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CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

CONTENT

Marilena Doina CIOCĂNEA, <i>Normality in the cultural landscape of the "Constanța peninsula" area.....</i>	5
Victor-Cristian OBANCEA, <i>Three buildings, a common history – Continental hotel, Constanța.....</i>	33
Gabriela PETRESCU, <i>The work of the Socolescu architects 1840-1940.....</i>	43
Andra Jacob LARIONESCU, <i>The house as support of social and family relation. A case study in the village of Marginea, Suceava county.....</i>	59
Doina Marilena CIOCĂNEA, Gabriela PETRESCU, <i>Cultural landscape: Murcia–Spain.....</i>	69
Dan Ștefan Vladimir GEORGESCU, <i>The meaning of being "at home" in naval mobile constructions.....</i>	91
Ileana KISILEWICZ, Dan KISILEWICZ, Dobrin DATCU, <i>Creativity – conservation.....</i>	99
Raluca DIACONESCU, <i>Cultural space versus archaeological space</i>	105
Raluca Mihaela MARINESCU, <i>Urban pedestrian spaces in traditional textures. The reconsideration of the old pedestrian spaces in the historical centres of Brașov and Sibiu.....</i>	111
Raluca DIACONESCU, <i>Manifesto of the urban musealization.....</i>	117

NORMALITY IN THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF THE "CONSTANȚA PENINSULA" AREA

Lecturer PhD. Arch. Marilena Doina CIOCĂNEA*

Abstract

Unlike people who say that you cannot know a place unless you are born and raised there, I would say that it is love that matters here. The Constanța Peninsula, the center of the city of Tomis, a place of birth and of a later becoming of what it is today the municipality of Constanța, the second largest after Bucharest, has witnessed a singular cultural evolution in that region. Even though it seems now deserted and lacking the glamour of the old times, the area is hiding priceless treasures. The cultural landscape, still present, unveils the creative spirit of its inhabitants.

Keywords: *urban potential, cultural landscape, buildings monument, cultural route, multiculturality*

MEMORIES FROM THE SEASIDE

As a child in the early 70's, I remember being aware of the magic of the Constanța Peninsula; back then, I could not foresee the changes of the 90's. Even though I was there in the summer time only, coming from a city like Bucharest, the vivacity of that place seemed to make everything look special: while there, you felt free, joyful and happy. The crowd, strolling up and down the Tomis Boulevard (former Carol) during the hot summer afternoons, after the long scorching hours spent on Modern, 3 Papuci or Tataia beaches, was looking for a cool place to drink something cold, eat an icecream or watch a movie in the shade. The people were dressed smart, they had that countryside charm where everyone was always greeting you, in spite of the fact that there were many 'seasonal' tourists here.



Image 1. Tomis Boulevard, 1950



Image 2. Tomis Boulevard, 2014

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Image 3. Photo of the pastry shop in the 60's



Image 4. The Pizzico Restaurant 2014

Down the Tomis Boulevard, there used to be sweetshops with Turkish pastries, such as sarailie or baklava, along with the famous pastry's shop in the Ovidiu Plaza (today Pizzico Restaurant), where you could eat a slice of cheese pie or the popular pretzels with braga (a sweet-sour cold and cheap drink, TN).

Ovidiu Plaza was filled with people eager to breathe in the seaside air and feel the breeze. Once we reached that place, we could go along two streets that were bifurcating starting from the plaza. The one going up was reaching to Arhiepiscopiei street, passing by the Carol I royal mosque, with the minaret that was a sight in itself, Casa cu lei, the Roman-catholic church or the Orthodox Cathedral, up to the quay next to the "Vraja Mării" restaurant. The other option was to take the "Revoluția din 22 decembrie" street, going to "Amiralitate" and to the statue of Eminescu. The panorama was breathtaking, as it is today, too. You could see the sea in the distance and the Casino was proudly rising from it. Its building started in 1880 but its legend is another mystery. The current form, designed by architect Daniel Renard, began taking shape in 1907 and was finished in 1910. The Casino was hosting parties, high-end restaurants, exquisite rooms, roulette games etc.

The sea front was another place to invite people for the evening walks; it started from the Constanța harbor, "Poarta 1" and ended in front of the "Amiralitate" building.

The journey was pleasant – the crowd was on one side and the sea on the other. There was the green steep shore, with flight of stairs here and there, with statues of marine inspiration.

At the end of the street of the "Vraja Mării" restaurant there was a garden restaurant, where they were serving frog fish with crushed garlic, followed by sardines. We would stop here – the older ones would drink a beer and the children a glass of brifcor (a yellow soda drink) and we kept walking to the Aquarium opposite the Casino building.

The Aquarium seemed huge and with a lot of fish. At the other end of the sea front, there was Eminescu's statue, the meditation site and the Genovese lighthouse. Here was the terminus point of our walk and we had to go back to where we started it.



Image 5. "Vraja Mării" in the 60's



Image 6. "Vraja Mării" in 2014



Image 7. Eminescu's bust realised in 1930 (sculptor Oscar Han), on a 3-meter height pedestal. 2014



Image 8. The Acvarium in Constanța. 2014

On our way back, we would go up the stairs to the Elisabeta Boulevard, where we were welcomed by a perfect string of building facing the sea, of a valuable architecture, designed by famous architects, which are today classified as monuments. And thus day after day, the image of this landscape was being engraved in my child memory.

INFLUENCE – from memories to reality

The term of natural landscape was coined during the 2000 European Landscape Convention in Florence. The Act 451/2002 was later adopted in Romania, regarding the ratification of the Convention in Florence about the landscape. During the years, the natural landscape has evolved into new forms by its anthropization. Thus, the concepts of cultural landscape transforming the natural landscape by human action have emerged. The cultural landscape combines a large number of terms to define it, such as urbanism, architecture, geography, history, art, tourism, fiction, where the inhabitants of the area are bringing their contribution.

The memory of place lasts in time only by the valorification of this cultural landscape, thus managing to give it a specific identity. To this purpose, the Summer School of the Faculty of Architecture within SHU Bucharest has aimed to study and focus on a few aspects of the cultural landscape present in the Constanța Peninsula.

The architecture workshop at the SHU Summer School, on the topic of *The valorification of the cultural patrimony in the Constanța Peninsula* took place in August 2014 in Constanța. A group of fourth year students of the SHU Faculty of Architecture - Robert Valentin Dan, Cristian Dună, Alina Moraru, George Buchete, Alexandra Mihai etc., along with several enthusiastic teachers – Arch Assoc Prof PhD Doina Teodorescu (the initiator of this action), Arch Assoc Prof PhD Ana Maria Hariton, Arch Lect PhD Sidonia Teodorescu, Arch Lect PhD Doina Marilena Ciocănea, Arch Assist Lect Ion Teodorescu and others – apologies to the others as I do not remember their name – tried to sound the alarm and bring to the attention of the local authorities, the locals and, last but not least, the tourists about the great cultural landscape potential in the Constanța Peninsula.

The study started with a detailed examination of the Peninsula, of the present buildings, the landscape, ambience; photos were taken, mapping was drafted for several important buildings, the museums in the area were visited, documents were compiled and discussions with specialists took place so that the team could draw conclusions, showcased in an outdoor exhibition in the Ovidiu Plaza. Later on, the area was approached as a case study for the urbanism project of the 4th year, started in the fall of 2014.

The present situation, the location

The peninsular area of Constanța, its historic centre, lives in an amazing landscape, with coastal regions and beaches along the seashore (a continental sea that communicates between east and



Image 9. The layout plan in the area

area is in the south-eastern side of Constanța city, surrounded by the Black Sea and closed in the northern side by the straight line of Ferdinand Boulevard. The peninsula area can be such demarcated: north – Ferdinand Boulevard, south – Black Sea, Casino Quay, east – Black Sea, Modern Beach, west – Black Sea, “Poarta 1 Port”. That area has circa 90 sqha and a population of 8,000 people.

THE URBANISTIC POTENTIAL OF THE PENINSULA

The urbanistic potential of the peninsula resides in elements of topography, landscape, history, archaeology, circulation, functions, height, etc, as below illustrated.

History and archaeology in the cultural landscape of Constanța Peninsula

This place has deep roots in history. The multiculturalism of the Peninsula has been an example of living in that region. For many centuries, here were born, bred, lived, created, went to school, worked, had fun many Romanians, Greeks, Turks, Tatars, Jews, Macedonians, Roma, Russians, Hungarians, Armenians, Germans, Bulgarians, Ukrainians and they had left traces on their religious mixture behind, namely the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, the Roman-catholic Church, the Greek-Catholic

Church, the Armenian Church, Muslim, Mosaic, etc, in a perfect harmony. The cultural landscape has a unique variety, where the special aesthetics manages to put so different religious

west via a harbor), outstanding architectural value buildings, along with ordinary ones. Time flies relentlessly and the indifference of the authorities is witnessing the gradual destruction of whatever is valuable here.

The Municipality of Constanța is known as the Greek citadel of Tomis at Pontus Euxin, with a documentary attestation of circa 2273 years. Traces of human living come back from the paleolithic times. Constanța is the fourth biggest port in Europe. This city

This is where the 4th Pan-European transport corridor passes, from Berlin to Nurnberg–Prague–Budapest–Bucharest –Constanța–Salonic to Istanbul. The peninsula

edifices together. The Peninsula area, the historic nucleus, the 'Pearl' of the Constanța city, is still hiding great treasures of history, architecture, culture, geography, arts, archeology and religion.

The land has a descendent path, coming from the Ferdinand Boulevard with 40 m to 5m towards the Elisabeta Boulevard. The descendent perspective to the Casino Quay builds a tall green bank. On its three sides, the Peninsula area features a cornice of different heights of circa ¹⁵ to 30 meters above the sea level. Even though the sea surrounds the shore from three sides, each of them has a different urban image: west – the harbour, south – the quay and east – the beach and the touristic port.

Tomis Port was established in the second half of the 6th century B.C. by the Greek colonists.

The layout of the city of Constanța, starting with the harbour, was drafted by Constantin Ionescu Dobrogeanul in 1887, where Elisabeta Boulevard was well-traced along with the other streets of the Peninsula.

An archaeological and architecture reservation, according to the List of Historic Monuments, the area under study is the Archaeological Site 'The ancient city Tomis – Peninsula of Constanța – located between Ferdinand Boulevard, the east quay of the city to the Modern beach, Casino, Poarta 1, trading harbour, Termele Romane Boulevard, Traian Street.

Circulation- an important element in identifying the cultural routes of the Peninsula.

The circulation in the Peninsula Area features different aspects, with a spontaneous development. The area is mainly crisscrossed by roadways, where most of them are one-way. This street grating is partially made before 1893. Important changes occurred between 1923 and 1936 (Ovidiu Square) and after 1936 (the Traian and Termele Romane streets were open).

A landmark with a historical, ambience, tourism, archaeological value, a singular configuration, Ovidiu Square is a 'bowtie', spreading on both sides – two streets on the northern side of the Tomis Boulevard and Mircea cel Batran Street and similar on the southern side of Arhiepiscopiei Street and Revolutia din 22 Decembrie Street.

The roadway. The connection with the major road network from Ferdinand Boulevard to the south of Peninsula is made via mainly auto circulation north-south bound on Tomis Boulevard to Sulmona Street, Traian Street to Ovidiu Square, Mircea cel Bătrân Street, after that, it goes from Ovidiu Square, through Arhiepiscopiei Street, to Revoluția din 22 Decembrie Street. The access on the east and west sides is made by Termele Romane and Marinei streets.

The connection with the main roadway is made by numerous east-west bound streets, among which there are Sulmona, Aristide Karatzali, Remus Opreanu, Vasile Alexandri and Regina Elisabeta Boulevard.

The **pedestrian** circulations take multiple forms, such as pedestrian streets, sidewalks, quay, stairs. Pedestrian streets can be found on Tomis Boulevard, from Sulmona Street to Ovidiu Square, on Mircea cel Bătrân Street, from Sulmona to Ovidiu Square. Other pedestrian streets or randomly turned into roadways are Vasile Canarache Street, Marcus Aureliu Street (partial), Diana Street. All these will be

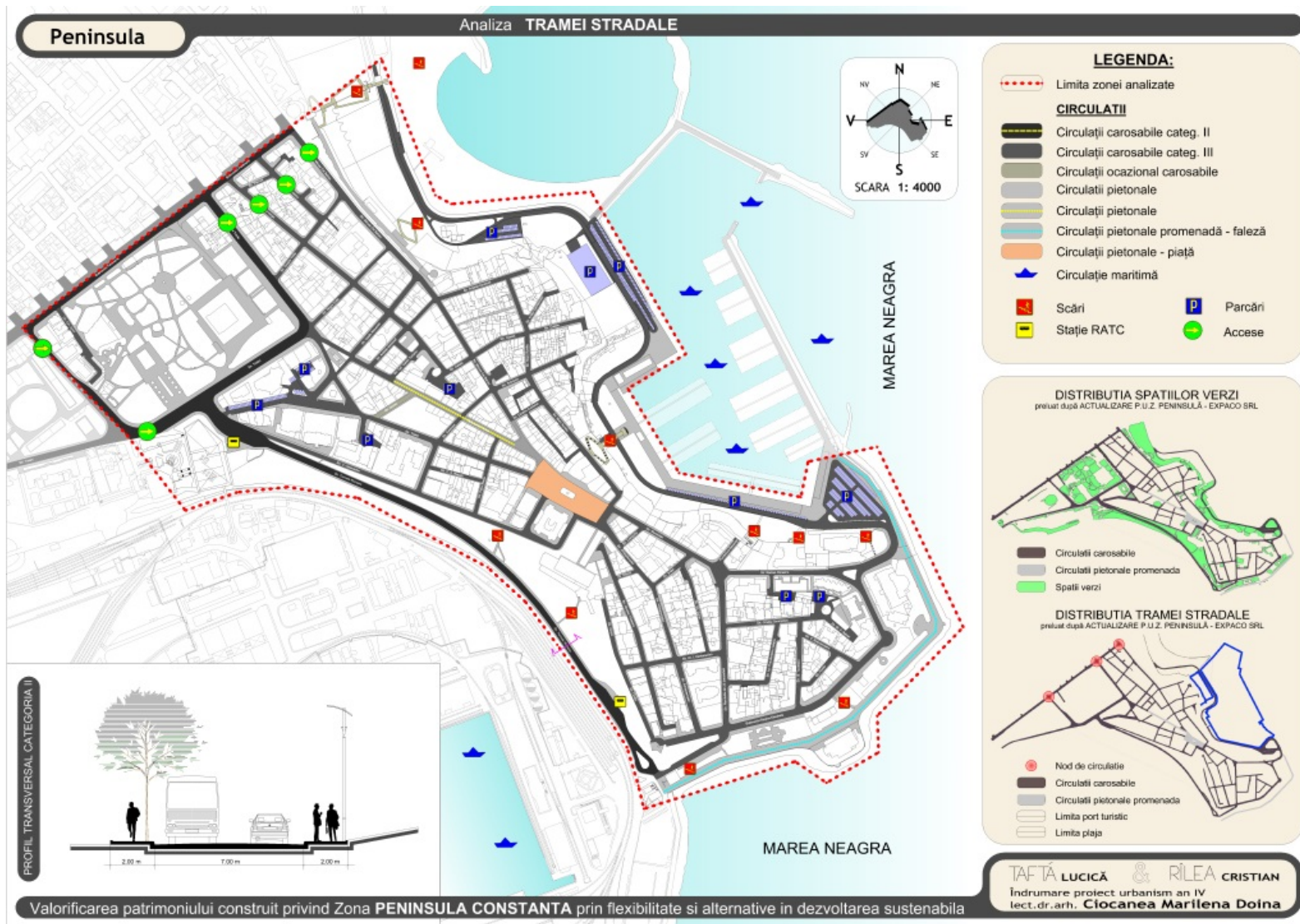


Image 10. Urbanism project, year IV – 2014

added the stairs going down to the beaches, the tourist port or the quay. Another way of circulation is the **seaway**, at the trading or the tourist port. For example, look at the table below.

From the **functional** perspective, the area features different aspects, i.e. 40-45% of the buildings are heavily damaged. A functional analysis of the area would not be relevant and would not have a correct outcome. Most of them are abandoned and have no longer any other functions. The frail and slow efforts of recovering the area can give a somewhat idea about the functional future. The on-site research reached the conclusion that the correct term would be **refunctionalisation** for that area.

The local urban studies, performed in 2000, 2002, 2004, 2008, etc. identified the living functions as predominant. The north-south axis includes more commercial, services and entertainment

functions along Tomis Boulevard and part of Mircea cel Bătrân Street. Ovidiu Plaza, an important site of the cultural route in the Peninsula, is represented by cultural or services functions, namely viarestaurants and museums. But what prevails is the living function, both individual and collective. The most important in the Peninsula, though, singular and providing the multicultural feature is the religious one, thus represented by major denominations, such as Orthodox, Catholic, Islam or Judaism. It is also a function of local public administration and justice. The economic activity comes from the existence of the Tomis port.

The trading and services functions that are closely linkined to the tourism activity are represented by restaurants, hotels, banks, offices, stores. Education has its own institutions, such as Mihai Eminescu High School and so do the museums – the History Museum, archaeology, popular art, etc.

An important aspect is the **height regime**, which lowers from the Peninsula ends to its center. The free perspectives to the sea are given by the east-west bound streets. The height of the buildings is constant in the south of the Peninsula, reaching GF+2 or 3 floors and decreases towards Ferdinand Boulevard.¹

The presence of the holes in the built patrimony, badly organized areas, insertions of destructuring, all these bring a somewhat disorder to the urbanistic thinking.

Highlighting the built patrimony, a cultural value in the Peninsula landscape

The architecture monuments, of plastic art, memorials, architecture ensembles, urbanistic complexes, archaeological sites, cultural routes preserve the memory and identity of the cultural, geographic and historic landscape, thus defining the specific personality of the area under study. Each building has a value of a monument, even though it is not such catalogued in compliance with the relevant legislation; each building has its history, its style, architecture, and all of them bring a special charm to this heavenly site, broken off and away from the reality of the city of today.

The long path of Tomis Boulevard links the north of the city to the south of the Peninsula, of a former special attraction but now quiet and with no allure. This path hosts numerous patrimony buildings, now in ruins. The onsite research, completed with a project of the 4th year of the Faculty of Architecture of USH, compiled a plan with the above values. An inventory was made for the buildings with a monument values, architectural, public forum (groups of statues or individual statues), archaeological sites.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL CULTURAL ROUTE

The first topographic plan of the ancient building ruins was made in 1915 by Vasile Pârvan, based on the results from digging under the Tomis enclosure wall. These walls were destroyed by the constructions erected after 1878. A few of the archaeological sites of the Peninsula included in the list of historical monuments can be mentioned.

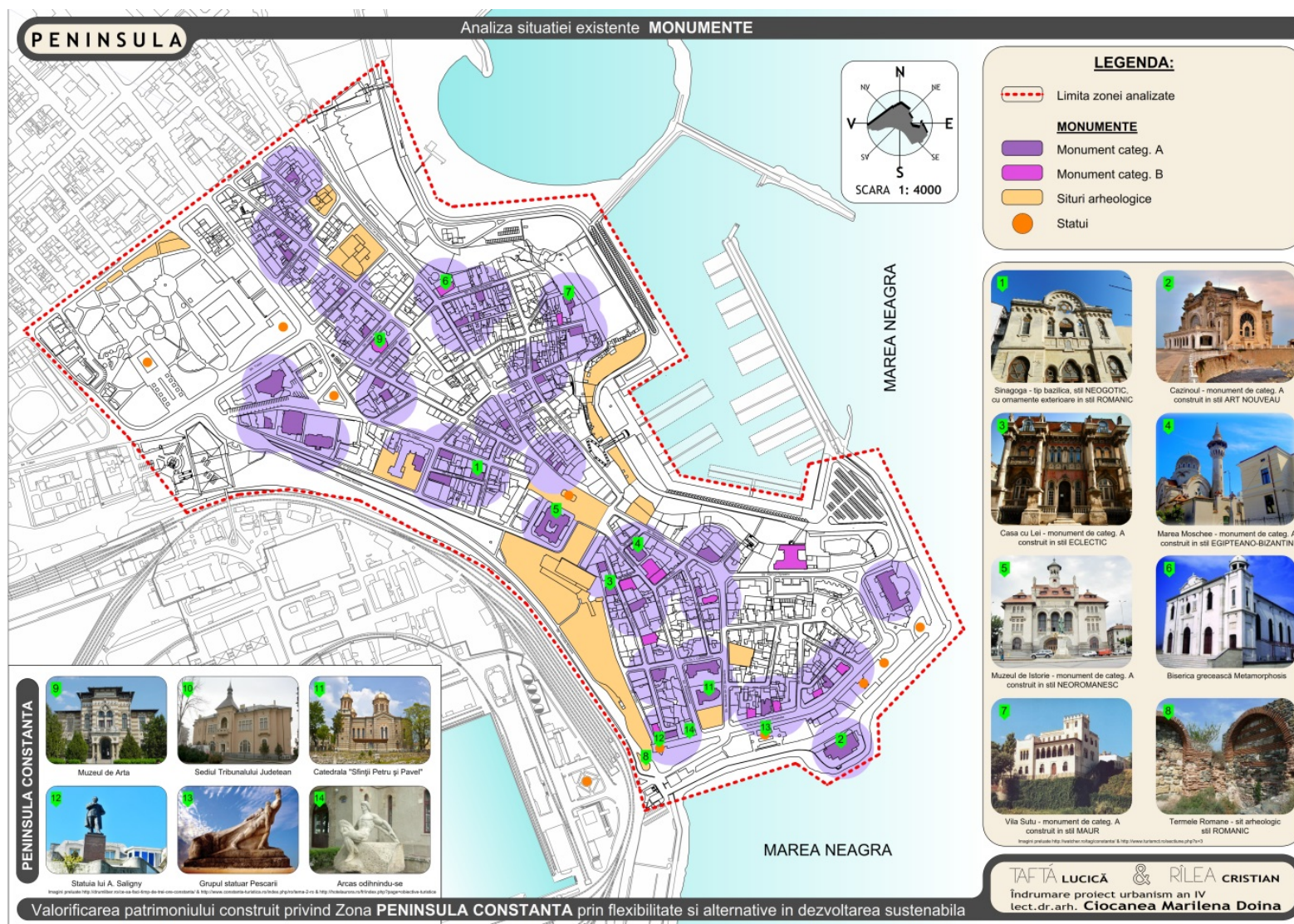


Image 11. Urbanism project, year IV – 2014

There are more perspectives that contribute to the cultural landscape of the Peninsula, classified by cultural routes, such as:

- ❖ Archaeological
- ❖ Architectural
- ❖ Religious
- ❖ Ambiental
- ❖ Tourism and entertainment

The Roman edifice with mosaic between Ovidiu Plaza and Termele Romane Boulevard, the south-west seafront of the Peninsula, dated IV-VI AC, the Roman-Byzantine era.

Tomis town living by 'Sf. Petru și Pavel' Orthodox Cathedral, between Arhiepiscopiei Str, Elisabeta Blvd and Revoluția din 22 decembrie 1989 Street, dated between centuries 4th BC and 5th AC, the Greek, Roman and Roman-Byzantine era.

The aqueducts – galleries to be found on the underground of Tomis city and at the bottom of the seafronts, with entrances to 'Modern' Beach, Tomis Port, School number 2, Court of law, the Roman edifice with mosaic and the Termele Romana Boulevard, dated in the 3rd century AC, Roman era, are essential evidence of the Peninsula culture.



Image 12. Town living

THE ARCHITECTURAL CULTURAL ROUTE

The buildings erected in this Peninsula area dates back at the end of 19th century and first half of the 20th. The street grid, still present today, was mostly built before 1893. Important changes occurred between 1923 and 1936 (Ovidiu Plaza) and after 1936 (the opening of Traian Street and Termele Romane Street). The area has been declining after 1990. There is a large number of buildings with a monument value that gives a special value to the Peninsula landscape.

The Casino, the most important construction on the Peninsula, built in the art-nouveau style, is located on the seashore, in the most south-eastern point, against the winds and its story begins in 1880.

One of the important prefects in Constanța, Remus Opreanu, decided to build a place for socializing and entertainment. The construction was going to have ballrooms, theatre rooms, restaurants, gaming halls, open gardens to the sea. This was a place where tourists met, sailors stopping in that port. The first construction that had this function was made of wood but it crumbled, due to the weather conditions. In 1903, architect Daniel Renard was assigned the Casino project. Even back then, the politicians made some comments about this enterprise. Once the conservatorists replaced the liberals on the political stage, the project was continued by architect Petre Antonescu.

Later, the liberals came back to govern and gave again the project to Mr. Daniel Renard, who completed it in 1910. Other restoration and modernization works were done in 1937 by the same architect. In 1986, the Casino was given a new painting, stucco masonry, frescoes and stained glass.



Image 13. The Casino. Old postcard



Image 14. The Casino in 2014

In 2014, the building is in a highly state of decay. The same political fights as in the beginning of the 20th century have delayed too much the required interventions for its preservation. An agreement was finally reached and the works will start soon.

The Museum of National History and Archaeology, Constanța

Located in the Ovid Plaza, in front of the statue, the Museum building was erected between 1913 and 1921, after a true journey of the exhibits that started in 1878.

Prefect Remus Opreanu decided to have a space to present the exhibits found at the shore of ancient Tomis. Architect Victor Ștephănescu was the one to monitor the construction of the current museum. He was going to compile the development plans of the Independenței Plaza (now Ovid) and to erect the Communal Palace (the future Museum of History and Archaeology).

It was erected after Neptun and Thetis streets had been leveled away, on the old access road to the port. *The construction belongs to the series of the public edifices built in a neo-Romanian styles, with specific architectural elements: the loggia on the large fronton with richly decorated columns and a chapter, the entrance and the two windows of the lateral bodies that are much farther stuck and with stone borders, the hall with a wide opening and the small and narrow exterior windows on the third storey.*² The Museum is one of the best museums in this branch in Romania. It is the host to many objects of Greek, Roman, Byzantine and medieval origins.

The Folk Art Museum

The Museum is located in the historical center of Constanța, at the intersection of Tomis Boulevard with Traian Street. Built in 1893, it hosted the City Hall for a while, then the Post Office and since 1975 it has been the seat for the Museum of Folk Art. Designed by architect Ion N. Socolescu, the building has an eclectic style with Oriental and national influences and is part of the search time of the first Romanian architects in Paris after 1880, a time of search and accomplishments of an architecture with national particularities.³



Image 15. Aerial view of the Peninsula



Image 17. The Folk Art Museum



Image 18. The Court of Law



Image 16. The Museum of History and Archaeology



Image 19. The Admiralty. A view from the sea

The Royal residence

The royal residence, also called 'The Queen Nest', the residence for King Carol I and Queen Elisabeth in Traian Street, was built starting from 1903-1906. The coordination of works belongs to architect Daniel Renard. The construction style is eclectic but architect Daniel Renard brings art-nouveau elements, such as a few small towers or balconies. Around 1921 and 1922, the building was purchased by the Department of Justice, then turned into a Court of Appeals. It is now a Court of Law.

The Admiralty Office – the former Carol Hotel

Located in Remus Opreanu Street, the building was erected between 1879 and 1881, as designed by architect Alexandru Orăscu, in a neoclassical style. Along the years, it served as a hotel, called Terminus, then Carol, a Yacht Club of the Naval League, the National Military Circle, a Designing Institute and, after 1978, the office of the Military Marine Headquarters.⁴

The Suțu Villa

The house, built in the 19th century above the Tomis Port, following the design plans of architect Grigore Cerchez, was commissioned as a summer residence by the numismatist Mihail Suțu. In a Moorish style, the villa has a special vibe. Suțu Villa accomplished various social and cultural functions. For instance, it used to be the seat of the Czech Consulate and of the Court of Appeals in Constanța.⁵

The Palace Hotel

Known as the *hotel of the casino players*, baron Edgar de Marçay, casino owner in Monte Carlo, won the auction in 1912 to build this hotel. Later on, he conceded his rights to the Societatea Marilor Stabilimente (Society of Large Buildings) in Constanța, which turned to French architect Edgar de Goue to design the hotel. Located on the eastern shore of the Peninsula, near the Black Sea, the building was erected in the French Riviera style, thus aligning itself with the neo-French style of the end of the 19th century, with Mediterranean elements.



Image 20. Suțu Villa



Image 21. Palace Hotel

'Open to the public in July 1914, Palace Hotel has had the luxury specific to its category', writes Doina Păuleanu in her book. On July 13 1914, the 'Conservatorul Constanței' newspaper was inviting the public to visit the building, in the most picturesque location on the Black Sea shore.'⁶ Before the construction of the eastern pier of the Tomis Port, the storm could bring the seawater to the bottom of the city quay.⁷ In 1972, the building was renovated and joined the circuit of the hotels.

The Intim Hotel

The building of the hotel is in Nicolae Titulescu Street, erected after 1948, on the land of the former Regina Hotel. The construction includes valuable elements of art-nouveau with the neoclassical structure of the main façade. The history of that site reminds of the existence of two hotels, namely Regina and d'Angleterre.

The House with Lions (Casa cu lei)

Hidden behind a construction of the 60's, in 1 Diana Street in corner with N. Titulescu Street, a marvellous and lonely building overlooking the Black Sea – The House with Lions, as saying '*where is my bygone glamour?*'

This house belonged to a rich Armenian ship owner. The project author is most likely architect Ioan Berindei (1871-1928), or possibly Daniel Renard. The style blends pre-Romantic and Genovese elements. The works were completed in 1902.⁸



Image 22. Intim Hotel



Image 23. Memorial plaque

Eminescu lived in d'Angleterre Hotel in 1882. In 1903, the hotel was demolished.



Image 24. The House with Lions



Image 25. Jalea Museum (today, Jalea Museum)



Image 26. Jalea Museum

THE AMBIENT CULTURAL ROUTE

Elpis Theatre in Aristide Karatzali Street, next to the Greek Church, was built between 1890 and 1898 by the member of the Hellenic community, in the Greek neighborhood. Today, it is the theatre of children.⁹

Houses in Elisabeta Boulevard

The first boulevard of the city was starting taking a shape between the Port streets and Remus Opreanu Street.¹⁰ In 1880, Barbu Ștefănescu Delavrancea describes the promenade site – Elisabeta Boulevard, recently inaugurated: 'The Boulevard is well swept, wasched, ready to welcome the gentle *baigneuses* who, in their simple yet stylish suits, are heading towards Ovidiu station'.¹¹

Pariano House (Jalea Museum)

Started in 1913 and completed in 1920, Pariano House was built in a neo-Romanian style, as the first building in Elisabeta Boulevard designed by architect Victor Ștefănescu. During the years, the construction had multiple functions, among which there are: English Consulate, the headquarters of the Romanian Maritime Office in 1913 and a strategic site used by the Soviet Commanding Office during the occupation. Since 1968, it has become the seat for the Ion Jalea Museum.¹²

The houses in Regina Elisabeta Boulevard are grouped into two areas, as shown below. One of the areas includes the Cuculis, Șomănescu and Pilescu Houses.

Cuculis House

The residence was built at the onset of the 1900's. The style has eclectic features and elements of neoclassical filiation. Comprising a basement, ground floor, two more stories and an attic, the house has an austere and symmetric main facade, apparent bossage on the entire surface. After the WWI, it was leased to Society Lloyd Triestino in Trieste. Between the two world wars, the building was superposed.¹³

Șomănescu House

Located between Cuculis and Pilescu Houses, Șomănescu House was the property of the great land owner Sava Șomănescu. The construction started in 1909 and it is richly decorated, in a rococo style.¹⁴

Pilescu House

The building carries the name of the owner who built it, Dr. Nicolae Pilescu, in 1903. The style cumulates neoclassical, rococo and art-nouveau elements. The construction has two stories, in an asymmetric disposition. The façade overlooking Elisabeta Boulevard has four window-doors on the ground floor, flattened arches, above which there are decoration elements, festoons, keystones, hems. The four openings of the storey are oriented towards the balconies on brackets, decorated in rococo. The building was used as a seat for the Bank of Corn Dealers and it is now a residence for the Archiepiscopacy.

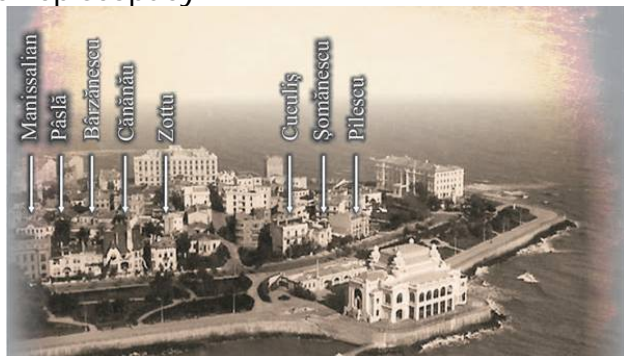


Image 27. Aerial photo 1938



Image 28. Cuculis House



Image 29. Șomănescu House



Image 30. Pilescu House

Manissalian House

Armenac Manissalian, one of the owners of homonym house, was President of the Armenian Union in Romania at that time. The residence of the Manissalian Brothers was at the intersection of Elisabeta Boulevard with D.A. Sturdza Street. The house was built in 1904, following the plans of architect Ion Berindei, in a monumental eclectic style. In 1928, it became the headquarters of the Chamber of Commerce in Constanța. After the WWII, it was bombed and it could not be rebuilt again.



Image 31. Manissalian House

The other area comprises the Pâslă, Bârzănescu, Cănanău and Zottu Houses.

Pâslă House

The house was built by the owner in 1904. The residence has a semi-basement, ground floor, first floor and attic, with Brâncoveanu elements and Romanic decorations (the attic sticking out is supported by brackets).

Bârzănescu House

The house was built after 1904, in an art-nouveau style, with a neoclassical structure and some baroque elements. The entrance is marked with a rosary above the door and a decor in apparent brick. The builder was Ion Bârzănescu but it was lived in by engineer Zahariadi, an inspector of the works in Constanța Port at that time.¹⁵

Cănanău House

'In 1913, Titus Cănanău, the former mayor and conservative party member of Constanța, commissioned this project to architect Victor Gh. Ștefănescu. The architectonic style has European eclectic and also neo-Romanian elements. As decorations, the art nouveau is a distinct trait. The left lateral side is sticking in jutting. There is a semicircular bowwindow, with a board decorated with oak leaves where a window and a door incastrated into a broken arch are opening. The storey of the right side of the building comprises a balcony with a door and window, a large stone ship with a raised board and a tall chimney in stone, Gothic style, to expand the facade with abutments and iron plaque in a shape of lilly. The asymmetric composition is specific to the feudal houses ".¹⁶

Zottu House

The characteristic of the construction lies in the extremely volumetric elements and the simple, classic ornaments. The building belonged to G. Zotu, one of the most distinguished magistrates of Constanța, president of the Court of law in Constanța. The house was built at the beginning of 20th



Image 32. Street development



Image 33. Pâslă House



Image 34. Bârzănescu House



Image 35. Cănanău House



Image 36. Zottu House

century and features rococo motifs. It has two facades, overlooking the yard and the street. The corner is rounded and it has a prismatic bowwindow on the floor. In 1928, the house became the headquarters of Lithuania in Constanța. In the 30's, the house was sold to the Insurance Society 'Steaua Română' (Romanian Star).

THE RELIGIOUS CULTURAL JOURNEY

The buildings with a religious function give a sense of multiculturality to the area:

The Greek Orthodox Church

The Greek Orthodox Church, a Christian construction of the Greek community, named 'Metamorphosis', designed by Greek architect Iani Teoharidi, is located in Mircea cel Bătrân Street in corner with Dr.Aristide Karatzali Street, on the way to Modern beach. The construction started in 1862-1867, upon being agreed by sultan Abdul Aziz Bin Mehmet Han, away from the Turkish neighborhood. The architecture reminds of the typically Greek buildings, with only 10 meters in height, length of 25 and width of 12.5.¹⁷

The Roman Catholic Church 'Sfântul Anton de Padova' (Saint Anthony of Padua)

The construction is in red brick and belongs to the Romanic trend, from an architectural perspective. During the WWII, the commanders of the Russian troops found the church tower suitable for the surveillance of the portuary area and turned the church into a storage for ammunition. It is one of the most beautiful and interesting buildings in Constanța.

The Roman Catholic Church 'Saint Anthony of Padua' is located in Archiepiscopacy Street, between Carol I Mosque and Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul. It was built between 1935 and 1936, after plans designed by architect Romano de Simon in Bucharest.



Image 37. The Greek Church



Image 38. The Roman Catholic Church



Image 39. The Sinagogue



Image 40. The Sinagogue



Image 41. The Carol I Mosque

The Sinagogue in Constanța was built in 1911. Other sources will mention the year of 1914 instead. The Sinagogue of the ashkenazis, in a Moorish style, is at 2 C.A. Rosetti Street. Currently, this synagogue (The Great Sinagogue) is no longer used by the small Jewish community in Constanța, but it is rather abandoned and in danger of collapsing.

The architecture of the Great Sinagogue in Constanța is structured on three horizontal registers: basement, ground floor and first floor. On the outside, the windows and the doors feature Moorish decorations.

Inside, the religious building is divided into three aisles, strongly defined on the outside of the main one. Traditional Jewish decorations are to be found in the interior.¹⁸

The Carol I Mosque

The mosque emerges over the ruins now dominating the plaza in in Archiepiscopacy Street, as saying 'we are still standing in this ocean of debris'. Its construction started in 1910 and was completed

in 1913, commissioned by King Carol I. The mosque follows the plan of engineer Gogu Constantinescu, under the supervision of architect Victor Ştephănescu, in an Egyptian-Byzantine style, with some Romanian architectural elements.

It is the first building with reinforced concrete components ever erected in Romania. The minaret has a Moorish style.¹⁹

The Orthodox Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul

At the intersection of Gr.Cantacuzino (Muslim) Street with Elisabeta Boulevard, built between 1883 and 1895, there is the Orthodox Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul. The plans were designed by architect Alexandru Orăscu. The construction is in a neo-Byzantine style, from pressed bricks, and is towering the surroundings thanks to its facade and its 35-meter belfry. George Demetrescu Mirea was the painter of this church. The park around hosts an archaeological complex that encloses elements of the old city of Tomis.²⁰

The Bulgarian Church Saint Nicholas

The Bulgarian Community in Constanța requested in 1898 from the City Hall the approval to build a church. This construction preserves the characteristics of the Romanian architectural traditional style. After 1940, the Bulgarian Church was appropriated by the Episcopacy of Tomis and transferred to the Romanian orthodox cult.²¹



Image 42. Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul



Image 43. Church Saint Nicholas (former) and the Bulgarian School



Image 44. The Armenian Church

The Armenian Church

The titular saint of the Armenian Church in Constanța is 'Saint Mary'; the construction is located on the seashore, near the Greek Church, in Callatis Street, as a color patch on the Constanța multicultural map. The church is of Armenian – Gregorian confession. Architect Dan Rusovan harmoniously blends elements that are specific to the Armenian medieval art.

The building was erected in 1880 by Nazaret Torosian and it functioned as a school for the children in the Armenian community. In 1940, the ballroom on the first floor was turned into a church. The Armenian church is an apostolic and traditionally orthodox one. Its architecture differs from the traditional one. The services are held in the Armenian language, with small exceptions.²²

THE TOURISM CULTURAL JOURNEY AND OF LOISIR

The Aquarium is located on the sea quay, in front of the Casino; it was initially an annex of it, functioning as a restaurant. After 1958, it was turned into an aquarium that has gathered in time over 100 species of fish and sea creatures from various geographical areas. It does not have a special architectural style, its value is more sentimental, thanks to its unique function in our country.

The Quay, a promenade site, singular in our country, is an artificial construction, an extension of the south-eastern shore into the sea, developed in 1910, following the plans of the French landscape architect Édouard Redont. The level gap between the two lanes, the quay and Elisabeta Boulevard is made up of a smooth green area, with statues of sea inspiration.

The Beach

The three beaches in existence at the beginning of the 20th century were Modern, 3 Papuci and Tataia. They were spreading in the eastern side of the peninsula and the access was via wooden stairs. The shore has always been very high, with a 30-40 meter level gap.



Image 45. The Aquarium



Image 47. The Quay



Image 46. Modern beach



Image 48. The Quay



Image 49. The complex of statues "Pescarii"



Image 50. Ion Jalea, The "Archer resting"



Image 51. Statue of A. Saligny by Oscar Han

MONUMENTS FOR PUBLIC HOMAGE

Numerous statues on the peninsula enrich its cultural image. Made by famous artists, after topics of seaside area, they are able to increase the value of this region. Here are some of them:

The complex of statues Pescarii/Fishermen, located near the Casino, in the corner of Elisabeta Boulevard and Constantin Brâncoveanu Street, was erected in the 60's by sculptor Corneliu Virgiliu Medrea (1888-1964), as a tribute to the hard work of the fishermen.

The "Archer resting" statue was created in 1926 by sculptor Ion Jalea.

Statue of A.Saligny, by Oscar Han, is located in the vicinity of the Casino, where engineer Anghel Saligni is looking to the sea.

TREASURES OF PENINSULA

Ovid Plaza

Also called the 'Bowtie loop', it is known as the 'heart' of Constanța, Ovid Plaza largely opens to the traveler hungry for knowledge at the end of Tomis Boulevard, on the one hand, and Traian Street, on the other hand. At first, the plaza was called 'Independence Plaza', of a smaller size. It was thought as a public promenade site, in a rectangular shape, with stores on all its sides. In time, this plaza has become razed, destructured, with holes in front buildings or constructions of unsuitable heights. The image giving the name to this area is the statue of Ovid, the poet, and the building in a neo-Romanian style of the History and Archaeology Museum.

Constanța 1878-1928. Spectacolul modernității târzii (volume II), the book of art critic Doina Păuleanu, has a special chapter called 'The downtown is the Independence Plaza'. 'As any archival space, tracing back in history and full of meaningful beginnings, Tomis has an internal center – it is actually an ideal center, an axis built as a finite space image of the infinite temporality'. For the ancient Tomis and modern Constanța, this ideal center has been the narrow area of the peninsula, called Independence Plaza and, later, Ovid, says the art critic.²³

Statue of Latin poet Ovid (43 B.C. — 17 A.D.), made by the Italian sculptor Ettore Ferrie in 1887, as a tribute to the poet who lived his last years in exile, in Tomis. Ovid was born in the Italian city of Sulmona. A street in Constanța Peninsula bears the name of this city.

The monument has been located in Ovid Plaza, in front of the National History and Archaeology Museum since 1887, with small interruptions. The statue was vandalized and demounted by the Bulgarian army between 1916 and 1918.



Image 52. The bronze statue of Latin poet Ovid



Image 53. The demounted statue

On the pedestal of the statue are the words '*Here I lie, who played with tender loves, Naso the poet, killed by my own talent. O passerby, if you've ever been in love, let it not be too much for you to say: May the bones of Naso lie gently.*'

The Genovese Lighthouse

The Genovese Lighthouse was built around 1300 by an English company. The name honors the Genovese merchants who were trading in the Port. The construction was renovated between 1858 and 1860 by French engineer of Armenian background Artin Aslan. The lighthouse has a 8-meter height and it operated until 1913, when Carol I Lighthouse was erected in the port.

CONCLUSIONS

The image of the cultural landscape of Constanța Peninsula is more comprehensive than this succinct presentation. The current state of this area is of a great concern and time passing can only bring more damage to the standing constructions that used to bear forth a unique perfume and charm. Initially divided into ethnical and religious districts (Romanian, Muslim, Bulgarian, Armenian, Hebrew, Catholic), Peninsula witnessed the best of multiculturalism a long time ago. The threats due to legislation, lack of interest from authorities, inhabitants, tourists and, last but not least, specialists is bringing this jewel of the Black Sea to a gradual degradation, until disappearance.

The special cultural identity imposes an attitude of reverence towards the current built heritage, which our ancestors were able to do for us. What is expected from us is to identify opportunities of preservation, rehabilitation and valorification of tourism, as the best means of promoting the cultural landscape.



Image 54. The Genovese Lighthouse

Illustration source

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¹ An upgrade of the regional urbanistic plan P.U.Z. Peninsul, Municipality of Constanța- E X P A C O S R L 2012 Constanța.

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¹² Source <http://Constanța-imagini-vechi>.

¹³ Source <http://Constanța-imagini-vechi>.

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THREE BUILDINGS, A COMMON HISTORY - CONTINENTAL HOTEL, CONSTANȚA

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Abstract

This paper aims to present the evolution of the three buildings, which held, either as a whole or individually, the name of Hotel Continental and functioned as a symbol of Constanta, for nearly a century, since the first documentary mention in 1908, until the final demolition in the year 2000. Based on available documentation on the matter in the press and publications, provided by the Constanta County Library and the study of archive documents made available by the National Archives of Constanta, this article attempts to provide, without claiming to be an exhaustive study, a more comprehensive image of what has been, over the years, the Continental Hotel. Both a landmark of the city and a fine example of modernist architecture with Mediterranean influences, a particular assimilation of the International Movement at the local level, the building erected in 1938 by the prolific architect from Constanta, Harry Goldstein, known in the postwar era as Horia Maicu, represents the very core of this study.

Keywords: urban hotel, landmark building, Dobrogea regional approach of Modernism

The first building of the Continental Hotel

Recorded for the first time in the writing of Ioan Adam, *Constanța pitorească* in running order around the year 1908, the first building that bears the name of Continental Hotel is described as follows: "Across the street <towards school Nr. 1 for boys and girls, in which it operates with the subsequent extension, the current Museum of Art of Constanta> stands in a towering corner The Continental Hotel".¹ In the same source we learn that in both the Census in 1884 and the City's General Plan, developed by engineer V. Simu in 1893, Ferdinand, was not yet traced. The boulevard is



Image 1. Archive image confirming the presence of commercial functions, left of the Continental Hotel, where Carol Hall and Market were built

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also missing from the Tables of M. Ionescu Dobrogeanu dating back to 1896, 1905 or June 1916. "Only in 1924 Grand Hotel is mentioned on Ferdinand Boulevard at no. 1, and Continental at no. 2".²

Without doubt, this is why, in 1910, both the Continental Hotel and the Grand Hotel, built on corner plots, are mentioned on Carol Street. Another historic photograph taken up on Carol Street, now Tomis Boulevard, from the middle of what today is the intersection of Ferdinand Boulevard with Tomis Boulevard, makes visible an inscription above the Aces corner access of the first hotel, which shows that the renowned Miga pharmacy initially worked on its ground floor, before building its own premises, on the opposite corner of the intersection.

In the book written by Doina Păuleanu, *Constanța: spectacolul modernității târzii: 1878-1928*, we find that:

*"By order since 1926, based on the Permanent Delegation and the right conferred by the Law for organizing urban communes, the municipality of Constanța divides hotels into four groups as follows: Luxury category, Palace, Regnier and [...] Grand Hotel (no charges are specified); first class, with rates of 120-160 lei / room with a bed, 170-240 a double - Regina, Boulevard and High-Life on Traian Street. second-class hotels, with rates of 50- 100, 135-200 lei respectively, are Elite, Bristol in the Ovidiu Square, Royal, Central, Commercial, Princiar and Continental in the upper town."*³

The hotel's eclectic building with ground floor, two stories and an attic, brings together elements of architectural language specific to Neoclassicism, most obvious on the facade towards Carol Street and Baroque elements, such as the gable on Ferdinand Boulevard, above the side entrance to the property limit. Further, the aforesaid boulevard, is visible in Fig. 1., above, taken from the album of the Lăpușan spouses, *Constanța - File album*, that the commercial function existed, even before The Carol Hall and marketplace were built.

The interwar period and Harry Goldstein's building

Although until 1924, the Romanian authorities have not made specific efforts to attract tourists at the Romanian seaside, the fact is that Mamaia and the city of Constanța functioned, after the First World War, as an extension of Calea Victoriei in Bucharest, during summer season. The city centre and the Casino are just a few examples of places where there were displayed clothes tailored to the latest Parisian fashion. The lively atmosphere was attended both by locals whose business prospered and also by Romanian and foreign tourists, diplomats and officers arrived at the seashore on duty, or on vacation. Trips to other resorts, on the coastline of 577 kilometres from the south at Ecrene (Bulgaria today) northwards to Bugaz (now in Ukraine), conferences, concerts and plays, films and dance evenings are just some of the recreational activities that visitors could enjoy at that time in Constanța.

The year 1938 brings about a series of changes, with the administrative reorganization imposed by Carol II, marking the beginning of the so-called royal dictatorship. On December 19, 1938, by decision of the Ministry of Interior no. 38744/1938, published in the Official Gazette no. 295, Constanța Municipality and Mamaia Beach are taken from amongst the Spa resorts, Constanta being downgraded to the status of bathing resort for local and losing some advantages of the former classifications.

Although in Romania of the interwar period 1938 is considered the year of highest economic development, the National Archives of Constanta shows us that, over the previous year, when documents submitted for obtaining permits favourable for building the extent of the city gather in 4 folders, in 1938

there is a single folder of this kind. However, the above mentioned is the year in which one the leading hotels, which became an emblem of the city and Romanian modernist architecture, originally called Carlton was built, by the Hebrew origin architect from Constanța, educated in Rome, named Haim M. Goldstein (known as Harry Goldstein and then as Horia Maicu in the post-war period).

Harry Goldstein (1905-1975), designed after 1930 a lot of modernist villas that gave consistency to the building fund of Constanța and subsequently acted as a guide for future construction, influencing in the long run the way of conceiving urban housing. This manner of building, still fascinates ordinary traveller at every step in historic areas. Between 1950 and 1972, he held the position of professor at the Institute of Architecture, Bucharest, playing an important role in defending and promoting the architectural values of Modernism after the Second World War, with particular attention paid to detailing. "A great figure in the communist era architecture, he coordinated the imposing construction of The Press House/ Casa Scântei that mimics Soviet Baroque (with. M. Alifanti). In Modernist-Utilitarian style he designed the Palace Hall, Heroes Monument in Carol Park, the National Theatre, all in Bucharest. "⁴

In the folder no. 1/1938 "Applications and authorizations for construction. The future construction plans and the relative correspondence. Construction table (surfaces and values) raised in Constanța in 1933-1938. Plan of the "Dr. Zion" Hospital with the location of buildings", there are 4 documents referring to the hotel to be constructed / under construction on Bd. Ferdinand Nr. 20, with N. Gheorghiu as beneficiary. First mentioned on 28.1.1938, in an request for approval for the development of shelters against air attacks, to the Minister of Interior, the National Office for the Protection of the population against air attacks, Bucharest, stating that building plans in triplicate would have been sent (plans do not exist in the file). Upon this request, perhaps unresolved, the author returns on 14/03/1938. The second statement is made during a complaint addressed to the mayor, on 14.04.1938, by traders from Carol Hall, because the Market's direct link with Ferdinand Boulevard is to be blocked by the hotel building:

"As these plans provide for the closing of the current passage linking Ferdinand Boulevard and Carol Market - the main artery of communication with this market - allowed for public use, with no claim by the former owner Mr. Petre G. Radu until the sale of the property Mr. N. Gheorghiu, we see ourselves prejudiced in the vital interests of our existence, by failing to communicate directly with the the main entry of Carol Market."

The fourth document is a complaint to the mayor by the Head of the Department of Architecture, which provides a list of three sites, including that of Mr. N. Gheorghiu (vis-à-vis Grand) that have not complied with the authorizations to make shelters for defence of tenants against air attacks and requires interrupting the construction process. Interestingly enough, on 07/03/1938, in the same folder, mentioned above, there is a list of diplomat architects, recognized architects and authorized architectural drawings conductors, operating at that time in Constanța. Diplomat architects are only two, namely Haim M. Goldstein, with the address on Scarlat Vărnăv Street, no. 7 and Crisantema Stamatescu, at the address Constanta - Port. Studying the evolution of the streets we find out that Scarlat Vărnăv Street is nowadays called Rășcoala 1907 Street, therefore, the one towards which Carlton Hotel turns a side façade. We can deduce from this that the works were carefully supervised by the architect, which carries out its activity at only a few numbers on the above mentions street, thus certifying once more the increased attention that was given to solving detail issues.

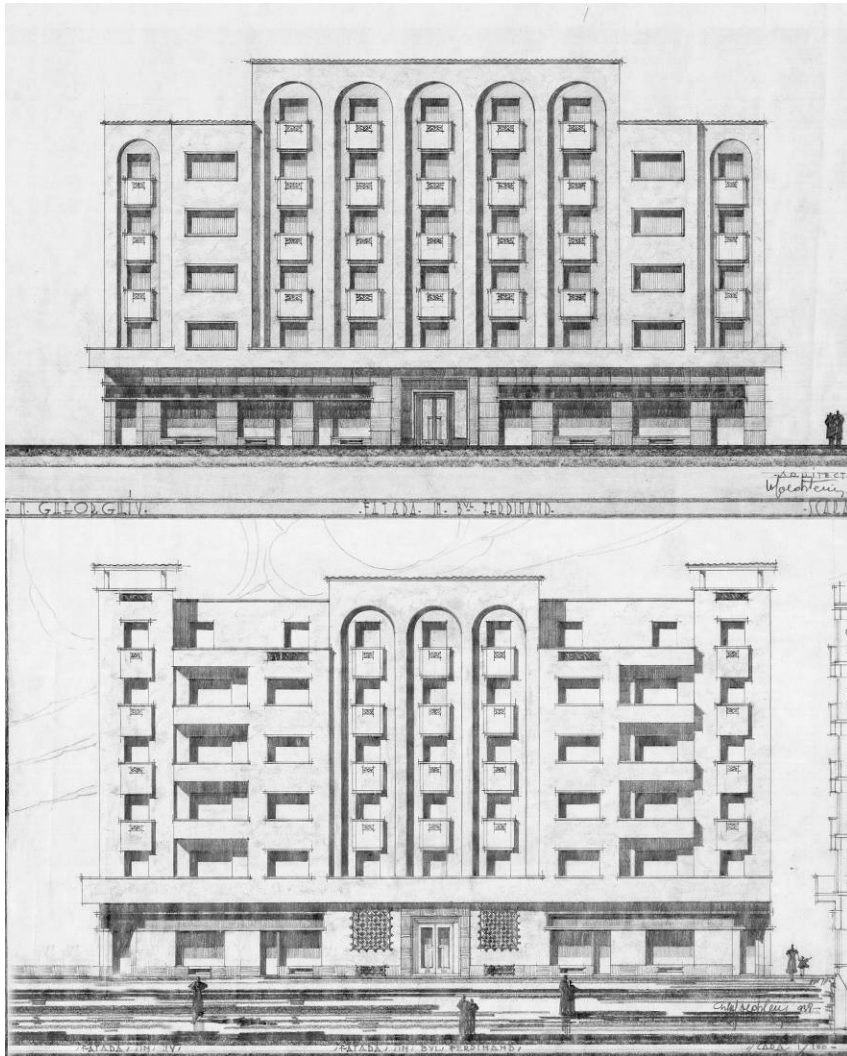


Image 2. Variants of the main facade of the Carlton Hotel (top: 1937 version, below: 1938 version)

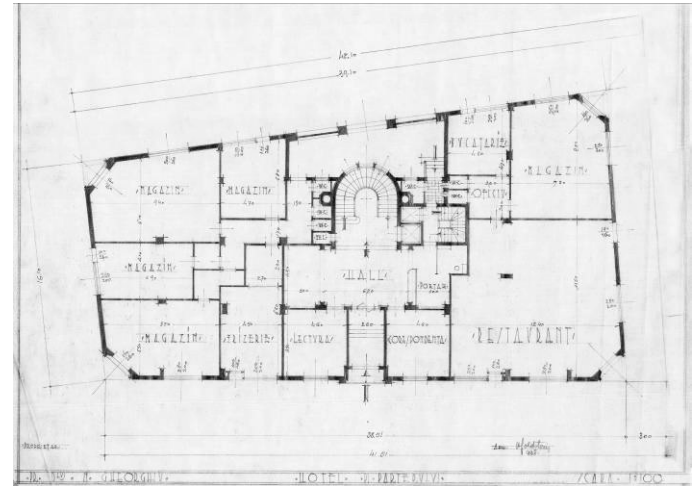


Image 3. Floor plan and accommodations storey plan of Carlton Hotel top: floor plan 1938 version

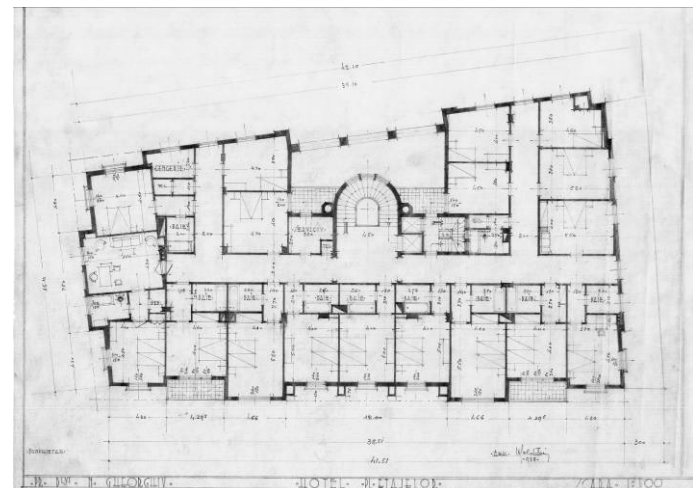


Image 4. Floor plan and accommodation storey plan of Carlton Hotel down: accommodation storey plan 1938 version

The above scans of the original drawings of Harry Goldstein, prove that the project was in progress since 1937, and went through several versions, up to choosing the one that was built. The above images represent the facade in proposed 1937 and the one proposed in 1938, the last one being the one that was carried out. The building with ground floor and five storeys, illustrates a local adaptation of the International Style, called Dobrogea regional approach of Modernism by some experts, with Florentine style influences such as the local use of gutter tiles. The fifth floor of the final version has two local withdrawals, symmetrically arranged to the main body, marked with three arches over the entire height of the accommodation levels. These withdrawals, along with the ones on the side facades make visible two towers that mark the ends of the volume, above each rising a pergola covered with gutter

tiles. The continuous parapet of the balcony on the first floor, makes the building appear as if it would float above the withdrawn ground floor.

The ground floor plan, in the final version, from 1938, shows a main access, for guests, located on the middle the facade, with a *windfang* opens to a hall of honour with the monumental staircase at it's end. An elevator for guests can be noticed doubled by a smaller one for hotel employees, with access via an airlock, that also serves the utilitarian staircase. This *windfang* also connects with a second one, which serves the secondary access from Carol Hall. To the left and right of the access there is a reading room and one for correspondence. In the above illustrated proposal there is also a restaurant, the kitchen and the necessary office, five shops and a hairdresser. The toilets find their place to the left and right of the central core with staircases and elevator. The accommodation floor plan offers visitors a number 16 rooms, out of which 9 with private bathroom and a single one bedroom apartment with bathroom and closet.

In folder no. 94/1939 - "Requisitions for Concentrated Troops," The Manoeuvres Department (Great General Staff) requires the retention of 18 rooms in Continental Hotel (the new one was called Carlton) which is to be damaged by the devastating earthquake of 1940, that leads to the collapse of the Carlton Hotel from Bucharest.

During the Second World War, Carlton Hotel, together with the Continental were requisitioned and housed the German-Romanian joined headquarters and after switching sides, at the few bombings suffered by the city of Constanța, the old wing, from the former Carol Street was once again damaged and the hotel occupied by Soviet troops, who did not leave Constanța until 1955.

Continental Hotel in the post-war period

On March 1, 1948, the local newspaper "Cuget Liber", announced the reopening of the first restaurant and hotel in town "in places where until now functioned and Carlton hotel and restaurant on the Republic Avenue".⁵

A year later, Eugeniu Alfred Gheorghiu, the rightful owner of the hotel is "condemned through criminal sentence no. 779 of 26 May 1949 of the Bucharest Military Tribunal, District 1, to 25 years in prison for high treason, and confiscation of property, property including in this case Continental Hotel, with adjacent land, which was effectively taken and administered by the state, appearing in all documents and state patrimony."⁶

The hotel's name is changed afterwards to the Proletarian, because the name Carlton did not meet the new ideals of



Image 5. Archive photograph with the two hotels operating together after the Second World War

that time and the historical wing, although restored after the damage caused by bombing during the war and connected to the modernist wing, is demolished. In its place is opened in 1962, a new wing, ground floor plus four floors, whose architecture was similar to the one of collective housing buildings of the period. The hotel has adopted then the name "Republic", then changed it once again because in the '70s the name Continental seemed to be pleasing the authorities once more.

Continental Hotel after 1989

After the 1989 Revolution, SC "Continental" SA, bought the hotel and related land from the State Property Fund, on 07/24/1995. The hotel continued to operate until 15.6.1996, when functioning was ceased following several definitive structural expertises and the demolition began shortly after by order of the City Hall. The demolition process it is stopped by the active trials of legitimate heirs of Mr. Gheorghiu (Teodor Constantin Polter si Gheorghe Noel Polter) and one lady from Bucharest named Maria Moldovan. She is in possession of a will, according to which, everything Gheorghiu had owned belongs to her (although at the time of signing the will, the mentioned property is referring to an apartment in Bucharest). After the sentence received by Eugene Alfred Gheorghiu in 1949, in 1950 the appeal of the defendant was rejected, also the subsequent appeals until 1998, when the Supreme Court of Justice upheld the appeal brought by Maria Moldovan, as heir of Gheorghiu, who died in 1984.

*"Trying to push things forward, Urbanism Committee of the Constanta Local Council approved the Detailed Urban Plan (PUD) for the new Continental hotel yesterday. Most committee members agreed with the fact that Constanta needed a modern hotel. [...] The only dissenting opinion was the one of liberal councillor Gheorghe Dragomir. He proposed delaying the decision until the legal situation of the hotel Continental becomes clear."*⁷

Demolition works have stalled and left a dilapidated 2 storeys structure in the middle of the city, which obviously damaged its image and made a good place for the homeless. Accompanying the mayoral switch, in 2000, on 28.07., the demolition works were completed and earth was poured onto the former foundations with the intention of making a small park. Since then, the free land that destructures this



Image 6. Photo of the hotel's new wing built after the demolition of the first Hotel Continental.

portion of the city is used as display area for some of the sculptural works made by the participants of the International Summer School, coordinated by university professor Ion Titoiu in 2000.

The most recent article on the subject, dated July 2, 2013, informs us that the legal status of the land was clarified and the current owner, whose identity can not be revealed by the real estate agency that mediates the possible sale, put it on sale for 310,700 euros. Until the possible sale of this land and the initiation of new construction works (maybe of the 12-storey building proposed in the '90s and agreed upon at the time by the Commission of Urban Planning), looks like it will take some time in which we will be able to enjoy the abstract sculptures with no signatures or annotations of any kind that do not have the necessary consistency to fill this void left in the body of the city.



Image 7. Photograph representing Continental hotel in the state in which it participated, partially demolished, to the image of Constanța for several years

Illustration source

- 1 Lăpușan, Aurelia, Ștefan Lăpușan, Gheorghe Stănescu. *Constanța - File de album*, 84
- 2-4 Horia Maicu Personal Archive - Daniel Balint Collection
- 5 <https://picasaweb.google.com/117836439846085303388/ConstantaDeOdinioara02?authkey=Gv1sRgCKLo79ni08uKfQ>
- 6 <http://www.transira.ro/b3viewtopic.php?f=15&t=2173&sid=9b2eae1cc1028e0810a453ea63e9257&start=120>
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- 7 Radu Cornescu collection

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² Ibid., 173.

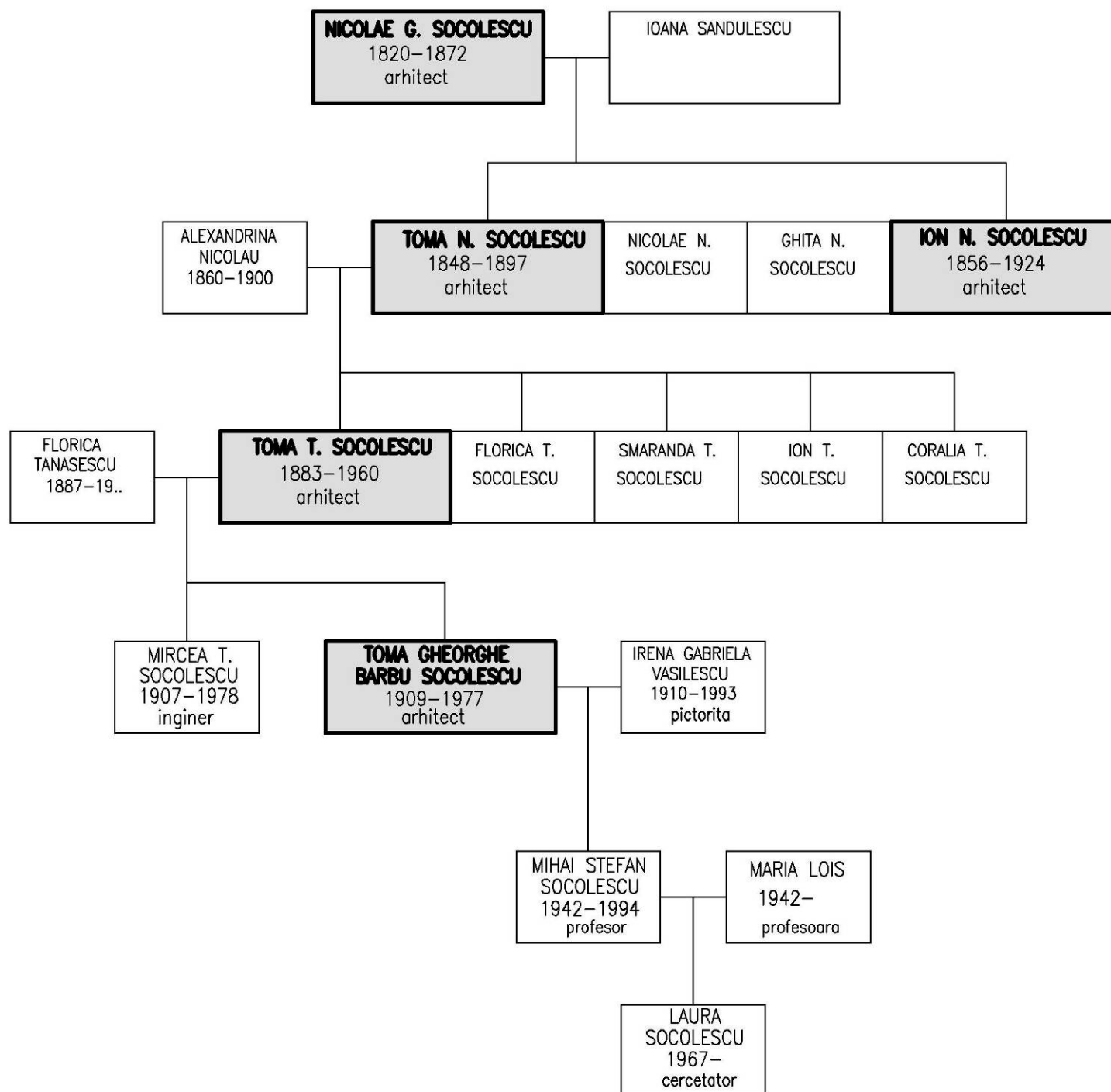
³ Doina Păuleanu, *Constanța: spectacolul modernității târzii: 1878-1928*, 223.

⁴ Șerban N. Ionescu, *Dicționarul panoramic al personalităților din România, sec.XX*, 242.

⁵⁵ „Azi s'a deschis primul hotel și restaurant din localitate”, 6.

⁶ „<Moștenitorii> nu au nici un drept asupra <Continental>-ului”, 1, 2.

⁷ „Chiar dacă procesul dintre S.C. <Continental> și Maria Moldovan nu s-a încheiat Comisia de Urbanism a aprobat P.U.D.-ul viitorului hotel <Continental>”, 10.



THE WORK OF THE SOCOLESCU ARCHITECTS 1840-1940

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Abstract

This paper aims at remembering the activity of the Socolescu architects, members of the same family, who stood out through their remarkable career. Their architectural works marked the image of many localities at national level as Bucharest, Ploiești, Câmpina, Sinaia, Vălenii de Munte, Constanța, Câmpulung Muscel, Iași and the like. Family would be the place where they form, where traditions take shape, are assimilated and perpetuated, family would create generations of architects and builders.

Key words: Socolescu, Neoclassicism, eclecticism, Art Deco, Neo-Romanian, Memories

The 1840 – 1940 period is addressed in point of the Romanian architecture and especially with respect to the Socolescu architects' work over a century. The paper is based on the information and documents from various sources, archives, publications of the age, family documents.

The period addressed, 1840 – 1940, is the age of the gradual modernisation of the Romanian society. Cutting out the Eastern culture influence and embracing the Western culture was the result of a process of rapid assimilation and harmonisation with the Western values. The reign of Alexandru Ioan Cuza succeeded by the Hohenzollern – Sigmaringen dynasty, ruled by Prince Carol I, triggered an urban progress which maintained even after Romania gained independence in 1877. The reign of Carol I (1881 – 1914) marked the beginning of a major economic, cultural, political and social development of the country which continued in the interwar period.

The five architects studied are:

Nicolae G. Socolescu (~1820-1878)

Toma N. Socolescu (1848-1897)

Ion N. Socolescu (1856-1924)

Toma T. Socolescu (1883-1960)

Toma Barbu T. Socolescu (1909-1977)

The first architect of the family was **Nicolae G. Socol(escu)** (~1820-1872). He was born in a village at the bottom of the Făgăraș Mountains, called Berivoiul Mare, where the "Socol" name is popular. He and his builder brothers settled in Ploiești around the year 1846. Nicolae G. Socolescu pursued architecture studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, which had been providing high-level architecture classes since 1766.

After settling in Ploiești, Nicolae G. Socolescu worked as an architect and builder, designing and erecting residential and commercial structures in the town and the surrounding areas between 1846 and 1872. He built structures with important purposes for the addressed age: dwellings, inns, hotels and stores. Having an Austrian academic background, his works bore the neoclassical architecture with

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Image 1. Hagi Niță Pitiș Inn, Ploiești, 1857



Image 2. Europa Hotel, Ploiești



Image 3. Victoria Hotel, Ploiești



Image 4. Hagi Petre Buzilă Inn, Ploiești, 1858

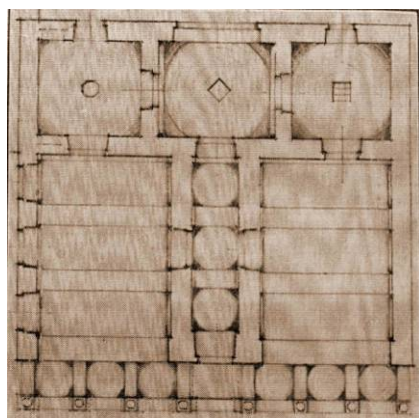


Image 5. The ground-floor of Hagi Petre Buzilă's stores Ploiești, 1860

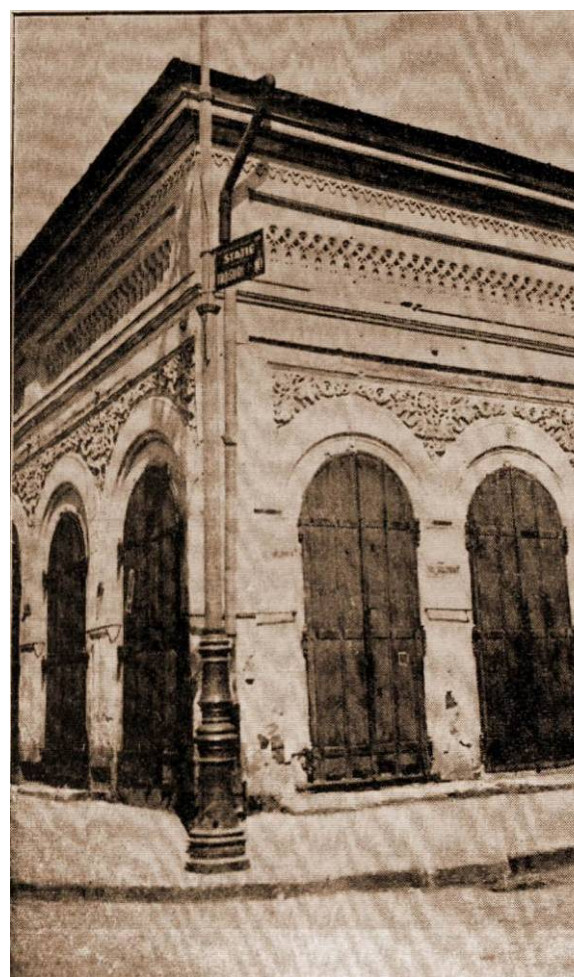


Image 6. View of Hagi Petre Buzilă's stores, Ploiești, 1860

Austrian neo-gothic influences, resulting in sober, symmetrical facades and high level windows. In 1950s, Nicolae G. Socolescu was the only Romanian architect in the county; he worked with foreign architects hired by the Ploiești Town Hall, as Swiss Johann Schlatter, architect of the town in 1843, or Austrian Karl Hartel, in 1847.

Through his talent and his profession, N. G. Socolescu initiated a sound activity, passionately pursued by two of his sons, Toma N. Socolescu and Ion N. Socolescu. The structures built by Nicolae G. Socolescu would mark the image of Ploiești until the eve of World War II, when some of them were demolished and replaced by the Central Covered Market Halls, while others were destroyed during the war or pulled down following the 1940 earthquake.

Toma N. Socolescu (1848-1897) was born in Ploiești. Wishing to follow in his father's footsteps, he pursued architectural studies at the School of Fine Arts in Bucharest, founded in 1964 during the reign of Alexandru Ioan Cuza and taking after the French pattern. The education at the School of Architecture of Bucharest, where he had Alexandru Orăscu – a classicist architect – as a teacher, his father's experience as well as the trips to European countries would contribute to his architect training.

Working in a Romania under an intense modernity process in all fields, Toma N. Socolescu had the opportunity to design and build both public and residential structures.



Image 7. Toma N. Socolescu

During his short activity (he died aged 49), Toma N. Socolescu had a prosperous activity as an architect and building contractor.

As his father, he was the only Romanian architect working in Ploiești and in the surrounding areas at that time. As an architect and builder, he designed and erected many residential structures as well as buildings for the public or civil administration institutions in Ploiești, as the Old Court (1879), the Public Baths Palace (1879), The School of Arts and Crafts (1886).

Toma N. Socolescu was the author of two important places of worship, symbols of Ploiești town, namely Sfanta Vineri Church (1879), bearing a Neoclassical style with German baroque influences and Sfintii Impărați Church (1894). In 1882, upon appointment to the office of chief architect of Ploiești County for a short time, he developed a complete urban plan called *The plan of Ploesci Town, the nomenclature*, and continued the development plan of Chestnut Boulevard (the current Independence Boulevard), started by architect Cristian Kertsch. Toma N. Socolescu was a representative of the late 19th century Neoclassicism in Romania.



Image 8. The Old Court, Ploiești, 1879

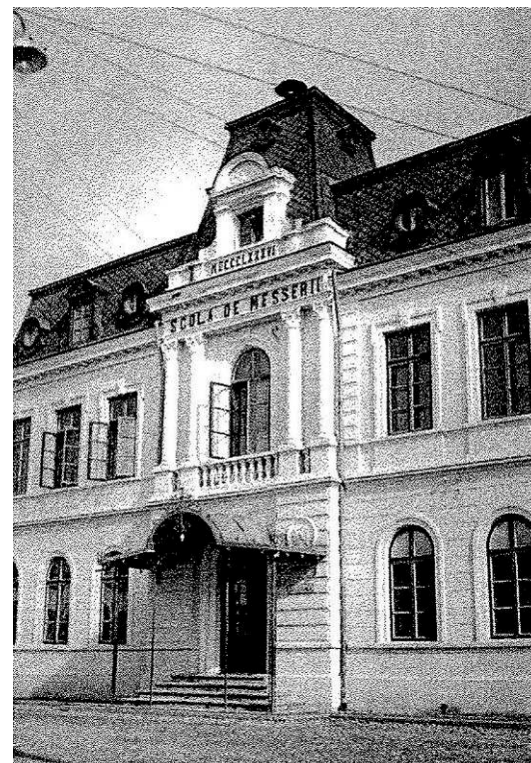


Image 9. The School of Arts and Crafts, Ploiești, 1886



Image 10. Sfânta Vineri Church, Ploiești, 1879

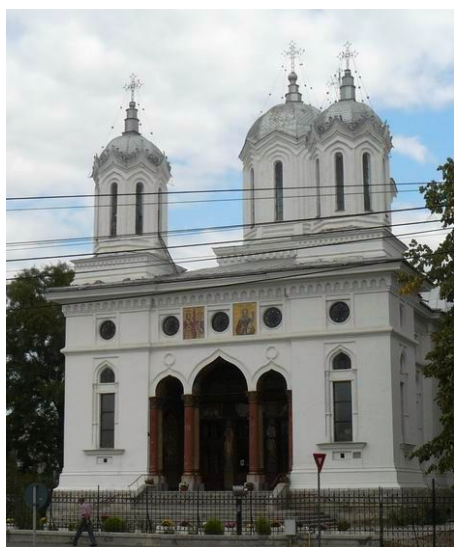


Image 11. Sfinții Impărați Church, Ploiești 1894



Image 12. Sfinții Impărați Church, Ploiești 1894

Ion N. Socolescu (1856-1924) is known in the Romanian architecture history as a dynamic architect whose practical activity as a designer and building contractor blended with his theoretical activity.

After pursuing engineering at the Polytechnic School of Bucharest, Ion N. Socolescu would attend architecture classes at the School of Fine Arts of Paris (1879 – 1883), thus belonging to the first wave of Romanian architects educated in Paris. Ion Mincu, Ion N. Socolescu, Ștefan Ciocârlan, Alexandru Săvulescu, Dimitrie Maimarolu and Toma Dobrescu were among the first architects who initiated the national style, breaking the academicism domination.

The architects pursuing courses at the School of Fine Arts, the contact with the French cultural and artistic environment were fundamental elements underlying the development of the new national style, subsequently called the Neo-Romanian style. Also, by attending archaeology classes, the future Romanian architects discovered the importance of the national monuments, understanding tradition's role and considering it a genuine source of inspiration.

The social and economic progress experienced by Romania after declaring its independence in 1878 and after the proclamation of the kingdom in 1881, was a proper and stimulating context for the young Romanian architects educated in Paris, creating the premises for the initiation of a national style, based on folklore and on ancient feudal architecture.

In his endeavour to create a national style, Ion Socolescu, together with Ion Mincu (the founder of the National School of Architecture), Grigore Cerchez and others, followed his own architectural expression path, using both elements of Romanian traditional architecture and details of Eastern architecture as sources of inspiration.

Ion N. Socolescu carried out his activity on several directions: architect, engineer and building contractor, theorist, founder and director of the *Annals of Architecture and Related Arts* journal, founding member of the *Society of Romanian Architects*, director and teacher at the *School of Architecture* between 1892 and 1897.

The theoretical activity of Ion N. Socolescu reflected especially in the pages of the *Annals of Architecture and Related Arts* journal, which he initiated and ran; he also funded its last issues. Even the first pages of the journal, considered an *open platform for the architects*, revealed in the first issue the essential problems facing the architects: the recognition of the architect profession and delimitation from the builder occupation; the need to establish a society of the Romanian architects and last but not least the lack of training the Romanian architects in a national school of architecture.

On 26 February 1891, on the initiative of Ion N. Socolescu, 24 young architects, most of them educated at the School of Fine Arts of Paris and collaborators at the *Annals of Architecture* journal, signed the Act of Incorporation of the Society of Romanian Architects. The journal was made available to the society. During meetings and in the pages of the journal, Socolescu advocated for the members of

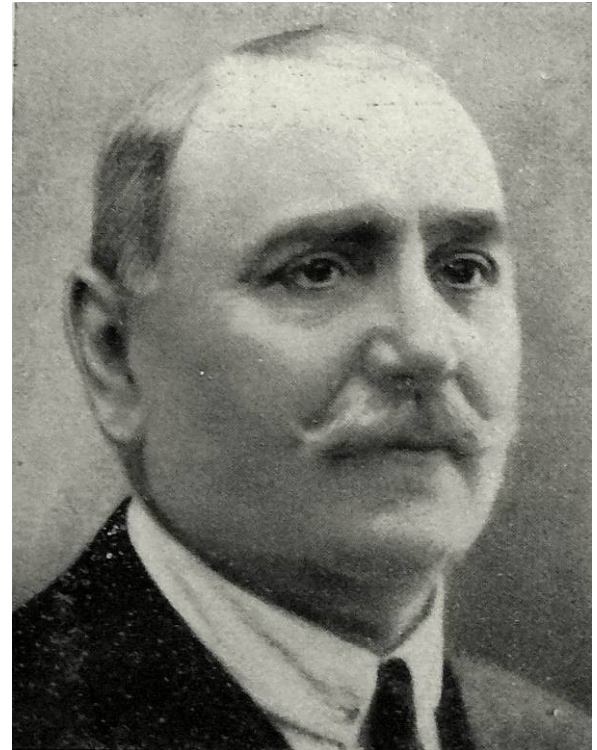


Image 13. Ion N. Socolescu



Image 14. Călărași Town Hall (currently the Art Museum), 1885



Image 15. Pitești Town Hall (currently the Art Museum), 1885



Image 16. Pitești Town Hall (currently the Art Museum), 1885

the Society of Architects taking action with respect to the Law for the organisation of the Technical Council, which does not benefit the architects, excluding them from the decision-making on the public structures erection.

Due to Ion N. Socolescu's initiative, the members of the Society of Romanian Architects' committee decided, in the meeting of March 1891, upon the establishment of a private School of Architecture. Ion Socolescu was elected director of the school and George Sterian, director of studies. The School of Architecture operated from 1892 until 1897 when, following an interpellation of Ion Mincu, a deputy in the Chamber of Deputies at that time, public funding was allocated for the Section of Architecture within the School of Fine Arts. Therefore, twenty-four students of the Society of Architects pursued the courses, being the first series of diplomats of the new school. Architects Dumitru și Constantin Herjeu, Toma Scarlat, Ion Traianescu, A. Cristoloveanu and Simion Vasilescu were some of them.

Ion N. Socolescu conducted his practical work after the year 1884, at first in Bucharest. After declaring its independence in 1878 and the proclamation of the kingdom in 1881, Romania experienced social and economic progress, a proper and stimulating context for the young architects graduated from the School of Fine Arts of Paris, creating the premises for the initiation of a national style, later called the Neo-Romanian style, based on folklore and on ancient feudal architecture. Ion Mincu, the founder of the Neo-Romanian style and of the National School of Architecture, wasn't the only active initiator of this new movement. Each of his fellow architects came with personal versions of a national style. Ion N. Socolescu was given a lot of credit for his activity and interest in the Eastern legacy of Romanian art, giving the Neo-Romanian style another interpretation.

Ion N. Socolescu built a great number of structures, most of them in Bucharest. The most important is the house of historian Ionnescu Gion, located at Lucaci Street (currently Udriște Street), which made the transition from the academic eclectic style to an own stylistic language consisting of elements of traditional architecture and of Eastern architecture, called by his peers "the Socolescu style".

The public buildings designed and erected, to a large extent, by Ion N. Socolescu became symbols of the towns. We mention some of them: the Palace of Justice in



Image 17. The Palace of Justice in Craiova (currently the University) 1890



Image 18. The Palace of Justice in Craiova



Image 19. The Carol I Normal School of Câmpulung Muscel (currently a highschool)



Image 20. The Carol I Normal School of Câmpulung Muscel



Image 21. Constanța Town Hall, currently the Popular Art Museum, 1894



Image 22. Domnească Church Bușteni, 1889



Image 23. Sfânta Vineri Church, Pitești, 1904-1908

Craiova (1890) (today's University), the Normal School of Câmpulung Muscel and Vasile Lupu School of Jassy, both of them currently serving as highschools; the Communal Palace of Constanța, currently the Popular Art Museum; Călărași Town Hall (1885) and Pitești Town Hall (1885) – currently both of them are the Art Museum.

We shouldn't overlook the Domnească Church in Bușteni and Sfanta Vineri Church in Pitești, currently functional and well preserved.

The decorative elements used by Ion N. Socolescu on the facades of various buildings with different purposes had the delicacy of lace, therefore getting closer to the Eastern vision. Although the facades were richly decorated, such decorations were wisely used in a balanced manner in well-delimited areas. The composition, the execution spoke originality and refinement. We notice the flawless execution and the design down to the last detail.

In close connection to the architect profession, Ion N. Socolescu also worked as a building contractor. The execution of the Palace of the House of Deposits and Savings, designed by French architect Paul Gottreau in 1894 and built by Ion N. Socolescu between 1895 and 1900 was remarkable. As a building contractor, he erected most of Bucharest structures he designed between 1894 and 1900.

Toma T. Socolescu (1883-1960) was the most important figure of the Socolescu family. A professional, with a rich intellectual culture, he left us a complex work, perpetuating the legacy left by three generations of architects.

The influence of the School of Architecture of Bucharest on Toma T. Socolescu's work was decisive for his entire activity. He pursued classes between 1901 and 1911. Ermil Pangrati, Grigore Cerchez, Ion Berindei, Ion Mincu and Petre Antonescu were some of his teachers. Ion Mincu was the one who instilled the future architect the love for tradition and for the study of the historical monuments and of polite and vernacular architecture monuments, in order to analyse them, to assume them, to take the main elements and put them into his own creations.

Toma T. Socolescu worked as an architect, building contractor, teacher and architecture theorist. He was the mayor of Ploiești Town and chief architect of Prahova County. He involved in various projects for the establishment of some cultural institutions in Ploiești.

Toma T. Socolescu had a rich publishing activity, he published specialist articles in various journals as *Architecture*, *Bulletin of the Historical Monuments Commission*, *Symmetry*. He facilitated the publication of translations of some specialist papers in the Urban Library: *Urbanism for all* studies, written by Jean Raymond and *Urban hygiene* by Paul Juillerat. In the latter, Toma T. Socolescu published a foreword called *Introductory study*, in which he explained the new urbanism principles and the importance of urbanism for the modernisation of urban and also rural areas.

Toma T. Socolescu helped writing the *Architecture, Urban public works, Town planning* and *Popular culture* chapters of *Ploesti Town Monography* paper (*Monografia Orașului Ploiești*), published in 1937 under the supervision of publicist Mihai Sevastopos. The chapter on the architecture of Ploiești Town was published separately in 1938 under the title *Architecture in Ploiești. Historical study* (*Fresca Arhitecților care au lucrat în România în epoca modernă 1800-1925*).

Between 1949 and 1953, Toma T. Socolescu wrote the biographical paper called *Memories* (*Amintiri*), a paper that addressed the family members, the context of training as an architect, the teachers and colleagues of the school of architecture, the beginnings of his architect profession, the First World War. The architect evoked the period of Neo-Romanian style crystallisation. The paper covered the travel notes *Around Ardeal, an architect's travel notes*, a trip made in 1924 together with Ion N. Socolescu who wanted to visit the place of birth of his father, Nicolae G. Socolescu.

Toma T. Socolescu elaborated a very important study for the Romanian architecture history, *The Panorama of the architects who worked in Romania in the modern age, 1800 – 1925* (*Fresca Arhitecților care au lucrat în România în epoca modernă 1800-1925*), a post-mortem publication. The paper provided data on the Romanian and foreign architects who worked in Moldavia and Wallachia in the 19th century until the year 1925 as well as considerations on the old Romanian architecture, filling out the *white pages* of the Romanian architecture history of that age.



Image 24. Toma T. Socolescu

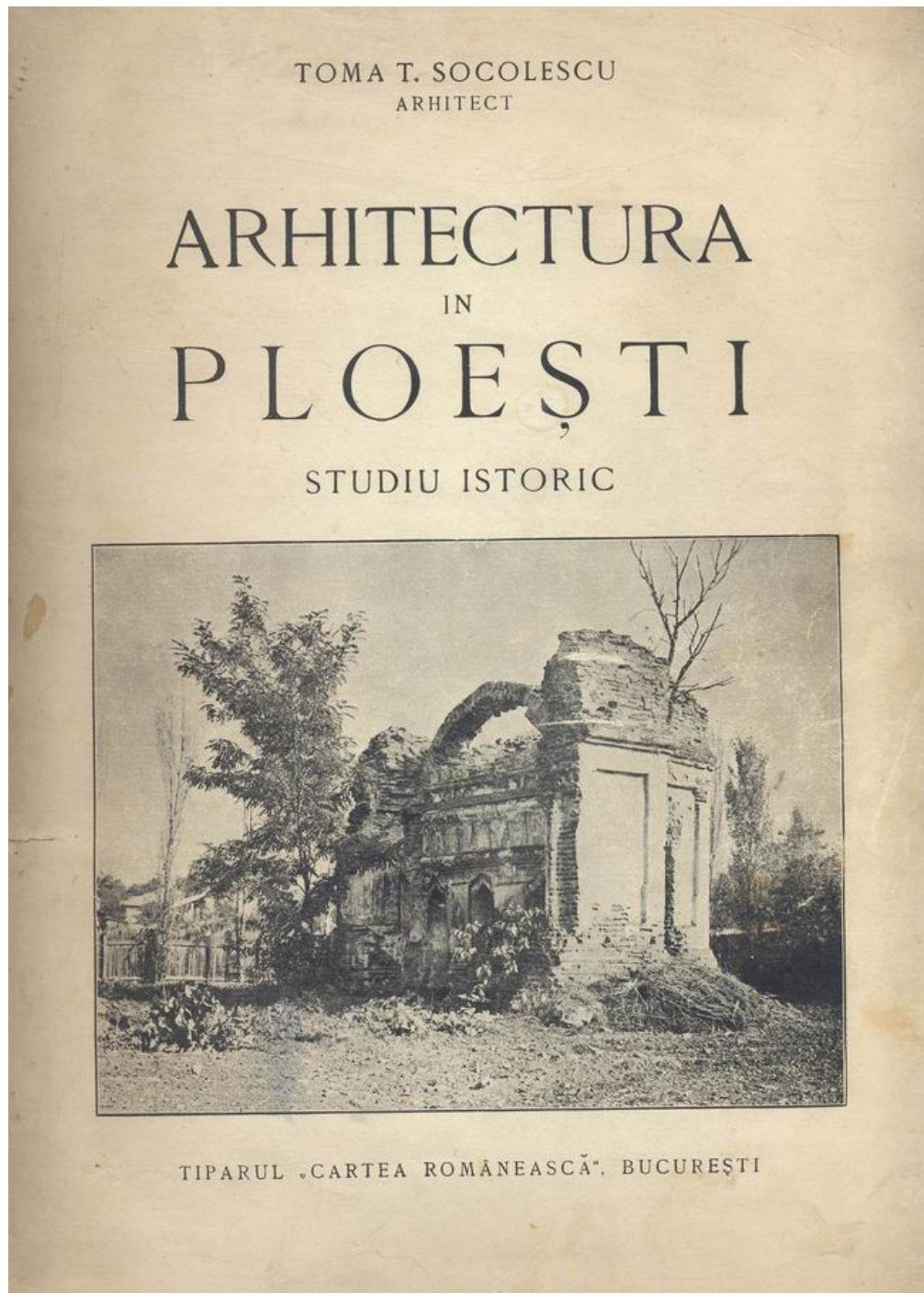


Image 25. Architecture in Ploesti. Historical study, 1938

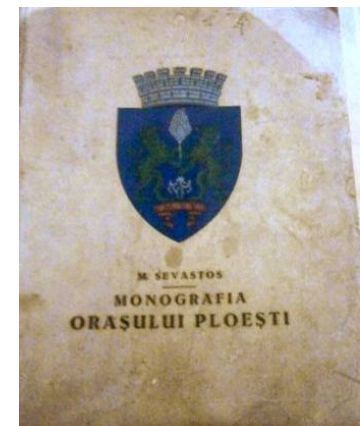


Image 26. Ploesti Town Monography, 1937

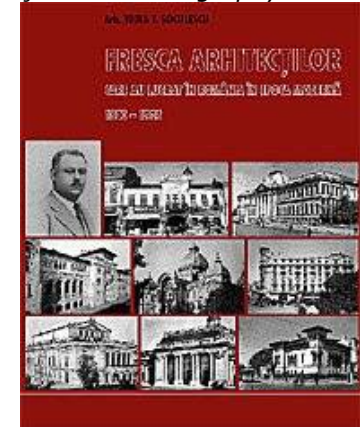


Image 27. The Panorama of the architects who worked in Romania in the modern age, 1800 – 1925, 2004

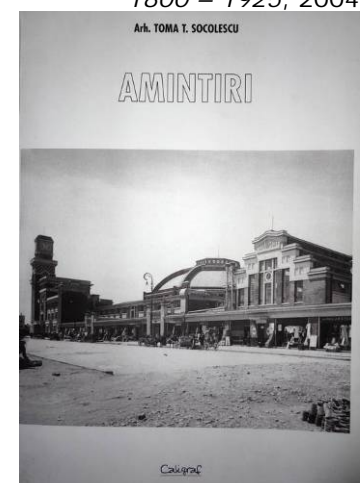


Image 28. Amintiri (Memories) 2004.



Image 29. The Palace of Commercial School in Ploiești (1924 – 1938)



Image 30. Highschool for boys of Câmpina, 1926 – 1929

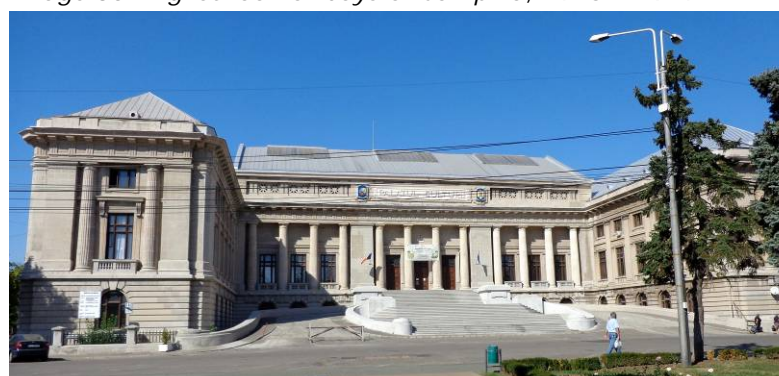


Image 31. The Palace of Justice in Ploiești (Palace of Culture) designed by architect Ernest Doneaud together with architect Toma T. Socolescu

Toma T. Socolescu designed many dwellings and tenement houses in Ploiești, Bucharest, Câmpina, Vălenii de Munte and Sinaia. We also mention some important public structures built by architect Toma T. Socolescu in Ploiești: Central Covered Market Halls, Saint John Cathedral, the Palace of Commercial School, Prahova Credit Bank, Teacher Resource Centre, The Palace of Justice, designed together with architect Ernest Doneaud.

The architect designed public structures, most of which being located in towns as Ploiești, Sinaia, Vălenii de Munte, Câmpina. Among the most important are: The Central Covered Market Halls in Ploiești (1929 – 1935), The Palace of Commercial Schools in Ploiești (1924 – 1938), Highschool for boys of Câmpina (1926 – 1929) and Buftea (1929 – 1934). Toma T. Socolescu designed, renovated and expanded town halls. He renovated and expanded the Town Hall of Sinaia (1913 – 1914), the Town Hall of Urlați (1914) and the Town Hall of Păulești (1937). He collaborated with architect Ernest Doneaud for the design of the Palace of Justice in Ploiești, at the same time designing the Courts of Law in Drăgănești (1916), Vălenii de Munte (1923) and Câmpina (1924).

A unique structure with a composition consisting of several joined volumes, the Central Covered Market Halls are an example of the mild 1920 – 1930 modernism, bearing an eclectic style with Art Deco influences, but also influences of Romantic architecture reflected in the presence of the clock tower. The structure built by Toma T. Socolescu was made of concrete steel under various forms, to achieve a wise



Image 32. The Central Covered Market Halls, Ploiești



Image 33. The Central Covered Market Halls, Ploiești



Image 34. The fish market hall, Ploiești

use of the spaces by large openings but also a remarkable architectural expressiveness. Both the design and the erection of the concrete steel structures using the latest technologies represented a novelty for our country in those times and gave the entire ensemble the expression of modernity.

The ribbed dome covering the market hall along with the dormer windows increased lighting inside the structure by means of lightwells at the ribbed dome level. The fish market hall was covered by raised transverse arches which bear a longitudinal beam system supporting the roof. The arches and beams were visible making the interior pleasant to the eye.

Also, the technological equipment – the installations – was fixed by well-known companies.

The project was a confirmation of Toma T. Socolescu's professionalism, of the way he approached a programme of such complexity, a novelty for our country. The project was a demonstration of the integration of the modern functional demands and the cutting-edge technology in a project.

The Central Covered Market Halls ensemble represented for Ploiești the organisation, for the first time, of the food markets according to hygienic and economic criteria, but also of a public space between the three symbols of the town, Saint John Cathedral, the Central Covered Market Halls and the Palace of Culture, a project for which Socolescu collaborated with architect Ernest Doneaud. From a plastical perspective, the structures built by Socolescu, whether mansions, tenement houses, schools or churches, characterized by stylistical coherence in using the Neo-Romanian style by interpreting some elements of the old Romanian architecture, porches, gazebos and borders. The only exception was the Central Covered Market Halls, which bore a mild modernist style with Art Deco influences due to the specific programme, the dimensions and location in the centre of Ploiești.

Contemporaneous with the modernist architects of the age, Toma Socolescu remained faithful to his beliefs of creating a modern national architecture based on the traditions of ancient architecture, on the byzantine legacy, focusing on completing his works in the Neo-Romanian style. Socolescu was not the only one who displayed a reserved attitude towards cubism. Most Romanian architects, members of the Society of Romanian Architects and collaborators of *Architecture* journal showed an obvious preference for traditionalism. The majority of projects published in the pages of the journal were completed in a Neo-Romanian style or in a mild modernist style as Art Deco, the decorations playing an important role. The works of modernist architects as Henrietta Delavrancea, Octav Doicescu or Horia Creangă were poorly represented in the *Architecture* journal or were published only around 1940.

Besides being an architect, Toma T. Socolescu was drawn to the research of the ancient Romanian architecture. He studied traditional dwellings from various regions of the country, publishing studies on *Hagi Prodan House* (1916) and *Dobrescu House* (1926). In *Architecture* journal he published drawing drafts, water colour-based works, photos, articles on the old Romanian houses in different areas of the country.

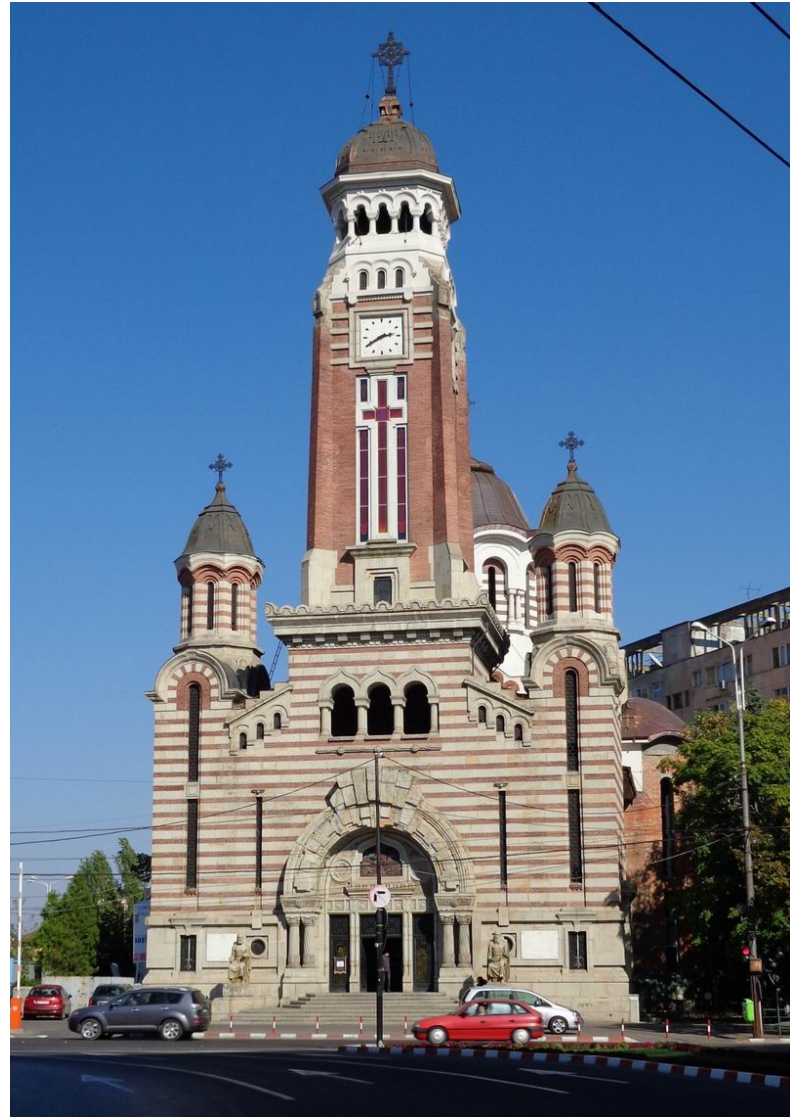


Image 35. Saint John Cathedral, side view Ploiești, 1925



Image 36. Toma Ghe. Barbu Socolescu

Toma Gheorghe-Barbu Socolescu (1909-1977), son of Toma T. Socolescu was born in Ploiești. Being very good at drawing, as all the architects in his family, he would pursue architectural studies at the School of Fine Arts in Paris between 1929 and 1937, industrial, civil and naval architecture major. Even as a student, he accomplished the interior decorations within the Normandie passenger ship, being part of the team run by architect Roger Henry Expert. After his return home, Toma Gheorhe Barbu Socolescu worked as an architect – his specialty – within some design institutes for civil and industrial constructions as well as in the educational field.

Conclusions

The paper addressed the practical and theoretical activity of the Socolescu architects. Nicolae G. Socolescu and Toma N. Socolescu were the representatives of 19th century Neoclassical architecture. Ion N. Socolescu was credited with being among the first Romanian architects who fought in late 19th century for determining the new institutions of the modern Romanian state recognise the architect profession and the value of the architect. It was due to his endeavour that the first specialist publication, *The Annals of Architecture and Related Arts*, took shape. The journal would change in a decisive manner the vision on the architect profession, showing also the need of a relationship between architecture and the other arts and implicitly between artists. It would become the open *platform* of the Society of Romanian Architects, founded on Ion N. Socolescu's initiative. The School of Architecture, operating between 1892 and 1895 was also a fruit of Ion N. Socolescu's effort.

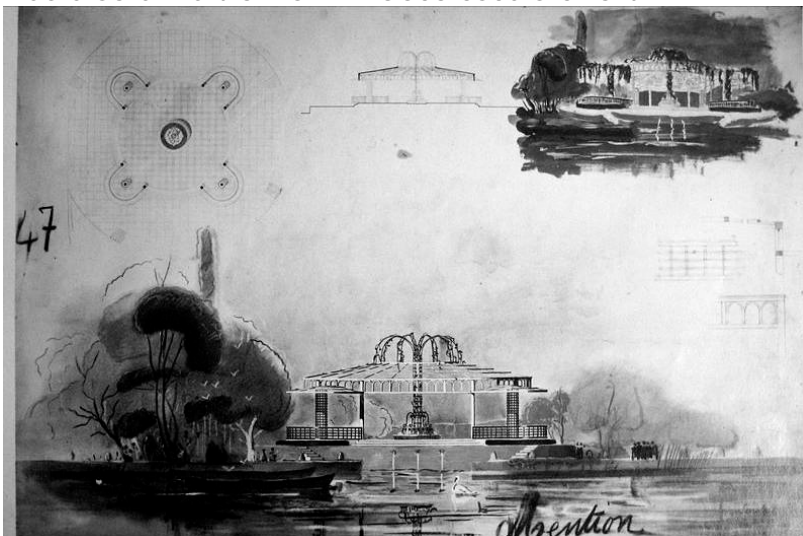


Image 37. Drawing by Toma Barbu Socolescu (fountains) – the first mention within Delaon Price in 1938

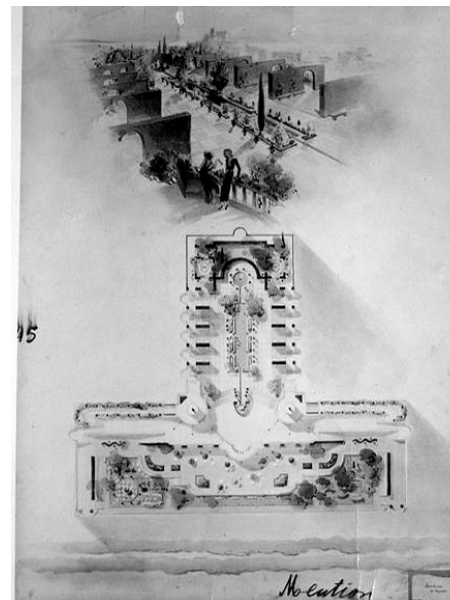


Image 38. Drawing by Toma Barbu Socolescu (gardens) – the first mention within Delaon Price in 1938

Along with Ion Mincu, Ion N. Socolescu was coined to be one of the Romanian architects who advocated in late 19th century for creating and promoting a national architecture. The dwellings and public structures designed by Ion N. Socolescu, belonging to the new Romanian architecture trend, introduced to us the stylistic language of Ion N. Socolescu. Their architecture spoke originality, putting them in a special place in the Romanian architecture history.

Toma T. Socolescu was considered the most valuable architect in the Socolescu family, standing out through a rich practical work as an architect, publicist and teacher, focusing on the architecture theory and criticism. His complex personality was shaped by three generations of architects and builders in his family who guided him towards understanding the landmarks of architecture profession, namely design, functional character and especially the flawless execution.

The works of the Socolescu architects form the heritage of outstanding Romanian architecture. They belong to the Romanian architects elite. Most of the existent works of architects Toma N. Socolescu, Ion N. Socolescu and Toma T. Socolescu representing various architectural programmes, dwellings, schools, churches, covered market halls, are on the historical monuments list.

We conclude by providing a paragraph of Toma T. Socolescu's *Memories* on the architect profession: "Nowadays, the architect must have the qualities of the artist and the knowledge of the technician. All beautiful architecture works reflect the harmonious blend of such properties in their authors. Architecture is not a decorative art as many still deem and practice it; it is a genuine body just as the achievements of the universe, the art of balance, of proportion, of perfectly adapting to the environment, the customs, the climate as well as to the scientific requirements of the problem to be solved".

Illustration source

1-7, 13	Toma T. Socolescu, <i>Amintiri</i> . București: Caligraf Design, 2004
8-12, 14-18,	Author's collection
21-23, 29-35	
19-20	Sergiu Nistor collection
24	Archives Laura Socolescu
36	UAR Archives
37-38	http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toma_Barbu_Socolescu

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THE HOUSE AS SUPPORT OF SOCIAL AND FAMILY RELATIONS: A CASE STUDY IN THE VILLAGE OF MARGINEA, SUCEAVA COUNTY

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Abstract

The paper analyses the homes of Romanian migrants built in rural areas, after the fall of the communist regime, as a support of social relations. It also examines the building and furnishing of homes in relation to the family and gender. Indeed, the migration strategy of Romanian migrants from rural areas consists in a collective effort and close cooperation between members of the extended family, in order to access all the resources required for the construction of their homes.

Keywords: home-gender relationship, home - family relationship, migration, village of origin

1. Introduction

In many cultures, the house was perceived not only as a material framework that shelters a family, but as a manifestation of its existence, the pair home - family being inseparable, the word "home" often meant family too, designating the household, as well as land, livestock and even the ancestors.¹ Indeed, in the traditional world of Maghreb, where the patrilineal type of family had a great signification in the social identification of the individual, male or female, the concept of "home" - "the support of this ancestral identity" – is confused with its inhabitants.² The same way, Daniels notes that "the Japanese term for house, ie, includes the household, the entire family clan, genealogy, family wealth and its territory".³ In what concerns the Taiwanese society, Tan notices how it stands as a "housing-based society"⁴ the term 'house' including both the physical property and the people that live on it. That's why the processes of starting a family, building and decorating a house combine one another: "the construction and decoration of the house is closely related to the transformation of marital relations [...]",⁵ because "marriage fidelity and house building are core values" of the traditional Taiwanese community. As a consequence, the success of a marriage cannot be conceived without the material support - the house – where these marital relationships are born.⁶

Another aspect to be mentioned here is the analysis of the house - gender relationship. Marion Ségaud notes that "the close connection between the woman and the house has consequences upon the house, its management and the degree of openness in relation to the public space".⁷ In fact the woman - house relationship is found in all traditional cultures around the world, the space of the house being segregated in some cases, according to gender relations - as in Maghreb⁸ or even in the French traditional society. In this respect, Martine Segalen notices that the rural house was strongly womanized, namely the garden, the house and the yard in the traditional French society, all these being tended to by the woman, while the field and the barn were associated with the man⁹. Even in the Japanese contemporary houses we witness a "feminization of the domestic environment".¹⁰ Furthermore, in an ethnological research dedicated to the working class in Asketorp (Sweden), the researcher will discover that the interior decoration of the house - except the garage which is used as a workshop by men – bears the exclusive signature of the wife.¹¹ For the Norwegian society, Marianne Gullestad observes the

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involvement of the couple in the interior space decoration, both helping and completing each other: she takes care of the aesthetic and financial details, and he organizes and performs technical tasks,¹² the DIY being 90% a male domestic activity.¹³

Moreover, the house-gender relationship is reflected not only in the arrangement and the destination assigned to the space, but also in the construction process - another area in which the distribution of roles was by gender - as the Romanian sociologist Stahl recorded:

"These works were carried out by a more or less numerous group, working even when a carpenter was directing the work, surrounded by family members [...] Men and women working together, with different tasks for each, the toughest being assigned to men. They would cut the wood, hammer the beams and planks and assemble them all. Women would cover the walls with a layer of plaster, paint it and then decorate it at regular periods of time".¹⁴

2. A case study in the village of Marginea, Romania

The paper uses a fieldwork carried out by the author in the village of Marginea, between 2009 and 2011. Marginea is a village in northern Romania (Suceava county), close to the Ukrainian border. In 2011, according to the census, the number of migrants reached 2153 persons (without counting the persons temporarily absent from the locality) out of a total of 10529 inhabitants. The emigration rates in Marginea (about 28%) are among the highest in Suceava county, Marginea occupying the second position after the city of Cajvana (33%). The income remains the main reason for the temporary migration of Romanians to Italy,¹⁵ a lot of them being from Marginea. The number of houses built between 1994 and 2011 - within 17 years - raised to circa 1750 units, out of a total of 3 459 units. Indeed, building a house in the homeland is one of the migrants' targets. While the houses become more like a proof of success and upward social mobility, attracting a great part of the migrants' savings and remittances, they contribute to a radical transformation of the rural landscape. This phenomenon is well illustrated by one of the locals in Marginea "what Ceausescu did not achieve in his search for urbanization, loss of local identity and traditions, the capitalism did it, with the opening of borders and migration to Italy".¹⁶

The Romanian migrants in Italy are described as "individualists", the support networks being functional only within extended or spiritual family - godparents.¹⁷ Indeed, the field research in Marginea has revealed this sense of parental duty toward the new generation: to provide dowry for daughters and help sons with building new houses, as "there is no culture of living on rent."¹⁸ This desire for an owned home was also emphasized by a Romanian sociologist:

"Paul Stahl highlights the importance of the property in the relationship between the peasant and the house. Individual does not have a house, but HIS own house. Rental does not exist in rural areas. Stahl explains this attachment by the intimate relationship between the house and the family because you do not get married if you have no home; living as a tenant in another peasant's home is an exceptional situation, extremely rare."¹⁹

Thus, G., a woman of over 60, mother of three sons (now adults, parents on their turn) worked for 5 years in Israel, after 1989. She did not return at all in the country during this period. G. had also worked there during the communist regime (for periods between 1 and 3 months). She invested the money she earned in the houses of her first two children: "I made a stone fence, the nice kind. This [the

stone fence] cost me ... I do not know how many thousands of euros [...] I had to put a stove in the house [of the son], [...] it is still not plastered [...].”²⁰ In another case, P.A. family – who worked in a factory in Banat for 10 years, during the communist period (they returned to Marginea in 1990) – managed to save money for the house. They built their house in 1982, but lived in it after they returned from Banat. One of the husbands’ parents kept a check on the building works: “The parents built it [...] well, we also came on the holidays.”²¹ After 1990, it was Mrs. P.A.’s turn – mother of 4 children – to help her two elder sons with the construction of their new homes, built with the money earned in the US. The support given by parents consisted in supervising the building works and as workforce – to save some money –, although it was not only them working, but together with other workers. Mrs. PA’s brother also worked in the United States for 8 years, after a period of 5 years spent in Italy. He used to come home in the month of August. His house was started by his mother, a widow – and then it was continued by a brother-in-law –, he would send her money which she used to buy building materials. After finishing the house (a process that lasted for 4-5 years) he got married: “and he finished it before getting married [...] Like this, step by step.”²² Similarly, T.B. helped the children build their houses – sold the cows one by one and gave them the money – and, in addition, he supervised the works when they were away for work abroad: “He sends me money and I take care of everything”²³ – he explains when speaking about one of his sons that is currently in England. In another case, the eldest son of H. family, who had been in Italy for two years, sent money to his parents to help them finish the works on his future home. The H. family has several enterprises, thus managing to collect the necessary financial resources to change the old house – they added an attic and extended it – designed for their eldest son.

MC. is a young migrant that returned to the country, along with her husband and two small children. She owns an orchard, as well as potato and maize crops, as she advocates for ecologic living and prefers to eat from her own garden. The young woman resorts to family’s help with the housework: “[...] if I call someone, I call my relatives, my family, as I call them and they come and help methey do not really want to be helped back or accept money, no, no, they are not like that. Yes, it happens sometimes that they need something and I may help them, why not?”²⁴ Thus, we notice the survival of the mutual aid or even barter practices in Marginea. The help of the family was efficient inclusively in rehabilitating the old house, in the works participating both herself, and her husband, together with the extended family: “everybody in the family helped me, if it were to pay the building contractors ...I think that not even now were we move into it... very often people to be paid are more expensive than the building materials.”²⁵

As already shown, there is a very active network of family support in this village, where the family links are also used to transmit various techniques and construction patterns, on an informal basis. For example, in the village of origin, the process of home building was monitored on site by parents or a relative and by the migrant, from a distance.²⁶ In some cases, the migrants decided to send the plan of the future house to the parents and the parents were responsible for the building works organization and supervision. They are in charge with the purchase of the land or concession (where appropriate), with obtaining permits, building materials and site supervision. Depending on their age and abilities, parents help themselves with the manual labor, to cut down the costs.

Practices of reciprocity are common within the extended family. These practices were common in the past, when even the neighbors were helping with the building work or wall painting: “It is usually the parents, brothers and sisters to work together with the boy that had to get married. The sons that left the parental house were also called to help their younger brother, in the same way in which they had

been helped. The family relations were often exceeded, neighbors also taking part [...]."²⁷ An example is N.S. family. They used to come to the country only once a year, in the summer. Nevertheless, they succeeded to build a new house with the help of some cousins of the husband. The building works also continued while the family was in Italy; the husband's cousin took care of the site and he asked for advice from his mother-in-law, who guided him: "[...] go and fetch this, put this here or there, do that ... as if she were at home. We... were sponsoring, we were the ones with the money [...]."²⁸

In the village of Marginea, there are cases when two or three (more rarely) generations cohabit on the same plot. This is the result of maintaining the tradition that the younger son gets married and inherits the parental household. In the case of migrants' households, the elderly's house is either demolished to make room to the new house or kept, not to be lived by the young family, but the boy's parents; the latter are living in another house on the same plot and both buildings share a common courtyard. Therefore, the parents will remain in the old, traditional house, or in an extension when the house is demolished. The other children (boys) build new houses for themselves, by their own means or with the help of the parents, usually located on the parents' land. Therefore, each couple has its own house, even though they may share a common courtyard:

"Despite a majority which supported the beneficial effects of the systematization projects, some architects and anthropologists, however, drew attention to the dangers of the passage from individual housing to block of flats, and also to the peasant's reluctance toward this change ... The main danger consisted in the destruction of individualism and specificity of the peasant world which resided in two fundamental characteristics: a house per each family and a small village community."²⁹

These houses are located either in the garden or in the parental household courtyard, or in another area of the village - on plots inherited from a member of the extended family (grandparents, uncles, aunts). In the case the parents do not have enough land, they turn to other means: concession of a lot from the Town Hall or purchasing it from a private agent. In both cases, we have found the tendency to group the extended family's members, the new plot being located either in the proximity of the parental household or near the house of a brother or cousin. On the other hand, the misunderstandings that have arisen between a woman and her in-laws can lead to the abandonment of the new home: it is the case of the V. family - despite the fact that they have a brick house built (before their departure for Italy) on the plot of the husband's parents, they plan to build another home, located in the same village, but in a nicer place, far from the mother-in-law.

Nevertheless, a small number of households have designed their new houses with one flat per floor, reserving to children a suite in the parental home. This living practice is not part of the local tradition, but what draws our attention is the parents' concern to provide a home for each of their children (usually for their sons). For example, the M. family is living downstairs, though they built a house with an attic. The upper level is not furnished and it will so remain until their son (now aged 13) gets married. Until then, the mother uses the rooms in the attic to keep plants in winter, to protect them from freezing, and also to iron and dry out the laundry. Similarly, the D.B. family, though having a large house with one floor and a loft, they only furnished the ground floor, even changing the interior configuration of the living room and certain finishes over time, while the floor remained in the same condition. That was initially designed for the boy, but the young man is today a student in Iași and his mother is thinking of buying him an apartment in Iași or Suceava. As for the house of H. family, even though they have only one boy, aged one (at the moment of the interview), they built a three-storey house. They are living in Italy, where they bought a much smaller home than the one in Marginea. Since

the husband owns a company of interior renovations and earns more abroad, he does not have any plans to return to Marginea soon. The mother thinks that, in the future, when their children grow up, each of them will occupy one level of the house, while they will move into the extension.

With her attitude towards the family and home, the woman could build or ruin the reputation of her husband and the household. Thus, the diligence and prudence of the woman were qualities that would bring her honour before the community, included in the proverbs on the topic: "A woman makes a house and a woman ruins it"³⁰ or "little spender woman makes a good house"³¹ or "the house of a big spender woman is not solid".³² Thus, in the past times, a house without a woman could not exist:

"In rural and even urban Romania, the notion of 'casa' is the sum of two inseparable elements: family and building. Building a house means a family and vice versa. 'Casa' (house) and 'familia' (family) have the same reference field: legacy, safety, stability, long-term."³³

On the other hand, in the traditional rural society, a few women would find their fulfillment outside the institution of marriage. We may say that a woman could not have a house unless she got married. Therefore, in the Romanian rural area, the building of a house was the responsibility of the man and his family, and the construction process usually started long before the time of marriage. For example, in the village of Marginea, it was rare for the parents to build houses for their daughters, except for the cases when their only child is female: "those who have only one girl, surely built a house for her [...] I've met such cases ... more rarely."³⁴ Indeed, as professor Stahl noticed, in the Romanian rural area "The obligation to build a house was, in a general line, the boy's family."³⁵

Another custom is the one related to the newlyweds' settlement in the boy's house, both in the case of endogamous and exogamous marriages:

"[...] where the boy is, there the girl should go, it is not the boy that goes to the girl, but the girl to the boy, this is the normal way, this is the way it is all over Romania [...] if I am from here, the girl comes here, normally [...] it is hard for her too if she comes here [...] but women think differently, adjust differently, it is easier to them [...]"³⁶

Thus, N.M.'s wife, a native from Bacau, will live in Marginea with her husband, in the new house to be built in the proximity of N.M.'s parents household. The young migrants build their house in Marginea and not in Bacau, having the consent of the girl's parents, as "[the girl's] parents came and liked it."³⁷ However, there are cases (for serious reasons) when the husband moves in his wife's house: "I came to my wife ... I got married ... this is not a problem, I do not mind it."³⁸ His parents' house is situated toward the outskirts of the village and, even though they lived in their household after marriage, the young couple decided to build the new house on the land of the wife's parents. The motive is mostly economic: here the land is situated in a strategic position for the new restaurant they are planning to open, in a specially furnished space downstairs.

The houses built for their sons by the parents, and even the houses built by migrants themselves (unmarried men) remain unfurnished until the time of marriage, because it is a matter of the woman to invest in the furnishing of her new home. Mothers prepare the girls' dowry many years prior to the marriage time. These practices also survived after 1990. Thus, G.M. had in her courtyard 30 geese because, as far as she could recall:

"I was making pillows for the girl ... when I started to make the dowry she was [...] about three years old [...]. When she married at 20 [...], it was then when I sewed the pillow buttons. I sewed then one hundred buttons."³⁹

The girl was born in 1977 and married in 1997. The dowry consisted of:

"[...] all kinds of blankets, as they were that time: folding bed couch, sofa [...] six eiderdowns, fourteen large pillows, ten small, fifty meters of carpet by meter [...] and fifty meters cloth of patches... three blankets, three wardrobes, a pair of kitchen furniture, two sewing machines, two showcases, a mirror, ten chairs [...] armchairs, seven tables, a truck [...] plus her clothes [...] in the showcases she had glassware, what must be, full showcases [...] then dishes [...] she took pots, she took everything that is absolutely necessary, also needles and spools of sewing silk, everything."⁴⁰

Formerly, it was the woman's dowry that decorated the house of her husband. For example, MA's dowry –she worked in Italy for two years, between 1999 and 2001 – was made by her mother and later by her and her sister but the new house (where she is living now, together with her family) was built by her husband before getting married (they got married in 2001):

"So I contributed financially too little to what can be seen here ... only the finishing touches ... my husband did well, ... earned lots of money ... then he went to Turkey with blue jeans, for profiteering ... he did it well there, too."⁴¹

Thus, she came with the dowry and he had the house: "I married with a dowry. I bought the bedroom furniture, [...] carpet, linens [...] I also had pillows."⁴² The bedroom on the ground floor is furnished with items from her dowry: "from me, from my money ... I spent a lot of money on it."⁴³

In another case, MM got married in 1996 and brought with her furniture, linens, and needlepoints "once they were sewn." MM recounts she had as dowry "bare necessities: linens, beds, pillows ... cabinets and a kitchen table, four chairs and he [her husband] had that house over there [an old building]... and then we worked and built it [the new house]."⁴⁴ Similarly, P. practiced suitcase commerce in Serbia when she was younger (42 years old), immediately after 1989. She bought goods from other towns of the country and sold them to Serbians: "I stayed there for two weeks and then came back home, stayed at home for a short time, and again took little merchandise, ran there again [...] I went for the corn harvest [...] I stayed there for two-three weeks, then returned home with some money."⁴⁵ Since the first children were two girls, P. invested a part of the money earned in Serbia in their dowries: "pillows, cloths, clothes, beds, carpets."⁴⁶

Today, nevertheless, the obligation of the girl to come with a dowry and even of the boy's to have a house before getting married is less strong: "Formerly, it was customary in this place that the girl has the dowry and the boy has the house, now they get married and make it together ... now it is modernized."⁴⁷

While the women's role in choosing the external shape and interior configuration of their future home was poorly represented before 1990, the international migration of women, their influence and preferences are feeling more strongly now, mainly in the domestic sphere. Thus, MC., a young mother, about 23 years old, explains the division of the roles in designing the shape of their new home (a refurbished traditional house): "It is more me who came up with the ideas and he [the husband] put them into practice ... if it's good, he would put them into practice, if not, he says 'they are not good because I cannot do it'. "⁴⁸ Instead, in Mrs. S.N.'s answer concerning the person being responsible for the design, it is difficult to determine the role of each partner: "We were in Italy drawing. Here we will place the entrance, a room, the bathroom, the stairs [...] we were drawing all Sunday."⁴⁹ However, builder S. tries to talk with both spouses before starting the building work: "until I realize who the boss is, I call both of them [...]. "⁵⁰

Today, the contribution of women in making new homes is particularly manifested in what regards obtaining permits, preparation of inheritance or concession/purchase documents, supervising the

site, establishing the interior configuration of the domestic space, as well as choosing the finishes and other appliances. In some cases, they can even help with the building works. Thus, D., a woman migrant settled in France for 14 years, built a new house in Marginea for herself, with the help of her mother (her father was still alive). The building works started 7 years ago, around the year 2003 and it was completed in the same year. D sent money to her mother for the house construction. She paid the builders and made the house blueprint - D did not suggest anything to her. Moreover, D was living in France and did not know the prices and the constructions market in Romania. Her mother informed her that "with this money you can make such a house, with ... rooms and a terrace."⁵¹ Again, it was D's mother who took care of the works supervision and lands purchase for the homes of two other children, and even made the blueprints for one of them.

Conclusions

We have shown how migrants in Marginea, continue to cling to the old ways of living and construction practices drawing all the extended family together, by changing the configuration of their homes. Indeed, these practices evolve slowly because they have been internalized by individuals over time, becoming a part of their internal structure,⁵² unlike the architectural forms that are more unstable.⁵³ Regarding the women's role in choosing the external shape and interior design of their home, we noticed that, once with the international migration of women, their influence and preferences are felt more and more in the domestic sphere, as "migrant women are more open to change than their husbands, a visible aspect at the level of the house."⁵⁴ In other words, we can assume that the transformation of the interior space of the rural house happens with the emigration of women,⁵⁵ but the choice of new materials and construction techniques is related to men's employment in the building sector.

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 - ¹⁰ Yasuyuki Kurita, "Ordre et désordre domestique", 178.
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CULTURAL LANDSCAPE. MURCIA–SPAIN

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ABSTRACT

Murcia, the city capital of the homonymic autonomous region in Spain, represents history, culture and richness. The cultural heritage originates several centuries ago, starting with the Phoenician times, going through Islamic, Middle Ages and Baroque, where the last was a flourishing one, leading to the current Murcia.

The 17th and 18th centuries were prosperous for Murcia, when most of the old buildings were rebuilt during that time, mainly in the baroque style. Urbanism and the baroque architecture joined together and turned into a cultural urban public space, in which the enhanced public gardens took a front seat.

A result of an intense historic tradition, coming from an overlap of the cultures and from the strategic geographic location at the Mediterranean Sea, as well as setting at the border between the highland and mountain areas, the built patrimony in Murcia is a proof of the past and reflects the intersection between tradition and modernity, with a constant concern about how to make it known to the contemporaries.

Keywords: Spain, Murcia, cultural landscape, religious architecture, public buildings, bridges

The cultural experience in Murcia....

To travel from Murcia to Bucharest is a real adventure, due to the long distance. The only option would be the airplane that will take you to Valencia in three hours. From there, you will have an hour trip by subway. If lucky, you will find a train in the Valencia station to take you to Murcia in another three hours. If not, you will have to wait in a hotel overnight, which is not a bad thing, as the evening life is quite pleasant in Valencia. Once in the Murcia station, located near downtown, the cultural experience can start immediately. All this journey was necessary to get to San Antonio Catholic University in Murcia, in an exchange with Erasmus Mobility grant. It was at the Faculty of Architecture of the above University where I found the first information about the cultural heritage of Murcia city, about the academic university, the local trends and practices in the field of architecture and urbanism.

LOCATION

The autonomous community of Murcia region is located in the south-eastern part of the Iberian Peninsula, has a 11,317 sqkm area (representing 2.2% of the total surface of Spain), and a population of 1,335,792 inhabitants, where almost 30% live in Murcia city.¹



Image 1. The location of Murcia region in Spain

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The region is one of the 17 in the Spanish kingdom. The official language is Castilian (Spanish) and also a regional language, specific to that area of Murcia. The capital city is Murcia, a word from Latin that means *mulberry*. The name comes from the time when the Romans occupied the region, which was abundant in mulberry trees. Their arbutus and leaves were used to feed the silkworms, as the region was a large silk exporter. Important cities are Lorca, Cartagena, Alicante (even if from another autonomous region).

Close to the present Murcia, the archaeological research studies have revealed the relics of the first human settlements, dating back in the Neolithic era (3rd century BC).² The region was populated many centuries ago, thanks to its advantageous location, as its land is fertile and the hills have large surfaces of orchards. Situated between the Mediterranean Sea and Carrascoy mountains, Murcia is the largest area for gardening, as it is the biggest producer of fruits, vegetable and flowers in Europe.

Murcia region has a semiarid mediterranean climate, with warm winters (the temperature average in December and January is 11 degrees Celsius) and hot summers (40 degrees Celsius). The annual average temperature is 18 degrees Celsius.

SHORT BACKGROUND

In the southern part of the Iberian Peninsula, along the banks of Segura river, the argáricos, iberian, carthaginian and roman cultures have been present since the Neolithic era.

During the Roman occupation, Murcia was part of Carthagenense province. The Romans built roads and infrastructure on its entire territory, which helped them settled along the rich banks of Segura river. They also built gardens, dams, embankments and channels, which were modified by the Muslim population that came there at a later date. Starting with the 4th century, the Visigoths occupied the land, followed by the Muslim army in the 8th century. The latter introduced agriculture in that province, still predominant in the economy of Murcia. The muslims used the water from Segura river through irrigation channels.

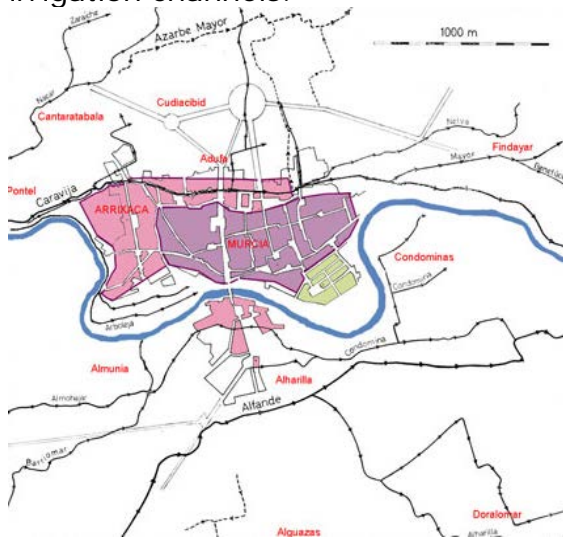


Image 2. The outskirts of the historical town, located in a similar site with the current city



Image 3. An archaeological plan of the Islamic wall



Image 4. Right side of Segura river



Image 5. Left side of Segura river

The city of Murcia, known from the Arabic writings called Madīnat Mursya, is located on the Segura river valley, at the confluence with Sangonera river. The settlement created by Emir Abd al-Rahman II in the year of 825, becomes an important city in the region. The Muslims will protect Murcia by means of a 15-meter wall, comprising 95 defense towers and 9 entrance gates. In the 13th century, Alfonso X el Sabio conquers Murcia again and incorporates it into Castile. Thus, in the medieval times, Murcia witnessed Christianity and churches and professional associations arose. The disasters caused by the disease outbreaks, droughts and floods had affected the city at various times, which encountered the real demographic and economic crisis.

Between 1936 and 1939, Spain went through the Spanish Civil War, when the fascist army of General Francisco Franco defeated the Republican forces. Franco started his authoritarian dictatorship in 1939 and lasted until 1975. This was left deep scars everywhere. The built patrimony was greatly affected, as many public and religious buildings were destroyed.

After General Franco passed away, regality came with Juan Carlos, who started transitioning the country towards democracy. Spain became a constitutional monarchy country.

BAROQUE IN MURCIA

Baroque identifies with the city of Murcia. When walking through the city, you will be amazed at the large number of baroque constructions, most of them in the historical town. The narrow roads make you get by the buildings so close that seem to shake hands with you and open up onto public markets, nicely disposed, where people spend their hot summer nights. The plazas are surrounded by monument buildings, visible for the onlookers. Most of them are in the baroque style, specific to this region, with mainly public and religious functions. The baroque architecture models reflect typologies specific to Murcia, talked about in various books and also details bringing uniqueness to them.

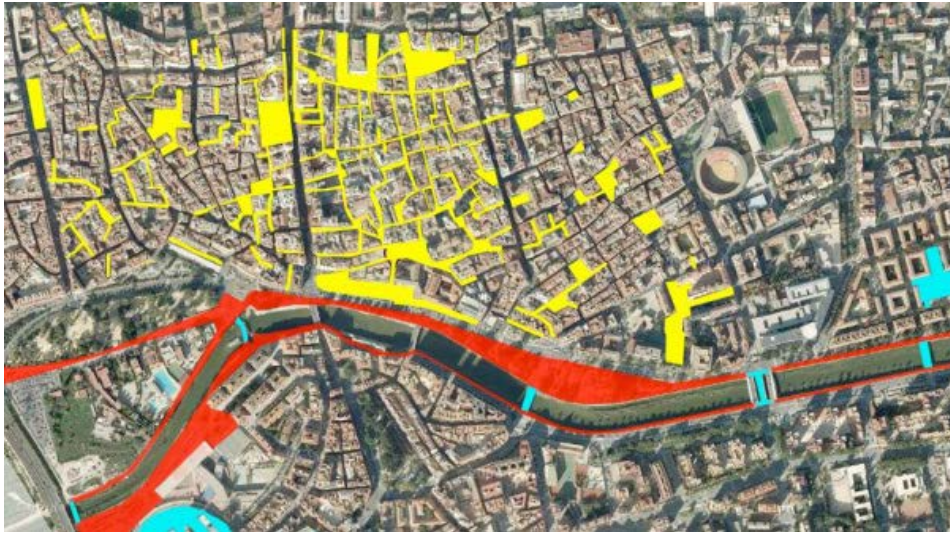


Image 6. Pedestrian area in the historical town Murcia and along river Segura

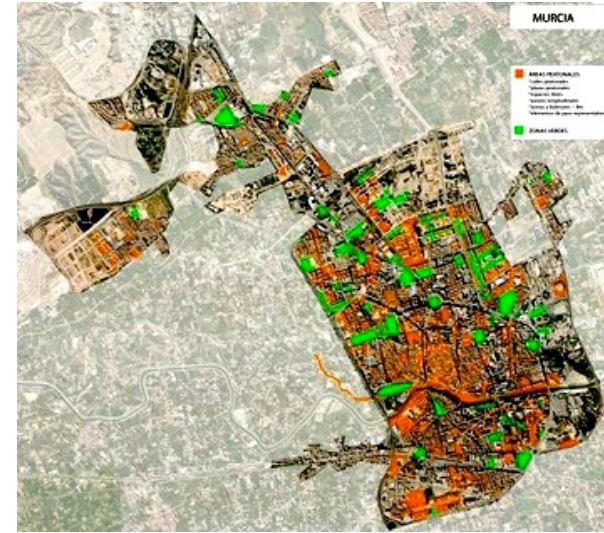


Image 7. Pedestrian areas and green areas

Numerous remains and archaeological sites refer to both mural paintings in the caves, the Iberian times and also to the splendor of the Roman ancient era with its urbanistic precision, the taste for cultural events of the Visigoth cities or the Arabic customs. There are altogether castles, control towers of the temples and Christian churches, civilian and military buildings.

The entire cultural, historic, artistic and architectural heritage shows in the cultural landscape of the city in various occasions, in order to be seen and admired. The region of Murcia turns into a generous study opportunity, where the past reflects its relics in the present.

The buildings in Murcia can be classified into several categories. Along with Baroque, they combine the Romantic, Rococo or Neoclassical styles, plus eclectic. The buildings make up a cultural landscape of a high value and are listed as national monuments, according to the Spanish legislation.

The present study divides the city buildings into the following categories: religious, public and bridges.

THE RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE IN MURCIA

The religious architecture shows everywhere around the city. Among the most important objectives, there are: Santa Maria Cathedral, Corpus Cristi Augustine Monastery, San Juan de Dios Church, Santa Clara de la Real Monastery, Jeronimos Monastery (the present location of San Antonio Catholic University), Santo Domingo Church, El Carmen Church, Eulalia Church, etc.

The times of Bourbon kings were favorable for Murcia, when the relative peace of the national politics allowed the advancement of the arts and science. Between the 16th and 18th centuries, Murcia witnessed a special urban development, when the city expanded beyond its walls. It was the time when the religious architecture in Murcia was greatly boosted. One can mention the baroque churches, such as La Merced, San Miguel, Santa Ana, Las Claras, Santo Domingo, Santa Eulalia and San Juan de Dios, where architecture, painting and sculpture are in a harmonious mix. The religious architecture

represents a heritage that includes important works made by the great Spanish sculptor Francisco Salzillo.³ Outside the city, there are de los Jerónimos Monastery (in Guadalupe) – today, the Catholic University of San Antonio and Basílica de la Vera Cruz. The most representative Murcian religious building in the baroque style is the Cathedral of Murcia.

Cathedral of Murcia – Santa María Church (Catedral de Murcia-Santa Iglesia Catedral de Santa María)

The Cathedral of Murcia is known as *Santa Iglesia Catedral de Santa María*, the main temple and head office of Diocese of Cartagena, located in the historical center of Belluga Plaza. The construction works lasted between 1388 until 1465, when it was sanctified. During the 16th and 18th centuries, the cathedral went through various damage of the campanile tower, the new chapel and facades. The style of the building is original gothic, with elements from Renaissance, Baroque and Neoclassicism. The church tower, built between 1521 and 1793, is the sure sign of the 93-meter high cathedral, as the third tower in Spain in terms of height. The Tower project was done by the Italian architect Francisco Florentino. The main facade, designed by Jaime Bort between 1737 and 1754, is considered to be a piece of art of the Spanish baroque masters. The excess of the baroque decoration, both interior and exterior, was to prove the great power exerted by the church within the kingdom. The major chapel holds the urn with Alfonso X el Sabio's heart. The Cathedral is in a three-nave shape cross and a rotunda, which includes elements of Mediterranean gothic, described as simplicity in structure and moderately decorated elevations.

Corpus Christi Augustine Monastery (Convento de las Agustinas del Corpus Christi)

It is located in the western neighborhood Sant Andrés of Murcia. It is a monachal complex that belongs to the female wing of San Augustin Order in the 18th century. The current building is one of the most 'baroque' among the monasteries. The main facade, built in an austere manner, is made of brick and ends with a semicircular fronton that highlights the central nave of the church.

The architectural complex comprises the convent itself, church and the cloister. The Church interior preserves the original baroque feature from the 18th century. It is in the shape of Latin cross with a tall loft, three naves and lateral chapels communicating among them.⁴



Image 8. The Cathedral in Murcia and Belluga Plaza



Image 9. The Cathedral



Image 10. The main facade of Corpus Christi Augustine Monastery



Image 11. The present facade, 18th century San Juan de Dios Convent – Museum of San Juan de Dios Church



Image 12. The Clara Santa la Real Convent



Image 13. The interior yard

San Juan de Dios Convent – Museum of San Juan de Dios Church (Museo de la Iglesia de San Juan de Dios)

San Juan De Dios Convent and Museum make up a monumental complex. Located near the Cathedral, in a traditional plaza of the historical center, the Convent is an integrant part of the hospital site of the dominion back then and a major fortress of the city.

San Juan de Dios Church was erected in the 12th century on the ruins of the Moorish fortress⁵ (Alcazar Nazir). Its ruins are to be found in the church basement. The first church was dedicated to Saint Mary. In the 16th century, the church was taken over by the hospital of the San Juan de Dios Order and rebuilt in the baroque style in 1742 by Martin Solera, a Mason master⁶ of the Church in Cartagena. The interior of the church is decorated in a rococo style. The elliptic plan of the church is different from the other churches in Murcia, and it is similar with the one of Sant Andrea of Quirinale, Rome, designed by architect Bernini. The church has six radiating chapels, hosting the paintings of Italian Paolo Sistori (the 18th century). In the 17th century, the Church became the chapel of the Hospital of Templars' Order. Currently, the Church is desacralized and is the office for the Museum of Belle Arte in Murcia.

Various cultural events take place here, collections of Murcian religious images from the 15-19th centuries are on display. Similarly, the collection of sculptor Juan González Moreno (20th century) in Murcia is hosted at this location.

The Clara Santa la Real Convent (Monasterio de Santa Clara la Real)

The Convent originates in the 14th century and was built on the ruins of the Palace where the last muslim leaders of Murcia lived. The construction lasted until the 18th century.

The architecture of the Convent is a mixture of Gothic and Baroque. The Convent church is laid as a cross with a central nave, ended with lateral apses and a presbyterium. The chapel is richly decorated. The facade is divided into two equal registers. The access portal is decorated with pilasters and capitals. The sculpture is made by Manuel Mateo. The Church is surrounded on two sides by the buildings of the monastery buildings, in a Gothic style. Its ground floor has a portico made up of ample arcades, richly decorated, while the floor has numerous arcades of smaller dimensions. Currently, these buildings accommodate the Cultural Center of Murcia and the Monastery Museum.

Jerónimos Convent - San Antonio Catholic University of Murcia (UCAM)
(Monasterio de los Jerónimos- Universidad Católica San Antonio de Murcia(UCAM)).

Only 4 kilometers away from the city of Murcia, there is the Jeronimos Convent in Guadalupe province, called El Escorial Murciano, founded between 1574 and 1578 by the Order of Jeronimo Saint monks, also known as Hieronymites (a very strong order in the Iberian Peninsula). The Convent was founded by Don Alonzo Vozmediano Arróniz, under the name of "San Pedro de la Nora". After the 1648 flooding, the decision was taken to move the monastery from the present site. The new Convent and the Church were built by monk Antonio de San José, expert in constructions and inaugurated by Bishop Thomas J. Montes in February 1738. After 1835, it was looted and went through extensive damage, almost turning into ruins. The Convent buildings were used a nursing home during the cholera epidemic in 1855. In 1878, it was ceded to the Jesuit monks that used it for almost a century. During the Civil War (1936-1939), the army was the beneficiary.

The building is grandiose, ample, massive, in an austere classical style, which contrasts with the interior of the church, richly decorated in a baroque style. The transept hosts the remains of the founder, Don Alonso Vozmediano Arróniz. The uncovered interior yard is rectangular in shape, surrounded by a closed gallery. In 1996, the building has been open to the public by Bishop of Cartagena of San Antonio Foundation to organize the San Antonio Catholic University in Murcia (UCAM). The Convent church is the current chapel of the University.

For a good operation of the University, constructions with a ground floor and other two floors were erected, without affecting the historical buildings of the Convent. One of these new constructions is the Faculty of Architecture, shown in the images below.

Santo Domingo Convent and Rosary Chapel
(Convento de Santo Domingo y Capilla del Rosario)

The Convent Santo Domingo and Rosary Chapel have been a monastic complex of a Dominican Order, today Jesuit. The history of this site started in the 13th century, when a school for Jewish and Arab people was operational.

Santo Domingo Convent was built between 1722-1745 and it is located in the middle of the homonymic Plaza. The Convent has a specific feature, i.e two facades of two different styles. The main facade opens up onto Romea Theatre and it uses a Renaissance architecture with Baroque details. The facade towards Santo Domingo Plaza does not have a ground floor access, but two steeple towers and two floors for living. Alongside there is Rosary Chapel, built between 1543 and 1575. The entrance portal to the Chapel is semicircular and was allegedly designed by Pedro Monte. The Church building is baroque, while the Chapel belongs to Renaissance.

Carmen Church (Iglesia del Carmen)

The Church is located in the ancient Carmen neighborhood, to the south of Segura river, which is part of the first extension of Murcia city in the south of the historical center. The Carmen neighborhood features several important buildings for the cultural evolution of Murcia city. The most representative are Carmen Church and Floridablanca Garden. The Church is a perspective cape of Floridablanca Garden. The facade is visible from the north-south axis and from the Old Bridge, opposite



Image 14. Perspective-Jerónimos Convent - San Antonio Catholic University of Murcia (UCAM)



Image 15. The interior church(UCAM)



Image 16. The interior yard(UCAM)



Image 17. Facade towards San Domingo Plaza



Image 18 The main facade



Image 19. Santo Domingo Arch



Image 20. The side façade

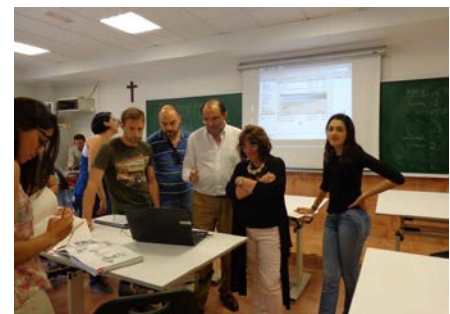


Image 21. Images from the practicum at the Faculty of Architecture within UCAM



Image 22. The main facade-Carmen Church



Image 23. Floridablanca Garden



Image 24. Trees in Floridablanca

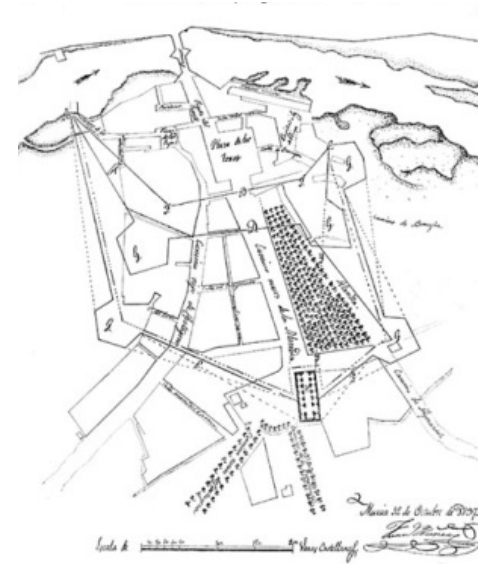


Image 25. Carmen neighborhood with Carmen Church, Floridablanca Garden and the Bridge of the Dangers



Image 26. Santa Eulalia Church. Main facade



Image 28. San Isidro Old Theological College. (today, the main gate of IEF Francisco Cascales)



Image 29. San Isidro Old Theological College. The main facade

Image 27. Santa Eulalia Church. Side facade

from the famous Floridablanca Garden. The Church was erected in 1721 on the site of an old chapel from 1451 and consecrated in 1769. Its style is Baroque. In a lateral gallery of the Church, there is the Museum of the Blood. The main facade is flanked by two steeple towers. In 1936, this Church went through extensive damage.

Floridablanca Garden (Jardin de Floridablanca)

This is a public garden of the city of Murcia, located in Carmen neighborhood. It was designed by José Marín Baldo, architect and mayor in Murcia in the mid of 19th century. Planted in 1786 and remodelled in the mid of 19th century, it is the first public garden in Spain. Considered as a central park, it is built in a Romantic style, where the large ficus trees live along with the magnolias in the central area. In 1998, the Garden was remodelled, in an attempt to recover the Romantic look by recreating the old park.

Santa Eulalia Church (Iglesia de Santa Eulalia)

It was built in the second half of the 18th century, as one of the last representatives of the baroque architecture in Murcia and it is located in the homonymic plaza. The interior of the church features the rococo style. The facade with a curved fronton, specific to the 18th century levantine architecture, in stone and brick. The Church, along with San José Chapel, the remains of the Moore walls and relics of a Muslim graveyard discovered during the Archaeological research works in 1964 is a complex of a large interest in the historical center of Murcia. The Church is Catholic and belongs to Diocese of Cartagena.

San Isidoro Old Theological College (Antiguo Colegio de Teólogos de San Isidoro)

Located in the historical center of Murcia city, Antiguo Colegio de Teólogos from Diócesis de Cartagena is one of the main theological education institutions in that area. The building was erected in 1742 and finished in 1767, following the plans of architects Martín Solera and Pedro Pagán. The exterior facade opening onto Segura river is in a civilian baroque style, specific to the city, with relining brick. The north facade has an austere and sober classical style. The interior central patio is elegant and balanced.

THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Among the public buildings, the monumental historical ones making up the urban tissue of Murcia, one can mention: the City Hall, Romea Theatre, Royal Casino, the impressive palaces hosting various institutions, the museums, Railway Station and Plaza de Toros.

City Hall of Murcia (Casa Consistorial de Murcia or Ayuntamiento de Murcia)

Located in La Glorieta Plaza, along with a homonymic garden, the building is the office for the municipality of Murcia. It was built between 1846 and 1848 in a neoclassical style, as being the most important work of architect Juan José Belmonte (1809-1875). He studied architecture at the San



Image 30. City Hall of Murcia



Image 31. Cardinal Belluga Plaza to the Cathedral



Image 32. Cardinal Belluga Plaza to City Hall annex

Fernando Royo, Academy in Madrid and was appointed in the position of the city architect (1848) and of Murcia region (1859). He was the secretary of the Board for Monuments and contributed to the Regional Museum of Archaeology and Fine Arts.

In 1998, due to lack of space, an annex for the City Hall was built in Cardinal Belluga

Plaza, as designed by architect Rafael Moneo.⁷ The building in a neoclassical style, with the main facade in the chromatic scale specific to Murcia, namely brick color in alternance with the beige of the stucco works. Architect Rafael Moneo also dealt with the changing of the plazas in the historical centre into pedestrian spaces.

Verónicas Plaza (Plaza De Verónicas)

Verónicas Plaza is one of the main food markets in Murcia. It is located on San Francisco platform, next to the archaeological site of Verónicas Convent, close to the Almuñécar Palace, Paseo del Malecón and Segura riverbed. The construction has a large nave in the rectangular plan and it is covered in two partial sides. The original facade still maintained, in an eclectic style of the end of the 19th century, is designed by architect Pedro Martínez Cerdán⁸ between 1912 and 1916. The two main entrances have large windows framed in white brick. The side facades also have large windows, framed with white brick arches, for an optimum ventilation inside.



Image 33. Verónicas Plaza. Main facade of



Image 34. Verónicas Plaza. Side facade



Image 35. Archaeological traces of the Islamic walls in the Verónicas complex



Image 36. Floridablanca Palace (today, San Juan Arch' Hotel)



Image 37. The Palace of Inquisition



Image 38. Saavedra Palace



Image 39. In front of Almudi Palace



Image 40. Almudi Palace



Image 41. The Renaissance facade of Fontes Palace



Image 42. Pacheco Palace. The main entrance



Image 43. Romea Theatre



Image 44. Royal Casino at night



Image 45. Cerdá House



Image 46. The Episcopal Palace



*Image 47. Museo de Salzillo
(Main facade and church)*



Image 48. Díaz Cassou House

The Islamic walls of Verónicas complex (Muralla de Verónicas)

Archaeological traces of the Murcia civilization are visible in a building of the 1912 and one of the end of the 20th century. These walls, remains of the Islamic civilization, were kept within the Verónicas Convent, built in the 18th century. The Convent was partially taken down in 1985. What is left is Verónicas Church, remodelled as an exhibition hall.⁹

Floridablanca Palace (Palacio De Floridablanca)

It is an old building of the city of Murcia, in a neoclassical style, erected at the end of the 18th century as a state residence of José Moñino, count of Floridalba. The construction was designed by Alicante architect Ramón Berenguer (1776-1812), a graduate of the Academy of Valencia and settled in Murcia in 1790.

The building proves the austerity and the lack of ornaments of classicism with traditional influences, reminding of gypsum, primitively colored in green and ,pumpkin' yellow.¹⁰ After a reform at the end of the 20th century, the Palace turns into the, San Juan Arch'.

The Palace of Inquisition (Palacio de la Inquisición)

The Palace of Inquisition, an old building of the city, located in Jara Carrillo Street, was built in the mid 18th century, as a new main office of the Court of Saint Inquisition in Murcia. The building was preserved in time; today, it looks like the latest restoration in 1816 and 1823, thanks to architect Francisco Bolarín García. The building has a simple, pleasant, neoclassical style. Currently, the Palace has become the office of the Order of Architects in Murcia, a place hosting various exhibitions.

Saavedra Palace (Palacio de los Saavedra)

Saavedra Palace is a historical building in the older district of the city, in Rambla del Cuerno Street. Built in the second half of the 17th century, it is now the office for the Azarbe College, associated with University of Murcia.

Almudi Palace (Palacio del Almudí)

Almudí Palace, of an Arab origin, built in the baroque style, is a historical building in Murcia, next to Malecon Garden. In 1554, the Council in Murcia decided to build a wheat warehouse in San Francisco Plaza. The construction works started in 1612 and ended in 1629. Initially, it was the Central Warehouse for wheat, then a chivalry office and the Palace of Justice in 1886; later on, the space was meant for exhibition rooms and a municipality archive until the end of the 20th century, i.e. a cultural center. Following a fire incident, the facade was redone in 1628.¹¹

Fontes and Pacheco Palaces (Palacios de Fontes y Pacheco)

Fontes Palace is a building of the 18th century, located in the historical center of town, in Fontes Plaza, along with Pacheco Palace, built in the 16th century. Fontes Palace has a baroque-rococo style and it is the office for the Confederation for the Hydrologic Safety, while Pacheco Palace has a Renaissance style and it is the main office for the Presidential Council of the Autonomous Community of Murcia Region.

Romea Theatre (Teatro Romea)

The main theatre of Murcia city is located in the historical centre in the plaza bearing the name of the famous Murcian artist Julian Romea (1813-1868). The initial building was erected by architects Diego Manuel Molina and Carlos Mancha, as a monastery for the Dominican monks, later confiscated by the Municipality. In 1862, Queen Isabella II inaugurated the theatre called Los Infantes. In 1872, the theatre was given the name of artist Julian Romea. The fires in 1877 and 1899 almost destroyed it. The architect Justo Millán restored the building, redid the facade in an eclectic style of a neoclassical inspiration and modernist details, visible in the decoration of the loft or in the wrought iron gates. The facade is multicolored, in gray and pink. In its present form, the theatre was inaugurated in 1901. The hall accommodates 1200 seats and has an Italian style. This room hosts theatre shows, dance, musicals, concerts, zarzuelas and others.

Royal Casino (Real Casino de Murcia)

Since 1847, the Royal Casino has operated in an old palace, on Traperia Street, and it is known as the Casino from Murcia. The present facade of the building is dated in 1901. The construction was designed by architect Martinez Pedro Cerdan in an eclectic style, with neoclassical and modernist elements. It is now a building whose facades and interiors are a blend of artistic trends, coexisting in the second half of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th. It was included on the List of Historical Monuments in 1983.

A patio inspired from the royal halls in Alhambra, Granada and Sevilla is to be found inside. The ballroom of a large dimension is decorated with baroque elements, and the pool room has a wooden ceiling, with geometrical motives. The interior decoration dates back from the 19th century.

The Episcopal Palace (Palacio Episcopal)

The building is located between two plazas, with the main facade opening towards Cardenal Belluga Plaza, while the other towards Plaza de la Glorieta, close to the City Hall and Segura river. The building was erected between 1749 and 1768, in baroque and rococo styles. Presently, it is the residence of Bishop of Diocese of Cartagena. The building surrounds a square interior yard, along with a porch in a baroque style. The facades are richly decorated, of a brick color and they have three levels, separated by a rich profiling. The entrance porch is flanked by grooved columns.

Salzillo Museum (Muzeo de Salzillo)

The Museum is dedicated to the works of Murcian sculptor Francisco Salzillo and it is located close to San Agustin Plaza, near the Nuestro Padre Jesús Church, an integrant part of it. Its construction started in 1941 and ended in 1960. The idea for such museum came in 1941 and it was declared historical and artistic monument in 1962. From an architectural perspective, it has a special feature, which is to join a building from the 21st century with a church at the end of the 17th century, shifting from baroque spaces to contemporary spaces.¹²

The first project of architect J. A. Rodríguez in 1919 is different from the one in 1955. The creation of the Museum had the same reforms and extension as Jesus Church, a project following the

design of José Tamés and Eduardo Jiménez Casalins, after consultation with museum curator Manuel Jorge Aragoneses.

Cerda House (Casa Cerdá)

The building is one of the most popular in the urban landscape of the city, located in Santo Domingo Plaza, at the crossroad of two streets: Gran Vía Alfonso X and El Sabio. The Cerda House was built in 1930 as a collective house by architect José Antonio Rodríguez Martínez. The styles are eclectic, with ionic pillars, which highlights verticality. The vertical accent also comes from a decorative element in the shape of a circular temple over the corner area. The building is a landmark in Santo Domingo Plaza.

Díaz Cassou House (Casa Díaz Cassou)

The House is one of the most representative buildings in the modernist architecture. It is listed as a public interest estate. It is located in Santa Teresa Street and it was designed by architect José Antonio Rodríguez (1868-1938), at the request of Murcian writer Pedro Díaz Cassou (1843-1902). The history of this building has risen a debate between the owners and the City Hall during its time of construction (1900-1906). Currently, the House belongs to the government and hosts exhibitions and cultural events. The interior was painted by Pedro García del Bosque (1907-1908).

Plaza de Toros Ronda (Plaza de Toros)

Bullfighting is part of the Spanish culture. The arena for bullfighting in Murcia is in the eastern part of the city, in the old side of Condomina stadium, near Reina Sofia Hospital and the former Real Murcia stadium. Plaza de Toros Ronda, as known in Spain, was built in 1887 in an eclectic style, in the shape of a regular 80-side polygon, accommodating 15000 seats. The bull fights take place in September, around the time of Murcia anniversary.



Image 49. Plaza de Toros Ronda



Image 50. Entrance gate

Carmen Railway Station of Murcia (Estación De Murcia Del Carmen)

Carmen Railway Station is the main station in the city of Murcia, located within a small distance from Segura river, southwards from the historic city, in the homonym neighbourhood. It is one of the stations providing short, medium and long distance services to Barcelona, Alicante, Águilas. The construction started between 1884 and 1885. In 1910, a mudéjar (an Arabic roof) was added to it, so the presence of the Arabs on that part of the country should not be forgotten.¹³



Image 51. Carmen Railway Station of Murcia. Main facade

BRIDGES OVER SEGURA RIVER Hospital Bridge (Puente del Hospital)

It is a bridge for people and cars, initially built in 1973. In 1997, Santiago Calatrava designed the bridge as it is now and finished it in 1999. The bridge, made of prefabricated concrete and steel beams, is located in front of Reina Sofía Hospital and it is very well lit. It comprises two lateral arches, bent at 52.5 degrees outward, compared to the horizontal plan. The arches are made from parabolic curved tubes, connected with tie rods from the bridge foot.

The New Iron Bridge (Puente Nuevo de Hierro)

The construction of the New Iron Bridge started in 1894-1903. It is a metallic bridge, with parabolic beams over Segura river – the second urban bridge, hence its name to tell it apart from the old one. The project was carried out by the road, canal and port engineer José María Ortiz. In 2001, the restoration started, following the project of Javier Manterola. In 2003, it was re-opened to the public.

The Bridge of Dangers or the Old Bridge (Puente de los Peligros o Puente Viejo)

The Bridge of Dangers or the Old Bridge is a stone arched bridge over Segura river, finished in 1742.¹⁴ It is the oldest bridge in Murcia, which connects the Carmen neighborhood and the historic centre of the city. The popular name of Bridge of Dangers comes from the presence of a worshipped maiden's image (named Peligros) in a niche in the superior part of the bridge.

Vistabella Bridge (Puente de Vistabella)

Vistabella Bridge or Jorge Manrique Bridge is a gangway for people, over Segura river, and it connects the Vistabella and Polígono Infante Don Juan Manuel neighborhoods, between Auditorium and



Image 52. Hospital Bridge



Image 53. The New Bridge



Image 54. Vistabella Bridge



Image 55. Bridge of Dangers



Image 57. Malecon Lane



Image 58. Malecon Lane

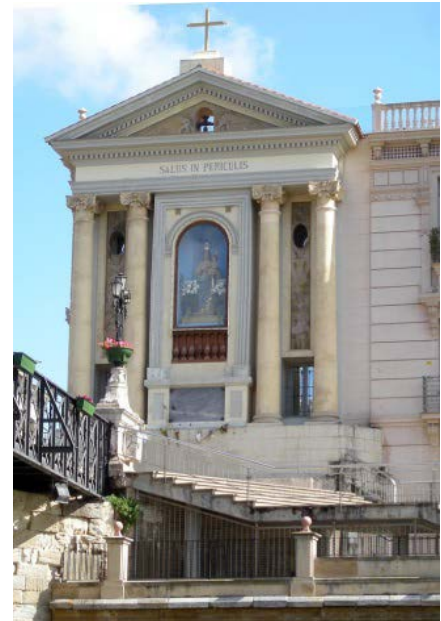


Image 56. The access to the bridge, with the niche of the maiden Peligros



Image 59. Lion of Malecon



Image 60. The statue of "La Virgen"

the Convention Center. The bridge was designed by architect and engineer Santiago Calatrava in 1995 and finished in 1997. It was made of tubular arches, with tie rods. The floor is made of glass, which makes it difficult to use. This is why it was covered in a non-skid ethenyl carpet with PVC granulated particles.

Malecon Lane (Paseo del Malecon)

Malecon Lane is a promenade site along the Segura river and it is a way of stop the high flood. It was built in the 15th century but it was damaged because of the rains, winds and traffic of the horse riders. It was re-built in 1736 by Francisco de Luján and Arce. It is one of the city landmarks, a site for entertainment, promenade and relaxation, where the city holidays are celebrated. Its height is 3 meters above the ground. One of the important gardens is located in its vicinity.

STATUES

The Lion of Malecon (León del Malecón)

It is a commemorative sculpture, one of the **city symbols**, made in sandy and carved stone, located at the entrance to Malecón Lane. The statue was erected in 1779, to the memory of the war captains in Murcia, Joachin de Pareja and Obregón. The statue is a copy but the original (restored) is exhibited at the Museum of Murcia.

HOLIDAYS PROCESSIONS

The Maiden of Fuensanta has been the main patron of Murcia city since the first half of the 18th century. During the spring holidays, a procession is organized when La Virgen comes out of the Cathedral Sanctuary and walks to Algezares, a sanctuary in the mountains on the outskirts of the city.

CONCLUSIONS

Like everywhere in the world, the buildings are not only physical structures, but also means of communication. They feature the values of the community or its various activities, for example the Roman amphitheatres, theatres, religious constructions such as temples, monasteries, churches, etc. The buildings give us information on the traditions, of the architecture in their area. The Spanish architecture best reflects the impact of the political events – the erection of the churches, palaces or castles, whose presence communicates the idea of power and control of the leaders, meant to last for a long time. The same type of communication has this effect on the visitors to the city. The urban image manages to bring history, architecture and art to reality, via the wonderful monuments in the city. The concern and care of the local public authorities for all these contribute to their value. The city is a real example of the mixture between past and present, business and pleasure, private and public, it is a sign of normality from the local governance towards the residents and the guests.

Illustration source

1 https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regiunea_Murcia#/media/File:Localizaci%C3%B3n_Regi%C3%B3n_de_Murcia.png

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³ Francisco Salzillo (1707-1783) a baroque Spanish sculptor, whose works exclusively feature religious topics. Born in Murcia. Hundreds of his works are displayed in the churches in Murcia and neighboring areas.

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⁷ José Rafael Moneo Vallés (b.1937), Spanish Architect, alumnus of the Technical University in Madrid. Author of numerous works, he was granted the Pritzker Prize in 1996 for architecture and the RIBA Gold medal in 2003. Among his works in Spain, there are the National Museum of the Roman Art in Merida, Kursaal Palace in San Sebastian; The Museum of Science in Valladolid. He was also behind the works at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles and the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston.

⁸ Pedro Cerdan Martinez (1863-1947), Spanish architect, alumnus of the Royal Academy in Madrid. Starting with 1889, he worked in Murcia, becoming the architect of the municipality in 1891. He designed an eclectic style, with gothic and modernist influences for Verónicas Plaza, Royal Casino, etc.

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THE MEANING OF BEING “AT HOME” IN NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTIONS

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Abstract

Most human action involves spatial aspects, people need a place of departure and a place to return to, other locations became a continuation of the personal existential space. In addition to the strictly functional spaces designed for activities, people have also feelings, cultural skills, temperamental behaviour and various sensitivities which lead to the need to customize and differentiate spaces according to the recipient, as well as to the socio-cultural ensemble of the group he / she belongs to.

Thus the man becomes the creator of the living space through artistic and expressive interventions which contribute to the crystallization of an elusive propriety of being “at home” in the architectural space and which changes when that space is not static, gravitational, terrestrial.

This paper discusses the issue of being “at home” in the naval versus terrestrial architectural space. The concepts of habitability and psychological space are outlined and discussed as well as the impact of increased mobility in a globalised world.

Keywords: *habitability, mobility, naval mobile constructions, at home, psychological space, dwelling*

1. Architectural space

Shelter is one of humanity's primary needs. Along the centuries and throughout all corners of the world, the nature of the human shelter has been governed by a few key factors: the need for a shelter, the purpose of the construction, the climatic conditions, the available materials and the construction technique.

Human beings can be considered as the only beings that have evolved from a state of sheltering themselves to one of dwelling, transforming the space in their proximity into an architectural space. Seen from this point of view, the space is the place where someone exists and sustains an activity in at least minimal circumstances. Since each activity is a conscious action, it can be sustained only by humans, in spaces built for this purpose which establish themselves into architectural space.¹

Christian Norberg-Schulz defines space as having existential roots through the need for orientation and action. Most human action implies spatial aspects, human beings needing a settling place to depart from and return to, all other locations becoming a continuation of their existential space.

An indefinable factor often supplemented, mainly the need for beautification, which as a creative impulse represents one of the differences between humans and other species in the perception of space, can add to pure function an aesthetic quality through which the building becomes architecture.²

Aside from a strictly functional side of spaces destined for activities, human beings are endowed with emotions, feelings, cultural capacities, different temperaments, behaviours and sensitivities, which lead to a need for customization and differentiation of spaces according to their user but also to the socio-cultural ensemble that person belongs to. In this way, the man becomes the creator of the space he inhabits through artistic and expressive interventions.

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An important characteristic of the architectural space is the involvement of the man in the generation of this space and the fact that he inhabits and uses it.

Through his buildings and constructions, the man tries to delimit volumes, creating spaces to meet the different functions necessary to his existence. Unlike animals, human beings, aside from this need to build shelter imprint on their constructions a certain vibe, a certain character thus creating an architectural space.

Piaget defines spatial adaptation as being the state of equilibrium between assimilation, as an action of the organism exerted on objects, and accommodation.

If in Antiquity, the Greeks and the Egyptians celebrated the power of volumes and the relationship between them, Romans treated interior space with the same emphasis.

In modern times, architecturally speaking, the emphasis lies in the interaction between the interior and the exterior space. Seen from a spatial point of view, architecture can also be defined as the art of virtually conceptualizing a skin to envelop the interior space, destined to be lived in.

"The skin (envelope), whether it is of a building or of a ship, encloses a volume which we have to structure according to its destination. In both cases people inhabit these volumes and need qualities and comfort."

Each construction, whether static or mobile, breaks the continuity of space in such a way that the man, while existing inside, can opt if he / she wishes or not to see or be seen, to participate or not in whatever happens outside of the enveloping skin.

Thus, one can observe that the process through which a spatial image can be transposed to an emotional plane represents an expression of the concept of the existential space, comprising the geometric dimension as well as the human dimension simultaneously.

2. The habitable space in mobile constructions

Starting from Jules Verne's books and arriving to the experiments of the sixties, we notice a tendency to create an architectural space also in mobile constructions.

This space will have to shape and define itself, to find through accumulation of concepts, images and symbols a particular type of expression, gaining the complexities of a real lifestyle. In this context, while joining social and behavioural changes, the habitation issue will have to be reanalysed through the study of habitable space in mobile constructions, along with the contemporary technological and economic evolution. Thus, along with a monotopic type of habitation which is bound to a single place, in modern times we are more and more faced with the choice of a polytopic type of living – the alternating series of habiting different places for different periods of time.

Globalisation also leads toward a lifestyle predominantly based on a society of mobile individuals, to a geographic mobility in expansion based on economic affordability, tourism or social criteria.

This type of approach of the practice of habitation leads to the observation that such affirmations as those of Constantin Noica, according to which the reasons behind human beings constructing homes would be fear, hunger, the eros and logos are no longer sufficient. A contemporary approach should take into account the need for customization of the personal space, whether such need is generated by the need for intimacy and anonymity, on the one hand, or the need of showing off on the other. In any case, there is clearly a need to take into account the need for personal demarcation in the sense of setting territorial boundaries on these spaces.

Also, we cannot ignore the phenomenon of deterritorialisation of the man and his dwelling as well as not take into account the nomad side of the man. Whether such nomadism is caused by personal choice or set by lifestyle or socio-economic conditions.

Today we are more often faced with situations in which people live and work in different locations from day to day, alternating settling from one location to another.

3. "Being at home" as a determining criteria of dwelling

"Being at home" is a term we associate to intimate dwelling spaces, those spaces territorially and personally marked more or less consciously. But not only dwellings or housing are invested with this term of being "at home" but also those spaces that, for a period of time, become the spaces where we live in, the places where we depart from and return to and for which we start to develop a feeling of intimacy.

In this sense we can start to conclude that personal spatial intimacy, as a motor of affirming creativity and personality in an intimate space and the one which gives the feeling of being "at home" to a space, is redefined by contemporary nomadism through the extension and attribution of the label of being or feeling "at home" to spaces that are used only seasonally or occasionally.

Spatial relationships are born and are governed by alternation and identity, familiar versus alien, relationships that are not necessarily bound to measurable distance but rather pertaining to practices of the everyday, by the fact of being more often or less often in one location or the other.

Observing this phenomenon allows the emphasis on problems which are related to the mobility of individuals and the consequences on the individual vs. territory, individual vs. space relationships, while also keeping the focus on spatial customization, which in itself constitutes the origin and essence of being "at home".

Architecture, through the nature of its activity, is a permanent shaping force of the many and different forms of being at home, by embodying the material and spiritual into the skin enveloping buildings and the interior space created within.

Human life is more and more frequently bound to economic concepts like efficiency, correlated with the alert rhythm of life, with the need for a permanent search for optimization, finding solutions, experiments, dependency on time and profitability. On the other hand, as some activities begin to be able to be done on the move, even dwelling itself begins to be dependent on mobility.

Efficiency and the increased capacity for rapid delivery are determining factors of contemporary life and they become leading agents in the need for ensuring emotional, functional and personal characteristics to spaces and lead to the redefining of workplaces and living places as minimally personal territories, to confer them with identity as close as possible to the feeling of being at home.

Architecture, as the locus of aesthetic, social and cultural experimentation is through the work of conceptualization and design first and foremost a process of creating ambiance through the ingenious combination of matter and energy.

Aesthetic signs specific to architecture and through which one can transmit or suggest different emotions are scale, proportion, functional ordering, the logic of association of different finishing materials, colour and light, the aesthetic arrangement of useful everyday objects, ornament and vegetation.

But also the particular plastic signs of a specific lifestyle or cultural practices have a role in imbuing the personality of an owner to its space and contribute to the crystallisation of the architectural ambience.

"A work of architecture must embed all four functional categories: the material utilitarian function, the material constructive function, the spiritual expressive function and the spiritual informative function, which in reality permeate each other, because only in this way physical space gains sense as an architectural object."³

These interventions will not be limited to the solving of the technical problems but will have to raise the problem of spatial perception and architectural thinking.⁴

4. Tourism and its social influences

The development of seasonal dwellings, with or without a touristic or vacation function has attracted the interest in combining the nomad spirit with maintaining the habits and behavioural archetypes in the design of such spaces.

By definition, touristic practices imply a change of place from a place of the everyday to a place of the unknown or the infrequent and non-everyday, with behavioural implications through the practice of activities that are more or less completely different from those of the everyday, usually for relaxation or recreation, but not necessarily.

Not only touristic places can be "habited" in the primordial sense, the touristic experience itself changes the manner of being, of everyday routine behaviour.

As such, we need to readapt the role of architecture, as a creator of spaces for living, whether we call them dwellings, housings in the case of "normal" static terrestrial architecture, or habitacles as is the case of the spaces of mobile constructions.

As the sole specialists primarily concerned with human habitation the study of all typologies of living and habitation spaces we need to address a term less used in architecture until now, mainly habitability.

5. Habitability

Habitability is supposed to be a term to define the complex of conditions necessary for an optimum everyday life, unrelated to the nature of the space in which such activity takes place.

The term is commonly used in all the activities which involve the isolation of individuals for a certain period of time in artificial constructions, usually having the possibility to communicate with the surrounding environment or not, as is the case of space travel.

In "Skylab Experiment M487, Habitability/Crew Quarters", C.C. Johnson, a NASA researcher, considers this term as being "at best a vague term" (at least in what NASA researchers are concerned), because of the complexity of elements the term involves.

This reason leads to the growing importance of involving the architect, as the specialist in finding solutions for the everyday spaces, in whose language the term can be assimilated as an extension or synthesis of the term of dwelling/habiting.

Beside the factors that belong to the realm of engineers, in the case of spatial aircraft and capsules for examples, like the composition and temperature of the atmosphere, the level of noise and light, habitability contains also the composition of spaces and the ease of their use and maintenance, the need for personal hygiene and the need or disposition for physical exercise and relaxation after work.

The experience and intuition gained in time have demonstrated that these elements have become increasingly important in the case of periods of isolation that are voluntarily or involuntarily extended, as is the case of ship cruises that must be taken for longer periods of time than previously envisioned (in case of storm or other situations), or the expeditions or missions in space that need to follow a strict programme, without the possibility of outside intervention or the possibility of bailing until the agreed finishing time, and in which the importance of habitability becomes crucial.

In other words, the necessity of conferring to a space the qualities and defects of a personal intimate space, which are contained in the idea of "home" become obvious and obligatory for the inhabitants of such spaces. Of course the situation in which such a space is shared by multiple individuals will also bring into discussion social aspects, adaptability aspects and so on.

We could argue that this is the recognition of the necessity to return to an ancestral understanding of architecture, as a creator of homes and ships (the etymology of the word architecture having the origin of a mix of roman and Greek words of ARKEIN, to lead, to command and TEKTON which means constructor of wooden structures and ship structures).

6. Fixity and mobility in the process of habitability

If dwelling, architecturally speaking, had a relatively slow evolution, partially accelerated only by the industrial revolution, by the discovery of new materials and technologies, but permanently keeping the factor of fixity in the sense of anchoring to one site and place, the alert rhythm of human societies in the last century has lead to a need of seriously addressing the phenomenon of alternative dwelling in different kinds of spaces as is the case of mobile spaces, in the sense of vehicles.

Architecture is the art of creating harmony between function and form of a clearly defined space meant to satisfy the human needs from a particular time and place. The creation of this space leads to the creation of architectural ambiance.

"Architectural ambient is more complex than just the interior comfort to whose creation latent conventional energy and the objects that capitalize it are more prevalently participating, because it refers also to the multitude of spatial relationships and unconventional interior energies, to the forms and spatial proportions, to the relations with the exterior, to the interpersonal and intercultural relationships etc".

A specific situation starts to appear when this habitable space becomes one, until now, only dedicated to transport, mainly when this habitable space becomes the space of mobile constructions.

To confer the most of the characteristic of a dwelling to this new space of vehicles, adaptation of habits and human behavioural archetypes, both ancestral and those evolved from cultural historical evolution, must take place.

7. The psychology of the space

The design of the habitable space in naval mobile constructions needs to take into account an approach that emphasises the relational dynamics between the individual and the environment, taking into account the fact that the latter is in direct connection to the quality of life concept.

The environment⁵ is a factor that influences by the principle of stimulus and reaction. A causal relationship between the organisation of space and the type of observable behaviour was noticed.

Environmental psychology is a field of psychology that addresses the complex interactions between individuals and groups function of the psychological and socio-cultural characteristics of the space they live in.⁶

Seen from this perspective, the psychology of space of naval mobile constructions is the study of interactions of individuals in this (confined) space.

The habitable space in naval mobile constructions represents a built social object that generates relationships, a matrix of social existence. This space is arranged and furnished following the principles and values that are dominant in a society and whose functions constitutes a tool of representation of that society. It possesses a psychosocial aspect following the influences of causal factors but following also ascribable characteristics.

As is the case with a building, the habitable space in naval mobile constructions incorporates social activities in its limited space. The habitable spaces in naval mobile constructions must be evaluated according to a cultural model described through a structural language that follows the dominant norms of a culture, as a non verbal communication that functions through the type of territorial occupation (in the sense of space). The totality of lifestyles, symbols, meanings, cognitive schema and adaptive strategies constitutes the cultural approach of architectural space in general.

The territory implies an understanding of the environment as an entity limited by frontiers which, from a psychological point of view, leads to a separation of elements into an interior and exterior universe, intramuros and extramuros.

Through the immensity that it represents, the sea, the ocean, stimulate imagination, poetry, dreaming and the sensation of freedom. Practicing navigation, especially in the case of sailboats, either for fun or sport, generates qualities of human psychology and interrelation. This aspect particular to sailing, meaning the taking place of an activity in a natural environment of such sensorial stimulation, the practice of sailing can be exploited as a factor of re-education, readaptation and social reinsertion of disabled individuals.

The psychology of the beneficiaries of these habitable spaces of naval mobile constructions is strongly influenced by the environment. All of them are privileged observers of the immensity of the sea, combined with the immensity of the sky that can be present in a hemisphere of 360° in different periods of time. But along with the great freedom of isolation from the world, in the same time the persons on board are paradoxically also prisoners. Prisoners of the more or less restricted and limited space of the ship construction itself, from which they cannot escape; prisoners of this artificial, technological, cultural and mobile biotope, entirely designed and built by man.

The space in which they have to live and work, to deal and cope with each other, to confront one another, the space they have to share with others that share the same conditions, problems, hopes, doubts or fears as well as joys or satisfactions.

Social micro-universe that is very strongly and powerfully structured on hierarchies containing the ferments of every type of relational conflicts, the climate on board of naval mobile constructions is extremely dependent on the type of organisation on board, of the types of inter-human communication systems agreed upon.

The design and modelling of such a construction must imperiously integrate the notion of space with the notion of maintaining a physical and psychological balance. It will have to, particularly, provide each individual, irrespective to their position in the social hierarchy of the ship, the possibility of isolation in an intimate "territory".

As one can see, a specific characteristic of life and activity in naval mobile constructions (and not only), is and will remain the permanence and omnipresence of a social hierarchy at board, generated by the necessity of ensuring the security of the participants, unrelated to the conditions and the responsibilities. This particular situation will generate solutions specific to this social system. But not only the social relationships on board of these spaces are bound psychologically speaking to hierarchy but also the limited territorial spaces available on board.

In the space of naval mobile constructions we will distinguish the following territorial typologies:

- Free territories, which are represented by the totality of spaces which individuals have no sense of property upon and no right of exclusive self assignment, for example decks, corridors, stairs and the like;
- Reserved territories which represent spaces in which groups or individuals have the feeling of exclusive belonging, and
- The territory of refuge, which is composed from the spaces and places that permit the individuals to escape the social control and offers the maximum of intimacy.

The habitable space in naval mobile constructions, seen as a personal space, aims at preserving intimacy, to create a clear separation from the other participants and from the environment.

The studies addressing the concept of personal space had as a starting point the positioning of the individual in space, demonstrating that this is not limited to the physical fact of corporal positioning in space. Personal space represents a sort of psychological envelope or skin that allows the individual to move through different surrounding spaces while adapting continuously the behaviour function to its movement.

The immediate space surrounding the body is an occupied territory that is in interaction with the delimiting zones. This space requires an identification of the self with the immediate space surrounding the body and because its character to let itself be taken in possession by the individual has been named "Place identity", in 1978 by H. M. Proshansky.⁷

Henri Laborit, physician and sailor and considered France's most important psychologist, affirmed the following referring to the psychology of people that live for a certain time in the spaces of naval mobile constructions:

"to remain normal is, first of all, to remain normal to yourself. For this one needs to retain the possibility of action in conformity with one's impulses which are transformed by socio-cultural experiences and continuously returned into the discussion between imaginary and creativity.

However the space in which this action takes place is occupied by others as well.

To obey means to accept the psychosomatic pathology that necessarily follows from the impossibility of acting according to impulse.

To rebel means to lead to extinction because rebellion if it is done in a group very quickly finds again another hierarchic scale of action in the interior of the group and rebellion alone leads to the quick stifling of the revolt... There is nothing left but escape or the retreat into that intimate territory."

Architecture is the only place where those who conceptualise it and create it and those who practice and live it have the tendency of creating a vibrant spirit on the same wavelength, a spirit of the champion of the inhabitable space.⁸

8. Conclusions

The habitable space in naval mobile constructions, seen as one part of the more general realm of mobile constructions (vehicles), represents a working domain open to architects through its specificity.

Seen from a theoretical standpoint, this complex habitable space presents the need to access knowledge and practice from less than usual architectural approaches that work for conventional terrestrial constructions.

Thus it becomes obvious that there is a need to re-identify and redefine the concept of "being at home" by using it for all habitable human spaces, present and future, whether static or mobile.

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² Carl E. Hiller, *From Tepees to Towers*, 3.

³ Adrian Mahu, *Specificul național în preocupările arhitecților din diferite țări*, 54.

⁴ Adolphe Luc, Remi Baudoui, "Ambiances architecturales et urbaines", 63.

⁵ Cf. *Dicționarul explicative al limbii române*.

⁶ Gustave-Nicholas Fischer, *Course Psychosociologie des espaces*, 3.

⁷ Harold. M. Proshansky, Place-identity: Physical world socialization of the self, 62.

⁸ Roger Seimetz, "L'oeuvre architectural, ouvrage multiple et absolu", 1.

CREATIVITY – CONSERVATION

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Abstract

Absorbing Modernity was the topic, proposed by Rem Koolhaas for the 2014 edition of Venice Biennale, as reflecting the main streams that can be noticed in the last 100 year of architectural evolution. For the Romanian participation at this event it was organized in 2013 a project competition according with the exhibition space available at Venetian Giardini's Romanian Pavilion and exhibition space at Venice, the New IRCCU Gallery and the international jury awarded the first prize to the project entitled "Creativity-Conservation" designed for the New Gallery. The exhibition topics, designed for this tight space in Venice, were theoretically based on the absorbing modernity, since the second half of the 20th century, through the architectural creation developed in Romanian heritage conservation actions influenced by Roberto Pane ideas- one of the 1964 Venice Charter theorist regarding the architectural heritage conservation. In 2015 there were 50 years since this Charter guides the heritage conservation actions in the world. The exhibition program reveals the some hand drawings done by Ioana Grigorescu, a gifted woman architect, during her most significant conservation works, some of them inscribed, later, on World Heritage List.

Keywords: *Venice Biennale 2014, Absorbing Modernity ,Creativity-Conservation, hand architect's drawings, Ioana Grigorescu*

An international jury organised by the Romanian Union of Architects¹ awarded the first prize to the Creativity Conservation project.² The jury³ appreciated⁴ the modalities of the project to reveal the expressiveness and the importance of hand-drawing during the architectural design process, and for the better understanding of the architects' heritage, too.

The first preparatory meeting with the representatives of the Countries took place on 25 January 2013 in order to organise the 14th International Architecture Exhibition, Venice, 2014, known as the Biennale of Venice having the architect Rem Koolhaas as Director.

The subject proposed⁵ for the Central Pavilion was *Fundamentals*, while the one for the National Pavilions was *1914-2014 Absorbing Modernity*, motivating that "2014 is the Critical Mass... Given the fact we have a lot of time now, our proposition is that we try to find a way that each nation tells the same story – the story of the last 100 years of modernization and does that in their own way with their own emphasis and originality, but that basically we start looking in 1914 and end in the present and see how it is that we are in our current situation."⁶ Motivating that "(...) 100 years later you cannot anymore – we have all become more or less identical and more or less interchangeable. Of course this is not the whole story, but I would like to document how we got from there to here. It has never been done and it has

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*Image 1: Ioana Grigorescu, The meeting of architects.
Chalk on cardboard 100x130cm*

never been done for every country in the world. With this exploration, I hope to create a global perspective rather than the usual Western perspective that dominates architecture.”⁷

Any educated person knows that society is in continuous evolution as the natural and built environment. Just taking into consideration the great economical changes of the 20th century after the world conflicts and political movements of the past 70 years, we discover that architecture is a mirror of the historical events which still stands in front of us. “Architecture is still treated as a history of evolving styles, and in this exhibition I propose that each nation has a real awareness of the forces on that style. The changes in architecture are caused by architects, but also forced by events. War, political regimes, the discovery of oil, earthquakes, and revolutions all

have a huge influence on architecture. If we look at the last 100 years, these influences will be revealed.”⁸

The topics for the exhibition designated to the New IRCCU⁹ Gallery space were theoretically based on: the absorbed modernity since the second half of the 20th century, through the architectural creation developed into the Romanian architectural heritage conservation actions, also critical and creative conservation actions elaborated by arch. Roberto Pane, one of the 1964 Venetian International Charter theorists, regarding architectural heritage conservation.

The exhibition called ‘Creativity – Conservation’, designed to take place within the tight space of the New IRCCU Gallery, remembers the almost forgotten Arch. Ioana Grigorescu’s activity (1915 – 2006), and presents a creational lecture through various expression tools specific to the author’s times: sketches, drawings, photos of models and recent photographic imagery and objects designed by herself. At a first glance, the terms of creativity and conservation have non – complementary meanings, however in the architectural conservation practice they often mix up. When modern architectural phenomenon researches, the least neglected should be the theoretical start ups resulted from built up conservation practices.

Throughout this defined time span, 1914 – 2014, the lady architect’s assertion and recognition within the creative community was achieved. Especially after WWII, women architects, thus naming Ioana Grigorescu who’s been project leader and coordinator for important projects. Her own professional and capabilities recognition has been fulfilled through leadership and management of important

conservation works within the Moldavian area, in north-eastern Romania. These stand for creative, daring examples of conservation architecture using a contemporary approach, though they have not been ignored by the unaware critic, however they have always been an example for the future generations of professionals.

The exhibition design outlines the enlarged vision upon the Romanian conservation heritage, featuring also new expressional means developed through modern architecture and new materials available / exposed concrete, through spaces and shapes reinterpretation, whether wooden or steel Romanian traditional structures, all as a result of the skilful work of a lady architect working within the

6th and 7th decades of the last century. Through her designs, Arch. Ioana Grigorescu tried to preserve the historical authenticity within the designed environment, whether structural or spatial, inputs complying to the contemporary requirements. Comparative studies and traditional shapes remodelling was a research method used by the architect in order to enrich various design inputs aesthetical qualities within the limitative historical context. Thus, the architect's creativity adds value and contributes to a better understanding of the architectural heritage perusal.

The main entrance area dedicated to showcasing architectural creation, richly illustrated through expressional and spatial elements based on modern concepts, however mainly subordinated to highly valued historic buildings conservation. Here too, there is a transparent panelling structure, placed in the centre of the exhibition space, bearing images of exposed concrete, timber, steel, showcasing the modern instruments used through architectural expression but the conservation techniques and interventions designed by the architect versus historical authenticity. At the same time the panels suggest walking and sensory guidance (tactile, the best views to the displayed images). Here, a chair and a stair placed in opposite corners make for ordinary objects, built by architect's design but they highlight modern takes of traditional Romanian wooden shapes. The stair also proves helpful as a leaflet distribution point to visitors. Hung off the hall's ceiling, a projector connected to a computer will help show images of architect's designed buildings and sketches on a semi-opaque screen, placed within a window-frame as these images should be seen as from inside and outside the designated exhibiting space. Thus the 'window' images would pick the by passers' attention and they'll make for an animated invitation to



Images 2-5. Pictures from the exhibition 'Creativity – Conservation' for the New Gallery ICCRU in Venice

visit the exhibition.

The second area, adjacent to the first, more restrained, is dedicated to the architect's creative studio showcase, the architectural creation hub. Here specific professional objects are displayed: drawing board, t-square, lamp, drawing tools, pencils as well as notebooks bearing a massive diversity of sketches, books, magazines, and on the walls will be displayed bigger drawings, watercolours, life drawings, illustrating the creative and inspirational artist's universe. Here the visitor is free to shuffle notebooks containing the architect's working sketches reproductions.

"Conservation is therefore a critical object though artwork, brought together within a dialectical rapport, whereby the first determines already existent situation however intrinsic, limits within the second is called upon to act, then the critical activity leads to the architectural work which a creative action only should fulfil".¹⁰

The appreciation of the contest' jury rests the most precious recognition for the qualities of our teams' work, that unlighted the absorbing creativity even, in conservation.¹¹

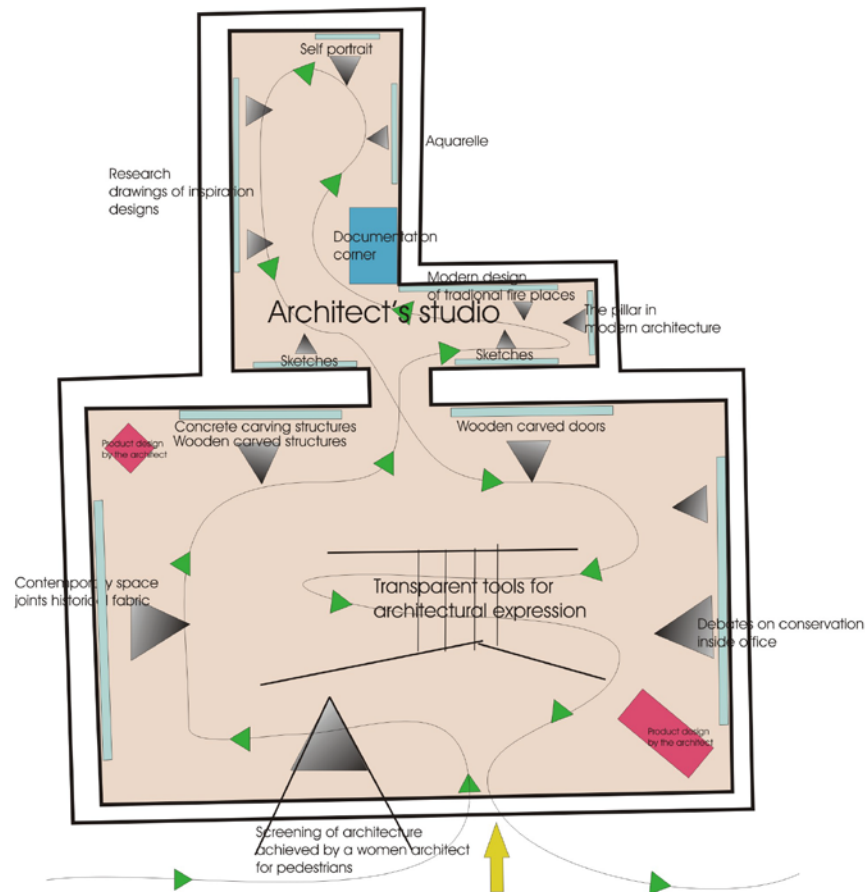


Image 6. 'Creativity - Conservation' Exhibition organisation at the New Gallery of IRCCU in Venice

Illustration source

- 1 UAR collection
- 2-6 *Absorbing Modernity 1914-2014 – Catalogue of Venice Biennale of Architecture*, "Ion Mincu" University Press, Bucharest, 2014, p. 71-79.

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³ The project for the New Gallery of ICR got 91,43/100 points. The jury members were Arch. Vlad Gaivoronschi, Faculty of Architecture Timisoara, Arch. Ana Maria Zahariade, University of Architecture "Ion Mincu" Bucharest, Arch. Brian Spencer, USA, Arch. Juhani Katainen, Finland, Monica Morariu, Romanian Ministry of Culture, Alexandru Damian, ICR, Arch. Bogdan Tofan, Union of Romanian Architects. See "Rezultatele Concursului național pentru selectarea proiectelor care vor reprezenta România la cea de-a 14-a ediție a expoziției internaționale de arhitectură - la Biennale di Venezia."

⁴ Ibid. The jury motivation was: "The project has been selected specifically for thematic idea. The architect Ioana Nicolae Grigorescu is extremely representative of architectural Romanian modernity, her design could make connections between subtle interwar modernism and the evolution of modernity from the communist era, innovative ethos between the vanguard and safeguarding property, between architecture, graphics and painting. Her complex personality and least publicized just until now it is presented by the atmosphere of the workshop design and through projects and original designs, which the Commission considered."

⁵ Rem Koolhaas said "What we want to do in the Central Pavilion is describe the history of all the components that every architect, everywhere, any time, has used and that together form the elements of architecture. It used to be that in architecture schools, the elements of architecture were taught. Students would have instruction on the floor, the door, the wall, the ceiling. But that has been abandoned, probably also because at the elements will have the huge advantage of helping us to better

understand what architecture is about on a very basic level. That is why we call the whole endeavor of the biennale *Fundamentals*". See "Prezentarea temei Bienala de arhitectură de la Veneția 2014. Lansarea temei în 25 Ianuarie 2013 de către Rem Koolhaas și Paolo Baratta", 11.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Institutul Român de Cultură și Cercetare Umanistă.

¹⁰ Gheorghe Curinschi, *Restaurarea monumentelor*, 95.

¹¹ Bogdan Tofan. *Absorbing modernity 1914-2014 / Absorbând modernitatea 1914-2014*.

CULTURAL SPACE VERSUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SPACE

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Abstract

In our living space it is all about the memory of the space: the traces, our personal memory identifiable in the collective one. By means of this type of memory, we are establishing relationships with places or maybe with the people involved in them. To save what we know about a space and its history, besides our personal or collective history, becomes the most important thing to do in relation with space. We are saving memories while we are preserving a building, or an important historical site; we are saving memories reinterpreting spaces, re-using them, but, first of all, by learning how to read them. Learning how to live with their past, their meanings, in our personal sense, right now, in our personal present. For these actions, archaeology has an immeasurable role, since it always reveals new layers with important historic sense. To this purpose, the society has developed itself in a spatiality with memories. And just for that, the conservation systems, as well as the ones reproducing the images from the past, come along with the archaeological memory and urban archaeology –these terms that will be added to the conservation and the “image” of the past new possibilities, new „fragments” of collective memory, of the memory of living.

Keywords: *space memory, collective memory, heritage, archaeology, conservation*

Motto: “Human identity presupposes the identity of place.”¹

One of the definitions of cultural space in the last century given by Prof. Robert M. Young² is: “the most spacious area in which we are thinking of ourselves is called culture. “To complement “*of ourselves*” actually comes that vision related to our own identity: spatial, historic, anthropological.

Robert Young developed the idea of defining the culture, starting from the *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*³ where he discovers a description made by Elvin Hatch in Adam and Jessica Kuper in the *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*, namely, the culture⁴ “is the living way of people.” It consists of conventional thinking and behavior patterns, including values, beliefs, rules of conduct, political organization, economic activity, which are passed on from one generation to another by simply learning them.

The concept of culture is an idea of signal importance because it provides a set of principles to explain and understand human behavior. It is one of the hallmarks of modern social thought and may be one of the greatest achievements of the modern social science, mainly anthropology.⁵ Upon reading the “message” of Christian Norberg - Schulz, we understand how important **the origins of humanity and its spatial identities** are. We could provide a better meaning to the present, and much needed connection between spatiality and time, in the historical sense might come out of it. According to this author, despite of the fact that the issue is much more complex, “any understanding of the natural environment grows out of the primeval experience of nature as a multitude of *living forces*”.⁶

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This is how we are actually closing in to the sense of space, to its essence and what it has to convey about the human settlements ... that *genius loci*.

The fact that "architecture belongs to poetry, and its purpose is to help man to dwell. But architecture is a difficult art. To make practical towns and buildings is not enough. Architecture comes into being the when a < total environment is made visible>" draws us closer and closer to the conclusion of the same author: "in general this means **to concretize the genius loci**."⁷

And, to this respect, all topics related to the cultural landscape, nature monuments and architecture introduced in the conservation and valorisation project may be included. And if you were to go deeper, at least with this definition, we would go farther into the depths of space, cutting it across, getting the information up to the surface, and reading 'between lines' about all the details of living, of living in that space.

"The basic act of architecture is therefore to understand the <vocation> of the place"⁸ and here we have somehow a little of what Eliade says about sharing spaces, sacred and secular. To invoke sacredness requires certain features to a space. "The most primitive of the <sacred spaces> we know of constituted a microcosm: a landscape of stones, water and trees."⁹

Here, the focus is placed on the discovery of sacred places, not merely on their establishing. While moving away from sacredness, which our predecessors were able to discover, we will turn your attention to the spatial historicity and its own culturality. The spaces are speaking, have their own memory and message, so that their simple "translation" we will help us get closer to its meaning, thus revealing the own language and authenticity of a city.

The historic spaces were contextualised in countries like Egypt, Greece or Italy, areas that simply recite their own historic paths and bring us memories. In terms of memories, Henri Bergson tells us in his book *Memory and Matter* that "a pure reminder is a spiritual manifestation. By means of the memory, we are simply placed in the field of spirit."¹⁰

Basically, while dissecting the perception a little, the author is right in what he says further: that any type of perception is already memory.¹¹ Almost everything that we perceive has actually passed. Perhaps it would help to additionally point out to the fact that the past is a very important element to understand the present, and its impact in their memory, especially in the collective memory. This is taken as a sum of individual memories, which recompose themselves into the description of a past; if we go with Bergson's view, we realize how important this memory resonance is in the present history of a city.

Should we have a quick look, besides Halbwachs's perspective, he actually believes that the **collective memory** is the *reversed image of the individual image*, and the past is not the one being preserved, but it simply **rebuilt** itself.

Going back to the importance of the past and the perceptions of the ancient space, we could try to describe that *axis mundi* of Romanity, as the two spatial coordinates *cardo* and *decumanus* *Cardus* were called, whose meanings were explained by Norberg – Schulz, as "a similar axis mundi was imagined by the Romans, whose heavenly *cardo* runs south from the Polar Star, crossing at right angle to the *decumanus*, which represents the course of the sun from the east to the west. In Rome, thus primary elements of Southern and Northern cosmologies were unified."¹²

The fact that Rome is the **eternal city** shows us exactly what Christian Norberg - Schulz says, namely that "to be **eternal** implies that the city has always conserved its identity."¹³

Basically, we understand that having a historical city actually means to have a city whose space identity has been kept. And we believe that in fact, its historical times and spatial characteristics related to its own monumentality have been preserved here. About Rome, Giuseppe Mazzini, Italian democrat, said in 1649 that "after the Rome of the emperors, after the Rome of the popes, there will come the Rome of the people."¹⁴

In fact, we are told that by preserving those times, along with the layers of space overlapping and given to the present, this is actually Rome does: it becomes of the commoner, the visitor, the tourist. Everything collected during centuries is now revealed, due to the actions of conservation and restoration that it has gone through for centuries. And this happens because of the urban museums, outdoor or traditional, of the archaeological museum where the spatial and temporal sectioning are bringing this extra information to the present, which makes it so special the travelling through the Italian capital city.

If we were to make a urban archeology analysis, closely related to the archaeological excavations in a context developed in the urban perimeter of the city, we find that the effort of the excavations will therefore be meant, in most cases, to illustrate the *long-term history* of the area under study, and also the changes occurred in the land use. For Rome, this use can sometimes be uninterrupted throughout the centuries.

In Rome, one of the most important scientists of the urban archeology was Prof. Rodolfo Lanciani, 1845-1929, who taught the topography of the ancient Rome and authored the book *Forma Urbis Romae* (1893-1901). Lanciani did not only attempted to reconstruct the ancient Rome and the medieval monuments, but he also made detailed observations, carefully researching all the pieces found and belonging to the ancient structures, emerged during the new wave of reconstruction of Rome, the capital of Italy .

Similar issues were also addressed during the excavations at Pompeii, where the archaeological investigations were primarily carried out in urban areas destroyed by the bombings in the WWII, particularly in the Northern Europe; at the same time, the need to find new methods of excavation or investigation was highlighted. There are special cases of modern urban archaeology in Italy, where the excavations made during the work on the subway in Milan, and in particular those of the Crypta Balbi in Rome, came up with great museums, which are now in one of the jurisdictions of the Roman National Museum.

One can wonder what a place means, starting from a wreck as we can prove what a 'place' can become itself by re - interpreting the ruins, by capitalizing them. From a mere technical space, it can become a **space of story**, with multiple meanings, light data, color, materials, or re - functionalizations, which we would like it become, so as to represent that space. The archaeological object captures the becoming of its own stories, of a scenographic order. Here, it is not possible to speak of a stylistic eclecticism, which overlaps objects of different "ages" to give more eloquence to the decor. In their intimate life, the archaic objects, of a decorative role, inherit their utility from generation to generation, while passing into a more serious plan, the one of memory, or of the memory of scenery.

What can a place mean, starting from the ruins? The physiological living in the same place, with more meanings of which we become more aware, makes these plans of time and space belong to themselves, thus turning everything into a poem of living. Traces, mean any location behind

and support a plea to preserve them, to understand what has previously happened. **The trace is actually the architecture understood as a sign.**

There are several key significances for any fragment of a relic. The overlapping of several places, and at the same time, of more "things" in the same context, will create meanings of which the person overseeing the planning of that space becomes aware and responsible with. Upon creating effects, sensations, calling the plan "past" in terms of space- time, feelings related to space and comfort can occur. Giovanni Morelli,¹⁵ did a study on the activity of the traces. The lost element defines "trace as being memory".

The way to focus on the positions, the balance between the past and the present, actually creates the difference between "to remember" and "to remind", thus creating a correspondence that brings to the fore the idea of museum, with a role of re-memorization. A conclusion is that when **considering the fact that the archeology is a layered omnipresence, recalling spaces and actions, hence it creates that type of transdisciplinarity between "creating" and "digging", between "understand" and "specify"**. Further arguments can be brought in support of the subject of **urban archeology**, recalling its role in the identification, establishing and giving back the cultural identity of the respective place, site in that city.

The same thing can be said about the archaeological sites, whose meaning of "trace" is often forgotten and unsatisfactorily taken advantage of in the settlements and urban functions. In Rome, the example taken from the author of *Scenography of the archaeological museum space*,¹⁶ the presentation of his doctoral thesis, it is shown that a purely archaeological city leads the perception issue on "two levels of reading: one on **"archeology in the city"** and another being perceived as **"archaeology of the city"**. The author therefore considers that the "archaeological sites are presented as a basis for successive changes in the city tissue as values that have triggered a report based on the role of ruins in the town, while for the latter, archeology is regarded as" **a hidden layer, illegible as an initial support found under the contemporary architecture**,¹⁷ "says the author; the latter preordains, prefigures the level, the quality of the "contemporary architecture".

We will continue with quoting, stating that "the archaeological sites are presented as a basis for successive changes in the city tissue and the values that have led to the development of the urban composition"¹⁸. Even though everything leads to the term of **muzealization**, it also belongs to the **local identity**, an identity recaptured via the function of museum. During the ARA symposium in 2011, according to the same author, the classification of the **archaeological spaces** will trigger a "spatialization", a function of the two essential criteria from the archaeological perspective within a city: **"archeology in the city"** and **"archaeology of the city"**; in the former case, it will identify a report mainly based mainly on the role of ruins in the city will be identified, which invokes the social experience and its own ability to communicate in this environment.

In the latter case, archeology is seen as a **hidden layer**, illegible and indirect, as an initial support under the level of the current architecture. The city is made up of successive layers, each having an equal importance in defining the whole, up to its contemporary image. The archaeological sites are thus introduced as basis of the successive changes in the city tissue and as values leading to the development of urban composition. A number of processes are hence defined as new functions which guarantee the tutelage, active muzealization and the visit to the preexistences, along with the bordering

environment, conservation and protection programs - not only thanks to the monumental values or seniority, but a representation of the local identity."¹⁹

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Endnotes

¹ Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci, Towards a phenomenology of architecture*, 32.

² Prof. Robert M. Young, born in 1935 in Dallas, Texas, is a historian of science specialising in the 19th century.

³ Philip P. Wiener, *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, 1968-1974, vol. 1., 614

⁴ Robert Young, "Mental Space."

⁵ Ibid., Hatch, 1985, 178

⁶ Ibid., 23.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in comparative religions* apud Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci. Towards a phenomenology of architecture*, 27.

¹⁰ Henri Bergson, *Matière et mémoire*, 327.

¹¹ Ibid., 258.

¹² Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci. Towards a phenomenology of architecture*, 28.

¹³ Ibid., 138.

¹⁴ Spiro Kostof, "The third Rome, The Polemics of Architectural History", 239.

¹⁵ Giovanni Morelli, 1816-1891, art historian and italian politician.

¹⁶ UAUIM doctoral dissertation , author Oana Diaconescu, Scafa Udriste supervisor , co- supervisor of Brunetto Battle, April 2012

¹⁷ Ibid, p.18.

¹⁸ Source: http://www.simpara.ro/ara12_rez/Oana%20Diaconescu.htm.

¹⁹ Ibid.

URBAN PEDESTRIAN SPACES IN TRADITIONAL TEXTURES

The reconsideration of the old pedestrian spaces in the historical centres of Braşov and Sibiu

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Abstract

The study “Urban Pedestrian Spaces in Traditional Textures – The Reconsideration of the Old Pedestrian Spaces in the Historical Centers of Braşov and Sibiu” represents my doctoral thesis performed under the guidance of the scientific coordinator Ph.D. Professor Arch. Florin Machedon and under the guidance of the co-tutoring Ph.D. Professor Arch. Teodor Octavian Gheorghiu. The paper deals with the medieval pedestrian historical urban centers in our country (Braşov and Sibiu), by reconsidering them and presenting the current trends applied to the pedestrian spaces (in the historic center of the Belgian city of Brugge).

Keywords: *urban pedestrian spaces, traditional textures, historical centers of the medieval cities, reconsideration of the old pedestrian spaces*

The research entitled **“Urban Pedestrian Spaces in Traditional Textures – The Reconsideration of the Old Pedestrian Spaces in the Historical Centers of Braşov and Sibiu”** set as an objective to study the matters related to urban pedestrian spaces, especially those in the historical centers of the medieval cities of Braşov and Sibiu – an integral part of the so-called research, through a reconsideration of the old pedestrian spaces, respectively through an analysis and a systemic and critical approach of the defining elements as well as through the highlighting of some notions regarding the improvement of the aspect and the functionality of the spaces.

The idea of the study appeared many years ago, out of a passion for medieval cities and for the spaces dedicated to pedestrians. A first concern regarding the approach of the “pedestrian” notion appeared during my student years and later on, the “pedestrian” notion was discussed with various experts in the country and abroad (architects, urban planners, restaurers, artists, engineers, sociologists, psychologists) as well as inhabitants of other visited cities, with whom I interacted. Based on the accumulated professional experience, this concern was considered thoroughly by the medium of several concrete cases which, eventually, constituted the basis of the present research.

Thus, the research was situated at the border or at the interference of many fields – history, urbanism, engineering, architecture, design, arts, sociology and psychology.

The objective was that of emphasizing, through the chosen case studies, the importance, the necessity and the specific modality of treating pedestrian spaces in urban historical centers.

The study itself **dealt with the problems discussed both nationally and internationally** which are a first-rate matter when it comes to talking about cities. Once I started studying **the problems** themselves, I realized that, however similar some pedestrian areas in the historical centers can be, just as many differences of context, approach, mentality and behaviour can be brought to light. Nevertheless, after reading the specialist bibliography, and after the field visits both in Romania and abroad, I could notice a defining constant of these pedestrian spaces, a constant which can be

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summarized in the idea that life among buildings implies a rational use of public space; it is generated firstly by the human need of contact of each of us with our fellows in an environment as favourable and recognizable both mentally and visually.

Usually, the designed and the materialized examples limit themselves to the simple "cosmetization" of the façades which border pedestrian spaces, the equipping with elements of street furniture, the extension of the commercial and the public alimentation functions and the pedestrianization of some arterial roads without taking into account the aspects which are related to the possibility of long-term functioning of these areas and, last but not least, their becoming benchmarks in the domestic and international urbanism.

Alongside with the technical support offered with a view to my getting to know and to learn some elements related to the design and the conformity of some sustainable pedestrian spaces, as well as my becoming familiar with the specific elements of the urban historical areas, the research was also intended to facilitate a series of possible solutions to reconfigure these spaces in the historical centers of Braşov and Sibiu, which constitutes **the novelty of the study**. Also, the study, through its approach, was meant to open new directions of research in the field.

In elaborating the study, the fundamental research and the descriptive research were used as **methods of research**. **The fundamental method of research**, also known as theoretical research, on which the first two parts of the research were based, mainly targeted the defining of some terms and theoretical concepts. **The descriptive method of research** which formed the basis of the other two parts, which also comprise the personal contribution of the author, led to the most thorough analysis of the case studies, by means of comparisons, in the historical context; the development trends in the field were mentioned too.

Moreover, **the bibliographic documentation, the analysis of the historical documentations, the observation of various aspects** following the visits at the sites, as well as **the conversations with various experts in the field** led to the final result of the research.

Starting from a series of questions (**How do we reclaim a pedestrian space in the historical center of a city? What must we take into account? Why do we create it for? Who are the involved actors?**), in this present research, we set as **the main objective** to offer a general view of everything that a pedestrian space involves and we tried to bring a well-determined personal contribution as far as the reconsideration of pedestrian spaces in the urban historical centers is concerned.

As far as **the structure of the research** is concerned, it was organized as follows: introduction, four parts, annexes and bibliography.

The first part of the study targeted the most relevant deciphering of the idea resulted from the joining of the 3 words - *traffic* - , - *urban* - , *pedestrian* - , as well as the technical character conferred by a series of specific parameters and standards, which the author tried to subordinate to a larger frame, at principles' level. It is imperative to know all these technical data as well as the principles which lie at the basis of the design of the urban pedestrian traffic. Without previously getting to know them, we run the risk of designing inadequate pedestrian routes, under - or overdimensional ones, and some conflictual areas may appear between the pedestrian traffic itself and the other types of traffic.

Also, as far as the design of the pedestrian routes is concerned, a most careful attention should be paid to the elements of urban design, which, in their turn, occupy a place just as important in the special configuration.

Alongside with the technical notions, the knowledge and the presentation of the history of the streets and the squares constituted a basis for the case studies in the third part of the research. Urban pedestrian spaces (streets or squares) have always represented the answer given to a series of social, economic and esthetic requirements as far as meeting, communication, relaxation and free-time spending were concerned. The most detailed knowledge of the models of the past as well as a reconsideration of them only reinstate the spaces dedicated to pedestrians, which are so important in cities nowadays.

The second part highlighted the fact that an urban pedestrian space can't exist without the three factors which are essential to the determination of a pedestrian frame - *the place* - , *the time* - , *the person* - , at the same time explaining the characteristics of a traditional urban, historical and commercial center, as well as the idea of centrality. The place, the time and the person are, one at a time or altogether, the main determinations of the pedestrian spaces, namely of the urban and the historical centers.



Image 1: Republicii Street – Braşov



Image 2: Nicolae Bălcescu Street - Sibiu



Image 3: Sint – Amandsstraat Street - Brugge



Image 4: Grote Markt - Brugge

The third part contains the case studies (*The reconsideration of the old pedestrian spaces – CASE STUDY NO. 1 – THE CENTRAL AREA – BRAŞOV CITY – REPUBLICII STREET – THE COUNCIL SQUARE – JOHANNES HONTERUS HOF COURT; CASE STUDY NO.2 – THE CENTRAL AREA – SIBIU CITY –*

NICOLAE BĂLCESCU STREET – THE LARGE SQUARE – THE LITTLE SQUARE – HUET SQUARE) and the present trends applied to the pedestrian spaces (in the historical centre of Brugg City).

Within the two case studies I targeted the thorough study of the pedestrian spaces in the area of the historical centers of Braşov and Sibiu, as well as the proposal of some objectives meant to preserve the character, the uniqueness and the identity of the areas through a durable revitalization. If the pedestrian area afferent to the historical center of Braşov is made up of an ensemble of two markets (The Council Square and Johannes Honterus Hof Court), a main street (Republicii Street) and a few other secondary pedestrian streets, the one in Sibiu includes a group of three squares (The Large Square, The Little Square, Huet Square), a main street (Nicolae Balcescu Street), passages and a few secondary pedestrian streets.

A first conclusion is that both central areas of these cities centered round a commercial street which directs the passers towards a main point (The Council Square in Braşov, and the Large Square in Sibiu). Then, the areas include routes with more or less prominent winding, a fact which leads, alongside with the insertion of surprise elements, to more originality and value. As far as the architecture of the buildings is concerned, both cities comprise constructions, most of them with monumental value; others – because of their open spaces with commercial functions and downstairs and with dwellings upstairs make us think of the former houses of the merchants in the medieval period.

Another similitude regarding the pedestrian areas of the two cities is given by the placement of the two churches, sideways to the main squares, in an area which is reserved to them. A difference as far as the placement of the Black Church (The Evangelical Parish Church) is concerned, consists in the fact that the Black Church can be visually accessed from the Council Square, while the other church cannot be seen from the Large Square. Both pedestrian areas sum up a multitude of functional, social, historical, environmental and emotional values.

On coming back to **the main objective**, namely **the reconsideration of these two pedestrian areas afferent to the central historical areas of the cities which comprise them**, we can state that it can only be reached through some pedestrianization actions, treated with a lot of responsibility. Through the diversification of the measures (one-level pavements, giving up classic pavements, taking care of some decorations, equipping with urban furniture adequate to the style and the period, ensuring adequate street lighting, creating a pleasant environment by taking care of the green areas, establishing clear rules regarding parking in the streets which won't be dedicated to the pedestrian circulation, clearing the squares of the parked cars - George Enescu Square and Johannes Honterus Hof Court in Braşov, and the Little Square, Huet Square, Goldsmiths' Square, Crown Square, Fishmarket Little Square and Arms' Square in Sibiu -, building glass passages, functional reconversions, the conservation, consolidation and restauration of the valuable buildings, the one-sided or alternative disposing of the commercial functions and public alimentation functions, the inclusion of other types of functions – auditoriums, galleries) proposed to be taken about the pedestrianization operations, one will get to define new pedestrian areas.

The proposal to include the two pedestrian areas with the afferent streets, squares, passages, courts and gangways within some theme-based routes (to visit the monuments with memorial value, graphic arts, monuments with urban architectural value, the fortifications of the city, to get to know the whole ensemble of the area afferent to the cities of Braşov and Sibiu, especially places of historical interest) contribute to the enlargement of the influence area and the efficient valorization of the touristic potential.

The last part, the fourth one, comprises **the chapter dedicated to the final conclusions and the recommendations made**.

The detailed research regarding what is connected to the reconsideration of the pedestrian spaces in the historical centers of the cities subsequently led to finding out the answers regarding the series of questions formulated with a view to defining the whole pedestrianization process. Along the research process, while looking for answers to the questions regarding the creation of pedestrian spaces, I found out the trends in the field.

Firstly, we must mention that in order to have a pedestrian space where we can feel good and safe, we must never interact with vehicles. Simultaneously with my walking in the pedestrian areas within the presented cities I realized the truth of the statement according to which the human scale was defining within the reconsideration process of the two historical centers.

Both within the pedestrian area of Braşov, of Sibiu, as well as in other urban historical centers in which the present research continues, the architectural scale mentioned by Jan Gehl will be permanently marked by those small-sized spaces and marks, as many details as possible, a fact which leads to people's getting closer to each other and implicitly to friendly areas and city centers.

At the same time, by extrapolating Gehl's ideas regarding cities, I proposed the creation of pedestrian spaces which should be as welcoming as possible, thus re-thinking the spaces, with a view to their becoming meeting places which should be full of life, safe, durable and healthy.

With a view to creating favourable meeting places, I suggested equipping these spaces with adequate urban furniture, which should totally match the style of the respective areas. For this reason, I started from the premise according to which furniture facilitates the configuration of some subdivisions both in the case of the squares and the streets. Standing represents a short-time activity most times. Thus, comfort represented another feature worthy to be taken into account within the reconsideration of the old pedestrian spaces.

The pedestrian central areas were considered and re-considered with a view to ensuring human inetraction. Most times, one could notice a "shading off" of these qualities considered very important within a pedestrian space, a "shading off" because of the excessive increase of the noise level caused by the vehicle traffic in the streets where vehicle access is still allowed (in these pedestrian areas).

Following the study and, implicitly, the assimilation of Jan Gehl's observations in his books, suggestively entitled "Cities for People", and "Life Among Buildings – The Uses of the Public Space" as well as William H. Whyte's observations in his book, "The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces", I understood how important social life within urban pedestrian spaces is.

Thus, both the new-proposed pedestrian spaces as well as the re-planning of the old ones must be the basis for various short-term activities of special importance ("street music", "festivals", "Christmas fairs", and many other events which can be organized in such spaces). Also, we mustn't omit treating pavements as carefully as possible, as well as the re-configuration of the existing green spaces within these central pedestrian areas, and the configuration of some new ones even by means of mobile vegetal elements such as flower stands, landscape planning and the vegetation itself, as they are all key-elements of the pedestrian urban spaces. Another aspect, not at all to be neglected within the reconfiguration of the two pedestrian areas was related to the importance of lighting within these spaces. Following its future presence, the pedestrian areas will become safer and the constructions – monument will be valorized after sunset.

At the same time, another alternative means of transport specific to pedestrian areas has been proposed for these areas; it is represented by the bicycle, a means which is trendy within international cities and which we want to implement in Romania too. Bicycles have been used in the historical centers too. However, we don't think that the tracks should be marked with a view to encouraging this means of transport; instead, we plead for a "tacit" policy of abiding by some minimum traffic rules.

Regarding the planning and the re-planning of the pedestrian areas in the historical centers, we can say that most times they coincide with the development of commerce and services. The commercial area has traditionally remained either on one of the main streets of the city, or in the area of one of more of the squares in which the guilds functioned during the Middle Ages.

In keeping with this aspect, besides the insertion of some commercial and public alimentation functions or other types of functions (auditoriums, galleries), with a one-sided or an alternative disposition along pedestrian streets / areas, on the occasion of the processes of planning and re-planning of the two areas, one has proposed the inscription of the street plates by joining the new name of the street with the old name with a view to including these spaces within some theme routes and to allocating some spaces, created through some functional reconversions, as exemplifications of some old trades and activities. This whole process was thought with a view to attracting people (either locals or tourists), namely to creating the temptation to walk in the respective areas.

Also, with a view to making known these areas both nationally and internationally, I paid a lot of attention to the constructions-monument which create the frame of development of the urban dynamics in the spaces allocated to these pedestrian areas. The attention I'm referring to is not limited to the simple cosmetization of the façades but is also intended to attract ample conservation, consolidation and restauration works (where is the case), operations which should be extended to the other constructions within the pedestrian areas.

As a consequence of my getting to know the norms and the parameters exemplified, the familiarization with the multitude of aspects which are related to the urban frame – namely the historical aspect, fact that it is the central area itself, as well as the reflection on the three determinant factors of the urban spaces, according to which nothing can be created without a previous reference to the person, place and time, pedestrian urban spaces must be conceived in such a way so that they are in harmony with the entire urban structure.

With a view to establishing some concrete and staged actions in order to increase the attractiveness of the routes, the connection between the present legal frame, the possible investors and the general policy of urban development of the municipalities of Braşov and Sibiu is determinant. As far as the cases presented in the research are concerned, we appreciate that, due to the proposals regarding the process of reconsideration of these spaces, we succeeded to pay proper attention to them.

The study also includes a series of **descriptions and images afferent to the historical objectives in the central areas of Braşov and Sibiu cities and, implicitly, their central areas, as well as street plates** which present the old and the new names of the street.

Illustration source

1-4

Author's collection

MANIFESTO OF THE URBAN MUSEALIZATION

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Abstract

*Urban musealisation is linked with urban spaces, with their identity, with the representation of space in the historic urban trail integration and continuity of this space in the city. Residents living their historic space perceive it in a way of interpretations going through it and being with him. The various manifestations of urban space archeology shed some past relationship with this consciousness leaving traces on space redefined it, redefining its routes, approaches and what is most helpful: transformations. Historic space change in another sense, other directions in other ways than an empty space of meanings and traces of it in the consciousness of those who are defining through it. Otherwise it's all about re-interpreting **the meanings of empty space toward a space defined by the past.***

Keywords: *urban museum, identity space, archaeological space in the town or in relation to town, urban destiny*

Definitions

Museum - an institution dealing with the collection, preservation, research, and the display of the objects with a historical, scientific, artistic interest; the building where these objects are stored and displayed. Urban museum - the act of capitalizing on the objects / sites with a historical, scientific value in the urban areas.

Some of the solutions for the integration, storage or commemoration of the archaeological sites and their contents might be: musealization, archaeological collections, archaeological parks, the designing and "prediction" of some **urban destinies** of the archaeological areas.

In the western cities, historic evidence is highlighted by making the most of the "**archaeological collections**", actions that will later lead to the establishment of **archaeological museums** where there are preserved a few samples of the old town included into the circuit / context of the new city. There are many examples of such interventions within the context of urban archaeological sites. But, unfortunately, in our country these examples are few and we will feature some examples in Bucharest that can be regarded as a bad example in this sense.

Musealization of the archaeological spaces or sites in the world

An **archaeological site** (or group of sites) is the location where clear records are kept for the activity of a civilization from a bygone era, be it prehistoric, historic or contemporary, which can be scientifically investigated. Meanwhile, the **archaeological site** can be seen as a perpetuation of the memory, the will and of the collective values, and their exposure to the benefit of the community. Similar with the historical monument, the archaeological site is also invested with those three components - spatial, temporal and that Koselleck defines from a temporal perspective, calling it "the functionalization of death representation in the surviving profit."¹

Monuments and the archaeological site alike are called upon to compensate for the absence of essential things, to bring the community essence back to sensibility that raises and maintains it.

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The **archaeological park** often encompasses the archaeological site, whose remodeling undergoes a series of changes and it is completed by a covered exposure area of the temporary and permanent collections, the museum and the green area nearby. These are placed either over the ruins of the old housing estates, castles etc. dotted with archaeological remains or places of great significance for the history of a people with no such remains. The centerpiece of this area is often represented by the archaeological remains that are recovered *in situ*. The role of these facilities is recreational and didactic, thus favoring the educational recreation.

The didactic nature of the archaeological parks is to facilitate the understanding of life of a civilization that existed in a certain time by exploring an area heavily exploited during that time, and it is meant for both adults and children. For a thorough understanding of the facts by the public referred to, it has been opted for a series of "fireworks", such as the stiling of the walls, the reconstruction of those parts of the building that might raise your interest, or even of an entire building, the development of a lightweight, detachable construction, which does not affect the archaeological site where various demonstrations and examples can occur, of an interactive nature of the circumstances faced by the people of that time, projections, outdoor exhibitions etc.

The role of research is manifested by an archaeological site landscaping that favors the study action in certain areas of the site that is not very richly documented, or to verify hypotheses, etc. One of the main issues of these sites is created by the **exposing** operation, i.e. "*the removal of layers of the superficial or deep soil covering a monument or an archaeological object*", after which a greater sensitivity to the action of external agents remains in the monuments, which is why their restoration should have a protective role; most of the time, the solution is found in the glass boxes, which alters the original image of the complex.

Besides the archaeological site itself, the archaeological park also includes a **building-turned-museum**. In addition to the role of exhibition, it has the opportunity to expand the teaching side of the park, which contains an area of collective or individual studies (seminars, conferences), thus facilitating the access to the library databases or to the topic library. The museum generally houses objects discovered in the archaeological site or in its immediate vicinity or in the same locality, but it can also provide temporary exhibitions. Sometimes, these museums are equipped with research bases (restoration / conservation), strongly supporting these *in situ* studies. The existence of **green areas** in the vicinity of the archaeological sites is a missing component of these programs, whose need is a fundamental one. It promotes the time spending in an area where the cultural component is very intense, with a great impact upon education.

Archaeological site in Newport – the Roman villa²

This example, a Roman villa in Newport, is an **archaeological site** on the Isle of Wight, in front of the Sussex coast and of Fishborn channel. This island is also mentioned by Plinio, the author says. This reference to the two populations, called Durotriges and Dumnonos. The Roman occupation between 43 and 44 AD was led by Vespasian during the last period of the kingdom of Emperor Claudius. In 296, Constantine was living in vectis to fight against the British Allectus, mainly in this period towards the end of the third century. The housing is traditionally placed in the main points left on the island, in this case the *villae rusticae*.

The Villa in Newport is the best known and the only visible to the public; a special appreciation is given to the mural painting, the bathrooms equipped with *hypocaust* heating type, proven by the

discovery of fragments of what this system was made of, and the glass in the windows. It's about a villa dating from 270-280 A.D., with a corridor that splits into two wings, a popular topology in Britannia. Discovered in 1926 during the excavations for the construction of a garage, the **Villa** was barely saved, given the lack of importance of the premises. The site was surrounded by houses and the covering of the ruins was necessary for the protection of the murals and the hypocaustum, whose restoration was supposed to be similar to the garage, originally planned. Meanwhile, other parts of the ruins remained within a tiny space among the houses, like a romantic garden. The feeling of moving into an outside area, like in the common English small towns in the 30's, is more visible in the presence of tiny plaits that mimic a Pompeian garden.

The **interior musealization** includes an exposure via a sloped walkway, perimetrically adosed to the walls, on which small size pillars supporting the sun-blind are leaning, the restoration of the paintings and of the bedstone, going on with the " period room" to " kitchen ", which was visible while walking across an open window on the same exterior wall, partially restored. This is not a happy situation, but given the limitations of the geometry and the size of the space, dark colors, lack of light, the low ceilings, the reconstructions were performed better than the higher edifices, thus managing to convey the domestic atmosphere of this small villa. The feeling is that this house fits the modern urban fabric. This intervention is of a strange naturalness, but it is wrong in many respects, especially in its size.

Highlighting the ruins of *Isis und Mater Magna Heiligtum*, Mainz, Germany

The archaeological site approached as a tool of focusing on the urban context, tracing back to its past but which can become a popular tourist spot. The Roman sanctuary, built in the first century, was operational until the third century. It was discovered during the excavation for Römerpassage mall in Mainz, (as opposed to building the Sun Plaza mall in Bucharest, carelessly built on top of the Văcărești monastery ruins) in 1999; the site was open to the public toward the end of the same year.



Image 1. Mainz, Isis und Mater Magna Heiligtum, Archaeological Taberna



Image 2. Mainz, Isis und Mater Magna Heiligtum, Archaeological Taberna

Illustration source

- 1 [https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heiligtum_der_Isis_und_Mater_Magna_\(Mainz\)#/media/File:Heiligtum_Mainz1.jpg](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heiligtum_der_Isis_und_Mater_Magna_(Mainz)#/media/File:Heiligtum_Mainz1.jpg)
- 2 [https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heiligtum_der_Isis_und_Mater_Magna_\(Mainz\)#/media/File:Heiligtum_mainz7.jpg](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heiligtum_der_Isis_und_Mater_Magna_(Mainz)#/media/File:Heiligtum_mainz7.jpg)

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Endnotes

¹ Ciprian Mihali, *Altfel de spații*, 95.

² Maria Clara Ruggieri Tricoli, *Musei sulle rovine*, Architetture nel contesto archeologico, 111.