

**ASPECTS OF
ROMANIAN
ART: A
REVIEW.**

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This is a compilation as a first draft of all my papers from my MA course in art history at Sussex University 2015-17. At October 2017 some of these though substantially complete still are about to undergo some revision and refinement .

They should only be quoted and referred to with my permission.

As this is compiled from papers that were written individually for different tutors there is some overlap of illustrations and references.

I have attached as an appendix a short paper which I prepared earlier (as they say) which may answer the question ‘WhyRomania?’

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1

**REDRAWING A PART OF THE MAP OF ART HISTORY: THE OPENING OF THE MUSEUM OF
CONTEMPORARY ART BUCHAREST AS A MEASURE OF THE SHIFT IN ROMANIAN MODERN
ART AFTER THE FALL OF CEAUSESCU : AN ANALYSIS OF TWO EXHIBITIONS 2004/5**

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“It is certain that foreigners would be very surprisedto learn that there still exists a country whose people doubt that they possess an art of their own; and they would be right to be surprised since they believe that even the most backward, primitive peoples have their own art, however rudimentary it may be”

George Sterian, Editor of *Arhitectura* ; ‘Arta Romanesca. Romania are sau nu o arta natioanala’ in *Arhitectura nr 1; ian- feb 1906,p17* quoted in Kallestrup,*S Art and Design in Romania 1866-1927* 2006, Boulder Colorado, East European Monoographs,p222.

1 –INTRODUCTION

As someone who has come to ‘art history’ from a background in geographical studies¹ and a interest in Romania² - all of which have artistic and art historical connections - the possibility of using the theories ‘kunstgeographie’ an aspect of ‘Maps of Art’³ seemed to bring all of these together. This paper will explore the spatial and geographical aspects of Romanian art and focus on to two exhibitions that make the effects of end of communism on art as perhaps the key event in Romanian art history. One is the official state approved paintings and especially portraits of Ceausescu (organized after the end of the Communist state) *the Muzeul de Pictura / the Picture Museum*; the other is a mixed exhibition: *Romanian artists (and not only) love Ceausescu’s palace?!* held in 2004 to celebrate the opening of MNAC (national museum of contemporary art) in (a small part of) the huge [Palatul Poporului](#) which dominates and destroyed a huge part of historic Bucharest at an enormous cost.

This essay will explore briefly the consequences for art history of the geography, history and politics of this ‘edge of Europe’ and then discuss these two specific exhibitions of post WW2 art .

¹ To be precise ‘Land Use Studies /Town Planning’, ‘Urban Planning Design’, ‘Talking about Special Places’ (PhD title) and Creative and Transactional Writing – my previous degrees.

² British Council Small Research Grant 2011-12 *Contemporary Romanian Arts as a commentary and critique of the urban environment of the post- communist city*

³ Maps can be conceptual or real/spatial and many maps of art history are of the former type:



This conceptual map for instance is taken from a unedited version of James Ekins’ *Stories Of Art* posted on siac.academia.edu/Ekins (accessed Dec 3 2015) – while conceptual maps can be fascinating and exciting they may omit or distort spatial and temporal realities.

2- THE IDEA OF 'KUNSTGEOGRAPHIE' AND ITS APPLICATION TO CONTEMPORARY EASTERN EUROPE

This section sets the theoretical framework for the paper and reviews the importance of place and local context – aspects 'outside' many approaches to art history - the identification of 'art's context' in D'Alleva's introductory text⁴ for instance is a-spatial – the history of ideas, Marxism and materialism, feminism, sexuality and cultural/post-colonial studies are her headline contexts⁵

This contrasts with the idea of '*Kunstgeographie*' which can be traced back to the 19th Century and has in various forms undergone something of a revival in recent years. Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann relates it to the recent 'spatial turn' in some areas of philosophy⁶ on the one hand and also the recognition of a geography of art that emerged in the 19th century especially in France and Germany⁷.

The possible connections and shared interests were noted in 1935 by Peter Breigher⁸ but the approach was tainted with Nazi connotations of *Volk* and *Volksraum, Boden* and *Blut* (soil and blood) and its revival in the post-war period has been in Eastern Europe where boundaries and national identities have been more fluid and the need for a sense of identity perhaps stronger. Paradoxically one of the best known works is Nikolaus Pevsner's *The Englishness of English Art* which adopts a wide time-frame⁹. Several important conferences at the end of the 20th Century 'consciously evoked' *Kunstgeographie*¹⁰. While Rampley, reviewing conference papers from Eastern Europe sees them as a major landmark opening up new horizons for research¹¹, Mattos writing from a South American perspective sees it as a way to make art history more inclusive¹².

⁴ A D'Alleva, *Methods and Theories of Art History* (second edition)(London: Laurence King Publishing, 2012) Chapter 3

⁵ D'Alleva, *Methods and Theories*, p. 46

⁶ T D Kaufmann, , *Toward a Geography of Art* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2004) p.3;Piotrowski (2005, p.166, footnote 1) cites Foucault *Questions on Geography* (1980) and Soja's *Postmodern Geographies* (1989)

⁷ Kaufmann, , *Toward a Geography of Art*, Chapter 3

⁸ Brieger, P *The Relations of History Geography and Art* Original publication *History* June 1935 pp 1-17 first published online: 18 DEC 2007 DOI: 10.1111/j.1468-229X.1935.tb00074.x Accessed Dec 2 2015.

⁹ N Pevsner, *The Englishness of English Art* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1956)

¹⁰ Kaufmann, , *Toward a Geography of Art*, pp 103-4; *Borders In Art: Revisiting 'Kunstgeographie'* (Proceedings of the Fourth Joint Conference of Polish and English Art Historians, University of East Anglia, Norwich, 1998). Edited by Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius. 272 pp. incl. 142 black and white illustrations. (Institute of Art, Warsaw 2000.) ISBN 83-85938-98-2.

⁸Rampley N, *Rethinking the geography of art history* Journal of Art Historiography Number 8 June 2013

⁹ Claudia Mattos (2014) *Geography, Art Theory, and New Perspectives for an*

Inclusive Art History, The Art Bulletin, 96:3, 259-264, DOI: 10.1080/00043079.2014.889511

The collapse of the communist states in Eastern Europe and the questions it raises in terms of art have been discussed at length by Piotr Piotrowski¹³, but in all of this 'Romania' is, by comparison with other former Communist countries little discussed. Several reasons might be advanced for that: it was a well established geographical entity (despite the questions of Transylvania with Hungary and the establishment of a separate state of Moldova) with an established culture and history - 'Romania's modern art differs from that of the other Balkan countries where modernism was a principal vehicle for the development and expression of national identity'¹⁴; in the Communist years there extreme repressive control and little of the 'underground' art that in other Eastern Bloc countries contributed to the 1989 revolutions; Romanian artists and writers in the west had been easily absorbed into western cultures – Tristan Tzara, Constantin Brancusi, Eugene Ionesco in the early 20th Century, or Paul Neagu¹⁵, in the Communist years. As a result there has not been as much attention to Romanian contemporary art.

¹³ P Piotrowski, , *In the shadow of Yalta* (2005) London, Reaktion Books, pp 255-259.

¹⁴ S. A. Mansbach, *Modern Art in Eastern Europe from the Baltic to the Balkans, ca.1890-1939*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999. p243

¹⁵ P Piotrowski, , *In the shadow of Yalta* (2005) London, Reaktion Books, pp 259-263 emphasizes the Romanian aspects of his work.

3 – ‘ROMANIA’ : A DISCUSSION OF MEANINGS AND IMAGES - WHAT DOES IT MEAN IN TERMS OF ART HISTORY?

The image of Romania is often made up of contradictory elements (Fig. 1) and from Western Europe at least ‘its location alone is enough to make it seem like an exotic land : somewhere ‘out there’, on the margins of Europe’¹⁶ (Fig 2) and my own impressions as a first time visitor were full of these contradictions ¹⁷. The geographical identity of Romania is clearly established, even if for long periods it was concealed and disputed, but its culture essentially a rural and folk orientated one with the Romanian Orthodox Church the national religion under Turkish (Ottoman) rule – not a social pattern encouraging artistic development and experiment : self consciously ‘Romanian’ art does not emerge until the 19th Century.

‘Dacia’ from which modern Romania can be traced was part of the Roman Empire however brief and marginal (Fig 4). Even the tracing of Romanian identity to the Roman is contested : Romanian is a Romance language in structure and grammar with a scattering of Slavic, Turkish, Greek and Hungarian words¹⁸. However confused and debatable the history the

¹⁶ Boia, L *Romania* London, Reaktion Books, 2001, p8

¹⁸ This is an extract from a paper describing my impressions :

HOTEL EUROPA/RIVERS OF BABYLON : Two novels set in and around 1989 – one Romanian, one Slovakian – illustrate – with all the qualifiers of individual examples – different cultures and geographies in a turbulent epoch. The Slovakian, by Peter Pist’aneek can be seen as part of a central European tradition that begins with Grimmelhausen’s *Simplicissimus* and runs through *The Good Soldier Schweik*. of the chancer and the opportunist – likeable but ruthless – who make the best he can, for himself out of uncertainty and upheaval¹⁷. The Romanian by contrast is full of hesitation and self doubt, a complex and elaborate post-modern piece of almost non-story telling and fantasy in which the author is also a character¹⁷. By the end of Rivers of Babylon ‘jungle capitalism’ is supreme, deals and careful scheming Racz has risen (literally) to the top of the hill over looking Bratislava. By the end of Hotel Europa ‘the author’ has travelled backwards and forwards across Europe several times, been on the edges of Piata Universitate, wandered around impoverished, doubted himself and others and finished up back in exile in France.

MTV 8AM. THE AMERICAN DREAM AND PEPSI COLA : (fig 3) I turn on the TV in my room and I find a hip hop video which could be in the suburbs of some mid-western city but then gradually I realise half its verses and images are Romanian¹⁷...in the break there are black and white factory scenes of the mechanical mass production of Pepsi-Cola, and at the end a brief tag line‘as good now as it was then’ for the ad is a re-run of a communist era documentary - the *epoca de aur*¹⁷ had already been absorbed into marketing.

Jarvis, B *For the first time – once : Bucharest* Paper presented at the Planning Research Conference, Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, April 2010.

¹⁸ Boia, L, *Romania*, Chapter II pp28-59. More recently Mircea Davidescu has written a very detailed and researched account of this complex and difficult (early Romanian history has been ‘claimed’ by many competing ideologies and nationalities not least Ceausescu who presented himself as the heir to the Dacian rulers) Davidescu, Mircea *The Lost Romans* USA(no city given) Create Space 2013; the Ceausescu reference is in Footnote m. p56.

establishment of these Roman origins in sculptural evidence is proudly presented – even if it relies on casts and reconstructions rather than authentic remains (Fig 5). In the early Middle Ages the territory was overrun by the Bulgars (Fig 6). The Battle of Posada in 1330 saw the defeat of the occupying Hungarian army by a much smaller Wallachian¹⁹ force led by Basarab I which led to the evolution of an independent principality (Fig 7) and the emergence out of characteristic decorated churches and icons (Fig 8) of the first identifiable Romanian style – ‘Brancovinian’ (Fig 9) though the effect of this and other victories is challenged²⁰.

Romania was²¹ an essentially rural economy with few large centres of population and poor communications: its art was essentially a folk art proudly displayed in the two national museums – of the Romanian Peasant (Fig 10) and the Romanian Village (Fig 11); the former is an indoor museum which extends the story to include the Communist years²², the latter is an outdoor collection of relocated and reconstructed village buildings opened in 1936 and is especially popular²³.

Modern Romania emerges in the mid 19th Century as part of the upsurge of European romantic nationalism (Fig 12); in terms of the evolution of ‘Romanian’ art the foundation in 1864 of The National School of Fine Arts (Școala Națională de Arte Frumoase) and the opening of railways across Europe (Fig 13) aided links and opportunity for contact with the west; and the *boyars*²⁴ started to adopt western dress as seen in the sequence of portraits in the Romanian National Gallery. The establishment of a monarchy²⁵ created a modern nation even if its capital was little more than a sprawl of village clusters with unmade streets (Fig 14). The first attempts to tidy up and canalise the muddy River Dambovită which ran through the centre of Bucharest began in the 19th century.²⁶

By the turn of the century Bucharest had been modernised with new streets, new public buildings and grand houses in a French neo-baroque manner, becoming known as ‘The Paris

¹⁹ ‘Wallachia’ was the precursor to Romania

²⁰ Boia, L, *Romania*, pp 60-69

²¹ And still is for most of its territory

²² In 2006 it won the European Museum of the Year award

²³ “The Village Museum was visited by 346,718 people in 2014, some of the activities with large number of visitors being the “Different School” (Școala Altfel) event – with 12,000 visitors, and “The International Day of Birds” – with 8,333 visitors a day, “The Afternoon at the Museum” – with 8,000 visitors, “Indian Culture Festival” – 6,989 visitors in two days, “St. Mary Fair” – 4,000 visitors in two days,” said Popoiu, the General Manager;. In 2015, the institution targets a total of 400,000 visitors. <http://www.romania-insider.com/the-village-museum-in-bucharest-romania-s-most-visited-museum-in-2014/138129/> (accessed 16 xii 2015)

²⁴ The native upper classes, until then very much ‘eastern’ and Turkish influenced.

²⁵ The Romanian monarchy was a dynastic construct with a king from a German royal family and (from 1914) an English queen. Marie was a member of the British royal family and married Prince Ferdinand in 1893 when King [Carol I of Romania](#) was looking for a suitable bride for [Crown Prince Ferdinand](#), in order to secure the succession and assure the continuation of the [House of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen](#). A painting of Marie by John Everett Millais in 1882 is in the Royal Collection. Marie was a most forceful, active and patriotic to Romania to an exceptional degree. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marie_of_Romania; Accessed 7 xii 2015)

²⁶ A recent detailed topographical history is Giuseppe Cina *Bucharest from Village to City* Capitel, Bucharest 2010.

of the East' (Fig 15)²⁷ and Romanian painters mimicked European styles and media (Fig16) rather than traditional decoration and icons²⁸, becoming 'representatives of French aesthetics in the Orient'²⁹, even if painters such as Nicolae Grigorescu³⁰ and Ion Andreescu³¹ studied in France their landscapes still evoked the Romanian villages and countryside.

Eventually an original strand of 'Romanian' modern art emerged out of small magazines and exhibitions to become DADA(Fig 17). Though its Romanian connections are mentioned more in passing, Tom Sandqvist³² has researched the influences and connections before the opening of Cabaret Voltaire in Zurich 1916. With the end of WW1 Romania expanded to include Transylvania(Fig 18) and many artists returned to Romania and many avant-garde magazines³³ began to appear and established an active avant-garde of cultural capital in Romania and Bucharest especially³⁴(Figs 19-21). But this was a brief episode that was 'drained away' by the persecution of Jews by the Iron Guard, Dadaists were seen as Judeo Bolsheviks and a foreign plague in the late 1930³⁵. Key figures emigrated as WW2, then Communism sealed the boundaries and connections with the West were severed except for a privileged few.

Even this brief review shows how local conditions have contributed to a specifically 'Romanian' art even among the émigré artists : Brancusi lived and worked in France but his roots are in Romanian wood carving (Fig 22).

²⁷ Or at least 'Belgium of the east' –as a small country but an economic power in Europe it could serve to inspire Romanians ; French became the language of cultivated intellectuals and between 1859 and 1918 by far the most literary translations in Romanian periodicals were from French writers (Boia, *Romania*, pp. 192- 202)

²⁸ 'Up to now our Schools of Fine Art in Bucharest and Iasi have dazzled only by their hopeless sterility' Ion Mincu, *'Our schools of fine art'* 1896, *Literatura si arta romana* quoted in Kallestrup, *S Art and Design in Romania 1866-1926*, 2006, Boulder Colorado, East European Monographs p.10

²⁹ Mansbach, S. A. *Modern Art in Eastern Europe from the Baltic to the Balkans, ca.1890-1939*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999. P. 246

³⁰ 1838-1907, studied in Paris with Gustav Courbet and Jean François Millet

³¹ 1850 – 1882, after initial training with Theodor Aman's (himself French trained) he joined the Barbizon school before returning to Romania

³² Sandqvist T *Dada East – The Romanians of the Cabaret Voltaire* Cambridge, Mass. MIT press , 2006.

Though there was a brief attempt to re-assimilate Tzara in the rise of national communist trends in the 1970's as part of the nationalist-literary-historical 'protochronism' concept during the Ceaucescu regime.

³³ *Contimporanul* 1921-31, *75HP* 1924, *Punct* 1924-1925, *Integral*1925-28, *algae* (1930-31).

³⁴ Ioana Vlasu gives a lively impression of this era with a mix a texts, photographs and maps in Benson T O (ed) *Central European avant-gardes* 2002, pp247-254.

³⁵ This collapse is vividly captured in Olivia Manning's *Balkan Trilogy* (3 volumes 1960, 1962, 1965, Arrow Books) "Nobody saunters or jaunts in encircled Bucharest. Harriet and Guy take a horse-drawn carriage – the beast is a pathetic nag, the driver sinister. They venture a sleigh ride; the too-thin ice groans. In a mountain resort, they wander paths through dark pines to a nunnery, where they walk in on a dark tableau of abasement. At the cinema, they watch newsreels of northern Europe's roads streaming with strafed refugees. In the park, they stroll among beggars and overhear reports of an assassination."

(<http://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2015/aug/14/the-balkan-trilogy-by-olivia-manning-a-fraught-trip-through-wartime-europe>; Accessed 13 xii 2015)

4 –EXHIBITION CASE STUDY 1: MUZEUL DE PICTURA / THE PICTURE MUSEUM

Although the Romanian Communist Party had been a small minority³⁶ with little influence in the interwar period the changing fortunes of Romania in WW2 led in 1944 to 'King Michael's Coup' and the establishment of a Communist government later that year and the abdication (under pressure) of King Michael in 1947 and the establishment of the "[People's Republic](#)" aligned with the Soviet Bloc. The establishment of the Union of Romanian Artists in 1950 brought art – through control of commissions and funding- into state control though the role of the UAP is very different today continuity is still acknowledged³⁷. The development of the arts thereafter followed the Soviet pattern (fig 23) with a very specific Romanian twist – the relations between Ceausescu's government and the USSR was never easy – and Romanian communism was specifically Romanian and artists were expected to contribute to the reinforcing of 'National Identity'³⁸.

In the first decades of Communism well established artists continued to work in a generally realistic painterly style which though it often celebrated the achievements of the party in transforming the landscape (Fig 24) it does not have the personality cult of the later years.³⁹ Even 'naive art' had a place recording the new landscape in peasant style (fig 25). Only a few artists challenged this propagandist dominance– most notably centred around the art school in Timisoara⁴⁰ where :

³⁶ Rising quickly from 5–6,000 party members before WW2 to 710,000 members in 1947.

³⁷ "After the 1950s, the politicisation of art brought to the foreground the face of the New Man, a debatable concept, but one that also spurred artists into a kind of socialist competition for immortalising steelworkers, miners, builders on sites and children kissing the various beloved leaders – of whom some died natural deaths and others ended their days in helicopter-surveyed barracks. The creation of the Artists' Union, following the model provided by the sister countries of the invincible socialist bloc, provided artists with lucrative commissions, and many gladly became attached to the system. Others, enlisted under constraint by the regime, were, of course, less glad. The great industrial plants injected new life into the craft, and the Yearly Salons at the Dalles Gallery, the Biennials, the Triennials of all kinds, as well as the symposiums gave rise to a period of victories of all kinds. The awards of the craft, generous when compared to those set at stake by the international salons in the countries of the socialist brotherhood, looked meagre when compared to the prizes put up by western meetups. Most artists dreamt of going to, and hopefully living in the West of so many temptations. The officials of the time managed to keep in check for quite a while the artists' desires" UAP Iasi Branch Website <http://www.uapriasi.ro/desprenoi/> Accessed 21 Nov 2015.

³⁸ This is discussed in Mocanescu, *A National Art as Legitimate Art : 'National' between tradition and Ideology in Ceausescu's Romania* users.ox.ac.uk/~oaces/conference/papers/Alice_Mocanescu.pdf Accessed 15/12/15.

³⁹ Ion Petrescu (ed) *Pictura Romineasca Contemporanea* Bucharest, Editura Meridiane 1964

⁴⁰ "In this region actionism was regarded as a practice with a powerful individual component which concentrates on visual experimentation or relates to some social or political commentary that eludes "official art", and which thus situates it at the opposite pole. This is why actionism was frequently an underground phenomenon; it was considered subversive, and consequently it remained almost unknown in the former communist countries, where movements that opposed the communist regimes were passed over in silence. In the 1970s actionism manifested itself in a variety of ways, ranging from environmental actions and land-art events, such as those organised by the members of the Sigma Group in Timisoara, to events of the Muscovite Conceptualist type which occurred in isolated places outside the towns. These were performed in front of a specialised public or under secretive circumstances, in art galleries or in other public spaces, but for a small public. In the late 1970s and early 1980s actionism appeared sometimes in the form of body-actions in the artist's studio, and sometimes only in front of a photographic or moving picture camera as a kind of post-happening art manifestation" [Ileana Pintilie The Zone Performance Festival - the Expression of a Regional Context](http://www.inst.at/trans/9Nr/pintilie9.htm) <http://www.inst.at/trans/9Nr/pintilie9.htm> Accessed 20 Nov 2015

The Sigma Group was the first experimental group in Romania (1970-1978), made up of its permanent members: Stefan Bertalan, Constantin Flondor and Doru Tulcan. Their programme was both artistic and pedagogic; at the time its members were all teachers at the Fine Arts Academy in Timisoara. Their activities focussed on a free, experimental study of nature integrated with an ecological vision, and were characterised by an interest in land art. The group presented actions, film and photography, in an attempt to integrate several "visual languages" in their research.⁴¹,

The reality of the Romanian landscape increasingly diverged from the scenes presented in the official images and recording and making art from this bleak landscape only began to be known after 1989 (Fig 26,⁴²) a bleakness that was increased by 'Ceauşima'⁴³ and the increasing deprivations that Ceausescu's combination of megalomania and absurd focus on an ideal of Romania with himself as an almost magical leader: "Beloved leader", "Great Helmsman", "the most beloved son of the nation", "Genius of the Carpathians". This image was reinforced and communicated in the many large paintings of him (and her – his wife Elena) that adorned public buildings. Artists found ways to continue to work under close and pervasive surveillance and control⁴⁴.

⁴¹ [Ileana Pintilie](http://www.inst.at/trans/9Nr/pintilie9.htm) *The Zone Performance Festival - the Expression of a Regional Context* <http://www.inst.at/trans/9Nr/pintilie9.htm> Internet-Zeitschrift für Kulturwissenschaften 9nr, august 2001

⁴² "Ion Grigorescu is one of the very few multimedia artists in Romania who during the communist regime conducted visual research on the body: a taboo topic at the time. The artist's body became work "material"—perceived as a "medium" and surface—onto which mental images are reflected. His body performances are to be seen as "post-happenings" with the emphasis no longer on the temporal dimension but rather on the photographic snapshot that, however, preserves a performative character. These works, like many others from the nineteen-seventies and eighties, would go public only much later" *Subversive Practices*, Budapest 2010 <http://subversive.c3.hu/en/Ion%20Grigorescu.php> (Accessed Dec 28 2015)

"Andrei Pandele was a young architect when he began photographing his home country, Romania, in the 1970s. His camera captured a period of huge change under communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. For some, his stunning photos are now a painful reminder of a time of destruction, and a life lost. "I was an architect," he explains. "I could find plans [and] approximate what they would destroy. Not exactly, no-one knew that. They were wild, totally out of control." "After two years of photographing the architectural destruction I decided that it was very bad, but it was even worse that they were ruining the lives of 22 million people. So I began to take pictures of everyday life. I think they are much more striking." "I have seen women over 40 exploding in tears in front of my photographs, because they saw their life had been destroyed, but they realised it 20 years too late. And a lot of teenagers laughed neurotically - because they recognised something in the pictures that their parents had told them, but they had never seen for themselves." Tessa Dunlop *A lost city: Photos of Bucharest's past* 5 October 2013 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-24368485> Accessed 01 jan2106

⁴³ Ceauşima ("Ceausima") is a vernacular word construction in [Romanian](#), sarcastically linking former Communist leader [Nicolae](#) to [Hiroshima](#). This [portmanteau](#) term was coined in the 1980s to describe the huge urban areas of [Bucharest](#) that Ceauşescu ordered torn down, comparing the results with the [nuclear attack on Hiroshima](#) (Wikipedia Accessed 2 jan 2015)

⁴⁴ 'I don't refuse an order. When I needed the money, and I did, because I have two children, and they came and ordered me to paint a work depicting Ceausescu from me, I accepted gladly. But only with the condition that I do it my way! (...) I liked commissions that were made during the Ceausescu regime. But I painted him as I wished (...) Since great artists always followed orders, only amateurs do what they like The orders came from people who to this day are very rich, people whom I again thank for giving them to me. (...) I didn't do politics and nobody told me what to do. Because I did not do politics and did not create any fuss, the Securitate did not treat me badly. Why complain? I stayed away from dissidence, from complaining, because dissidence is a sort of complaining.' Informal interview with Pavel Susară, August 23, 2013 in Caterina Preda

The official art which was formulaic and usually featured Ceausescu (sometimes with members of his dynasty⁴⁵) sets him in standard repeated poses against different backgrounds and in different styles – groups of workers, children or adoring public are seemingly blessed by the great ‘conducator’⁴⁶. In her thesis *The Leader Cult in Communist Romania 1965-1989 Constructing Ceausescu's Uniqueness in Painting* Mocanescu argues that these paintings use traditional Romanian devices but does not discuss the artistic quality of the work⁴⁷

Forms of Collaboration of Visual Artists in Communist Romania of the 1970s–1980s Hungarian Historical Review 4, no. 1 (2015): 171–196 Hungarian Historical Review 4, no. 1 (2015): 171–196
<http://www.hunghist.org> 171

⁴⁵ For it was seen as a dynastic family, though the playboy son Nicu was rather a figure of fun.

⁴⁶ ‘leader’ One of the many titles he assumed

⁴⁷ “Whereas the XIXth century had a lot to offer in terms of national heroes who could be used as models and background for Ceausescu's visual image, the mediaeval painting, especially the votive portrait, provided a clear visual scheme for the representation of the Romanian leader. Art historians started to pay minute attention to the votive portraits which had been the only 'laic' portraits in the church painting produced in the Romanian Principalities almost up to the XIXth century. As the vast majority of the churches constructed up to the XVIIIth century were foundations of the leaders of the Romanian Principalities, the votive portraits represented the founders along with their families in a dedicatory attitude. Whilst their main function was that of representing the voievozi as devoted Christians who dedicated their foundations to God, the votive portraits were also used by the leaders themselves as a means of displaying their social status, their signs of power. When these votive portraits started to come under the scrutiny of the art historians of the Ceausescu Era, they were given a more extensive significance. Because all these voievozi were represented in the votive portraits in their official outfits (crowns, weapons included), the portraits were also seen as indicators of the fight for independence and national dignity. This broader interpretation accentuated the Romanian voievod's image as a defender and guarantor of the country's independence and paved the way to a similar depiction of Ceausescu. More importantly, it conferred to the portrait of the leader certain attributes. The style of most of the works representing Ceausescu recalled the post-Byzantine style of the votive portrait in the mediaeval church or the icon painting. The flat style of these representations was influenced by the rich production of historically inspired painting that started to emerge from the middle of the sixties on and which more often than not depicted historical events or figures trying to respect the historical accuracy: buildings, interiors, gowns, physical appearance, etc.

Partly due to his very basic artistic education, to his incapacity to grasp other forms than the figurative ones and partly due to his perception of painting as an incomplete means of mass persuasion, the attention he paid to the fine arts in general was limited. In the first years of his rule he had a benevolent attitude towards artists whose support he attempted to gain.

Nevertheless, his attitude changed after the 1971 Asian tour which reconfirmed his belief in means of mass mobilisation. The issue of the July Theses marked the beginning of the Romanian 'mini-cultural revolution' within which visual image became a simple additional agitation tool meant to transmit messages in accordance with the official ideological line. The central tenets of the new cultural policy inaugurated by the July Theses were to be ceaselessly reinforced through speeches, directives, meetings and the rhetoric maintained practically unchanged until the end of the regime. The cult of Ceausescu propagated through visual images started to appear in this changing ideological atmosphere and to compete with other forms of cult production. Although never central within the cult, visual image received wide circulation through newspapers and homage volumes and aimed to render Ceausescu as the perfect embodiment of all positive national features, as the utmost personage in the history of Romania” Mocanescu, Alice *National Art as Legitimate Art : 'National' between tradition and Ideology in Ceausescu's Romania* users.ox.ac.uk/~oaces/conference/papers/Alice_Mocanescu.pdf Accessed 15/12/15.

These paintings made up the body of works displayed in 'The Painting Museum' Painting a project that set out to engage critically with the 'dark side' of Romanian art : the representations of communist power, the official portraits of dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.⁴⁸

Nicolae Ceausescu, more than two decades after his disappearance, remains a curiosity to many historians, but also for people who have experienced democracy and the values of the Western world a glimpse of communism is very hard to understand. How we managed to live without to wonder or revolt, in an era in which a man, be it head of state and party, was deified.⁴⁹

Reviewing the paintings they seem incredibly naive and somewhat perfunctory in painterly values – as if they had been 'dashed off' with little thought or care for workmanship or originality, taken from photographs or copied. The characteristics that Mocanescu describes as Icon- like and historically rich in references seems to be a rather view of paintings that appear somewhat slipshod and formulaic; however interesting as documents of a period they have little to commend them artistically despite the optimism of the press release :

The final set of figures for this section has grouped them thematically⁵⁰. The one painting which has a greater sense of originality – perhaps for not being a literal portrait is shown in Fig 33.

⁴⁸ "The curatorial strategy negotiates between showing and hiding the images, describing in a sense their post-revolutionary history: seldom openly discussed, yet always there, in the back of our minds, in the psychic backyard of unexamined recent history. Alongside conventional modes of presentation, the exhibition makes use of alternative spaces inside the museum, residual spaces left behind after the conversion of a wing in Palace of the Parliament (formerly known as the House of the People, the second largest building in the world and in itself the most obscenely triumphant symbol of communist power) into a gallery for contemporary art. In a sense, this strategy seeks to decontaminate the new space of the museum, as the curator describes the corridors between original wall and museum wall as encapsulating fifteen years of post-revolutionary history. The works in question articulate a virtually complete history of modern art, as the authors resorted to various styles and stylistic devices to embellish – and seemingly diversify – an encomium which is fundamentally the same, the endless repetition of the same statement about authority and submission. From the 'Rousseau Ceausescu' to the 'Jasper Johns Ceausescu', the artists deploy indiscriminate metaphors, crooked readings of Romanian history and puzzling details, creating an official iconography with many involuntary lapses and a great dosage of tragic humor. Ranging from the picturesque to the sheer grotesque, this polymorphous portrait of Nicolae Ceausescu introduces viewers to a biologic enigma. The subject seems unaffected by age, he actually grows younger, a process which culminates with a 1989 portrait of blossoming strength and youthful confidence. He is seen working on the country's many construction sites, visiting factories or villages, in 'permanent dialogue with the people'. He is the prototype of the 'the new man', which communist propaganda imposed as the fundamental aim of Romanian society⁴⁸

<http://www.e-flux.com/announcements/muzeul-de-pictura-the-painting-museum/> [National Museum of Contemporary Art \(MNAC\), Bucharest](#) March 16, 2005

⁴⁹ Voicu *Hotel Nicolae Ceausescu in tabluri* Accessed 3 Jan2015

⁵⁰ It has not always proved possible to properly attribute these paintings – any catalogue of *muzeul-de-pictura-the-painting-museum* seems not to be available and according to anecdotal reports paintings of this era are haphazardly stored

5 –EXHIBITION CASE STUDY 2: ROMANIAN ARTISTS (AND NOT ONLY) LOVE CEAUSESCU’S PALACE?!

With the ‘revolution’⁵¹ of 1989 – the bloodiest of the series of Eastern Bloc seismic shifts⁵² – the literal as well as the artistic map of Europe changed; after a period of confusion and more violence⁵³. The huge physical, social, humanitarian and psychological scars that permeated post-communist Romania are still apparent, 25 years later, and one of the most visible is the huge ‘Palatul Popolariul’ (its communist title), ‘Ceausescu’s Palace’ (the popular title) now officially ‘Palatul Parlamentului’ for which a huge area of historic Bucharest was arbitrarily demolished almost overnight (Fig 35) and which consumed a vast proportion of the state budget and manpower for ‘the horrific immortal monument’⁵⁴. After various rival strategies⁵⁵ the use of the bulk of the huge building (the second largest in the world) would be for the Romanian parliament with some of the state rooms available for hire for conferences and weddings ...and a ‘Museum of Contemporary Art’ in the rear wing – hardly the most accessible part, something which had been called for since 1990⁵⁶.

The opening exhibition *Romanian Artists (and not only) love Ceausescu’s Palace, 2004* might be seen as a joyous cross-section of contemporary art in Romania all in various ways celebrating the huge shift in the use ‘We take the project of building a space of free spirit as a challenge of the upmost importanceit counteracts its very essence and is capable of humanising an urban area that seemed to be definitely deprived’⁵⁷. 25 artists took part in the exhibition which included :

- A cake model and staged photographs (Irina Botea)
- Science fiction fantasies for the future of the building (*Wrongbeach*)(Nicolae Comanescu)

⁵¹ Some hold that it was more a palace coup than a true ‘revolution’. Boia argues that it was ‘a revolt, a revolution and a *coup d’etat*.... all at the same time’ (p148) and that Communism had destroyed the Romania of the past – socially and politically, physically and geographically (Boia, *Romania*, 2001, Chapter IV).

⁵² The Ceausescu’s were the only Communist leaders to be (summarily) executed

⁵³ The most notable of which was the series of Minerriads (Mineriadă) is the term used to name any of the successive violent interventions of miners in [Bucharest](#). These interventions were generally seen as aimed at wresting policy changes or simply material advantages from the current political power. The term is mostly used to refer to the most violent mineriad, which occurred in Bucharest during the period (Wikipedia, 4 Jan 2015). *Hotel Europa* by [Dumitru Tsepeneag](#) (2010, Dalkey Archive Press) is full of hesitation and self doubt, a complex and elaborate post-modern piece of almost non-story telling and fantasy in which the author is also a character. By the end of *Hotel Europa* ‘the author’ has travelled backwards (a little accidental James Joyce there!) and forwards across Europe several times, been on the edges of Piata Universitate, wandered around impoverished, doubted himself and others and finished up back in exile in France.

⁵⁴ Pandele Andrei, *The House of the people – the end in marble* Bucharest , Compania 2009 p6

⁵⁵ Notions of a Michael Jackson Theme Park; huge office development as part of the winning entry in the Bucharest 2000 Competition were mooted in the 1990’s

⁵⁶ Geta Bratescu *Dupa 14 ani/after 14 years* pp 62-63; in Ruxnadra Balaci *Romanian Artists (and not only) love Ceausescu’s Palace* Bucharest, MNAC, 2004.

⁵⁷ Mihai Oroveanu, Introduction pp 19-21, in Ruxnadra Balaci *Romanian Artists (and not only) love Ceausescu’s Palace* Bucharest, MNAC, 2004.

- 'Tourist Terror Target' (Stefan Cosma)
- The use of the Romanian flag colours for terrorist balaclavas (Alexandra Croitoru)
- Video of the city through the eyes of a 'Balkan Tijn Uilenspiegel' (Calin Dan)⁵⁸
- Treatment as a childrens' sweet (Suzana Dan)
- Graffiti art ('are sheep zebras?') (Gorzo)
- 'Dialogue' on film with Ceausescu and a screening of 'Crooked Axes of the Civic Centre' (Ion Grigorescu)
- Repeated images of the Palatul over time in different settings 'Indirect Reconstructions' (Iosif Kiraly)
- 'Divided' a project about a divided world and divided cities (Dan Mihaltianu)
- '30 Years of Social History- images of the Dacia 1300 one of the constants of Communist streets (Vlad Nanca)
- 'Actors in Subliminal History' subverting the message of Ceausescu's mass rallies (Cristian Pogacean)
- Accounts (on video) of the first days of the Revolution (Cristi Puiu)
- Subversive commentaries on the 'east west avenue' and a model Palatul built from packets of 'Carpati' (Carpathian) cigarettes recalling Dracula's castle (Sub-real)
- A comparison of different guides presentations of the Palatul (Mona Vatamanu and Florin Tudor)

The differences in media, style and attitude between this exhibition and works shown a few months later in *Muzeul de pictura / The picture museum* could hardly be greater, yet they are from geographical site – clearly there is more to *Kunstgeographie* than location, topography and climate – the factors initially seen as crucial.

⁵⁸ Who is now Director of MNAC

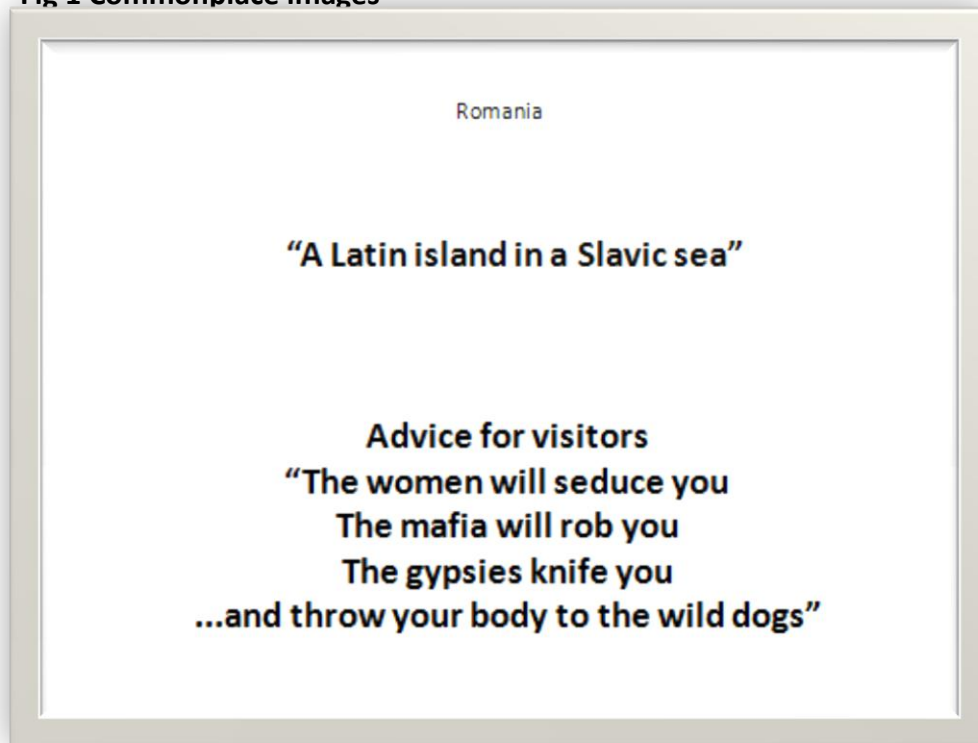
6- DO MAPS OF ART MATTER IN THE ELECTRONIC AGE?

The modern, electronic world is increasingly a-spatial but nevertheless real space and time frame our everyday lives. This brief study has shown that the idea that art has a spatial and location related dimension and that the history of specific locations – and the access they have to others, the way ideas and people move and communicate – is still an important consideration – whether Ceausescu’s overblown claims to be a Dacian emperor, or contemporary Romanian artists’ debunking of them (and reminders of the horrors of the Communist regime in Romania) still give worth to the idea of *Kunstgeographie*.

Text including headings and captions – 6500 words

ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig 1 Commonplace images



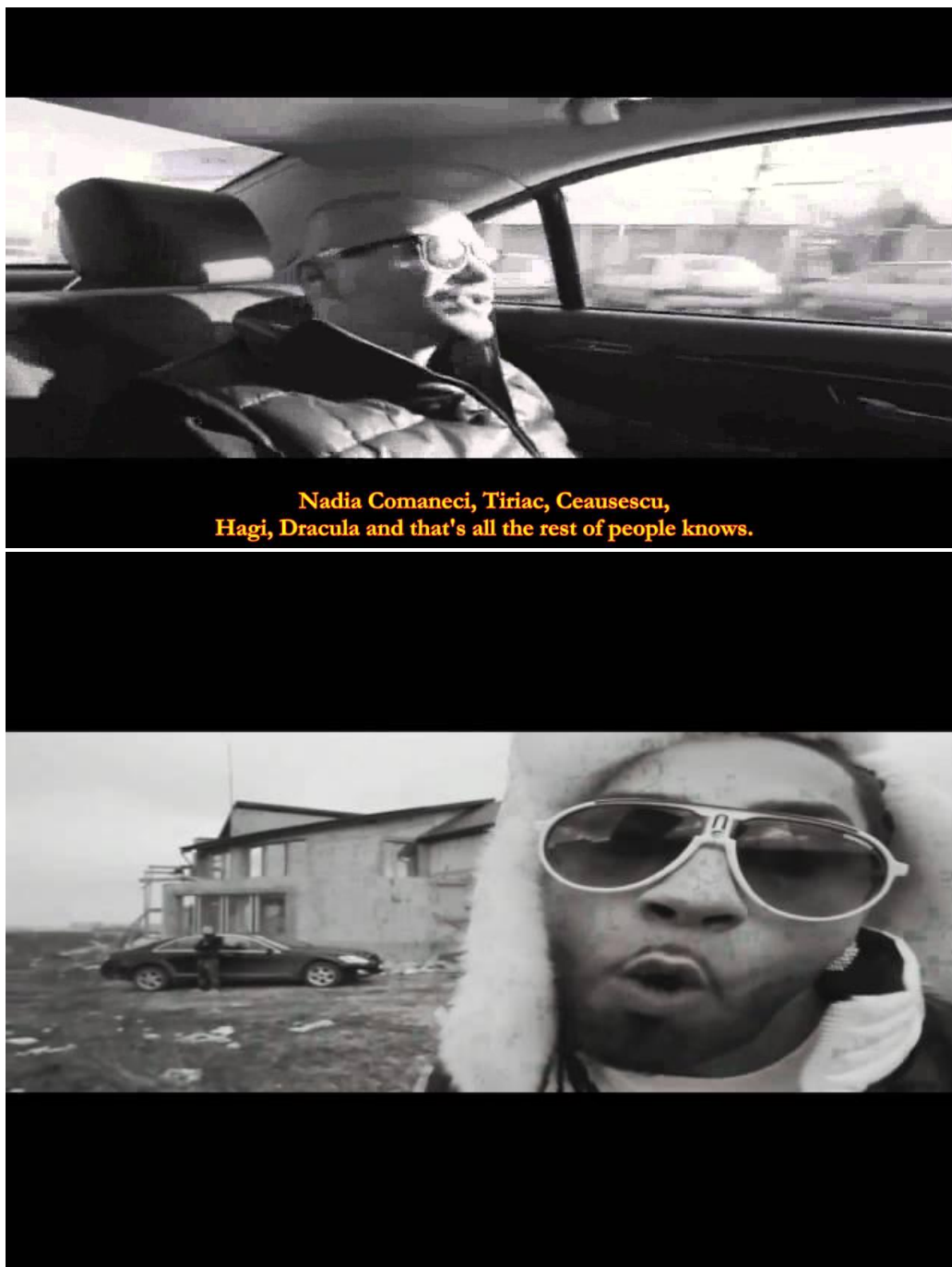
The former comment is to be found, in various forms in almost all commentaries on Romania; it a source of explanation for a unique identity and cultural distinction. Romania is both Latin – in linguistic roots – and Orthodox having had (albeit limited) autonomy as a principality within the Ottoman Empire.

The latter comment was colloquial advice from a Slovakian – this unique Latinity is compounded with other less desirable images.

Fig 2 At the edge of Europe



Fig 3 American Drim .



Without the Romanian language and some more domestic images around the supper table with [Mămăliță](#) - *cornmeal* mush and [Ciorbă](#) – ‘sour soup’ made with lemons or sauerkraut juice the video could pass as American,

Stills from the official video for Puya *American Drim* , www.youtube.com , Accessed 5 Dec 2015 (@2010 MusicExpertCompany - musicexpert.ro, la-familia.ro, Muzica: George Hora, Dragos Gardescu, Stefan Mihalache, Text: Dragos Gardescu, Stefan Mihalache, Publisher: MusicExpertCompany/InsideMusic/ScandalosMusic, Label: MusicExpertCompany/InsideMusic/ScandalosMusic, inregistrat in Studio 66 – Timisoara)

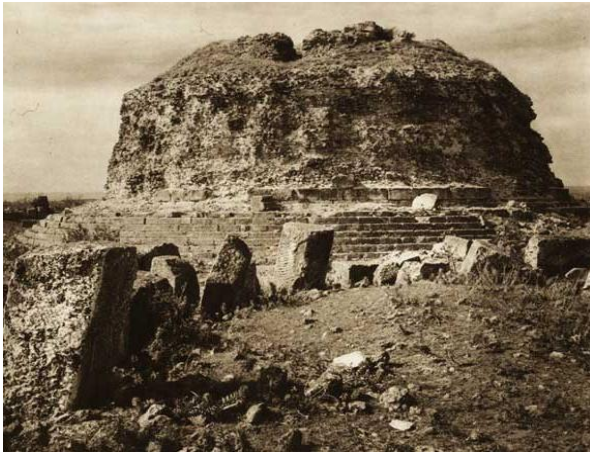
Fig 4 Dacia and the Roman Empire



Dacia is situated north of the Danube and was regarded by the Romans as a source of gold and other rare and valuable mineralsjust as the Nazis saw it as a source of oil.

Fig 5 Celebrations of Latinity – in reconstruction and casts

a) Tropaeum Traiani – reconstruction



(<http://www.artatraditionala.ro/popup.php?path=photogallery/undeva/Tropaeum-Traiani.jpg&desc=Tropaeum%20Traiani> Accessed 10 Nov 2015)



(<http://www.romanianhistoryandculture.com/trajanforumandcolumn.htm> Accessed 10 Nov 2015)

b) Trajan's Column – casts arranged to tell the story of Romania's 'foundation myth' in the Museum of National History, Bucharest



(Photo Jorge Lascar www.flickr.com/photos/ilascar/11321151895/in/photostream/ Accessed 10 Nov 2015)

Fig 6 Bulgar occupation



[Avar](#) or [Bulgar](#) warrior with captive featured on the ewer from the [Treasure of Sânnicolau Mare](#)

(Иван Добрев - website of the Bulgarian Military Academy – Sofia, Accessed Nov 27 2015)

Fig 7: The Battle of Posada



The Battle of Posada (November 9, 1330 – November 12, 1330) was a turning point in the establishment of Wallachia – the precursor of modern Romania.

("Viennese Illuminated Chronicle Battle of Posada")

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Viennese_Illuminated_Chronicle_Posada.jpg#/media/File:Viennese_Illuminated_Chronicle_Posada.jpg ; Accessed 29 Nov 2015)

Fig 8 The emergence of 'Romanian' art



The Last Judgement , Voronet Monastery constructed by Stephen the Great in 1488

(commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Voronet_Intrare.JPG Accessed 28 Nov 2015)



Anonymous - **The Holy Trinity**, Brancovenian style, 18th century

Cotroceni National Museum collection Bucharest
http://www.muzeulcotroceni.ro/engleza/colectii_eng.html

Fig 9 'Brancovian'



Mogoșoaia Palace is situated about 10 kilometres from Bucharest, Romania. It was built between 1698-1702 by Constantin Brâncoveanu in what is called the Romanian Renaissance style or Brâncovenesc style. (<http://book.mrtripp.tours/details/81031/half-day-tour-to-snagov-monastery-mogosoiaia-palace> : Accessed 14 Nov 2015)

Fig 10 Museum of the Romanian Peasant (Muzeul Taranului Roman)



MUZEUL NAȚIONAL AL ȚĂRANULUI ROMÂN
MEREU ACTUAL. DIN 1906



(Museum of the Romanian Peasant , <http://www.muzeultaranuluiroman.ro/home.html> Accessed 7xii2015

Fig 11 The Village Museum *Muzeul Satului*



(*Muzeul Satului*, <http://www.muzeul-satului.ro/> (Accessed 7 xii 2015))

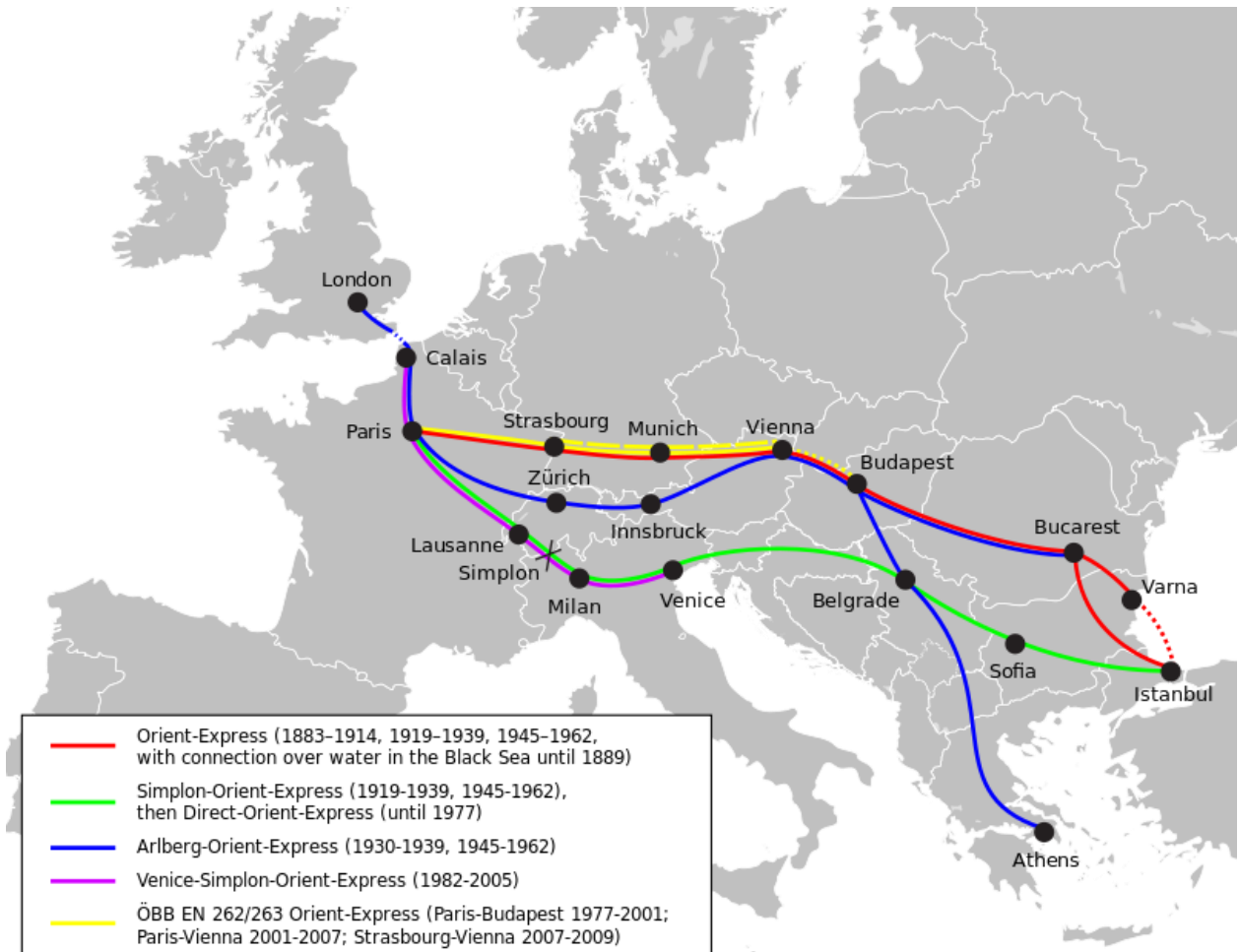
Fig 12 – Romania becomes identifiable – Maria Rosetti as Revolutionary Romania



Constantin D Rosenthal *Revolutionary Romania*(*portrait of Maria Rosetti*) Oil Painting 1850 National Museum of Art Romania (source Wikipedia commons,en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Revolutionary_Romania_by_C_D_Rosenthal.jpg accessed 10 Nov 2015)

Rosenthal was a Budapest born Jew who trained in Vienna and then worked in Paris as part of a group of liberal minded Romanians. He was exceptionally granted Romanian citizenship after the 1848 uprisings and in 1851 was arrested by the Hungarians and tortured in prison. British born Maria Rosetti was the wife of the Romanian revolutionary C.A. Rosetti and was in Bucharest with her brother who was Secretary to the British Consul. Rosenthal's painting is in high European Romantic style recalling Delacroix's *Liberty leading the people* (1830), though the costume is authentically Romanian.

Fig 13 – Across Europe by rail



The operation of the various Orient-Express connections linking Romania with western Europe was the last link in the trans-European rail network which greatly facilitated the integration of Romania – and Romanian art – with Western Europe.

Fig 14 From village to capital



The transformation of Bucharest into a westernised city did not occur until the latter half of the 19th Century

Upper image - A bridge in Bucharest with [Spirii Hill](#) in the background, 1837
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Bucharest#/media/File:Bucuresti_punte_1837.jpg

Lower image - Amedeo Preziosi ,*Turnul Colței*(1868) Watercolour
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Aquarelle,_Turnul_Col%C5%A3ei.jpg#/media/File:Aquarelle,_Turnul_Col%C5%A3ei.jpg

Fig 15 The Paris of the East



www.imagoromania.ro/imagini/bucureti-calea-victoriei-in-dreptul-palatului-potei-en.html | Author =Unknown | Date =1941-1947



<http://draculachroniclestours.com/bucharest/>

Fig 16 Romanian turn of the century painting

Stefan Luchian (1868-1916)



Primăvara ("Spring") (1901)

<http://www.tkinter.smg.net/Romania/ArtGallery/index.htm>



Alphonse Mucha Dziewanna (Flora) 1900



Aubrey Beardsley Withered Spring (detail) 1894



La împărțitul porumbului (the grainsharing)(1905)

ulei pe pânză, Myzeul Național de Artă al României din București
http://www.mnar.arts.ro/ro/galerii/lucre-moderna.php?id_autor=80&id=234



// Quarto Stato (The Fourth Estate) by Giuseppe Pellizza da Volpedo 1901

The influence of Western styles and imagery is immediately apparent in these two quite different paintings by Stefan Luchian one of the leading Romanian painters at the end of the 19th Century ; he studied in Munich and Paris after a a brief period at Bucharest School of Fine Art.

Fig 17 DADA east

In the early decades of the twentieth century, the art world was taken by storm by the fearless experimentalism of several Jewish artists from Romania: Tristan Tzara (1895-1962), Victor Brauner (1903-1966), Marcel Janco (1895-1984), and M. H. Maxy (1895-1971). They and the older Romanian artist Arthur Segal (1875-1944) were present at the birth of an influential avant-garde movement.



Calligramme (detail) by Tristan Tzara, zincograph, 1916/1959 from The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, The Vera and Arturo Schwarz Collection of Dada and Surrealist Art © Christophe Tzara © Photo: The Israel Museum, Jerusalem



The Railway by Arthur Segal, 1910. © The National Museum of Art of Romania, Bucharest



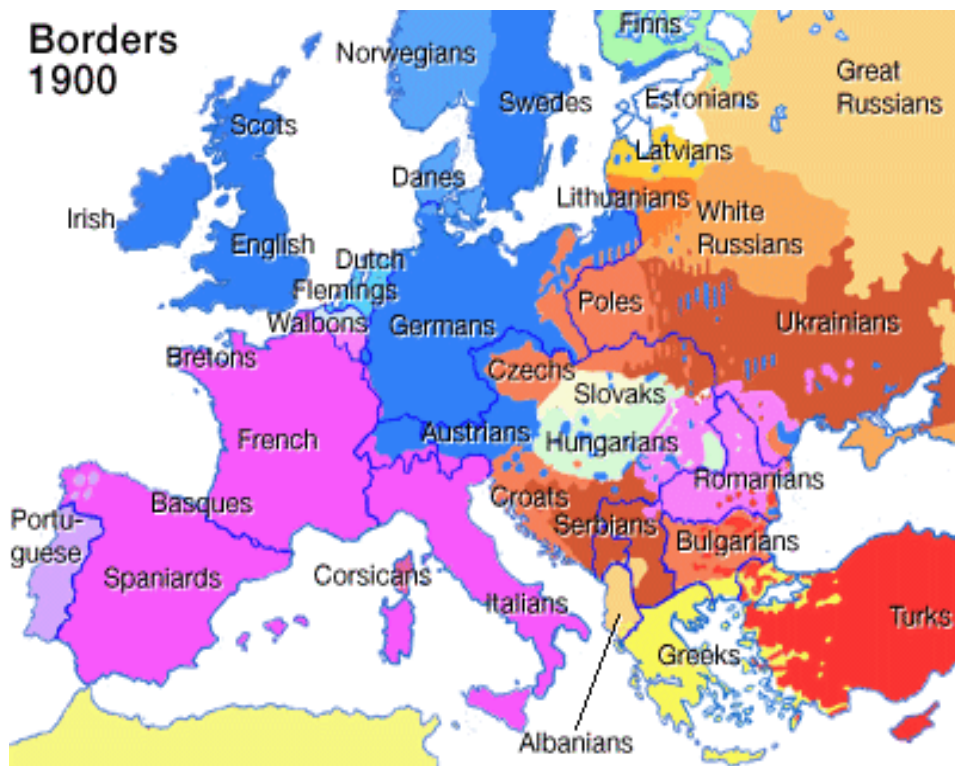
From left to right: Tristan Tzara, Georges Janco, Marcel Janco, Jules Janco, their friend Poldi Chapier, and Ion Vineu, Bucharest.

© The National Museum of Art of Romania, Bucharest, 1913, Josine Janco Starrels Collection.

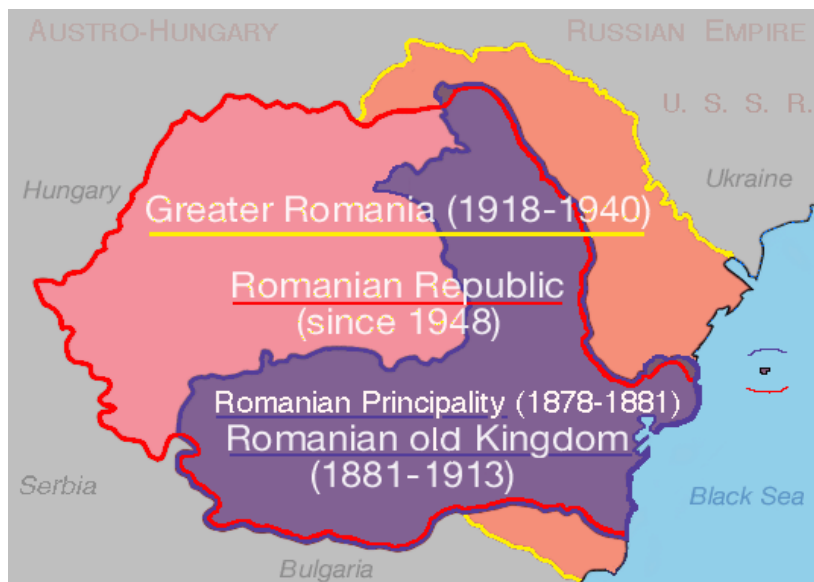


Mask für Firdusi by Marcel Janco, 1917-1918. Sylvio Perlstein Collection, Antwerp, c/o Pictoright Amsterdam 2011 © Marcel Janco

Fig 18 'Greater Romania'

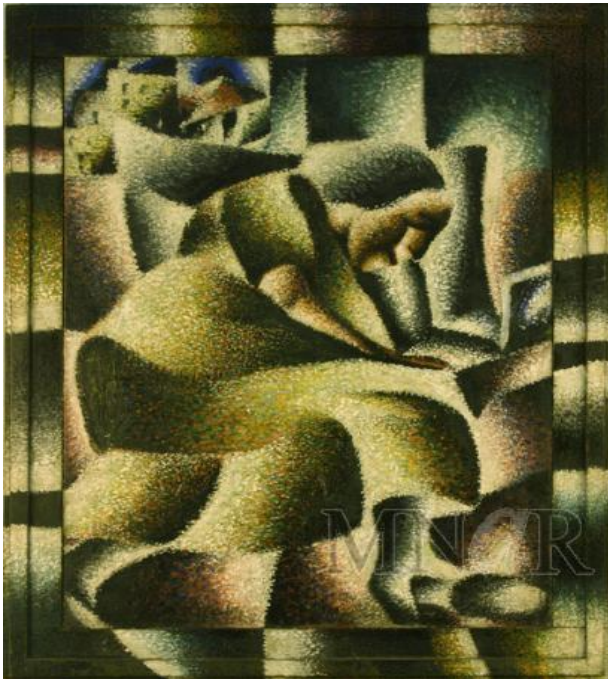


The complex overlapping of nations and nationalities in Eastern Europe is apparent in comparison with the west.

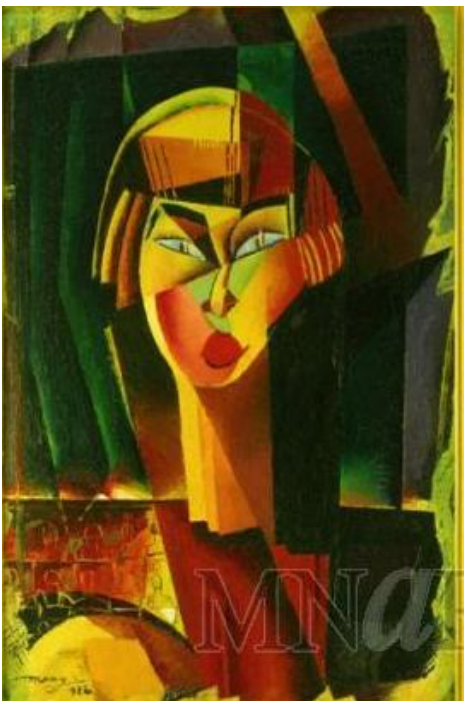


The inclusion of Transylvania from the Austro-Hungarian Empire has not been without some problems and has seen active Romanian-ization in some places. For instance [Gheorghe Funar](#), mayor of Cluj-Napoca from 1992 to 2004, was notorious for acts of ethnic provocation, bedecking the city's streets in the colours of the Romanian flag and arranging pickets outside the city's Hungarian consulate (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cluj-Napoca>; Accessed 10 xii 2015)

Fig 19 Jazz Age Bucharest –in art.....



Woman Reading 1920 Arthur Segal
Oil on canvas 90 x 70 cm



Electrcal Madonna 1926 Max Herman Maxy
Oil on board 70,5 x 46,5 cm

[Copyright © mnar - the National](http://www.mnar.ro) Museum of Art of Romania

Fig 20 Jazz Age Bucharest –in architecture



main photo- <http://static.panoramio.com/photos/original/13439306.jpg>

Inset -<http://unknownbucharest.com/old-photos-of-bucharest/bucharest-1930s-bratianu-bld/>

Fig 21 and popular culture.



Pola Illéry was an exotic silent film star in France and Romania during the 1920s and made a modest transition to sound films in the 1930s. She was known for portraying sexually liberated women and was considered the most glamorous film star in Romania.



Maria Tănase (25 September 1913 – 22 June 1963) was a celebrated Romanian singer and actress. Maria Tănase has a similar importance in [Romania](#) to that of [Édith Piaf](#) in [France](#) or [Amália Rodrigues](#) in [Portugal](#).^[1] In her nearly three-decade-long career, she became widely regarded as Romania's national diva, she is still regarded as a major cultural icon of the 20th century. Among her songs are *Cine iubește și lasă* (1937), *Leliță cârciumăreasă* (1939), *Bun îi vinul ghiurghiuliu* (1938), *Doina din Maramureș* (1956), *Ciuleandra* (1956) and *Până când nu te iubeam*.

(Source for images and text Wikipedia, Accessed 13 xii 2015)

Fig 22 Brancusi and Romanian folk art



(left) Brâncuși's Paris studio, 1920, photograph by [Edward Steichen](#)

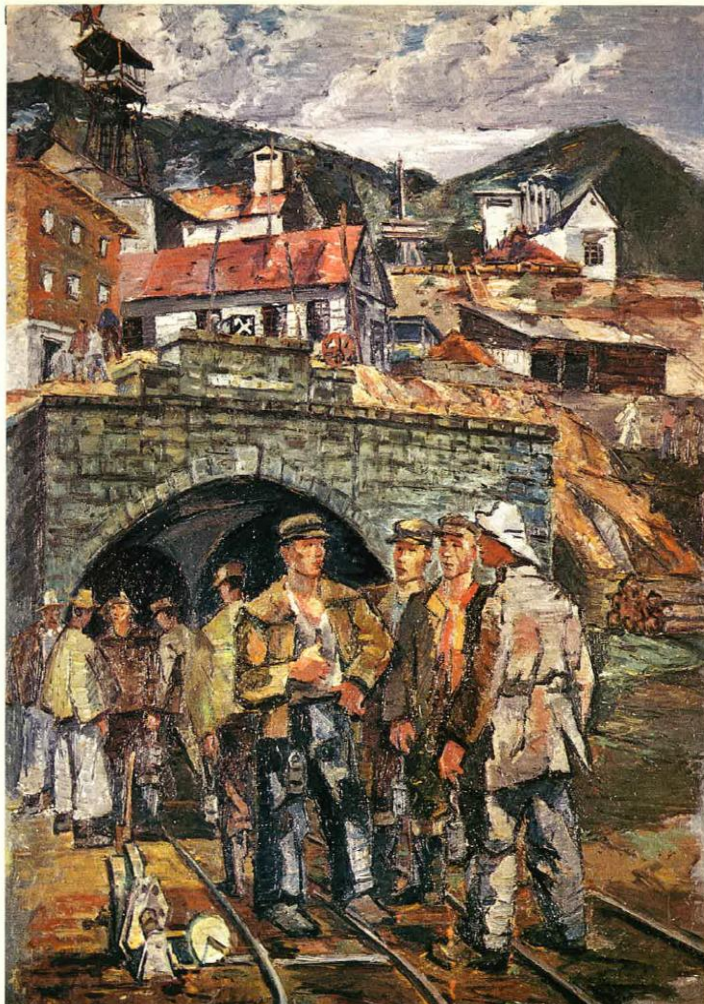
(right) Traditional carved wooden Maramures folk art church gate at Breb, Nr Sighet, Maramures,

Fig 23 The Basic conceptual schema of Socialist Realism



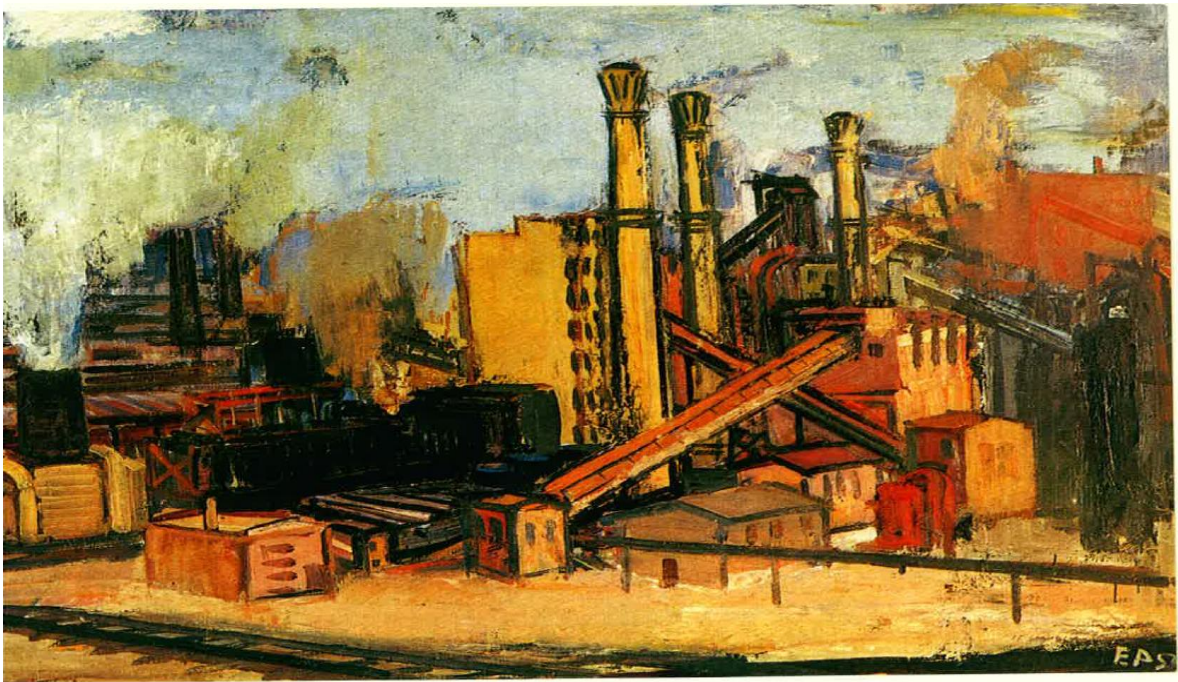
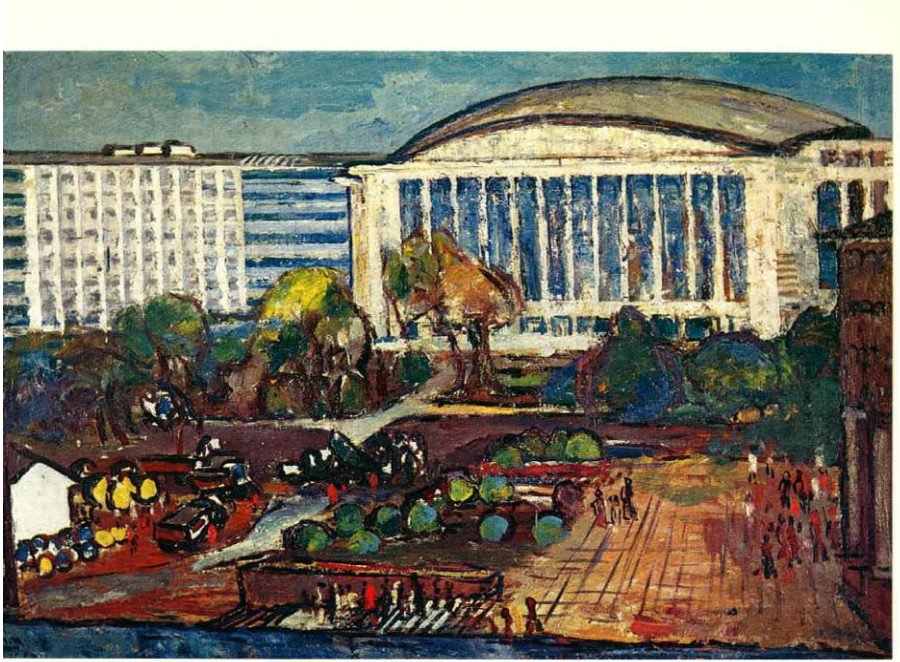
(Fig 1 in Heller, L, *A world of Prettiness- Socialist Realism and its Aesthetic Categories*, in Lahausen, T and Dobrenko, E *Socialist Realism without Walls*, London and Durham, Duke University Press, 1997 p54)

Fig 24 Contemporary Romanian Art 1964



(upper) Marius Buescu *Sentier (Building site)* Oil on canvas, 0.660x1.870, undated, Art Museum of Peoples Republic of Romania

(lower) M.H Maxy *Entering the Mine* Oils on Canvas 1.350x0.995 1957



(upper) Gheorghe Spiridon *New Buildings in Bucharest* Oil on cardboard, 0.830x1.010, (1)960

(lower) Eugen Popa *The Hunedora Cokeworks* Oil on canvas, 0.810x1.125,(19)59

(all paintings in Art Museum of the Romanian Peoples Republic)

Fig 25 Arta Naiva in Romania 1980

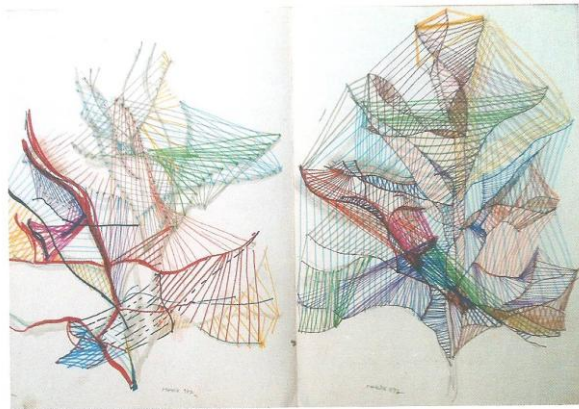


EUGENIA STĂNESCU
În piață
ulei pe carton, 1978

from : Vaisle Savona *Arta Naiva in Romania* Bucharest, Editura Meridiane 1964, p69

Fig 26 'In the light of Utopia'

(Exhibition at Romanian Cultural Institute, 14 June- 14 July 2011)



Apricot Tree, 1977, mixed media on paper, 48 x 66 cm



and Earth, 1980, mixed media on paper, 180x104 cm



and Earth, 1980, mixed media on paper, 180x104 cm

Stefan Bertlan – Apricot Tree, Malva neglecta and salvia officinalis (1977.1984)
Constantin Flondor - Sky and Earth 1980

Fig 27 'Surprise Witnesses' – the reality of the Romanian landscape in the 1980's

1 Andrei Pandele



În Mercedes, Elena Ceaușescu, savanta analfabetă, după cutremur (Bd. Magheru, București) 5 martie 1977
Elena Ceaușescu, the illiterate scientist in a Mercedes after the earthquake (Bucharest) March 5, 1977



Cu bicicleta, spre blocurile fără drumuri de acces (Șos. Colentina, București) Iunie 1984
Riding a bike towards apartment blocks with no access road (Șos. Colentina, Bucharest) June 1984

(p15 and p40 Pandele, Andrei, *Martorul Surpriza/Surprise Witness* Bucharest, Compania, 2008-9)

2 Ion Grigorescu

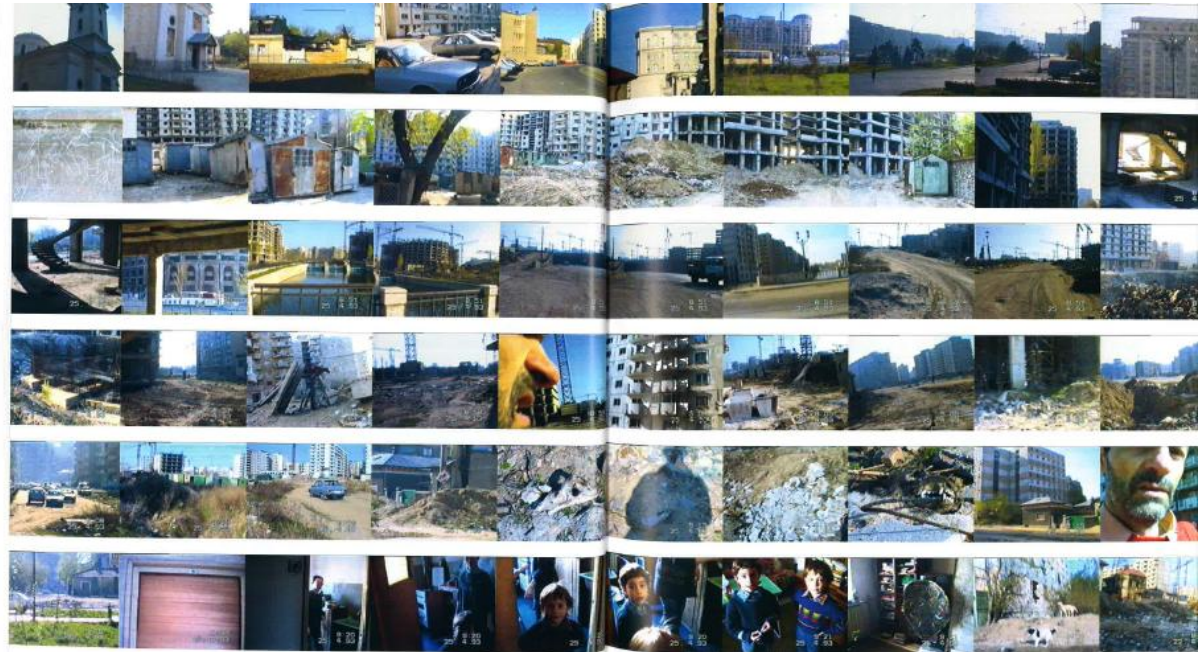


(left) *The City in Socialism* -series of 18 b/w photographs (1974-87), p74 Ion Grigorescu *In the Body of the Victim*, Museum of Modern Art Warsaw 2009,

(right) *The Crooked Axes of the City* (still from video, 1994-2000), in *Out of Place* Tate modern, 2011

Fig 36 Romanian artists (and not only) love Ceausescu's palace?!

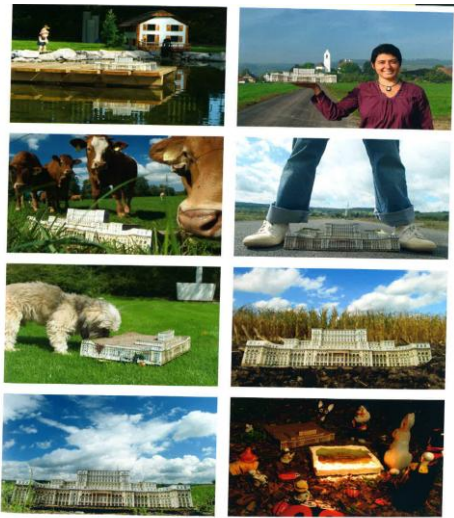
Samples from the catalogue (*Balaci Ruxandra Romanian Artists (and not only) love Ceausescu's Palace Bucharest, MNAC, 2004*).



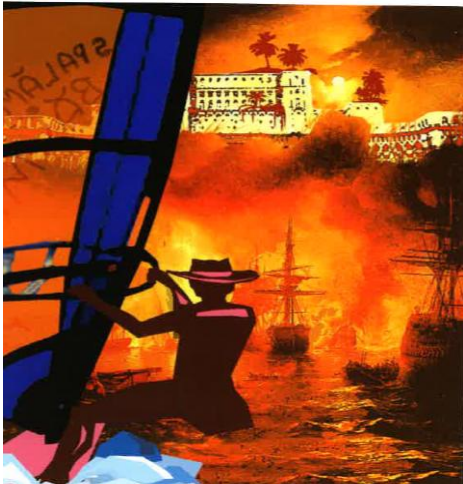
'Crooked Axes of the Civic Centre' (Ion Grigorescu)



'Divided the children of Ceausescu and George Soros a project about a divided world and divided cities (Dan Mihaltianu)



Irina Botea *Casa Poporului*



Nicolae Comanescu *Wrongbeach*



Sample city -Video of the city though the eyes of a 'Balkan Tijl Uilenspiegel (Calin Dan)⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Who is now Director of MNAC



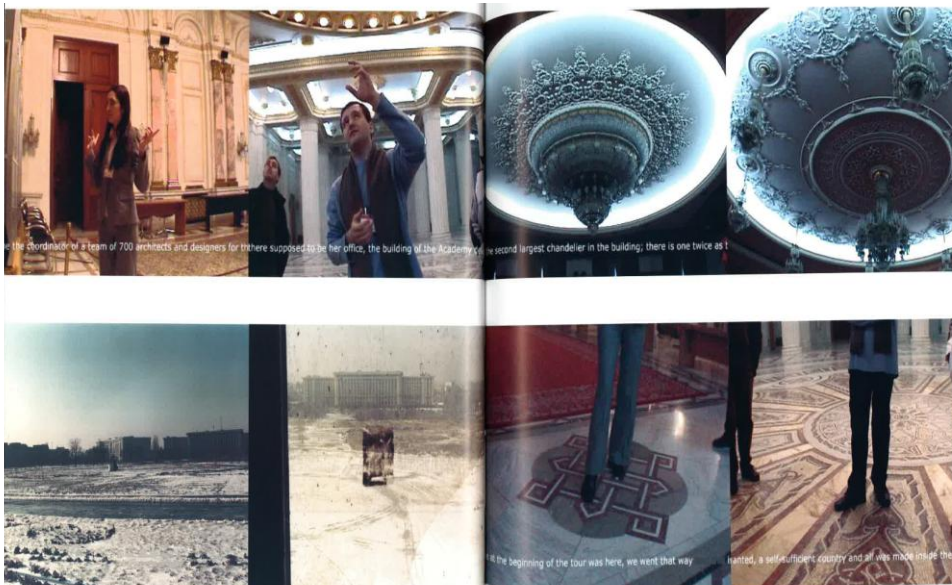
Graffiti art ('are sheep zebras?') (Gorzo)



'30 Years of Social History- images of the Dacia 1300 one of the constants of Communist streets (Vlad Nanca)



'Actors in Subliminal History' Ceausescu's mass rallies (Cristian Pogacean)



A comparison of different guides presentations of the Palatul (Mona Vatamanu and Florin Tudor)

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2

Art and Travel : Shifting ground at the edge of Europe –aspects of travel in the evolution of Romanian art.

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An unnumbered page of maps is included before the essay. References are included in the citations rather than a separate bibliography.

Word Count 5014 (text alone), 7208(With captions, notes etc)



<http://www.worldatlas.com/img/areamap/4d0da08ecdafa17439515182c059168b9.gif>



<http://romaniatourism.com/images/romania-location-map.jpg>



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Introduction

The very British approach to ‘Art and Travel’ starts from an island with clear boundaries and an expansive, Imperial world view from which ‘explorers’ or ‘colonists’ have usually sailed forth to document and bring back trophies, evidence, exotic specimens and (to be colloquial)booty. This essay turns this conceptual background on its head and discusses the influence of ‘travel’ (and its implications and limitations) on a almost landlocked country which has been part of several empires and only established ‘national’ boundaries in the 19th Century : Romania.

Byron’s remark on Albania “though within sight of Italy, is less known than the interior of America”⁶⁰ applies as much today, about Romania and Romanian art and served to prompt this essay. Although Romania has a Latin based language, and since emergence of nationalism in the mid 19th century has been a ‘European’ country it is little known ⁶¹

The general argument running through this paper will be that the current easy/everywhere culture that underlies the globalisation of art and images is a very recent pattern, and this study of Romania and Romanian art will discuss how travel into and out of this large but isolated and least known part of Europe has left a complex legacy. Though ‘Romania’ has only existed politically since the mid 19th century a ‘Romanian Consciousness’ ⁶² can be traced back (and argued for as a continuous cultural tradition) for two millennia, and its

⁶⁰ Quoted in Belcher, Rosemary, *Lord Byron’s Grand Tour* in Chard, Rosemary and Langdon, Helen *Transports :Travel, Pleasure and Imaginative Geography, 1600-1830* Yale UP, Studies in British Art 3, New Haven and London, 1996, p50. These topics are discussed further in Gephardt [Katarina](#) *The Idea of Europe in British Travel Narratives, 1789-1914* Routledge, 2016

⁶¹ Apart from popular connections with Dracula legends. it is frequently omitted from current lists and surveys of EU countries, Romania has been a member of the EU since 2007 and in 2019 will hold the rotating [presidency of the Council of the EU](#) for the first time .

⁶² Boia, Lucian *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness* (Budapest and New York, 2001)

cultural and artistic development is permeated with the travelling and transportation of artistic ideas and artefacts.

This essay will be illustrated with discussion of art and architecture and how these barriers and facilitators of travel have influenced them. It will first examine how some frequent common place cultural observations have influenced travel and exchange, and then the effects of the links and barriers created by physical geography. The political geography of Romania⁶³ is complex and by no means a stable continuum and this too has shaped the travel geography of art. Finally there is an overlay of the two substantial and influential cultural and racial minorities in Romania – Jewish-a substantial influence on DADA⁶⁴, Roma⁶⁵ – which have their own boundaries and patterns of travel and influence.⁶⁶

⁶³ And of all of Eastern Europe

⁶⁴ See Sandqvist, Tom, *DADA East: The Romanians of the Cabaret Voltaire* MIT Press 2006

⁶⁵ The first Roma pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2007 gave recognition to this – the artists included were from many European countries. Junghaus Timea and Szekely Katalin (eds) *Paradise Lost* The First Roma Pavilion, La Biennale di Venezia, 2007 available at www.opensocietyfoundations.org/reports/paradise-lost-first-roma-pavilion-venice-biennale (Accessed 06/01/2017)

⁶⁶ Boia discusses these two groups at length in his popular introduction to Romania pp208-212 deals with The Jews, pp215-219 and discusses The Gypsies, who, he notes, are 'the Romians principal obsession'(p215) – confusion is often caused these days as the word '*Tigan*'(*gypsy*)is pejorative and the word '*romi*' (*Roma*) is the word they use to identify themselves – a word which to the outsider is very close to 'Romanian' though from different roots.

1 Common place cultural observations

Ulysse de Marsillac's casual remark "*I asked my fellow-traveller, What distance is between Paris and Bucharest? Three centuries, sir! was his answer,*"⁶⁷ unkindly emphasises the cultural differences – and similarities- between Romania and Western Europe. Romania has been described as a 'Latin island in a Slavic sea', its capital city, Bucharest lying somewhere between orient and occident⁶⁸ - which is visible today where you can pick up a regular service bus to Istanbul and the architecture is an eclectic mix of styles and sources. As western influences grew it came to be called the "Paris of the East" (fig 1) as architects and artists from Paris were given commissions and Romanian architects and artists studied there.

Yet despite the western influences and material culture Romania preserved an Orthodox Christianity (of its own) through 400 hundred years as a part of the Ottoman Empire and 40 years of Communism. Though exact details for the origins of Christianity in Romania and its constituent parts are disputed the imagery and architecture (as well as its form) are closely integrated with other orthodox churches though it caused disputes with the Roman Catholic church:

"For disregarding the Roman Church, they receive all the sacraments not from our venerable brother, the Cuman bishop, who is the

⁶⁷ Ulysse de Marsillac was one of several French commentators on (and enthusiasts for) the newly forming Romania in the mid 19th Century and this off-hand dismissal is misleading. For detailed discussion of De Marsillac see Iulian and Laura Oncescu *The image of Romanian Society in France (1859- 1878)* in Stanciur, Ion, Miloiu, Silviu and Onescu Iullain (eds) *Europe as viewed from the Margins – an East- Central European Perspective from World War 1 to the Cold War* Editura Cetatea de Scaun, Targoviste 2007 (extracts available on Google Books)

⁶⁸ This theme has been explored by many writers notably Adrian Majuru *Bucharest: Between European modernity and The Ottoman East* Fundatia Culturala Echinox 2003,vol5,pp92-103 and Harhoiu, Dana *București, un oraș între orient și occident/ Bucharest, a city between orient and occident* Simetria Bucharest 2005

diocesan of that territory, but from some pseudo-bishops of the Greek rite”⁶⁹.

In their *History of Romanian Arts* Dragut and Grigorescu⁷⁰ note the way Orthodox iconography had restrictions and traditions that allowed little or no flexibility or interpretation and Romanian painting was held under the influence of Byzantine models and suggest an eastward looking network of influences and ideas. which continued well into the modern period (fig 2). Villiers discussing the wooden churches of Maramures and their decoration note how the painters worked around Northern Transylvania⁷¹ while Cantacuzino in his review comments how the Carpathian Mountains served to protect the Romanians from western influences and also retained their independent status in the Ottoman empire and this is discussed in the next section of this essay.⁷²

⁶⁹ Letter of Pope Gregory IX of November 14, 1234 cited in Spinei, Victor (2009). *The Romanians and the Turkic Nomads North of the Danube Delta from the Tenth to the Mid-Thirteenth Century*. Brill. P155

⁷⁰ Dragut, Vasile and Grigorescu, Dan *History of Romanian Arts* Editura Enciclopedica, Bucharest 1990

⁷¹ Villiers, John *The Wooden Churches of Maramures*. in Villiers John (ed) *Romania*. Pallas Athene, 2009, p 167 - 183.

⁷² Cantacuzino, Sherban *The Brancoveanu style – art and architecture in Romania in the Seventeenth Century*. in Villiers John (ed) *Romania*. Pallas Athene, 2009, p118

2 Physical geography –links and barriers

Travel has real physical constraints, even distances across a flat and favourable terrain is limited by facility and capacity and the reality of South-eastern Europe is not flat and the conditions are far from favourable. This has shaped the transfer of culture and art into and across Romania : as well as being on “the other side of Europe” (at least from the Franco/Italian/British cultural axis) it is separated from all this by the Carpathian mountains (Fig 3) a formidable mountain range- which has few passes⁷³ and has proved impassable in winter warfare (Fig 4)

From the late 1100’s German settlements were established as defensive boundaries against invaders from the Eastern steppes and to use the mining skills of their new settlers to exploit the natural resources of the region.⁷⁴ These areas still retain Germanic cultural and artistic connections : Romania’s recent literature Laureate – Herta Muller who wrote and published in Germany is perhaps the most famous⁷⁵, but Germanic patterns run through architecture and costume and decoration which are proudly celebrated on the website <https://www.siebenbuerger.de> extracts from which are shown in Fig 5.

Though the Danube River flows in a series of narrow gorges through these mountains until engineering advances in the late 19th Century this was impassable such was the effect of the narrow and long gorge –“The Iron Gates” which was an obstacle to shipping. Plans to make the gorge navigable started in 1831 but it was not until 1896 that the after extensive rock clearances and explosive engineering that the ‘Sip

⁷³ The most important [mountain passes](#) are (starting from the Ukrainian border): the [Prislop Pass](#), Rodna Pass, [Tihuta Pass](#), Tulgheş Pass, [Bicaz Canyon](#), [Ghimeş Pass](#), Uz Pass and Oituz Pass, [Buzău Pass](#), [Predeal Pass](#) (crossed by the railway from Braşov to [Bucharest](#)), [Turnu Roşu Pass](#) (1,115 ft., running through the narrow gorge of the [Olt River](#) and crossed by the railway from Sibiu to Bucharest), [Vulcan Pass](#), Teregova Pass and the [Iron Gate](#) (both crossed by the railway from [Timișoara](#) to Craiova) ([.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carpathian_Mountains](https://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carpathian_Mountains), accessed Jan 2017)

⁷⁴ Jenkins, Simon. "The Forgotten Saxon World that Is Part of Europe's Modern Heritage," *The Guardian* October 2009.. <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2009/oct/01/romania-saxon-conservation-villages> Accessed Jan 2017

⁷⁵ <https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/6328/herta-muller-the-art-of-fiction-no-225-herta-muller>

Channel' was completed⁷⁶ allowing easy navigation downstream where previously complex and dangerous⁷⁷ arrangements for towing and transshipment were needed and wrecks commonplace (Fig 6)

Along the Black Sea coast the virtually uninhabited Danube Delta, the second largest in Europe, presents another barrier against the Ukrainian steppes and the lower reaches of the Danube have been sometimes dried up so that they were un-navigable. Even in fair conditions skilled pilotage was needed⁷⁸ and is still subject to special rules⁷⁹ (Fig 7)

The European revolutions of the 19th Century combined with the growth of railway connections across Europe radically re-orientated the 'Europeanization' of Romanian art and culture – first the railways. The Orient Express (fig 8) is the most famous link across 19th century Europe but it was only possible because of the gradual consolidation and connection⁸⁰ of disparate national railway networks.

⁷⁶ [https://www.revolvy.com/topic/Iron%20Gate%20\(Danube\)&item_type=topic](https://www.revolvy.com/topic/Iron%20Gate%20(Danube)&item_type=topic), Accessed Jan 2017

⁷⁷ The history of these changes is still being researched and a comprehensive synthesis of protection, study and presentation of the engineering construction enterprises in the Iron Gate Gorge throughout history is being undertaken. The project involves the history of urbanization, hydraulic engineering, shipbuilding, construction of medieval fortresses and infrastructure (roads, railways, bridges), as well as electro-mechanical design for exploiting the energy potential of water.

The chronological framework in which these issues will be processed is from the 1st century AD and the projects of Roman engineers, through the construction of medieval defensive fortifications, shipbuilding at the time of the Principality of Serbia, the hydro-constructional works made throughout the 19th century, until the grand enterprise of modern engineers - hydroelectric power plants Djerdap I and Djerdap II.

Scientific Conference *History of navigation in the Iron Gate Gorge*, Museum of Science and Technology Belgrade, 27 - 28 September 2016

⁷⁸ Constantin Ardeleanu *The Navigation of the Lower Danube (1829-1853)* original published source not given sourced from

https://www.academia.edu/5372112/The_Navigation_of_the_Lower_Danube_1829-1853 (Accessed Jan 2017)

⁷⁹ Galati Lower Danube River Administration, A.A *Special navigation rules for the Danube sector between Sulina roadstead and Braila harbour (km 175)* 2010

⁸⁰ To a standard gauge for most of Europe outside Russia and the Iberian Peninsula

More recently transcontinental road connections (though the UK is not part of the European Highway⁸¹ network though this is underplayed in UK material as the British Government did not fully endorse the project but its impact is apparent in long distance coach travel) and European air travel again though UK budget airlines hardly touch Romania Wizz Air and Blue Air operate from Stansted, along with the entry of Romania into the EU in 2007 with all the freedoms of travel these encourage.

⁸¹ *In search for Primary European Trunk Road Network Draft of a CEDR internal discussion paper*
<http://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/tentec/tentec-portal/site/en/abouttent.htm>

3 Political Geography

The territory called ‘Romania’ today has been part of many political empires and cultures. Each of has facilitated or restricted travel and left traces of their art in the ‘Romanian’ canon and architecture in the modern landscape.

A summary of the key ‘empires’ runs:

Classical Rome and the Dacians; the Ottoman Empire ;the Austro-Hungarian which included Transylvania until 1919; the rise of Romanian nationalism in the 19th Century and the emergence of ‘Greater Romania’⁸²; the great divide of the ‘Iron Curtain’ with the closing off of the West ; the distinctive styles of the Ceaușescu years; the post-communist era since 1989.

1 The Dacian Kingdom and its defeat by the Romans

The hold of ‘Dacia’ on Romanian culture⁸³ is considerable and although material remains are slight from records and maps the it seems that the ‘Dacians’ settled in the lower Danube region and developed distinctive styles of pottery and metal-work using the local mineral wealth of the area. (fig 10 and 11)⁸⁴ The best known record of Dacian civilization is in the commemoration of their defeat by Trajan in the massive spiral carving of his campaign (fig 12, ⁸⁵) though more

⁸² with the addition of Transylvania after 1919

⁸³ Even through to contemporary automobile production

⁸⁴ The major account of the Dacians and their culture is Koch, John T (2005). *Dacians and Celts. Celtic culture: a historical encyclopedia*. ABC-CLIO. [ISBN 978-1851094400](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022296705001400).

⁸⁵ [The National Geographic site has an animated explanation Trajan's Amazing Column | National Geographic](https://www.nationalgeographic.com/trajan-column/article.html) www.nationalgeographic.com/trajan-column/article.html

research in English is being published about this ‘cornerstone of Europe’⁸⁶

2 The Ottoman Empire with all the aspects of ‘the orient’ that it holds.

Even to the casual visitor ‘Romania’ seems an ‘eastern’ country and one of most frequently cited works describes Bucharest as ‘a city between orient and occident’⁸⁷. Vasile Florea comments in his *Romanian Painting*⁸⁸ that the defeat of the Ottoman armies at Vienna in 1683⁸⁹ brought about changes which had a fruitful effect on the arts and new ideas spread from the west. Romania was still ‘imprisoned in the Ottoman system of feudal relationships’ (p48) although with greater contact with the west new ideas spread they were not fully assimilated and there was an ambiguity in these ‘eclectic approaches and half hearted experiments’ (p48) and secular art had not emerged. Nevertheless the religious frescoes were far more varied and dynamic than the older traditional ones (fig 14)

Following this theme Marjuru notes how

‘situated at the crossing of the principle commercial routes linking Southeastern Europe to the centre of the continent. It was near to the Ottoman world (a huge market, greater than that of Russia) and to the economic and cultural vitality of central Europe through which it found itself linked organically to the West. It was a melting pot for elements of all the civilisations

⁸⁶ Ion Grumeza *Dacia: Land of Transylvania, Cornerstone of Ancient Eastern Europe* University Press of America, 2009 - By A.D. 1, Dacia was the third largest military power in Europe, after the Romans and Germans.....The wars, economy, and traditions of this Transylvanian land permeate the geopolitics of today's Balkan countries, invasions that moulded the Balkan and Eastern European nations that continue to redraw their borders and impose ethnic domination on each other (publishers summary – book on order)

⁸⁷ Harhoui, Dana *Bucuresti – un oras intre orient si occident /Bucharest a city between orient and occident* Simetria, Bucharest 2005(not available in UK at present photocopies ordered)

⁸⁸ Florea Vasile 1983 *Romanian Painting* Wayne State University Press

⁸⁹ Though the Ottoman Empire was still extensive (Fig 13)

in the wide cultural expanse. At the end of the 18th century merchants, craftsmen, professional classes and others of different ethnic groups arrived in successive waves⁹⁰

Fig 15 shows some city scenes that capture this polygot human and architectural townscape in the early 19th Century.

3 The Austro-Hungarian empire, of which Transylvania was a part until 1919

The history of Transylvania is complex with waves successive invasions and occupations (fig 16) .The defeat of [Ottoman armies](#) in [Battle of Vienna](#) means the end of [Ottoman](#) rule over Transylvania. The [Roman Catholic Church](#) became the official church in Transylvania in a move by the Habsburgs to weaken the [noble](#) estates, which were both [Roman Catholic](#) and [Protestant](#). It was not an easy amalgamation and in 1791 Romanian-speaking Transylvanians petitioned [Emperor Leopold II](#) for recognition as the fourth [nation](#) of Transylvania and for [religious equality](#). Their demands are rejected and their old marginalised status is reinforced⁹¹

From the beginning of the 18th Century Romania straddled the boundaries of two great European empires (Fig 17)The Grand Principality of Transylvania was proclaimed, giving it separate status within the [Habsburg Empire](#), originally granted in 1691, but this was a formality as Transylvania was still an [administrative area](#) of [Hungary](#) This westernization spread across the whole cultural spectrum:

With the German colonists and in particular with the political link to Vienna, Bukovina⁹² was opened to Western influence. The absence of political boundaries in the Danubian state facilitated the exchange of men and ideas. Workers in stone, metal, oils and wood came from all parts of the empire as did instrumentalists, artists, teachers and singers. Romanians and Ukrainians from Bukovina studied, worked, and traveled in the West, bringing back with them new economic,

⁹⁰ Majuru, Adrian [Bucharest – Between European Modernity and the Ottoman East](#) in Caichete Echinox, Bucharest 2003, Vol 5 pp 92-103, p 71

⁹¹ Compiled from various general histories of Transylvania accessed via Wikipedia Jan 2017

⁹² On the boundary of Romania and Ukraine

*political, and cultural concepts. The nationalities had their own cultural institutions, foremost among these, the schools by which their native language and heritage could be transmitted. With increased literacy came a viable press with journals, newspapers and periodicals in Romanian, Ukrainian, Polish, Yiddish, and German*⁹³

The influence of Catholic traditions and imagery can be seen especially in the church architecture of these regions of Romania. Distinguished Austrian architects worked in the country including Fischer von Erlach designed the new Catholic cathedral in Timisoara, Franz Anton Hillebrand in Oradea⁹⁴ stylistic influences that continued into the 20th Century (fig 18)

4 The rise of nationalism in the 19th Century and the growth of Romania as a European nation in the first part of the 20th Century

Inventing Romania involved substantial borrowing and importing of artistic styles to match the emergence of ‘Greater Romania’⁹⁵ and the revival of historical nationalistic styles and a connection back to native styles. Dragut and Grigorescu give many details of the way the history of Romanian art in this period is the history of travel across Europe and the assimilation of different cultures and styles⁹⁶.

Architects trained in Vienna, Paris and imported styles began to appear (fig 19). Painters studied in Paris, Italy and Vienna of whom the most significant is perhaps Nicolae Grigorescu (1838- 1907) who worked with the Barbizon (fig 20) school after studying with Sebastian Cornu and Charles Gleyre (who trained Monet, Renoir, Sisley and

⁹³. Welisch , Sophie A *The History of Bukovina*..<http://www.bukovinasociety.org/Welisch-2002-1.html> Accessed Jan 2017

⁹⁴ Dragut V and Grigorescu, D *History of Romanian Arts* Editura Enciclopedia Bucharest 1990 p114

⁹⁵ The addition of Transylvania after 1919 following WW1 consolidated ‘Romania’

⁹⁶ Dragut V and Grigorescu, D *History of Romanian Arts* Editura Enciclopedia Bucharest 1990, p122 onwards documents in detailed, note like style many Romanian architects, painters, sculptors and engravers a large proportion of whom studied and worked abroad(the book is unillustrated and the translation somewhat eccentric in places)

Whistler). Ion Andreescu's work in France developed impressionist influences in colour and brushwork⁹⁷ and Gheorghe Petrescu took the experiments he saw in Paris to paint in Venice, Spain and France (fig 21).

5 The 'Iron Curtain' with the closing off of the West (varying with time and politics)

The Communist years marked a huge shift in freedom – to paint and to travel. “Artists were commissioned only to deal with themes of social struggle, liberated labour and heroic deeds”⁹⁸, the complexities and necessities of ‘collaboration’ have been documented by Catherine Preda⁹⁹. Travel abroad was restricted to those who could prove that they would return:

“Romanian “border jumpers” tried to flee the Communist regime, often paying with their lives. After 26 years, this issue remains a black hole in the history of the country”¹⁰⁰

Touristic travel was carefully controlled and directed inwards¹⁰¹ and travel was regulated in the extreme. A collection of Romanian paintings published in 1964 shows nothing of external influence and the paintings shown are generally wooden and static whether industrial scenes or figures though the introduction to the volume notes how the artists are endeavouring to represent the models' social significance – there is no reference to a world beyond Romania's tightly controlled borders¹⁰²

⁹⁷ Florea, Vasile *Romanian Painting* Wayne State University Press, 1983, p.80

⁹⁸ Florea, Vasile *Romanian Painting* Wayne State University Press, 1983 p.123

⁹⁹ Caterina Preda *Forms of Collaboration of Visual Artists in Communist Romania of the 1970s–1980* Hungarian Historical Review 4, no. 1 (2015): 171–196 171 <http://www.hunghist.org>

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.balcanicaucaso.org/eng/Areas/Romania/Fleeing-Romanians-Who-Clipped-Their-Wings-in-Mid-Flight-173612> 26/08/2016 -

¹⁰¹ Duncan Light *A medium of revolutionary propaganda: The state and tourism policy in the Romanian People's Republic, 1947-1965*

<http://eprints.bournemouth.ac.uk/21512/3/A%2520medium%2520of%2520revolutionary%2520propaganda.pdf> (Accessed Feb 2017)

¹⁰² Ion Petrescu (ed) *Contemporary Rumanian Painting* Editura Meridiana , Bucharest 1964 pp127-129 ('Rumania' was the then current English version of Romania)

The personal accounts collected by the Museum of the Romanian Peasant¹⁰³ records some of the absurdities (of being able to cross freely to Bulgaria at weekends (p32), even friendships with people in other Communist countries were disallowed (p70) as were visits to relatives abroad (p143): only party members were allowed to travel abroad (p67). In her dissertation Maria Asavei notes the importance of rare exchanges of western art periodicals :

*“underground” art in communist Romania between 1965 and 1980..... meant: a freer traveling of artists, of artworks and sometimes of ideas”*¹⁰⁴.

But these were rare and key artists left Romania in this period¹⁰⁵ while the concentration of the Sigma Group¹⁰⁶ was an isolated example dependent on a few determined personalities.

The exception to influences from abroad is to be found in the megalomaniac and destructive projects personally imposed by

"architect", "celestial body" "demiurge", "secular god" "fir tree", "Prince Charming" "genius", "saint" "miracle", "morning star" "navigator" "saviour" "sun" "titan" and "visionary” the *Conducător*, or "the leader”¹⁰⁷

who travelled widely¹⁰⁸ and was especially influenced by what he saw in N. Korea to impose on Bucharest’s layout on his return (Fig 22)

¹⁰³ Martor, Museum of the Romanian Peasant Anthropology Review *The Eighties in Bucharest*, Vol VII 2002

¹⁰⁴ Maria-Alina Asavei 2007 [Rewriting the Canon of Visual Arts in Communist Romania](http://www.etd.ceu.hu/2007/asavei_maria.pdf) Central European University, History Department www.etd.ceu.hu/2007/asavei_maria.pdf

¹⁰⁵ Notably Paul Neagu (in 1970, first to France ,then UK)

¹⁰⁶ Stefan Bertalan was included in many official exhibitions in Western Europe and sustained the experimental art programme in Timisoara detailed in a film by Gheorghe Sfaiter { 5 Jun 2013} <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2d4xUjztyDg> (Accessed Feb 2017)

¹⁰⁷ List of titles ascribed to Nicolae Ceausecu , taken from Dennis Deletant. *Ceaușescu and the Securitate: Coercion and Dissent in Romania, 1965-1989*, Routledge 1995 and Steven D. Roper, *Romania: The Unfinished Revolution*, Routledge, 2000

¹⁰⁸ And feted as a ‘friendly’ communist in in the west. An video of Ceausescu’s visit to N Korea is at <http://visitromania.tv/tv/watch.php?vid=c11357bec>

7 The fall of the Communism

*“Imagine you wake up one day belonging to another countryalmost everything has changed: the space of experience, the radius of activity, holiday plans, even life plans...people have started to build a new logic for the future through routines of co-existence, of exchange, of everyday life’.*¹⁰⁹

After a few years of uncertain adjustment¹¹⁰ and especially after the new Romania joined the EU¹¹¹ in 2007 opened up travel and the flow of art and artists to and from not only ‘the west’ but also other former Communist countries. Central to this exchange was the *Institutul Cultural Roman* (ICR) which has offices in 18 cities outside Romania and as well as presenting various events around Romanian art and culture¹¹² offers various residencies to Romanian artists. A recent example is that of Anca Benera who traced and made visible the hidden streams of London (fig 23).

¹⁰⁹ Simona Nastac introduction to *‘Under the Radar’* (Paintings by Serban Savu) Pitshanger Gallery, Ealing, London, March 25 – May 8, 2011

¹¹⁰ Some argue that the sudden fall of Ceausescu (the only Communist leader to be executed, and after only four days) was not so much a “revolution” but an internal coup

¹¹¹ Though not the Schengen countries

¹¹² The programme of the London ICR can be found at <http://www.icr-london.co.uk/>

4 Minorities – Jewish culture, Roma culture

There are two significant ethnic groups in Romania who are less bound by territorial rootedness and see pan-European travel as part of their cultural and artistic heritage : the Jewish and Rroma¹¹³.

A distinct Eastern European Jewish language and culture united them across Eastern European state boundaries (fig 24) and so facilitated travel and exchange - Yiddish. The influence of this on art and culture has been traced by Sandqvist in *DADA EAST – The Romanians of Cabaret Voltaire*¹¹⁴ where he notes the complex international Jewish roots (fig 25) of DADA and this adds to its internationalism. Even one of its best known Romanian founders adopted a name (Tristan) Tzara that means in Hebrew, one exiled from the community "Ttzara'at". In Romanian, it means "sad in the country."

A distinctive attitude of Dada was the crossing of borders, and this had a uniquely emancipating role: by suspending traditional social norms, it opened the way to artistic self-realization without borders. Dada dispensed with the questions of origin, religious background, women's role stereotypes or even formal artistic training. It removed the moral barriers to asking previously inconceivable and provocative questions concerning artistic creation and reception, institutions, society and public taste in general. Dada was a symptom of the decomposition of the old world. Its radical language had an impact even on artists who never called themselves 'Dadaists'.

What did avant-garde artists use Dada for in East-Central Europe during the 1910s and 1920s? Certainly to commit systematic border incursions. The borders were those between languages, majority and minority identities, politics and anti-politics.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ This seems to be new accepted spelling "Why Rroma with two Rs? Rroma can actually be written with one or two Rs. In some dialects, this is pronounced differently. And originally, this "Rr" was the Sanskrit retroflex D, which phonetically changed into an R. So, with one or two Rs, both are valid options."

<http://rroma.org/en/overview/> (Accessed Feb 2017)

¹¹⁴ Sandqvist Tom *DADA EAST – The Romanians of Caberet Voltaire* (MIT Press, 2006)

¹¹⁵ Extract from conference proposal: *Dada Techniques in East-Central Europe* (Budapest, 14-15 Oct 16) The 'Petőfi Literary Museum - Kassák Museum' and the 'Institute for Literary Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences' to mark the centenary of the beginning of Dada in Zurich (Source: *Dada Techniques in East-Central Europe* (Budapest, 14-15 Oct 16). In: H-ArtHist, May 14, 2016 <<http://arthist.net/archive/12951>>. (accessed Jan 20, 2017),

Romania's other minority, the Roma (suppressed under Fascism and Communism) has only recently begun to develop a unique position in the arts – building skills learned on working abroad have travelled home to built 'palaces', their music has a strong influence in Romanian dance culture and its 'Gypsy' roots are pan-European with bands travelling widely across the EU.

Their origins are in the east and they started to migrate to Europe in the fourteenth century under pressure from Islam : in 1416 Sigismund, Holy Roman Emperor granted them freedom to travel across Europe¹¹⁶ which gives rise to their nomadic culture. But their 'life without a state' soon cast them as an underworld, segregated from settled peoples and their regular patterns of movement were curtailed in Romania first under fascism and then under communism¹¹⁷.

The most obvious physical artistic¹¹⁸ results in Romania are the extravagant and exotic 'castles' built with money earned abroad and using traditional skills of metalworking and vivid colour (Fig 26)

Since 2007 there has been a Roma Pavilion at the Venice Biennale which is a significant recognition and dissemination of the emergence of 'art' from their nomadic patterns. The first Roma Pavilion was in 2007 with 16 artists from 8 countries¹¹⁹. By 2011 the Roma Pavillion characterised by bright colours and informal shapes and patterns had become a regular exhibitor not only at the Venice Biennale but in (fig 27) other European cities¹²⁰ and the Venice pavilion had regular organization:

¹¹⁶ Ionescu, Vasile *The House as Public Body* in Andresoiu, B, Coicazanu, A and Bonciocat, S *Kastello: Palaces of the Roma in Romania* Igloo, Bucharest, 2008, p73

¹¹⁷ Ibid , 74 and 133-4

¹¹⁸ Leaving aside here singing dancing and storytelling which are closer to nomadic patterns of life.

¹¹⁹ Camilla Palestra *Paradise Lost :the first Roma pavilion* and Catalin Berescu and EU Roma *Roma Pavillion Preview: 11th Venice Architecture Biennale 2008* in Lucy Orta (ed) *Mapping the Invisible –EU Roma Gypsies* Black Dog Publishing London 2010, pp 127-13

¹²⁰ Catalogues are on line, for instance :

Commissioned by the Open Society Foundations and hosted by the UNESCO Venice Office located in the Palazzo Zorzi, the Roma Pavilion emerges into a makeshift exhibition over time through the flux of additional testimonies—works of art, performances, talks, and conversations by and with artists, philosophers, and politicians, in which the situation of the Roma and Roma art are considered as emblematic for the world today, in order to speculate, in solidarity, about more hopeful futures.¹²¹

- Call the Witness 22.05.–24.07.2011

http://www.bakonline.org/en/Research/Itineraries/CallTheWitness/Call_the_Witness?parent=Who%2FMariaHlavajova

-Paradise Lost Edited by Tímea Junghaus and Katalin Székely The first Roma pavilion

La biennale di venezia 2007

¹²¹ Call the Witness

http://www.bakonline.org/en/Research/Itineraries/CallTheWitness/Call_the_Witness?parent=Who%2FMariaHlavajova22.05.–24.07.2011

Conclusions

The approach to art history through mundane and material themes has been well established in recent years –cost and availability of materials, methods of payment, attitudes of commissioners, this essay has explored another. The effect of travel, on art in a country that has been little studied in English –Romania and at the other side of Europe from the UK, land locked¹²² and with shifting boundaries rather than an island, and within various empires rather than at the hub of the largest and no great tradition of exploration and discovery¹²³ can be fruitfully studied using ‘travel’ as a theme has been demonstrated here.

¹²² Except for a short length of coast to the Black Sea

¹²³ Strong (and perhaps fantasist) believers in Romanian culture and history might dispute this – Henri Coanda developed the jet engine and the website -<https://positivenewsromania.com/2016/04/28/top-ten-romanian-inventions/> lists ten while Wikipedia has an alphabet full of inventors and discoveries.

Fig1 Paris of the East – in architecture.....



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4eqQ6H3_fhc



<https://romaniadacia.wordpress.com/2014/10/10/old-bucharest-pictures/>

Little Paris of the East is illustrated in thousands of images that could be used here – only the dress perhaps gives clues as the websites that these were sourced from attests.

And in painting.....

Stefan Luchian (1868-1916)



Primăvara ("Spring") (1901)

<http://www.tkinter.smig.net/Romania/ArtGallery/index.htm>



Alphonse Mucha *Dziewanna (Flora)* 1900



Aubrey Beardsley *Withered Spring*
(detail) 1894

The influence of Western styles and imagery is immediately apparent in these paintings by Stefan Luchian one of the leading Romanian painters at the end of the 19th Century ; he studied in Munich and Paris after a brief period at Bucharest School of Fine Art.

Fig 2 The unique architecture and decoration of Romanian Orthodox churches



Moldovița The original church was 14C was 500m away. This church was founded in 1532 by Petru Rareș



Sucevița Founded by the Abbot Gheorghe Movilă and built between 1584-86. The frescos were painted in 1596.

(source. <http://www.eliznik.org.uk/RomaniaViews/moldavia-churches.htm> Accessed Jan 2017)



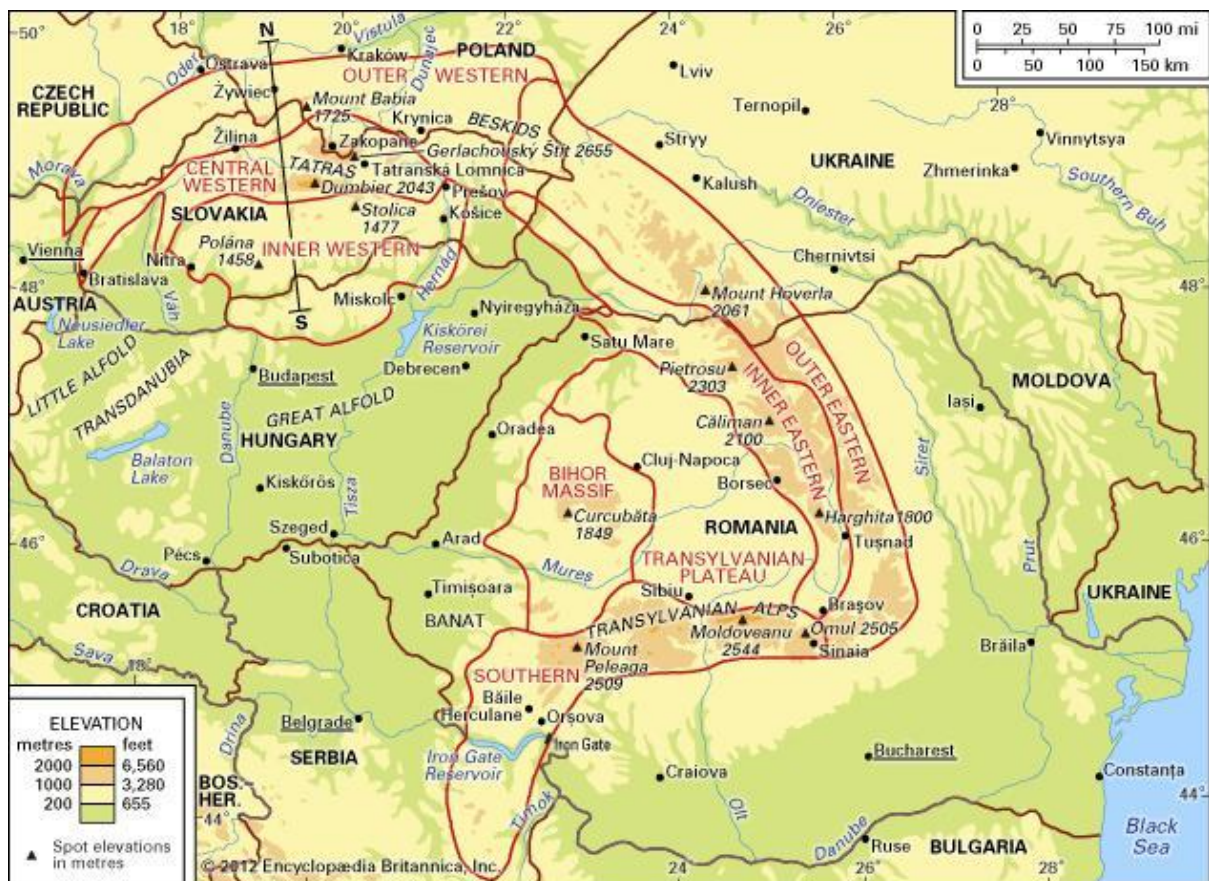
Exterior walls and ceiling of the porch illustrating stories from the life of Christ. Kretzulescu Church, Bucharest, Romania, built in 1772.

(Source :<http://www.chicagonow.com/unexpected-art/2016/07/the-rock-church-and-churches-on-steriods-unexpected-art-in-eastern-europe/> accessed Jan 2017

Fig 3 The Carpathians



<http://www.romania.travel/attractions/the-carpathian-mountains/>



Source <https://www.britannica.com/place/Carpathian-Mountains> (Accessed Jan 2017)

Fig 4 The Carpathians as defensive boundary



WRETCHED CONDITIONS IN THE CARPATHIANS

In the Frozen Heights Austrian Soldiers Die in Their Sleep Russians Prevail; Austrian Army Shattered

Source: <http://greatwarproject.org/2015/03/02/wretched-conditions-in-the-carpathians/>

Fig 5 Transylvania or Siebenbuerger?



Sibiu moves from year to year more and more tourists –the Christmas market in.....Sibiu, Romania (or Hermannstadt, Siebenbuerger): <http://www.adz.ro/artikel/artikel/wie-hermannstadt-touristen-lockt/>



Ruins of the old school Bistrița-Năsăud In Transylvania, Romania,
<https://www.facebook.com/siebenbuerger.de/photos/a.127180840631581.21596.111816225501376/1425771697439149/?type=3&theater>



Fortified church and fortress of Viscri
whc.unesco.org/en/documents/111385

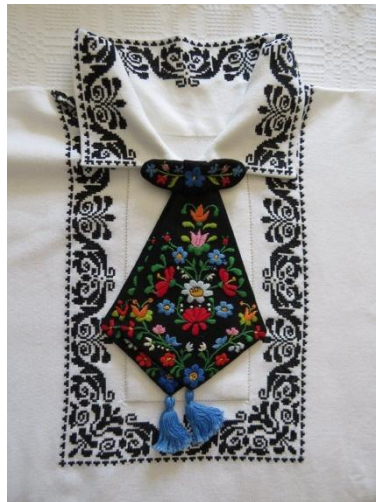


In the evangelical church of the transylvanian saxons in Thalheim.
More: Siebenbuerger.de/ortschaften/thalheim/



Embroidered Bands: the substance from which the costumes are dreams.

<https://www.facebook.com/siebenbuerger.de/photos/a.127180840631581.21596.111816225501376/1411046505578335/?type=3&theater>



Detail of a transylvanian Saxon male costume.

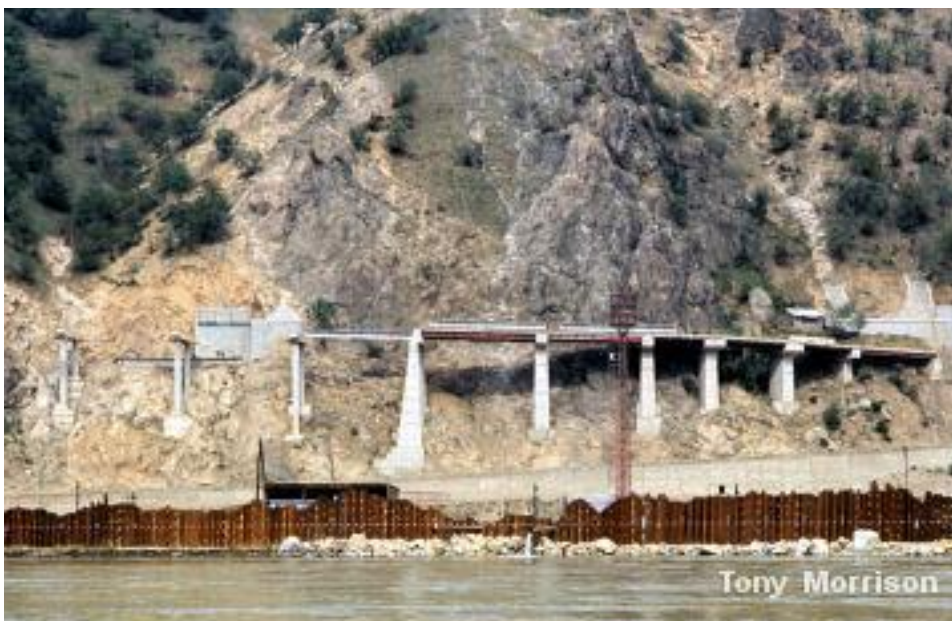
The shirt is a short, Black Velvet, embroidery, tie with flowers. The White Cotton shirt is in the neckline black embroidered.

<https://www.facebook.com/siebenbuerger.de/photos/a.127180840631581.21596.111816225501376/1410708012278851/?type=3&theater>

Fig 6 The Iron Gates – wrecks and new road construction in 1966



Wrecks of two Hungarian barges that had snapped their tow going downstream. At this point the bed of the river was broken by large rocks and a rock shelf extending almost the full width.



Romanian E 70 between Drobeta Turnu Severin and the New Orsova.

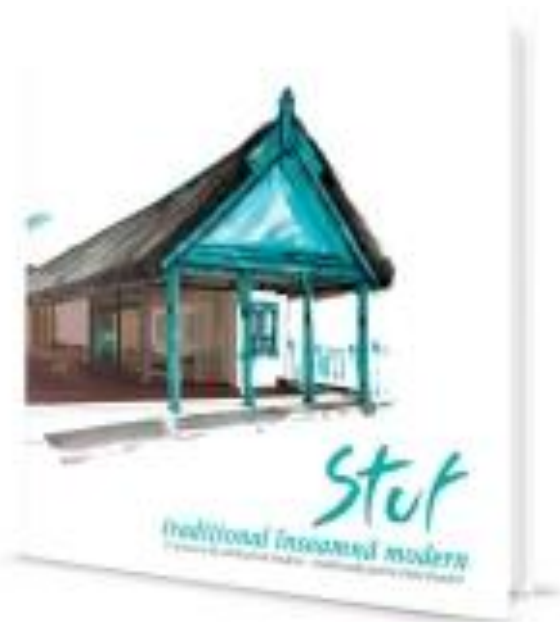
Source ::<http://www.nonesuchexpeditions.com/nonesuch-features/Lost%20Danube/Iron%20Gate/iron%20gate.htm> (Accessed Jan2017)

Fig 7 The Lower Danube : Navigation and traditional architecture



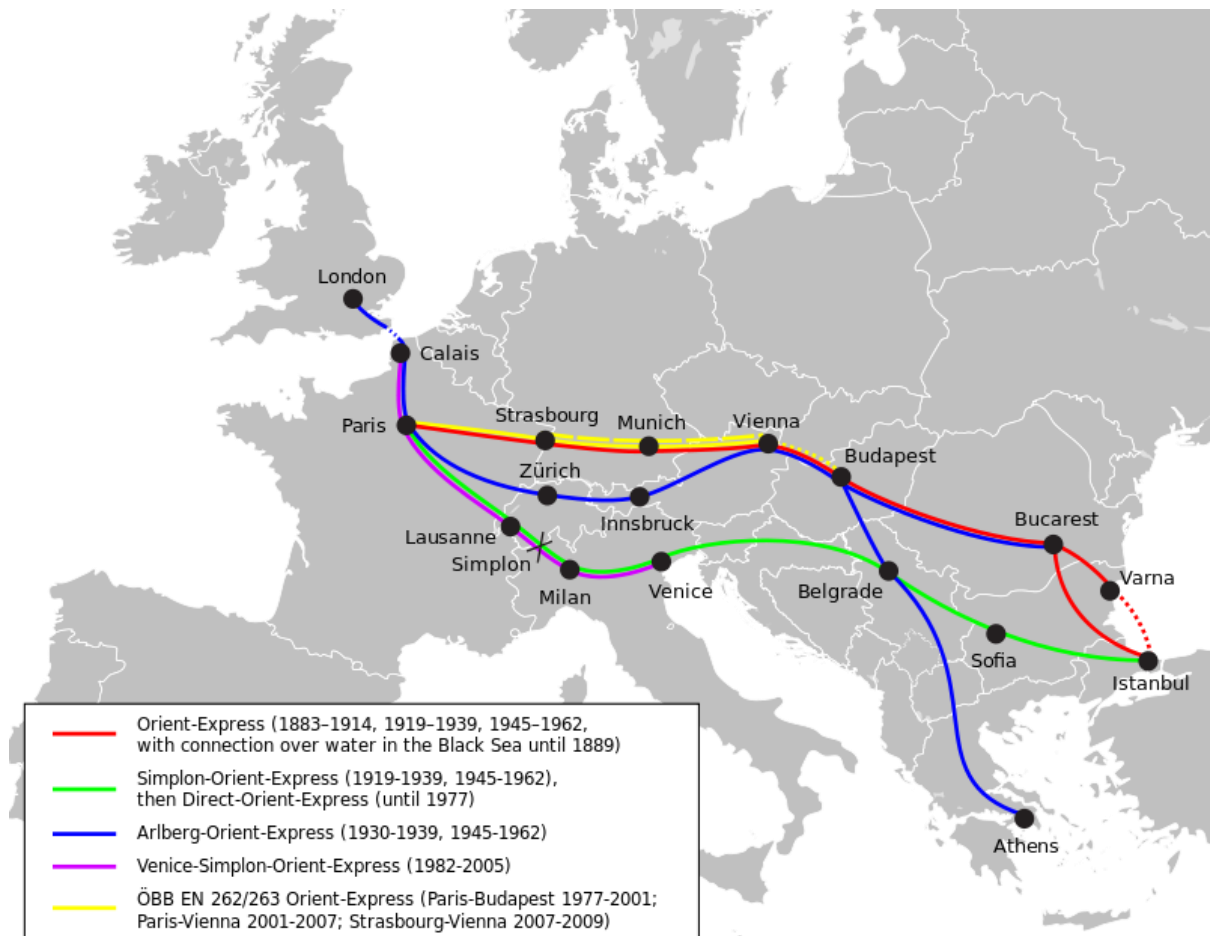
Inland waterway transport can be an environmentally friendly alternative to road or rail transport, and contributes to the decongestion of the overloaded road network in densely populated regions. Can sustainable waterway infrastructure projects create win-win solutions for the environmental needs of the river?

The International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR)
<https://www.icpdr.org/main/publications/finding-room-navigation-and-environment>

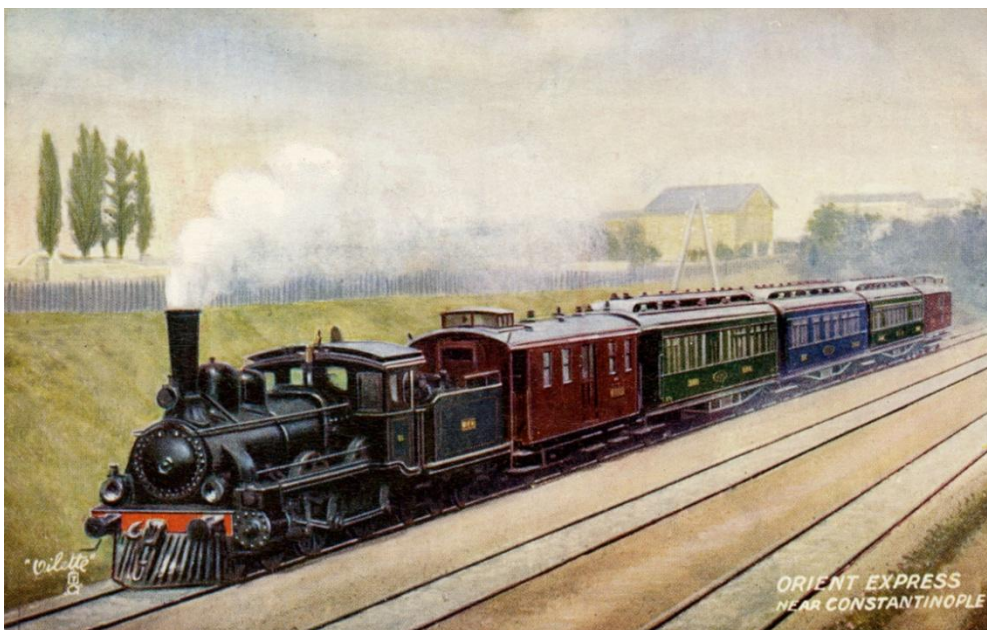


Reed: Traditional means modern <https://www.igloo.ro/shop/carti/>

Fig 8 Transcontinental Rail travel



Historic routes of Orient Express — the cross denotes the Simplon tunnel *Source* :https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orient_Express (accessed jan 2017)

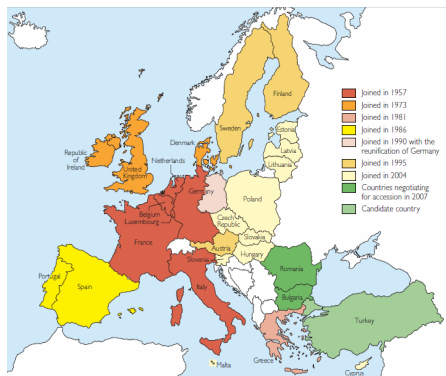


A postcard for the Orient Express, c. 1900. (Photo: Arjan den Boer). *Source* atlasobscura.com/articles/an-illustrated-history-of-the-orient-express Accessed Jan 2017

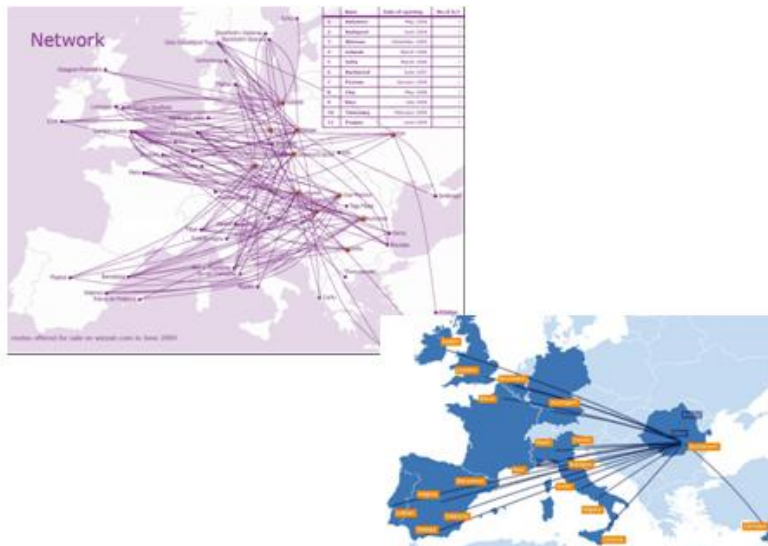
Fig 9 Post 1989 –a new geography for art and artists



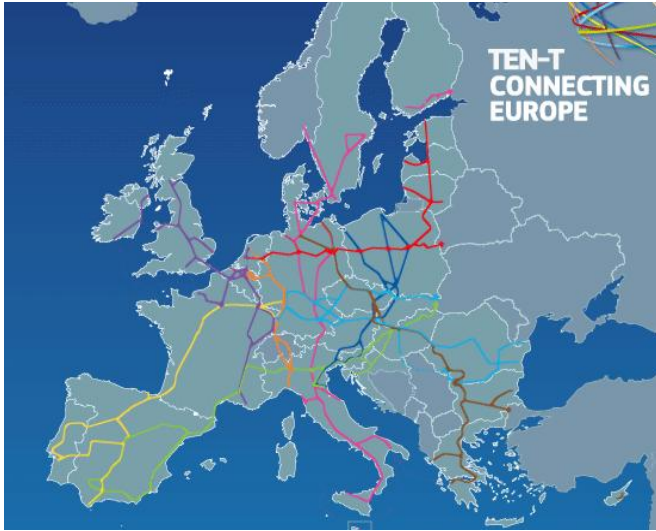
The collapse of the communist block.....



The growth of the European Union

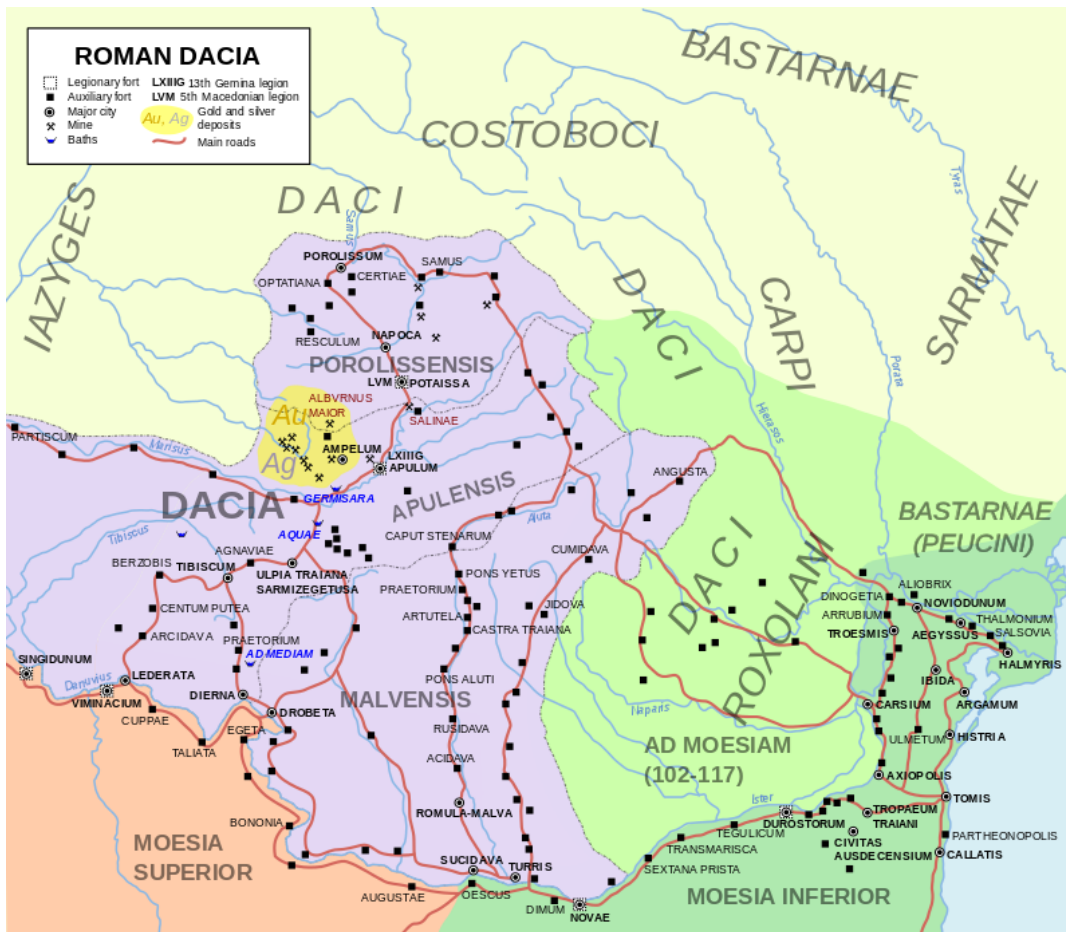


The rise of budget air travel to Romania.
(Wizz Air and Blue Air)



European Trunk Road Network

Fig 10 The Dacians i) maps



[Roman province of Dacia](#), part of modern day [Romania](#) and Serbia, from the conquest of [Trajan](#) in 106 AD to the evacuation of the province in 271 AD. Roman settlements and legion garrisons with Latin names are included in the map, (Source Andrei nacu [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dacian_warfare#/media/File:Roman_province_of_Dacia_\(106_-_271_AD\).svgm](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dacian_warfare#/media/File:Roman_province_of_Dacia_(106_-_271_AD).svgm) ,Accessed Jan 2017)



The 9th European Map (*Nona Europae Tabula*), depicting the [Balkans](#), from a medieval edition of [Ptolemy's Geography](#)

(Source https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dacia#/media/File:Ptolemy_Cosmographia_Dacia%2BDanube.jpg, accessed Jan2017.



Part of *Tabula Peutingeriana* showing Western Moesia Inferior, Western Dacia and Macedonia. A large number of Roman castra, towns and cities were built after the conquest of Thrace, Moesia, and Dacia. Many were constructed on top of existing Dacian and Thracian structures, often inheriting their native names, usually in a Latinized form. Some were built near the ruins of destroyed native settlements or fortresses, and in such cases mostly Roman structures survived. All of these towns were connected on Roman road networks built throughout the region, as described in ancient sources like *Ptolemy's Geographia* (c. 150 AD) and *Tabula Peutingeriana* (2nd century AD). Many fortified settlements were also part of limes.

(sourced http://en.academic.ru/pictures/enwiki/80/Part_of_Tabula_Peutingeriana_showing_Western_Moesia_Inferior%2C_Western_Dacia_and_Macedonia.png (Accessed Jan 2017))

The Dacians ii) material remains



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2007_



Geto-Dacian [Koson](#), mid 1st century BC A gold [stater](#) coin (weighing 8.31 g) from [Geto-Dacian Scythia](#) (modern-day [Transylvania](#)), dating from the mid-first century B.C. The [obverse](#) side of the coin, shown on the left, depicts a [Roman consul](#) accompanied by two [lictors](#), with a [monogram](#) to the left and underneath the name ΚΟΣΩΝ, the king under whom this coin was minted. This is now thought to be the Geto-Dacian king [Coson](#). The coin's [reverse](#) side, shown on the right, depicts an eagle standing on a scepter and holding a wreath. Source CNG - <http://www.cngcoins.com/Coin.aspx?CoinID=126637>



Dacian engineering [tools](#): compasses, chisels, knives, Photo , [CristianChirita](#)
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2007_Dacian_Engineering_Tools.jpg

Dacian Fortresses of the Orastie Mountains



www.shutterstock.com · 519035680

Fig 12 Trajan's Column



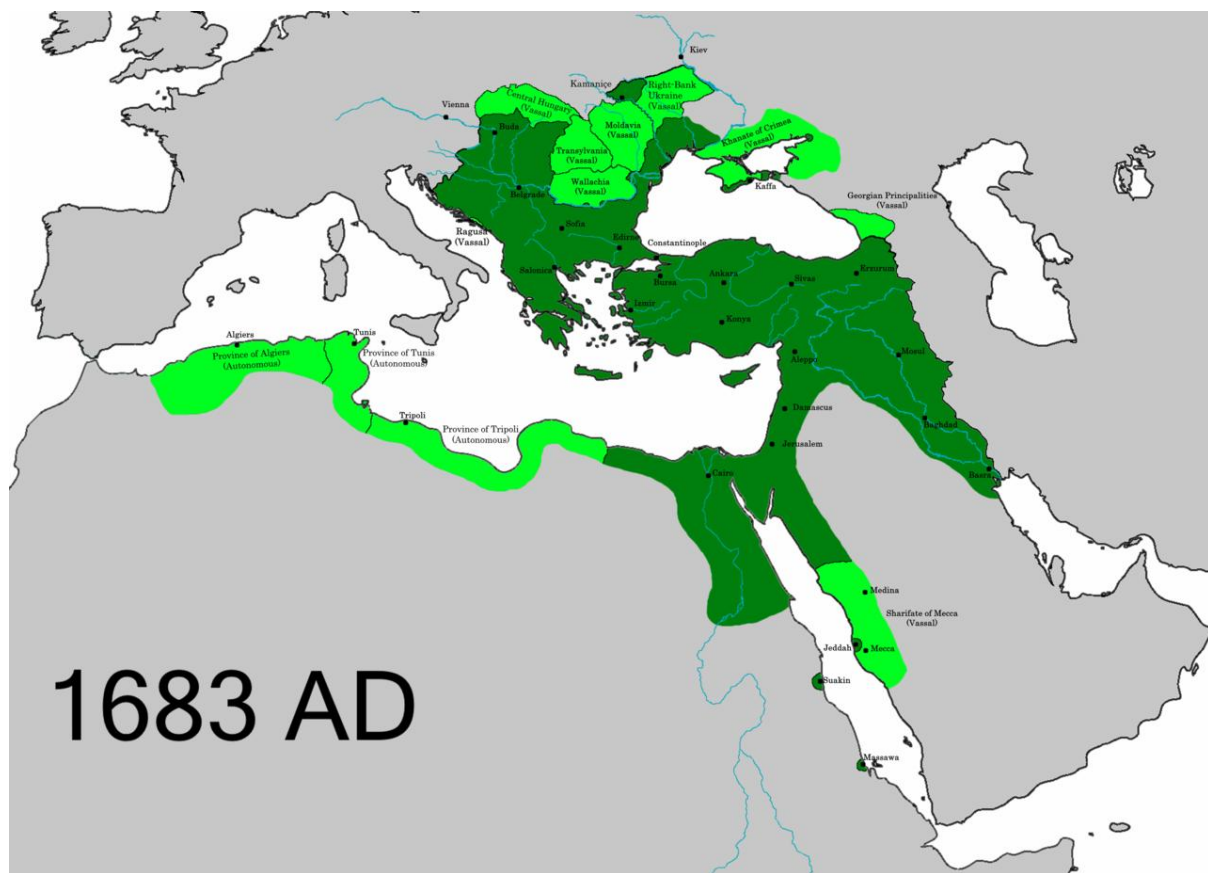
<http://www.crystalinks.com/trajanscolumn.html>



Cast as installed in Museum of Romanian History, Bucharest

(authors photograph, 2009)

Fig 13 The extent of the Ottoman Empire



The Ottoman Empire and its dependencies (Romania appears as its three constituent parts – Wallachia, Transylvania and Moldavia (light green)) in 1683

Author : [Chamboz](#) –
Accessed https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Vienna#/media/File:OttomanEmpire1683.png (Jan 2017)

Fig 14 The new style of painting examples form Sucevita Monastery, 16th Century.



Source : <http://www.romanianmonasteries.org/bucovina/sucevita> Accessed Jan 2017



(source
sucevita+monastery&biw=1280&bih=894&source=Inms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewiOn_bEt87RAhWhDsA
KHSNrCNsQ Accessed Jan2017



Source https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=sucevita+monastery&biw=1280&bih=894&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiOn_bEt87RAhWhDsAKHSNrCNSQ Accessed Jan 2017



Source <http://www.romanianmonasteries.org/bucovina/sucevita> romaniatourism.com

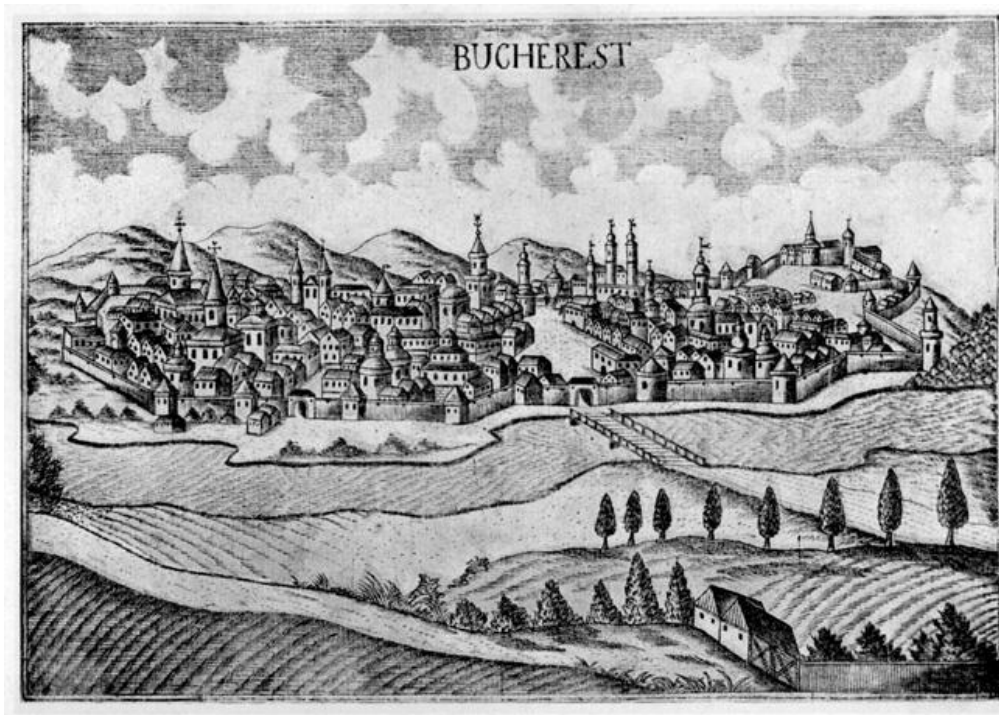
Accessed Jan 2017



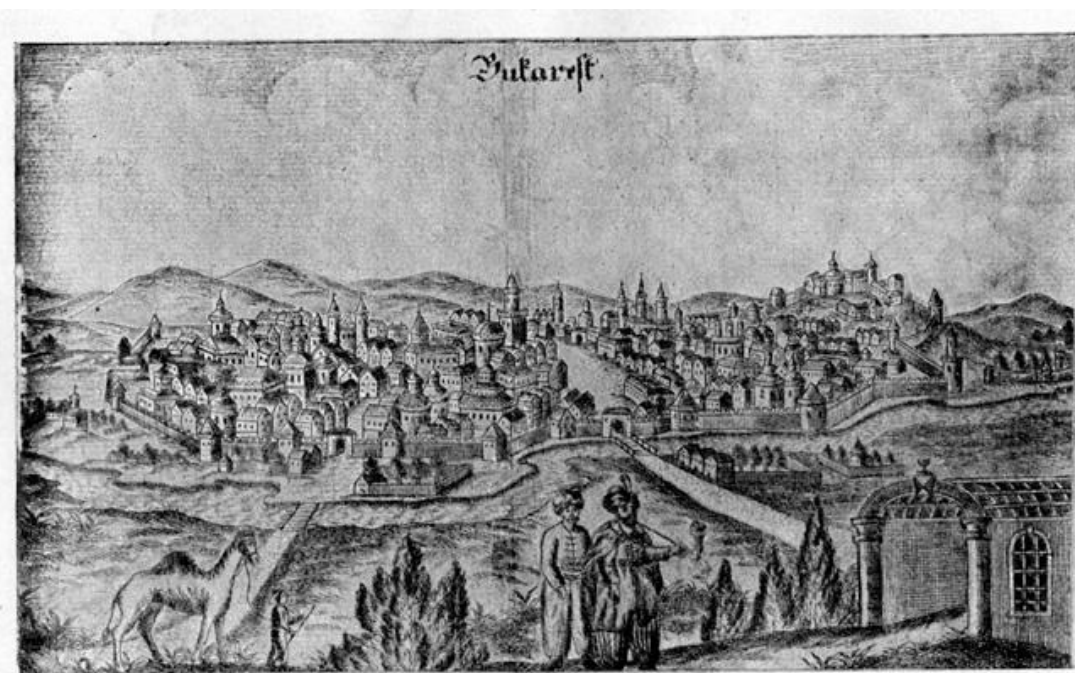
Source <http://www.romanianmonasteries.org/bucovina/sucevita> romaniatourism.com

Accessed Jan 2017

Fig 15 The polyglot social and architectural landscape of the early 19th Century

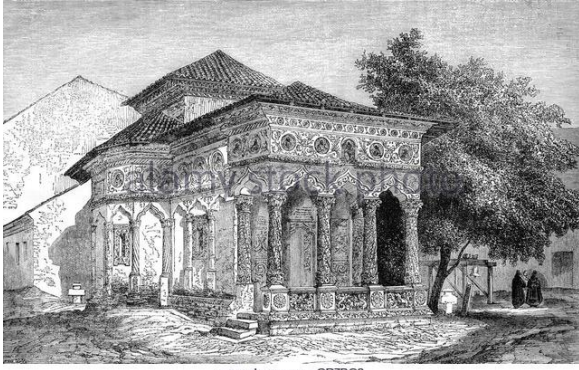


<https://alchetron.com/Bucharest-5329-W>

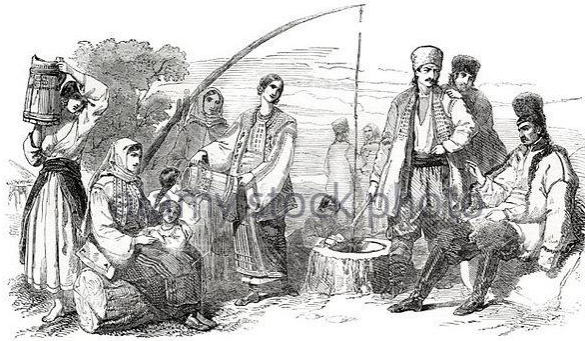


<https://alchetron.com/Bucharest-5329-W>

Both images date from the early 18th Century but note how Turks and a camel are added to the lower image to give a more Oriental feel to virtually identical scenes



www.alamy.com - GR7BG8



www.alamy.com - BAM5PD



www.alamy.com - H3POKW



www.alamy.com - FET9XW

Scenes from various issues of The London Illustrated News (source : Alamy.com Accessed Jan 2017)



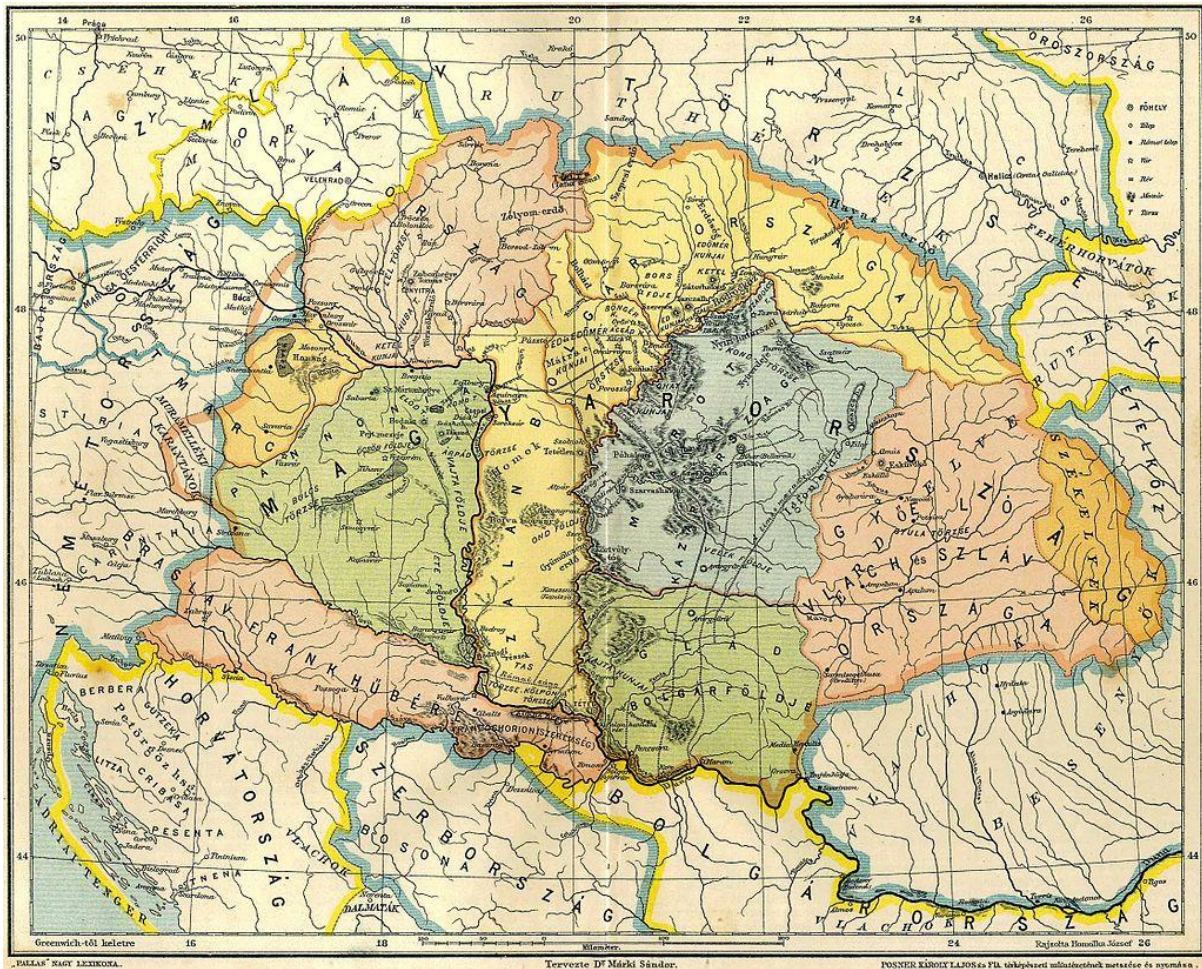
Good Friday Fair at Iasi, 1845 *Scurtă istorie a artelor plastice în RPR* (Source Fișier:AKauffmannJReylasiFair.PNG, Accessed Jan 2017)



Strada Blănari în 1836, acuarelă Bucharest 1836 "I. L." (Source https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Istoria_Bucure%C8%99tiului#/media/File:Buc.Str.Bl%C4%83nari1836.jpg Accessed Jan 2017)

Fig 16 Changing boundaries in Transylvania

16.1 Map of Central Europe in the 9th century before arrival of Hungarians



. It reflects data from [Gesta Hungarorum](#) chronicle . Map show medieval duchies of [Braslav](#), [Salan](#) (Zalan), [Glad](#), [Menumorut](#) (Marót) and [Gelou](#) (Gyelo), as well as neighboring countries and territories and the Vlach-Slavic voivodship (duchy) of Gelou (Transylvania) in the ninth century, according to [Gesta Hungarorum](#)

Source :Dr. Márki Sándor (1853-1925), Hungarian historian: <http://www.bibl.u-szeged.hu/exhib/evfordulo/marki/marki.html> - taken from here: http://keptar.niif.hu/000500/000586/magyaro-honf-terkep_nagykep.jpg

16.2 **Romania's territorial losses in the summer of 1940**

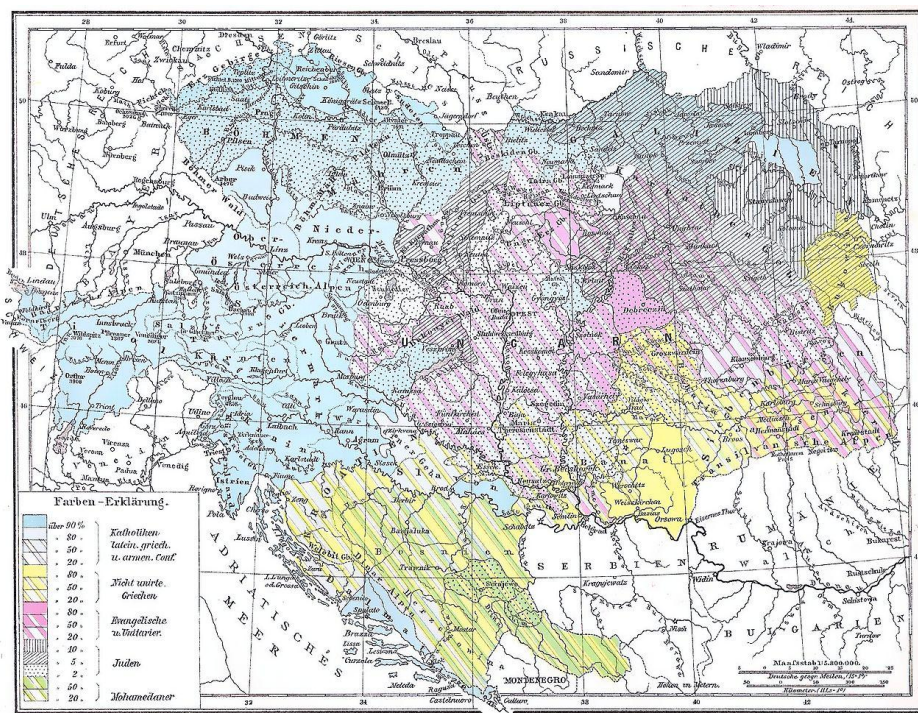


Source [PérdidasTerritorialesRumanas1940.svg](#): [*Romania 1940 1941 es.svg](#):
[*Romania 1940 1941 ru.svg](#): [Anton Gutsunaev](#)

Fig 17 The Austro-Hungarian Empire: Ethno-linguistic map and religions of Austria-Hungary, 1910



The ethnic groups of [Austria-Hungary](#) in 1910. Based on "Distribution of Races in Austria-Hungary" from the Historical Atlas by William R. Shepherd, 1911, [File:Austria hungary 1911.jpg](#). The city names were changed to those in use since 1945. Author [Andrein](#) - Transferred from [en.wikipedia](#) Accessed Jan 2017



Religions in Austria-Hungary, Andres Allgemeiner Handatlas, 1st Edition, Leipzig (Germany) 1881, Page 48, Map 2. (Accessed Jan 2017)

Fig 18 Catholic traditions and imagery in church architecture



St Nicolas Catholic Cathedral Oradea, Anton van Hillebrand. 1762
(<https://www.expedia.co.uk/Baroque-Palace-Oradea>. Accessed Feb 2017)



St George's Catholic Cathedral Timisoara, Fischer von Erlach 1760
(http://wikivisually.com/wiki/St._George's_Cathedral,_Timi%C8%99oara, accessed Feb 2017)



Catholic cathedral St Antony of Padua in [Arad, Romania](#) 1902-1904 by Milan Tabacovici, an architect from Arad. File:Arad CatholicCathedral.jpg (Accessed Jan 2017)



Basilica Sfantul Anton, Constanta 1938 Romano de Simon'(Source Basilica Constanta2.jpg Accessed Jan 2017)





Roman-Catholic Church, Lugoj, 1718 -1723, (Source :Biserica Romano-Catolica Lugoj.jpg, Accessed jan 2017)

Fig 19 Styles for the new Romania



Princely Palace, Iasi ; Singuov , 1841 – 1843 (www.Shutterstock Accessed Feb 2017)



Sutu Palace, Bucharest , Vitiul and Konrad Schwink 1831-

(<https://www.inyourpocket.com/bucharest/Sutu-Palace-Museum-of-Bucharest> ; accessed Feb 2017)

Fig 20 Barbizon comes to Romania

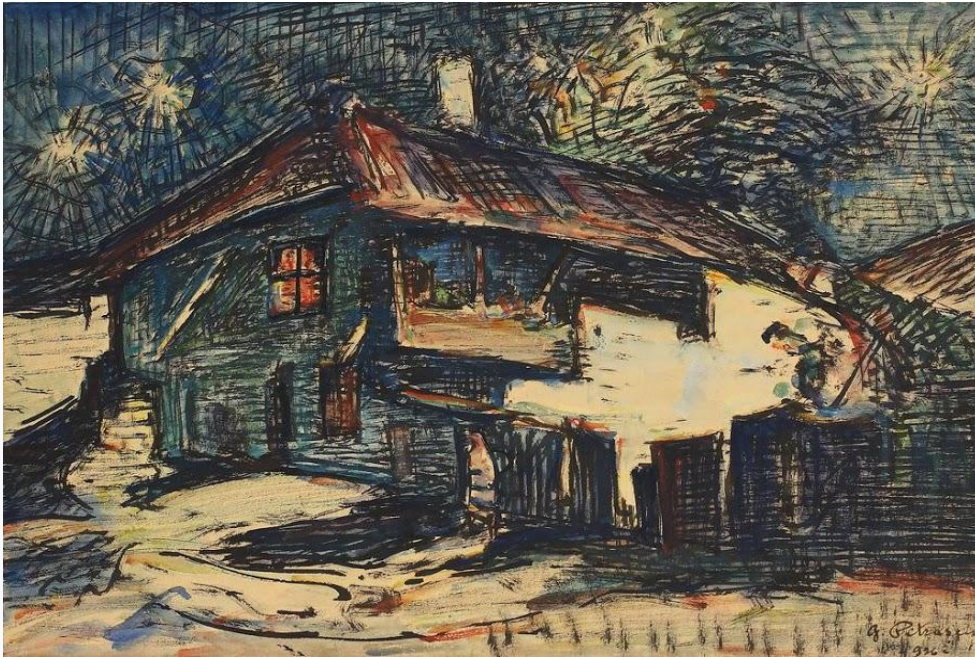


[Nicolae Grigorescu](#): Ion Andreescu at Barbizon. 1879-80

Source :[Nicolae Grigorescu](#) - mnar.arts.ro Accessed Feb 2017

Ioan Andreescu (1850- 1882) was “a great tragical figure of Romanian painting” who died young.

Fig 21 Romanian Impressionism



Gheorghe Petrașcu - Nocturnă (Case la Turtucaia)(Source : <https://g1b2i3.wordpress.com/2009/11/20/galerie-de-pictura-gheorghe-petrascu/> Accessed Feb2017)



Ion Andreescu : Stejarul (the Oak) Source : [http://www.wikiwand.com/ro/Ion Andreescu](http://www.wikiwand.com/ro/Ion_Andreescu) Accessed Feb 2017

Fig 22 Ceausescu-ismus –“Korea for me is everything”



A propaganda poster on the streets of Bucharest, 1986. The caption reads "65 years since the creation of the Romanian Communist Party", while in the background it reads "Ceaușescu Era" and "The Party. Ceaușescu. Romania"



Source : https://twitter.com/e_amyna (accessed Feb 2017)

Fig 23 A Romanian artist rows along London's hidden streams



Source <https://www.camdenartscentre.org/whats-on/view/anca-benera-residency-exhibition>.(Acessed Feb 2017)

The works on display have been made during the artist's joint residency at Camden Arts Centre and the Romanian Cultural Institute. Benera's work incorporates a range of media including video, performance and sculpture; her practice focuses on story telling, re-construction, performance and in particular, how these things can occur in the public sphere. For her residency, she is developing a research project begun in 2008, re-reading sculptural occurrences and interventions in the public domain as reminiscent of key art works from art history. (.Text : icr-london.co.uk/article/anca-benera-residency-exhibition-camden-arts-centre.html)

Fig 24 Yiddish dialects of Eastern Europe



The pale of settlement territory where Jews were restricted to permanently live during the Russian empire

Source :<http://kehalinks.jewishgen.org/golynka/maps/YiddishRegionalMap.png> (accessed Feb 2017)

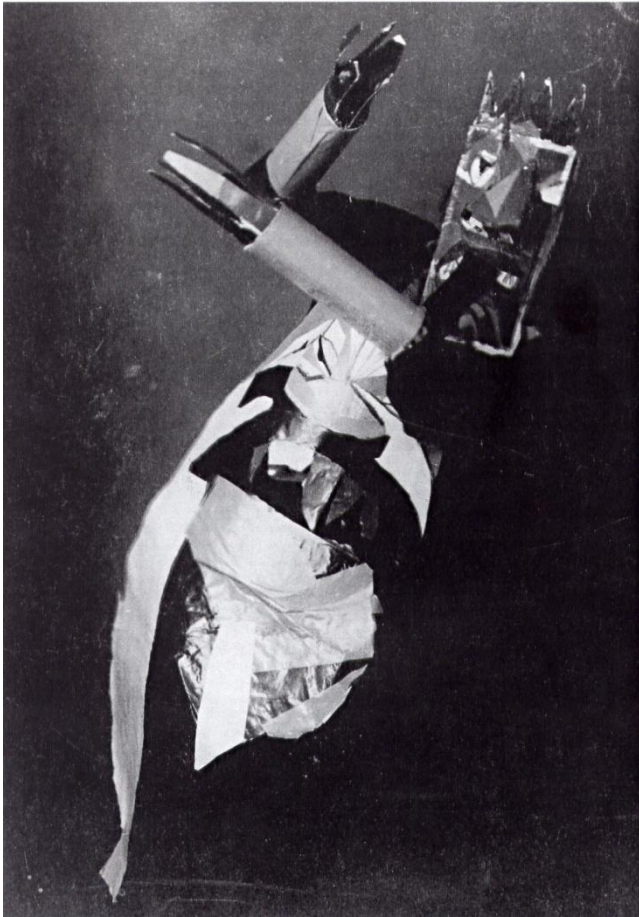
Fig 25 From Romanian/Jewish masks to Dada



capra-the-goat-traditii-datini-iarna-europe-winter-<https://romaniadacia.wordpress.com/>



Mask for Firdusi, 1917 - 1918 - Marcel Janco WikiArt



<http://stylebubble.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Sophie-Taeuber-Arp-4-1024x1471.jpg>

Fig 26 Kastello – Palate ale Rromilor din Romania



Source <http://www.bzi.ro/public/upload/photos/52/Palat4.jpg> Accessed Feb 2017



Source http://www.manager.bg/sites/default/files/styles/large/public/mainimages/0_9d4de_adff8a0b_L.jpg?itok=OVMLKxTh Accessed Feb 2017



Source <http://www.rozylowicz.com/retirement/graphics/kastellos/preface-image2.jpg> Accessed Feb 2017

Fig 27 Roma Art i) Pavillion – Preview in Bucharest



http://www.domusweb.it/content/dam/domusweb/en/art/2010/06/28/-mapping-the-invisible-eu-roma-gypsies/rbig/big_250193_3311_IMAGE4_big.jpg

ii) Lucy Orta and George Orta : Wandering



https://encrypted-tbn1.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:AND9GcTdQu87RUKvEi6E81tP8b32W0ZCdGLZRjhN9W87VvisQ1_qnrUA1w



https://encrypted-tbn1.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:AND9GcRjxarTIKSxCGPePm0-Oakl_cbFHUIWNe1N_TmFCPhRI1Qz2SDGeA

iii)Delaine LeBas: Damaged Goods. 2005 Installation, mixed media on fabric



Artist's statement

"The nation's morals are like teeth: the more decayed they are, the more it hurts to touch them."
George Bernard Shaw

My work is at the point where Outsider, Folk and Contemporary Art meet, combining a visionary, conceptual and craft approach. I live and work in the same space. There is no separation of daily life and art; they are intertwined. My works are the struggle to escape the stereotypes. I employ symbols that the viewer thinks they understand. I take these familiar images, retain their democratic nature but create a shift in their meaning.

Scratch beneath the glittery surface and you will see a violent undercurrent, exposing things for what they are, drawn in by the prettiness to be confronted by what lurks beneath the surface, the wolf in sheep's clothing being a reoccurring theme.

As a Romani, my viewpoint has always been that of the outsider, and this position of the 'other' is reflected in the materials and messages within my work. We live in a culture of mixed values and garbled messages. My works are crafted from the disregarded and disparate objects of the car boot sale and the charity shop. A bricolage of materials. Employing the materials of the everyday, all formed together in a manner that allows them to be precious yet reclaimed.



3

Surviving Witnesses –unseen photography in Ceaurescu’s Romania :the case of Ion Grigorescu and Andrei Pandele



Frontispiece: Supermarket Shelves in early 1980's Romania

(date and photographer not traceable) Source: VIA9GAG.COM (Accessed 18 May 2016)

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INTRODUCTION

It is important to establish the differences between the context of the works studied in this paper and the ever expanding media world of today, but also to remind the reader of the similarities of artistic media for political change – in this case against repressive odds. The paper is also part of extended research interest in Romanian contemporary art.¹²⁴

With the ubiquity and pervasiveness of digital technology and photography it is easy to forget the speed of historical and geographical change. The social and political issues of control and circulation of images and ideas were present none the less and this paper will look at an extreme – and relatively recent and geographically near – contrast with the media saturation of the present day in the west – the case of two¹²⁵ photographers in Ceausescu's Romania in the 1980's.

“In the Future, We Will Photograph Everything and Look at Nothing”¹²⁶(Fig1).

By contrast posit a time before the electronic media revolution pervaded every aspect, every moment of daily and political lives. Before ‘video’, before internet, before mobile phones (certainly ‘smart phones’). Imagine a large, poor country at that time (but one rich in natural and agricultural resources) with a leader who though ‘elected’ is in fact a despot and is building a new world fit for an idealised ‘new man’. But in this country if you had a typewriter without authorisation it is best to bury it.¹²⁷ The state apparatus carefully controlled and manipulated the images that were available¹²⁸. It was believed the state employed one out of four of the population as an informer¹²⁹. One state controlled TV channel broadcast for only 4 hours a day. A National Union of Artists controlled funding for art – and the content of art work. Without state funding a few artists avoided this control and therefore could still document the reality but in secret and exhibit work privately. The use of cameras and home movies was not controlled or licensed by the state, though materials and equipment were not easily available and there was a form of self-censorship. This is not an dystopian sketch but a very brief summary of the visual arts in Romania in its ‘Golden Age’¹³⁰

The first section of this paper gives an overview of conditions in that ‘Golden Age’, focussing on mass media and photography ; the next two sections discuss the two artist/photographers chosen for this study Andrea Pandeale and Ion Grigorescu the nature of their work and the way their work stands in relation to art and photography in Romania. It

¹²⁴ It forms part of an extended study of contemporary Romanian art begun with the aid of a British Academy ‘Small project Grant’ *Contemporary Romanian Arts as a commentary and critique of the urban environment of the post- communist city Documentation report 2013*

¹²⁵ There are possibly others but the two cases examined here are the best documented.

¹²⁶ [Om Malik](#) *In the Future, We Will Photograph Everything and Look at Nothing* New Yorker online April 4, 2016

¹²⁷ Bugan, Carmen *Burying the typewriter- childhood under the eye of the secret police* Picador, London, 2012

¹²⁸ Ben Lewis, *The King of Communism* (DVD, Little Bird/Ben Lewis Films 2002)

¹²⁹ Actually it was one agent or informer for every 43. Deletant Dennis *Ceausescu and the Securitate – Coercion and Dissent in Romania* Hurst and Co. London 1995

¹³⁰ A half affectionate nostalgia for the Ceausescu years. See Cristian Mungiu *Tales from the Golden Age (Amintiri din epoca de aur)* film 2009 (available on DVD) Fig 2; Stefan-Constantinescu. *The Golden Age for Children* pop-up book, Romanian Cultural Institute, 2008,

will concentrate on their 'urban' photography to focus the study and relate to my own background and wider interests

BACKGROUND – ROMANIA IN THE 1970'S AND 1980'S

Because the social, political, economic, media and artistic context for these artists is so different from the present day a short summary is appropriate to set the scene.

There are many accounts of life in Communist Romania now available, 27 years after the sudden collapse of the Ceausescu regime over Christmas in 1989 and the short summaries here are brief indication to sketch a background, using as many personal and firsthand accounts as possible.¹³¹ Several of these have been translated and published in UK and USA¹³²

Boia's brief history of Romania summarizes this period :

Bread was beginning to be in short supply. From around 1980, nothing seemed to work anymore and the situation worsened from year to year....the people were left without food. The Romanians may not actually have died of hunger but increasing numbers suffered the effects of malnutrition.'patriotic work' the army became an army of slaves on the great construction projects....an idea took root which became an obsession: to flee the country.¹³³

New construction projects disrupted the traditional rural pattern of much of Romania and its cities with the collectivisation of agriculture, centralisation of housing in new modern blocks in a few village centres, and new industrial complexes which were often unsustainable and became derelict after 1989 when the artificially boosted communist economy collapsed¹³⁴(fig3).

The most savage and extensive urban clearance took place, using the excuse of earthquake risk, in the old centre of Bucharest where, from 1974 onwards comprehensive demolitions cleared nearly 1000 acres in the heart of the city, including well established residential quarters of great character and charm, undertaken at very short notice and resulting in great personal suffering and distress¹³⁵ undertaken under Ceausescu's personal direction with the aim of making a city suitable for his image of 'the new man',¹³⁶

¹³¹ Even Denis Deletant's detailed account of the Securitate is sparked by his personal experience, Deletant Dennis *Ceausescu and the Securitate – Coercion and Dissent in Romania* Hurst and Co. London 1995

¹³² Manea, Norman *On clowns:the dictator and the artist (essays)*Grove Press, New York 1992, Bugan, Carmen *Burying the typewriter- childhood under the eye of the secret police* Picador, London,2102

¹³³ Boia, L 2001,*Romania* Reaktion Books, London 2001.p141

¹³⁴ Ceausescu aimed to pay off the Romanian national debt which crippled the internal economy.

¹³⁵ The film commissioned by the Romanian Cultural Institute (Fearn, Robert and Marineacu, Ioana *Off the map* (DVD) Romanian Cultural Institute 2006) gives a detailed and personal account of the memories of this.

¹³⁶ He was influenced in this project by his visits to North Korea and many commentators suggest that by this point his megalomania was approaching insanity.

Carmen Bugan describes in daily detail the persistence and pervasiveness of the Securitate¹³⁷ following up suspicions that he father had was guilty of 'Propaganda Against the Socialist Regime, Article 166 paragraph 2 of the Penal Code'¹³⁸ and the continued harassment and disruption this investigation of her father's one man protest against the Communist regime caused her family.

Norman Manea goes into minute detail of the successive interviews he had with the Securitate in attempts to get his writing published in a country of unlit streets, unheated apartments, interminable lines for basic foodstuffs, ubiquitous police and collaborators¹³⁹

Although there was no underground opposition, no *samizdat* culture¹⁴⁰ individuals with some conscience did attempt to divert the destructions of the regime. One documented example is Gheorghe Leahu's attempts to circumvent the demolition of the huge and architecturally significant Vacaresti Monastery on the southern edge of Bucharest. Leahu was commissioned by the State to replace it with a new Court of Justice (the feeling was that the criminal elements of society should not be anywhere near the new centre of the city) but aware of the historical and architectural qualities of the monastery and its courtyards produced several alternative schemes which demonstrated that demolition was not necessary, and opposed the demolition until the last minute¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ The popular term for the Departamentul Securității Statului (Department of State Security), the secret police agency of the Socialist Republic of Romania.

¹³⁸ Bugan (op cit) p250

¹³⁹ Manea, Norman *On clowns:the dictator and the artist (essays)*Grove Press, New York 1992, p5

¹⁴⁰ Manea op cit , pp 24-28

¹⁴¹ Leahu,Gheorghe, (1998) *Distrughera Manastirii Vacaresti*(with English summary)Arta Grafica, Bucharest . This includes photographs and drawings of the (then) existing monastery buildings.

PHOTOGRAPHY IN ROMANIA IN THE 1970'S AND 1980'S

Photography was not recognised as an 'art' in Romania at the time and so operated in a pattern of self censorship.

Though at the time accurate information about Romania was obscured by the control and manipulation of almost every aspect of everyday life and communication, since the violent overthrow of Ceausescu and the gradual publication of documents, photographs and films and personal accounts of life in Romania in the 'Golden Age' it is possible to describe the conditions in the 1970's and 1980's. Even though photography was not subject to direct state surveillance and security foreign journalists were subject to watchful tailing and intermittent arrest¹⁴². Badica's investigations with the CNSAS (National Council for Studying the Archives of the Former Political Police) revealed no special interest for controlling the activity of the AAPH¹⁴³. There are no files on the Association's activity or on its most preeminent members. Even the Securitate, so it seems, considered their activity benign.¹⁴⁴

Photography was not considered a creative medium as literature, music or painting. Educated people, artists, those with some political education, those who would dare to speak against the communist government, would not consider photography among their creative weapons. A photographer could not enter the *Uniunea Artiștilor Plastici* (Fine Arts Union) because it had no photographic department. As artist Iosif Király remarks, photography was not officially one of the arts. Romanian artists who used photography as a medium of artistic expression were mostly young and experimental. Photography would record their artistic actions or be a form of mail-art, while trying to keep up with artistic developments on the other side of the Iron Curtain.¹⁴⁵

The net result of this pattern of almost self censorship was that photography operated in a pattern of self censorship, producing bland and inoffensive images (fig 4)

The idealised Communist photographer would

have an unshakeable faith in reason, progress and humanity. They will not let themselves be diverted..... They go ahead practicing direct photography, with no hermetic meanings, animated by warm humanity. They have a deep understanding of their fellow creatures and offer them images in which they recognize themselves, images that help them understand, images that give them satisfaction. They are not isolated and scared artists. They actively participate in community life, accompany people in their days of feast and days of work, share their joys and sorrows, their accomplishments and revolts. Thus they become spiritual leaders of the community, poets, wise men and revolutionaries ready to fight for truth, against injustice. There

¹⁴² Vivien Morgan, 2007 Video Journalism Routledge 2007 p 5, "Towards a definition of video journalism "we were followed by the secret police ,the Securitate, everywhere and were arrested at least nine times in as many days"

¹⁴³ The Association of Artist Photographers in Romania

¹⁴⁴ Badica Simina ,2012, Historicising Absence : the missing photographic documents of Romanian late Communism in Colloquia Vol. XIX 2012, Babeș-Bolyai" University Institute of Central European Studies Journal of Central European History Cluj Napoca 2012 footnote 34,p61(available on line)

¹⁴⁵ Badica Simina op cit pp40-62 (available on line)

are a lot of these citizen-photographers, these human being-photographers. And a lot are yet to come.¹⁴⁶

This is double speak – as Badica notes

It was obvious for anyone who has lived through the era that this type of photographer would never walk the streets of Romania. An involved photographer, with sensitivity for the social issues would not only be discouraged and marginalized by the regime but would risk major discomforts. However, the official discourse promoted this type of documentary photography, images of everyday life, people in their working place and in their homes, under the condition of course that all these made life in Communist Romania seem nice and happy. It was probably also this double talk of the regime that drove photographers away from documentary photography; the concept had been so much abused by the regime that no-one took it seriously into consideration anymore.¹⁴⁷

The kind of 'noxious' realism that might have shown vagrants, children begging, flies on faces, garbage : the kind of things abhorred by the 'Association of Artist Photographers' simply were not there, in Badica's words, after Barthes', photography had been 'tamed'¹⁴⁸ deprived of its power through banalization (and state subsidy).

The development of 'art based' photography has little interaction with this stream and has been charted by Ruxandra Balaci¹⁴⁹ who discusses it in relation to experimental art.

'Architectural' photography was well developed by the 1960's and typically tended towards the sculptural effects of new, unoccupied, unmarked blocks in strong light and shadow treated like sculptures (Fig 5) in magazines such as *Arhitectura*¹⁵⁰ and republished¹⁵¹.

Other systematic photographic projects are however gradually coming to light- for instance the Vasluiul Communist project¹⁵² (Fig 6) documented everyday street scenes, but one

¹⁴⁶ Aurel Duca, 'Cuvânt de deschidere' [Opening Remarks], *Fotogra fi ca*, 128 (1979): 36, cited in Badica 2012, p56

¹⁴⁷ Badica, op cit, p56

¹⁴⁸ 'Society is concerned to tame the Photograph, to temper the madness which keeps threatening to explode in the face of whoever looks at it. To do this, it possesses two means. The first consists of making Photography into an art, for no art is mad. Whence the photographer's insistence on his rivalry with the artist, on subjecting himself to the rhetoric of painting and its sublimated mode of exhibition. Photography can in fact be an art: when there is no longer any madness in it' Barthes, *R Camera Lucida Reflections_on_Photography* 1980 p 117

¹⁴⁹ Balaci Ruxandra *Photography - a proposed Chronology of an Experimental Epoch* International Contemporary Arts Network 2005 http://www.c3.hu/ican.artnet.org/ican/text1c91.html?id_text=20

¹⁵⁰ Maxim, Juliana (2011) 'Developing Socialism: The Photographic Condition of Architecture in Romania, 1958-1970', *Visual Resources*, 27: 2, 154 — 171

¹⁵¹ Many of the same buildings, sometimes identically photographed, also appeared in the glossy albums published during the period, such as Gustav Gusti, *Arhitectura în România* (Bucharest: Editura Meridiane, 1965), which contains 214 photographs and was translated into German and English; Ionescu, *Arhitectura în România*; Cezar Lăzărescu, *Arhitectura românească contemporană* (Bucharest: Editura Meridiane, 1972). These albums that were printed in large numbers, and to that one should add the albums that illustrated the recent architecture of specific cities, such as Bucharest or Iași. Finally, the photographs circulated also as postcards, which illustrated the modernist hotels on the Black Sea Coast, as well as new residential districts in Bucharest and around the country. (Maxim, J op cit, footnote 4, p170)

suspects rather selectively. Photos (fig7) from Cartier Bresson's visit to Romania in 1975 as part of accredited events organized to commemorate the 30th anniversary of victory against the fascist regime are now on the internet. He made a long tour of the country, (at that time Romania had close ties with the French Communist Party) by visiting Bucharest, Oltenia Bucovina and Moldova.¹⁵³ His guide in Romania was Andrea Pandele whose work is discussed later and was clearly an influence on Pandele's work – extended private contact would have made this inevitable.

The manipulation of photographic and film images to glorify the communist state and promote an image of well-being and achievement was well developed –in spectacular displays (Fig 8) and in advertising (fig 9) and glamorous models (fig 10) – not at all 'noxious'¹⁵⁴ imagery. Nevertheless taking photographs of less savoury aspects of life – such as queuing for bread could be construed as 'denigration of the socialist reality' and carried a sentence of 6 years in prison¹⁵⁵

All this was taking place at the same time as aspects of western photography were becoming overtly politicised and using darker more socially critical imagery¹⁵⁶ Today 'street photography' is a recognised genre of photography¹⁵⁷ even in Romania¹⁵⁸ (Fig 11) -and with the availability and flexibility of digital pocket cameras and connection to the Internet the forecast Walter Benjamin made in 1931 at the end of his essay "Small history of Photography" is apt:

"Cameras are getting smaller and smaller, even more ready to fix fleeting and surreptitious images, whose shocks bring the viewers association mechanism to a standstillNot for nothing have Atget's photographs been compared with those of a crime scene. But is not every spot of our cities a crime scene? Every passer-by a perpetrator. Should not every photographer – descendant of the augurs and the harpies – expose guilt in his pictures ?"¹⁵⁹

¹⁵² Various photographers, text by Mihai Popescu *These Vintage Photos Show a Colourful Side of Communism* VICE April 9, 2016,

¹⁵³ <http://only-romania.com/2012/12/henri-cartier-bresson-in-romania-1975/> This version includes an interview with Andrei Pandele which discusses the impact his meeting with Cartier Bresson had on his work and his realisation that 'absurd was the new normal'

¹⁵⁴ One of the terms used to condemn styles and content that was not acceptable

¹⁵⁵ Moldeveanu/Pandele 2011, *Everyday life in Communist Romania* VICE uk, 18 October 2011

¹⁵⁶ See for instance Jessica Evans(ed) 1997 *The Camerawork Essays –Context and Meaning in Photography* Rivers Oram Press, London which covers the period 1976- 1985.

¹⁵⁷ For instance – a random sample of recent references, found for this essay but not referred to : Stilletto, J *Vintage 80's –London Street Photography* Frances Lincoln, 2011; Sophie Howarth and Stephen McLaren *Street photography NOW* Thames and Hudson, 2010; David Gibson, *The Street Photographer's Manual* Thames and Hudson 2014; Bussard, Katherine *Unfamiliar Streets : the Photographs of Richard Avedon, Charles Moore, Martha Rosler and Philip-Lorca Dicorcia* Yale University Press, 2014

¹⁵⁸ For instance Stefan Cosma 2000 *100% Bucuresti-the eclectic esthetics of the city* Editat de Comsicosma Buchuresti

¹⁵⁹ Walter Benjamin, *Small History of Photography (1931)* translated with other shorter essays and an introduction as Esther Leslie *On Photography- Walter Benjamin*; Verso 2015 p93

Though until the 1989 'Revolution'¹⁶⁰ this was still in the Romanian future. And in Bucharest public photography was banned in 1976¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰ There is still discussion as to whether the 'revolution' was more a palace coup within the Romanian communist elite – most of key Communist party figures remained, cleansed of earlier affiliations (for a brief summary of the questions see Professor Mihai Manea 1989 *Revolution in Romania: A Violent Popular Oust – Certainties and Uncertainties -summary* Bucharest, Romania manea.mihai@gmail.com)

¹⁶¹ Corina Ilea 2012 *Contemporary Romanian Photography and Video Art after 1989: Perspectives on a State of Unprotectedness* A Thesis In the Department of Art History Presented in Partial Fulfillment of The Requirements For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Art History) at Concordia University Montreal, Quebec, Canada August 2012 p78 –where footnote 142 refers to Cosmin Costinas, "Demons, Allegories and Humanism," in ed. Marta Dziewanska, *Ion Grigorescu: In the Body of the Victim*, (Warsaw: Museum of Modern Art, 2010), 32.

THE DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHER – ANDREI PANDELE

As an architect Pandeale not only had access to a certain amount of equipment and was able to import film stock and as an architect he had a certain level of status and access. His work was carefully developed and printed and is now available in various books in Romania and frequently used to support essays on 'Communism in Romania'

Pandeale worked as a sports photographer (with accreditation and ID) as well as being an architect and built up an archive of approximately 11,000 pictures which were not published until 2005¹⁶² when they were exhibited in Bucharest (fig 12)

"I have seen women over 40 exploding in tears in front of my photographs, because they saw their life had been destroyed, but they realised it 20 years too late. And a lot of teenagers laughed neurotically - because they recognised something in the pictures that their parents had told them, but they had never seen for themselves."¹⁶³

"What perspires through the pictures from 1975? Everything is dull and worn-out. A feeling of sadness and begarliness. The people were dressed in rags; kids in uniforms, only the overcoats are different. Women wear dresses hand sewn or knitted at home. The streets are deserted. You rarely saw a Dacia, sometimes a Moskvich or a Trabant. The public transportation was almost inexistent. Even the central arteries were deserted. On Calea Victoriei you could park at any hour. Only the "Comrade's" portrait was ubiquitous."¹⁶⁴

The lessons that Pandeale learnt from his days as Cartier-Bresson's guide are apparent in the human focus in almost all of his images, even when they are documents of the privations of late communism they still have a human focus (Fig 13). He was able to use his privileged role as an architect and accredited photographer to respond photographically to the conditions in Bucharest¹⁶⁵

"I was an architect ,I could find plans [and] approximate what they would destroy. Not exactly, no-one knew that. They were wild, totally out of control. After two years of photographing the architectural destruction I decided that it was very bad, but it was even worse that they were ruining the lives of 22 million people. So I began to take pictures of everyday life. I think they are much more striking."¹⁶⁶

He learned to take pictures without looking through the viewfinder, even from under his coat. In conversations with the Securitate - the Romanian secret service -he casually wove the names of high-ranking people, supposedly his friends. In this way in 20 years he accumulated 61,000 negatives, which remained hidden until 1989.¹⁶⁷ Although the

¹⁶² Though in 1993 he did offer them to the National Museum of Contemporary Art who 'so appalled he threw them away. People were not ready to come to terms with their past – and many still aren't' (Moldoveanu Ioana,2011)

¹⁶³ Andrei Pandeale quoted in Tessa Dunlop *A lost city: Photos of Bucharest's past* Bucharest, Romania 5 October 2013 From BBC News [Magazine](#)

¹⁶⁴ [Romania Insider](#) *Book Insider: Forbidden photos and personal images by Andrei Pandeale* 1 Oct 2010

¹⁶⁵ Several were taken from his office window, including a much reproduced view of the one deep organised 'crowd' greeting the visit of the Russian president (Fig 14)

¹⁶⁶ Pandeale, Andrei quoted in Tessa *Dunlop lost city: Photos of Bucharest's past*, BBC magazine 5 October 2013; www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-24368485

¹⁶⁷ Adapted from Polish http://dsh.waw.pl/pl/nw/3_83

photographs as usually reproduced in black and white from those included on his website and also in his record of The House of the People¹⁶⁸ it is apparent that there are some coloured images – which would give a very different effect if it had been more widely used.(fig 15).

The captions used here are the notes added by Pandele himself and add up to an extensive, detailed, observational journal of Communist Bucharest, almost a neutral commentary simply recording the facts and details. He continues to be interviewed and his views on current issues in Bucharest are sought in the local media¹⁶⁹ which indicates the value of his work today as a source of reference and a reminder of the past.

¹⁶⁸ Pandele, Andrei, *The house of the People – the end in marble*. Compania, Bucharest 2009

¹⁶⁹ http://www.b365.ro/andrei-pandele-andrei-pandele-foto-bucuresti-andrei-pandele-arhitect-sef-andrei-pandele-interviu_193047.html The machine translation is difficult to follow but there is a sense of nostalgia for the old (pre-communist) city where his parents and grandparents lived.

THE ARTIST USING PHOTOGRAPHY – ION GRIGORESCU

“Ion Grigorescu is half visual artist and half a everyday life historian”¹⁷⁰. He is perhaps the best known living Romanian artist¹⁷¹ who has had a varied career: he was commissioned to paint a portrait of Ceausescu, worked as a restorer of church paintings and retired for a while to live in a monastery. He has worked in several media – he used (by professional standards) rough and primitive photographs and 8mm. films and it is on this aspect this essay concentrates.

Since the end of the 1960s Bucharest born Ion Grigorescu (1945 -) has explored themes such as sexuality, body, politics, religion and himself in relation to these topics through various media such as painting, photography, video, performance, installation and diary records.

The case of Ion Grigorescu is rather different. in addition to producing prolific drawings and paintings he also photographed the desolate communist landscape (*Our beloved Bucharest*, 1977), the destruction of churches so as to leave space for the new building sites (*Văcărești*, 1975) and his life inside the walls of his apartment (*In prison/Pyjamas*, 1978).

There is something essentially furtive about these shots, contradictory to the official portrayal of “reality” and even Pandele’s carefully framed and printed images. Ion Grigorescu photographed his everyday life - taking the very crowded bus, waiting in line for something to buy, or even partying with some friends, along with images that portray the artist as a loner in desolate landscapes. But the images are always somewhat scrappy and hand worked – many of them are hand coloured, torn or roughly pasted up together with texts and other images. He used these images to explore a range of themes : his work is essentially autobiographical and Grigorescu implicitly questions his role as an artist, a role he considers achieved in simple everyday gestures. His films are precarious in technical realization and these sparse, simple observations may seem anachronistic and self absorbed at first sight.

But that’s exactly where their strength lays: the imperfect, raw technique depicts the deep, moving humanity of Grigorescu’s works. Ion Grigorescu’s use of documentary film material recording the condition of “bare life” was an important contribution to contemporary art in the 1970s and a paradigm-setting work for many artists in Romania and elsewhere.¹⁷²

In the aftermath of the 1977 earthquake which was severe even for earthquake prone

¹⁷⁰ MA Asavei - 2007 [Rewriting the Canon of Visual Arts in Communist Romania](#) MA Dissertation, Central European University 2007 P48 (available on line at www.etd.ceu.hu/2007/asavei_maria.pdf)

¹⁷¹ Two recent books document his career and work : Alina Serban (ed) *Ion Grigorescu –the man with a single camera* Sternberg Press Berlin 2013; Marta Dziewanska (ed) *In the body of the Victim* Museum of Modern Art Warsaw 2009

¹⁷² Mihaela Chiriac *Repere ale artei experimentale românești în galeriile berlineze :When History Comes Knocking: Romanian Art from the 80s and 90s in Close Up* Review Observator Cultural <http://www.observatorcultural.ro/articol/arte-vizuale-repere-ale-artei-experimentale-romanesti-in-galeriile-11-03-2011>

Romania there was some relaxation of controls on travel for artists and Grigorescu, already an important artist was able to travel abroad¹⁷³

Nevertheless the use of photography is thus in itself defiant of official rules and becomes even more bold by the subjects chosen by Ion Grigorescu that registers those responsible of the surveillance, the members of the Secret Police. In *Electoral meeting* (1975. Fig16) Grigorescu includes photographs of the Securitate members who are surveying a “spontaneous” manifestation of support of Romanian citizens carrying the portraits of the communist leaders and placards with political slogans.

By turning the camera on those that use it to instill fear into citizens minds and behaviors, Grigorescu deconstructs the official myth put forward by the Romanian communist regime that proclaimed the voluntary, spontaneous manifestations of support to the official policies. By his secretive shots, Grigorescu shows us the farce well known by everyone but absent as a proof from our memory.¹⁷⁴

The primitive quality of his images still has an appeal(fig17)

. Grigorescu’s “My Beloved Bucharest,” from 1978, looks as if it were filmed with a pinhole camera. Poor quality, faded color images of the city, shown at jerky, irregular intervals, create a perfect portrait of a place — and suggest the same Richter-Tuymans idea of photographic images as faulty documents of memory and history¹⁷⁵

In Balta Albă,¹⁷⁶ he captures

“the savage poetry of these places”, recording the day to day activities and social behaviors (children playing in front of the block of flats, the people queuing for fruits in the market) from the newly built district of Bucharest that gave its title....capture the city “from below” – pointing to its contemporary ruins, peripheries and its rebuilt representations¹⁷⁷

The first images show the new *blocuri*¹⁷⁸ that seem to run out in every direction . Grigorescu scans the surface of the sparse and geometric facades as prisons , zooming to search for human presence and then tilts the frame creating a feeling of vertigo and claustrophobia this alien architecture. But the mood of the film changes when its focus moves to children playing and people at the market .

¹⁷³ Though unlike many, he returned

¹⁷⁴ Caterina Preda *The artist as witness in dictatorial regimes in Eastern Europe and South America* ECPR Bordeaux (4-7 September 2013) - Panel: Art as political Witness

¹⁷⁵ <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/16/nyregion/16artwe.html>

¹⁷⁶ Silent super 8 film 07:55, colour, 1980; but also a set of photographs

¹⁷⁷ <http://www.gamtorino.it/videotecaeventi/index.php?id=ion-grigorescu-balta-alba> (English translation adapted)

¹⁷⁸ The plural of ‘block’ in Romanian

There is a core of individual truth , irresistible humanity that feeds the artist's inner resistance against all sense of parade, order and authority¹⁷⁹

Several of his films are in effect long wanderings through the 'non history' of the Communist period which, even now is not discussed , and he brings out the human presence in these 'tainted stones'¹⁸⁰ - the most striking (and the longest) is *The Road – New axis of the town* (1993)¹⁸¹ which sets out along a diagonal walk at angles to the central axis of the grand project replacing the torn down centre of Bucharest and follows a line Grigorescu would have followed on his way to one of the church restoration projects he worked on.

¹⁷⁹ <http://www.gamtorino.it/videotecaeventi/index.php?id=ion-grigorescu-balta-alba> (English translation adpted)

¹⁸⁰ Costinas, Cosmin *Demons, Allegories and Humansim* p36, in Marta Dziewanska (ed) *In the body of the Victim Museum of Modern Art Warsaw* 2009

¹⁸¹ This could not be traced to view again for this piece either through the Romanian Cultural Institute or the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, despite being included in the exhibition *Out of Place* at Tate Modern in 2011

COMPARISONS : CONCLUSIONS

The investigations, brief as they are, for this paper suggest a slightly different picture from the overwhelmingly bleak photographic scene usually depicted in Communist Romania. This is not to deny the pervasiveness of state influence if not direct control and censorship. But one aspect of this is that it is apparent in the internet searches that gradually large personal archives are coming to light : photography was not an 'art form' and so has not been documented as well as other aspects and the two artists focussed on here have been vigorous in modest self promotion.

Also there has been a revival of photography (as well as publication of what are now historic images) since 1989 as Balaci notes

following the overwhelming political and social unrest of December 1989, increased contacts with the west favor a continuous improvement of technique and an increasingly frequent use of photography as an autonomous means of artistic expression, or integrated in multi-media expression systems (contemporary visual culture, which makes great use of photography, film, multi-media systems, is assimilated with art, not everyday civilization, in Romania.¹⁸²

Photography of what would have been 'noxious' scenes in the communist years – homelessness, poverty, drug abuse, prostitution- has flourished across Eastern Europe since 1989 but as the Ukrainian photographer Boris Mikhailov comments

Documentary cannot be truth. Documentary pictures are one-sided, only one part of the conversation. Anyway, documentary pictures are not possible anymore with digital technology as nobody believes in the truth of pictures. These are real people in Case History. The only thing that changes is how they are posed and that they are naked. I posed these people in poses that remind me of the history of art or of gestures that I saw in life. Sometimes I asked them to repeat a gesture that they made so I could photograph it. With Case History, I wanted to find a metaphoric image of life¹⁸³

¹⁸² Balaci Ruxandra 2005 *Photography - a proposed Chronology of an Experimental Epoch* International Contemporary Arts Network 2005, no

pagination http://www.c3.hu/ican.artnet.org/ican/text1c91.html?id_text=20

¹⁸³ Respinj, Eva *A Conversation with Boris Mikhailov* Inside/Out JUNE 1, 2011 | [artists, collection & exhibitions](http://www.moma.org/explore/inside_out/2011/06/01/a-conversation-with-boris-mikhailov/) http://www.moma.org/explore/inside_out/2011/06/01/a-conversation-with-boris-mikhailov/

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig 1 - *We Will Photograph Everything and Look at Nothing*



As our relationship with photography shifts, will desktop-based photo-editing programs like the Google Nik Collection go the way of the film camera?
photograph by jordan strauss / inversion / ap; [Om Malik](#) *In the Future, We Will Photograph Everything and Look at Nothing* New Yorker online
April 4, 2016

Fig 2 – Tales from the Golden Age



Tales from the Golden Age (2009) [Directors: Cristian Mungiu, Hanno Höfer, Ioana Uricaru, Razvan Marculescu, Constantin Popescu](#) [Screenplay: Cristian Mungiu](#)

"The final 15 years of the Ceausescu regime were the worst in Romania's history. Nonetheless, the propaganda machine of that time referred without fail to that period as the golden age..."

"Tales From The Golden Age" adapts for screen the most popular urban myths of the period. Comic, bizarre, surprising myths abounded, myths that drew on the often surreal events of everyday life under the communist regime.

Humor is what kept Romanians alive, and "Tales From The Golden Age" aims to re-capture that mood, portraying the survival of a nation having to face every day the twisted logic of a dictatorship.

On the occasion of Ceausescu's working visits, countryside mayors ended up hanging fruit in trees to make sure their villages would be noticed, obeying even the strangest orders from the ferocious Party activists. Communist Party secret regulations stated that in official pictures President Ceausescu couldn't take his hat off in front of the representatives of the rotten capitalistic world, President d'Estaing included. A professional driver decides to open his sealed truck for the first time in his career and discovers the connection between eggs, Easter and marital love. A policeman gets a live pig as gift before Christmas and decides that gas poisoning would be the best way to kill the animal silently amongst his hungry neighbors. In the 80s Romania, Bughi and Crina play Bonnie and Clyde, robbing people of bottled air.

"Tales From The Golden Age" combines several true stories to portray an era during which food was more important than money, freedom more important than love and survival more important than principles". (publicity quote)

Fig 3 Kombinat

1974



<http://www.panoramio.com/photo/44039358>

The plant, known during this period as the Hunedoara Steel Works (*Combinatul Siderurgic Hunedoara*; CSH), employed workers from surrounding villages as well as peasants from [Moldavia](#) and [Muntenia](#) driven to settle in the city as part of the forced industrialization drive of the decade-old [Communist regime](#). They spurred the city's growth from 4800 residents in 1930 to almost 90,000 in 1990, making it the country's largest city dependent on a single industry

2009

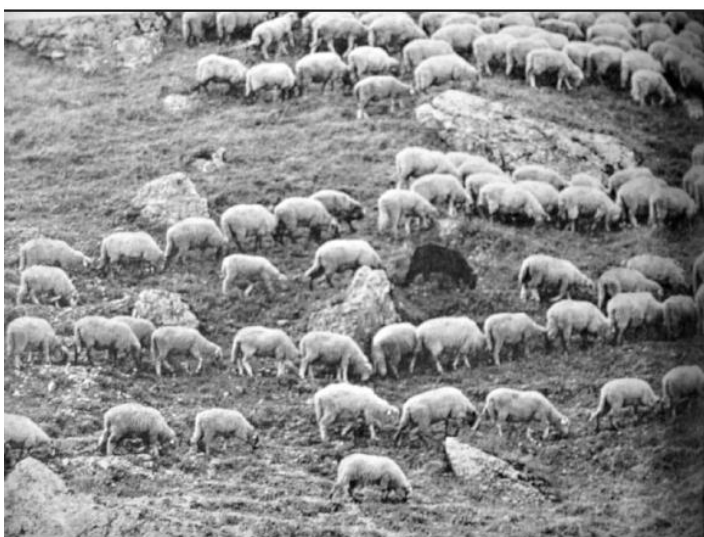


www.igloo.ro/en/books/kombinat-industrial-ruins-of-the-golden-era/

Untold acres of land are now deserts of crumbling ferro-concrete towers, surrounded by polluted land of evil coloration, with pools of water that are like national repositories of toxic chemicals. (...) It is as if a grey-brown organism that solidified into immovable detritus had invaded the earth and spread malignantly, eating up the landscape for miles around. Only occasionally is a village to be seen in the background, in the midst of which there is a church, anything not of ferro-concrete now appearing like a masterpiece by Brunelleschi by comparison. But the vast industrial complex of ruins dominates all: the horizon, the eye, one's very thoughts. There is no escaping it; as there was never any intention that you should be able to escape it.

Anthony Daniels <http://www.icr-london.co.uk/kombinat-exhibition.php>

FIG 4 Tamed photography



Aurel Toncoglaz, *Relach*

Corneliu Dan Gelep, *Lena*

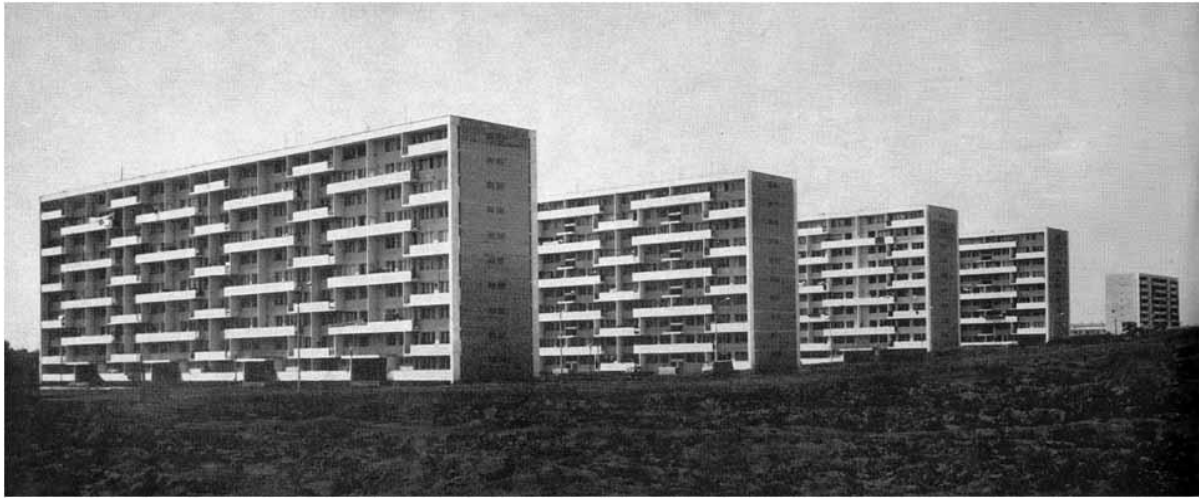
Nic Hanu, *Black sheep*

Source: *Fotografia*, 176 (1987)

“ The fact that these images could have been made in any period, in any country over the twentieth century testifies to the taming of photography in socialist Romania. Do they convey anything about life in 1987 Romania? Do they hint to any sort of internal problems or turbulences? On the contrary, these images testify to a society at peace with itself, contemplating natural beauty, unaware or unshaken by any political or social trouble. Their banality was their passport. These images, typical of the photographic movement in the 1970s and 1980s, contain within themselves the reason why they could make it across the borders of the country.”¹⁸⁴

¹⁸⁴ Simina Badica *Historicising Absence : the missing photographic documents of Romanian late Communism in Colloquia Vol. XIX 2012, Babeş-Bolyai” University Institute of Central European Studies Journal of Central European History* Cluj Napoca 2012 p52

FIG 5 Architectural photography towards abstraction



Balta Albă housing district, Bucharest, Romania, ca. 1963. Photograph (uncredited). Illustrated in *Arhitectura R. P. R.* 83, no. 4 (1963): 34



Balta Albă housing district, Bucharest, Romania. Photograph (uncredited). Illustrated in *Arhitectura* 101, no. 4 (1966): 32.

from Maxim, Juliana(2011) '*Developing Socialism: The Photographic Condition of Architecture in Romania, 1958-1970*', *Visual Resources*, 27: 2, 154 — 171

These two projects were also used by Ion Grigorescu in very different forms (qv.) which Maxim, although referencing Grigorescu's body photographs, does not mention in her paper.

Fig 6 Vasluiul Comunist



<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vaslui607080> also at
https://www.facebook.com/vaslui607080/photos_stream

The Communist Vaslui project restores old archival photos and videos from the heyday of the city. The project is run by Andrei Beşliu – an art director born and raised in Vaslui – his architect father and a local museum curator. I asked Andrei about the communist glory days of Vaslui.

Andrei Beşliu: “I grew up in Vaslui, in the 70s and 80s, when it turned from a dusty trade town of 17,000 people to a county capital of 90,000 people. My parents worked at the Design Institute and I know how much work they put into making this place into a beautiful and functional city. But I've seen all that work being ruined by local authorities since the 90s”

What was the atmosphere in Vaslui in those early days? “In the 70s it was a hip city. A lot of people from Bucharest and other big cities were forced to move to cities like Vaslui, which was sad for them, but helped the region grow. There were Italian and French tourists in the city, who were pen pals with Vasluian women and came to visit. The city produced clothing for Italy and furniture for IKEA. My parents would throw these house parties for local architects and artists. Everybody wore Levi's and had an improvised photo development studio at home. We received foreign magazines. I guess I was in a privileged position.

(Photos by various photographers, text by Mihai Popescu *These Vintage Photos Show a Colourful Side of Communism* **VICE**, New Zealand /Australia April 9, 2016)

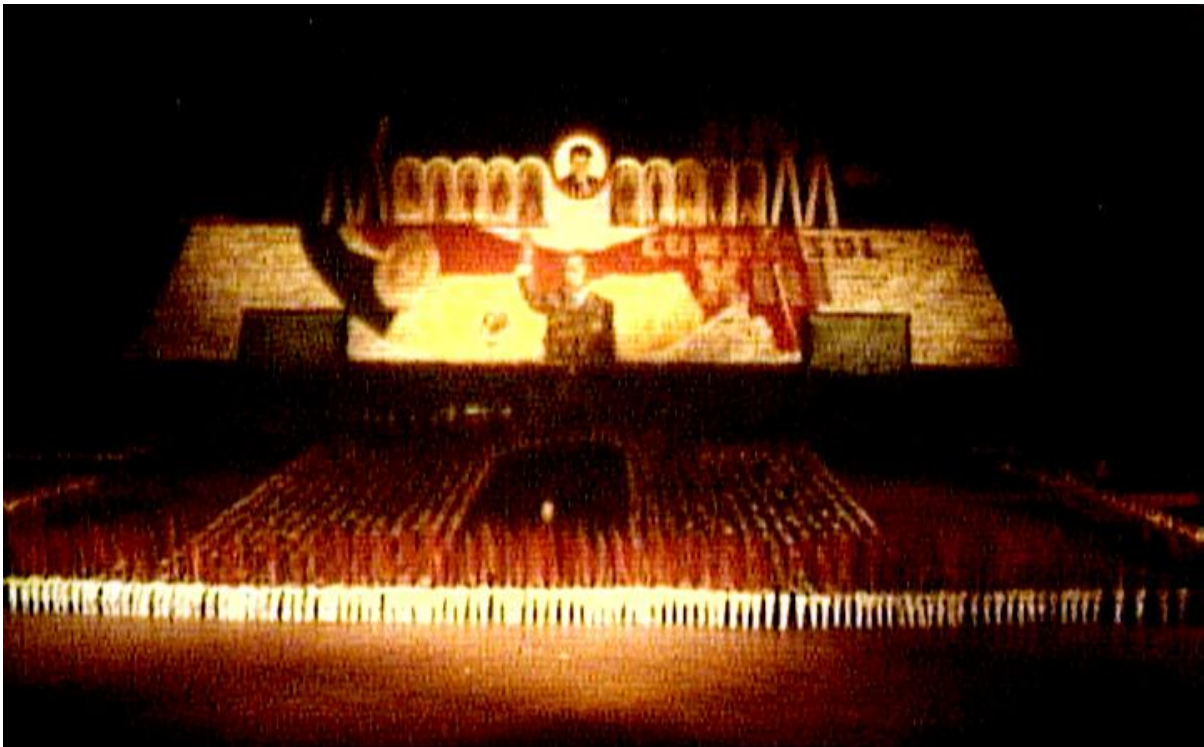
Fig 7 Henri Cartier Bresson in Romania



Bucharest. The first parking meters are received like new toys

(<http://only-romania.com/2012/12/henri-cartier-bresson-in-romania-1975/>)

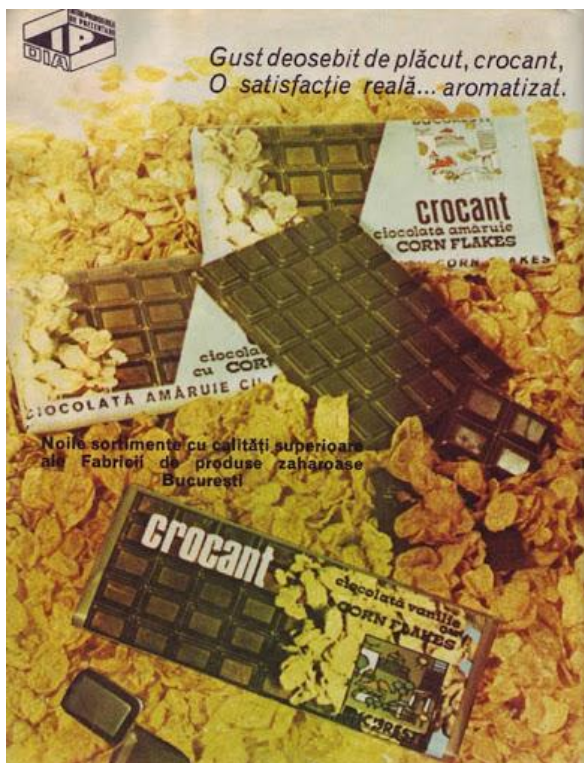
Fig8 The king of communism



www.benlewis.tv

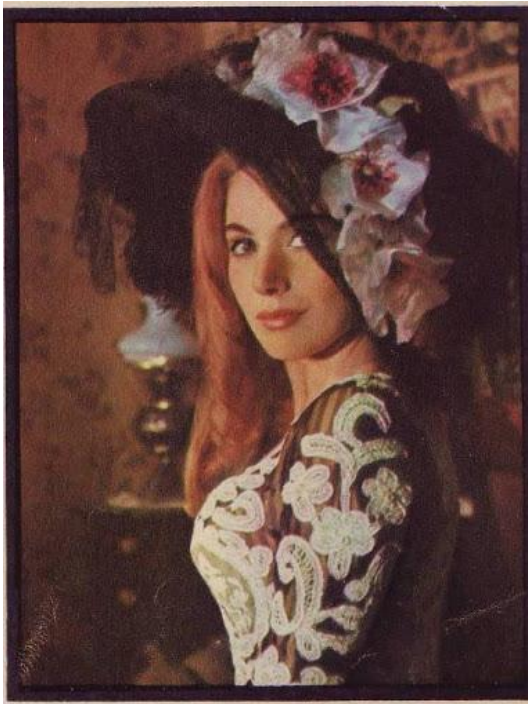
'Picture a Maoist spectacular, all fluttering flags and synchronized smiles, choreographed by Busby Berkeley and starring the entire population of a European Country. Throw in medieval royal pageants scripted by poets that make our laureate look like a venom-spitting anarchist and you will have some idea of the bizarre world that Nicolae Ceausescu created in Romania in the 1970's. The Peasant's son who came to power after staging a huge demonstration against Soviet invasion grasped that grand public display worked. (Sylvia Simmons, The Sunday Times)

Fig 9 Advertising in Communist Romania



Ads existed under communism. Although various products were often not found, or very difficult to find but, ironically, they were still advertised . <http://only-romania.com/2012/02/communist-ads/>

Fig 10 Memories from communism.– Actresses



Violeta Andrei ; Margareta Pogonat

Corina Chiriac; Monica Ghiuta

<http://only-romania.com/2012/04/memories-from-communism-part-vi-actresses/>

All these actresses continued to work in TV, films and media after 1989. Fragments of their work and images can be found under their names on Google

Fig 11 100% Bucuresti



Stefan Cosma 2000 100% Bucuresti-the eclectic esthetics of the city Editat de Comsicosma Bucharesti

“Bucharest has long ceased to be the ‘Paris of the East’ .Years have gone by. The city grew and the recent plastic surgery slash urban planning operations almost turned it into a real ‘SimCity’ a thing created by Micheal Jackson in his own image. A city suffocating and convulsive. Its spasms are a commercially minded blown up metaphor of the ‘mall inclusive’. Hypermarket and residential neighbourhood culture .All these placed together successfully annihilate any kind of interactive social flirtation at the at the heart of the city that becomes a victim of the turbo show-off in front of turabo cafes” Stefan Cosma *The Eclectic Chic of Contemporary Bucharest*

FIG 12 Anrdrei Pandeale *Everyday Life in Communist Romania*

_(from Moldoveanu Ioana, *Everyday Life in Communist Romania* October 18, 2011

http://www.vice.com/en_uk/read/everyday-life-in-communist-romania-0000001-v18n9)The notes are Pandeale's own comments



1985. You could wait for the bus for up to an hour. That's why they were often so full they'd run with their doors open, with the back almost touching the ground because of the weight.



1988. Hipsters in the communist days wore jeans and branded sneakers, like Nikes and Pumas, which sailors brought back from the West, along with vinyl records that were duplicated on to tape at an amazing speed.



1987. You weren't allowed to travel outside the country as a tourist, so all holidays took place locally, in the mountains or by the seaside. Some would travel there by bike, others by car, and would use their vehicles as all-inclusive hotels where they'd eat, sleep, smoke and, if they got lucky, bring a girl.



1980. People waiting in line for football tickets. The games were pretty tame as the fans were careful not to draw attention to themselves. Whenever Romania played against another country, the local crowd was separated from the foreign one by security forces.



1985. Cars were expensive and there was a seven-year waiting list to get one. There wasn't much choice of car brands either; most were Romanian Dacias, which would always let you down in the middle of the road. To save on petrol, only cars with even number plates were allowed to drive during the weekend, and cars with uneven ones during the week. If you didn't have a garage, your car would be left to hibernate in the winter snow for months until spring arrived to uncover it, all rusty.



1986. Ceaușescu visited China and North Korea in 1971 and came back with the megalomaniac desire of having hundreds of thousands of people shouting his name. From then on, the parades became national compulsory entertainment, for which people arrived in busloads from all over Romania. Eventually, these spectacles took place at every festivity. For example, at the start of the school year, pupils would wait for Ceaușescu in the sun for up to nine hours and more often than not he wouldn't show up. The specially selected children would be kept in quarantine for days to make sure Ceaușescu wouldn't be exposed to any flu virus.



1989. Chickens would often weigh less than a half a pound and were smaller than pigeons. There was always a food shortage. Outside Bucharest, finding bread was a real problem. To get bread in Bucharest you had to start queueing at the break of day. Meat wasn't sold at all, unless you knew the right people.



1989. Some football matches weren't broadcast on TV, so people would climb on to roofs to place TV antennas in order to watch the games through a Bulgarian signal.



1975. This girl serving a basic lunch in the yard is wearing a homemade dress. Clothes were made rather than bought, and any hole in your sock or blouse would be fixed immediately.

FIG 13 Human Focus in Pandeale's work



Fig 14 The staged crowd



Andrea Pandeale (<https://uk.pinterest.com/pin/565201821958964056/>) Accessed August 3 2016

Fig 15 Colour in Pandeles' photographs even in the queues.



<http://estost.photoshelter.com/gallery-image/Romania-Life-1975-89/>



romania-redescoperita.ro-fotograful-dezastrului-comunist-andrei-pandele-elogiat-de-



<http://estost.photoshelter.com/gallery-image/Romania-Life-1975-89/>

FIG 16 Ion Grigorescu : Electoral Meeting



Ion Grigorescu, Electoral Meeting, 1975 One of a set of 28 B/W photographs

In communist Romania state-managed electoral meetings were the order of the day. Under the oversight of the feared secret police, citizens had to testify to their adherence to the regime. Ion Grigorescu secretly photographed one of these meetings, organized on March 6, 1975. The results are especially revealing of the mechanism behind these demonstrations. The combination of the crowd, bewildered but docile, and the individual members of the secret police, created an absurd spectacle, lacking every form of spontaneity. These senseless and mechanical actions had no other purpose than to be a setting for role playing, imposed by a system of discrete but ruthless oppression. (<http://angelsbarcelona.com/en/artists/ion-grigorescu/projects/electoral-meeting/272>)

FIG 17 Ion Grigorescu : My beloved Bucharest



Gica Petrescu - Bucurestiul Meu Iubit

"Bucureștiul meu iubit " my beloved Bucharest
Ce-ai făcut de m-ai vrăjit? What have you done to get me hooked?
București, București, fratele meu ești, Bucharest, Bucharest, my brother you are
București, București, tu mă veselești." Bucharest, Bucharest, you tsar.

[Gică Petrescu](#)

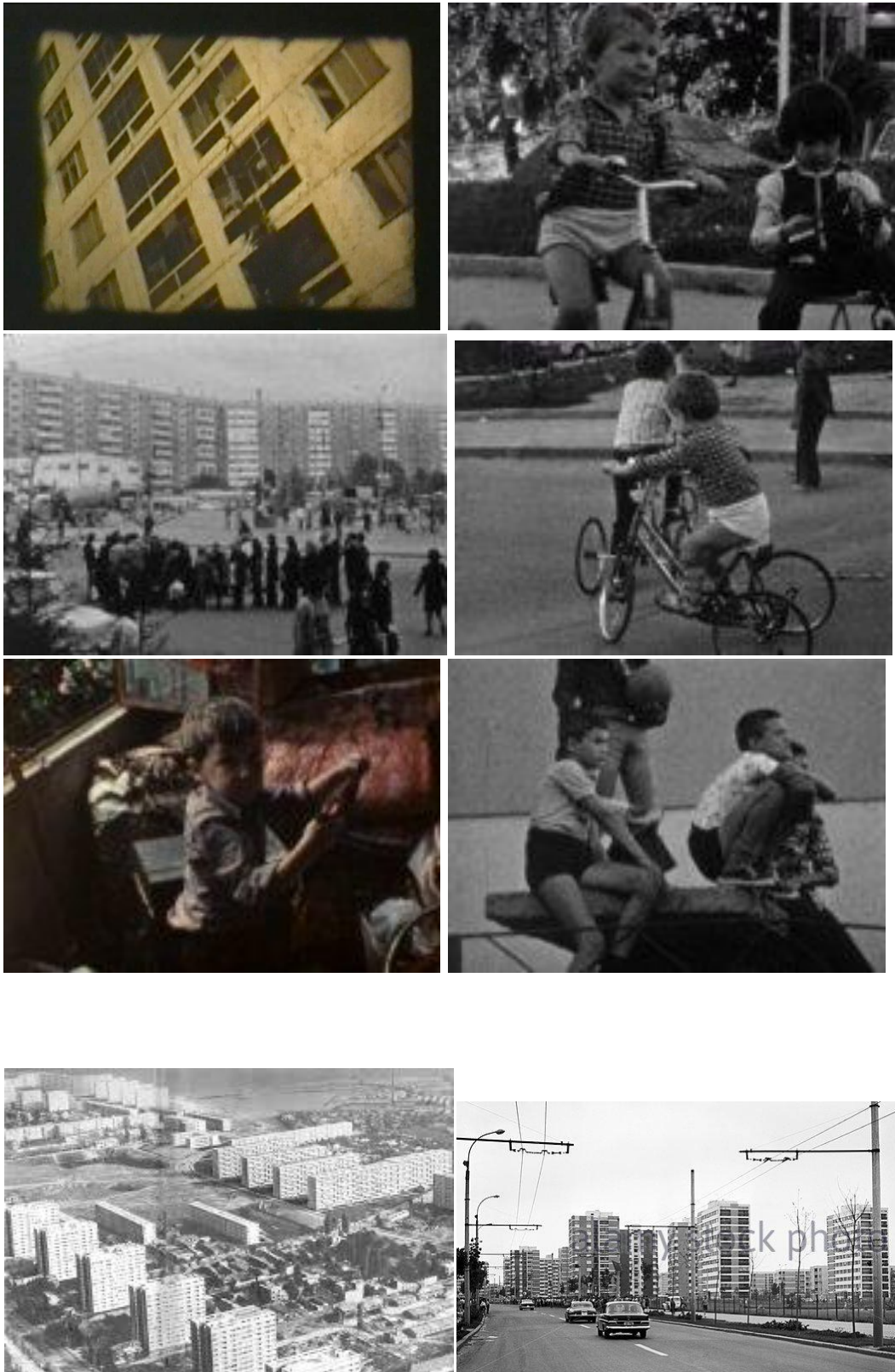
www.youtube.com/watch?v=N1LNqPVhoP8 has the original song in a stage set of Bucuresti TVR

In Ion Grigorescu's *My Beloved Bucharest* The camera investigates the city's peripheries, testifying to the failure of socialism: the poverty, the dreary living conditions, the new construction projects which gave rise to alienating and low-quality living environments; it is a deteriorated piece of footage punctuated by short lines of text which are pointing at the gap between the much heralded socialist ideals and their disappointing outcome, sometimes inserted between fragments of footage and sometimes discovered accidentally on the walls of some run-down construction, as if the city were articulating its own misery: "Let us embellish the city like in fairy-tale"¹⁸⁵



¹⁸⁵ [Magda Radu Art and Politics: considering some of Ion Grigorescu's films and photographs](#) presented at Technology and photography in transition - International Symposium (Conference - New Europe College, Bucharest) May 11, 2007 9:30 - May 12, 2007 10 www.2020.ro/resources/files/ArtandPolitics.pdf

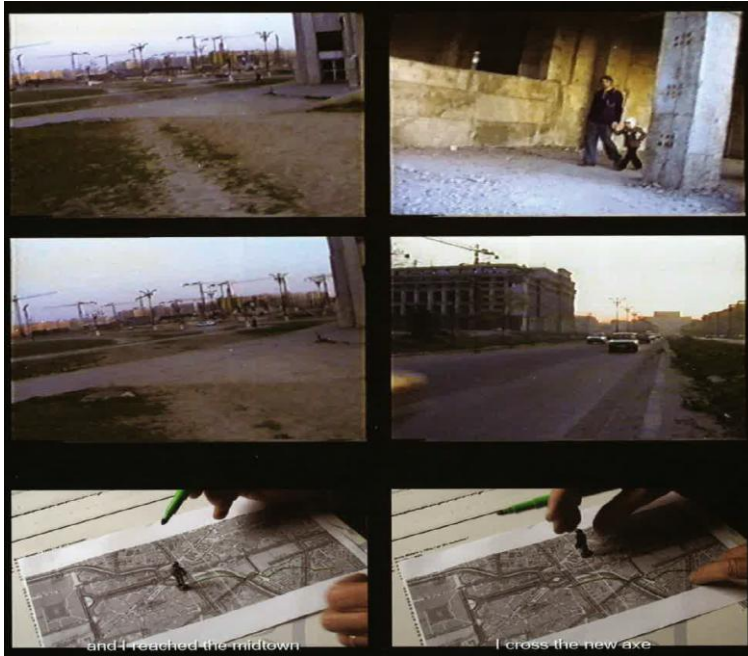
Fig 18 Ion Grigorescu : Bata Alba



Above – Images from Grigorescu’s film Bata Alba (1979)

Below – Official views

Fig 19 Ion Grigorescu :The new axes of the city





Stills from *The Road – New axis of the town* from Alina Serban (ed) *Ion Grigorescu –the man with a single camera* Sternberg Press Berlin 2013 pp 240-241

4

Photography and 20th Century Visual Culture :The Revolution will not be televised: reflections on the imagery of the fall and execution of Nicolae Grigorescu Ceausescu

The series of upheavals and changes that collectively amounted to the ‘fall of communism’ was nowhere more sudden, unexpected and violent than in Romania.

In the final weeks of 1988 and the first weeks of 1989 the seemingly unassailable and monolithic regime which Nicolae Ceausescu had built up since he first came to power in the 1960’s after the death of Gheorgiu-Dej collapsed. The political, social and economic ramifications have been widely discussed and are still written about, though full and detailed accounts, such as Peter Siani-Davies’ *The Romanian Revolution of 1989*¹⁸⁶ were not published for 15 years.

This essay looks at the images of this and the way they have been presented and used.

By the 1980’s Ceausescu was the focus of the Romanian state and as ‘President of the State Council of the Socialist Republic of Romania’ it was his image that dominated media imagery and appeared in an vast number of guises¹⁸⁷. In her analysis of Ceausescu¹⁸⁸ written and published just before the fall Mary Ellen Fischer¹⁸⁹ wrote:

‘This unprepossessing individual had established himself as the omniscient and omnipotent ruler of Romania the object of a leadership cult...he had become an international statesman well known and admired for his maverick and activist foreign policy’¹⁹⁰

a view that was reversed later as the failures and injustices of his policies at home became apparent although ‘public adulation of

¹⁸⁶ Peter Siani-Davies *The Romanian Revolution of 1989* Cornell University Press 2005

¹⁸⁷ These have been discussed in other ‘term papers’ for this course and in the published literature.

¹⁸⁸ Mary Ellen Fischer *Nicolae Ceausescu: A study in political leadership* Lynne Reiner Publishers, Boulder and London 1989

¹⁸⁹ Then Professor of Government at Skidmore College

¹⁹⁰ Mary Ellen Fischer op cit p1

Ceausescu continued and intensified despite the growing disillusionment and eventual despair of the population ¹⁹¹

This nature of the collapse and its speed is captured in Marian Sultanou's essay

Arrested leaders anticommunist movement "Popular Front Romanian" - Cassian Maria Spiridon - writer Stephen Prutianu - Professor Vasile Vicol - engineer Aurel Ștefanachi - writer, Ionel Săcăleanu - engineer Valentin Odobescu - lawyer who canvassed the population through posters and flyers to gather at a protest against the communist regime in Union Square on December 14, at 16.

Instead, the market place was "occupied" by the security and militia and organized communist party general assembly in all institutions of the city.

December 15, gather in front of the house Reformed pastor Laszlo Tokes, Street Timothy Cipariu Timisoara - followed by security and forced the Court Timisoara to leave the family, church and home, starting at an address still unknown - dozens of parishioners. They are joined by a number of local people of Timisoara, chanting "freedom, freedom". They all turn to Maria Square, still chanting against the regime.

*It would be the beginning of the Revolution in Romania.*¹⁹²

This essay discusses the way subsequent events became media images. It is three parts : in a country where every public report was carefully edited and composed, suddenly the revolution was taking place, live and unscripted on national television. What actually

¹⁹¹ Mary Ellen Fischer op cit p3

¹⁹² MARIAN Sultanoiu *The year of despair, the Revolution* December 14, 2014 (<http://revolutions.gandul.info/stiri/1989-anul-disperarii-anul-revolutiei-137184391989>) Accessed April 2017 (some grammar corrected)

happened after a helicopter lifted the Presidential party from the roof of Communist Party Headquarters in Bucharest has been pieced together and some staged recreations added in films of the events. Finally some artists responses and incorporation of these images and recordings into their own work is discussed.

The title of this essay *The Revolution will not be televised* is taken from Gil Scott-Heron's 1970 song which is itself taken from a popular Black Power slogan on the 1960's. It catalogues the way in which the Black American revolution will not be manipulated into commercial and mass media clichés

*The Revolution will not be televised/ The revolution will not be brought to you by Xerox/in four parts without commercial interruptions/...The Revolution will not be brought to you by the Schafer Award Theatre and will not star Natalie Woods and Steve MacQueen*¹⁹³

Though this pattern is the same as in Romania the song was written twenty years earlier and its references are contemporary and American. Introducing her discussion of the images of the Ceausescu regime and their manipulation Caterina Preda notes:

The Ceausescu regime was based on an extreme degree of personalization of power while its ideology combined Marxism-Leninism with nationalism and a set of Ceausescu's own personal ideas such as the concept of 'the multilateral developed society', which meant applying socialist principles to all segments of life and thus ensuring the transition from socialism to communism. Analysed as dynastic socialism, 'Ceausescuism' and sultanism an extreme personalization of power is the key defining feature of the Ceausescu regime in the period 1974 to 1989.

Nicolae and his wife Elena Ceausescu were tried in secret by an

¹⁹³ Gil Scott Heron: *The Revolution will not be televised*: Lyrics c. Carlin America 1970. First recorded on *Small talk at 125 and Lenox* Flying Dutchman Productions. The Wikipedia page for the song includes a list of cultural references in the lyrics and a bibliography.

*extraordinary military tribunal coordinated by the revolutionary leaders in the days that followed the take-over of power on 22 December 1989. They were then executed on 25 December 1989. In those days of controlled confusion, the revolutionary leaders used the chaotic atmosphere to justify the necessity to eliminate Ceausescu in order to rule out the possibility of his return*¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁴ Caterina Preda *The digital (artistic) memory of Nicolae Ceausescu* in Ellen Rutten, Julie Fedor and Vera Zvereva (Eds) *Memory conflict and the New media – web wars in post socialist states* Routledge 2013

1 In a country where every public report was carefully edited and composed, suddenly the revolution was taking place, live and unscripted on national television.



Nicolae Ceausescu – Final Speech, 1989 <http://visualcultureblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/52.jpg>

“The Communist Regime attempted to erase the memory of all ideas that contravened its political ideology. The party leaders banned art representations and writings that contradicted social-realism, instead they tried to use art to promote their own version of the truth and create new memories. As harsh as their methods might have been, they were not new. They were merely new players in an old game, the game of power that has been played in much the same way for centuries. Through the ages many (if not all) were the emperors, kings and queens who attempted to create a favorable image for themselves through the medium of art. Just as many were those who tried to erase the images and ideologies of their adversaries in order to promote their own. Memory is an essential, yet fragile element of our lives, in constant need of nourishment. Whatever we remember exists and what we don’t disappears. Since images seem to stick in our minds best of all art is one of memory’s most powerful tools. And art appears to have always been in the hands of he who held the power”¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁵ Hodárnău, Alexandra *Artistic Propaganda and damnatio memoriae during the Romanian Communist Regime* <http://www.ceeol.com/asp/getdocument.aspx?logid=5&id=6CFA33C2-6B2C-4150-8035-96D9DD883EFC> **Central and Eastern European Online Library The European Library**

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Typically public spectacles were carefully choreographed for public broadcasting with carefully choreographed images and movement¹⁹⁶ and the sudden disruption in this important speech – Ceausescu’s first public appearance addressing a crowd of about 100,000 since the events in Timisoara had heralded unrest¹⁹⁷. A transcript of the speech is attached as Appendix 1. Marco Bohr offers a detailed analysis and notes the gradual slipping away from the conventional signifiers of autocratic power – the single speaker addressing the massed crowds spread out below him – but they were quiet and uncheering as Bohr notes:

*The depiction of the crowd is also highly stage-managed and filled with ideological signification. The front segment of the crowd are likely party members clapping in unison or holding up banners and giant portraits of Ceasescu and his wife. The elevated viewpoint of the camera has the effect that the grandness of the occasion is matched by the huge masses that can be seen filling up the square. But also, by filming from high above, the people gathered in the square remain, in the eyes of the viewer, an anonymous mass whose purpose that day was to support their leader.*¹⁹⁸



¹⁹⁶ Cristina Pătrașcu *Media and the Totalitarian Society: Spectacle, ‘Simulacra’ and the Construction of (un)Reality in Communist Romania* in *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* Volume 92, 10 October 2013, Pages 686-691 (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S187704281302870>)

¹⁹⁷ Mary Battiata *How Romania's bloody revolution got its start in Timisoara* December 31, 1989 New York Post <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1989/12/31/how-romaniyas-bloody-revolution-got-its-start-in-timisoara>

¹⁹⁸ Marco Bohr (as admin) *The Lost Camera in Ceausescu’s Final Speech* (<http://visualcultureblog.com/2010/10/the-lost-camera-in-ceausescus-final-speech/>)



(Illustrations : www.rt.com/news/217467-romania-christmas-revolution-ceausescu/)

But gradually the curious and unusual sound of the crowd’s hissing which gradually sweeps from the back of the crowd is apparent to the “*great conducator*” himself and he shows a genuine human reaction of disbelief and the conventions of the broadcast start to break down and the cameras switch to neutral shots of the grand buildings around the square above the crowd who are made invisible (though not inaudible) .



This neutral and rather desparate filling in goes on for about 3 minutes until some semblance of order has been restored and Ceausescu signals for calm but behind him there are glimpses of flurried preparations (for what) by even the key members of his party, both Elena and Ceausescu are wanting calm – tapping the microphone as if it could command obedience



The curtain also underlines the performative aspect of Ceausescu's appearance on the balcony. It's as if he is the main actor, the politbüro the supporting actors, the balcony the stage and the people the audience who knows that the final curtain is about to fall. While state television filmed subjects that signify steady government, the desperateness of the situation is only discernible in the combination of image and sound.¹⁹⁹

Bohr reads this all this as signifying that the regime is about fall.



The final shots are distant views and show Ceausescu isolated among the line of party apparatchiks while the state media also withdraw.

¹⁹⁹ Marco Bohr (as admin) *The Lost Camera in Ceausescu's Final Speech* (<http://visualcultureblog.com/2010/10/the-lost-camera-in-ceausescus-final-speech/>)

Though there is still another act to come it is clear that a revolution – exactly what that might be is not clear – has begun.

*The logo of TVR accompanied by symphonic music was all that was broadcast for several hours. That image, usually meaningless, intrigued an entire country: it was clear that something had happened in Bucharest. Later confessions of television viewers in different cities testify that the first free broadcast of television was watched from its very first moment. From that moment on, the live revolution unfolded on the television screens.*²⁰⁰

²⁰⁰ Anca Velicu - Monica Mitarca.(Bucaresti University) *History at TV: a Romanian view on History on recent television ...in "Il filo d'Europa"* Edited by Luisa Cigognetti, Lorenza Servetti, Pierre Sorlin *History on television in seven East Europe countries –www.assemblea.emr.it/europedirect/pubblicazioni/filo...1/...television.../file)*

2 What actually happened after a helicopter lifted the Presidential party from the roof of Communist Party Headquarters in Bucharest has been pieced together and some staged recreations added in films of the events



Source: [Fuga lui Ceaușescu Procesul lui Ceaușescu și execuția](http://revolutions.gandul.info/.../procesul-lui-ceausescu-si-executia-25-de) - revolutions.gandul.info/.../procesul-lui-ceausescu-si-executia-25-de.

At this point the Ceausescu's disappear from the screen – later some documentary films were made assembling newsreel footage with reconstructions.

The helicopter which lifted them from the roof of the Party Headquarters landed, not far away, on army orders since all flights were banned. A private car was flagged down and then its driver made an excuse and dropped the couple with the police who then turned them over to the army and the couple were eventually taken in an army truck to Targoviste. A hasty show trial followed²⁰¹ and the images of the dead Ceaușescus were videotaped and the footage promptly released in numerous western countries two days after the execution. Later that day, it was also shown on Romanian television.

²⁰¹ A transcript of the trial is in Appendix2

By this time they look haggard and angry, realising the fate that must suddenly await them. They argue and thump the table to the end but they cannot escape their fate. Ceausescu repeatedly denied the court's authority to try him on charges of illegally gathering wealth and genocide , and asserted he was still legally president of Romania. But they were (obviously) found guilty and sentenced to death. Despite their protests the Ceausescu's hands were tied behind them and they were led outside singing the Internationale and shot at once so that the TV crew sent to record the event missed it²⁰² except for the dust from most of the bullets hitting the wall behind them.



<http://www.oocities.org/szatmary.geo/trial.html>



²⁰² There is a comic element to all this



BBC1 continuity 27th December 1989 - Nicolae Ceaucescu executed
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cl8h2Sd_JEA



The spot is where their bodies fell is marked on the ground and is now a part of the tourist round .

(<http://newsok.com/article/feed/585948>)

3 Finally two artists responses which use some of these images and recordings in their own work

Mona Vatamanu and Florin Tudor²⁰³ have been working together on critical projects since 2000 and in their short film *Procesul* (the Trial) set the dialogue of the trial without commentary, the transcript becomes a theatrical performance.

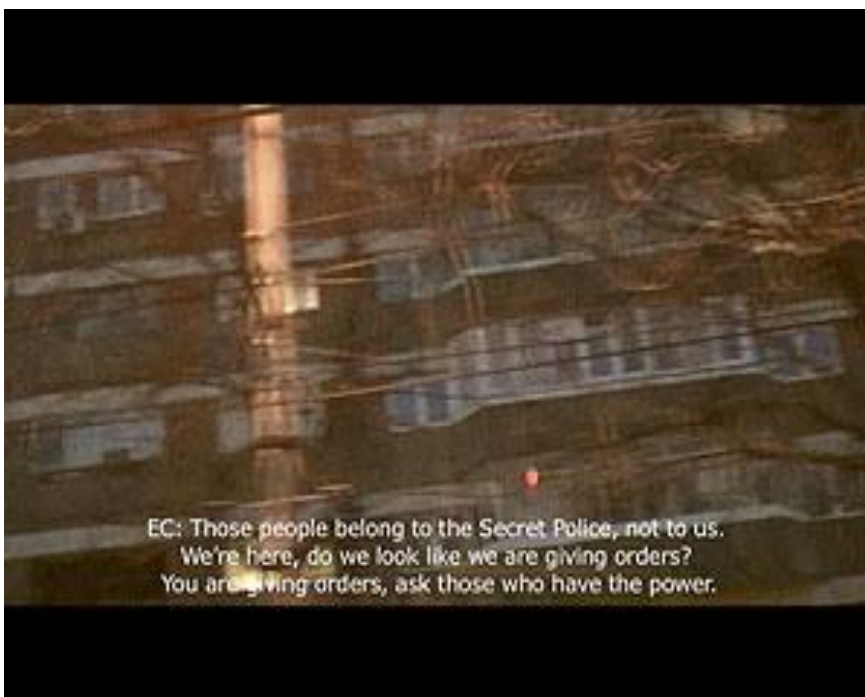
*The camera traces facades of communist bloc housing, depressingly unchanged over the past fifteen years, as the transcript from the trial of Communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife, Elena, is read without pause or emotion. The intensity of the film is created by the tension between the dizzying and unceasing movement of the camera and the continuous and expressionless reading of the trial script, recording a very dark episode of modern history.*²⁰⁴



²⁰³ <http://www.monavatamanuflorintudor.ro/> have been working together on a wide range of mixed media projects since 2000 and have exhibited and published their work widely .a definitive collection is Cosmin Costinas and Jill Winder (eds) *Mona Vatamanu and Florin Tudor* Editors: Texts: Cosmin Costinas, Maria Hlavajova, Mihnea Mircan, Vivian Rehberg, David Riff, Georg Schoellhammer : Published by: BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, Utrecht & post editions, Rotterdam, 2009 ISBN: 978-94-6083-003-7

20Notes for *Procesul / The Trial*. film, Bucharest, 37'24" / 2004-2005.
www.monavatamanuflorintudor





Ion Grigorescu's short film *Dialogue with Ceaușescu* was made in 1978 but not shown until after 1989 and a second version with the same script but in colour and filmed outdoors :



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²⁰⁵ Upper : *Dialogue with Ceaușescu, 1978* N8mm film / DVD, 7' 11"; Lower *Post-Mortem Dialogue With Ceaușescu (Ion Grigorescu, 2007)*. is longer: the two films have been shown in parallel in some exhibitions (<https://youtu.be/fGrCxM2xlyQ>) The text is at Appendix 3

The persistence of Grigorescu in refining and developing this piece is evidence of the profound impact Ceausescu has had on Romania .

In Conclusion

This short study by focussing on film and TV coverage of the last days of Ceausescu has pinpointed the moments at which a period of severe and total control of the media suddenly fell apart and the vacuum that it left, the chaotic attempts to fill the gaps and record unprecedented events.

#text alone about 3000 words. With appendices about 8500

APPENDIX 1:

Nicolae Ceausescu – Final Speech, 1989

[Nicolae Ceausescu (January 26, 1918 - December 25, 1989)] Source: LYBIO.net
Dear comrades and friends, citizens of Bucharest, capital of socialist Romania. First let me send my sincere revolutionary wishes to those of you participating in this great demonstration and to all the inhabitants of the city. I wish you success in all your fields of activity.

[Voice Over]

(To assert his endangered power, Ceausescu addressed a mass rally like so many which he had ordered to be held during the prior 25 years. Television transmits live.)

I also wish to thank the initiators and organizers of this great demonstration in Bucharest. Who is shooting? Someone is shooting. They are entering the building. An earthquake? What?

[Voice Over]

At this point, the television went off the air. Electromagnetic recording continued in the broadcasting van and documented this.

An earthquake? What?

[Voice Over] Source: LYBIO.net

Command communication from the ruler to the people had broken down. And as if the were a disturbance in the line, Ceausescu shouted.

Keep calm! Keep calm! Keep calm! Stop that!

[Voice Over]

The cameraman had received instructions to pan to the sky if anything unexpected occurred.

Comrades, sit down and keep calm.

[Voice Over]

At this point, the television came back on the air, at first without audio.

Comrades, sit down and keep calm. Be quiet! What's the matter with you all? Summon all the comrades! What's wrong with you? Keep calm. Return to the square, comrades! This is a provocation. Sit down! Keep calm! Citizens of the capital...move back, comrades! Quiet! Speak now!

[Voice Over]

At this point, the sound came back on.

I want to stress again that we must demonstrate our strength and unity for the sake of Romania's independence, integrity and sovereignty. This is a basic question of...

[Voice Over]

Let's return to the beginning of the disturbance. What had occurred?

I also wish to thank the initiators and organizers of this great demonstration in Bucharest.

[Voice Over]

Something rivets his gaze. Shouts surge up, his speech stops, the camera wobbles, the technical disturbance, the broadcast is interrupted. What had occurred? A film camera from the weekly Newsreel was able to record some moments of the interruption. Here the rally is still proceeding in orderly fashion. People massed in front of an entrance to Central Committee Headquarters.

[Voice Over] Source: LYBIO.net

In the background, there are streams of people going away from the square. In the foreground toward the balcony, here order has been restored temporarily. These recordings too give no indication of the nature of the disturbance. Ceausescu proceeded with his speech.

What? I wish to inform you an important decision made today by the politbureau...

[Nicolae Ceausescu (January 26, 1918 - December 25, 1989)] Source: LYBIO.net

We decided to increase minimum pensions from 800 to 900 lei. We decided also that the survivor's pension to be increased by 100 lei. We will also increase social support from about 500 lei to 800 lei. We will ensure, in this way, good conditions, appropriate to work and life for all citizens of our country. These measures demonstrate the strength, with the growth of the economy, we do everything to ensure the continuous rise of living standards, material and spiritual of the people, according to congressional party.

(Applause)

[Nicolae Ceausescu]

Speaking about the events from Timisoara, I talked about it last night. It appears increasingly clear, that there is a joint action, circles that want to destroy the integrity and sovereignty of Romania, to stop the construction of socialism, again to put our people under foreign domination. Therefore, we must defend with all the forces the integrity and independence of Romania!

(Applause, Cheering, and Chanting)

[Nicolae Ceausescu] Source: LYBIO.net

I think there are many among you, who remember the great event from 1968 to defend independence of Romania. Firmness, unity of our people have provided the independence and the building further of socialism in Romania! And now we must act in complete unity, strongly against anyone who is trying to shutdown our strength, unity of our nation, they are acting in the service of various imperialist circles and intelligence services, to divide again Romania, to enslave our people.

[Nicolae Ceausescu]

You know what our ancestors have done and said: "Better to die in battle, in full glory, than to once again be slaves upon our ancient ground!" and we must fight, to live free and independent!

(Applause, Cheering, and Chanting)

[Nicolae Ceausescu]

It is necessary more than ever, to act in the spirit of our workers' democracy, to debate with full responsibility, all matters concerning the development of our society, having always in mind that anything we do in Romania has to ensure the welfare of the people that we build the socialism with the people and for the people. We should, in any circumstances, to ensure the integrity and independence of Romania!

(Applause, Cheering, and Chanting)

[Nicolae Ceausescu]

Some would like again to reintroduce unemployment, to reduce the living standards of people, and in order to dismantle Romania, to endanger the future of our independent people and nation.

(Applause, Cheering, and Chanting)

[Nicolae Ceausescu] Source: LYBIO.net

Dear comrades, the best answer we have to give is the unity of all working people from the entire nation. Firm action to achieve social development programs of the homeland and continue lifting the level, living, material and spiritual, of the people. It depends on us that Romania continues to remain a free country, independent and for construction of socialism! And I wish to declare here again that we will do everything to defend the integrity and sovereignty of Romania, the freedom and life of our people, the welfare of our entire nation!

(Applause, Cheering, and Chanting)

[Nicolae Ceausescu]

To act with full responsibility and ability and to demonstrate the strength of the working people in the Capital of the entire nation for the development of our country, for the well being and for our independent nation! I wish you all success in all fields, and unity, firm action against all those who want to destroy the independence and socialism in Romania! This is our obligation, of all!

(Applause, Cheering, and Chanting)

[Nicolae Ceausescu]

Organized in all firms, everywhere, policy groups, advocacy groups socialism, everything we've done, the country's independence. With all to act in the service of people, of independence and for the socialism!

(Applause, Cheering, and Chanting)

Source :

Nicolae Ceausescu - Final Speech, 1989. Dear friends and comrades, citizens of Bucharest, capital of socialist Romania. Complete Full Transcript, Dialogue, Remarks, Saying, Quotes, Words And Text <http://lybio.net/nicolae-ceausescu-final-speech-1989/news-politics/>

Appendix 2 : the trial

Rumania's Communist dictator from 1965 - 1989, Nicolae Ceausescu, and his wife and second-in-command Elena, were prosecuted by the National Salvation Front in a secret trial, held on a military base near Tirgoviste, Rumania, on Christmas Day, December 25th 1989.

General Gica Popa was the prosecutor.

Below are the officially reported transcripts.

(But is lies! All lies! Ceausescu lives!)

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: A glass of water!

NICOLAE CEAUSESCU: I only recognize the Grand National Assembly. I will only speak in front of it.

PROSECUTOR: In the same way he refused to hold a dialogue with the people, now he also refuses to speak with us. He always claimed to act and speak on behalf of the people, to be a beloved son of the people, but he only tyrannized the people all the time. You are faced with charges that you held really sumptuous celebrations on all holidays at your house. The details are known.

These two defendants procured the most luxurious foodstuffs and clothes from abroad. They were even worse than the king, the former king of Rumania. The people only received 200 grams per day, against an identity card. These two defendants have robbed the people, and not even today do they want to talk. They are cowards. We have data concerning both of them.

I ask the chairman of the prosecutor's office to read the bill of indictment.

CHIEF PROSECUTOR: Esteemed chairman of the court, today we have to pass a verdict on the defendants Nicolae Ceausescu and Elena Ceausescu who have committed the following offenses: Crimes against the people. They carried out acts that are incompatible with human dignity and social thinking; they acted in a despotic and criminal way; they destroyed the people whose leaders they claimed to be. Because of the crimes they committed against the people, I plead, on behalf of the victims of these two tyrants, for the death sentence for the two defendants. The bill of indictment contains the following points:

Genocide, in accordance with Article 356 of the penal code.

Two: Armed attack on the people and the state power, in accordance with Article 163 of the penal code.

The destruction of buildings and state institutions, undermining of the national economy, in accordance with Articles 165 and 145 of the penal code. They obstructed the normal process of the economy.

PROSECUTOR: Did you hear the charges? Have you understood them?

CEAUSESCU: I do not answer, I will only answer questions before the Grand National Assembly. I do not recognize this court. The charges are incorrect, and I will not answer a single question here.

PROSECUTOR: Note, he does not recognize the points mentioned in the bill of indictment.

CEAUSESCU: I will not sign anything.



PROSECUTOR: This situation is known. The catastrophic situation of the country is known all over the world. Every honest citizen who worked hard here until 22 December knows that we do not have medicines, that you two have killed children and other people in this way, that there is nothing to eat, no heating, no electricity.

NICOLAE CEAUSESCU and ELENA deny this.

PROSECUTOR: Who ordered the bloodbath in Timisoara.

CEAUSESCU refuses to answer.

PROSECUTOR: Who gave the order to shoot in Bucharest, for instance?

CEAUSESCU: I do not answer.

PROSECUTOR: Who ordered shooting into the crowd? Tell us!

ELENA (to Nicolae): Forget about them. You see, there is no use in talking to these people.

PROSECUTOR: Do you not know anything about the order to shoot?

Nicolae reacts with astonishment.

PROSECUTOR: There is still shooting going on. Fanatics, whom you are paying. They are shooting at children; they are shooting arbitrarily into the apartments. Who are these fanatics? Are they the people, or are you paying them?

CEAUSESCU: I will not answer. I will not answer any question. Not a single shot was fired in Palace Square. Not a single shot. No one was shot.

PROSECUTOR: By now, there have been 34 casualties.

ELENA: Look, and that they are calling genocide.

PROSECUTOR: In all district capitals, which you grandly called municipalities, there is shooting going on. The people were slaves.

The entire intelligentsia of the country ran away. No one wanted to do anything for you anymore.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Mr. President, I would like to know something:

The accused should tell us who the mercenaries are. Who pays them?

And who brought them into the country?

PROSECUTOR: Yes. Accused, answer.

CEAUSESCU: I will not say anything more. I will only speak at the Grand National Assembly.

ELENA whispers to CEAUSESCU.

PROSECUTOR: Elena has always been talkative, but otherwise she does

not know much. I have observed that she is not even able to read correctly, but she calls herself a university graduate.

ELENA: The intellectuals of this country should hear you, you and your colleagues.

PROSECUTOR cites all academic titles she had always claimed to have.

ELENA: The intelligentsia of the country will hear what you are accusing us of.

PROSECUTOR: Nicolae Ceausescu should tell us why he does not answer our questions. What prevents him from doing so?

CEAUSESCU: I will answer any question, but only at the Grand National Assembly, before the representatives of the working class. Tell the people that I will answer all their questions. All the world should

know what is going on here. I only recognize the working class and the Grand National Assembly -- no one else.

PROSECUTOR: The world already knows what has happened here.

CEAUSESCU: I will not answer you putschists.

PROSECUTOR: The Grand National Assembly has been dissolved.

CEAUSESCU: This is not possible at all. No one can dissolve the National Assembly.

PROSECUTOR: We now have another leading organ. The National Salvation Front is now our supreme body.

CEAUSESCU: No one recognizes that. That is why the people are fighting all over the country. This gang will be destroyed. They organized the putsch.

PROSECUTOR: The people are fighting against you, not against the new forum.

CEAUSESCU: No, the people are fighting for freedom and against the new forum. I do not recognize the court.

PROSECUTOR: Why do you think that people are fighting today? What do you think?

CEAUSESCU: As I said before, the people are fighting for their freedom and against this putsch, against this usurpation.

CEAUSESCU claims the putsch was organized from abroad.

CEAUSESCU: I do not recognize this court. I will not answer any more. I am now talking to you as simple citizens, and I hope that you will tell the truth. I hope that you do not also work for

the foreigners
and for the destruction of Rumania.

The Prosecutor asks the Counsel for the defense to ask Ceausescu whether he knows that he is no longer president of the country, and that Elena Ceausescu has also lost all her official state functions, and that the government has been dissolved. The Prosecutor wants to learn on what basis the trial may continue. It must be cleared up whether Ceausescu wants to, should, must or can answer at all. The situation is uncertain.

The Counsel for the defense, who was appointed by the court, asks whether Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu know the aforementioned facts -- that he is no longer president, and that she has lost all official functions.

CEAUSESCU: I am the president of Rumania, and I am the commander-in-chief of the Rumanian army. No one can deprive me of these functions.

PROSECUTOR: But not of our army, you are not the commander in chief of our army.

CEAUSESCU: I do not recognize you. I am talking to you as simple citizens at the least, as simple citizens, and I tell you, I am the president of Rumania.

PROSECUTOR: What are you really?

CEAUSESCU: I repeat, I am the president of Rumania and the commander in chief of the Rumanian army. I am the president of the people. I will not speak with you provocateurs anymore, and I will not speak with the organizers of the putsch and with the

mercenaries. I have
nothing to do with them.

PROSECUTOR: Yes, but you are paying the mercenaries.

CEAUSESCU: No, no.

ELENA: It is incredible what they are inventing,
incredible.

PROSECUTOR: Please, make a note. Ceausescu does not
recognize the new
legal structures of power of the country. He still
considers himself
to be the country's president and the commander in
chief of the army.

Why did you ruin the country so much? Why did you
export everything?
Why did you make the peasants starve? The produce
which the peasants
grew was exported, and the peasants came from the most
remote
provinces to Bucharest and to the other cities in order
to buy bread.
They cultivated the soil in line with your orders and
had nothing to
eat. Why did you starve the people?

CEAUSESCU: I will not answer this question. As a simple
citizen, I
tell you the following: for the first time I guaranteed
that every
peasant received 200 kilograms of wheat per person, not
per family,
and that he is entitled to more. It is a lie that I
made the people
starve. A lie, a lie in my face. This shows how
little patriotism
there is, how many treasonable offenses were committed.

PROSECUTOR: You claim to have taken measures so that every
peasant is
entitled to 200 kilograms of wheat. Why do the
peasants then buy their
bread in Bucharest?

The prosecutor quotes Ceausescu's program.

PROSECUTOR: We have wonderful programs. Paper is patient. However, why are your programs not implemented? You have destroyed the Rumanian villages and the Rumanian soil. What do you say as a citizen?

CEAUSESCU: As a citizen, as a simple citizen, I tell you the following: at no point was there such an upswing, so much construction, so much consolidation in the Rumanian provinces. I guaranteed that every village has its schools, hospitals and doctors. I have done everything to create a decent and rich life for the people in the country, like in no other country in the world.

PROSECUTOR: We have always spoken of equality. We are all equal. Everybody should be paid according to his performance. Now we finally saw your villa on television, the golden plates from which you ate, the foodstuffs that you had imported, the luxurious celebrations, pictures from your luxurious celebrations.

ELENA: Incredible. We live in a normal apartment, just like every other citizen. We have ensured an apartment for every citizen through corresponding laws.

PROSECUTOR: You had palaces.

CEAUSESCU: No, we had no palaces. The palaces belong to the people.

The prosecutor agrees, but stresses that they lived in them while the people suffered.

PROSECUTOR: Children cannot even buy plain candy, and you are living in the palaces of the people.

CEAUSESCU: Is it possible that we are facing such charges?

PROSECUTOR: Let us now talk about the accounts in Switzerland, Mr.

Ceausescu. What about the accounts?

ELENA: Accounts in Switzerland? Furnish proof!

CEAUSESCU: We had no account in Switzerland. Nobody has opened an account. This shows again how false the charges are. What defamation, what provocations! This was a coup d'etat.

PROSECUTOR: Well, Mr. Defendant, if you had no accounts in Switzerland, will you sign a statement confirming that the money that may be in Switzerland should be transferred to the Rumanian state, the State Bank.

CEAUSESCU: We will discuss this before the Grand National Assembly. I will not say anything here. This is a vulgar provocation.

PROSECUTOR: Will you sign the statement now or not?

CEAUSESCU: No, no. I have no statement to make, and I will not sign one.

PROSECUTOR: Note the following: the defendant refuses to sign this statement. The defendant has not recognized us. He also refuses to recognize the new forum.

CEAUSESCU: I do not recognize this new forum.

PROSECUTOR: So you know the new forum. You have information about it.

ELENA & NICOLAE: Well, you told us about it. You told us about it here.

CEAUSESCU: Nobody can change the state structures. This is not possible. Usurpers have been punished severely during the past centuries in Rumania's history. Nobody has the right to abolish the

Grand National
Assembly.

PROSECUTOR (to Elena): You have always been wiser and more ready to talk, a scientist. You were the most important aide, the number two in the cabinet, in the government. Did you know about the genocide in Timisoara?

ELENA: What genocide? By the way, I will not answer any more questions.

PROSECUTOR: Did you know about the genocide or did you, as a chemist, only deal with polymers? You, as a scientist, did you know about it?

CEAUSESCU: Her scientific papers were published abroad!

PROSECUTOR: And who wrote the papers for you, Elena?

ELENA: Such impudence! I am a member and the chairwoman of the Academy of Sciences. You cannot talk to me in such a way!

PROSECUTOR: That is to say, as a deputy prime minister you did not know about the genocide? This is how you worked with the people and exercised your functions! But who gave the order to shoot? Answer this question!

ELENA: I will not answer. I told you right at the beginning that I will not answer a single question.

CEAUSESCU: You as officers should know that the government cannot give the order to shoot. But those who shot at the young people were the security men, the terrorists.

ELENA: The terrorists are from Securitate.

PROSECUTOR: The terrorists are from Securitate?

ELENA: Yes.

PROSECUTOR: And who heads Securitate? Another question...

ELENA: No, I have not given an answer. This was only information for you as citizens.

CEAUSESCU: I want to tell you as citizens that in Bucharest...

PROSECUTOR: We are finished with you. You need not say anything else. The next question is: How did General Milea [Vasile Milea, Ceausescu's Defense Minister] die? Was he shot? And by whom?

ELENA: Ask the doctors and the people, but not me!

CEAUSESCU: I will ask you a counter-question. Why do you not put the question like this: Why did General Milea commit suicide?

PROSECUTOR: What induced him to commit suicide? You called him a traitor. This was the reason for his suicide.

CEAUSESCU: The traitor Milea committed suicide.

PROSECUTOR: Why did you not bring him to trial and have him sentenced?

CEAUSESCU: His criminal acts were only discovered after he had committed suicide.

PROSECUTOR: What were his criminal acts?

CEAUSESCU: He did not urge his unit to do their patriotic duty.

Ceausescu explains in detail that he only learned from his officers that General Milea had committed suicide.



PROSECUTOR: You have always been more talkative than your colleague.

However, she has always been at your side and apparently provided you with the necessary information. However, we should talk here openly and sincerely, as befits intellectuals. For, after all, both of you are members of the Academy of Sciences.

Now tell us, please, what money was used to pay for your publications abroad -- the selected works of Nicolae Ceausescu and the scientific works of the so-called Academician Elena Ceausescu.

ELENA: So-called, so-called. Now they have even taken away all our titles.

PROSECUTOR: Once again, back to General Milea. You said that he had not obeyed your orders. What orders?

CEAUSESCU: I will only answer to the Grand National Assembly. There I will say in which way he betrayed his fatherland.

PROSECUTOR: Please, ask Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu whether they have ever had a mental illness.

CEAUSESCU: What? What should he ask us?

PROSECUTOR: Whether you have ever had a mental illness.

CEAUSESCU: What an obscene provocation.

PROSECUTOR: This would serve your defense. If you had had a mental illness and admitted this, you would not be responsible for your acts.

ELENA: How can one tell us something like this? How can one say something like this?

CEAUSESCU: I do not recognize this court.

PROSECUTOR: You have never been able to hold a dialogue with the people.

You were not used to talking to the people. You held monologues and the people had to applaud, like in the rituals of tribal people. And today you are acting in the same megalomaniac way. Now we are making a last attempt. Do you want to sign this statement?

CEAUSESCU: No, we will not sign. And I also do not recognize the counsel for the defense.

PROSECUTOR: Please, make a note: Nicolae Ceausescu refuses to cooperate with the court-appointed counsel for the defense.

ELENA: We will not sign any statement. We will speak only at the National Assembly, because we have worked hard for the people all our lives. We have sacrificed all our lives to the people. And we will not betray our people here.

The court notes that the investigations have been concluded. Then follows the reading of the indictment.

PROSECUTOR: Mr. Chairman, we find the two accused guilty of having committed criminal actions according to the following articles of the penal code: Articles 162, 163, 165 and 357. Because of this indictment, I call for the death sentence and the impounding of the entire property of the two accused.

The counsel for the defense now takes the floor and instructs the Ceausescus once again that they have the right to defense and that they should accept this right.

COUNSEL FOR THE DEFENSE: Even though he -- like her -- committed insane acts, we want to defend them. We want a legal trial. Only a president who is still confirmed in his position can demand to speak at the Grand National Assembly. If he no longer has a certain function, he cannot demand anything at all. Then he is treated like a normal citizen. Since the old government has been dissolved and Ceausescu has lost his functions, he no longer has the right to be treated as the president. Please make a note that here it has been stated that all legal regulations have been observed, that this is a legal trial. Therefore, it is a mistake for the two accused to refuse to cooperate with us. This is a legal trial, and I honor them by defending them.

At the beginning, Ceausescu claimed that it is a provocation to be asked whether he was sick. He refused to undergo a psychiatric examination. However, there is a difference between real sickness that must be treated and mental insanity which leads to corresponding actions, but which is denied by the person in question. You have acted in a very irresponsible manner; you led the country to the verge of ruin and you will be convicted on the basis of the points contained in the bill of indictment. You are guilty of these offenses even if you do not want to admit it. Despite this, I ask the court to make a decision which we will be able to justify later as well. We must not allow the slightest impression of illegality to emerge. Elena and

Nicolae Ceausescu should be punished in a really legal trial.

The two defendants should also know that they are entitled to a counsel for defense, even if they reject this. It should be stated once and for all that this military court is absolutely legal and that the former positions of the two Ceausescus are no longer valid.

However, they will be indicted, and a sentence will be passed on the basis of the new legal system. They are not only accused of offenses committed during the past few days, but of offenses committed during the past 25 years. We have sufficient data on this period. I ask the court, as the plaintiff, to take note that proof has been furnished for all these points, that the two have committed the offenses mentioned. Finally, I would like to refer once more to the genocide, the numerous killings carried out during the past few days. Elena and Nicolae Ceausescu must be held fully responsible for this. I now ask the court to pass a verdict on the basis of the law, because everybody must receive due punishment for the offenses he has committed.

PROSECUTOR: It is very difficult for us to act, to pass a verdict on people who even now do not want to admit to the criminal offenses that they have committed during 25 years and admit to the genocide, not only in Timisoara and Bucharest, but primarily also to the criminal offenses committed during the past 25 years. This demonstrates their lack of understanding. They not only deprived the people of heating, electricity, and foodstuffs, they also tyrannized the

soul of the
Rumanian people. They not only killed children, young
people and
adults in Timisoara and Bucharest; they allowed
Securitate members to
wear military uniforms to create the impression among
the people that
the army is against them. They wanted to separate the
people from the
army. They used to fetch people from orphans' homes or
from abroad
whom they trained in special institutions to become
murderers of their
own people. You were so impertinent as to cut off
oxygen lines in
hospitals and to shoot people in their hospital beds.
The Securitate
had hidden food reserves on which Bucharest could have
survived for
months, the whole of Bucharest.

ELENA: Whom are they talking about?

PROSECUTOR: So far, they have always claimed that we have
built this
country, we have paid our debts, but with this they
bled the country
to death and have hoarded enough money to ensure their
escape. You
need not admit your mistakes, mister. In 1947, we
assumed power, but
under completely different circumstances. In 1947,
King Michael showed
more dignity than you. And you might perhaps have
achieved the
understanding of the Rumanian people if you had now
admitted your
guilt. You should have stayed in Iran where you had
flown to.

ELENA (laughs): We do not stay abroad. This is our home.

PROSECUTOR: Esteemed Mr. Chairman, I have been one of
those who, as a
lawyer, would have liked to oppose the death sentence,
because it is
inhuman. But we are not talking about people. I would

not call for
the death sentence, but it would be incomprehensible
for the Rumanian
people to have to go on suffering this great misery and
not to have it
ended by sentencing the two Ceausescus to death. The
crimes against
the people grew year by year. They were only busy
enslaving the people
and building up an apparatus of power. They were not
really interested
in the people.

Appendix 3

‘Dialogue with Ceaucescu, Ion Grigorescu.

English translation of the texts used in the film:

„If the people cannot rule they should at least criticize!

I: In the last days you were speaking about the people’s content.

Ceaușescu : Yes, there is a content created by the stimulated consumption, sometimes by the lack. We are creating needs where the man is easiest to be scared – at food. However the country is hierarchized so that those who live in villages should be the most starved, but are accustomed to endure; their civilization, is it still existing, is not based on food, nor on other needs from today services. It’s simply a handicap with which we are fighting and will not be set on the progress way by equalizing the level of the country and the town. It is a matter of economic objective laws.

I: These ‘objective laws’ result from too simple speculation: who is exploited in the newest relations – the proletariat, would be destined to defeat exploitation and to be the future leader, but now reality changes: the proletariat is too bound to the bourgeoisie to invent something else than exploitation.

Ceaușescu: We are those who suppressed property of the means of production.

I: You did anything but pushed by your bourgeois materialist side; exploitation is more complex: on 2nd March 1978 at 8 o’clock a.m. I saw two women pushing a full tonner with mud – and juxtaposed the two or three visits at the presidential palace in the same day, where militians pulled the begging children’s ears. Woman delinquency is very high – we can speak about pauperization. Of course there is no legal property but ‘Carpati’ trust with buildings, workshops and technical equipment, there are tenths of orders that submit all the enterprises to the trust’s needs, a lot of people are employees in this trust in slave conditions, not in the sense they don’t have access to this fortune, but these people are bought and sold for life. What I mean by owning their lives is the party’s own ‘jurisdiction’ outside the law, trials without public or defenders, and to the fact that the debts accumulated like that hide a capital punishment. Too many people passed through prison.

Ceaușescu: Only few men resist transformations!

I: The only statements about people are: ‘one cannot perform miracles over night’ (Brasov, 1978) and ‘in comparison with 1938...’ But the poets are singing only miracles made over night. Our dialogue, the dialogue is necessary because nevertheless there is a truth and a science with which one analyses the social reality.

Ceaușescu: Romania is fastened in the girth of the international economic relations, and dependent of the pressure of the very developed countries, on their credits or crisis.

I: If a revolution would take place here would we go on the path the other countries are? That is ‘progress’, ‘ware’, ‘accumulation’, ‘investment’.

Ceaușescu: We make an original experience in original conditions, where the anarchy itself co-operates in planning. ‘Progress’ doesn’t mean the capitalist one! Maybe the revolution doesn’t exist because the town was crushed by our most agrarian economy. Your proposals of anti-capitalism (no to accumulation, no to the progress) not only will lead to misery and general decay, inasmuch would be in economic isolation, but it NEGLECTS even which is SOCIALISM: the GUARANTEE OF THE STABILITY (which could be your dream about the lack of progress) on the path of collective responsibility on the enterprise and its proportion.

I: At least would seem to the people that you wish a capitalism for all: you encourage the property of the apartments, autos, furniture, household apparatus, you are trimming the town with stores. What stupefies those who follow you and strive to understand why you sustain the system’s superiority is your behavior of great capitalist – you are always speaking about economy, inspecting business, asking discipline, you are a great employer thirsty of speculations in a stock exchange to whom you are the only investor, you only see men as unhappy meanwhile you throw them in the circuit labor-buying power, proletarians-consumers.

Ceaușescu: I don’t understand why you don’t observe the qualitative difference between our today society and the one in the very developed countries when they were in the situation you are speaking about. Poor peasantry and industrial proletariat from the outskirts and often the middle of the town, the broad masses of men ruined by exploitation, war and economic crisis ARE TODAY RAISED UP TO THE LESS TWO STEPS, they live in a block of flats with reasonable cleanliness and minimum house comfort. To attain this end we had to give them some work, in other words to offer a source of honest and continuous income

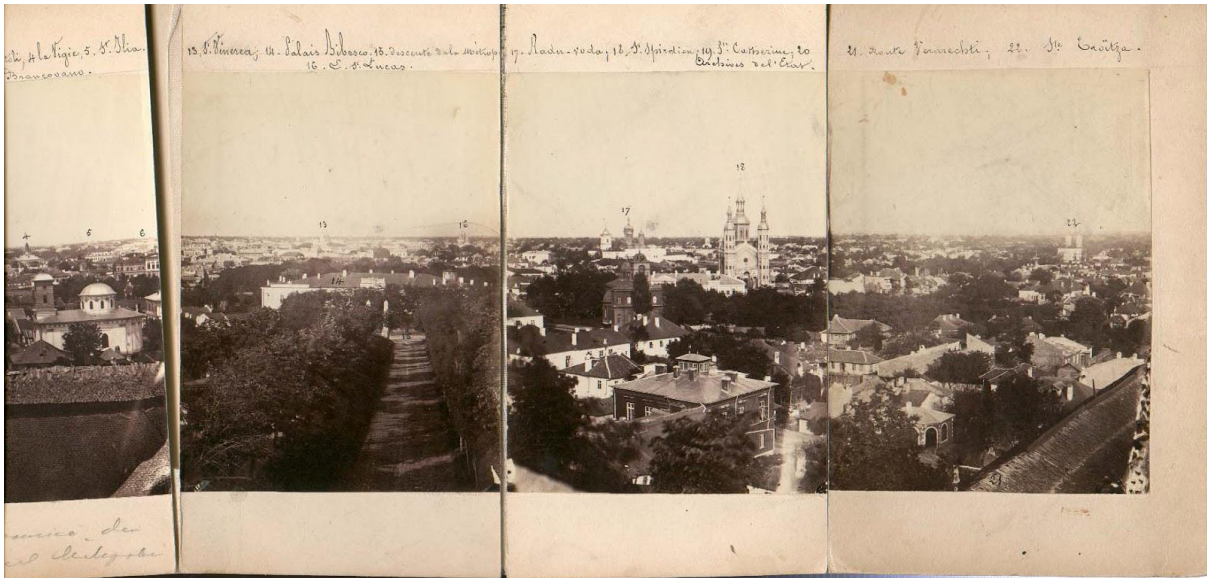
featuring to climb up the social hierarchy. Which is the aim of these salubritization and moral economy? We really are a society based on economy, whose values are at first material ones.

I: You are the exponent of a minority – the suburb one and will remain as such because the services will always constitute in the stipulated system a majority beside the working class. You overlooked the people's yearnings, disinterested in economic efforts, they are rich people in spite of your vision. A richness you don't know and what is worst, you are destroying it unconsciously. There was material richness and today the food is a kind of rubbish. There was a social richness. Today the people's unity is only a slogan. Social classes are deeply disunited, working is repulsive (in fact the conditions; there is a confusion between labor and its conditions). In services there is corruption, so that the general atmosphere is antisocial. The intellectuals who were about to rebirth in 1968-70 and were a social richness, are now deviated – they are people who repeat texts by heart. Our real phenomena became non understandable, the intellectuals have no connection with the workers, they don't defend them, they aren't solidary not even between them. Romania has no intellectuals yet – strange preconsciousness of the party – 'the new man will come' the party said. This is why one demolishes so much around us."

(Ion Grigorescu; translated by Dana Chetrinescu Percec)

5

**Creating The Image Of A New
Capital– The Image Of Bucharest
(1850 –2017)**



Panoramic photograph of Bucharest : 1856 Attributed to Carol Popp Szathmary

(Architectural heritage built by the Bibescu-Știrbey-Basarab Brancoveanu family in Bucharest and Ilfov County
<http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-EMzQSKEdTow/Um0Hn869JfI>)²⁰⁶

Acknowledgements

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Illustrations

Bibliography

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²⁰⁶ All web references accessed July /August 2017

Acknowledgements

Though this dissertation is a self contained piece of research for the MA in Art History its origins lie outside this, and as a topic it combines with 'Art History' my background in urban design (my professional qualification, working and teaching experience) and my enthusiasm and interest in Romania.

*The idea of researching Romania began when I was teaching urban design at LSBU and we were urged to explore new research areas. The lure of the 'New Europe' (as it was often called) to the east (and the possibility of funding research there) was great but feeling that I should have at least a basic grasp of the language I was daunted by the complexities of Polish, Hungarian and the Slavic languages (as for Bulgarian which uses the Cyrillic alphabet...) and my first acknowledgement must go to Ileana Apostol (who at the time was teaching in America) who suggested that if I could speak Italian(I do, upto a point) then Romanian was not that different. Romania is often described as a 'Latin Island in a Slavic sea' and I have been able to make bi-lingual bus stop conversations with Romanians using my limited Italian. Ileana introduced me to Angelia Stan at Ion Mincu Architecture University in Bucharest – a landscape architect and poet and with many visits and conversations with and very generous supply of books and invitations from her things grew from there. My department at LSBU funded my initial visit (written up as *Ocazie prima, o data – București* (on the basis that you are only ever somewhere for the first time once) as a conference paper) and the British Academy provided me with a 'Small Project Grant' which enabled me to travel and stay in Bucharest over two years to research Contemporary Romanian Arts as a commentary and critique of the urban environment of the post- communist city encouraged by The Romanian Cultural Institute in London and LaBomba, Pavilion, Studio Basar, Observatorul Urban, Young Romanian Artists, Centre for Visual Introspection in Bucharest where Irina Giadiuta and Mircea Nicolae provided support and ideas for my investigations.*

This dissertation and my choice to focus on Romania for all of my MA work grew from that start and the encouragement from the staff of the Department of Art History at Sussex University to persue this (in a University that has no obvious links to Romania) must also be acknowledged.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Bucharest grew from a collection of villages formed by practical necessities and topographical constraints. The establishment of an independent Romania in 1877 and the kingdom of Romania in 1881²⁰⁷ consolidated the role of Bucharest – capital of Wallachia since 1659- as the capital of the new country, favourably located in a marshy landscape between Carpathian mountains to the north and west and the Black Sea coast to the south and east. (Fig 1) on the banks of the meandering Dambovitza river.

The Ottoman background meant that Bucharest was not a typical European city : it had no walls (they were forbidden) so new urban areas spread without regulation and as a collection of village clusters. There were also none of the typical places of power – a castle, a royal palace or city hall. The largest building groups were the monasteries with their encircling courtyards and ancillary buildings along meandering track-like roads with widening to occasional ‘maidane’ (public spaces) (Fig 2)

Views of this pre-modern agglomeration are limited to informative and topographical documentation rather than as works of art in their own right. They are not always correctly identified or dated – the view shown (which is frequently used in histories of Bucharest) is dated both 1794 (in Cina²⁰⁸, 2010,p 85) as Mihai Voda Monastery and 1810 (New York Public Library Collection) as a ‘Royal Palace’ (Fig 3).

As Romania emerged as a nation state in the 19th Century so its art very rapidly westernised : artists trained abroad – in France and in Italy and in Germany – and Romania began to be pictured in versions of ‘western’ secular artistic styles(Fig 4). The image of Bucharest the capital and cultural centre of this new country was no exception and this dissertation studies the parallel transformation of Bucharest into a ‘western’ capital city and the rapid establishment of western fine art practices in the nineteenth century²⁰⁹ and

²⁰⁷ A timeline of the history of Romania is attached as Appendix 1.

²⁰⁸ Guisepe Cina *Bucharest from Village to Metropolis* Capitel Bucharest 2010, will be an essential source

²⁰⁹ Prior to the nineteenth century art in Romania was essentially religious art . It was not until the Brancovian period that western influences emerged. Following the defeat of the Ottomans at Vienna their grip loosened .

Vasile Florea *Romanian Painting* Wayne State University Press 1983 Chapter 3

discusses the connections between architectural changes in Bucharest and in the representation of the city in art.

This dissertation is one of the few extended works in English covering the history of Romanian art and has grown out of the authors enthusiasm for one of the largest and least know and furthest east of European countries²¹⁰. The first chapter introduces the idea of discussing images of place through art and specifically through paintings and how this is a neglected part of (at least English language) art historical studies with a short discussion of the background to topographical art and in parallel with this how Bucharest is an especially interesting case study. Next there is a short review of recent explorations and accounts of images of place. This is a somewhat partial study based on works to hand during the preparation of this dissertation : it does not claim to be exhaustive and the decision that was taken to exclude film might be questioned. However it provided a background for the study and the approaches to selecting and discussing paintings.

The next three chapters are the body of the dissertation and focus on Bucharest itself. The first expands the ideas raised in the introduction of the 'special case' that is Bucharest : most of the city studies in the literature review have a long and rich urban and artistic history. Bucharest is a new (in historical time) city and so is Romanian topographical art. The second of these chapters summarises the urban development of Bucharest and it is fortunate that there is a recent substantial academic historical study of the city²¹¹ which provides the backbone of this chapter though other material is also used. The third and final chapter takes the four significant periods in the growth of the city and studies from Cina's study and examines works of art from each of those periods as 'snapshots' .

Even this is not exhaustive and focuses on key works either in public collections²¹² and the wider field that was surveyed for the British Academy

²¹⁰ This is background is discussed in the acknowledgements

²¹¹ Cina, Guisepppe *Bucuresti, de la stat la metropolita/ Bucharest , from village to metropolis* Capitel Collectia Biblioteca de Architectura/Memoria Oraselor Bucharest 2010

²¹² The National Gallery of Romania (<http://www.mnar.arts.ro/en/>)and the Municipal Museum of Bucharest Museum (<http://www.muzeulbucurestiului.ro/muzeul-varstelor.html>)

work for the post communist era.²¹³ The concluding chapter reviews this work in its wider context both in terms of art history and Romanian studies.

²¹³ Bob Jarvis 2013 *Contemporary Romanian Arts as a commentary and critique of the urban environment of the post- communist city Documentation report* Unpublished Small Projects Grant British Academy . A summary is available at <https://bobopedia.wordpress.com/>

2 THE BACKGROUND TO TOPOGRAPHICAL ART AND “A GEOGRAPHY OF ART”

Although the foregrounds and figures of Renaissance paintings, the immediate settings for the religious and civic scenes they portray have been the main focus of research and scholarly attention, behind and around the actions and interactions of holy and lordly figures, in the hillsides and horizons there are other details, scenes and moments that give a sense of place and context to the key moments and events portrayed. One of the largest and earliest Lorenzetti's *Allegories of Good and Bad Government* (1338)²¹⁴ has a specific urban message for the Sieneese (FIG 5). The 15th Century ‘Ideal cities’ of the Urbino panels (Fig 6) show levels of detail and perfection of the architecture though they are strangely empty of life.

Scenes of pure **townscape**²¹⁵ began to emerge in the 16th Century in Flanders and the Netherlands – with the work of Hans Vredeman de Vries (1525-1609) and others (Fig 7) leading to an established tradition²¹⁶

²¹⁴ This latter example is of interest because it shows not only the architecture but also a complete range of the activities of everyday life.

²¹⁵ The urban equivalent of landscape but the word is heavily nuanced by its use in urban design following in the footsteps (an accidental pun) of Gordon Cullen's *Townscape* (the book published in 1961 drew on his work of the previous 15 years in *The Architectural Review*)

10 A typical list would include : [Salomon Vredeman de Vries](#) (1556-1604)[Paul Vredeman de Vries](#) (1567-1617)[Hendrick Aerts](#) (between 1565 and 1575 - 1603)][Hans Vredeman de Vries](#) (1527-1607)[Hendrik van Steenwijk I](#) (1550-1603), [Pieter Neefs the Elder](#) (1578-1656) [Hendrik van Steenwijk II](#) (c.1580–1649)[Lodewijk Neefs](#) (1617-1649)[Wolfgang de Smet](#) (1617–1685)[Pieter Neefs the Younger](#) (1620-1675)[Erasmus de Bie](#) (1629-1675), [Wilhelm Schubert van Ehrenberg](#) (1630–c. 1676)[Jacobus Ferdinandus Saey](#) (1658 – after 1726)[Lievin Cruyl](#) (1634-1720)

In the 17th century, architectural painting became one of the leading genres in the Dutch Golden Age, together with portrait painting and landscapes. Notable Dutch painter of the genre include:[Hendrik van Steenwijk II](#) (1580-1649)[Bartholomeus van Bassen](#) (1590-1652)[Pieter van der Stock](#) (1593-1660)[Pieter Jansz. Saenredam](#) (1597-1665)[Gerard Houckgeest](#) (1600-1661)[Susanna van Steenwijk](#) (1601-1664)[Dirck van Delen](#) (1605-1671)[Daniël de Blicke](#) (c. 1610-1673)[Emanuel de Witte](#) (1617-1692)[Job Adriaenszoon Berckheyde](#) (1630-1693)[Jan van der Heyden](#) (1637-1712)[Gerrit Adriaenszoon Berckheyde](#) (1638-1698)[Caspar van Wittel](#) (1652 or 1653-1736)

Sources :

Waagen, Gustav Friedrich (1860). [Handbook of Painting: The German, Flemish, and Dutch Schools](#). John Murray. p. 245. *Muller, Sheila D.* (2013). "Architectural painting". [Dutch Art: An Encyclopedia](#) Routledge. p. 20. !

The study and discussion of *landscape* had been identified as a theme around which to organize research as early as 1912 by in a little known work by Emma Gurney Salter²¹⁷. Kenneth Clark's *Landscape into Art* which began as the 1949 Reith Lectures on the BBC, drew attention to landscape issues at a popular level²¹⁸. The idea that it is possible to write *geographically* about art history is not a widely accepted tradition in English language histories and was discredited through its association with Nazi territorial views and it was not until Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann's *Toward a geography of art*²¹⁹ that it re-emerged as a reputable field of study.

The next chapter will briefly discuss a range of recent studies of cities in art.

²¹⁷ Emma Gurney Salter *Nature in Italian Art* Adams and Black, London 1912 – Although she is also refers to buildings and architecture.

²¹⁸ It was one of the first books on art that I read, as a teenager.

²¹⁹ Da Costa Kaufmann, Thomas *Toward a Geography of art* Chicago University Press 2004

CHAPTER 3 RECENT EXPLORATIONS AND ACCOUNTS OF IMAGES OF PLACE

This chapter presents a short review of recent explorations and accounts of images of place. It is a somewhat partial study based on works to hand during the preparation of this dissertation : it does not claim to be exhaustive and the decision that was taken to exclude film²²⁰ might be questioned. However it provided a background for the study and the approaches to selecting and discussing paintings.

The problems of representing the city in a single image were highlighted by Dawn Ades in her discussion of photomontage when noting how Futurist paintings

‘never fully matched the heroic vision of the modern world evoked by Marinetti in *The Manifesto of Futurism* .The violent changes of scale and simultaneous perceptionswere ideal matter for photomontage’²²¹

She includes the well known examples of montages by Paul Citroen (of Berlin) and Kazimierz Podzadecki (Warsaw) (Figs 8 and 9) to make her point. These themes are picked up again in *Montage and Modern Life 1919-1942* which invokes the complexities of the modern city and city life²²²

But the collection exhibition and commentary on single painted images grouped thematically is a strong pattern of criticism : an early example is the exhibition *London and the Thames : paintings of three centuries*²²³ which brought together over 100 paintings of the river and exhibited them chronologically. A more critically informed perspective but without a specific

²²⁰ This is only very brief selection: there is a genre of ‘city symphony films’ (Sarah Jilani *Urban Modernity and Fluctuating Time: “Catching the Tempo” of the 1920s City Symphony Films* September 2013 *Senses of Cinema* Issue 68)

1927Lang , Fritz *Metropolis*

1927Ruttman, Walter *Berlin : symphony of a city*

1961Schlesinger, John *Terminus – 24hrs in the life of Waterloo Station*

1986Byrne David *True Stories*

1987Reggio Godfrey *Koyaanisquatsi*

1994Kieller Patrick *London*

2016Thynne, Lizzy *Brighton : symphony of a city*

²²¹ Ades, Dawn *Photomontage* London 1976 p17

²²² Teitelbaum, Matthew *Montage and Modern Life 1919-1942* MIT Press

²²³ Harley Preston for the National Maritime Museum *London and the Thames : paintings of three centuries* Somerset House 1977

geographical perspective is the thematic *Cityscape 1910- 39 : Urban themes in American, German and British Art*²²⁴ which set out to show the range of approaches to the city beyond the familiar Futurists and modernists (Fig 11) and capturing a new social order to replace the mysteries of the Victorian city.

By the 1980's the 'image of the city' was an accepted tool of analysis at least in literature: Burton Pyke described four successive levels of description : the static city, of a single composition (he cites Wordsworth's *Composed upon Westminster Bridge*), the evolution in the 19th Century of the 'city in flux' – 'an unstable refraction of individual consciousness rather than an object fixed in space'²²⁵ and which in turn becomes the individual set against the mass – Joyce's Bloom, Kafka's K and Eliot's Prufrock and finally in a cascade of images capturing past in the present. At the same time detailed image documentation was taking place and in Venice (one of the most imaged of cities) in the form of the exhibition *Venezia Piante e Vedute*²²⁶ which covered images of Venice from 1480 through to the end of the 19th Century : as the catalogue headline puts it *Venice emerges between the dark of the inks*²²⁷ .Fig 12 gives an impression of the range .

Another strand of images is of the unbuilt city : *London as it might have been*²²⁸ was one of the first and built up layers of unrealised possible futures open up by the blank canvases encouraged by James 1st and opened up by the blank canvas (briefly) created by the Great Fire of 1666 (Fig 13). The range of forms and styles and sites contrasts enormously with the strictly controlled and monothematic visions for Bucharest of the Ceacescu era although some of the internal debates are now starting to emerge. Gheorghe Leahu, in a detailed privately published account²²⁹ records how alternative schemes were explored to retain the famous Varcaresi monastery buildings (Fig14) and details the various explored (without success). In her recent commentary on the architectural process under communism Ana Maria Zahariade identifies an 'occult' architecture of schemes that were hidden from public discussion and

²²⁴ Arts Council of Great Britain 1977-8 *Cityscape 1910- 39 : Urban themes in American, German and British Art*

²²⁵ Burton Pyke, *The Image of the modern city in literature* Princeton University Press 1981 p 71

²²⁶ Romanelli, Giandomenico and Biadene, Susanna *Venezia Piante e Vedute* Museo Correr April 1982

²²⁷ "Venetia tra l'oscurita degli'inchiostrati"

²²⁸ Barker, Felix and Hyde Ralph *London as it might have been* John Murray 1982

²²⁹ Leahu, Gheorghe, (1998) *Distrughera Manastirii Vacaresti* (with English summary) Arta Grafica, Bucharest

from which the ‘solemn performance’ of architectural production emerges for the people of the nation – this second process remains hidden and secret, a ‘mystery’(Fig 15)²³⁰.

The thorough and repeated observations of some of the French Impressionist painters has encouraged detailed cataloguing of their works –*The Impressionist and the City: Pissarro’s Series Paintings*²³¹ organised and catalogued over 130 paintings he made of repeated views of Paris, Rouen, Le Havre in a way that built up a complex and layered sense of not only place but also time.

By the end of the 1990’s two writers were able to construct international imagery of ‘the city’ in a general and non place specific way cutting across time and space and drawing images from a wide range of places and media to tell their stories – images more as a source of plunder than careful place specific story telling²³².

London of course is extensively documented and catalogued. *London in Paint*²³³ the most compendious is organized both chronologically into six periods and within them thematically to draw out key themes – the river recurs in different periods and levels of industrialisation – and includes very ordinary street scenes as well as famous views (fig 16). The British Museum produced an exhibition (and catalogue) from mainly engravings with a few coloured plates, of just one year 1753²³⁴. The possibility of a single unfolding panorama along the river banks was realised in 1829 and recently republished²³⁵. The most recent ‘London’ book is Lee Cheshire’s *London in Paint*²³⁶ which, not limited to a single collection, is able to offer a careful critical commentary and a very thoughtful collection of views of London and London life.

²³⁰ Zahariade, Ana Maria *Architecture in the Communist Project Romania 1944 – 1989* SImetria Bucharest 2011. (Dual language book) ‘occult architecture’ is discussed in pp. 112 -131.

²³¹ Brettell, Richard and Pissarro, Joachim, Edited by Mary Ann Stevens *The Impressionist and the City – Pissarro’s series paintings* Dallas Museum of Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art and Royal Academy of Arts, London 1992

²³² Conrad, Peter *Modern Times – Modern Places* Thames and Hudson 1998 and Donald, James *Imagining the Modern City* Athlone Press 1999

²³³ Galinou Mirelle and Hayes John *London in Paint – Oil Paintings in the Collection at the Museum of London* Museum of London 1996

²³⁴ O’Connell, Sheila *London 1753* The British Museum 2003

²³⁵ John Inglis and Jill Sanders *Panorama of the Thames: a riverside view of Georgian London* Thames and Hudson 2015

²³⁶ Cheshire L, *London in Paint 2017* Tate Publishing

Reviewing American material in 2011 Aaron Shkuda notes how artistic visions of the city offer a coherent way to discuss the city that 'complements the more traditional interpretations....structural and political changes'²³⁷. He singles out the 'Ashcan School' which focussed on the urban culture of the New York poor rather than 'rural subjects or the elegant drawing rooms of the genteel'²³⁸ and they found subject matter in the mundane and the commercial world (Fig 17)

The most impressive and complex account was published in Italy (FIG 18) and a range of scholarly authors use sources and examples to compile a history of the Italian city from Antiquity through the Renaissance to the Futurists and the modern city using paintings and drawings. There is no English edition and an approximate translation of the contents pages must serve to indicate the coverage and the detail of this book:

The representation of the city in Greek-Roman painting(Fabrizio Slavazzi); the city between late antique and medieval times(Graziano Alfredo Vergarli);From the 13th century to the beginning of the fifteenth century(Graziano Alfredo Vergarli) ;Cimabue in Assisi: Rome as "figure" of Italy .

The cities of humanity: urban landscapes in Italian painting of the fifteenth and early sixteenth century(Patrizia Dragoni);The Strozzi Table: a view of Naples in the fifteenth century ;Benedict Bonfigli and the urban scene of Perugia; Bergognone: the daily life of the Lombard urban scene; Architectural thought between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (Rodolfo Perfume); The ideal city of Urbino; Renovatio urbis Romae: the face of the eternal city In the design and painting of the Renaissance (Maria Teresa Donati); The Rome of the Doge's Palace in Mantua;

Enchanted scenery: the urban landscape In Venetian paintings of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (Rodolfo Perfume) ;The San Sebastian of Mantegna at the Louvre;The Procession in Piazza San Marco by Gentile Bellini; The cycle of Sant'Orsola di Carpacci; Like an open window: shapes and aspects of transalpine paintings of the XV and XVI century(Maria Teresa Donati); The origins of the "view": the Roman urban scene; Florence between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries(Maria Teresa Donati, Thea Tibiletti) ;The many faces of Italian cities in the era of the Grand Tour(Anna Orlando);Rome triumphant: the View of Piazza Navona del Pannini; Gaspar van Wittel and Vedutism in Italy Between Six and Eighteenth Century(Ludovica Trezzani) ; Splendors in the Lagoon: Canaletto And the Vedutists of the eighteenth century in Venice(Graziano Alfredo Vergani); The city between the sky and the sea: the view of the Basin of St. Mark to the east in Canaletto;A poetic transfiguration of Venice: The departure of theBucintoro Guardi; Urban and human landscapes in 19th century painting (Silvia Chiesa);From fame to emotion: the image of Venice In the nineteenth-century painting(Silvia Chiesa)

²³⁷ Shukuda, Aaron Art, *Artists and the image of the Twentieth Century city'* (Review article in Journal of Urban History Vol 37(3) pp 444-450), 2011, p 449.

²³⁸ Shukuda , 2011, p448)

Memories of a Lost City: Milan in 19th century painting (Carlo Magniavacca) Piazza del Duomo: the stage of the Milanese; New features and new feelings: the city in painting of the avant-gardes of the first half of the twentieth century (Paola Tognon); The metaphysical squares of De Chirico Italy (Mario Sironi); The city rises : the urban scene in futuristic painting (Paola Tognon); Umberto Boccioni: the city rises; Futurists -towards the contemporary city: urban projects and utopias of Antonio Sant'Elia; From the city to the metropolis: the painting of the second half of the -twentieth century -Between urban model crises and new metropolitan realities (Paola Tognon)²³⁹

Though limited in scope and brief this chapter has served to illustrate the possibilities of using painting and other visual arts to offer a commentary on the image of the city. The most easily sourced cases have a much longer urban history and a much richer artistic history : Bucharest is more limited both in terms of art and in historical dimensions than some of the examples referred to here that have long histories and ample documentation but the application of this approach is justified.

²³⁹ An approximate translation of the contents pages of Perlonghi de Vecchi and Graziano Alfredo Vergani *La rappresentazione della città nella pittura italiana* Sivana Editoriale 2003

4 The 'special case' that is Bucharest

Most of the city studies discussed in preceding the literature review have a long and rich history both of urban development – from typically Roman or even pre-Roman foundations – and of artistic history – as centres of national and international creativity. By contrast Bucharest is a new “city” and nationally conscious ‘Romanian’ art only developed in the nineteenth century with the rise of nationalism.

There is no mention of Bucharest before 1459 when it was one of the two residences of Prince Vlad III (Dracula) and reinforced in the 1550’s by [Mircea Ciobanul](#), and continued to be favoured under the Ottomans as a centre for trade and became the most populous city in the region (by 1789: 30,030 property-owners; 6,000 houses) despite plagues and fires. In 1716, following the anti-Ottoman rebellion of Ştefan Cantacuzino Bucharest's development was clearly established several ways – the city was the unrivalled capital as rural centres declined and administrative offices, and centred on the princely residence. Urban development was rapid : overall, the urban population had doubled by 1850. Population estimates for [Bucharest](#) were about 120,000 in 1859. The dominance of Ottoman and so Islamic culture was a block to the emergence of a western orientated art – and though 17th and 18th century painting was becoming more secular and based on observation and gradually what has been termed ‘the primitives of modern painting’²⁴⁰ established something like a local style – still somewhat static and conventional.

Only with the arrival of foreign artists and teachers²⁴¹ and the revolutionary ideals of the 1850’s did painting start to fulfil the new social demands, ideas of progress and freedom. Though the portrait remained the genre historical scenes, rural and peasant landscapes were also produced and Carol Popp Szathmary in particular introduced a much freer style in his watercolours of towns and churches (FIG 19). This sudden development both of the city of Bucharest and its artistic expression thus makes Bucharest quite a different case from the typical cities of artistic history with their centuries of

²⁴⁰ Vasile Florea *Romanian Painting* Wayne State University Press /Meridiane Bucharest 1983. Pp 63-64

²⁴¹ Academies were established in Iasi in 1860 and in Bucharest in 1864

development and documentation.²⁴² This sudden development both of the city of Bucharest and its artistic expression thus makes Bucharest quite a different case from the typical cities of artistic history with their centuries of development and documentation.²⁴³

²⁴² The influx of Romanian postgraduate students to US and Central European Universities since 1989 has gone some way to remedy this.

²⁴³ To that might also be added the limited range of material held in the UK and (to a less extent) in English although the influx of Romanian postgraduate students to US and Central European Universities since 1989 has gone some way to remedy this.

5 The urban development of Bucharest

In the mid 19th Century it was still possible to depict Bucharest as a rural idyll – the village like scenes shown in the watercolours by the itinerant Maltese painter Amedeo Preziosi are of a city that is just about to emerge from a chaotic semi rural scene (Fig 20) . But they are essentially the picturesque views of a scene painter.

New public works began to reinforce the urban character of Bucharest. Already, following by a minor earthquake in January 1838, and a major flood in March 1839 and in 1847 a huge fire which consumed around 2,000 buildings (about a third of the city) (fig 21) .In 1883, flooding of the [Dâmbovița](#) was stopped through the [channelling](#) of the river (the change in course modified the neighbourhoods adjacent to the banks).

Prince [Gheorghe Bibescu](#) completed a [water supply network](#) and works on public gardens, and began constructing the [National Theatre of Romania](#) (1846; finished in 1852) and improved the streets linking Bucharest with other Wallachian centers. The streets were paved and [gymnasia](#) and several academic societies (including the [University of Bucharest](#)) set up and brick and stone replaced timber for building. During the early years of Carol's rule Bucharest was equipped with [gas lighting](#), the new [Gara de Nord](#) (1872),- and a horse drawn [tram](#) system (which was soon electrified, FIG 21) were commissioned. The [National Bank of Romania](#) was opened in April 1880, as the first and most important in a series of new banking institutions. New buildings were added, including the [Romanian Athenaeum](#), and the skyline increased in height – the [Athénée Palace](#) hotel , the first building in the city to use [reinforced concrete](#), had five stories.

In his comprehensive account of the development of Bucharest Guiseppe Cina identifies four subsequent periods and styles of urbanization after the 'village–city' period – the transitional phase briefly outlined above. These four stages of urban development provide a robust framework for analysis in which identifiable changes and patterns of urban development can be matched with material in the visual arts which, as will be shown, does not always correspond to the urbanistic content:

- ‘the Paris of the Balkans and historicist architecture’(from about 1880)
- ‘the new modernity – between tradition and innovation’ (from about 1912 to the outbreak of World War II)
- ‘the socialist city – from rationalism to post-modern’ (from 1946 to 1989)
- ‘post 1989 :the difficult return to Europe’ (from 1989 to the present).

Each is illustrated with a few ‘snapshots’ – selected paintings (and other art works) from national collections and elsewhere which illustrate these periods.

6 Four significant periods : the growth of the city and of art

6.1 -'the Paris of the Balkans and historicist architecture' (from about 1880)

Although the image of Bucharest from this period is one of the new French influenced and styled grand buildings and streets the painters of this period seem to have preferred in their topographical work the seedier backgrounds and side streets.

The public image of Parisian style and elegance was promoted through postcards and photographs which emphasised the grand facades and elegant street scenes (Figs 23 and 24). If there had been a fully developed beaux-arts school in Bucharest paintings that commemorated these new patterns overlaid on the city²⁴⁴ might have been expected in the manner of French paintings of Paris of the period (Fig 25). Painterly preferences were for the picturesque and showed a very different casually composed city – a painting by the highly regarded Stefan Lucian has a title that demonstrates this contrast with the great new city – 'The Devils Slum'. (Fig 26) Lucian died young and was paralysed from multiple sclerosis for the last years of his life and this oddly matched painting – the rest of Lucian's work is predominantly portraits, flowers and country scenes- sets a bitter note among them. He trained in Munich and Bucharest though he took little account of the academic tasks and then went to Paris where he became acquainted with the Impressionists. In 1896 he returned to Bucharest and was one of a group of painters who set up Bucharest's *Salonul Independenților*, which was opened in front of the official *Salon*. Luchian started to develop an interest in Symbolism which was becoming part of the cafe society of Bucharest (Fig27).

The Devils Slum shows an incoherent group of much altered modest houses with additions of ad-hoc steps and lean-to's surrounded by debris and detritus – the opposite of the careful domesticated formalism of 'Micul Paris'. Only Nicolae Darascu's paintings of Calea Victoriei in the rain (Fig 28)– which date from the 1930's have the same evocation of busy formal spaces – although of course Calea Victoriei though lined with grand 19th Century (and early 20th

²⁴⁴ Shown in Cina 2010. P 71, Fig 56

Century buildings still follows the old village meandering alignment and is askew from the partial grid of new streets.

The fascination of picturesque decay continued to be the main theme of paintings of Bucharest and this theme continued throughout the 1920's²⁴⁵ and the possibilities of tumbling roofscapes and irregular groupings continued as the artists of this generation matured and exhibited regularly.(FIG 29).

Some artists did find a more attractive view but even these were more suburban than urban (the French painters exiled in South London come to mind (Fig 30) and show a leafy suburban city – which is still part of the character of Bucharest.

It was not until the 1930's that Nicolae Ionescu's series of photographs showed the truth behind the facades of Micul Paris complete with rag pickers and sewage outfalls used for washing. (Fig 31 – the full document is attached as Appendix 2).

²⁴⁵ It has not always been possible to date individual paintings

6.2- 'The new modernity – between tradition and innovation' (from about 1912 to the outbreak of World War II)

In the period between the two World Wars Bucharest was a thriving European city with a rich and varied interchange of artists and ideas. In documenting the Romanian roots and connections of dada Tom Sandquvist gives a vivid image of this brief flowering which would be buried with the establishment of Communist rule after WWII after the abdication of King Michael. He discusses at length John Reed's 1916 visit²⁴⁶ when Reed found nothing original there where everything is borrowed even the King and the style of his palace. But Sandqvist concludes that this was the city to which the Romanian Dadaists would continually return and take part in its artistic and creative life. Though excited by and attracted to the city and contributing to its architecture²⁴⁷ the paintings of Bucharest in this period are mainly by others. Though Marcel Janco's description of Bucharest as a 'city of accidents' captures the excitement of the confusion and variety of the townscape – a quality that is still apparent – though with more layers added:

Though accidents are also the architecture school itself (archaic) and the university (modernizing?)/ An accident is also the destruction of the old university, a last vestige of art and common sense in the capital./Also an accident is the so called Romanian style./ If Bucharest ever displayed itself to foreign travellers under a likeable form, today they will leave with the memory of a city as a country fair, a conglomerate lacking any harmony, order, style, or soul.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶ John Reed *The War in Eastern Europe* Scribners now available in full at <https://archive.org/stream/warinearneuro00reeduoft#page/n1/mode/2up>

Sandquvist's extended reference is on pp 112-19 of *DadaEast* (Sandquvist 2006)

²⁴⁷ As well as his involvement with dada Marcel Janco /Iancu was the designer of key modernist buildings in Bucharest notably Villa Jean Fuchs 1927



²⁴⁸ Janco, Marcel *The Bucharest of Accidents* *Contimporanul* 70 (Nov. 1926): 9 This is reproduced as Appendix 3 in translation. The original Romanian can be accessed at https://monoskop.org/images/f/f6/Contimporanul_70_Nov_1926.pdf

But although dada is internationally the best known strand of the avant-garde in Romania in the early 20th Century a recent exhibition and its catalogue²⁴⁹ presents a more balanced view of the wider field and looks across the whole range of artists working in Romania. Although the exhibition included relatively few urban scenes there is much discussion of urbanism as a theme. A statement from the first issue of *Integral* the (equivalent of a Constructivist journal in Romania “We definitely live under the zodiac of the city”²⁵⁰ and this period showed a great range of painting styles- indeed the opening words of the catalogue are an apology :

“The Colours of the Avant-garde is decidedly not an exhibition thoroughly and honestly devoted to the avant-garde, not even to the complex and contradictory Romanian one. Seen from the purist advanced avant-garde outposts the exhibition is almost disloyal. It not only starts with modernist works of the 1910’s long before the Dadaist European debut but it also ends with pseudo avant-garde realist socialist collages produced in the 1950’s long after the official expiration of the properly historical avant-garde..... instead of focussing on a spotless pedant(ic) extricationit presents a cohesive view of an intricate and cultural and historical phenomenon”²⁵¹

There were relatively few urbanistic scenes in that exhibition²⁵². Although at the same time grand axial modernist schemes – both in the centre and in the newly expanding outer areas - were the dominant mode of architecture²⁵³ these too were not represented in painting.

The new Boulevard I C Briteanu was cut through the maze of lanes and streets that survived from the village forms to the north east of the old centre and it was quickly lined with a range apartment blocks, hotels, offices and department stores (fig 32) .In the outer areas new housing areas such as Zona rezidentiala Vatra Luminoasa (fig 33, Architects : Horia Creanga and N Aphraneau, 1933 -1939) took the same clear modern approach. The one modernist building that Vlasiu notes as being painted by Nicolae Darascu²⁵⁴ -

²⁴⁹ The interruption and disjuncture that followed fifty years of Communism have created many gaps in history too *I colori delle Avanguardie Arte in Romania/The Colours of the Avant Garde in Romanian Art 1910-1950* Rome 2011 (promoted by Romanian Cultural Institute, Italy, Curated by Erwin Kessler and Ioana Vlasiu, catalogue published by Gangemi Editore spa, Rome) traces these lost connections.

²⁵⁰ Ioana Vlasiu *City life versus rural life in Interwar Romanian Painting (in The Colours of the Avant Garde in Romanian Art 1910-1950)* p.23.

²⁵¹ Kessler, Erwin *Retroguardia in The Colours of the Avant Garde in Romanian Art 1910-1950*p9

²⁵² About 10 out of the 70 or so paintings included

²⁵³ Though more traditionalist historicist styles continued

²⁵⁴ Ioana Vlasiu *City life versus rural life in Interwar Romanian Painting (in The Colours of the Avant Garde in Romanian Art 1910-1950)*p24

though the 'telephone 'palace' was not traceable in his paintings on line, it was and still is a striking modernist intervention in the mixed streetscape of Calea Victoriei (Fig 34)

For artists it was the dynamics of industry and the vibrancy of city life that was their focus in this period. Lucian Grigorescu's city views are painted with loose brushwork and blurred edges as if the whole city is trembling (Fig 35). For other artists even when representing static buildings and street scenes the treatment of these ordinary urban scenes is given extra dynamism by fragmentation of the view and interlocking perspectives (Fig 36). For other artists it is the street-life that is the focus – whether in Jean al. Steriade's *Whitewashers* – a solid and sturdy group of peasant-like women about to begin their task, or the city square filled with diverse and disparate activity centred around a female figure who is almost posed in dance or Iancu's rendering of a courtyard with washing and washerwomen caught in angular momentary patterns (Fig 37). For some the drama – and contrast with the landscape – of industrial plant offered a new perspective (fig 38).

By comparison with the angular forms of modern architecture or the poetry and performances of dada (which was often by the same people) and especially considering the chaos and turmoil of the landscape of Bucharest its representation in art was somewhat tame and conventional. Artists focussed more on the excitement and dynamics of city life for their subject matter – even when like Marcel Iancu they were also designing the modern(ist) Bucharest, rather than the modernist potential which was being achieved in new developments. Though there were dreams of Bucharest 2000 (Fig 39 and appendix 3) and Marcel Iancu published a *Utopian Vision for Bucharest*²⁵⁵ these do not seem to have inspired a new visionary school of paintings of the city. Just as in the 1890's and 1900's there are no grand beaux-arts paintings so in the 'jazz age' there is no great futuristic painted vision of Bucharest. Its chaos and discord were enough.

²⁵⁵ Iancu, Marcel *Bucharest and its Utopia* Translated and reprinted in Vogel, Felix, *Handlung: on producing possibilities- reader of Bucharest Biennale 4, 2010* pp 362- 373

6.3-‘the socialist city – from rationalism to post-modern’²⁵⁶ (from 1946 to 1989)

The image of Bucharest presented in the Communist era is very different from the two periods discussed above – the main reason for this is the almost total control over at least the public painted image that the government was able to enforce through the control of funding – paintings were either directly commissioned or artists sought approval for their ideas. This build up a repertoire of images that glorified the city and the achievements of the Party and latterly more personally of Ceacescu himself. These were of course not the only images painted and there several artists had their own, secret oeuvre that offered their own more personal views of the city.

The sense of bleakness at the beginning of this era, before the party control was fully established is shown in the empty and deserted streetscapes of Alexandru Topoia(fig 40)

the last "modern classical" of his generation, linking two opposite worlds, one depressed and the other in the making with all the turmoil and anguish of the birth of these times.²⁵⁷

Imagine a large, poor country at that time (but one rich in natural and agricultural resources) with a leader who though ‘elected’ is in fact a despot and is building a new world fit for an idealised ‘new man’. But in this country If you had a typewriter without authorisation it is best to bury it.²⁵⁸ The state apparatus carefully controlled and manipulated the images that were

²⁵⁶ The later architecture of the Communist era in its borrowing and inflating of classical motifs becomes post modern in the manner of *Les Espaces d'Abraaxas (Social Housing Scheme)*-- Ricardo Bofill (Taller de Arquitectura) 1978-83



<https://www.bluffton.edu/homepages/facstaff/sullivanm/france/paris/abraaxas/0060.jpg>

²⁵⁷ Adapted from [Georges Tzipoia](#) *Alexandru Tipoia, 1914-1993* included in https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexandru_%C8%9Aipoia

²⁵⁸ Bugan, Carmen *Burying the typewriter- childhood under the eye of the secret police* Picador, London,2102

available²⁵⁹. It was believed the state employed one out of four of the population as an informer²⁶⁰. One state controlled TV channel broadcast for only 4 hours a day. A National Union of Artists controlled funding for art – and the content of art work. Without state funding a few artists avoided this control and therefore could still document the reality but in secret and exhibit work privately. The use of cameras and home movies was not controlled or licensed by the state, though materials and equipment were not easily available and there was a form of self-censorship²⁶¹. This is not an dystopian sketch but a very brief summary of the visual arts in Romania in its ‘Golden Age’²⁶²

Paintings were to celebrate the new city and its heroic dimensions. Paintings of the reality were impossible and continued only as private works not displayed. In the paintings from the early years of Communism however there is a sense of looking forward to a bright future for Bucharest (fig 41) which is also apparent in the few ‘naive’ paintings of urban life²⁶³ - clean new buildings as the settings for vibrant street life shown before poor construction and cheap materials became apparent.

But this sunny view was replaced by the savage and extensive urban clearance took place, using the excuse of earthquake risk, in the old centre of Bucharest where, from 1974 onwards comprehensive demolitions cleared nearly 1000 acres in the heart of the city, including well established residential quarters of great character and charm, undertaken at very short notice and resulting in great personal suffering and distress²⁶⁴ undertaken under Ceausescu’s

²⁵⁹ Ben Lewis, *The King of Communism* (DVD, Little Bird/Ben Lewis Films 2002)

²⁶⁰ Actually it was one agent or informer for every 43. Deletant Dennis *Ceausescu and the Securitate – Coercion and Dissent in Romania* Hurst and Co. London 1995

²⁶¹ As a result most artists independent work was in these media even when (like Ion Grigorescu) they trained and worked as painters.

²⁶² A half affectionate nostalgia for the Ceausescu years. See Cristian Mungiu *Tales from the Golden Age (Amintiri din epoca de aur)* film 2009 (available on DVD) and Stefan-Constantinescu. *The Golden Age for Children* pop-up book, Romanian Cultural Institute, 2008,

²⁶³ Most included in *Arta Naiva in Roamnia*

²⁶⁴ The film commissioned by the Roamanian Cultural Institute (Fearn, Robert and Marineacu, Ioana *Off the map* (DVD) Romanian Cultural Institute 2006) gives a detailed and personal account of the memories of this.

personal direction with the aim of making a city suitable for his image of 'the new man'²⁶⁵. Ceausescu's 'July Theses' of 1971 set out the rules that were to govern socialist culture which expanded political propaganda to cover the arts to promote a 'militant revolutionary' character in the arts presented as the defending Romanian values.²⁶⁶

Typically paintings of Bucharest of this period foreground Ceausescu (with Elena) being lauded with flowers and young Pioneers²⁶⁷ with the new projects in the background (Fig 42).

The approval and rejection of images was very careful and the example of Ion Grigorescu's triple portrait of Ceausescu which implied indecision is a well known example which shows three views of Ceausescu over a scene of new road construction (fig 43). Even the modified single portrait was rejected²⁶⁸. The model over which he is deliberating remained unchanged – a dual carriageway and overpass lined with blocks of flats – the kind of development that was beginning to surround Bucharest .

²⁶⁵ He was influenced in this project by his visits to North Korea and many commentators suggest that by this point his megalomania was approaching insanity. He is not alone in this see Megan Fowler. "How 7 Dictators Used Buildings to Influence and Intimidate" 12 Jun 2017. ArchDaily. Accessed 10 Sep 2017. <<http://www.archdaily.com/873353/how-7-dictators-used-buildings-to-influence-and-intimidate/>>

²⁶⁶ [Deletant, Dennis](#), *Ceausescu and the Securitate: Coercion and Dissent in Romania, 1965-1989*, M.E. Sharpe, London, 1995, Their impact on the visual arts generally and on the Romanian avant-garde is briefly described in Piotr Piotrowski *In the shadow of Yalta – art and the avant-garde in Eastern Europe 1945-1989* Reaktion Books, London 2009 pp255-262

²⁶⁷ The state youth movement

²⁶⁸ In 1980, asked to do a portrait of Ceausescu, Grigorescu was obliged to respond to this request and submitted an intriguing work, which was turned down by the cultural bureaucrats who objected that the portrait did not comply with the strict requirements entailed by Ceausescu's personality cult. As one may notice (fig.9), the dictator is depicted in three different attitudes within the same painting, in a manner which disrupts the conventional iconography that usually places Ceausescu (or the presidential couple) in the centre of the composition. Moreover, Ceausescu is seen giving instructions, as he is typically shown in the so called "working visits", but here his attitudes evince a certain hesitation as if he were pondering over a decision, or seeking advice. The artist's intention, as he himself admitted, was to make manifest Ceausescu's human side. Following this rejection, the artist had to repaint Ceausescu's portrait (fig.10); this time the critical comments pointed at the naturalistic details of the anatomy: the dictator's hands were disproportionately large, his swollen veins were too obvious; briefly put, the artist painted an unflattering portrait of the ruler of the state. It is interesting to mention as a footnote that scenes with Ceausescu's public appearances at various occasions were generally painted after photographs, which were often subject to manipulation..... Thus, the stratagems of distortion could move from one medium to another, amplifying the rhetoric of the images and adding up to this conflation of lies which made up the ubiquitous picture of the dominating power. Magda Radu *Art and Politics: considering some of Ion Grigorescu's films and photographs* Paper presented at Technology and photography in transition - International Symposium (Conference - New Europe College, Bucharest) May 11, 2007 www.2020.ro/resources/files/ArtandPolitics.pdf

Grigorescu however clearly felt strongly about what was happening to the city and made a short film *My Beloved Bucharest* which takes as its starting point a music hall song by [Gică Petrescu](#)

"Bucureștiul meu iubi Ce-ai făcut de m-ai vrăjit București, București, fratele meu ești? București, București, tu mă veselești?"²⁶⁹ (fig 44)

In Ion Grigorescu's *My Beloved Bucharest* The camera investigates the city's peripheries, testifying to the failure of socialism: the poverty, the dreary living conditions, the new construction projects which gave rise to alienating and low-quality living environments; it is a deteriorated piece of footage punctuated by short lines of text which are pointing at the gap between the much heralded socialist ideals and their disappointing outcome, sometimes inserted between fragments of footage and sometimes discovered accidentally on the walls of some run-down construction, as if the city were articulating its own misery: "Let us embellish the city like in fairy-tale"²⁷⁰. He made other films around the estate where he was housed, Bata Alba (Fig 45), and several photo sets and adapted paintings²⁷¹ which contrast the emptiness of the official views with the ways in which even these bleak peripheral estates human life still went on.

No sooner do views of an idealised modern Bucharest start to emerge than they are shown in other visions to be false and part of a state propaganda programme.

²⁶⁹ My beloved Bucharest What have you done to get me hooked?, Bucharest, Bucharest, my brother you are." Bucharest, Bucharest, you tsar.

²⁷⁰ [Magda Radu Art and Politics: considering some of Ion Grigorescu's films and photographs](#) presented at Technology and photography in transition - International Symposium (Conference - New Europe College, Bucharest) May 11, 2007 9:30 - May 12, 2007 10 www.2020.ro/resources/files/ArtandPolitics.pdf

²⁷¹ *The City in Socialism* (18 black and white photographs, 1974-1987) *Piatra Neamt* and *Marcia at piatra Neamt* (both photographs with oil paint interventions, 1976) *Berceni* (photograph set 1975) *Colentina* (colour photographs, 1976) *Obor* (photographs, 1963, 1979) *Fundeni-Dobroiesti* (b&w photographs and colour offset print, 1977) *The queue for bread* and *The queue for sugar* (b&w photographs, 1974) All included in Alina Serban(ed) *Ion Grigorescu –the man with a single camera* Strenberg Press 2013.

6.4 Post 1989 – the difficult return to Europe ²⁷²

The sudden collapse of the Communist state left a vacuum in the arts as well as all the social economic and political dimensions. The result was a huge and confusing output in a wide range of media , documenting the chaos of the suddenly interrupted communist project on the urban landscape of Bucharest. This chapter focuses on a few.

The work of Stefan Constantinescu²⁷³ makes an appropriate point to start as the sunny glow of *An Infinite Blue* a series of 22 paintings showing idealised images of Communist Bucharest ,based on propaganda pictures from the 1960s when there was housing and education for everyone, high-quality research, state-owned restaurants, and healthy habits for the working people²⁷⁴ echoes the ost-nalgie idea of this period being a golden age – which Constinescu has developed more explicitly in his giant sized pop-up book *The Golden Age for Children* which includes several ironic commentaries on Bucharest (Fig 46) . The Golden Age for Children is an interactive book done in a pop-up book manner that is featuring artists’ biography intertwined with highlights from the grand narrative of the country’s past, thus creating a story which covers 20 years of Romanian contemporary history. The story begins in 1968, the year Stefan Constantinescu was born, and ends with the Revolution in 1989.²⁷⁵

“In retrospect, the most obvious thing about Ceausescu’s golden age was its fraudulence. Like classic socialist realism, but even more so, Romania’s official culture trafficked in the beautiful lie and pretended it was truth—the representation of current social reality as airbrushed by authority..... In the rampant dishonesty and brutal deprivation of the golden age, even the most

²⁷² Parts of this chapter are taken from Bob Jarvis Contemporary Romanian Arts as a commentary and critique of the urban environment of the post- communist city Documentation report for British Academy Small projects 2013)unpublished

²⁷³ When Stefan Constantinescu was young, painting was the medium he used. After he moved to Sweden he also learned how to work with video. His grounding and his aesthetic schooling in painting, however, were acquired at the Academy of Arts in Bucharest.

²⁷⁴ Catrin Lundqvist *Ştefan Constantinescu. A Child of the Revolution*
[www.icr.ro/.../5026_2_About Stefan Constantinescu](http://www.icr.ro/.../5026_2_About_Stefan_Constantinescu) and Stefan Constaninescu website. www.stefan-constantinescu.com/

²⁷⁵ <http://www.stefan-constantinescu.com/index.php/work/the-golden-age-for-children/>

*plodding, least imaginative Romanians had to steal to survive.Dense and provocative, "Ostalgia" is richly "underground"—an array of unmarketable underdog art, infused with forbidden impulses, all, however obsessively private, unavoidably political."*²⁷⁶

Ion Grigorescu continued to produce commentaries on the upheavals that had occurred in the city. One of the most memorable is a second retracing of the walk that he took diagonally across the 'Vitan Ceaucescu' –the new great straight axis leading to the new 'palace' made initially as *Drumul Noua axa a orasului (the new road axis to the town)*1993²⁷⁷ showing the changes frozen with the collapse of communism and tracing a route that Grigorescu took diagonally across the city to reach the church he was restoring. The later remake 'Vitan Ceaucescu' (fig 47)shows the ways in which the chaos that is regrowing in the city is overrunning the grand plan.

The collective SubReal was established by Călin Dan (art historian at the time) and Dan Mihălțianu (artist), shortly joined by Iosif Király (architect and photographer), "the group of action" appeared as a consequence of the political changes in 1989 in Romania, to "exorcise the residue of the decades of communist oppression."²⁷⁸ They made a number of carefully composed photographs called *Framing Bucuresti* in which they held up an elaborate frame around a view showing as if they were actually worth framing . Calin Dan has commented on the changing nature of the city and Bucharest in particular the way the centre had become a series of slogans and the excitement was in the ever expanding periphery where the consequences of the forced urbanization of the communist years were apparent²⁷⁹ .

²⁷⁶ <https://www.villagevoice.com/2011/08/24/the-good-old-days-ales-from-the-golden-age-and-ostalgia/>

²⁷⁷ Though included in the *Out of Place* exhibition at Tate Modern in 2011 and listed in his works it has proved untraceable

²⁷⁸ .June 23, 2012 - National Museum of Contemporary Art (MNAC), Bucharest - subREAL Retrospect.
. subREAL is the first truly international group that originated in Romania after 1989. Belonging to a generation of transition, the members of the group took the first steps in establishing a dialogue with western art, transforming the closed culture from which they were coming into an open one. They initiated curatorial projects and participated in major international events

²⁷⁹ *Idea: Arte +Societa; Mobility is my only way of being around...An interview with Calin Dan by Judit Angel , Issue #17, 2004, <http://idea.ro/revista/?q=en/node/41&articol=222>*

. This concept started earlier with the works exposed at the Venice Biennial in 1993 and 1999 when they examined old photographs from the archive of a 1950's art magazine where people helped holding a black or white canvas as a background for works of art, mostly belonging to the time's socialist realism style, helping a photographer to get a seamless background by moving the canvas while the camera used a long exposure. Inspired by this, they worked for years on a project named "Serving Art" including themselves in the frame holding a canvas while taking portraits of other artists. Later on the project developed in "Interview with the City" with photographs from different locations in the world, but mainly from the city they both originated as artists: Bucharest.²⁸⁰ (Fig 48)

Calin Dan is a key figure in contemporary Romanian art²⁸¹ and has commented on the changing nature of the city and Bucharest in particular the way the centre had become a series of slogans and the excitement was in the ever expanding periphery where the consequences of the forced urbanization of the communist years were apparent²⁸². By observing the city, exploring of neighborhoods contact with people and linking this to folk traditions, he has developed a unique way of looking at things that is akin to psychogeography. His film *Sample City* takes a piece of Romanian folklore to offer a strange narrative journey through the broken landscape (Fig 49)

First and above all a powerful image coming from a folk tale read to me by my grandmother, when I was very little. It is the story of Păcalăst (sort of Romanian Tjil Uilenspiegel) who – told by his brothers “pull the door behind you when you leave the house” – reacts ad literam and starts off carrying the door on his back. I suppose that this episode triggered a semantic shock, a subliminal awareness that language has the capacity to create ambiguity with unexpected and painful consequences. That image became a latent component of my affective memory, a kind of dilemma waiting for solution. When I moved into my first house in Bucharest, I studied in detail the entrance door – a modest one – and tried to imagine what it would be like to carry it on my back all around the city centre. In 1994, when I renovated my second house, I went so far as to keep a useless door on the balcony for about a year, gathering courage to perform the above mentioned action. Luckily, the event never took place. I say luckily because otherwise I would have probably not decided to make *Sample City*, the film where the man carrying the door plays a crucial role.²⁸³

²⁸⁰ <https://adrianarmanca.wordpress.com/2012/02/26/subreal-reality/>

²⁸¹ He is now Director of MNAC – (Romanian Museum of Contemporary Art – which occupies the rear upper floors of the Parliament Palace)

²⁸² *Idea: Arte + Societa; Mobility is my only way of being around... An interview with Calin Dan by Judit Angel, Issue #17, 2004, <http://ehituskunst.ee/emotional-architecture-interview-with-romanian-dutch-artist-calin-dan/?lang=en/idea.ro/revista/?q=en/node/41&articol=222>*

²⁸³ <http://ehituskunst.ee/emotional-architecture-interview-with-romanian-dutch-artist-calin-dan/?lang=en>

Nicolae Comenescu (born 1968, Graduated University of Fine Arts, Bucharest, 1998) is one of the best known and also most prolific figurative painters in Romania. His early work was part of the Rostopasca (Celandine) Group²⁸⁴ and included performance and video work. He took part in many international exhibitions and group shows and gradually his style became more painterly. What makes his work of special interest here is the shift in his style of work from about 2007. Recently he has shifted from a garishly coloured roughly painted super-realist/surrealistic transatlantic style in which fragments of the landscape of Bucharest were collaged and transformed into a kind of American dreamscape, to realistic and grubby landscapes of the seemingly endless *blocuri*²⁸⁵ (Fig 50)

Mona Vatamanu (b.1968) and Florin Tudor (b. 1974) belong to a specific generation in Romania: a generation born during the baby boom, which began in the late sixties (and was to a large degree influenced by the biopolitical measures of the Ceausescu regime), who came of age on the barricades of the Romanian Revolution in December 1989 and during the spring and summer protests of 1990. After the enthusiasm and solidarity forged during the Revolution, and the subsequent profound disillusionment caused by the violent repression of the 1990 protests by fellow citizens who were instrumentalized by the new regime, this generation played a key role in establishing the dominant ideological framework in Romania over the last twenty years.²⁸⁶

Many of their works are haunted by the losses and strange landscapes left from the Communist era documented at the time when these abandoned places still seemed mysterious and unexplained. Today they are fewer and the relics of this era are gradually being demolished, rebuilt or converted²⁸⁷

²⁸⁴ <http://grupulrostopasca.blogspot.ro/search/label/Alian%C5%A3a%20Rostopasca> Celandine group functioned during 1997 _ 2001. It was initiated by Angela Bontas, Nicolae Comanescu Alina Dumitru Gorzo and Pentacle. Later joined Alina Buga, Florin Tudor and Mona Vatamanu.

²⁸⁵ The plural of *bloc* – blocks of mass housing which surround the historic city

²⁸⁶ Art Daily.org, Monday, August 13, 2012

²⁸⁷ See for instance - Duncan Light and Craig Young *RECONFIGURING SOCIALIST URBAN LANDSCAPES: THE 'LEFT-OVER' SPACES OF STATE-SOCIALISM IN BUCHAREST* in *HUMAN GEOGRAPHIES – Journal of Studies and Research in Human Geography* (2010) 4.1, 5-16 www.humangeographies.org.ro

*Mona Vatamanu and Florin Tudor's critical engagement with defining issues of today such as collective memory and amnesia, as well as artistic agency has positioned them among the most compelling and literate interpreters of our contemporary post-communist condition, which extends far beyond their native Romania to the "former West" and further afield.*²⁸⁸

Even their film of the trial of Ceaucescu is a document of the landscapes that the era created, still drab 15 years after the revolution(Fig 51)

In Vacaresti²⁸⁹ filmed in dark winter ice and snows from 2004 to 2006 shows an attempt to retrace the outline of the famous Vacaresti Monastery which was built in 1716-1722 by Nicolae Mavrocordat in Brâncoveanu style,

*"the greatest and biggest Orthodox settlement on the territory of actual Romania at the time. The settlement also included a princely court, a chancellery and a library endowed with the richest collection of books and manuscripts in South-Eastern Europe at the time. Using the pretext of the damages done by the 1977 earthquake, the communist rulers started to demolish Bucharest, pretending that the church had suffered irremediable damages because of the earthquake (fact denied by specialists), he ordered the church to be razed off the ground and the main Court of Justice in Bucharest to be built there"*²⁹⁰

'Vacaresti' has been exhibited in various formats and presentations²⁹¹ but central to them all is the sense of loss and mystery of the site

*"After the fall of the communist regime in Romania there were talks about reconstructing the monastery but nothing happened, not even marking in some way the former place of Vacaresti, very few seems to remember the trauma. It's like a whole community of people don't have the ability to link with their own past. Now, where the monastery once existed, there are socialist ruins, a cheap market, a local community of gypsies living in improvised housing, an empty lake and big empty spaces. We went there and tried to draw, map, using wooden sticks and wire, the shape of the church. None of us saw before the real monastery and church."*²⁹²

²⁸⁸ <http://www.lombardfreid.com/vatamanu-tudor/>

²⁸⁹ <http://www.monavatamanuflorintudor.ro/vacaresti.htm>

²⁹⁰ Notes edited from <http://www.bucharestian.com/Destruction.html>

²⁹¹ For instance - Vacaresti, installation, 6. Gyumri Biennial, 2008; Vacaresti, installation, Flying Down to Earth, FRAC Loraine 49 Nord 6 Est, 2010

²⁹² <http://www.monavatamanuflorintudor.ro/vacaresti.htm>

One of their early photo-essays was *The palace/Persepolis* which combines a (secretly made) film of a guided tour of the newly opened 'Palace' with images of the 'new' Bucharest (FIG . Their Artists statement is reproduced below in full as it gives a strong impression of the work and provides a fitting conclusion to this section

Imagine you are living in Romania. We grew up here whilst our cities, Bucharest and Constanta were demolished to make room for the socialist utopia. After that, a large part of Romanians found themselves living in cities of blocks of flats.

The palace was left unfinished by his owner, killed in 1989. The guided tour tells his story and the story of the building and the social implications on the lives of the people living in Bucharest.

We don't know how to consider our action of filming there _ Diana, the guide, was acting like a performer acting a role reminding us of Lara Croft's character in Tomb Rider, at the same time her discourse was hardly covering the drama of having the palace here... We can't describe the horrific dimension that this building represents for us, maybe ridiculous, incoherent, absurd, aggressive could be the words.

The border between filming legal or forbidden things inside is very thin because the edifice now hosts the parliament and at the same time you are allowed to tape by paying a fee of € 9. Another weird thing for us is that if you live in Bucharest you cannot figure out the amount of material wasted there until you visit the palace just like foreign tourists. It is like in a city of socialist blocks where you can find a palace made from socialist blocks.²⁹³



²⁹³ Mona Vatamanu & Florin Tudor *The palace/ Persepolis* 2020 Home Gallery ,Bucharest - 14 April 2004. The full sets of images and text can be found at <http://www.monavatamanuflorintudor.ro/persepolis.htm>

7 Review : wider context in terms of art history and of Romania.

This dissertation has enabled me to combine my interests in Romania with my background in urbanism in the context of little explored themes in art history in the UK and in English at least – the approach of ‘kunst-geography’ and the study of Romanian art.

It has demonstrated that although Bucharest and Romania have only a recent history both geo-politically and in terms of art history it is a viable approach that connects together the image of Bucharest coherently with the identified stages in its growth. It is clearly not as rich as the studies of London, Venice, Vienna or Paris which were briefly discussed as part of the framework for this dissertation and perhaps better access to sources (galleries in Bucharest have not replied to requests or even orders for publications that an extended visit to the city might have broadened the art base – though my earlier work there (funded by the British Academy) has proved of immense value and confirms that the coverage is adequate. Missing are populist and modern ‘gallery’ art but they would have given an imbalance (there are many many paintings of *Bucuresti vechii/învechit / antic/ fost/ arhaic* being turned out as decoration) .Romanians of course will tell you that ‘Bucureștiul nu este România’ anyway but that is probably true of all capital cities but still it confirmed my first impression of (and reinforced my love for) this crazy collage of a city. For that is what it is : Rowe and Koetter’s theory of urban form²⁹⁴ made real , twenty five years after it was written, combined with a discarded set for *Blade Runner*²⁹⁵ where ‘*the mafia will rob you, the women will seduce you the gypsies stab you and the wild dogs eat your body*’²⁹⁶ .

²⁹⁴ Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter *Collage City* MIT Press 1984

²⁹⁵ My Romanian language tutor told me of recent central, wholesale revisions to the conjugations of Romanian verbs, so maybe though single state planning is 20 years dead there is still a shadow of *Alphaville* in that mix too.

²⁹⁶ This was the warning of a Slovakian friend - there are prejudices between East European countries and Romania as ‘a Latin island in a Slavic sea’ is the focus of many of them.

What is reassuring is that in the final stages of editing this dissertation I came across two exhibitions in Bucharest that echo the theme of this dissertation. The Municipal Museum is about to hold an exhibition

"BUCHAREST - FROM THE PATRIARCHAL CITY TO THE CAPITAL OF GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS" The Art department of the Bucharest Municipality Museum is preparing an exhibition dedicated to Bucharest's representations in paintings and drawings that will allow visitors to uncover more unusual aspects of the city as it was in the past (end 19th century – 20th century), featuring the relics of its characteristic picturesque atmosphere. The exhibition will be open to visitors starting September 2017, and will unveil veritable "documents" on Bucharest's cityscape, along with sequences from the life of characters typical of the city, restoring the dynamic and continuously changing existence that made Bucharest what it is today.²⁹⁷

In 2015 *Mapping Bucharest: Art, Memory, and Revolution 1916–2016* was part of the Vienna 2015 Biennale :

The exhibition Mapping Bucharest: Art, Memory, and Revolution 1916– 2016 is dedicated to Romania's art scene; in front of a backdrop of avantgarde trends, it seeks out the potential of a cultural realm that spans Europe. Romania was the source of important impulses for the development of the historic avant-garde and modernity, whereby Romanian artists were among the founders or central protagonists of almost all significant art movements. The same goes for literature, film, and architecture. In Mapping Bucharest: Art, Memory, and Revolution 1916–2016, 33 artists and artist teams present an episodic look back at the past, give insight into Romania's contemporary art scene, and open a window to the future.²⁹⁸

This dissertation fits into that pattern.

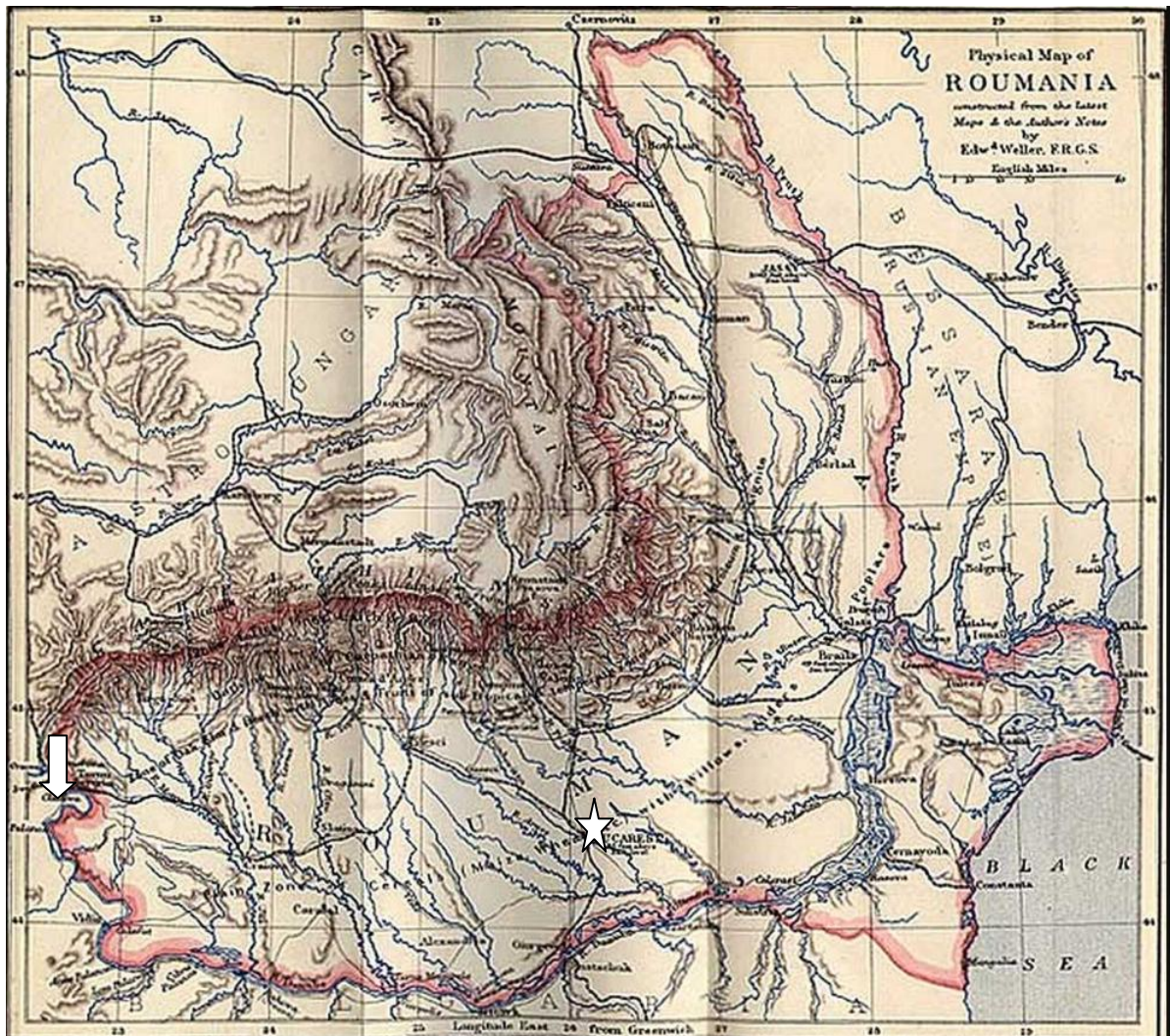
(approx 19,900 words with text boxes, footnotes and endnotes)

²⁹⁷ <http://muzeulbucurestiului.ro/En/bucurestii-in-arta-plastica.html>

²⁹⁸ <http://2015.viennabiennale.org/en/exhibitions/detail/mapping-bucharest-art-memory-and-revolution>

Illustrations

FIG 1 The physical setting of Bucharest



This 19th Century map (1) of the physical landscape of Romania shows the site of Bucharest (starred) on the flat plain between the Carpathian Mountains to the north and the Danube looping between the Black Sea to the east and the 'Iron Gorge' a dangerous and often impassible point (arrowed) to the west . The second map(2) shows the situation of Bucharest in a network of streams and rivers draining from the Carpathians to the Danube

1-James Samuelson *Roumania past and present* London ,Longmans, Green, and co., 1882. p3 and p115 reproduced in :Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/18240/18240-h/18240-h.ht>

2 -Liliana Zaharia and Gabriela Ioana-Toroimac, *Urbanization effects on the river systems in the Bucharest City region (Romania)*in *Ecosystems* Volume 2, Issue 11 November 2016

46°00'00" N

45°00'00"

44°00'00"

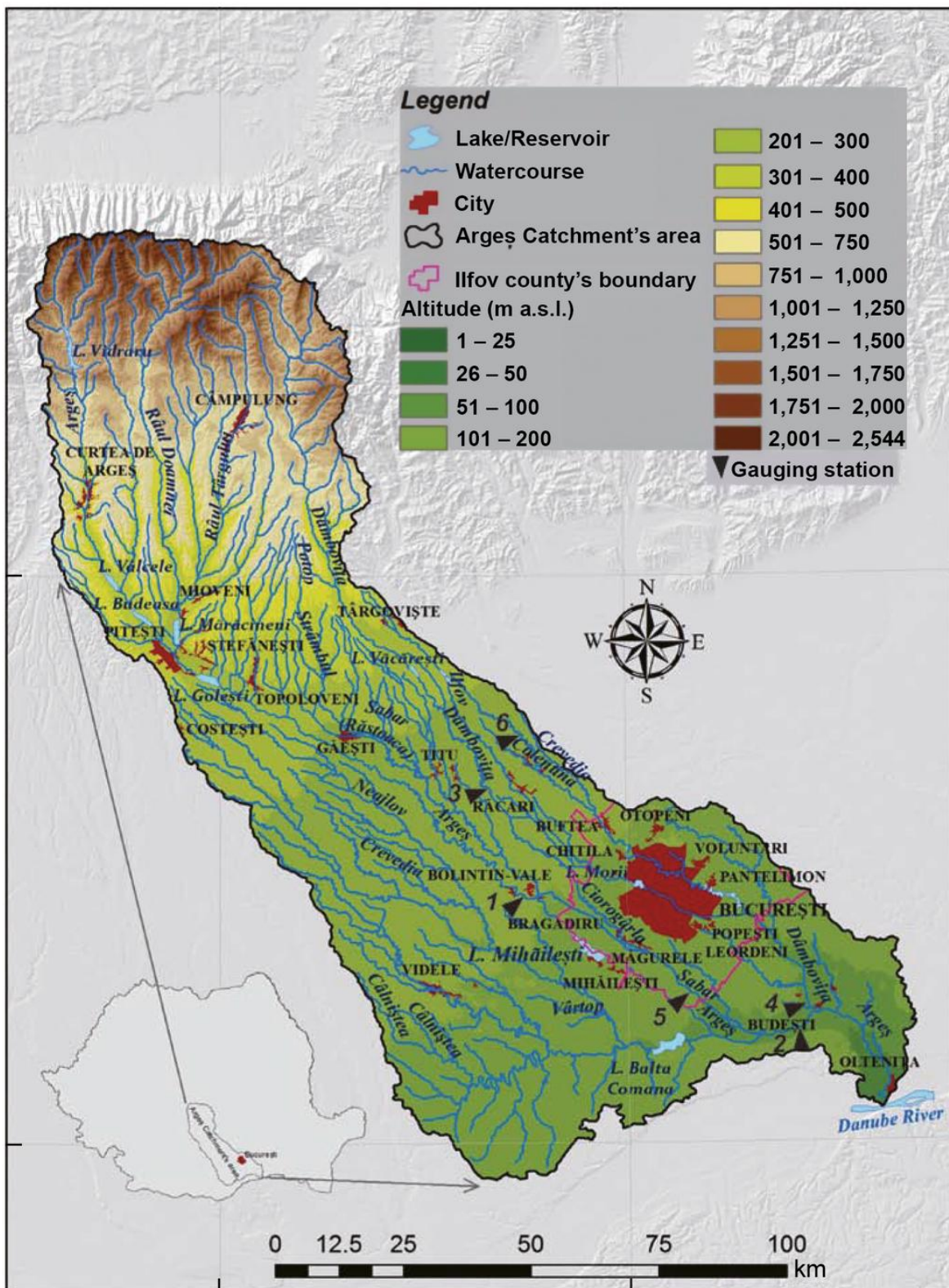


FIG 2 Bucharest before Romania



A City of Villages: this artist's reconstruction of Bucharest in 1847/50 shows the somewhat chaotic form of the 'city of villages' grouped around the bridges crossing the meandering River Dambovită. The alignment of the river itself was modified from the 19th Century when new regular streets began to be built. The historic core south of the river was destroyed by Ceausescu's redevelopments.

A City of Villages : 1847/54 Reconstructed view from the south (Source: golden-berg.blogspot.co.uk/2011/07/old-bucharest-maps.html The original is in the Museum of Romania in Bucharest.)

Fig 3 Old Bucharest



This often reproduced image gives an impression of the rural and village-like nature of Bucharest at the end of the 18th Century is dated both 1794 (in Cina²⁹⁹, 2010,p 85) and described as Mihai Voda Monastery and 1810 (New York Public Library Collection) as a ‘Royal Palace’ . Cina’s title is the correct one.

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Print Collection, The New York Public Library. "Palace at Bucharest" New York Public Library Digital Collections. Accessed June 19, 2017. <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47d9-60f5-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

²⁹⁹ Guiseppa Cina *Bucharest from Village to Metropolis* Capitel Bucharest 2010, will be an essential source

Fig 4 Revolutionary Romania- An Anglo Scottish model painted by a Hungarian exile in Paris



Constantin Daniel Rosenthal (Budapest, 1820-1851) **Revolutionary Romania** Oil on canvas 78,5 x 63,5 cm

“The painting was executed in Paris, where Rosenthal joined the exiled Romanian revolutionaries, following the toppling down of the Wallachian uprising by Ottoman troops. It is an allegorical representation of the social and national ideals many European intellectuals held for their respective peoples and countries. The painting shows Maria Rosetti turned to her left, dagger in one hand, Romanian flag in the other.

Wife of C. A. Rosetti, whom Rosenthal had befriended during their study years in Vienna, Mary, née Grant, was of a romantic, southern disposition despite her Scottish origin. She played an essential role in setting the Romanian revolutionaries free following their imprisonment aboard an Ottoman ship on the Danube. Her dedication and energy were an inspiration and turned her into a symbol of the revolutionary uprising in Wallachia. Little wonder that the Budapest-born Rosenthal made her into his muse.

The painting shows her dressed in the Romanian folk costume she disguised herself in while following the ship on which the Romanians were held hostage. The pathos of her posture is inspired by various romantic compositions Rosenthal was familiar with.

We can catch a glimpse of Maria Rosetti’s face in a small medalion in the middle of a still-life by Rosenthal. Could it be that the painter’s admiration for her was deeper than he could have openly admitted?”

Notes from National Museum of Art of Romania : Muzeul Național de Artă al României

(<http://mnar.arts.ro/en/discover/permanent-galleries/117-romanian-modern-art-gallery/discover-the-works-in-the-romanian-modern-art-gallery/289-rosenthal-revolutionary-romania- accessed july 2017>)



Constantin Daniel Rosenthal Romania_rupandu-si_catusele_pe_Campia_Libertatii ("Romania Breaking off Her Chains on the Field of Liberty")c. 1850

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/da/Rosenthal_-_Romania_rupandu-si_catusele_pe_Campia_Libertatii.jpg?1504682950944

Fig 5 Lorenzetti's *Allegories of Good and Bad Government* (1338)



Lorenzetti's *Allegories of Good and Bad Government* (1338), fresco, Salon of Nine (Council Room), Palazzo Pubblico, Siena

Fig 6 The ideal city



The Ideal City between 1480-1484. 3 wooden panels (originally in the Ducal Palace in Urbino, now in three different galleries : Berlin, Washington and Vienna so only rarely seen together: last in *The Renaissance from Brunelleschi to Michelangelo- The Representation of Architecture* Venice 1994)

Commissioned by the court of Federico da Montefeltro – artist is unknown, probably one of the painters who at the time revolved around the Duke of Montefeltro : **Piero della Francesca, Luciano Laurana, Francesco di Giorgio Martini, [Melozzo da Forlì](#).** or [Fra Carnevale](#),

Fig 7 Hans Vredeman de Vries

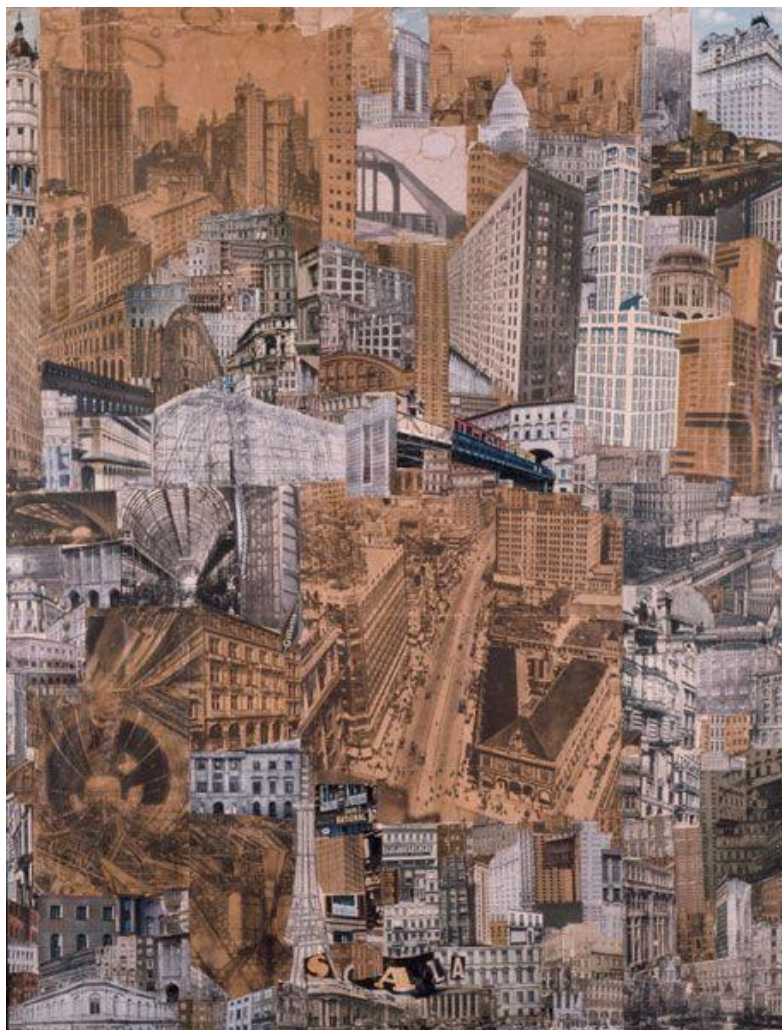


Palace with Musicians 1596 Oil on canvas, 135 x 174 cm Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



Architectural capriccio 1596-98 Oil on panel, 65 x 89 cm Private collection

Fig 8 Paul Citroen : Metropolis (city of my birth) 1923



Metropolis (City of My Birth) (Weltstadt [Meine Geburtsstadt]) Negative Date 1923 Print Date 1923–30
Medium Gelatin silver print Dimensions Image 8 × 6" (20.3 × 15.3 cm) Place Taken Weimar Credit Line
Thomas Walther Collection. Gift of Thomas Walther MoMA Accession Number 1651.2001 Copyright ©
2015 Paul Citroen/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York/Pictoright, Amsterdam



Paul Citroen, Letter to Francis Picabia, Bibliothèque Doucet, Paris. (www.dadart.com/dadaism/dada/022-dada-berlin.html)

FIG 9 Kazimierz Podsadecki *The Modern City – melting pot of life* (1928)



<http://rogowskiai.u.com/podsadecki-miasto/>

FIG 10 Montage and Modern Life

Alexander Alland :Photocollage Mural of Old and New Newark in Newark Public Library by Alexander Alland and Others *Old and New Newark* Newark NJ 1938



(Getty images)

FIG 11 The constructivist city – Leger and Delaunay



Robert Delaunay *Champs de Mars, La Tour rouge*, 1911, [Art Institute of Chicago](http://www.artinstituteofchicago.org/).



Ferdinand Leger "La Ville," ("The City"), oil on canvas, 1919, 91 x 117 1/2 inches, Philadelphia Museum of Art, A. E. Gallatin Collection <http://www.thecityreview.com/leger.html>

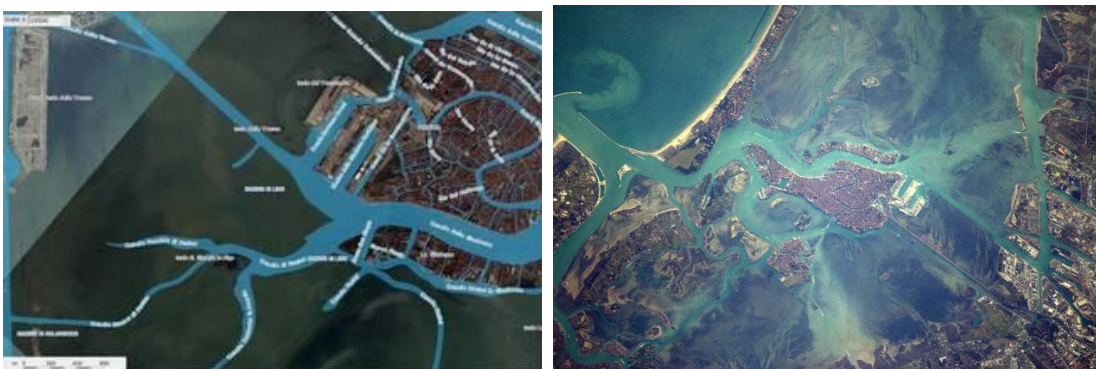
FIG 12 Images of Venice – the layering of images over time and changes in perspective and technology



Johannes and his school, c. 1400 manuscript Marco Polo sets out on his voyage Bodleian library
(bodleian.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/170/2016/02/treasures_z_9_MS_Bodl._264)



Jacopo de' Barbari, Venice (1500) – the map was printed from six original woodcut blocks totaling an impressive 1.3 x 2.8 m (4.3 x 9.3 ft).



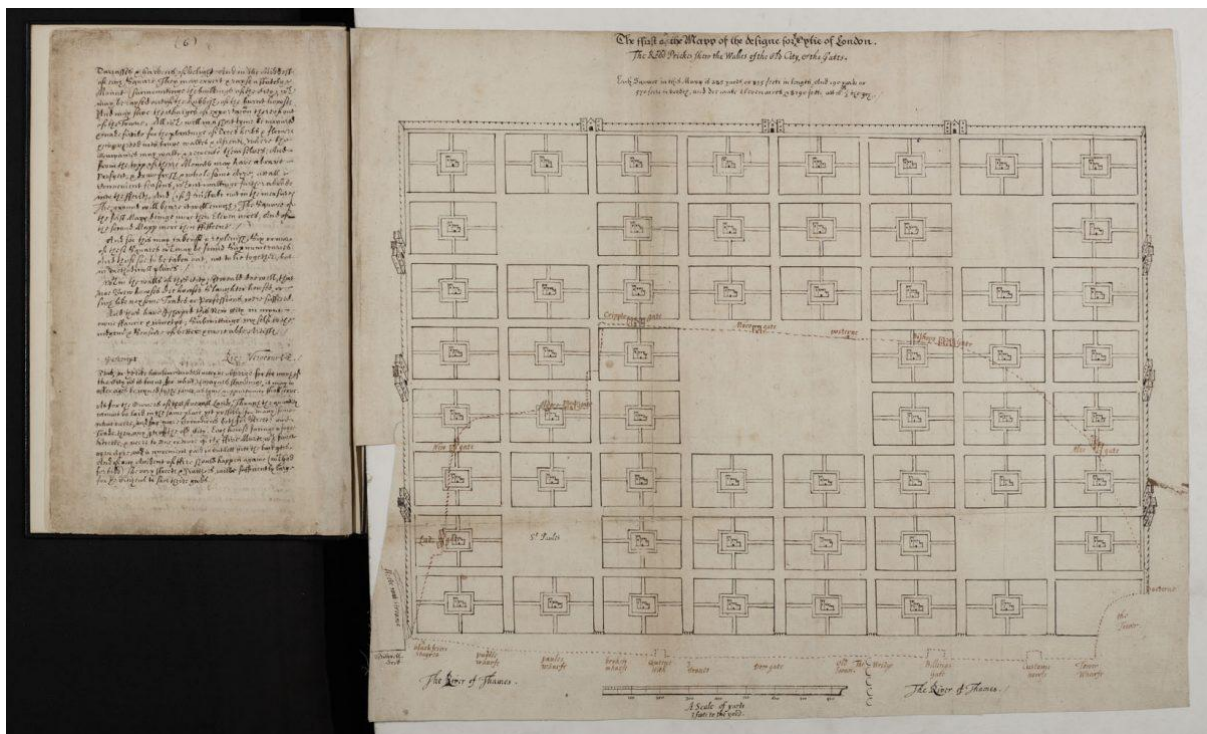
Monitoring the Health of the Lagoon of Venice From the Space Station

Screen capture of the Atlas of the Lagoon, showing geo-referenced astronaut photograph ISS023-E-13766 with a portion of the canal system (bright blue) added as an additional layer. The base image is an orthophoto mosaic (image created from a series of geometrically corrected images). Note that the site is currently only available in Italian
Credits: NASA

FIG 13 London as it might have been – Peypes map of the destruction and a little know plan for rebuilding on a regular grid by Richard Newcourt



<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/zmap-4-18-e1402061133285.jpg>



https://ichef.bbci.co.uk/news/976/cpsprodpb/EF6C/production/_88029216_fae08805-772b-4a0c-ad7f-c68712d87e8c.jpg

FIG 14 The avoidable demoltion of Vacaresti Monastery



Its final days as a prison (<http://www.themidlandhostel.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/021.jpg>)



Demolition of the final fragments – note the open space around its and the new housing at a distance.

(<http://bestofromania.eu/vacaresti-monastery/>)

FIG15 Occult Architecture : unseen alternatives for the ‘House of the People’ that ‘did not exist’- some of the dozen or so schemes illustrated over six pages by Zahariade from 1977 through to 1981.



Source : <http://spynews.ro/galerie/imagini-fabuloase-cum-ar-fi-putut-arata-casa-poporului-daca-nicolae-ceausescu-accepta-alte-propuneri-cum-ti-se-par-ideile-id52343-play83831.html>

FIG16 The ordinary city – Robert Powter *Greyshot Road, Battersea* (Museum of London Collection oil on canvas, 76x 105 cm 1978-9)



<https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/grayshott-road-battersea-london-50649>

FIG17 'Ashcan School'



[George Luks](#), *Street Scene*, 1905, [Brooklyn Museum](#) George Benjamin Luks (American, 1867-1933). *Street Scene (Hester Street)*, 1905. Oil on canvas, 25 13/16 x 35 7/8 in. (65.5 x 91.1 cm). Brooklyn Museum, Dick S. Ramsay Fund, 40.339

Source -

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/aa/George_Luks._Street_Scene_%28Hester_Street%29%2C40.339.jpg/1280px George_Luks._Street_Scene_%28Hester_Street%29%2C40.339.jpg

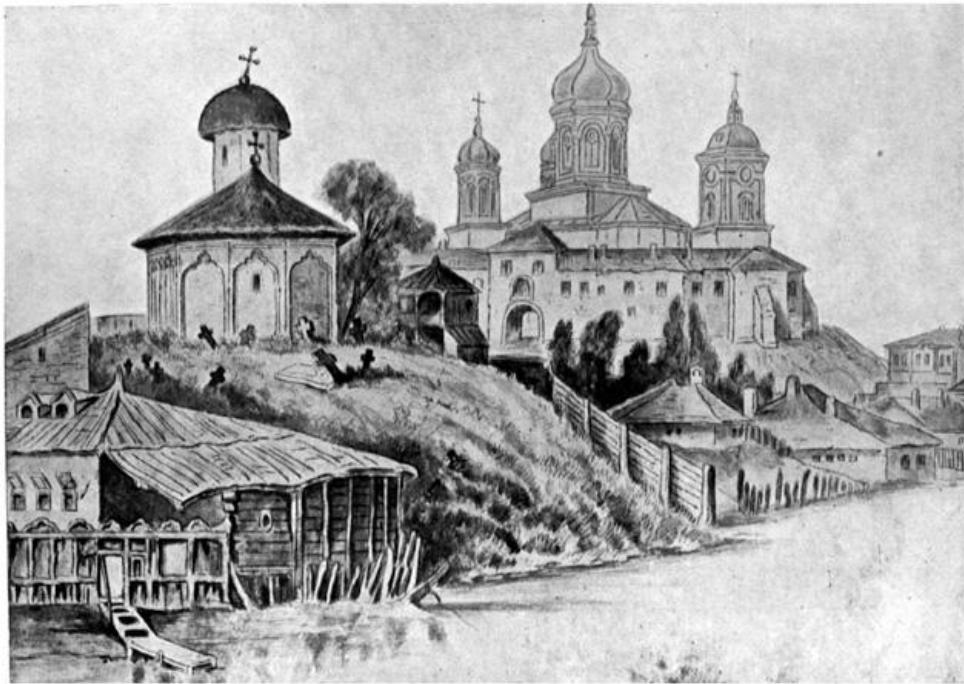
FIG18 *La rappresentazione della città nella pittura italiana*



<https://pictures.abebooks.com/BIBLIORFEO/md/md22449881057.jpg>

This detail from Vittore Carpaccio *La Predica di santo Stefano* (1514, Louvre) used on the cover of *La rappresentazione della città nella pittura italiana* shows how an imaginary 'Jerusalem' is built up from familiar Venetian with the addition of some minarets, Eastern costumes and some exotic animals. It is nevertheless still an essentially Italian scene.

FIG19 Carol Popp Szathmary – free watercolour townscapes



Biserica lui Bucur and Mănăstirea Radu-Vodă, 1860

<http://supravietuitor.files.wordpress.com/2013/02/carol-popp-de-szathmari-biserica-lui-bucur-and-mc483nc483stirea-radu-vodc4831860.jpg>

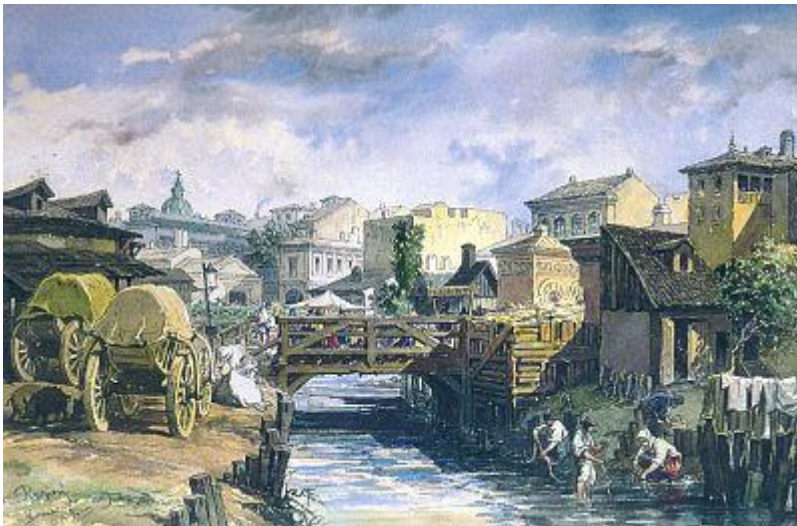


Biserica din Bucuresti <http://supravietuitor.files.wordpress.com/2013/02/carol-popp-de-szathmary-biserica-din-bucuresti.jpg>

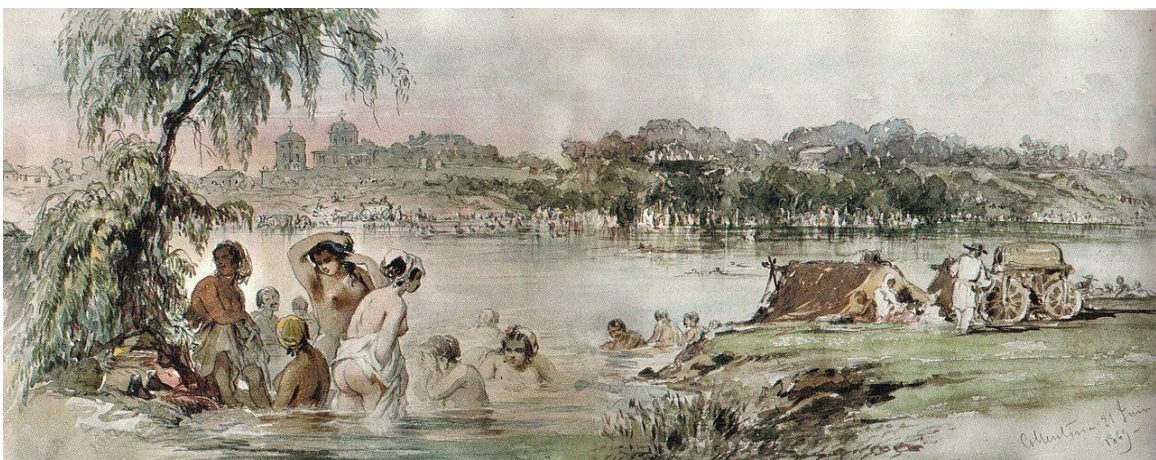
FIG20 The disappearing semi- rural scenes of Bucharest captured by Preziosi in 1869



http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-v9AgGCaBljE/Ur87YYGmyil/AAAAAAS7Y/OQmPDFwDgMA/s1600/06_Amedeo_Preziosi_Bucharest.jpg



River Dambovită https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/c6/Dambovită_preziosi.jpg/400px-Dambovită_preziosi.jpg



Bathers in the [Colentina river](#), in the 1800's well outside the city – now integral.

Market scenes



<http://bucuresti.infarom.ro/pictura19/013017.jpg>



traditional May fair, <http://romania.orchesis-portal.org/images/S4716.jpg>



<http://www.george-damian.ro/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Bucuresti-1869-01.jpg>



<http://www.george-damian.ro/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Bucuresti-1869-06.jpg>

FIG 21 Fires and Floods



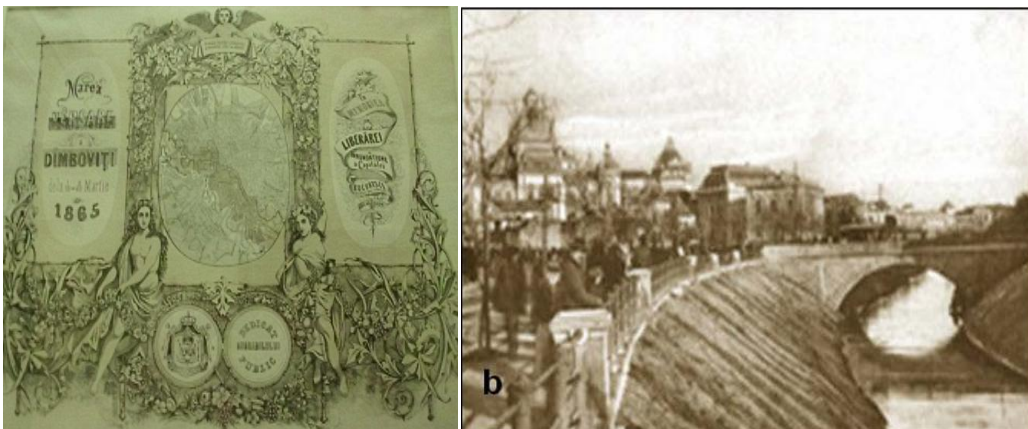
Great Fire of Bucharest, 1847 <http://www.show.ro/ucuresti/>



The flood of 1864 (authors photograph of engraving in [Bucharest Municipality Museum - Sutu Palace](#))

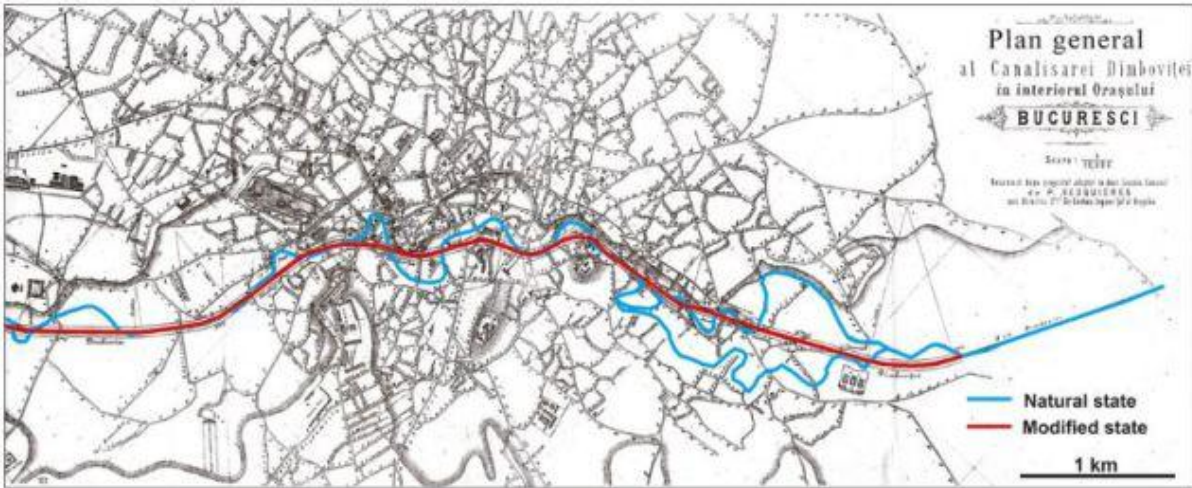


The city of Bucharest, the capital of the United Danubian Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, has just been visited by a great misfortune. The Dimbowitza, a rivulet so unimportant in size that it can easily be forded in summer at almost any part, has been swollen by the enormous masses of snow which fell in February to such incredible proportions that the city now appears situated, not upon the banks but in the centre of a mighty stream like the Danube itself. Nearly one half of the straggling extent of Bucharest is submerged, and the houses seem ranged less in streets than upon the borders of canals. Many of these houses continue to fall, as the waves dash huge bergs of ice and half-melted snow against the yielding walls. The disaster has chiefly overtaken the poorer class of the population, whose wretched huts border the banks of the river and constitute the low-lying quarters of the town, while the palaces and massive houses of the wealthy in the upper districts are comparatively safe. All the bridges are submerged, and intercourse with the sufferers (who have taken refuge in the upper stories of their houses, or, where these do not exist, have fled to the roofs) is only possible by means of boats and rafts. It is to be regretted that no precautions were taken by the Government to avert this misfortune. "The Illustrated London News" – 01st of April 1865



(left) Celebratory engraving of the Great Changes to the Dambovitza River 1865 (authors photograph of engraving in [Bucharest Municipality Museum - Sutu Palace](#))

(right) the newly canalised Dambovitza in the late 19th Century (<https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/736x/60/ff/3b/60ff3b62b8672938950c37376badb53b--slums-bridges.jpg~>)



Detailed scale plan of the modifications to the River Dambovită

<https://hiddenwatersblog.files.wordpress.com/2016/12/damb-map.jpg?w=636>

Fig 22 The electrification of the tramways **1894** : The first electric line for trams is launched on the route Obor-Cotroceni.



(authors photograph of engraving in [Bucharest Municipality Museum - Sutu Palace](#))



(http://www.ratb.ro/images/meniu_all/1929-vagonsimeringcuscoalademanipulanti.jpg)

FIG 23 'Micul Paris' of the East -1



The new Athene Palace Hotel http://www.theartofliving.info/img/article/picture/2019/min_micul-paris-una-dintre-capitalele-mondiale-



[http://femeide10.ro/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/image-42.](http://femeide10.ro/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/image-42)

https://s3.amazonaws.com/media.artslant.com/work/image/202431/slide/compozitie_bucurestii_vechi.jpg



The State Bank on Lipscani Street [http://only-romania.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/str.-lipscani_L.](http://only-romania.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/str.-lipscani_L)



Brancoveni Terrace <http://bestofromania.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/spitalul-brancovenesc2.jpg>

FIG 24 'Micul Paris' of the East -2 Colour postcards from Cina (2010, pp88-89)



Fig 25 The 19th Century Boulevards of Bucharest ...



https://img0.etsystatic.com/159/0/13871141/il_570xN.1072705996_7s2u.jpg

....but there are no grand painted scenes.



Camille Pissarro, The Boulevard Montmartre on a Winter Morning, 1897, oil on canvas, 64.8 x 81.3 cm
(Metropolitam Museum of Art, New York)

<https://ka-perseus-images.s3.amazonaws.com/2d653a0b76080969d5fd5cb4d89f54a7d50e14a6.jpg>

Fig 26 The Devil's slum



www.alamy.com - J4H5AK

Stefan Luchian : Mahalaua dracului 1898

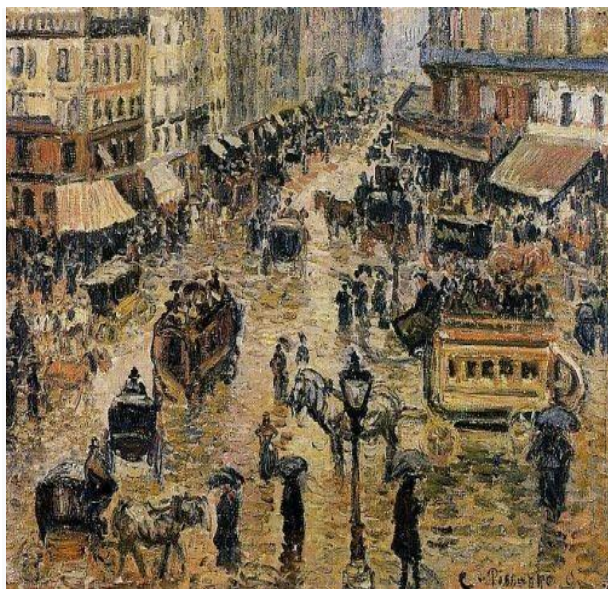
Fig 27 The Cafe Society of the Romanian symbolists



La Oteteleșanu ("Oteteleșanu's") or *La berărie* ("In the Beer-house"), 1915 satirical painting by the traditionalist [Ștefan Dimitrescu](#)

Ștefan Dimitrescu (1886-1933) - "La Oteteleșanu" ("Oteteleșanu's [Terrace]"), oil on cardboard, 57x82.5cm, signed in brown, bottom right side, dated 1915. Also known as *La berărie* ("In the Beer-House"), and described as a satire of bourgeois life in Bucharest (see Ionel Jianu, *Ștefan Dimitrescu*, ESPLA, Bucharest, 1954, p.14-16).

Fig 28 Nicolae Darascu Calea Vitoriei pe ploaie



Nicolae Darascu Calea Vitoriei pe ploaie (Catalogul Expoziției Retrospective "Nicolae Dărăscu", Muzeul de Artă al Republicii Socialiste România, București, 1966)

“After the end of World War I, Dărăscu returned to Bucharest, resuming his activity. As a founding member of the "Arta Română" society, the main exhibition activity of the years after 1918 will materialize within this society, moments when Dărăscu's creation knew a refreshment. The urban landscape would become predominant, war limiting both travels (from France and northern Italy) and the financial means of important itineraries. Iași, then Bucharest became inspiration for an artist working in the Impressionist manner, urban guides being an interesting element of study. In the case of the famous works made in rainy Bucharest, both in oil and in watercolor, the study of the impression prevails, Darsaucu painting several variants with Victory Road in the rain, reminding of Monet's impressionist manner, to surprise nature through a study of light, whether influenced by the moment of the day or by the atmosphere. Variants of the work can be found in the collection of the National Art Museum of Romania (inv. 2983) and in the collection of the Bucharest Museum. (IP)”
<http://www.artmark.ro/arhiva-rezultate-licitatii/licita-ia-de-primavara-241-2017/nicolae-darascu-calea-victoriei-pe-ploaie.html>

Fig 29 The Other side of Micul Paris



Géza Kádár (1878-1952) https://media.mutualart.com/Images/2013_07/25/12/125137519/161756ee-3d3c-4fc3-9c1d-b7a583013087_570.jpeg



Rudolf_Schweitzer_Cumpana_Mahala_De_Bucuresti.

http://artindex.ro/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Rudolf_Schweitzer_Cumpana_Mahala_De_Bucuresti.jpg



CHELLER Jean, Winter in Town,



CHELLER Jean, In the Suburb



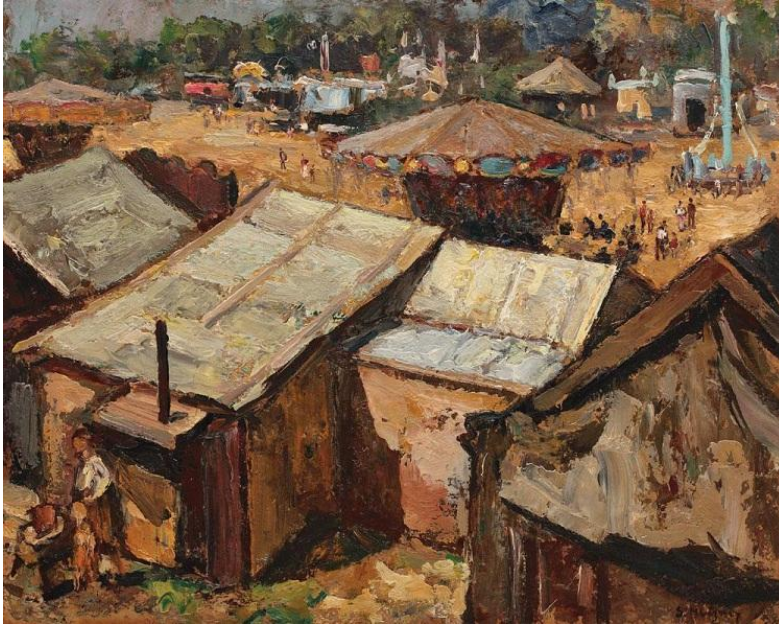
Jean Cheller (1911-1952), "Mahala",

(All Cheler: <https://image.invaluable.com/housePhotos/Yair/83/556683/H5649-L65310935.jpg>)



Josif Rosenblut - Old Houses in Bucharest (Filitis Street)

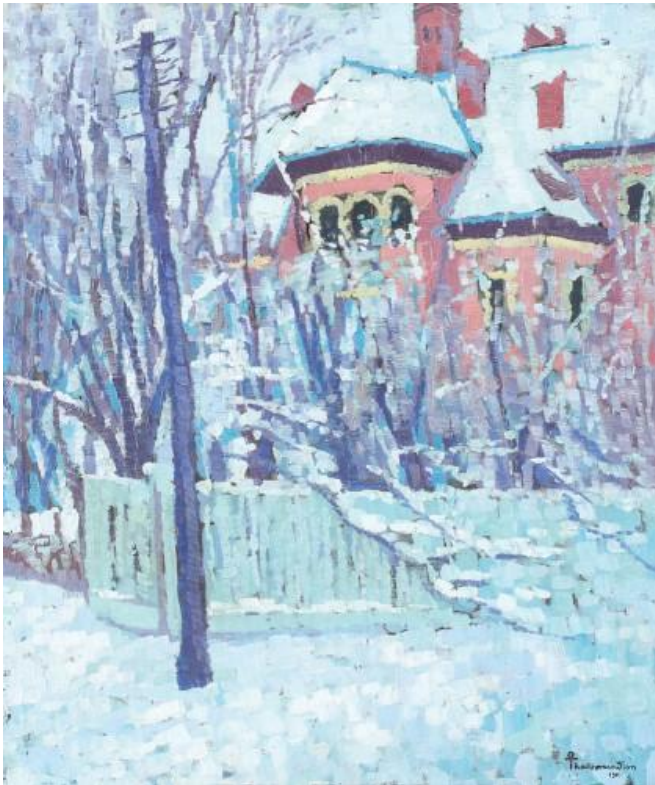
http://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/artmark.ro/catalog/product/cache/1/image/500x500/17f82f742ffe127f42dca9de82fb58b1/1/0/101_33.jpg



Samuel Mutzner - Iarmaroc in Mosi

http://artindex.ro/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Samuel_Mutzner_iarmaroc_de_mosi1.jpg

FIG 30 Impressionist Bucharest



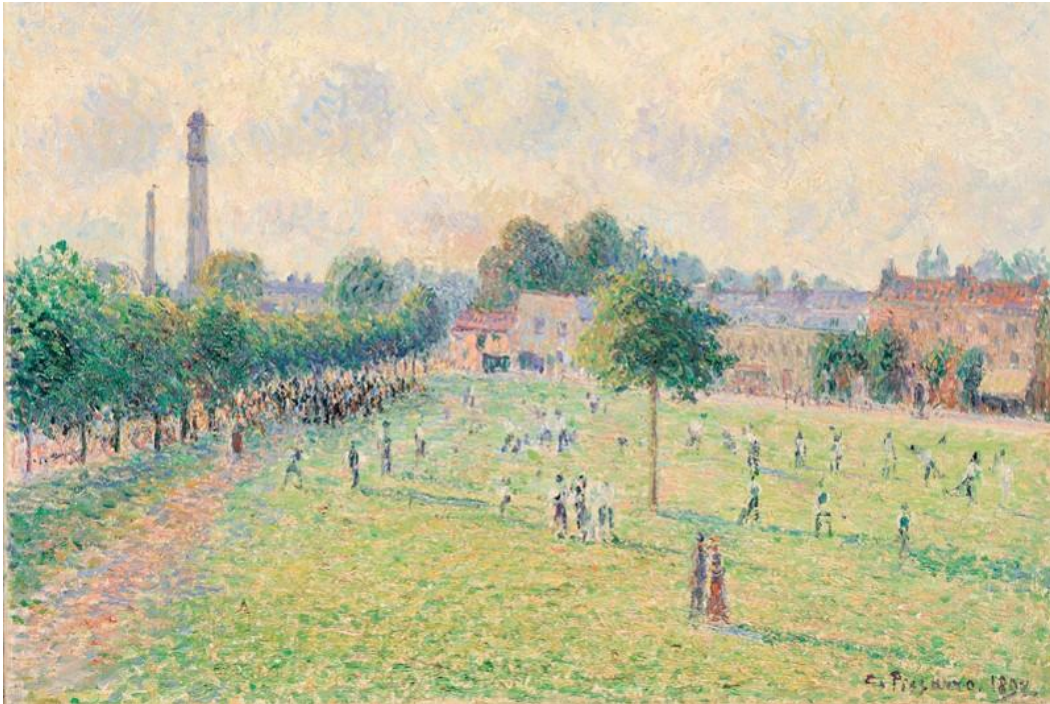
Ion Theodorescu Sion - Winter in Bucharest

http://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/artmark.ro/catalog/product/cache/1/image/500x500/17f82f742ffe127f42dca9de82fb58b1/2/_/2_98.jpg



Iosif Iser - Peisaj cu case in Bucuresti /

<http://www.artline.ro/files/mltems/image/5/906997107049027.-iosif-iser--peisaj-cu->



Kew Green, Camille Pissarro, 1892. (c) Musee d'Orsay.

<https://lovelondonloveculture.files.wordpress.com/2017/07/wdywodeyxzkuanbn.jpeg>



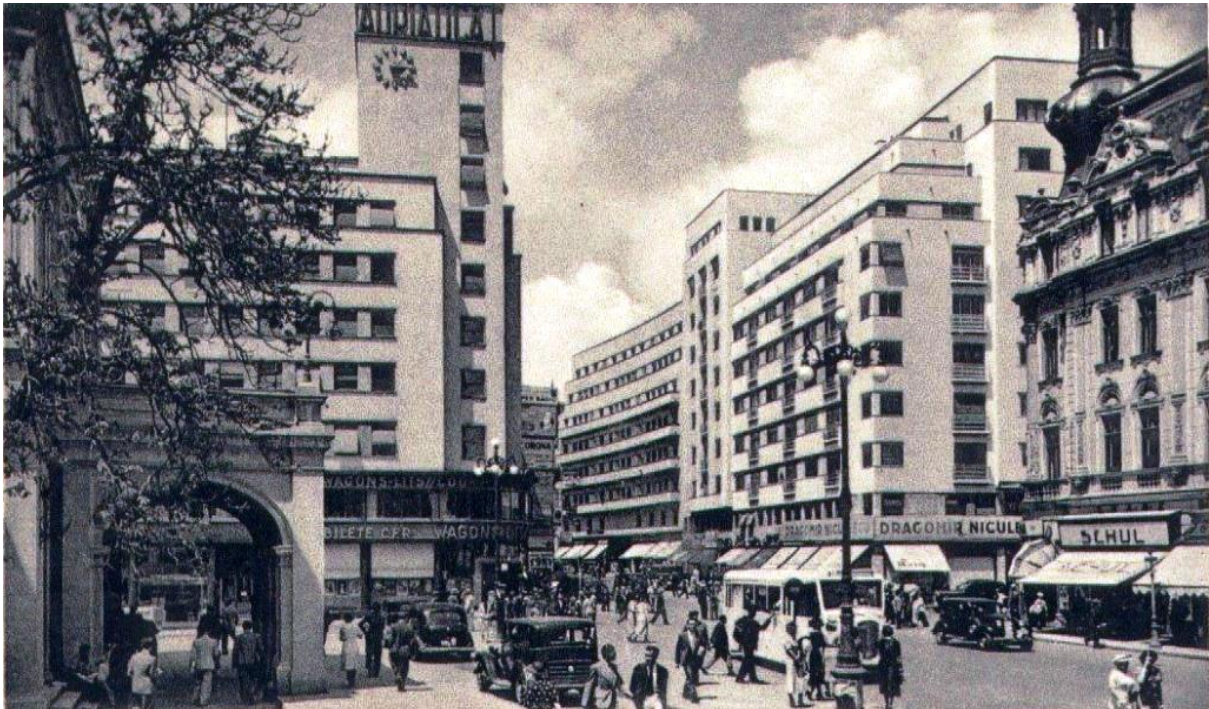
.....Bucharest as a garden city (authors photo 2013)³⁰⁰

³⁰⁰ The idea of Bucharest as a place of gardens – which may seem surprising given its Communist image – is discussed in [Florin Machedon](#), [Luminita Machedon](#) & [Ernie Scoffham](#) *Inter-war Bucharest: city in a garden* Pages 249-275 | Published online: 02 Dec 2010 [Planning Perspectives](#) Volume 14, 1999 - [Issue 3](#)

FIG 31 The Truth about Little Paris



Fig 32 Bulevardului I C Bratianu



<http://guideandtravel.pl/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/91.jpg>



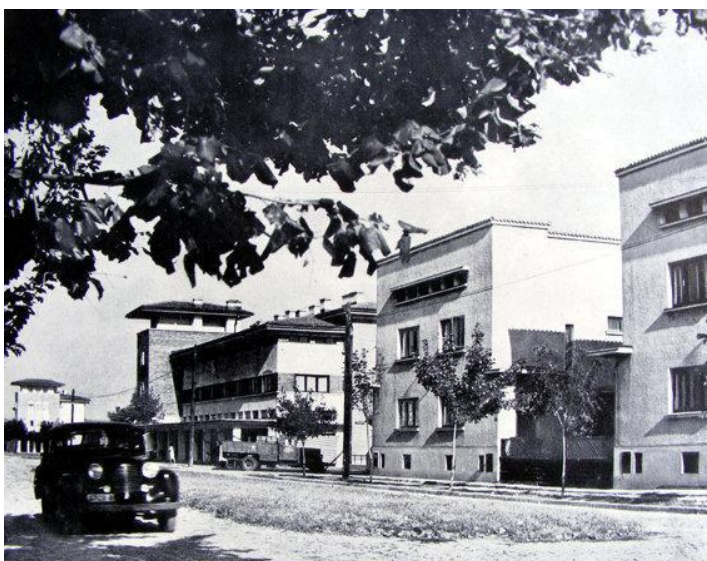
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/88/Bratianu_si_Magheru2.jpg

Fig 33 Zona rezidentiala Vatra Luminoasa,

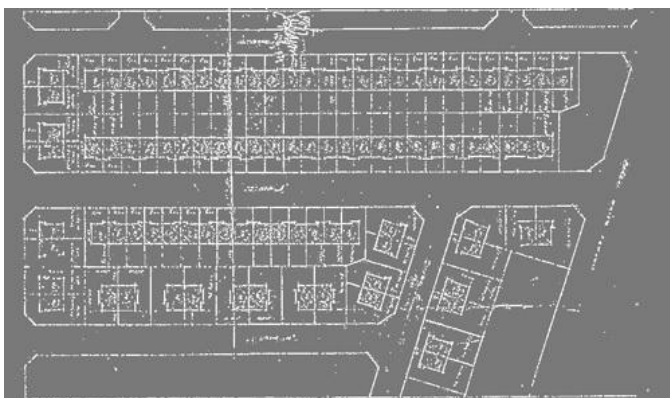


Poze vechi Bucuresti, Vatra Luminoasa, la inceput

<https://www.fotoshooting.ro/wp-content/uploads/Poze-vechi-Bucuresti-Vatra-Luminoasa-la-inceput....jpg>



Cartierul Vatra Luminoasă http://photos.wikimapia.org/p/00/02/60/75/90_big.jpg



<https://ocasapezi.files.wordpress.com/2009/02/vatra-luminoasa-ieri-3.jpg?w=500&zoom=2>

Today however it is poorly maintained and showing at least superficial signs of decay and neglect, and has been surrounded by newer more desirable developments.



<https://ocasapezi.files.wordpress.com/2009/02/detaliu-18.jpg?w=500&zoom=2>

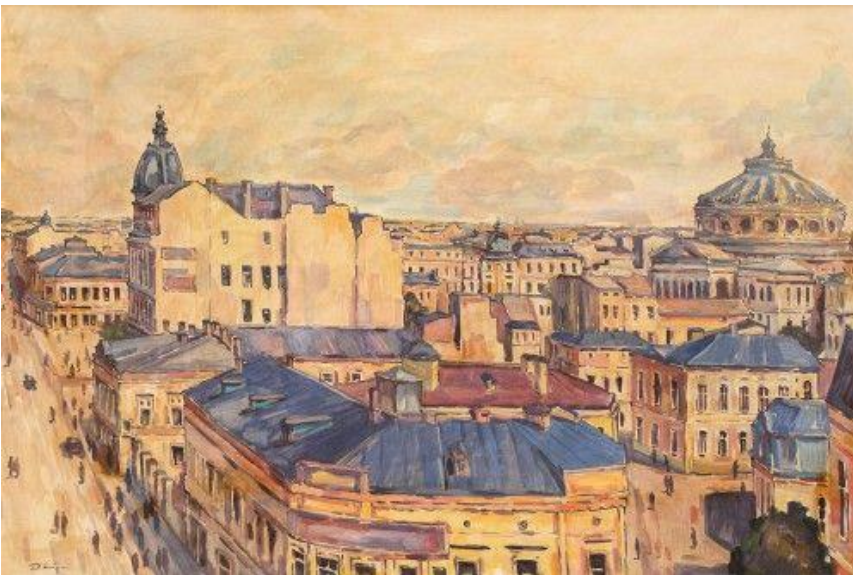
Fig 34 The Telephone Palace

Palatul Telefoanelor, the Telephone Palace of Bucharest City, is a historic office building located on Victoriei Avenue. The 52.5-m high building was built in 1929-1933, in a style reminiscent of the US skyscrapers, in an Art Deco style. Currently, Palatul Telefoanelor houses the headquarters of the Romtelecom telecommunications operator and is still a landmark building.



Alexander Moser, Panoramic View of Bucharest with the Telephone Palace, Casa de licitatie ALIS,

<http://www.artvalue.com/photos/auction/0/65/65012/padina-alex-alexander-moser-19-panoramic-view-of-bucharest-wi-4922852-500-500-4922852.jpg>



Nicolae Darascu <http://media.findartinfo.com/images/artwork/2015/7/a003832712-001.jpg>



<https://www1.agerpres.ro/media/images/2014-02/021517452105731782.jpg>



By Nicolae Ionescu - The Library of the Romanian Academy, via <http://www.maerlant.be>, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=18300698>

Designed on behalf of SART by the Romanian architect of Dutch origin [Edmond Van Saanen Algi](#) and built over the course of about 20 months in 1931–1933, it was the first major modernist building on Bucharest's [Calea Victoriei](#),^[5] the street of which Tudor Octavian wrote, "this is how the whole of Bucharest would look if we had been allowed..., if its builders had been clever enough..."^[6] *Bucureștiul Interbelic*, p. 5 (pages unnumbered).



mia1107.blogspot.com

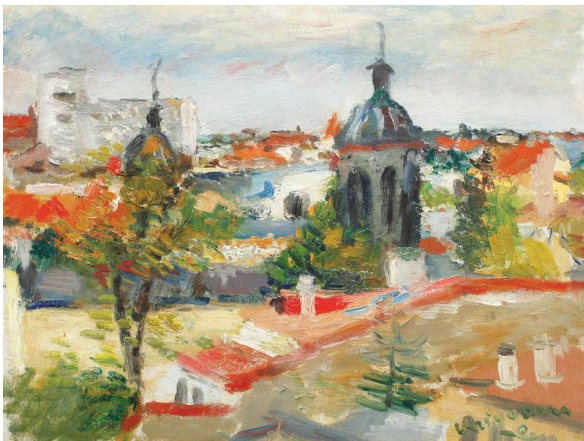
Fig 35 Lucian Grigorescu – the vibrating townscape



Peisaj din București



- Bucureștiul Vechi dinspre



Vedere din atelier (Acoperișuri din București)

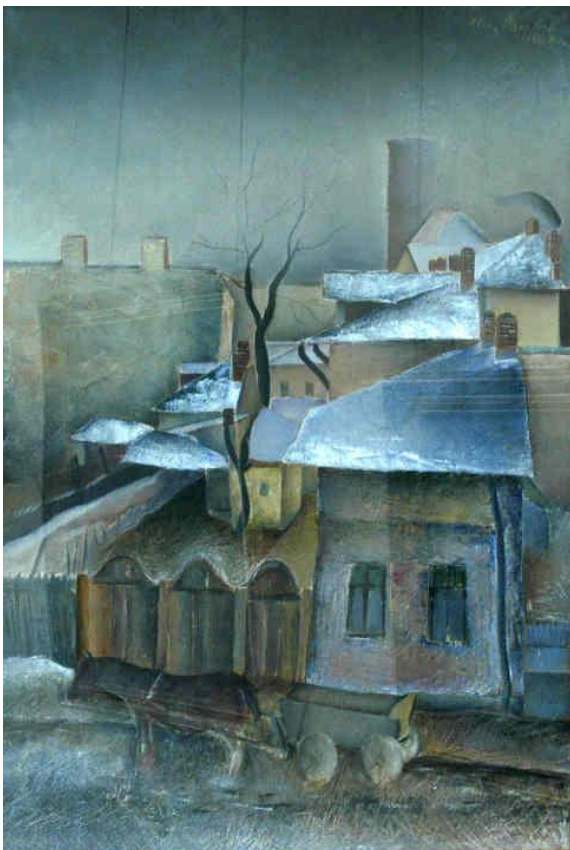
<https://lh4.googleusercontent.com/-o3PUugvh9YY/UVRq5HSfqBI/AAAAAABi6w/Tnf-kWBN27w/s912/Lucian%2520Grigorescu%2520-%2520Peisaj%2520din%2520Bucure%25C5%259Fti..jpg>

Fig 36 – Fragmentation of the ordinary street scene : Max Herman Maxy and Alexandru Phoebus.



Max Herman Maxy St. George Place in Crotches, 1935,

<http://www.europeana.eu/portal/exhibitions/pictures/1439/show/1600x1600/St+-George-Place-in-Crotches.jpeg?sh=2713410aa2f3d2ad>

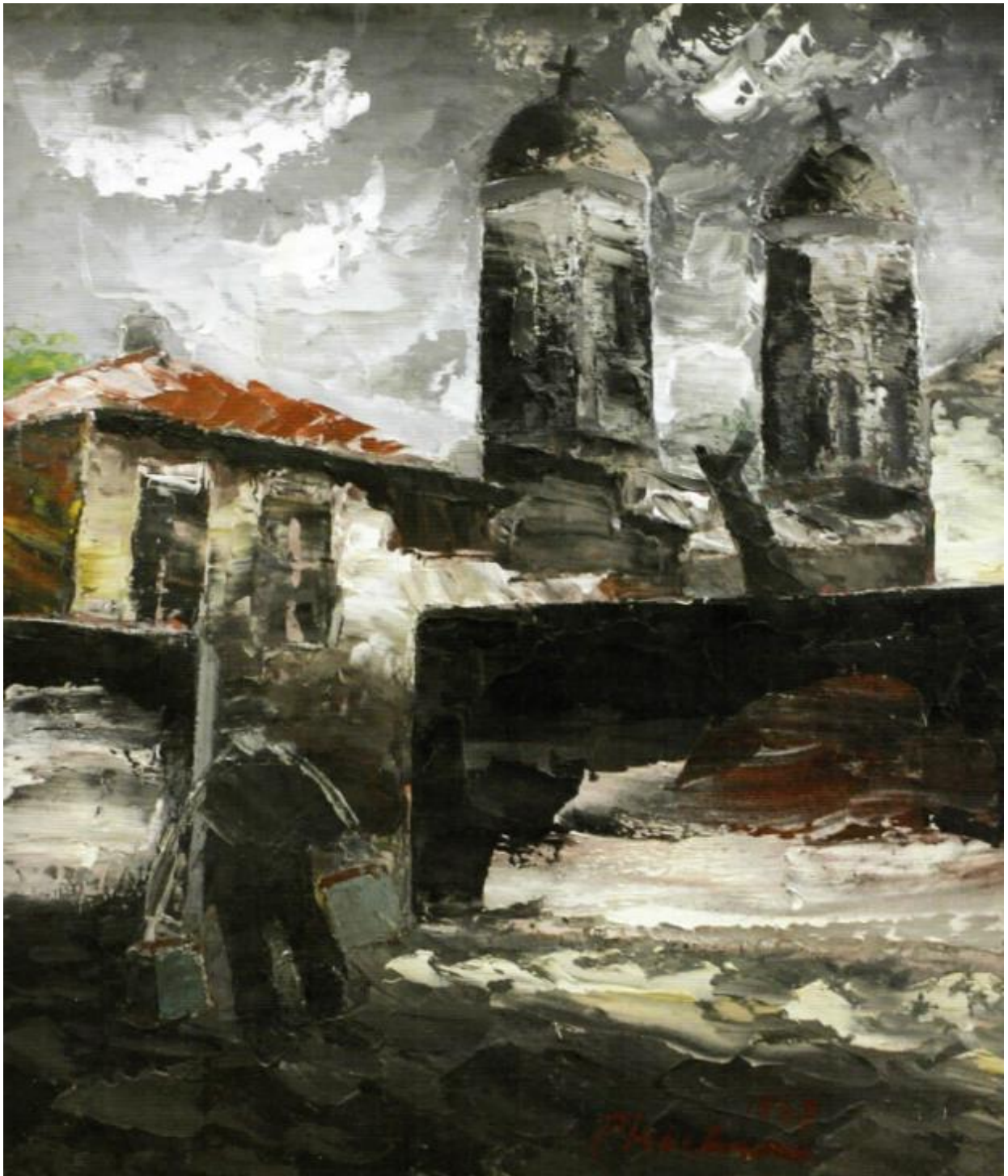


Phoebus, Alexandru. Peisaj bucureștean http://clasate.cimec.ro/medium/ARP_6908500_470-3.jpg



Alexandru Phoebus – "Stradă mizeră" – ulei/pânză, dimensiuni 72,7 x 55,4 cm –

<https://aegyssus.ro/adopta-o-pictura-editia-a-ii-a/>



Alexandru Phoebus
Vecchio paesaggio di Bucarest
Old landscape from Bucharest
1943
Olio su cartone / Oil on cardboard
54x47 cm
MAV, Galați

Fig 37 Frozen Movement frozen moments



Street Scene(artist and title untraced though photo taken in Romanian National Gallery 2011)

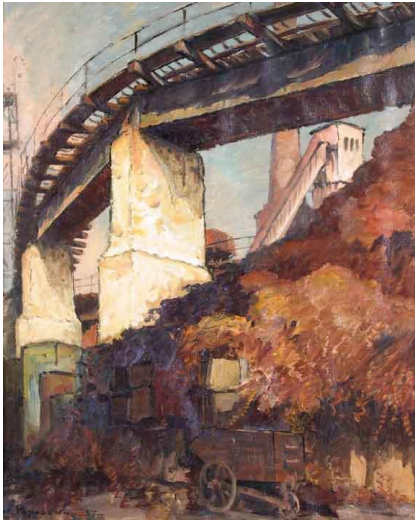


Jean Alexandru Steriadi *The Whitewashers* #

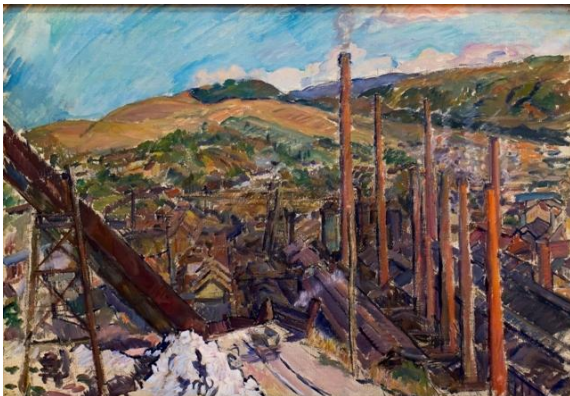


Marcel Languedoc *Courtyard with washing* Oil on cardboard 1930 (detail)

Fig 38 The Romance of industry



Popescu, Ștefan; Peisaj industrial (Reșița) - Muzeul Național Brukenthal –
http://clasate.cimec.ro/medium/ARP_6966500_608-4.jpg



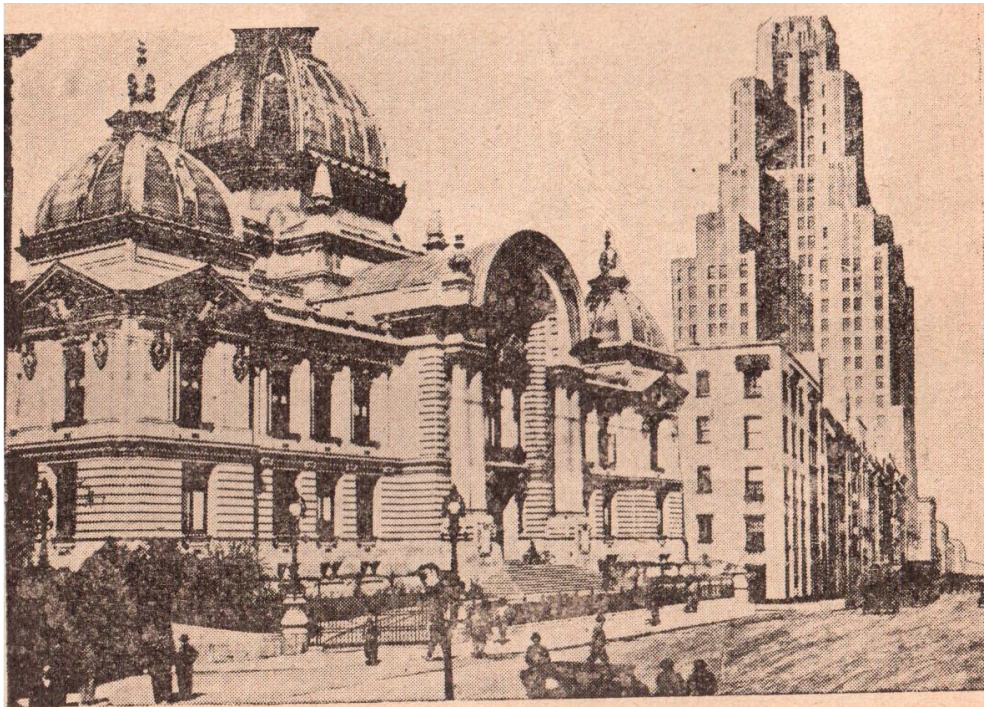
Jean Alexandru Steriadi „Furnale la Reșița”,
http://imageromania.ro/images/detailed/8/ MG_0494a.jpg?t=1431083585



Petre Iorgulescu-Yor Industrial Landscape
[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/e/e4/Petre_Iorgulescu_Yor -
_Peisaj_industrial.jpg/250px-Petre_Iorgulescu_Yor - Peisaj_industrial.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/e/e4/Petre_Iorgulescu_Yor_-_Peisaj_industrial.jpg/250px-Petre_Iorgulescu_Yor_-_Peisaj_industrial.jpg)

Fig 39 Bucharest as it might have been (See also Appendix 4)

Inter-war visionary designing a city of future in cohabitation with its old soul

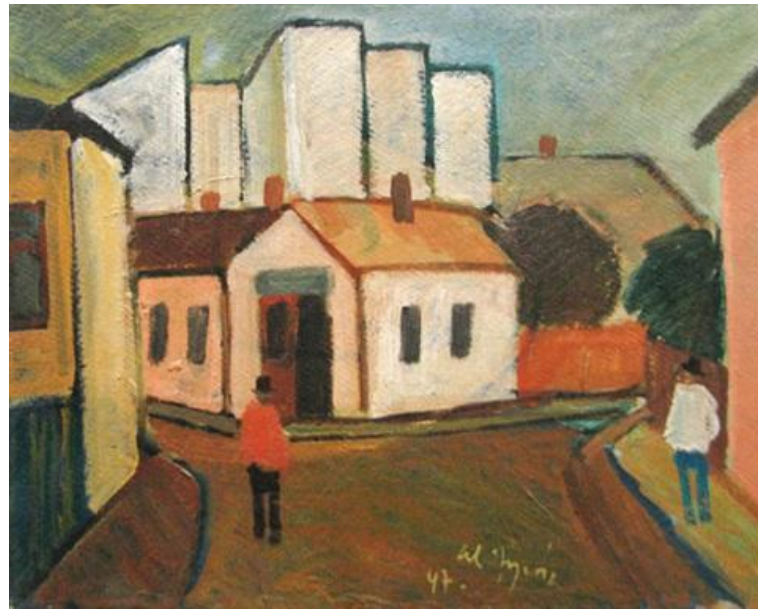


Casa de Depuneri rămasă monument istoric la sfârșitul
secolului nostru
(Cititorii ne vor putea controla la anul... 2000)



http://www.cotidianul.ro/images/3_miercuri.jpg

Fig 40 The Bleakness of the post war years :the empty streets of Alexandru Țipoi



Citadine, 1947 28 x 35 cm. http://www.artvalue.com/image.aspx?PHOTO_ID=4456012



Street Corner 1950



Strada <https://i.pinimg.com/564x/dc/74/75/dc7475721e0819145a7a7c5f78113703.jpg>



http://www.artvalue.com/image.aspx?PHOTO_ID=4456012&width=500&height=500

Fig 41 The new city and its heroic dimensions.



Marius Bunescu Building site (oil on canvas 0.6m x 1.87m)

<http://www.lapunkt.ro/wp-content/gallery/protest/2.-Marius-Bunescu-Bucures%CC%A6ti-i%CC%82n-reconstruct%CC%A6ie-1959-1.jpg>



Gheorghe Spiridon *New Buildings in Bucharest* Oil on cardboard, 0.830x1.010, (1)960



Eugenia Stanescu *In Piata* oil on cardboard 1978

from : Vaisle Savona *Arta Naiva in Romania* Bucharest, Editura Meridiane 1980 p69



Romania during Communism <http://www.michaeltotten.com/images/Communist%20Romania.jpg>

Fig 42 Ceausescu's city The Glorious projects



<http://sunchasers.sunglasscurator.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/ceausescu-tablou01.jpg>



https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcS-bljiBEN92Cfpr8G2VTXK6_M840LHYzNYJdGoc2-WjPNV57kF



This image is unusual as it shows the Ceausescus in a primitive icon like style linked by a red banner and holding a model of the Palace building between them with a hammer and a cycle in their other hand.

<https://i.pinimg.com/564x/0f/1a/5c/0f1a5c19ce31f3873567746028cc91f9.jpg>

Fig 43 Implied indecision is not an option



Source : Magda Radu *Art and Politics: considering some of Ion Grigorescu's films and photographs*

(Magda Radu *Art and Politics: considering some of Ion Grigorescu's films and photographs* Paper presented at Technology and photography in transition - International Symposium (Conference - New Europe College, Bucharest) May 11, 2007 www.2020.ro/resources/files/ArtandPolitics.pdf)

FIG 44 Bucureștiul meu iubit

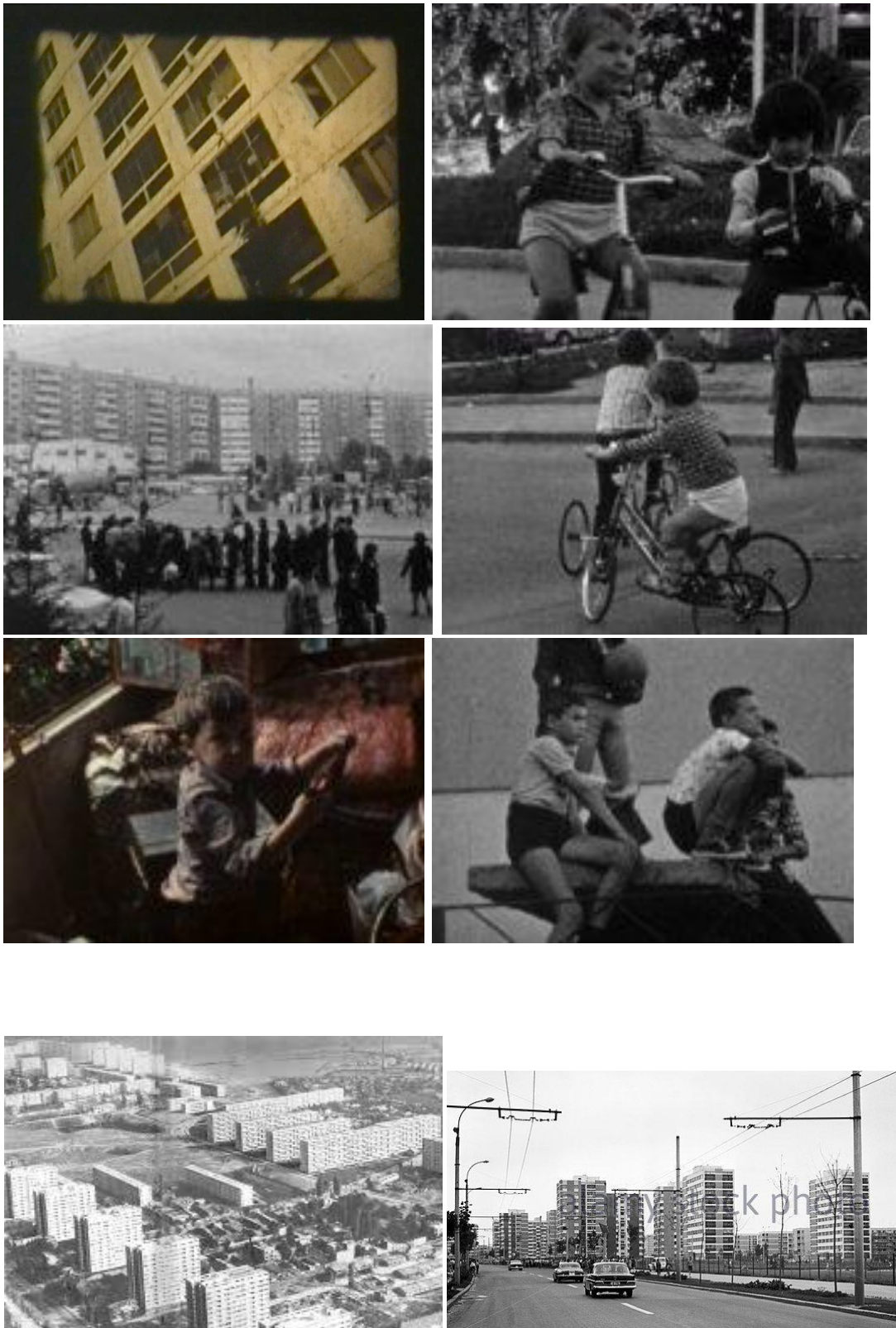


Gica Petrescu - Bucurestiul Meu Iubit



Frames from Ion Grigorescu my beloved Bucharest

Fig 45 Bata Alba



Above – Images from Grigorescu’s film Bata Alba (1979)

Below – Official views

Fig 46 Scenes of the Golden Age : Stefan Constantinescu



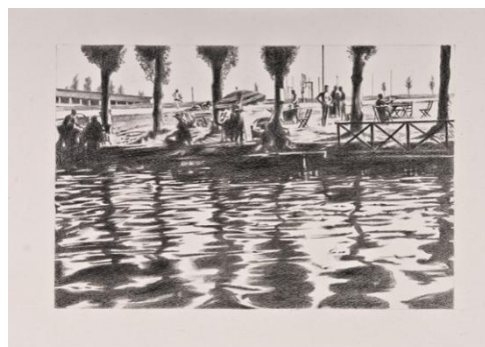
New Residents oil on canvas, 78x73 cm



The Detergent Department

oil on canvas, 55x76 cm

[httpconstantinescu.com/files/gimms/infinite_blue_18.png](http://constantinescu.com/files/gimms/infinite_blue_18.png) http://www.stefan-constantinescu.com/files/gimms/infinite_blue_16.png



http://www.stefan-constantinescu.com/files/gimms/infiniteblue_drawing03.png



http://www.stefan-constantinescu.com/files/gimms/TheGoldenAge_03.jpg



<https://i.pinimg.com/564x/48/bc/13/48bc13bdfbf23aa7f72c8d56d5672751.jpg>



http://www.stefan-constantinescu.com/files/gimms/TheGoldenAge_05.jpg

Three pages from *The Golden Age for Children*

Fig 47 New Axes



Ion Grigorescu, Vitan-Ceausescu, 1994, Super 8 mm film transferred on DVD, 50 min (upper image scanned reproduction, lower http://plan-b.ro/files/gimms/72_1.jpg)



The 'Vitan Ceausescu' – the new roads cut across and the development along them destroy the old patterns

Fig 48 Sub Real Framing Bucharest



Interviewing the Cities. Framing Bucharest, 2001, C-Print, 100x130 cm, edition of five

Fig 49 Sample city



Fig 50 Nicolae Comenescu – changing views



Nicolae Comenescu *GOTTA BE OUTA HERE*.

Subway Terminal Product – the full stop version. Contemporary jay-walking trough the inverted value system.

Keg-drinking, chain-smoking androgynous art critic get's wicked.³⁰¹



Nicolae-Comanescu *Berceni*-

<http://semnebune.ro/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Berceni-nicolae-comanescu.jpg>

³⁰¹ Text: [STEFAN TIRON](#) (from GRAND PRIX REMIX exhibition catalog). Photo: [CATALIN RULEA](#) Grand Prix Remix (Visual Shampoo Consumer Product _ mid city shower version), curator Stefan Tiron, National Museum of Contemporary Art, Etaj 3/4 Gallery, Bucharest, Romania, 2004. Medium: Acrylic & oil on canvas Size: 120 x 110 x 3 cm Year: 2004

FIG 51 Mona Vatamanu & Florin Tudor Procesul / Trial

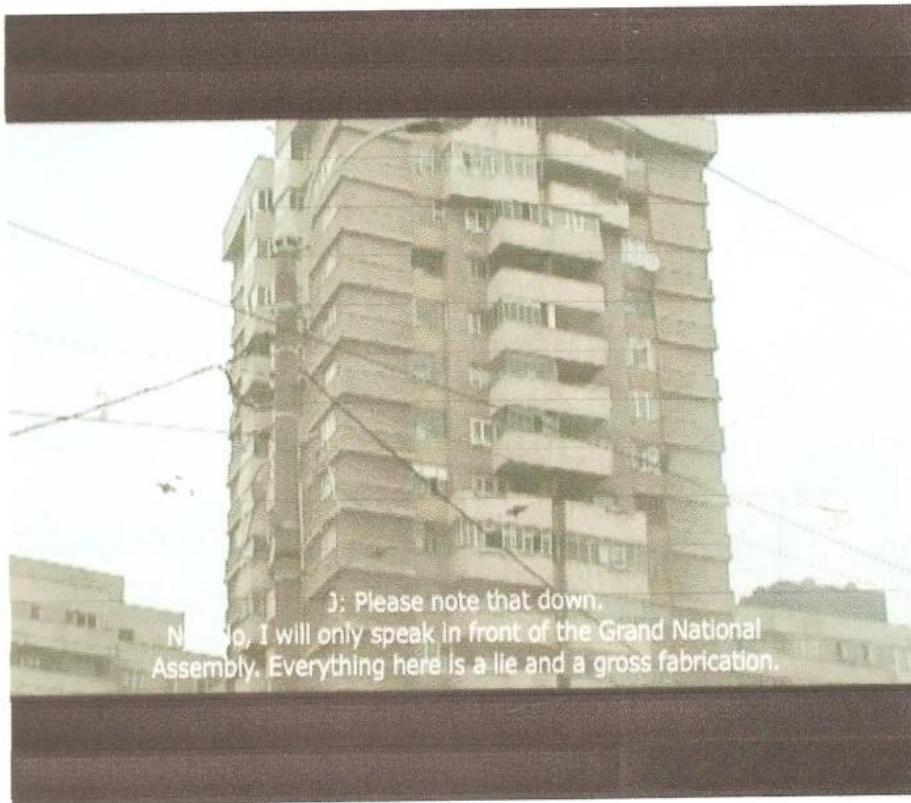


FIG 52Mona Vatamanu & Florin Tudor 'Vacaresti'



Fig 53 Mona Vatamanu & Florin Tudor The Palace/Persepolis



We kept the footage like character of the film to make the viewer feel more as a tourist inside since in Bucharest this place is mostly visited by foreign tourists. After the first film we made a second one with a different guide. Not surprisingly this one is different in discourse and story from the first revealing the contradictions in Romanian society. An installation with both could work as a space for experiencing a post-traumatic situation.

(Mona Vatamanu & Florin Tudor *The palace/ Persepolis* 2020 Home Gallery ,Bucharest - 14 April 2004.
The full sets of images and text can be found at <http://www.monavatamanuflorintudor.ro/persepolis.htm>)

Appendix 1 : A timeline of Romanian history (Source : romaniatourism.com/history.htm)

Romania's history has not been as idyllically peaceful as its geography.

Over the centuries, various migrating people invaded Romania.

Romania's [historical provinces](#) Wallachia and Moldova offered furious resistance to the invading Ottoman Turks.

Transylvania was successively under Habsburg, Ottoman, Hungarian or Wallachian rule, while remaining an (semi) autonomous province.

Romania's post WWII history as a communist-block nation is more widely known, primarily due to the excesses of the former dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. In December 1989 a national uprising led to his overthrow.

The 1991 Constitution re-established Romania as a republic with a multiparty system, market economy and individual rights of free speech, religion and private ownership.

- Ancient History / Roman Period (3600 BC – 500 AD) Middle Ages / Byzantine Period (500 – 1500)
- Early Modern / Ottoman Period (1500 – 1750) *Mid Modern Period (1750 – 1914)*
- Contemporary Period (1914 – present)

Some of the history that has shaped Romania

What is now Romania has been inhabited since the Paleolithic Age as evidenced by carved stone tools unearthed there.

10,000 B.C.

Approximate date of the first known art in present day Romania: cave paintings in northwest Transylvania.

4,000 B.C.

Approximate date of pottery (dated to the Neolithic Age) that is found in all regions of Romania.

3,000 B.C.

Thracian tribes of Indo-European origin, who migrated from Asia, occupied the actual territory of Romania.

2,000 B.C.

A distinctive Thracian sub-group emerged in what is now Romania.

The Greeks called these people Getae, but to the Romans they were Dacians.

Herodotus called them "the fairest and most courageous of men"

because they believed in the immortality of the soul and were not afraid to die.

700 B.C.

Greeks arrived and settled near the Black Sea.

The cities of Histria, Tomis (now Constanta) and Callatis (now Mangalia) were established.

Western-style civilization developed significantly.

70-44 B.C.

Dacian king Burebista controlled the territory of modern-day Romania.

Burebista created a powerful Dacian kingdom.

100 A.D.

Dacian civilization reaches its peak.

"The Dacians had a civilization of which they could be proud.

Their lands were rich in minerals, and they acquired great skill in metalworking.

They traded with the Greek world, importing pottery, olive oil, and wine,

and may have engaged in slave dealing.

Compared with their neighbors they enjoyed a high standard of living, as well as a rich spiritual life.

Militarily, the Dacians were less advanced.

Unlike the Roman legions, they did not field a standing army,

although there was a warrior class, the *comati*, or 'long-haired ones'."

(attribution: Anthony Everitt, *Hadrian and the triumph of Rome*).

106 A.D.

Romans conquer and colonize Dacia (modern-day Romania).

106 - 274 A.D.

Dacia is a province of the Roman Empire.

Dacians gradually adopt numerous elements of the conquerors' language.

271 A.D.

After fighting off the barbarian Goths, most Roman troops abandon Dacia.

4th Century

Christianity is adopted by the Daco-Roman, Latin-speaking people.

Both "Byzantine Empire" and "Eastern Roman Empire" are historiographical terms created after the end of the realm; its

citizens continued to refer to their empire as the *Roman Empire* (Ancient Greek: *Basileia Rhōmaiōn*; Latin: *Imperium*

Romanum or *Romania*) and to themselves as "Romans"

4th - 9th Centuries - late 1100s

Nomadic tribes from Asia and Europe (Goths, Visigoths, Huns, Slavs) invade Dacia. Magyars (Hungarians) invade regions in western and central present-day Romania (Crisana, Banat and Transylvania).

The local population — Romanians - were the only Latin people in the eastern part of the former Roman Empire and the only Latin people to belong to the Orthodox faith.

12th Century

Saxon (German) settlers begin to establish several towns in Transylvania. (Germans were invited to settle in Transylvania by the king of Hungary who wanted to consolidate his position in the newly occupied territory). Szeklers people - descendants from Attila's Huns - were also brought to eastern and southeastern Transylvania as border guards.

13th Century

The first formal division of the formerly unified Romanian population. The principalities of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Transylvania are established. Transylvania becomes an autonomous principality under Magyar rule, until 1526. Magyar forces tried unsuccessfully to capture Wallachia and Moldavia.

14th-15th Centuries

Wallachia and Moldavia offered resistance to the Ottoman Empire expansion.

1526

Transylvania (a semi-autonomous principality) becomes subject to Ottoman (Turkish) authority.

16th-17th Century

Threatened by the Turks who conquered Hungary, the three Romanian provinces of Wallachia, Moldova and Transylvania are able to retain their autonomy by paying tribute to the Turks.

The principality of [Transylvania](#) prospered as a vassal state of the Ottoman Empire.

1600

Wallachia, Moldavia and Transylvania ([map](#)) are briefly united under Mihai Viteazul (Michael the Brave), prince of Wallachia. Unity lasted only one year after which, Michael the Brave was defeated by the Turks and Hapsburg forces. Transylvania came under Hapsburg rule while Turkish suzerainty continued in Wallachia and Moldavia.

1699

Transylvania and Bucovina (smaller region north of Moldavia) are incorporated in the Habsburg Empire.

1765

Transylvania was declared a Grand Principality of Transylvania, further consolidating its special separate status within the Habsburg Empire.

1821

Moldavia loses its eastern territory east of river Prut (also called Bessarabia) to Russia.

1856

The principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia — for centuries under the suzerainty of the Turkish Ottoman Empire - secure their autonomy.

1859

Alexandru Ioan Cuza is elected to the thrones of Moldavia and Wallachia.

1862

Wallachia and Moldavia unite to form a national state: Romania.

1866

Carol I (German born) succeeds Alexandru Ioan Cuza, as prince of Romania.

1867

Transylvania falls under the direct rule of Hungary and a strong push for Magyarisation (of names and official language) follows.

1877

On May 9 the Romanian parliament declared the independence of Romania from the Ottoman Empire. A day later, the act was signed by Prince Carol I.

1881

Kingdom of Romania officially proclaimed

1892

The leaders of the Romanians of Transylvania sent a Memorandum to the Austro-Hungarian Emperor, Franz Joseph demanding an end to persecutions and Magyarization attempts.

1914

King Carol I dies. He is succeeded by his nephew King Ferdinand I (1914-1927). Romania enters WWI on the side of the Triple Entente aiming to regain its lost territories (part of Transylvania, Bessarabia and Bukovina).

1918

During large public assemblies representatives of most towns, villages and local communities in Transylvania, Bessarabia and Bucovina declare union with Romania.

1930

Carol II, Ferdinand's I son, becomes king of Romania and establishes royal dictatorship.

1939

Germany demands a monopoly on Romanian exports (mainly oil, lumber and agricultural products) in exchange for the guarantee of its borders.

1940

The Soviet Union annexes Bessarabia (eastern Romania - today Republic of Moldova) and Northern Bucovina (NNE Romania).

Germany and Italy force Romania to cede Northern Transylvania to Hungary.

Widespread demonstrations against King Carol II. Marshall Ion Antonescu forces him to abdicate in favor of his 19-year-old son Michael. Carol II flees Romania.

1941

Marshall Ion Antonescu imposes a military dictatorship.

In order to regain Bessarabia, Romania enters WWII against the Soviet Union.

1944

King Michael I engineers a royal coup and arrests Marshall Ion Antonescu.

Romania reenters war on the Allies side.

1945

The Yalta Agreement makes Romania part of the Soviet system.

Communist-dominated government installed.

1947

With Soviet troops on its territory, Romania enters the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union.

The communists, who gradually took the power, force King Michael I to abdicate and proclaim Romania a People's Republic.

King Michael leaves the country and moves to Switzerland.

1950s

After Stalin's death, Romania begins to distance itself from Moscow.

1964

Romania declares autonomy within Communist Bloc.

1967

Nicolae Ceausescu becomes President of the Council of State merging leadership of state and party.

1968

Romania condemns the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia;

Romania's communist leader Nicolae Ceausescu, earns praise and economic aid from the West.

1974

Romania was the first country of the Soviet Bloc to have official relations with the European Community. (and sign a treaty that included Romania in the Community's Generalized System of Preferences).

1980s

Obsessed with repaying the national debt and megalomaniac building projects Ceausescu orders a ban on importation of any consumer products and commands exportation of all goods produced in Romania except minimum food supplies. Severe restrictions of civil rights are imposed.

1982

Romania calls on Soviet Union to withdraw from Afghanistan.

1987

Ceausescu indicates Romania will not follow Soviet reform trends.

1989

Romanians unite in protests against the communist leadership and local demonstrations sparked a national uprising that finally ousted communist ruler Nicolae Ceausescu and his cabinet.

1990

First free, multi-party elections after WWII are held in Romania.

1991

Romanians vote for a new Constitution.

2004

Romania joins NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization).

2007

Romania becomes a member of the European Union.

Appendix 2 – The Truth about Little Paris

Adevărul despre Micul Paris în fotografiile lui Nicolae Ionescu: în

Bucureștii “de odinioară” domnea o sărăcie lucie

The truth about Little Paris in Nicolae Ionescu's photos: in Bucharest the fate of the "everyday" was poverty



Deseori cand ne gandim la Bucurestii din anii interbelici avem o imagine idealizata de explozia de civilizatie care marca capitala Romaniei Mari in anii '30. In mahalale si suburii exista, inasa, o lume sordida, deseori extrem de saraca, lume care era prezenta si in centru, mai ales in zona pietelor, balciurilor si ale pravaliilor de vechituri. Marele fotograf care a fost **Nicolae Ionescu**, (de ale carui poze sun pline cartile despre "Bucurestiul de odinioara" sau circula pe net in nestire, fara a fi inasa niciodata semnate cu numele autorului) realizat nenumarate instantanee cu oamenii amarati din Bucuresti.

Majoritatea imaginilor surprinse de-a lungul anilor 1925-1935 sunt facute in zona halelor si a Pietii Bibescu, pe cheiul Dambovitei, la Obor (Targul Mosilor), la pravaliile de vechituri din cartierul evreiesc, in carciumi de mahala sau la groapa de gunoi din spatele cimitirului Bellu, numita Valea Plangerii. Pentru cine nu stie, teritoriul actualului Parc al Tineretului a fost pana la inceputul anilor '60, cand a fost amenajat ca parc, un maidan sordid. In anii interbelici era groapa de gunoi si tigani amarati, cei mai saraci dintre saraci, isi duceau zilele in cocioabe improvizate, cautand in gunoai.

Explicatiile pozelor sunt inspirate de textele scrise chiar de mana autorului pe spatele acestora.

Often when we think of Bucurestii in the interwar years we have an image idealized by the explosion of civilization that marks the capital of Great Romania in the 1930s. In the slums and the suburbs, however, there was a sordid, often very poor world, a world that was present and in the center, especially in the squares of markets, ballasts and fleets. The great photographer who was Nicolae Ionescu (whose pictures are filled with the books about "Old Bucharest" or circulated on the net, but never signed with the author's name) made countless snapshots with the bitter people in Bucharest.

Most of the images captured during the years 1925-1935 are made in the area of the halls and the Bibescu Square, on the Dambovita, at Obor (Mosilor Fair), in the ruins of the Jewish district, in the slums or in the garbage dump behind the Bellu cemetery, called the Plangerii Valley. For those who do not know, the territory of the present Youth Park was until the early 1960s, when it was set up as a park, a sordid shepherd. In the interwar years there was the garbage dump and the bitter gypsies, the poorest of the poor, took their days in improvised shacks, looking for garbage.

The explanations of the pictures are inspired by the texts written by the author's hand on their backs.



<http://art-historia.blogspot.com/>

Una din nenumaratele familii de tarani gonite de saracie, isi cauta norocul in Bucuresti (1929)
Foto: Nicolae Ionescu



<http://art-historia.blog>

Gospodarie saraca de mahala



Fiecare

cartier avea "dulapul" sau (scranciobul). De Pasti, plata era un ou rosu.
Aici, in Calea Calarasi-1927



<http://art-historia.blogspot.co>

"Dreg la ghetete si papuci" instalati pe cheiul Dambovitei...(1932)
Foto:N.Ionescu



<http://art-historia.blogspot.com/>

Scormonind dupa deseuri la conducta cu apa menajera dinspre Dambovita (pe poza nu scrie nimic; asa era botezata imaginea de cei de la MMB, de unde am reproducerea). Dar eu cred ca femeile spala rufe cu apa curata ce vine din panza freatica, printr-un izvor.



<http://art-historia.blogspot.com>

Un invalid de razboi langa biserica Domnita Balasa (1932). Foto: N. Ionescu



Detaliu al imaginii de mai sus.



<http://art-historia.blogspot.com/>

ambulant

Cizmar



<http://art-historia.blogspot.com>
Cobzar batran in zona Pietei Unirii (Bibescu)



<http://art-historia.blog>



Taietori de lemne



<http://art-historia.blogspot.com>

Flasnetar cu papagal (posibil sa nu fie din Bucuresti aceasta poza). Foto: N.Ionescu



Flasnetar cu barba alba si baietan descul

<http://art-historia.blogspot.com>



<http://art-historia.blogspot.com/>

Nesgustorie cu carpe vechi la Taica Lazar (zona cu pravalii de vechituri din cartierul evreiesc – actuala strada Baia de Fier)

vezi si [saracii-se-imbracau-de-la-Taica-Lazar](#), si [Fostul-cartier-evreiesc-din-Bucuresti](#)



La Taica Lazar



<http://art-historia.blogspot.com/>
Pantofi vechi si reparati la Taica Lazar. Toate fotografiile apartin lui N. Ionescu



<http://art-historia.blogspot.com/>

Noroaie teribile la Mosi-Obor



<http://art-historia.blogspot.com/>

Lipoveni la ceainarie in Ducești (1924)



<http://art-historia.blogspot.com/>

Rampa de gunoi din "Valea Plangerii", in spatele Cimitirului Bellu, azi Parcul Tineretului.



<http://art-historia.blogspot.com>

Cautatori de gunoaie in "Valea Plangerii". Foto:N.Ionescu



<http://art-historia.blogspot.com/>

Asemenea ca mai sus



<http://art-historia.blogspot.c>
Adunatori de cutii de conserve goale in zona "Vaii Plangerii". In planul indepartat se poate recunoaste silueta Crematoriului.



<http://art-historia.blogspot.com/>
Pregatire de nunta in Vitan (1929) Foto:N.Ionescu



<http://art-historia.blogspot>

Interior dintr-o "casa" in Groapa lui Ouatu (zona Grant)



Tigani ursari





<http://art.historia.blogspot.c>

Appendix 3 : City of Accidents

The Bucharest of Accidents

Marcel Janco

Contimporanul 70 (Nov. 1926): 9

The quick and dissolute growth of our city is the product of confusion.

Despite the clumsy legislation and the various "styles" its facades display, our nation's capital is still and unfortunately always will be an example of Levantine spirit.

In a city where a hay wagon moving lethargically hinders the way a whole borough pulsates, a city where a horse-drawn tram in a ceaseless idiotic derailment shakes traffic wheels for hours, where in bright daylight street sweepers choke up people in dust, everything is unpredictable, everything is fortuitous, an accident.

Traffic accidents, hygiene accidents, architecture accidents.

Accidents are indeed the rules that "organize" all construction, as there is no accountability or vision.

Accidents are those unfortunate connections between Lahovari Square and the Commerce Academy, and an accident is also the industrial and spectral back wall of that building seen from the square.

Accidents, the renovated architecture of North Station, an accident that in the middle of Victory Boulevard, now looking like a fair, even more new styles are spurting up every day.

Accidents and surprises unheard of in the annals of urban planning are the hostile and horrible meeting of those two institutions of higher education: the Architecture School and the University.

Though accidents are also the architecture school itself (archaic) and the university (modernizing?).

An accident is also the destruction of the old university, a last vestige of art and common sense in the capital.

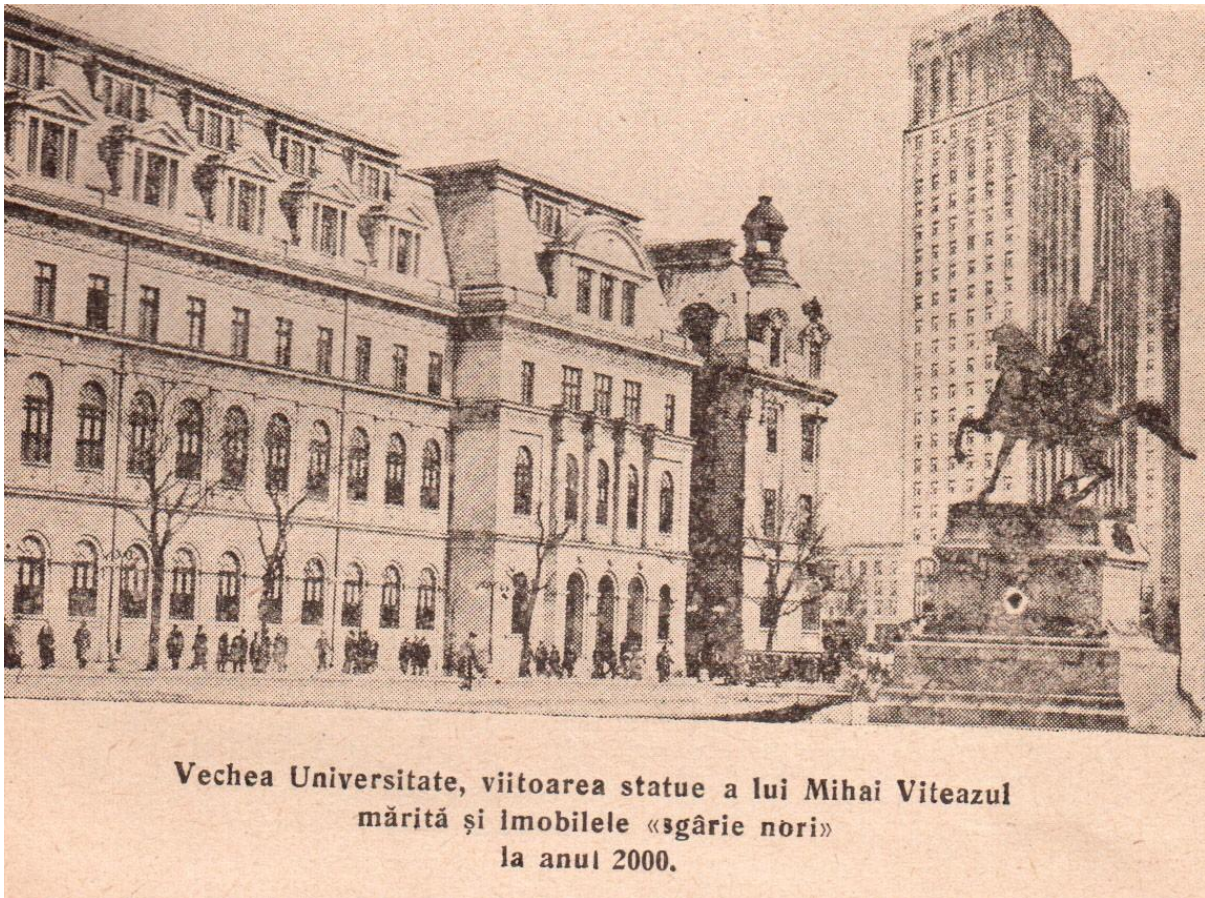
Also an accident is the so called Romanian style.

If Bucharest ever displayed itself to foreign travelers under a likeable form, today they will leave with the memory of a city as a country fair, a conglomerate lacking any harmony, order, style, or soul.

Where are our elected officials? Who can be held accountable in the citadel of chance and carelessness? The reigning fate is confusion.

(Translated from the Romanian by
Anca Roncea and Monique Yaari)

Appendix 4 – Bucharest 2000 (Bucureștiul mileniului trei imaginat în 1930)



http://www.cotidianul.ro/images/3_miercuri.jpg

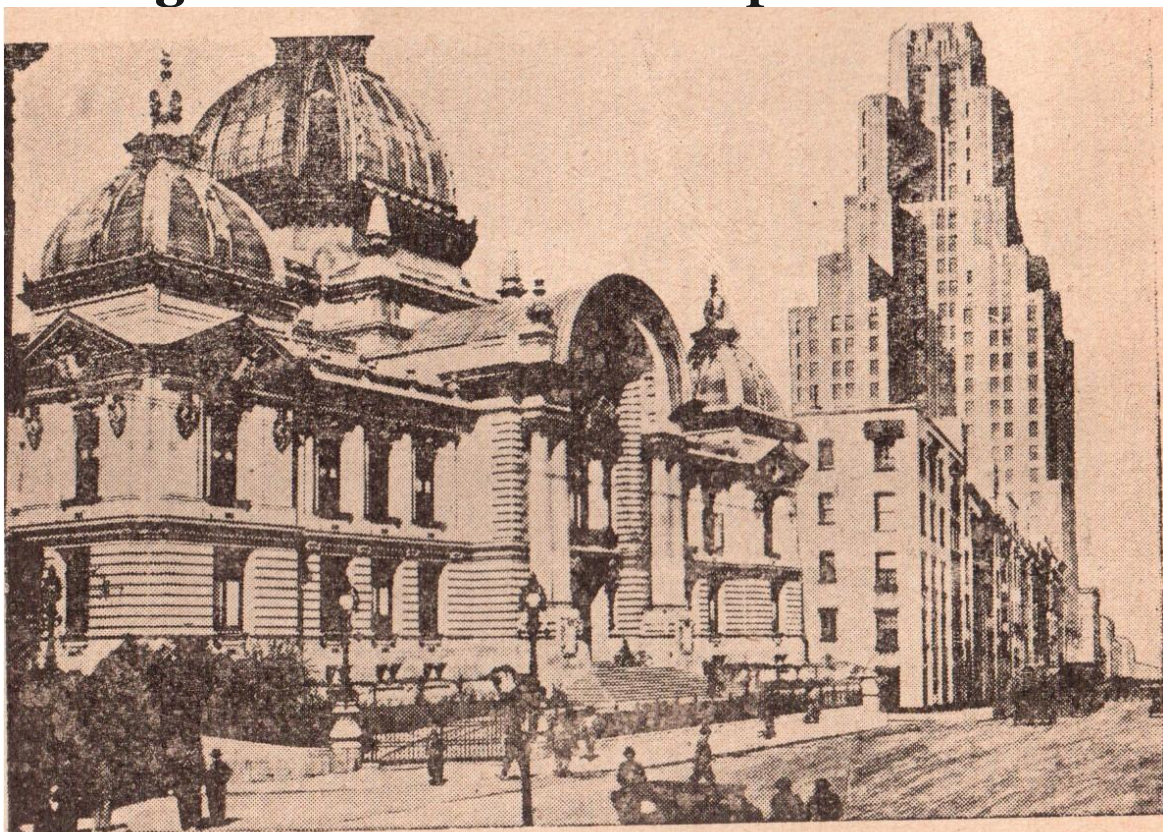
Bucharest has been a real arena for the past two hundred years between "new" and "old" confrontations between the city that stubbornly persists and the one who has long struggled to get out.

Bucharest between "old" and "new". From "confrontation" to "cohabitation"

The confrontation between "old" and "new" has been carried out from the beginning between "old" and "new" morals, tastes, ways of life. A confrontation between the many who love the pathetic and insubstantial universe of the semi-rural slum and those who have chosen to live in a model of city life. Unfortunately, the confrontation turned into cohabitation; between luxury and misery, between the palace and the hut, between the Oriental-Balkan universe and the European forms, towns. This was due to the fact that modern elements have always been in a cultural minority, especially demographic. The construction of a modern city from a urban perspective in Bucharest represented the "intelligence" of the 19th century and the technicians of the next century a priority. This process has fallen since the beginning of the European integration process. The process of modernization of Bucharest began in the nineteenth century, known in this sense as the success of Pake Protopopescu's urban-urban planning, and was continued in the early part of the 20th century.

For the last period mentioned, Dem. I. Dobrescu's (1929-1934) mayoralty was the starting point of the urbanization modernization. Dem I. Dobrescu tried to give Bucharest a new urban definition. His activity was continued on the occasion of the "Bucharest Luna" (9 May - 9 June). They began in 1935 and ended in 1940; starting with Al.Gh. Donescu (1934-1938) and ending with the mayor of General Victor Dombrovski (1938-1940).

Arrangements around the capital



Casa de Depuneri rămasă monument istoric la sfârșitul
secolului nostru
(Cititorii ne vor putea controla la anul... 2000)

Between 1930 and 1933, in only three years, two new parks were set up: Snagov, "with 3,000 forests of secular forest. and Baneasa with 250 pogons. " The recreation centers in the "Pusnicul" forest near Cernica were also set up and a park project was finalized in the "Valley of Complaint" (today Youth Park). In order to increase the belt of parks, "the state concluded the convention by which all the wooded massifs were put at the disposal of the capital, up to 40 km around", giving approvals for "making all the necessary arrangements and all the constructions for citizens' welfare and sanitation city ". Thus, the forests Cernica, Comana, Plumbuita, Țigănești, Căldărușani, Gruiu and others have been taken into account.

An unfinished (and not the only) project was to divert the "from the buffet to the Jianu highway and the colonel Ghica" to leave the Kiseleff road "to the pedestrians". Along this artery, between 1936 and 1940, the "National Park" (today Herăstrău Park) was set up, alongside which the Village Museum appeared in 1936, the Pescăruș restaurant in 1939, etc.

It was planned to bring together the Botanical Garden (inaugurated in 1935), with Cotroceni Palace park, where "to make our zoo" and the royal palace to rise on Piscul Hill, "in the most picturesque part of Bucharest" (The Polyvalent Hall). However, on the hill of Piscus was set up a ski resort that was "passionately visited all over the Capital".

It was intended to stop burials in the Belu Cemetery and turn it into a museum for the "need for picturesque and air for the living", but especially because the cemetery was no longer outside the city and present "a great danger to the so poor population in the neighborhood. For the southern part of the city, a boulevard called "Văcărești" was designed and afforestation of the nearby hills, "to give the people of Bucharest a place of walking in a picturesque landscape".

On the other hand, "the plan had been there (in the Piscul Hill) to raise the university fortress, which isolates the students and protects them from the temptations of the lives of the big cities." The university district "at Pisc" would have had "artificial

parks and lakes, which can be done with great ease" in the valley.

Unfortunately, another place was chosen in the town today, the student hostels in the vicinity of the Faculty of Law. A new student town in the Grozavesti area was subsequently designed, starting in 1980. So nothing is new under the sun!

According to the systematization plan, a boulevard was to be built "to go down from the human crematorium as a continuation of Bratianu Boulevard, pass through the Valley of Complaint, reach the Piscul Hill and reach Vacaresti" (the avenue was made in the years of popular power and is called "Tineretului", nm), and the Baneasa-Otopeni road "is fixed at a hundred meters wide at the entrance to the city".

It was intended to raise the monument from Adamclisi to Vacaresti Hill or the Arsenal hill, to be transformed into the "National Pantheon", which could thus form "an attraction for foreigners" and give the capital a "characteristic really gorgeous ". Although the fragments of the monument were brought to Bucharest, the project was not completed.

Projects for the "Old Center"

The Hill of Patriarchy has also entered the area of public concern. Being considered the "only picturesque part of the city", it was meant to be completed and turned into a "small Romanian Vatican". Although the works began on June 11, "the circumstances stopped them (the nm war), the project layout remaining at the patriarchy."

According to the above-mentioned project, the Patriarchal Hill "had to be placed in the axis of an esplanade, which would have continued the current alley to the Church of St. Vineri" and the Văcărești Monastery, "with its beautiful view, with the beautiful Văcărești Boulevard, residence of our Patriarchate, "whose religious institutions were" crowded "in the Patriarchal Hill.

"The hope of our city" was to be "the Dambovită esplanade, which will be achieved by covering its bed. We will indeed have a monumental esplanade that many cities in the world will not have. It will air the city, elevate the urban value and ease the huge circulation of our capital. (...) Under the Dâmbovița covered, we will be able to realize the metropolitan of

the city (the metro, whose projects date back to the 1930s), which will ease freight and passenger transport. With the metropolitan of Dambovită we will be able to build the railway stations in the center of the city, made underground (...); so we could also solve the issue of level crossings, which hinder the circulation of our city. " The plan had been approved, and Dambovită would cover Dambovită between Str. Șerban Vodă and the Palace of Justice, "With up front compartments and warehouses downstairs. The work was paid for itself in 15 years and the revenues after the expiration of this term, the gradual coverage continues "(Constantin Argetoianu).

In the vision of the interwar communities, Calea Victoriei was "a degrading point of our capital", which set a width of 22 meters, and for the sector between the Continental Hotel and the Palace Square and between Victoria Square and Academia Street, it was proposed to be thrown down "to make a beautiful esplanade."

The University Square was to be transformed into "a Corso, where we can pull the city's population, who clutches the other streets." A smaller achievement,

however, was made between University Square and Mihail Kogalniceanu Square, with many cinemas, cafes, breweries, restaurants (Corso, Gambrinus, Cismigiu, etc.).

Interesting remains the project on Lipscani Street and its surroundings. The Lipscani would be widened and turned into an arcade street that "should be covered with glass so as to hinder air circulation. It had to be transformed into a Corso of feminine elegance. (...) In that Corso of the feminine elegance of Lipscani Street one could establish the imitation and emulation of the elegance, from which the improvement of elegance would go. The natural elegance of Romanian ladies would soon make Bucharest a center of propagation of elegance in the Balkans. "

Modernization with subway, esplanade and skyscrapers



Towards 1940, urban projects are much more ambitious. It meant the total removal of the virgin sites, which were to be replaced with monumental squares, gardens, squares and parks, and on the streets of the capital "there will be no more carriages, no more caravans or carriages". The electric lines were to be extended "up to a radius of 30-40 km around the capital", and the metro (architect Marcel Iancu) will be introduced at its center.

The "Great Market" (Unirii nm) was to be "abolished with compliments" (alongside other agri-food

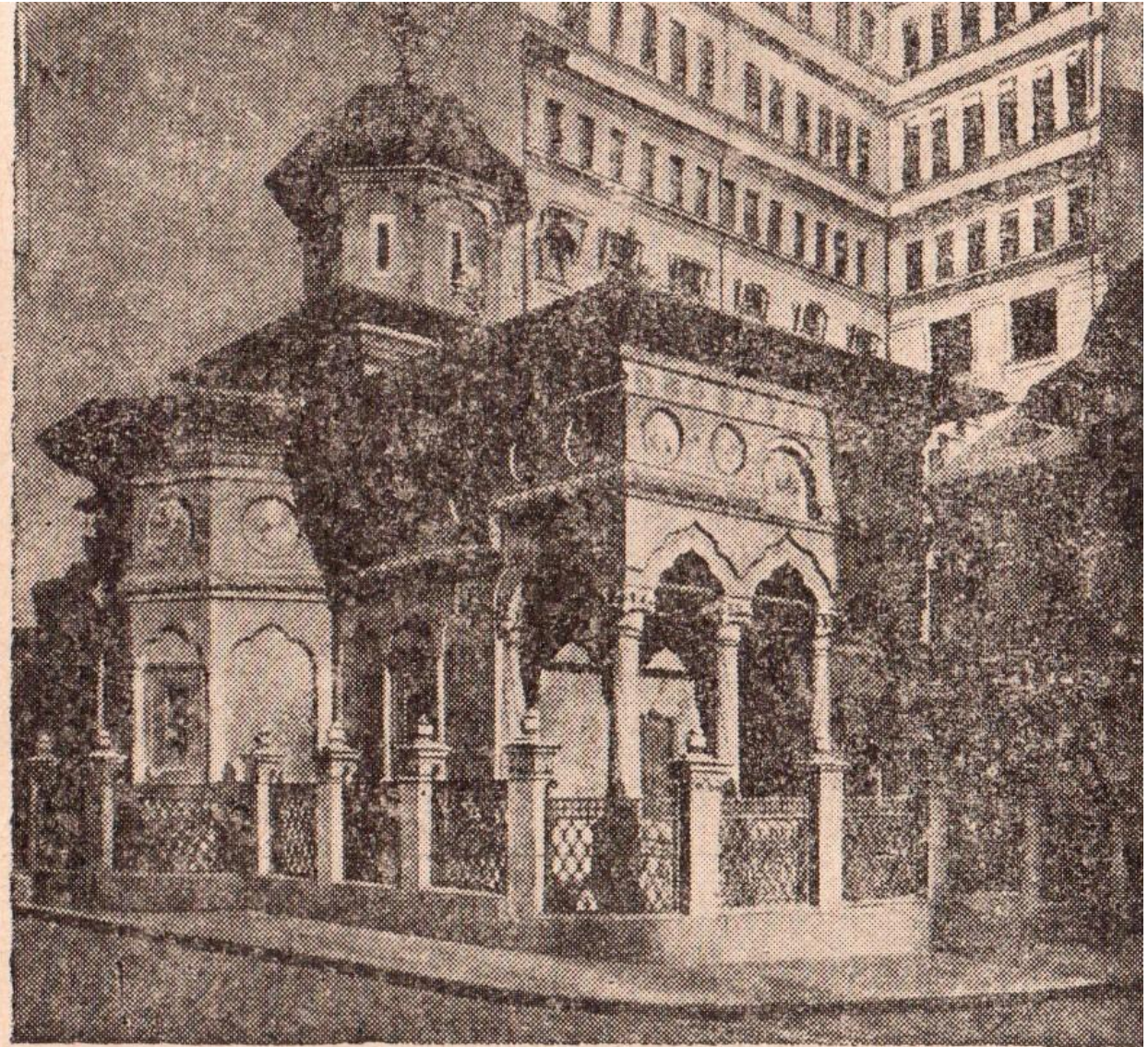
markets). Instead of the "Big Market, the Patriarchy's prospect will be broadly opened to a large market on which a great monument will be built" (today the project of such a monument: the Cathedral of Salvation Nation - nm) is in progress. The city's supply will be made only from warehouses located in various neighborhoods of the city (which were to be the famous "hunger circuses" and today are the wholesale outside the city). The kiosks, the stalls and the barracks were to be dismantled.

It is interesting to note that the area of the University and that of the Deposit House (now CEC) have become the point of imaginative projects for the construction of "attraction centers" such as "monumental blocks of 14-20 floors" amazing for interwar Bucharest, but not impossible if we think of the Phone Palace. Thus, buildings such as the University, the House of Deposits, the Romanian Athenaeum, the Military Circle "will remain modest memories of a distant and forgotten past". These projects were considered to be completed by the end of the 20th century.

We recognize today the successful calculation of these projects if we think about the subway, Dâmbovița, Vacaresti Boulevard, but especially the large buildings in the University area (Intercontinental Hotel) and CEC area (Bancorex building).

Why have these projects been largely doomed to failure 80 years ago? Demos Dobrescu responds to "The Future of Bucharest" (1934). The situation is complex and depended on a number of omnipresent factors in the interwar world of Bucharest.

Mentality and corruption, enemies of modern urbanism



Biserica Stavropoleos și împrejurimile actuale.

The most serious problem was that of the Bucharest people who "kept the humble nature of the peasant from whom they recruited. Bucharesters are anarchists in front of a real authority and serve in front of abusive authorities. (...) The inhabitants of Bucharest are the descendants of the old villagers, who have stored all the humiliation of the servant in

front of the patron. Bucharest suffers from the spiritual idolatry "(architect Horia Creangă). So, mentalities. A modern city built on a rural southern background with its mental accessories. That is why, until the formation of a common and modern soul fund, "we can not build anything seriously on the soul of Bucharest". Bucharest is undisciplined and inappropriate "to social rumors, is incapable of continuous work. Hence his professional instability. In no city in the world we can see so many ambulances, so many missions, so many boots, so many potatoes, so many cracks and so many clerks. In no city we see so few professionals to inherit their profession from father to son ... the Bucharest craftsman, prefer the blows "(ND Cocea). Another problem was (and continues to be) that "public money has not yet acquired the necessary discipline to go to the public treasury," Mayor Dem I. Dobrescu is often forced to intervene to recover large debts of some companies City Hall; the mayor rightly said that it would be a long time "until the public

money came to learn the way of the public treasure" (Constantin Argetoianu).

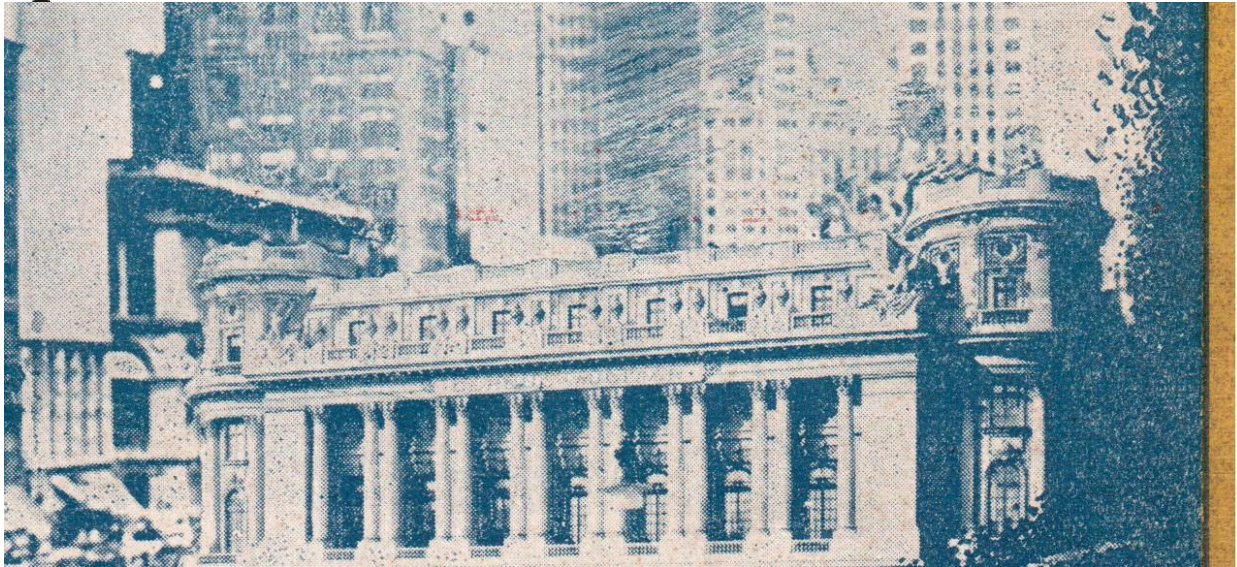
Beyond these distant landmarks - still current - there remains the temporal completeness between the theorizing of some projects (even at the utopian level) more than 50 years ago and their practical realization in the last years, which confirms the urban-urban feasibility of interwar projects.

Lately, an emphasis has been put on the establishment of a restoration center because, in today's Bucharest, "neither the urban structure nor the architect are valued, and they are mostly not known." Bucharest can become an interesting point for "cultural tourism", the habitat that should be capitalized as the central area, which benefits from "an original and sophisticated urban structure, and not very often a very interesting architecture!" (Architect Alexandru Beldiman).

It should be stressed that in the urban development of the last 40 years, "Bucharest has generally developed through overlaps and eliminations of the old fund"; through the new projects of the 1980s, the new city would gradually eliminate the old one in a

punitive way. This fact can be seen in the central area defined by the Unirii area, the People's House and the Boulevard "(Ștefan Ghenciulescu).

The up-to-date situation of the capital in some opinions



Inter-war visionary designing a city of future in cohabitation with its old soul

Bucharest is irreversibly divided "into two deeply uneven parts. Architect architecture, the author is responsible for a small island in the center. A vast, mediocre mitochondria, at best, eventually boom, often degraded, violently more and more frequently, is spreading around it. All this while "dughenizing" includes "city centers" and "the city entrances are palaces with towers and towers - mega-kitsch epitom

for the illicit wealth, eventually illiterate" (Mariana Celac).

Future projects are based on less mathematical calculations, as well as remodeling of states of mood and redefinition of concepts abandoned by proletcultural dogmas. If architecture is "the sensitive, very sensitive affection of people with their living spaces," the architect then becomes "the designer of the sensitive relationship of the inhabitant with the built environment in which he lives" (George Harpon).

The future of architecture is being restructured on the old values by those who can understand them, because the public sphere appears like a "whole destruct", and to "know architecture again we must rethink the instruments of our thinking" (Cosmin Cociu).

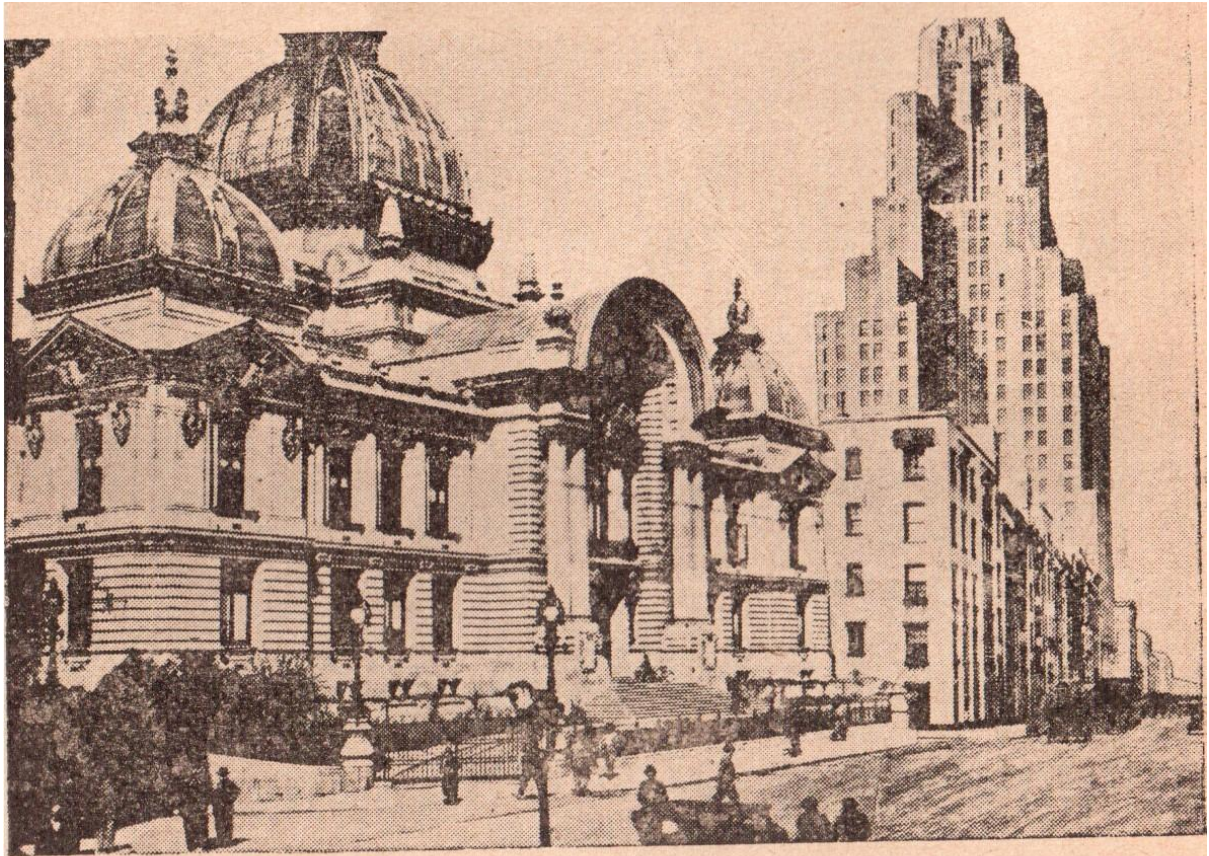
The pleasures of normality begin to appear fragile in the central area, but still unconvincing, so that Bucharest still has to wait until it can live "among images", color, products, etc. In conclusion, "we will know how to build when we learn to live" (Constantin Goagea).

Bucharest still lives with the "great traumas" of the past decades, when "a fake urbanism was created that did not take into account the territorial-urban organization." The enormously abused neighborhoods-bedroom have broken the "unity of the city" so that "you can not avoid them, you can only alleviate them by constructions made side by side. They remain a cultural reality of an unfortunate moment in Bucharest, which will take you for decades to repair and return to a certain acceptability" (architect Ion Mircea Enescu).

There is certainly in the architect's guild the consistency of a civic opinion that professionally realizes the architecture of Bucharest on the threshold of the new millennium. It remains that this trend of opinion and professional manifestation can be found in both the demands of the partners, and especially in the concerns of the civil society.

Source : Adrian Majuru Published Wednesday, October 17, cotidianul.ro
2012<http://www.cotidianul.ro/bucurestiul-mileniului-trei-imaginat-in-1930-131347/>

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**Casa de Depuneri rămasă monument istoric la sfârșitul
secolului nostru
(Cititorii ne vor putea controla la anul... 2000)**

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APPENDIX For the first time – once : Bucharest

Oginally presented at the Planning Research Conference, Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, April 2010.



Since this paper is intended to be read aloud it does not follow all the conventions of an 'academic' paper and includes poems and fragments, without explanation. But there are footnotes for the hunter-gatherers of the groves of Academe. The paper was allocated to the 'International Development' section but it is really an exploration of otherness, of strangeness, of unfamiliarity - all the qualities that 'experts' do not often admit. But to be somewhere for the first time is a rare and magical moment, something that only happens once.

To hear the distant diesels growl and the call of the midnight freight.

A city waking up.

Each place in a different key.

The first tramcar and the last taxi in the night.

Do the clouds catch the first sun's rays

Or the buildings hide the sky?

Building up a picture of a city in my mind

Novels maps and guidebooks paint a scene

Can't tell the future from the past

Behind every study of 'international development' is that first moment where there is no expertise, only experience. *The Stranger*³⁰², *The Strangers Path*³⁰³, are our guides, we are but *Readers, Travellers, Visitors* a long way from becoming *Visitors and Storytellers*³⁰⁴, lost like Roland Barthes in an *Empire of Signs*³⁰⁵ and whatever claim we may eventually make at this moment we are still in the grip of *The Tourist Gaze*³⁰⁶. We still have to learn to read the city

³⁰² Alfred Schuetz *The Stranger* in *American Jnl. of Sociology*, vol 49, pp 499-507.

³⁰³ JB Jackson *The Strangers Path* reprinted in JB Jackson *Landscapes* Univ. Massachusetts Press, 1970, pp92-106

³⁰⁴ Bob Jarvis *Readers, Travellers, Visitors, Inhabitants and Storytellers* GLOSCAT Papers no. 18, Gloucester 1983

³⁰⁵ Roland Barthes *Empire of Signs*, Jonathan Cape, London 1982

³⁰⁶ John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze* Sage 1990

*Close up*³⁰⁷. We do not know what is true and what is false in *Nights in this City*³⁰⁸.

The slides start here, running without interruption or explanation.

It always was going to be strange, to be somewhere for the first time (ocazie prima = first occasion?) once (o data = datum?)³⁰⁹ – but even Romanian becomes easier to read once you have a context and a pattern.

I set out with a deliberately under researched background – a few photos, a couple of exhibitions of modern Romanian art, a book of poems and a quick reading of *The Balkan Trilogy*³¹⁰ - but I suspect even its pre-war, pre-internet heroine Harriet Pringle knew more about the place than I did; at least she could talk to Guy as their train crawled across the Balkans from Venice.

I landed at Otopeni Airport in the dark cold of a Sunday night and, advised by a fellow traveller with a ten hour train journey ahead of him to Iasi not to trust the taxi drivers, sought the 7 lei³¹¹ bus trip into the city from the basement of

³⁰⁷ Grady Clay, *Close Up -How to read the American City* Pall Mall, London, 1973

³⁰⁸ Tim Etchells and Forced Entertainment, *Nights in this City* Reprinted in Nick Kaye. *Site Specific Art* Routledge, 2000, pp13-25

³⁰⁹ One of the attractions of Romania is the familiarity of its Latin based language - once you negotiate the antique complexities of its grammar and the Slavic additions.

³¹⁰ Olivia Manning (1987) *The Balkan Trilogy* Arrow Books, 2004

³¹¹ About £1.80 (return) for the 17 km journey.

the domestic arrivals terminal . I had arrived in Romania :‘Beware - the mafia will rob you, the gypsies stab you and the wild dogs eat your body’³¹²

I was there to explore the possibilities of developing a research programme around the connections between contemporary art and urbanism. I had seen challenging work from Romania at the Venice Biennale ³¹³ and started to read contemporary Romanian literature in translation³¹⁴ and in my mind was the model of Robert Hewison’s *Future Tense - A new art for the Nineties* ³¹⁵ which would serve as well as a text on urbanism as artistic experiments of the period, with its interweaving of *The Last of England* ³¹⁶ and Tobacco Dock shopping area, Richmond Riverside and *White Chappell- Scarlet Tracings* ³¹⁷.

As my bus crawled along the blue Christmas lit tree lined outer arterial where new apartment blocks covered in agents’ boards were spaced between retail ‘outlets’ , through the dark parklands of Baneasa and towards the Arc de Triumf (the first recognisable landmark - except that its in the centre of a huge gyratory) and then along boulevards of *jugendstyl* villas, and past the dark six storey blocks of department stores and flats I could have been in Lille or Lyon. Except the next stop indicator now read ‘Piata 21 Dec 1989 / Metro Universitatii’ - and if you know anything about recent Romania ‘21 Dec 1989’ is a date you don’t forget. And just to prove this is the new post Ceausescu

³¹² This was the warning of a Slovakian friend - there are prejudices between East European countries and Romania as ‘a Latin island in a Slavic sea’ is the focus of many of them.

³¹³ Both in the official Romanian pavilion *The Seductiveness of the Interval* (Stefan Constantinescu, Andrea Faciu and Ciprian Muresan) and in the independent *Young Romanian Artists* (curated by Mircea Nicolae).

³¹⁴ Maybe since Herta Muller’s Nobel Prize this will increase?

³¹⁵ Hewison, R (1990) *Future Tense - A new art for the Nineties* Methuen, London, 1990

³¹⁶ Derek Jarman,(1987) *The Last of England* (film)

³¹⁷ Iain Sinclair (1987) *White Chappell - Scarlet Tracings* - originally published Goldmark 1987, then Paladin, London 1988.

Romania³¹⁸ a huge electric Christmas tree is gradually changing colour at its centre.

Daylight, a grey even cold grey drizzle daylight, confirmed the eclectic fragmented collage that is post modern post communist Bucureşti. Outside my restored two star suite in a one star hotel ('Roman Style' with two balconies) a 1960's concrete frame office butted into a converted French *grande maison* and on the corner an unfinished swoop of exaggerated curved purple steel cut through the flapping sheeting of an unfinished speculation above the row of one room, one light bulb, one loaf of bread corner shops - the history of the city before I'd even started out to give my lecture.

But as I explored the bookshops later in the afternoon it was clear that there is, like everywhere but more poignant here because of what has been lost and in what circumstances, a great sense of loss. Not only of the well known destruction of the area south of the canalised and diverted and cleaned up Dambovită River for the 'Casa Popolarului'³¹⁹ and the overstretched Boulevard Unirii (though now there are 50 times more cars on the streets it looks about right in a Las Vegas way), but for a time perhaps in the mid 1800's when Bucuresti became the capital of the new kingdom. 'The oldest and finest photo panoramas of Bucureşti'³²⁰ and a graphic reconstruction of the city in 1850³²¹ are on sale alongside the usual sunlit souvenir books³²²; detailed and researched surveys of 'courtyards, gardens, quarters and landscapes'³²³ is in

³¹⁸ The celebration of Christmas was forbidden by Ceausescu.

³¹⁹ An exhibition '1989' (Muzeul National de Istorie) records publicly the scale of destruction visually for all as its centre piece.

³²⁰ *Panoramica fotografice Bucurestilor* Art Histotria, Bucuresti, 2008

³²¹ *Capitala Bucuresti, 1847- 1854*, Art Historia, Bucuresti : folded map and notes

³²² Though there is now an annotated guide to modern architecture too : Mariana Celac, Octavian Carabela and Marius Marcu-Lapadat *Bucharest - Architecture and modernity ...* Arcub-Simitrai, Bucuresti 2005

³²³ Ioana Tudora *La curte, gradina, cartier si piesaj urban in Bucureşti* Curtea Veche, Bucuresti 2009

the specialist bookshops alongside 'streets, passages and houses of old București'³²⁴; the Urban Observatory (in a passage behind a sex shop) run by the Romanian Architects Union³²⁵ campaigns for respect for the past and holds an exhibition of 'The lost gardens of București'³²⁶ and reports a mock funeral for urban planning controls³²⁷ while the introduction to *Bucharest - Architecture and modernity ...* concludes with a plea for control and care in managing the cityscape.

Maybe the developers whose projects fill the free sheets aimed at international investors and speculators will not have such an easy time in the future³²⁸.

In three, snowy days - not that -8 degrees and about 15cms. of snow did much to stop the traffic despite ungritted roads (raising questions of corruption on the local TV) - it was only possible to see a fraction of the city, but still it confirmed that first balcony impression of (and reinforced my love for) this crazy collage of a city. For that is what it is : Rowe and Koetter's theory³²⁹ made real twenty five years after it was written, combined with a discarded set for *Blade Runner*³³⁰

³²⁴ Cezara Mucenic *Strazi, pietre, case din vechiul Bucuresti* Editura Vremea Bucuresti 2004

³²⁵ Uniunea Arhitecților din România, www.unieaarchitectilor.ro

³²⁶ *Gradini Pierdute*, Galeria UAR Octav Doiescu, Calea Victoria nr. 26, București.

³²⁷ Observatul Urban, no.2 , 2009, p 16.

³²⁸ For example Real Estate Directory - 32 pages of glossy colour photos of apartment blocks.

³²⁹ Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter *Collage City* MIT Press 1984

³³⁰ My Romanian language tutor tells me of recent central, wholesale revisions to the conjugations of Romanian verbs, so maybe though single state planning is 20 years dead there is still a shadow of *Alphaville* in that mix too.

Reading back my notes and sketches impressions return. Huge pixellated animated billboards with the silhouette of a church in front; the cast of Trajan's column that here is not just archaeology but a foundation myth made fact; searching for Romanian cat food³³¹ in a tiny crumbling corner shop near Lipsani Str. where the assistant is just back from LA; buying a huge bunch of mistletoe for 1 leu³³² from an old lady sat beneath a long straight *bloc* that crashes through the network of streets behind my hotel; the chic bar underneath the UAR offices, post modernism growing from the bullet scarred ruins, where I drink 12 year old tuica under scenes of the 1989 Revolution turned to wall paper; the timber cottages of the *Transylvanian Motel* beside the E46 back to the airport. All of my memories are of these unlikely collages.

Even the infamous *Casa Poporului* is architecturally not much different from Bofill's excesses³³³. I was told that in the early 1990's when it was being enviously eyed by a speculator for a giant resort hotel the Romanian response was that it may be excessive, unfinished, and with all kinds of bitter memories but now it is our prize from the Revolution (*casa poporului* means house of the people) and is not for private sale, though I did buy a sweet little plaster model. The problem is the context of huge open spaces around it - a problem that Camillo Sitte would have understood and that Rob Kreir (though I cannot see him as Ceausescu's favourite architect) would never have allowed. There have been competitions³³⁴ and student projects but the real problem is a series of top secret security bunkers which were never revealed so maybe my

³³¹ A present for my cat at home - but even cat food is part of global logistics and a local product was hard to find.

³³² About 25p

³³³ According to Celac et al (14) has whatever its excesses 'refined detailing and good execution' (p. 76)

³³⁴ Celac et al, (op cit, note 14) p. 78 shows the winning entry for București 2000 (1995-6) - a grid of blocks around rebuildings of the lost historic landmarks.

colleague at Ion Mincu's student schemes for landscaped parks are more realizable³³⁵.

Can such a place as București, have such a fragile spirit as the *genius loci* when its been : transformed out of a trading post in the 19th century; made into the 'Paris of the East' in the 1920's; the model of rationalist state communism in the 1950's ; a megalomaniac's dream in the 1970's; and now in the grip of free market expressionism (with some token conservation) ; and if I read between the lines of my budget airline magazine and my Thomas Cook City Spot Guide : *'lets be honest, you probably aren't coming for the sights. Instead most people come for the energythe skyscrapers that appear from nowhere and the trendy night spots that attract the finest DJ's in the world'*³³⁶ - the next international party city ?

Maybe that spirit just fled when the first attempts to tidy up and canalise the Dambovită began in the 19th century and the boyars adopted western dress³³⁷ and started to look to Paris and Vienna?

It will not be conjured up through the downloaded images of glowing elsewhere that are so easily cut and pasted into image boards for student projects³³⁸, and nor will it be found in the property speculators fantasies. Lucian Boia has charted the struggles that Romania and Romanians have with

³³⁵ Projects set by Angelica Stan in the Department of Urbanism, University of Architecture Ion Mincu.

³³⁶ Craig Turp *City Spots - Bucharest* Thomas Cook 2007, p8

³³⁷ To be seen in the sequence of portraits in the Romanian National Gallery.

³³⁸ A problem that my students at LSBU have in common with those at Ion Mincu.

their national identity and culture³³⁹ and it is through understanding the topographies of these complexities of the national psyche that a new and more robust *genius loci* might be found³⁴⁰. In three days and only a brief survey of some of the literature³⁴¹ to claim a full grasp of planning and urban design issues in București would be presumptuous. The combination between the unfettered dynamism of commercial and speculative development, the relatively new planning system and the fragility of the historic townscape suggests a metaphor somewhere between riding a rodeo steer and a bull in a china shop.

³³⁹ Lucian Boia *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness* Budapest 2001 and *Romania - Borderland of Europe* Reaktion Books, London, 2001

³⁴⁰ There are wide differences of culture and history. Even a popular introduction such as Debbie Stowe *Culture Smart : Romania* (Kuperard, London, 2008) notes how even in the *blocuri communisti* despite endemic problems of construction and services 'the inhabitants do not let the poor design and living conditions breed disrespect of their homesthe communal hallways and stairwells (decorated) with plants and pictures of prettier places and rural scenes'(pp 97-98). I was shown pictures of balcony of one flat transformed into a semi tropical jungle. We must not judge places by their architecture and planning alone.

³⁴¹ A quick search produced : a useful four page guide to the planning system www.aloizrou.ro/subpages/1-2planningsystem ; official information at www.eukn.org/romania/themes ; papers - in approximate date order – include:Darrick Danta *Ceausescu's Bucharest* Geographical Review Vol 83, 1993;Maria de Betania Uchoa Cavalcanti *Urban Reconstruction and autocratic regimes in Planning Perspectives Vol12, 1, 1997 pp71-109*; Nigel Leach (ed)*Architecture and Revolution: Contemporary Perspectives on Central and Eastern Europe* (1999) contains a section on Romania ; *Bucharest - the City where anything goes* The Diplomat, Bucharest, Sept 2006 ; Augustin Ionin *Urban Policies and the politics of public space in Bucharest* in Tsenekova and Nedovic-Budic (eds) *The Urban Mosaic of Post- Socialist Europe* ,Phyisca Verlag, 2006 ; RRO Archives *Bucharest's Urbanisation and Systematisation* (2.04.2007) www.rri.ro/ahr-art.shtml ; Violeta Puscasu *Urban Renewal in Romania* www.fig.net/pub/proceedings/prague-final-papers/; INTBAU *Proceedings of the 2007 conference – History Regeneration Heritage* Sibiu 2007; Pietro Elisei *Integrated Development Plans in Romania* ISOCARP 44th Congress, 2008; Oana Luca *Urban Regeneration Process in Romania* Theoretical and Empirical Researches in Urban Management 1(10) 2009; Doina Marilena *Territorial Development Housing in Bucharest* IFPH Bucharest 18-29 October 2009.



Slide show ends here

Some readers of the modern European city find *Fragments*³⁴² disorientated and disorientating, lost in cultural space, or *Non Places*³⁴³ where super modernity has blurred identity and meaning. But there is another reading - *A Shout in the Street*³⁴⁴ in a babel of voices that gives life and meaning, a landscape of *Spaces of Uncertainty*³⁴⁵ that generates an *Everyday Urbanism*³⁴⁶

³⁴² Stephen Barber *Fragments of the European City* Reaktion Books, 1995

³⁴³ Marc Auge *Non Places* Verso London 1995

³⁴⁴ Peter Jukes *A Shout in the Street* Faber and Faber 1990

³⁴⁵ Kenny Cupers and Markus Miessen *Spaces of Uncertainty* Muller Busmann Verlag Wuppertal 2002

³⁴⁶ John Chase, Margaret Crawford and John Kaliski (eds) *Everyday Urbanism* The Monticelli Press, New York 1999.

that is essentially an existential one, not an expert one. That may be difficult for 'experts' and 'professionals' to come to terms with.

I am a stranger here myself.

I can read the maps and check the timetables,
make a good guess at tomorrow's weather.

I found that the National Museum sells reproductions of old maps
And has reconstructed the Victoria Socialismului demolitions in old
photographs, scattered across the floor,
I found the antiquarian book specialist just off Strada Academie

What is the word for this?

I can order the sausage and a brandy late at night
Buy wine and caviar to carry home
And a plaster model of the palatul

I have to find the stop for Otopeni airport

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