plan  
3\_b Blanc parcelling according to 1991 plan

The Filipescu family property was divided into two main properties: the large garden of Princess Eliza, the daughter of Prince Bibescu, and the plot owned by Prince Filipescu. This extensive property was parcelled according to the guiding principles of a new concept for residential areas: the residential park with huge plots, wide avenues with controlled perspectives and image, and a general silhouette marked by trees and vegetation. The structural concept is that of a landlord parcelling; the most important and the largest plot was the Filipescu family plot, located at the centre, and around it were enfolded circular streets named after the family members: Filipescu, Alexandru, Zoe and even the nicknames Vulpache and Modrogan (Pippidi 2008:10) (Fig. 4).



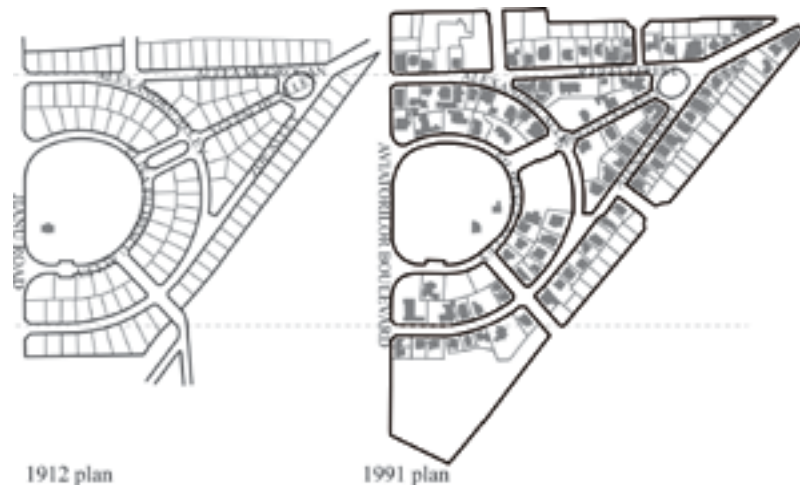


Fig. 4. Filipescu Park  
4\_a Filipescu Park according to the original plan, 1912  
4\_b Filipescu Park according to 1991 plan

It is very interesting how the structure of the parcelling followed the main axis of the entire area and how it related to the Blanc parcelling. Paris Street and Dorobanți Square introduced new structural elements into the urban area: a focal point and a diagonal as a structural axis. Dorobanți Square became the centre that gathered all future streets as radials of a circle, Paris Street being one of them. This imposed a tridentate solution for the connection, with resulting triangular plots all around it. Filipescu Park has a radial solution for its connection with Dorobanți square (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5. The main axis of the area, on the 1991 plan

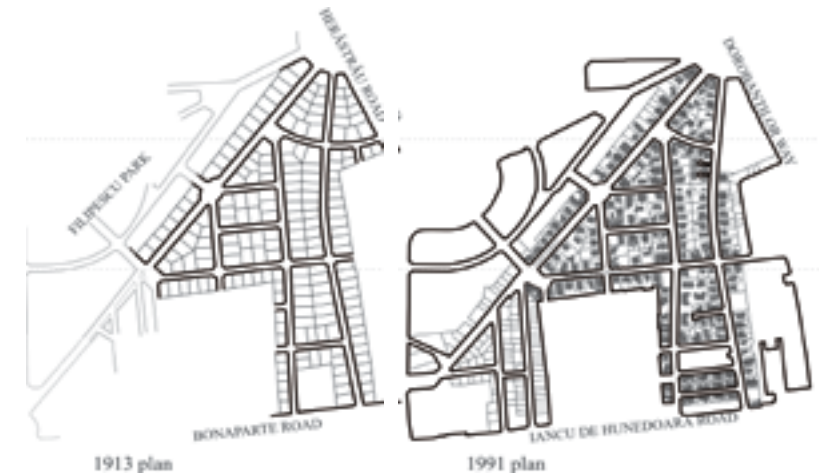


Fig. 6. Bonaparte Park  
6\_a Bonaparte Park according to the original plan, 1913  
6\_b Bonaparte Park according to 1991 plan

Bonaparte Park (Fig. 6) combined rationally all these structural elements and realised a uniform and rectangular parcelling with tridentate connections and triangular islands of plots that introduced a rectangular order to the irregular shape of the big holding. To this extent, it is eloquent the way Paris Street connects different approaches to parcelling: on one side we find a long front of houses and on the other there are triangular islands with little public squares at the intersections, in order to avoid the possible monotony of such a long route and to emphasise its importance in the area.

Between 1885 and 1900 there was a great leap forward in the construction of private houses and public institutions. In 1860s Bucharest, there were only 56 three-storey houses, 1,327 two-storey houses and 13,321 one-storey houses. In the period between 1860 and 1900, 9,132 two-storey houses, 2,058 three-storey houses, 341 four-storey houses and 57 five-storey houses were built. (Ionescu 1969: 93). At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a commission



appointed by the general council approached and studied the problem of public health and the problem of insanitary housing. In 1906 there were over 400 insalubrious houses and an acute housing crisis. The council decided not to demolish any of the buildings in question and the main proposal to solve the housing crisis was to approve the deletion of any tax in the case of low-cost buildings for the next 20 years and the creation of the 'Communal Company for Low-cost Buildings' ('Societatea comunală de locuințe ieftine') in 1910. In this period, the first residential neighbourhoods were built, not only by the Communal Society but also by other societies or private initiatives. Among the first of this type was Filipescu Park, in 1910-1912. By 1913 approximately 1,500 sites, with a surface of almost 150 hectares, were bought (Duțu 1969:102).

In reality, the period 1912-1920 was one of feverish construction, but there were some aspects that influenced the real estate market of the city. Even if there had been a promise to encourage construction by maintaining low prices for materials for those who invested in housing, that promise was never kept and the prices for construction materials grew higher than before. Construction fees and the taxes on buildings were lower or non-existent, but other taxes increased, such as the sidewalk fee, which grew thirty-fold. So the houses built in the construction campaign from 1922 were too expensive when compared to the initial expectations (Arhitectura 1920:28).

This represented the period when the northern part of the Jianu area (Mornand and Gherghel parcelling) and the southern part ('Edilitatea' Company and Zamfirescu parcelling) were developed. These were uniform parcellings that divided the land into bigger plots for single-family villas. (Fig. 7).

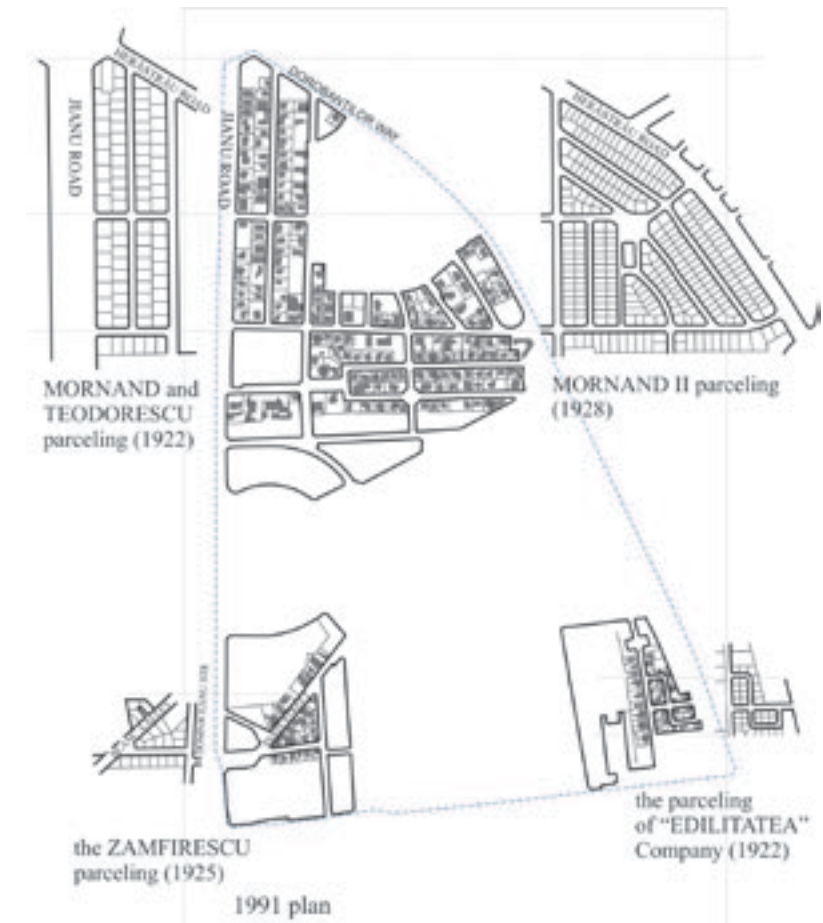


Fig. 7. The parcellings from the 1920

- 7\_a Mornand and Teodorescu parcelling (1922), according to the original plan
- 7\_b Mornand and Teodorescu parcelling, in 1991 plan
- 7\_c Mornand II parcelling, in 1991 plan
- 7\_d Mornand II parcelling (1928), according to the original plan
- 7\_e Zamfirescu parcelling (1925), according to the original plan
- 7\_f Zamfirescu parcelling, in 1991 plan
- 7\_g 'Edilitatea' Company parcelling (1922), according to the original plan
- 7\_h 'Edilitatea' Company parcelling, 1991 plan



Also, in the interwar period the city faced another construction fever wave. In 1935 the city experienced the most active construction campaign in its history, characterised not only by an accelerated rhythm in production, but also by the richness of volumes and the architectural styles of the products. Bucharest again became a huge construction site. In this period, the parts along Bonaparte Road - 'Țesătorie Mecanică' Company and 'Moara' Company parcellings - were built (Fig. 8). These plots were economically efficient: the plots were smaller, the density was higher and the preferred construction type was that of small blocks of flats, each with its own plot.

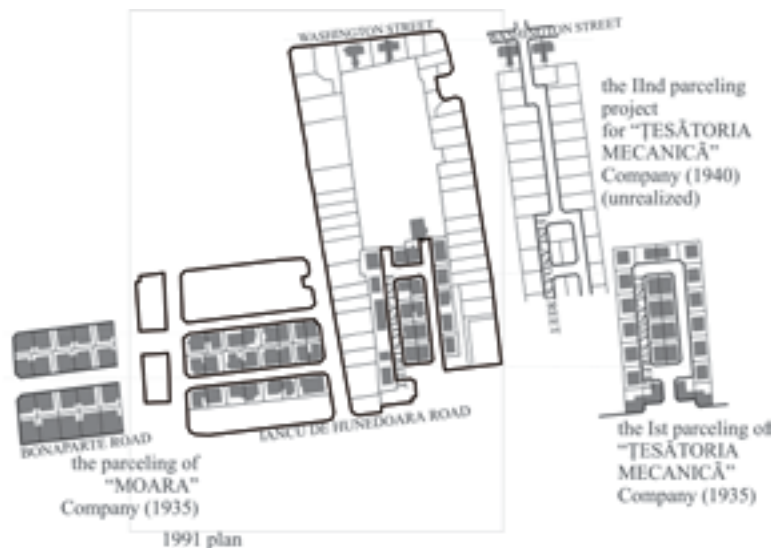


Fig. 8. The parcellings from 1935

8\_a 'Moara' Company parcelling (1935), according to the original plan

8\_b 1991 plan, including the mentioned parcellings

8\_c Project for the parcelling 'Țesătorie Mecanică' Company II (194. ), unbuilt

8\_d Parcelling of 'Țesătorie Mecanică' Company I (1935)

### The Jianu area as Modern neighbourhood

At the structural level, if we approach it as an urban unit, the first quality that appears is that the Jianu area succeeded in maintaining the residential neighbourhood character as a whole with a specific location and particular elements. At the conceptual level, the character of comfortable living in a residential park appears as the strongest feature in this area that needs to be preserved.

*'The essential law of modernity is the division and specialisation of functions that is translated in the structure of the modern city. The functional zones in the city should be clearly distributed and treated differently according to the special need. The residential areas for low-cost houses or for villas should hold a different urban image given by: density, proportions, aesthetics'. (Zamphiropol 1935: 4).*

The elements of modernity specific to this place, those that refer to the modern way of life are: comfort, low-rise buildings, small blocks, the garden-city image, and the hybrid housing type specific to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – the transition from the rural palace to the small city-house or apartment.

From the Modernist perspective, the Jianu area was an architectural laboratory, an exhibition of Modernist architecture at the time it was built. Nowadays the area is a living museum of Modern architecture. All of the initial urban structure is almost entirely intact: the street pattern, the islands, the plot pattern; the texture of the area – vegetation, concrete, small compact volumes made out of ordinary construction materials, with a variety of decoration and architectural details and language. All of these elements together form the unique atmosphere that has prevailed over time and now they are altogether the most exquisite features.



At a detailed level, the specific Modern elements can be set out.

First there are the main axes that limit and hold the area together (Fig. 9). These are:

- The main north-south axis of the city, Aviatorilor Boulevard and Kiseleff Road: their importance as the main ways to access the city centre gives strength to the entire route. This is an area which suggests pride and it is an open way, an ideal location for exposure for housing or for other representative functions (headquarters of foreign administrative offices, powerful companies that invest in their image).



Fig. 9. Constructions and urban islands delimiting Jianu area, according to the 1991 plan

- The main inner ring-road of the city – Iancu de Hunedoara and Ștefan cel Mare boulevards – corresponding to the former physical and powerful structural limit of the city that had the role of containing urban sprawl. This is a role that has been preserved over time. Its configuration now enhances this role; the high-rise buildings are a physical limit that holds within it the neighbourhoods that are lying behind them.
- Calea Dorobanților: the part between the intersection with Ștefan cel Mare Boulevard and Dorobanților Square has the configuration of a physical boundary, but the northern part is just a circulation road with the main role of relating

neighbourhoods to one another; it is not a limit, but a local structural axis.

Second is the location in a vast borough of the city: Jianu is a piece within an extensive residential area that retains similar urban values, forming the ring of low-rise housing around the city centre. There is a fluent relationship throughout the entire ring that respects a communication principle between neighbourhoods which have a similar initial impulse, similar physical structure and composition principles, and are approximately of the same age.

Thirdly, we see technical details of Modern urban design that are orientated to the human and community scale:

- The house/plot relationship: the house is orientated to its exterior, the yard is open to the public eye, the life of the house itself is open to the public eye through large windows that are orientated towards the street or to the open yard.

- The house/street relationship: a rhythm of houses - given by the orientation, the volumes and the distances - is the main rule of composition, meant to ensure the opening of the parcels to the public space of the street. It is an approach that aims to create the sense of community for the inhabitants and to add public quality to the street space. The street holds a double role: that of supporting the traffic of cars



Fig. 10. The relationship between house and plot, and between house and street (1991 plan)  
10\_a Gherghel parcelling  
10\_b Bonaparte Park



and people, and that of providing a gathering space. This double role is one of the main Modern characteristics (Fig. 10).

- The street profile: the streets are offering straight views to the carefully placed focal points. The initial street profile was 12 metres including sidewalks (16 metres for important streets). It was modified in time as cars became more demanding. The road was widened by taking one line of the sidewalks and this seriously affected the streetscape and the calm life of the neighbourhood. The initial street was not orientated to the needs of the cars. We have to keep in mind that the first automobile was seen on the streets of Bucharest only in 1900. (Ionescu 1969:92). Later, in 1907, as a response to the increasing traffic, the Municipality of Bucharest elaborated the first local regulations about car traffic on the streets. This stipulated that the maximum speed in the city and on the main roads should be 10km/hour, no more than the speed of the horses (Duțu 1969: 105).
- The aesthetics of the street and the streetscape: initially the street space was formed by the regular and peaceful rhythm of the buildings, interrupted by important elements – small public squares and buildings with special compositional rules – in carefully chosen locations (Fig. 11). This is one aspect that did not make it through time.



Fig. 11. Composition scheme in different intersections along streets (1991 plan)

- Volumetric relationships: contiguity in a group of buildings is guided by a soft and natural relationship; all the buildings in a group have the same importance in the street layout (Fig. 12).



Fig. 12. Altimetry of the residential buildings in Jianu area, according to the 1991 plan. (Note: Originally residential buildings which over time were assigned other functions, were also included)

Ground floor houses  
Two- to three floor houses  
Three- to five-floor apartment blocks



The building volumes are in relation to the lavish vegetation: the whole picture offers the image of a garden city, of houses in a park, closer to the human scale. Actually, at the Modern city level, the importance of vegetation was crucial. All the vegetation of the city should be properly distributed and maintained in a green network formed by big parks, little green squares and gardens, the street garden in front of every house as a line of 'green' on the street image. The desired image should be that of the garden city, picturesque and healthy (Cerkez 1934:22).

- The general urban composition of the area comprises a combination of different orientation axes that feels natural (Fig. 13). Each parcelling used different rules of composition, ingeniously combined with the existing features, and this led to a variety of interpretations. It is very interesting the way the parcelling process related to the new diagonal of the area, Paris Street. The street follows the diagonal line of a former property boundary; the importance of this street is mainly to enable the local street network to relate to Victoriei Square and Dorobanți Square. As the main composition axis, it is the most important inner street of the neighbourhood.



Fig.13. Urban pattern of Jianu area, according to the 1991 plan

The sense of history is not related to the social memory of this place: the Jianu area was not the place for memorable events. The historical value of this place consists in it being a clear and remarkable example of the history of urbanism and architecture, its faultless technical elements and its extraordinary success in creating a comfortable residential park that still functions by the initial laws and ambitions. This area is an excellent example for Modern behaviour in architecture and urban life.

The aspects that have survived over time are: a habitual residential character; the luxurious housing and other representative functions that imposed a high-level quality of life in the area; the urban structure and composition; and, in some cases, the quality of architecture.

Explicitly, the following should be preserved:

- the residential function;
- the overall idea of the house in a park: the main critical mass should always remain the vegetation;
- the street layout and the street composition: rhythm, height, proportions;
- the architecture;
- the correspondence with the neighbouring residential areas.

### Intervention principles

Conceptually, the aim of intervention in a Modernist area should be focused on protecting the authenticity of the functioning place, in all its aspects. In order to do that, it is necessary to seek and understand the balance between the elements preserved naturally,



which also contributed to the preservation of the way of life, and also the destructive elements. Intervention should be orientated to encourage a way of living that will not destroy any value of the area, but will transform it and allow a healthy way of living.

It is always a question of choosing between all the conceptual elements that hold together a certain period of time, as those elements can highlight the method of intervention. For instance, intervention in the Jianu Modernist neighbourhood can be approached in several ways. One approach is focused on freezing-in-time the urban regulations that gave rise to the current appearance of the area, which is an accurate image of the modern neighbourhood, and on preserving its natural life as a residential park. It is noted that this kind of approach excludes future development and contemporary needs. Or it may be suitable to try another and completely different method, and to allow and encourage the area to become an urban laboratory for modern attitudes in urbanism and architecture, based on those elements that are always subject to reinterpretation. This understanding of the place is in keeping with respect for a main characteristic of modernity: the relationship with the present time.

## Notes

The historical plans were provided by the Department of History & Theory of Architecture and Heritage Conservation, Ion Mincu University of Architecture and Urbanism.

The 1991 plan was provided by the Cadastral Department of the City Hall of Bucharest.

All the drawings were made by the author.

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## Preserve the transient

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The urban area which is the subject of the study is in the northern part of Bucharest. It is an area that used to be rural up to the end of the 19th century (cf. Jung Plan 1856) and became part of the city only after the urbanisation plan for the northern areas, when it was integrated in the 'new' road system of boulevards (cf. Plan 1895/1899), which linked the city to the countryside. The regular weave of the boulevards – Bulevardul Aviatorilor, Iancu de Hunedoara and Calea Dorobanților – defines the space where, starting from about 1895, the quarter was developed.

The size of the link boulevards is such that they appear to be like verges or borders of the area, with the same role that the historic walls or the banks of a river have in other contexts. The appearance of the buildings overlooking the bordering streets expresses the differing importance of the respective street axes: the dimensions, layout and characteristics are clearly different from those belonging to the area's internal buildings (Fig. 1).

The parcelling made in the 20th century strongly affected the whole quarter; it includes buildings erected for the most part during the first half of the 20th century. The quarter was essentially residential, apart from the presence of a suburban tram depot. The quarter today hosts also some public institutions, such as the Government of Romania, the headquarters of National Television and the I. L. Caragiale High School. Such settlements all have a specific peripheral location in the quarter and they have an unexpected





Fig. 1. The junction between Strada Mexic and Bulevardul Iancu de Hunedoara: the different scale of the buildings overlooking the boulevard can be noticed.

visual impact on approach from the wide boulevard in comparison to the internal one of the quarter, due to their out-of-scale buildings. In the heart of the area, the residential character of the majority of buildings has allowed them to preserve their function, or, at least, its replacement by public functions with the character of a representative headquarters: many of them are, as a matter of fact, the quarter's abodes recently turned into foreign embassies.

The intense parcelling-out of the end of the 19th century determined the construction of residential buildings in the southern part of the quarter, towards Victoriei Square. These take up the whole width of the lot; they overlook the street directly, and have architectural characteristics mainly linked to Beaux-Arts Eclecticism (Fig. 2).

The 20<sup>th</sup>-century parcellings, which included much wider lots in the remaining areas of the quarter, allowed for isolated residential settlements, surrounded by private areas mostly devoted to gardens.



Fig. 2. Strada Argentina: example of buildings belonging to the parcelling made at the end of the 19th century.

Within the urban structure, the aesthetic and social intentions are traceable, probably a result of the 'new' idea of greenery, with an hygienic and health function, which became popular around the beginning of the 20th century. Both intentions seem to be the root for the different parcelling phases of the quarter, thought of and realised as an organised sequence of private and public spaces, and a logical outcome of a formal intention. What we see today, beyond the image that we perceive from the boulevard, is a garden quarter, bordered from the west by the great Kiseleff (1831) urban park, the first one of a series of public gardens. These, between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, accompanied the city's development, characterised by a building tissue of villas in greenery and inhabited by the middle/upper classes. Buildings of value stand out, visibly to one another, with a complex of shapes, styles and languages, which have again and again Eclectic, Secessionist, Modernist accents and so forth.



Despite the fact that each building belongs to a specific expressive sphere, and as such has its own reading codes, they therefore form a coherent complex, or at least one that is perceived as such. The perception of this diffused homogeneity is due to different factors, among which it is worth remembering that the residential function, the realisation in a rather limited time (about 50 years), the spatial density and distribution, and last but not least, the way individual buildings are perceived.

### The value of fleetingness and permeability of spaces

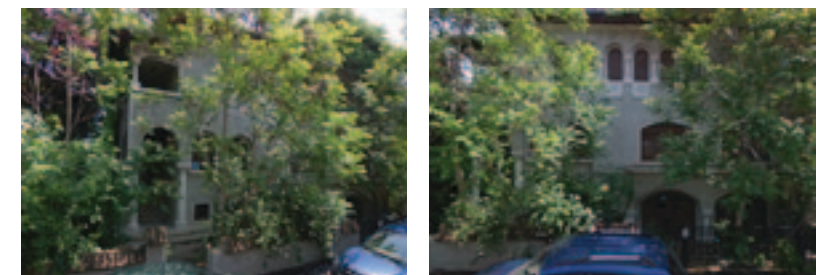
Within the artificial borders of the quarter, consisting of the Bulevardul Aviatorilor, Iancu de Hunedoara and Calea Dorobanților, the structure of the spaces is marked by parallel leafy streets, which often intersect perpendicularly with similar ones, and which sometimes converge radially in a square or garden. Despite the



Fig. 3. Square between Strada Atena and Strada Rabat.

presence of some small squares, which mark some nodal points of the paths, the public spaces do not entice you to stop and often they do not take this quality into account. Even when they have street furniture, they look more like roundabouts than pleasant meeting places (Fig. 3).

Such an urban layout expresses most of all a sense of movement and invites the user into a dynamic perception, which involves one's motion and the ongoing change of the surrounding sensory experience. The quarter, then, takes shape like an area of flows or canals, along which the observer walks, usually, occasionally or potentially, without any real strategic arrival points, where the activities – or better, a multitude of suburban poles – are concentrated. Along the road axes within the quarter, the commercial or service facilities (banks, cinemas, restaurants, shops, etc.) are rare – the sequence of similar housing types takes on the strength of a perceptive catalyst. The most direct and deep experience of the occasional or habitual user is therefore made by the activity of walking, going across the quarter, lingering along its various streets and enjoying the view of the private buildings (or, more often, just catching a glimpse). The leafy paths, mostly defined by broadleaves with large crowns, obstruct the overall view of all things surrounding the buildings, forming green barriers,



Figs. 4-5. Building on Strada Ermil Pangratti.



which mark and beat out the rhythm of the perception of the 'user-player' subject, and enhancing peripheral vision. The punctuating presence of high tree trunks also takes part in the sequential scanning of the spaces, inviting the subject to move in order to put together, like the pieces of a puzzle, the single shots of a building seen from different viewpoints and often forcing him to focus on the individual details (Figs. 4-5).

The trees therefore contribute to enhancing the space, concurring with the buildings to give a certain flamboyant effect to each path and to determine the repetition of the perceptive factors, which strike the visitor during the experience of 'walking along'. The public space is therefore not an empty space, a mere occasion of democratic use for the citizens, but it becomes a structured and structuring space, under the urban and social profile, and perhaps even the representation of a collective identity. The elements which regulate the structure of the quarter are the open interstitial public spaces, the paths which contrast with one another and take shape as an answer to the conditions of the buildings' internal spaces, just like the numerous private spaces which visually link to the paths. The abodes are in fact surrounded by a private space, often marked by the characteristics of the garden or courtyard, bordering with the public space in the area in front of the building, and on the sides with the private spaces belonging to other abodes. The quarter could be defined, then, as structured by implied 'enclosures', which determine a certain formal homogeneity. The character of contiguity and discontinuity, seems here to replace the 19<sup>th</sup>-century mark of continuity, which is still detectable on the Strada Architect Louis Blanc and Strada Argentina, the fruit of the Blanc parcelling at the end of the 19th century. In that case, the physical continuity of the buildings determines a real street front (Fig. 2) which is no longer detectable as an harmonious element in the other areas



Fig. 6. "Enclosures" in Strada Paris.

of the quarter, where the buildings, conceived as isolated objects, find themselves immersed, independently from the network of paths, within an overall space of a public nature (Figs. 6-7). Here, the space between the 'enclosures', takes up, time after time, the function of a visual channel or path – in any case still a 'place of perceptions'.

Even though the buildings, which are separated by the edge of the lot which fronts the street, stand back by a few metres and extend lengthways, sometimes sheltering a second green private space at the back, the impression you get walking around the quarter is of a great depth and relief. The buildings are accessible only by crossing the mediation space, which contributes, together with the public green spaces, to make the images grainy and to destructure the street frontages. The private gardens become compressed spaces, which determine an exclusive vision of the buildings they overlook,





Fig. 7. Public greenery and private greenery in Strada Dr. Grigore Mora.



Figs. 8-9. The garden-quarter.

opening out on porticoes and wide windows. You then constantly experience the difference between 'seeing' and 'catching a glimpse', meaning that you apply a different and deferred vision due to a space, even infinitesimal one, placed between the perceiver and the perceived.

The counterposition between these two green spaces, either public or private, and the solid structure of the buildings also leads the subject-user to considerations about temporality. The mutability of the greenery recalls the concept of the transitory, in the sense not so much of its ontological meaning, but of an aesthetic expression which communicates a condition of fleetingness, through specific expressive codes. Which aspect of our present allows picking up and modulating time, making its movement perceptible, better than nature? Then perhaps, the public and private greenery introduce with strength the space-time dimension, the feeling of the ephemeral in a place which, on the contrary, conveys values of substantiality, constructive solidity, balance, uniformity and individualism at the same time.

Public gardens, leafy boulevards, private gardens and courtyards have earned Bucharest the title of 'garden-city'. It has nothing to do with a proper citation of the social and economic model of the Garden Cities, elaborated at the end of the 19th century by Ebenezer Howard, but of an impression arising from the diffusion and distribution of greenery in the city. Some even claim that the public greenery, although very much present in the city's five parks, does not occupy a much wider area than that occupied by greenery in other European capitals. According to this thesis, the image of the 'garden-city' would be due mostly to the greenery in the private courtyards, which can be perceived from the street through a sort of visual osmosis between public and private spaces (Figs. 8-9).



The relationship, from a perceptive and physical viewpoint, between the building and its surrounding space is above all a necessary one and as such, is always being investigated. It is still one of the main topics of planning research. It is not only a matter of realising openings which allow for letting air and light through the space circumscribed by the building walls, but to adapt them to the constantly changing expression of the relationship between public and private space, because this is also a social matter. Such attempts have seen in the 20th century numerous transformations and the progressive vanishing of the opaque encasement, made more and more open by windows and smooth transitions between internal and external spaces.

In the quarter which is the subject of the study, the theme gains a further possibility: the garden/courtyard facing the road and marked by see-through fences. The access and distribution spaces called on to mediate between the smooth public space and the internal private spaces take on a specific importance, becoming places of possible experimentation and offering interesting options, which will become important examples during the second half of the 20th century. The corners of the buildings are emptied, in order to destroy the massiveness of the volume, the staircase blocks begin to have a glass surface, which lets you catch a glimpse of the internal floor sequence. All these themes will be taken up again by the Modern Movement after World War II.

Every border element becomes interesting and seems to look for effects through which we could define 'transparency', 'porosity' and 'permeability'. This characterises not only the garden fences and the private gardens and courtyards, but also the bow-windows, porticoes, loggias, verandas, balconies, external stairs and, in general, all of those elements called upon to interpret the internal/external relationship (Figs. 10-11). Every architecture, in



Fig. 10. Bow-window and loggia in Aleea Alexandru.



Fig. 11. Portico and veranda in Strada Atena.



the expressive variety that makes the area stand out, describes the internal/external relationship using some recurring elements in a different way.

There are mediation elements, whose transparency is never total. The glass surfaces have not yet become extensive, and fencings and parapets are made of curved iron, to form simple geometric designs, or complex phytomorphic weavings. The formal research that is the basis of the urban planning choices determines the overlap of several images which do not perceptually eliminate, but allow a simultaneous perception of the various existing spatial layers. In this sense, it is not correct to talk about 'transparency', as it is a type of transparency obtained in absence of a really see-through material: it is a transparency which we could define as non-literal but which reaches its aim of visual permeability.

The same effect seems to be drawn upon in the private spaces inside the buildings. The feelings swing between opacity and transparency – light capable of dematerialising the walls, emphasising the effect of interior-exterior union (Figs. 12-13).



Figs. 12-13. Transparencies interior/exterior in Strada Emile Zola.



Fig. 14. Nature becomes technology in Strada Argentina.



Fig. 15. Public space and private space in Strada Venezuela.

It is also interesting to observe how the aspects underlined up to this point have been introduced and interpreted also by some more recent architecture, which expresses time after time the importance of the green diaphragm or the permeation of public and private spaces.

Such is the case of the building located in Strada Argentina which, even though it aligns its frontage with the path, recalls the concept of the natural screen through the use of the green colour of the external surface, the employment of translucent material and the unexpected inclusion of a technological 'tree', which stretches out its sprawling branches over the whole front (Fig. 14). Other new buildings explore the concept of the permeation of spaces and the osmosis between the public and private sphere to the point of eliminating the fencing to the site. The boundary is established only by a different height of walking surface and the re-greening of the surface within the site (Fig. 15).



Some doubts remain: have these new buildings replaced pre-existing old houses, to the disadvantage of preservation? Have they blocked filter spaces, modifying the perception of the subject-user? Or have they resewn the enlarged meshes of the parcelling net of the quarter?

### Incoherence and frailty

The quarter under examination, perhaps like other quarters of the city that result from the expansion of the 20th century, has some specific formal characters which relate to the buildings as a whole and not only to the individual constructions, as each one of them represents an interesting building expression. The value of the whole, rather than that of the individual element, is tangibly perceptible, just as is the frailty of the distinctive characters of that same quarter, from a preservation point of view. Every 'little' modification of the single element seems to have a noticeable impact on the whole.

I have chosen to focus my attention on three themes previously mentioned: the green structure, the mediation and filter spaces between public and private, and the different solutions adopted to solve the interior/exterior relationship. The area's themes and problems to be addressed are wider, however I believe that those identified not only have to be acknowledged as distinctive and peculiar characters of the quarter, but they are also more fragile characters, and as such they need a targeted programme of care.

The green structure, a substantial part of this urban whole and its quality understood in a broad sense, must be preserved for the important role it plays, while paying attention to the preservation of its role of diaphragm as previously underlined. It is not a case of preserving the greenery, public or private, exclusively for ecological



Fig. 16. The public greenery that hides: intersection between Strada Dr. Grigore Mora and Strada Eng. George Balș.



Fig. 17. Nature has the upper hand on a building in Strada Sofia.

or aesthetic reasons. Above all, its impact has to be preserved, not allowing the latter to dominate the urban structure and/or the individual buildings, as seems to be happening in some limited areas of the quarter (Figs. 16-17).

The obstruction, distortion and denial of the mediating and filtering areas between public and private space do not affect just the single building, but also the possibility of perception of the path and of the entire quarter. The space included between the path and the building is loaded with meanings and leads to perception possibilities otherwise unachievable. The brief inspection carried out in the quarter has allowed observation that a progressive alteration by the owners of such private places is occurring. Some



Fig. 18. Restaurant in Strada Rabat.



Fig. 19. Coffee bar in Strada Atena.



shops, coffee bars and restaurants at present established here have obstructed such mediation and filtering areas, therefore obstructing the view of the building and altering its volumes (Figs. 18-19). The partial or total closure of courtyards/gardens is also done in favour of creating car sheds and garages, which more or less deeply change the relationship between the building and the built or un-built context (Figs. 20-21).



Fig. 20. Car sheds in Strada Brazilia.



Fig. 21. Garage in Strada Bruxelles.

The need to defend the private sphere has also led some owners to make the fencing opaque, although these were originally planned to be 'see-through', according to the intentions highlighted earlier. For the most part this is a case of reversible interventions, carried out by adding opaque elements to the fences. However, such interventions are heavily invasive, as they cause the loss of the permeability and osmosis feeling between the existing spaces upon which the quarter is based, as we have seen. Furthermore, when the fencing elements evoke the decoration motifs of the fronts of the building and/or on its windows and doors (as often happens), this prevents one from clearly understanding the figurative key of the architectural complex. Some owners have just covered the existing fencing parts, while others have altered the dimensions, by increasing them, in order to enjoy a better protection (Figs. 22-23); others have replaced the fencing altogether with new opaque

elements, which are completely out of context with the building (Figs. 24); the fencings of the new buildings also tend to be opaque (Fig. 25).



Figs. 22-23. Opacification of fencings in Strada Rabat and Strada Bruxelles.



Fig. 24. Modified fencing in Strada Sofia.



Fig. 25. Fencing of a new building Strada Venezuela.

The obstruction of spatial progression and the loss of visual permeability are also demonstrated by the numerous examples of concealment of balconies and loggias, which as a whole now risk becoming increasingly more like shapeless superstructures or distasteful additions (Figs. 26-27).



Fig. 26. Overbuilt structures on balconies in Strada Washington.



Fig. 27. Overbuilt structures on balconies in Strada Roma.



The analysis of what has been observed in the quarter identifies two tendencies simultaneously present in its current state. First, the private owners are progressively tarnishing the particular characteristics of the quarter, undermining its preservation, both with the realisation of independent and uncoordinated (or unchecked) small interventions, and the realisation of new interventions, which replace, clog or occupy spaces that used to be free.

Second, in the new buildings it seems that the designers identified as a main reference the transparency sensory experience, researched in its various aspects. As a matter of fact, in contrast to the preexisting buildings, the feeling of spacial permeability and osmosis is essentially pursued with the utilisation of glass (Figs. 28-29), which we generally find used in increasingly greater quantities from the middle of the 20th century onwards. The technological evolution has allowed the sizes of the glass surfaces to be increased, to the degree that they coincide with the whole front surface and interior/exterior end up blending up in a single 'housing' space.



Figs. 28-29. Glass façades at new buildings in Strada Rabat. And Aleea Modrogan.

On the other hand, the concept of transparency immediately brings to mind the glass architecture, whose use is expanding in the quarter not only as a new façade skin, but also as a protection and a mean of enclosure of loggias and porticoes, including parapets of balconies (Figs. 30-31).



Fig. 30. Verandahs in a new building on Strada Muzeul Zambaccian.



Fig.31. Transparent parapets and curtain walls in glass, at a building on Strada Washington.

The glass allows natural light to filter through the rooms of homes and offices located inside the restructured buildings, safeguarding at the same time the occupants' privacy. However, it may not interpret correctly the essence of the architecture. We must not forget the reflecting quality of glass, which often makes it less transparent than what you would expect. Marcel Duchamp too, wanting to define his work *Le Grand Verre* (1915-1923), used the term *miroirique* - de *miroir* (mirror) - extolling then the reflecting effect rather than the transparent one. The glass surfaces increase the sensory perception of the urban space, which already has in the quarter its richness and balance. Not only because the surfaces can also be and are treated – etched, engraved, screen-printed, tempered, curved, coloured – but most of all because they gain mutable reflections, which make them even less transparent.

Wooden diaphragms allowing the perceptive osmosis between public space and private space seem to be closer to the sensibility of the form of the quarter; they have been chosen for another new intervention, even if on the ground floor this is completely obstructed by a high brick wall and a thick green bush (Fig. 32).

It appears necessary then that the guiding principle for care extends from the single building (or built frontage) to the paths, filter areas,





Fig. 32. Wooden diaphragms at a new building on Strada Praga.



Fig. 33. 'Limited' intervention to the fencing of a lot in Strada Washington.

courtyards and open gardens, to all the elements which interpret the relationships of exterior to interior and public to private, that are menaced by continuous and frequent interventions (Fig. 33).

With regard to the themes tackled here, which are just some of those detectable in the area examined, the attention could be focused on one hand on the revision of the system of maintenance/management of the public greenery, and on the other hand on the specification of native species, with such characteristics (shape, spread, height) that do not totally obstruct the view of the buildings. A greenery management urban plan should also include some rules for the owners who intervene in private areas with a public value.

The concern for the filter areas and paths of the neighbourhood should stop the opacification of the fencings, and especially the progressive obstruction of the areas by private individuals making lock-up garages for car parking. If the need to have more parking spaces for residents was recognised, some limited areas could be used, which are as yet unbuilt.

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E p i l o g u e  
Conservation/  
Regeneration:  
of what and for  
what?







## CONSERVATION/REGENERATION: of what and for what?

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### **The neighbourhood to be 'regenerated'**

The district of Bucharest that we worked on appears to the visitor as a unique example of the 'Garden City'.

From looking at the maps of the city and merging the results of this inspection with the reading of its history, one realises that the district is a part of a long series of 'interrupted plans' that have influenced the recent history of the city. Towards the city centre are evident intersecting trajectories of plans and programmes for the transformation of Bucharest into a large eclectic capital of the *Mittel-Europ* (late nineteenth and early twentieth century), and those of the extraordinary period of modernisation dating back to the third decade of the twentieth century. Equally evident and clear are the real and permanent visions of the city planned by the new Communist order, partly superseded or distorted by the monstrosities and the destruction imposed by Ceausescu's megalomania. And later on, everything is crossed, interrupted and modified, almost without interruption, from what was achieved in the period following the fall of the dictator. Also heavy are the effects of an exasperated 'liberalism' of which the construction activity, with widespread replacements of old buildings (of recognised architectural and historical significance), with forced insertions of new constructions in existing tissues or in their free spaces, where



the progressive increase in volumes and of heights seems one of the clearest expressions.

In the city of Bucharest, the area we have worked on, which emerged from these complex and painful events, is a piece of a unitary fabric, although it is made of distinguishable 'pieces' that can be discerned through the network of the roads, the shapes and the sizes of the lots, in the relationship between buildings, the associated green areas and the relationship with the street. In essence, it is a 'total' rather than a 'whole', according to the definitions of units expressed at the time by Cesare Brandi (1973) that not coincidentally have been mentioned several times in the discussions that took place during the workshop.

In this sense and for its organisational and social features, rather than exclusively architectural, the neighbourhood seems to propose itself as a metaphor for other places or, for some respects, of other 'non-places', according to the famous and overused term coined by Marc Augé (2009).

### **Identity, roots, memory – past and future**

Looking at those maps and visiting those places, meeting the people who live there or frequent them, inevitably raises the issue of the so-called 'identity of places'. Walking through the neighbourhood, one is submerged in a space separate from the rest of the city and from its life which flows along the main external boulevards and which to the west is arrogantly hidden, by the almost continuous façades of the most recent tall buildings that have radically changed its margins and its relations with the outside world.

'Identity' as meaning 'to be yourself and remain such', however, belongs to people rather than to places, although places are an essential part of our sense of identity, as individuals and as a group.

If you think, then – as is too often the case with contradictory outcomes, and dangerous – of an identity that is born as a simple product of 'tradition' or of history, the district of Bucharest (as a metaphor for other places, actually) raises serious questions and poses problems that are not easy to solve (Bettini, 2011; Bauman, 2012).

Here, in fact, the tradition seems to not exist or at least is not linked to a long history but is at best the result of a recent chronicle, marked by implants and grafts imposed from the outside, in a place that we're trying to understand and for which we attempt to imagine a different future, a new, more vital or 'regenerated' state. The neighbourhood seems to be the result of a design of the groundplan and of a definition of the spaces and places irreducibly different from those typical of a past that, in this site, was just empty *campagne* and not urbanised.

What happens, then, to the meaning and the concept of their identity? Our neighbourhood seems, in fact, a synopsis or collection and provision on the ground of buildings and artefacts respecting some grids and a functionality totally unknown to this city at the time of its foundation. It presents itself like an extraordinary and multifaceted ensemble of diverse buildings and artefacts characterised by different styles, mainly 'imported' or belonging to a 'tradition' locally invented a short time beforehand in order to create a non-existent national 'identity'.

The buildings, set side by side, whose apparent unity is almost entirely derived from the regularity of the inner streets and by the pauses imposed by the area's very diffused related greenery, are in fact very different, marked by architectural types, constructive methods and accommodating lifestyles belonging to the old or the totally innovative. For this, it is permissible to ask what could the 'identity' of such a district be, or, even more, what is or may



be the identity of the social group and of the individuals who live there today or of those who tomorrow will dwell in it? The original inhabitants had been 'imported' and then expelled to make room for the representatives of the Communist regime. Its leaders were in turn replaced by new 'citizens' in the post-revolutionary period. If an identity of the place exists, then it will be perhaps an identity suffered but certainly not simply 'inherited' and, therefore, very labile and uncertain.

More than trying to find or describe, even less to invent or to artificially build an identity for this neighbourhood, we should trigger processes that can create a new 'identification' of citizens with places, so that they can feel they own them and really take care of them.

The kind of care necessary for supporting life in the neighbourhood, its homes and its spaces, will depend on the strength of a programme to be put in place, rather than on the potential tensions of preserving a heritage inherited from fathers (unknown or unacknowledged) and to which one must reconnect to ensure the permanence and the transmission to the future of an asset that, for now, does not seem to be perceived as belonging to the inhabitants and citizens of Bucharest or Romania, and not only those in the neighbourhood.

### **From 'generating' to 're-generating': metaphors and intentions**

The power of the metaphors lies in the fact that we cannot do without them, in any field or expression of thought and of action, as Cicero has already well explained (Bettini, 2011). The capacity to generate is recognised as belonging to the natural world, governed by laws and mechanisms still largely unknown to biology and the life sciences.

Re-generation, accordingly, indicates the ability that the organisms have, in various ways, to come back to a new life or to generate new independent life, mainly through the covert laws of procreation and of the perpetuation of the species. In all of this, conservation interferes, or it emerges, in many ways and for different reasons.

Procreation in its various forms, and the same sense, regeneration, or the creation of new generations, serve primarily the 'conservation' of the species.

On the other hand, only that which already exists can be regenerated, which in turn has been generated or created in the past.

Conservation is thus implicit in the re-generating or, at least, a quantum of unavoidable conservation is necessarily included.

The problem, however, is somewhat different in the case addressed by the workshop in Bucharest, primarily because we are not talking about living organisms capable of generating, self-generating or re-generating.

Also we cannot ignore the fact that it is possible to re-create, through artificial processes, used batteries that are produced artificially, or natural fabrics devastated by fire, thanks to still artificial processes invented and used by the physician-surgeon. Everything in any case happens still using some qualities and some natural processes that, with great effort, science investigates and for which the techniques, in their various forms, seek to provide appropriate survey instruments and powerful tools for care and intervention.

In our case, the weight of the organic metaphor is very strong since it transfers to the objects (the neighbourhood), or to the individuals



that govern their future (technicians, politicians and administrators of the city), some qualities and needs that are of a vital and inevitable fundamental nature and that are foreign to them. They respond, in fact, to higher but still partly unknown laws which appear to act in the natural world but that do not belong to objects (because inanimate) nor to the subjects that are responsible for managing them (because they are certainly builders but not generators).

The weight of the metaphor is even more noticeable if one remembers that we are still discussing questionable choices of mankind, intended for its own benefit and certainly not inevitable natural mechanisms from which no individual could escape.

### **The contribution and the limits of conservation**

The most appropriate and compelling question (accepting the metaphor for its evocative or pro-active power and for its pervasive presence in the debate on the future of the city) should address the role that the disciplines of conservation can or should play in the processes and projects of urban regeneration. Which kind of conservation is involved then? Of what? Only of the constructed and of layered or stratified matter of the buildings and of the artefacts from the neighbourhood? Or even of their shapes and organisation? Or, rather, of the possibility of a not oblivious or lost life within them?

In nature, a body, in order to re-generate itself or to generate a new one, starts from that which already exists and that belongs to it, but always and inevitably transforms that part, because only from the death of the individual can the life of the species be born and last.

A city, however, is something very different from an animated body and certainly does not act by itself on itself. People do so: they create, destroy, maintain, repair, alter or transform, but never following mechanisms imposed by eternal or overly ordered laws, and always by cultural choice, by necessity or even by accident.

This really complicates the use of the metaphor with which we began, and the scale of the problem makes the issue even more problematic.

A part of the city, although well identified but not unitary or coeval because it is the result of different stratifications (in time, space and matter), is not a living organism, although many have proposed a similar analogy, using powerful rhetorical arguments. It is not simply made of built matter, but it cannot even exist without it, unless you reduce it to a pure type, to a simple schema or to an abstract model (or to a blending of these elements). The relationship between form, space, matter, and what as 'immaterial' marks the lives that inhabit that part of the city (people, lives, perceptions, actions, aspirations), is even more complex at the urban scale than at the level of the single building. Even if we well know that the set of individual buildings is an essential part of its being, here and now, as a result of long and complex already consumed historical and human processes.

While instrumentally accepting the metaphor of the organism, we should at least ask ourselves what among those elements should (or could) be 're-generated' or rather, on which is it possible to act in order to bring new life into that piece of the city.

On the website of a medium-size Italian city, famous for its urban policies, it is stated that:



*The objective of the Program of Urban Regeneration is twofold: 1) the extension of the city effect, in terms of urban quality; 2) the extension of community effect in terms of quality of the human relationships. Through the Urban Regeneration Programs the Administration, on the one hand, identifies the strategies and on the other creates the conditions for pursuing them. The aim is to consolidate and increase the shared capital and resources to coagulate the physical transformation of a system of public and private places that are regenerated to a new life: the historic city, the neighbourhoods, the villas and the natural landscape. The Urban Regeneration Programs are one of the tools that make concrete the strategic vision of the "city of the persons", which must be perceived in every part of the city: a conscious community, where the identity takes roots in a history, is conjugated in the present and in the future and thus becomes diffusive<sup>1</sup>.*

The concept of 're-generation' applied to the city is therefore usually linked to the life that takes place within it and, above all, is aimed to improve its quality for the benefit of the individuals and of the social groups who live in it or that attend it for most diverse reasons.

The actions that can be triggered and implemented in order to translate the concept into real management practices for cities are, however, partly linked to the material they are made of. In the broadest sense of the term, that includes: the parcelling of the land; types of settlements (with an examination of the relationship between buildings and the ground, between open and closed spaces, both public and private) and those of the buildings; structural and constructive features of the buildings and of the artefacts that define the urban environment, their appearance and their perception. For this reason, the re-generation of cities

or specific urban areas involves also, although not exclusively, intervention on its architectures and on its spaces, built or free.

Thus many traditional themes of the disciplines of restoration and conservation emerge again, but a decided change of pace and perspective is also necessary. Conservation must in fact overcome the direct or exclusive reference to the single building and to the status it attained during the time spent becoming what it now is – the expression, perhaps, of a 'heritage' to be safeguarded and to be transmitted to the future. For this we have to decide, on the other hand, if what already exists (or how much of it) must be conserved, maintained and how or how much of it can be changed, so that life can be reborn in a neighbourhood neither unmindful nor prisoner of a past that is no longer and never will exist again.

### **Preservation, modification and transformation**

To preserve, inevitably we modify and transform – a relationship explored in the second workshop in Ireland (Kealy and Musso, 2011). On the other hand you can change or transform, (also in the hopes of revitalising), only that which already exists, at least in part. For this, the crucial problem is once again represented by the balance and the real management of these seemingly opposing tensions and their outcomes in the life of the city, of the land and landscapes.

Rather than ask what urban re-generation is, considering the inescapable presence of this term between the words (ideas) and the actions (aspirations) of the contemporary cities, we should ask ourselves, what conservation can and must offer in terms of its implementation. We must not lose this chance to affirm the ideas from which we started and the broader objectives we would like to reach for the benefit of the community of the present and the future. To succeed in this, we should perhaps give up all forms of



claim for a totalising coverage of the universe under discussion – a universe generated by our theoretical assumptions or intentions, however noble they appear.

This stance is dictated by the leap in scale that the transition to the urban 'contemporary' requires from our traditional, strict but sometimes self-referential way of looking at constructed reality, adopted in order to pursue in any case the protection and conservation of what we take care of, and which might lead to crashing against much more powerful transformative trends of the contemporary city.

Usually we oppose these forces with a very weak resistance, partly because our orientation is often calibrated towards the single artefact – an artefact that is sometimes analysed even in the most secret folds of its history or of its stratified material consistency in a way that, to others, seems not very interesting or valuable.

Nonetheless we must not forget our commitment because we know that all that is generally perceived as real and useful is often not so from a longer-term perspective, or on the deep cultural level.

This conviction, on the other hand, often moves our battles. To give a prospect of success to those issues that are really fundamental, we also should put forward equally legitimate alternative visions of the future of our cities.

If we do not this, we may condemn ourselves to a more and more residual role, one of pure and unwelcome testimony and, ultimately, to the defeat of the outcomes that we would instead like to propose and defend.

In front of the neighbourhood in Bucharest, thinking about the many discussions that have driven our dialogue during the workshop, we

should then act to make possible a really 'governed' change that conserves and remembers, that does not destroy or forget in vain and that in the meantime does not deny change as a condition of life.

For the philosopher Emanuele Severino, an abandonment that destroys because it does not remember is, sometimes, confronted with equally unproductive results by a conservation that does not know to abandon, that is, to detach oneself from the past and not to be its prisoner and superficial sycophant (Severino, 2003).

### Perspectives

The atmosphere and the silence, almost a sense of emptiness that sometimes strikes those who walk along its internal streets, the lights and the shadows, as well as the plaster and the stone, the timbers and the metals, the shapes of the windows or of the roofs; these are an essential part of this district of Bucharest as of any other.

Nevertheless, they are not all elements of a regenerative impetus with regard to its future. Far from it. If you want to discuss regeneration, it will for example come to pass by modifying the exclusive residential nature of the neighbourhood. The silences, pleasing to those who live there, can be disturbing for its public and community existence. The sense of emptiness and disorientation that captures whoever accidentally gets inside its borders, in the absence of reference points not only of architectural but also of social nature, may have to be filled by new forms and opportunities of aggregation.

The broken, denied or foreclosed relationship of the area (characterised by its inner land plotting) with the rest of the city and



its life must be reconstituted, reusing and reshaping, for example, the large and disregarded area of the bus depot to relate to the centre of the city, as if it were a new 'gate' to the district, as many have already suggested.

Of course, it is necessary that this intention or provision does not result in new speculative adventures and in new 'insertions' of a less than surgical nature in the existing building and urban tissue. Without new architecture, however, with the connected functions and occasions of collective life, everything seems very difficult.

In all this conservation can play an essential role, if it does not merely claim the protection or maintenance of the status quo. On the other hand, we saw several abandoned houses, still in good condition thanks to their good technological quality. Others were simply destroyed and replaced, and, of course, we would like to avoid future examples of this sort.

Other buildings, however, have been the subject of intensive 'restoration', or of recovery and rehabilitation interventions. The latter, in some respects, face no less a risk of total distortion, without any the real compensatory benefits for the quality of life in the neighbourhood, that is, for its effective regeneration. The outward forms, the interplay of volumes, the relationship between open and closed spaces and even some elements of the architectural vocabularies or of the styles that have marked their construction, apparently remain and are preserved. In essence, however, much has been changed: the plasters were sometimes removed and simply replaced or covered, for misguided energy-related reasons, with invasive coatings on which, at most, the old decorations have been copied and reproduced, maybe a little simplified.

The old wooden frames were sacrificed for similar reasons and sometimes replaced by approximate copies of industrial production, dispersing a patrimony that was part of the world from where the

buildings originated, that extended beyond the merely material.

In these cases, the old adage that a 'comforting mimesis' can make up for the sense of loss seems heavily and exclusively to benefit potential new residents looking for their own private and exclusive identification with the place.

It is difficult to argue however, that the sum of interventions of this kind, all aimed at a private dimension, in physical terms (the lot, the house, the garden – secure, isolated, hidden) and in cultural and social terms (me and my place of life – protected and relaxed), can drive a true regeneration of the neighbourhood, returned to the city and to its inhabitants.

On the other hand, each process of regeneration is usually very long and complex, requiring time and energy, relevant and pertinent but also dynamic knowledge, participation and sharing.

As we discovered, much work has been done to understand the district, its urban genesis and the story of its brief existence.

Now, however, new forms of investigation should perhaps be added to the urban studies already carried out, and to those devoted to analysing the buildings, to their survey and the 'classification' that appears mainly governed by criteria of chronology and style (sometimes of problematic translation with regard to wider horizons).

This is necessary not only to increase the knowledge of what exists in the quarter, as a depository of history.

What is needed, rather, is now a new ability to continuously observe and interrogate that world and its even minute changes, unplanned or planned, but surely linked to the life that takes place in the neighbourhood anyway.



Perhaps, such a form of continuous or ongoing analysis and monitoring of the evolving reality of the places should even involve the inhabitants and the visitors to the neighbourhood as true producers of knowledge, thus involving them, day after day, in the decision-making processes that will concern the future of those places. This would give support to their process of identification with the places and with the values that we 'specialists' think to see in the existing status of the neighbourhood.

Our drive towards conservation should certainly measure itself with the things that we think are worthy of forwarding to the future, but in order to ensure that this really happens, it should perhaps deal also with the life that already takes place in them and around them.

Only then, perhaps, those who are involved in conservation at this level will have a real chance to partly affect the life that we would like to start again in the future within this quarter, as in many others, avoiding unbearable speculation but also escaping any consolatory, unproductive and socially exclusive fictions.

### Note

1. The reference is to the official website of the Municipality of Reggio Emilia and in particular to its section devoted to the Programmes of Urban Regeneration: <http://www.municipio.re.it/retecivica/urp/pes.nsf/web/Rgnrznrbn1?opendocument>

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