

Sustainable Urban Development and Cultural Heritage: A Possible Symbiosis?

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Abstract

This article aims to determine whether a coherent urban development of Romanian cities is possible with the preservation of the built heritage and its integration in the urban regeneration strategies, by analysing the current situation of the Built Protected Areas (BPA) in Bucharest. A Built Protected Area includes a land area with a certain density of constructions within the administrative territory of a locality, in which the built frame, the natural environment and the human activities presents (historical) qualities whose protection is of public interest. These areas are defined and delimited following a number of historical, architectural, urban or landscape studies and through the urbanism documentation of those areas. The delimitation of the protected area is made by the Local Council through the General Urban Plan, in order to protect and preserve the cultural heritage, through specific detailed regulations and to improve the quality of the environment and the lives of the inhabitants. Currently, Bucharest has 98 Built Protected Areas, which are defining in determining the cultural identity of the city and the identity of its inhabitants. However, the contemporary interventions located in the Built Protected Areas of the City Capital of Romania seem to evade the urbanism regulations and the legislation regarding the protection of historical monuments. Over the last twenty years, Bucharest has lost a significant number of valuable buildings located in protected areas, many of them being abusively demolished; on the site of these historic buildings new structures emerged, often much taller, disrespecting the architectural specificity of the area and producing a negative visual impact on the area. Moreover, the impact of these new interventions is perceived by the community members, often with considerable negative effects. These aspects were derived from the author’s experience as a team member of “Catalog București” Project, launched in March 2017 by A.R.C.E.N., in an extensive effort to collect and inventory all the buildings located in the 98 Protected Built Areas of Bucharest. This paper tries to provide a series of answers regarding the situation of all Built Protected Areas of Bucharest, based on “Catalog București” Project conclusions. In this regard, a series of questions arise: What are the causes that led to this disastrous situation of the built heritage in Bucharest? What are the solutions that can put an end or solve, even partially, the continuous degradation of the urban landscape in the historic areas of Bucharest? The urban development of these areas, in a sustainable manner, by integrating these “islands of identities” - is it possible?

Rezumat

Acest articol aduce în discuție subiectul dezvoltării urbane coerente a orașelor românești, prin păstrarea patrimoniului construit și integrarea acestuia în strategiile de regenerare urbană, pornind de la analiza situației actuale a zonelor construite protejate în București. O zonă construită protejată include o suprafață de teren cu o anumită densitate de construcții pe

teritoriul administrativ al unei localități, în care cadrul construit, mediul natural și activitățile umane sunt de interes public. Aceste zone sunt definite și delimitate după o serie de studii istorice, arhitecturale, urbane sau peisagistice și prin documentația urbanistică a acestor zone. Delimitarea unei zonei protejate se face de către Consiliul Local prin Planul Urbanistic General, prin reglementări detaliate specifice, în vederea protejării și conservării patrimoniului cultural dar și pentru îmbunătățirea calității mediului și a vieții locuitorilor săi. În prezent, Bucureștiul are 98 de zone construite protejate, defînitorii în determinarea identității culturale a orașului și a locuitorilor săi. Cu toate acestea, intervențiile contemporane din zonele construite protejate din Capitală par să se sustragă reglementărilor de urbanism și legislației privind protecția monumentelor istorice. În ultimii douăzeci de ani, Bucureștiul a pierdut un număr semnificativ de clădiri valoroase situate în zonele protejate, multe dintre ele fiind distruse abuziv; pe locul acestor clădiri istorice au apărut noi structuri, adesea mult mai înalte, ce nu respectă specificul arhitectural al zonei și produc un impact vizual negativ asupra întregului areal urban. În plus, impactul acestor noi intervenții este acut perceput de către membrii comunității, adesea cu efecte negative considerabile. Aceste aspecte au rezultat din experiența autorului în calitate de membru al echipei "Catalog București", lansat în martie 2017 de către A.R.C.E.N., într-un vast efort de colectare și inventariere a tuturor imobilelor situate în cele 98 de zone protejate din București. Această lucrare încearcă să ofere o serie de răspunsuri privind situația tuturor ariilor protejate construite din București, bazându-se pe concluziile proiectului "Catalog București". În acest sens, se impun o serie de întrebări: Care sunt cauzele care au condus la această situație dezastruoasă a patrimoniului construit în București? Care sunt soluțiile care pot pune capăt sau rezolva, chiar parțial, degradarea continuă a peisajului urban în zonele istorice ale Bucureștiului? Este posibilă dezvoltarea urbană a zonelor istorice, într-o manieră durabilă, prin integrarea acestor "insule de identitate"?

Key words: cultural heritage, built protected areas, urban development, sustainability.

1. Introduction

Throughout the history, the cultural, economic, social and environmental values attached to the built heritage have been universally recognized by the community, authorities or specialists in the field of heritage. Therefore, the contribution of the built heritage in the implementation of sustainable development projects was recorded by a series of documents adopted in order to protect, preserve and reuse the historical architecture. At the same time, some of these documents highlighted the benefits resulting from conserving the existing resources and making them part of contemporary urban management policies. This quite recent attitude, oriented towards the efficient use of valuable built resources comes as a natural response to the reuse quality of historical architecture: through a series of interventions whose amplitude varies depending on several factors, the existing buildings can be adapted in order to accommodate new architectural programs, thus contributing to a sustainable development of the territory. Therefore, many of the international documents mentioned in this article have raised the importance of including the architectural heritage in coherent planning strategies.

The following paragraphs try to illustrate the complex problem associated with two concepts that are frequently perceived as antagonistic – the preservation of built heritage and the sustainable urban development. In this respect, the research is based on the extensive analysis of the current situation of the built heritage from the Built Protected Areas of Bucharest.

2. Preservation versus Transformation, in the Case of Built Heritage

The complex issues associated with built heritage and urban development has always been a subject of major importance for the European culture and beyond. However, the architectural heritage it is not limited to buildings of extraordinary value, but it also includes examples of less valuable

architecture which generate a special atmosphere that deserves to be preserved and transmitted to future generations. In the case of Europe, a series of measures regarding the protection and perpetuation of valuable historical architecture have been taken over the years by the representatives of the European Union or other international institutions, starting with the documents and charters adopted in order to protect the heritage and continuing with special events dedicated to the celebration of culture and heritage.

One of the latest such events is represented by the designation of the year 2018 as *The European Year of Cultural Heritage*, following the Decision (EU) 2017/864 of the European Parliament and of the Council of the European Union. This decision, adopted in 17 May 2017, was taken in order to encourage “the sharing and appreciation of Europe's cultural heritage as a shared resource, to raise awareness of common history and values, and to reinforce a sense of belonging to a common European space” [1]. Also, the main objective of this event is to encourage and support the efforts of every actor involved in the process of preservation of the built heritage in order “to protect, safeguard, reuse, enhance, valorise and promote Europe's cultural heritage” [2]. Placing the cultural heritage on the spotlight and celebrating it throughout a calendar year was an important decision of the European Union representatives, this being a testimony for the spiritual, cultural, environmental, social and economic importance held by the built heritage.

However, this event dedicated to the architectural heritage is not unique in the history of the European Union. Long before this significant event, another moment that marked the importance of the historical architecture in Europe was the year 1975, declared by the Council of Europe as *The European Architectural Year*. This event, that took place more than forty years ago, aimed to raise the public awareness regarding the irreplaceable cultural, social and economic values represented by historic buildings and sites, located in urban or rural areas. On this occasion, *The European Charter of the Architectural Heritage* was adopted in Amsterdam. The document previously mentioned stipulates that “the European architectural heritage consists not only of our most important monuments: it also includes the groups of lesser buildings in our old towns and characteristic villages in their natural or manmade settings. Today it is recognized that entire groups of buildings, even if they do not include any example of outstanding merit, may have an atmosphere that gives them the quality of works of art, welding different periods and styles into a harmonious whole. Such groups should also be preserved. The architectural heritage is an expression of history and helps us to understand the relevance of the past to contemporary life” [3]. This is the moment when the architectural heritage is redefined, the less valuable historical architecture together with outstanding examples of historical monuments being equally important and worthy of being preserved.

The same document recognizes the vital importance of historical architecture preservation, indicating the essential role played by the built heritage in territorial development projects. Far from being a luxury, this heritage is an economic asset which can be used to save the resources of the community, as the architectural heritage is a capital of irreplaceable spiritual, cultural, social and economic value [4]. Also, The European Charter of the Architectural Heritage puts the conservation of built heritage on a leading position in the process of urban development, without making it an exclusive matter: “conservation must be one of the first considerations in all urban and regional planning. It should be noted that integrated conservation does not rule out the introduction of modern architecture into areas containing old buildings provided that the existing context, proportions, forms, sizes and scale are fully respected and traditional materials are used” [5].

The Declaration of Amsterdam, adopted in 1975 and complementary to the above mentioned document, strengthens this idea, stating that the conservation of the architectural heritage is one of the major objectives of urban and regional planning: “The conservation of the architectural heritage should become an integral part of urban and regional planning, instead of being treated as a

secondary consideration or one requiring action here and there” [6]. At the same time, the conservation of architectural heritage that includes all buildings of cultural value, from the greatest to the humblest, should become a feature of a long-term approach.

A few years later, *The Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe* (known as *Granada Convention*) defines the principles of integrated conservation, while setting out the main objectives of “integrated conservation policies which include the protection of the architectural heritage as an essential town and country planning objective” [7]. At the same time, the document encourages the urban planning actors to take into account the conservation and use of valuable buildings, even if these are not given statutory protection measures. In this respect, the European countries must use the conservation, promotion and enhancement of the architectural heritage as a major feature of cultural, environmental and planning policies and also “foster the use of protected properties in the light of the needs of contemporary life and the adaptation when appropriate of old buildings for new uses” [8].

The Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas (Washington Charter) encourages the perpetuation of cultural properties “however modest in scale, that constitute the memory of mankind” [9]. The document also aims to outline the necessary steps required in order to protect, preserve and restore historical urban areas, pointing out the importance of harmonious development and adaptation of historic buildings to the needs of contemporary society. The Washington Charter recommends that historic urban areas should be part of coherent planning strategies, as spatial development of historic towns and urban areas is meant to ensure a harmonious relationship between the historic urban areas and the town, as a whole [10].

During The Fourth European Conference of Ministers responsible for Cultural Heritage that took place in Helsinki in 1996, the concept of integrated conservation is reconsidered, as the economic potential of cultural heritage for regeneration and development of the territory is being fully recognized. Therefore, apart from taking measures for scientific identification and legal protection of the heritage, the authorities are also responsible for promoting dynamic conservation strategies in order to highlight the economic potential for urban regeneration of the architectural heritage [11]. Another conclusion of the *Helsinki Declaration on the Political Dimension of Cultural Heritage Conservation in Europe* draws attention to the wide range of indirect social benefits accruing to the entire community, that result from the integration of historic urban areas in planning strategies. Consequently, the cultural heritage can be regarded as an essential factor of sustainable development, playing an important role in spatial development of urban areas and the preservation of its cultural identity. Moreover, *Resolution No. 2 - The Cultural Heritage as a Factor of Sustainable Development* adopted during the same conference emphasizes the contribution of the built heritage in the spatial planning projects and invites the authorities to develop varied methods for the management of cultural resources in the context of sustainable development [12].

The Paris Declaration on heritage as a driver of development, adopted at Paris in 2001 states that there are some challenges regarding the integration of heritage and ensuring that it has a role in the context of sustainable development, the most important of them being to “demonstrate that heritage plays a part in social cohesion, well-being, creativity and economic appeal, and is a factor in promoting understanding between communities” [13].

Over time, numerous conventions and documents have been adopted in order to underline the importance of the architectural heritage in the future development of the city. The above mentioned are just some of the documents adopted by competent institutions, the number of similar statements being much higher. All these documents underline the cultural, economic and social role played by the built heritage and encourage individuals and institutions to promote the integration of historical architecture into urban development strategies.

3. The Situation of Built Heritage in Bucharest, Romania

Romania is a signatory to all the international documents and conventions mentioned above, all of them being ratified by Romania through a series of laws regarding the protection of built heritage, that are still valid. Yet, the state of built heritage in Romania is rather disastrous. The precarious condition of historical architecture can be easily found in almost any historic city of Romania, but especially in Bucharest. This state of affairs was a constant over the last 30 years, the authorities ignoring the problems associated with the built heritage.

Notwithstanding, a significant number of associations, NGOs and organizations, both national and international, have triggered serious alarm signals about the ongoing degradation of the historical built architecture in Romania. One of the first warnings in this regard came in 2012, when the *Association for the Protection and Documentation of Heritage in Romania - Pro.Do.Mo.*, published the "Heritage of Bucharest 2008 - 2012" Report, stating that "during 2008-2012, the deterioration of Bucharest' architectural heritage, 2.621 buildings on the historical monuments list (according to the Historical Monuments List 2010) and 98 built protected areas, accelerated. In the absence of a strategy for the regeneration of historical areas and the preservation of valuable architecture, the pressure exerted by the chaotic real estate development threaten the survival of historic Bucharest [...] In the last years, we have witnessed the systematic destruction of Bucharest's historical and cultural tissue: abandoned and demolished monuments, valuable houses that have disappeared overnight or destroyed by aggressive renovation, the appearance of buildings whose volumes and aesthetics seriously affect the value of urban protected areas" [14].

One year later, *ICOMOS through its International Scientific Committee on Historic Towns and Villages (CIVVIH)*, during the annual meeting of the experts in Budapest – Visegrad, adopted a Resolution concerning the architectural and cultural heritage of Bucharest, Romania. As a result, "CIVVIH expresses his strong concern about the safeguarding of the Heritage of Historic Bucharest City and recommends to ICOMOS to call urgently upon the Romanian authorities to protect Bucharest architectural and cultural heritage" [15]. At the same time, CIVVIH calls for the authorities to stop the demolitions of listed buildings, individual elements that make up listed historic sites or individual historic buildings not listed, that contribute to the cultural and urban value of Bucharest. Also, the experts recommends to the Romanian authorities "to work on developing local strategies for the preservation of Bucharest architectural and cultural heritage through sustainable economic development" [16]. In 2014, in a letter addressed to the authorities of Romanian, the same international committee expressed its strong concerns about the safeguarding of the heritage located in the historic city of Bucharest and raised an Heritage Alert: "Concerned about the degradation of Bucharest's architectural and cultural heritage through demolitions, abandonment of historic buildings, unsustainable urban development and inappropriate rehabilitation measures, ICOMOS calls on the Romanian authorities, among other measures, to halt such demolitions and destructions, and offers its assistance in developing local strategies for the preservation of Bucharest's architectural heritage through sustainable social and economic development and integrated conservation, and in cases of sensitive technical issues or difficult planning constraints that threaten the built heritage" [17].

World Monuments Fund (WMF) included Bucharest among world cultural heritage sites at risk in the 2016 World Monuments Watch Report. The prestigious organization fighting for the cultural heritage conservation worldwide argues that the built heritage of Romanian Capital City is threatened by abandonment and demolition, uncontrolled development and inappropriate rehabilitation. According to WMF, Bucharest was included on the 2016 World Monuments Watch in order "to create public pressure to improve this dramatic situation. A moratorium on demolitions and the compilation of a comprehensive inventory, limits on the size of new development in historic

areas, as well as more public consultation and transparency are urgently needed to protect Bucharest for the benefit of its citizens and the world community” [18].

In the same year, the *Bucharest Territorial Branch of the Order of Architects in Romania* published the “Report for Bucharest 2016”, in which the disastrous state of the built heritage is described in detail. The authors of the report state that the absence of a coherent policy for preserving and protecting the cultural identity of Bucharest has altered the historical center and historical areas of the city, due to political instability, social transformations or economic transition. Despite the architectural quality of the built tissue, no strategic policy dedicated to the preservation of the specificity and character of the built heritage or to the development of their cultural and economic potential has been implemented in Bucharest in the last decades [19].

In Bucharest there are 98 Built Protected Areas which represent almost a quarter of Bucharest’s built area. Every one of these BPAs has its own specificity and particularities, contributing to the cultural (architectural and urban) identity of the city. Unfortunately, these areas have not escaped the demolitions madness or the interventions inconsistent with the laws regarding the urban development. In order to understand the magnitude of this phenomenon, as well as the consequences arising from the systematic destruction of the built heritage of Bucharest, a chronological review regarding the first steps in establishing these protected areas is required. This analysis is surprised in the following paragraphs.

i. Built Protected Areas in Bucharest – an Overview

Starting with ICOMOS Washington Charter from 1987 and continuig with UNESCO’s Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape adopted in Paris in 2011, the expression „*historic urban area*” has become an important concept in the conscience of everyone concerned with heritage protection. As defined by the Washington Charter “historic urban areas, large and small, include cities, towns and historic centers or quarters, together with their natural and man-made environments. Beyond their role as historical documents, these areas embody the values of traditional urban cultures” [20]. This definition is completed in 2011, by enlarging the significance of the expression mentioned above, along with the introduction of the term “landscape”. Thus, *the historic urban landscape* is defined by UNESCO as being “the result of a historic layering of cultural and natural values and attributes, extending beyond the notion of “historic center” or “ensemble” to include the broader urban context and its geographical setting. This wider context includes the site’s topography, geomorphology, hydrology and natural features, its built environment, both historic and contemporary, its infrastructures above and below ground, its open spaces and gardens, its land use patterns and spatial organization, perceptions and visual relationships, as well as all other elements of the urban structure. It also includes social and cultural practices and values, economic processes and the intangible dimensions of heritage related to diversity and identity” [21].

According to Romanian legislation, a Built Protected Area includes a land area with a certain density of constructions within the administrative territory of a locality, in which the built frame, the natural environment and the human activities presents (historical) qualities whose protection is of public interest [22]. These areas are defined and delimited following a number of historical, architectural, urban or landscape studies and through the urbanism documentation of those areas. The delimitation of the protected area is made by the Local Council through the General Urban Plan, in order to protect and preserve the cultural heritage, through specific detailed regulations and to improve the quality of the environment and the lives of the inhabitants. It is important to mention the fact that the built protected areas do not necessarily contain buildings listed as historical monuments.

The first Romanian city in which these built protected areas were established was Bucharest. In 1999, as a response to the previous demolitions of valuable urban areas that took place during the communist regime and in an attempt to save what was still preserved from the architectural heritage of the historic city of Bucharest, the limits of 98 Built Protected Areas (BPA) were established through the General Urban Plan of Bucharest (1997-2000) - Zonal Urban Plan "Built Protected Areas in Bucharest". One year later the Local Urbanism Regulations for these BPAs were approved. These regulations establish the degree of protection of the area, the value of buildings or the types of interventions allowed (conservation, restoration, preservation, demolition, etc.).

The whole approach to establish these protected urban areas was made in a relatively short period of time, after a series of historical studies and field research, but without a systematic analysis of each of the approximately 14,500 buildings located inside the boundaries of the 98 BPAs. As a result, in 2009 through a decision of the General Council of the city of Bucharest, the Zonal Urban Plans for 12 BPAs were subsequently reviewed. No inventory or analysis files were prepared on this occasion for any of the properties located in these protected areas. This only happened in 2011, when other three BPAs were revised: BPA 10. Calea Dorobanți, BPA Vasile Conta and BPA Pitar Moș. At that time, a systematic analysis of all the properties located in the three reviewed areas was started. But this praiseworthy approach ended with the completion of the analysis phase for the three areas mentioned above, due to the fact that the revision of the documentation for the other 95 protected areas was never initiated by the representatives of the local administration in Bucharest. In this context, the Municipality and the institutions responsible for heritage protection (National Heritage Institute, Ministry of Culture - Bucharest Department for Culture) do not know the real state of the historical built fund of the 98 built protected areas and, implicitly, the problems faced by the inhabitants of these areas.

ii. The Current Situation of Built Protected Areas in Bucharest

In spite of all the laws and regulations adopted for the protection of the built heritage, the situation of historic architecture in Bucharest is very precarious. The actual state of the built heritage from the built protected areas of Bucharest encounters a large number of dysfunctions, which make the future of these constructions uncertain. Based on the research conducted by the team members of "Catalog București" Project it can be stated that a large number of buildings are in an advanced state of degradation due to lack of maintenance, abandonment, seismic risk, uncertain legal status, etc. Moreover, a large number of interventions that are not in accordance with the regulations of BPA have been identified, many of which mutilate the historical constructions. Among these interventions that violate the regulations and laws regarding the built heritage can be included:

- Replacement of the original carpentry
- Façade changes (void size, decoration removal, etc.)
- Installation pipes, electric wires, air conditioners, TV antennas mounted on the façade
- Thermal insulation with polystyrene (with decorative degradation)
- The use of inappropriate colors and materials
- Volumetric alterations - addition of new buildings, extension of existing building
- Inappropriate functions and modes of use, etc.

The real estate speculation determines a negative attitude of the owners in relation to the built heritage, as the price of the land is often much higher than the construction. As a result, numerous abusive demolitions or new real estate developments that do not comply with the BPA regulation can be found in these historical areas. More than that, in some cases systematic destructions of the built heritage have been identified, often with the tacit approval of local authorities.

Besides these serious violations of the legislation dedicated to the protection of built heritage, a number of dysfunctions have been identified in terms of regulations regarding the BPA. Thus, a number of BPA's regulations have been identified whose provisions contradict the realities in the field. Moreover, in the case of several BPA's, the limits of these areas overlap; as a result, the professionals in the field are confronted with numerous contradictions deriving from the regulations of these BPAs and the application of these legislative norms becomes increasingly confusing, often serving the interests of speculators at the expense of the built heritage. Also, a number of errors regarding the Historical Monuments List have been identified through this project. As a result, valuable buildings are not subject to a legal protection regime, being victims of neglect, mutilation or demolition.

iii. Safeguarding the Architectural Heritage in Built Protected Areas – Solutions

In Bucharest there are 98 built protected areas which sum 14% of Bucharest area, every one of these historical sites having its own specificity and particularities. More than that, each built protected area - unique in so many ways – can be considered an *island of cultural identity* for the city, contributing to enriching Bucharest's history and maintaining its memory over time. Therefore, the protection of the architectural heritage existing in this perimeter becomes mandatory.

In order to insure the longevity and preservation of these urban areas, extremely valuable in terms of cultural significance, several steps can be taken:

- Identification / inventory of Historical Built Heritage from BPA
- Evaluation of the Historical Built Heritage in BPA
- Protection and valuation of the architectural heritage in BPA
- Integration of built heritage in BPA into urban development policies
- Management of Urban Historical Landscapes

First of all, *the identification and inventory of the built heritage* from these historic areas is necessary. Currently, there is no source, official or non-official, that can provide accurate data regarding the situation of Bucharest's BPAs and that can provide a statistical basis for the elaboration and development of protective measures. Thus, the creation of a complete database (inventory) containing information about all the buildings located in the 98 BPAs represents the first measure that needs to be taken in order to get a clear picture of the situation in the field. Subsequently, starting from the analysis of these data, the identification of existing problems, dysfunctions and threats affecting the built heritage in these urban areas is required.

The second step in ensuring the perpetuation of the urban image of the historic Bucharest consists in the *evaluation of the built environment in the BPAs*. A simple scroll of the Historical Monuments List shows that there is a shortage of buildings classified as historical monuments, many valuable properties not being included in this list. As a result, starting with the identification of valuable constructions in these areas, the Historical Monuments List can be extended, providing legal protection to other buildings important for the cultural identity of the city. Also, the situation in the field confirms that the actual system used for recording and controlling the interventions in these areas is completely unfeasible, mainly due to an insufficient number of employees in the competent institutions. Therefore, the cooperation with NGOs or associations concerned about the fate of heritage can help the authorities in managing the situation faced by these urban areas. At the same time, a revision of the methodology currently used for recording and controlling the interventions in the BPA is necessary.

The protection and valuation of the built heritage from the BPAs is another step that has to be taken

in order to ensure the preservation of the historical architecture. The actual heritage protection system has major gaps: in some cases, it has unclear and incomplete definitions or it comprises incompletely defined protection measures. As a result, the protected built areas are part of the heritage categories whose protection is deficient. In this regard, it is necessary to revise the legal framework for the protection of historical monuments. In addition, the multitude of interventions that violate the urbanism provisions, leading to the disappearance of the local specificity and to the destruction of the historical urban tissue in these areas, make it necessary to rethink the legislative framework used in urban planning. Another dysfunction that affects the life of valuable buildings located in BPAs is represented by the Public Procurement Law, where the criterion for the lowest price or shortest term of execution leads to poor quality interventions. A solution in this case may be represented by the Amendment of the Public Procurement Law and the introduction of the obligation regarding the quality criteria in construction. Nevertheless, the cultural heritage belongs to the entire community; therefore, promoting a sanction regime for the owners who destroy the built heritage (considerable fines, the obligation to fully recover the affected cultural values, to restore the land and buildings to the situation prior to the interventions) can contribute to saving the identity and memory of the city.

Consequently, *the integration of built heritage into urban development policies* may increase the survival chances of the historic architecture from the BPAs. The lack of public policies aimed at integrating the heritage in spatial development strategies makes it necessary to initiate pilot urban regeneration projects and the cooperation between all the stakeholders, public and private, involved in this process. At the same time, the number of arbitrary interventions in these areas, made through derogatory urbanism, can be limited by implementing coherent urban development policies and by respecting the current legislation regarding the general urban plans.

In order to preserve these values, a long-term strategy is needed, which can only be achieved through a *qualitative management of urban historical landscape*. The System is currently facing a passive attitude from the central specialized public administration that represents the problems of the built heritage. In addition, there is a personal and financial shortage in relation to these institutions, which generates an inadequate administrative capacity. Thus, reforming the administrative system can solve these problems. More than that, the state of the built heritage is continuously degrading under the pressure of urban development. A solution in this respect can be represented by the decentralization in the field of national cultural heritage and the constant monitoring of these urban areas. Another identified problem is represented by the owners of historical buildings, who are not encouraged to maintain them. In addition, almost all restoration interventions, when it exists, are aggressive and non-compliant with the BPAs regulations. Therefore, developing good practice guides in order to limit the number of incorrect interventions and offering technical support can prevent this phenomenon. It is also necessary to consider the creation of information programs for the inhabitants of the BPAs, as well as the granting of Tax Facilities to those owners who maintain and restore the historical buildings.

Through “Catalog București”, ARCEN tries to meet some immediate needs of the heritage in these areas, starting with the creation of a complete database containing information and photos for the approx. 14,500 buildings found in the 98 BPAs of Bucharest. The next step is the creation of an interactive platform/map of the 98 BPA in Bucharest, with all the buildings marked and accompanied by recent photographs (2017-2020) and data, regarding the construction period, the degree of protection, architecture, conservation status, contemporary interventions, seismic risk, aesthetic impact and so on. Consequently, a number of statistics on the most common violations of regulations, housing quality, urban landscape, seismic risk areas and others criteria are developed based on the obtained data, in order to have a complete overview of these urban areas situation.

Designed as a long-term project, “Catalog București” will also report the identified errors in the

Historical Monuments List and will point out the necessity of listing other valuable buildings. In addition, this initiative can become the basis for the improvement of the legislation in the field of heritage and the regulations for the BPAs. ARCEN works with specialists in the field of heritage and public authorities in order to save the urban heritage and the cultural landscapes of the City's Capital. This project is meant to support the community, by preparing good practice guides and offering architectural and technical solutions. Therefore, the result of this project can be seen as a practical tool for educating the inhabitants of Bucharest, by providing advice for the residents of built protected areas. Through all these measures, the ongoing project hopes to put an end at the aggressions and aims to ensure the preservation of the specificity of historical Bucharest.

In terms of project results, these are presented as following:

- Collaborations and partnerships with a number of institutions have been signed, among them being the Order of Architects in Romania and the National Heritage Institute
- Until march 2018 data has been collected for 21 BPAs: Icoanei, Lascăr Catargiu, Elisabeta, Carol, Traian, Pitar Moș, Dorobanți, Parcelarea Blanc, Parcelarea Țesătoria Mecanică, Parcelarea Edilitatea, Parcelarea Societatea Generala pentru Construirea de locuinte ieftine, Parcul Ioanid, Calea Moșilor, Calea Călărașilor, Brătianu, Negustori, Mântuleasa, Hristo Botev, Caimatei and Colței.
- For three BPA (Moșilor, Brătianu, Călărași) the statistics and analyzes of the obtained data have already been finalized.
- In 2018, data will be collected for 16 more BPAs: Vasile Conta, Batiștei, Ferdinand, J.L. Calderon, Brezoianu, Rosetti, Vasile Lascăr, Thomas Masaryk, Nicolae Iorga, Dacia, Eminescu, Strehaia, Mămulari, Bucur, Mitropolie, 11 Iunie.
- The beta version of the interactive platform has been released and can be found on <http://catalogbucuresti.info/>
- Good practice booklets for Calea Călărașilor, Calea Moșilor, Negustori, Mântuleasa and Caimatei areas have been already developed and distributed to community members.

4. Conclusions

As mentioned above, the importance of including the architectural heritage in coherent planning strategies has been highlighted by the documents drafted in this respect by numerous international institutions concerned with the fate of heritage. Although Romania is a signatory of all these documents, whose provisions were assumed in the form of laws by the national institutions, the condition of the built heritage in our country is at least uncertain. The lack of interest, education and knowledge regarding the potential of this cultural asset causes the abandonment, mutilation or, even worse, the demolition of historic architecture, in order to make place for new real estate developments. In the case of Bucharest, these destructive actions are not isolated, being concentrated in the historical part of the city, especially in the 98 built protected areas. Despite the legal protection established by the urban regulations, the built protected areas of Bucharest are not actually protected. However, these large urban areas shelter immeasurable values and have a special atmosphere, being visible testimonies for the history of this city. The continuous degradation of the historical urban landscape in Bucharest is therefore synonymous with a loss of cultural identity. Thus, it is necessary to try to save what is still possible from the historical architecture of the city.

Undoubtedly, the urban development of these areas, in a sustainable manner, it is possible by considering the architectural heritage in coherent planning strategies. but in order for this to be achieved, it is first and foremost a matter of knowing the situation in the field. By responding to two primary steps in preserving the built heritage – the identification and analysis of valuable historical

architecture in the BPAs, ARCEN's project aims to offer a complete and clear picture of the built heritage situation. Also, through "Catalog București", the team members hope to reduce the number of buildings located in historical areas that disappear annually in Bucharest, through demolition or mutilation, especially if they are under the protection of heritage or urban laws. By contributing to the improvement of the legislation designed to protect the heritage and determine the urban development of the city, ARCEN's project aims to enhance the quality of the architecture and the life these areas' residents. The introduction of modern constructions into these built protected areas is still possible and desirable, on the condition that the new insertions respect the existing context and architecture. In order to ensure the success of these interventions a permanent dialogue between the conservationists and those responsible for urban planning is needed.

The historical architecture is not a hindrance to the development of urban areas. Moreover, it offers character and atmosphere to historical areas, enhancing the charm of the city through the spiritual, cultural and social values held by the built heritage. In addition, the economic potential of the historical architecture for urban regeneration is fully recognized, thus the integration of heritage in in urban planning strategies is necessary in order to achieve a sustainable territorial development.

Acknowledgements

"Catalog București" project was launched in March 2017 by the Romanian Association for Culture, Education and Normality - A.R.C.E.N., as an attempt to inventory the urban heritage located in the built protected areas of Bucharest. The inventory will be carried out between March 2017 and November 2020 by volunteers and architectural, urban and historical specialists and will target the 98 protected areas of Bucharest. The aspects presented in this paper were derived from the author's experience as a team member of "Catalog București" Project.

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