

## Relocated churches in the centre of Bucharest

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**Abstract.** The demolitions for the creation of the civic centre destroyed one fifth of the area of Bucharest. The destructions include a part of the architectural ambience of the streets, documented by Gheorghe Leahu for example in watercolours, important monuments such as the Brâncovenesc hospital or the Văcărești monastery. Apart of the demolitions, some monuments such as churches could be saved through relocation, an ingenious method of the engineer Eugen Iordăchescu. This saved through relocation from their original place a number of monuments but lacking protection of the historical site. Other was demolished, the earthquake damage being abusively used as reason for the demolition. Although some religious buildings could be saved through that method, they were lacking the original monastery precinct and hidden behind blocks of flats. The boulevard of the so-called Victory of Socialism, named by some the Victory of Socialism on the city, cut the organic tissue resulting into streets transformed into dead ends of suddenly sectioned like the street of Rahova, sectioned by the boulevard, for which urban solutions are still looked for. The amplitude of the problem was clear in the international competition Bucharest 2000, won by the German office Meinhard von Gerkan. According to this solution, the monumental dimensions of the House of People could be put in scale only through the construction of some skyscrapers in the area remained park around it, where because of the rubbish from demolitions plants don't grow adequately.

**Keywords:** *photography, church, relocation, mapping, GIS*

### OVERVIEW

Carol Pop de Szathmary (Oltean, 2012) photographed Bucharest, his adoption city, and among the most renowned pictures are those of Dealu Spirii, the demolished zone by Ceausescu. Fig. 1 shows a panorama view with some important churches, and Fig. 2 shows the monastery of Antim in the 19th century and today. The monastery of Antim was one of the affected churches by the construction ambitions of the dictator. The precinct was damaged, through the movement of the sinodal palace, a construction in new Romanian style added two centuries later. Fig. 3 shows the translation of this palace to make place for the so-called Victory of Socialism. The fate of Antim monastery was not unique. Most compelling case was that of the monastery of Mihai Voda, from the time of the Middle Ages, the voivod Mihai Viteazul, the

precinct of which contained the state archives. Only the church and the tower could be saved, through a movement horizontally and vertically which needed an engineering masterpiece Iordăchescu (1996). Table 1 shows all churches which were translated in Romania, out of which six are in the zone for the new civic centre of Bucharest, as shown in Fig. 3 and 4.

Monument relocation is a problem discussed in relation with the ICOMOS documents. In the time churches were relocated in Bucharest, the only ICOMOS document touching the problem was the Venice Charter 1964, other documents with opinion on this problem being from 1990 (on the archeological heritage) and 1999 (cultural tourism) respectively. A discussion on contemporary relocations is given by (Gregory, 2008). The topic is still of interest for ICOMOS, so Ahmet Turer presented in the ISCARSAH meeting in Istanbul 19.

October 2016 the relocation of the Zenelbey Mausoleum. But the political implications of the master plan are not so deep in any of these cases.



**Figure 1.** [Imagine panoramică a Bureștiului. Vedere din Dealul Mitropoliei] ; Szathmari, Carol Popp de ; 1812-1887. Part of a photographic album- topographical mark Af 187 - with hand-written title page in black ink and watercolor, with dedication to Elena Cuza: "Souvenir de la Roumanie dédié a son Alteesse Serenissime Helene Principesse Regnante de la Roumanie par Charles Pap de Szathmari peintre et photographe de la Cour de Son Alteesse Serenissime le prince Regnant et décoré par LL. MM. L'Empereur d'Autriche, de Russie, du Sultan, Le Reine Victoria et le Roi de Wurtemberg". The album is bound in turtle shell covers, with gold and silver inlay on the first cover, with gilded-edged pages and silver bolt. It comprises 55 photographs from the no. 66276 to 66321. Approximate date of the album: 1860. The photograph has a legend above, hand-written in black ink. Vedere din Dealul Mitropoliei. 1. Biserica Sfântul Antim 2. Mănăstire, spital 3.[Biserica] Sfîinții Apostoli 4. Foișor 5.[Biserica] Sfântul Ilie 6. Palatul Brâncovenesc 13.[Biserica] Sfânta Vineri 14. Palatul Bibescu 15. Drumul Mitropoliei 16. Biserica Sfântul Luca 17.[Biserica] Radu Vodă 18.[Biserica] Sfântul Spiridon 19.[Biserica] Sfânta Ecaterina 20. Arhivele Statului 21. Drumul Văcărești 22. [Biserica] Sfânta Troiță.



**Figure 2.** a. The Church of Antim Monastery, Bucharest. Szathmari, Carol Popp de ; 1812-1887. The photograph belongs to the photographic album titled: 'România', as results from the inscriptions on its title page: ROMÂNIA.//ALBUM//I.S. Domnitorulă Romanilor//CAROL I//Photographiat din ordinul I. S. dupa natura de //C. P. SZATHMÁRI//Pictor și Photograph I. S. Domnitorulă/BUCUREȘTI.//[1867]. The album comprises 42 photographs, from no. 8386 to no. 8426 and 57677. The photograph is framed in a black-inked border. A printed note, above: ROMANIA ALBUM ALŪ M. S. DOMNITORIULŪ CAROLŪ I., down centre, in black ink: ANTIM BUCUREȘCI. Biblioteca Centrală din București. 1901. Photograph from Europeana database, public domain. b. The church today photo M. Bostenaru, 2016.

Table 1. Translation of churches

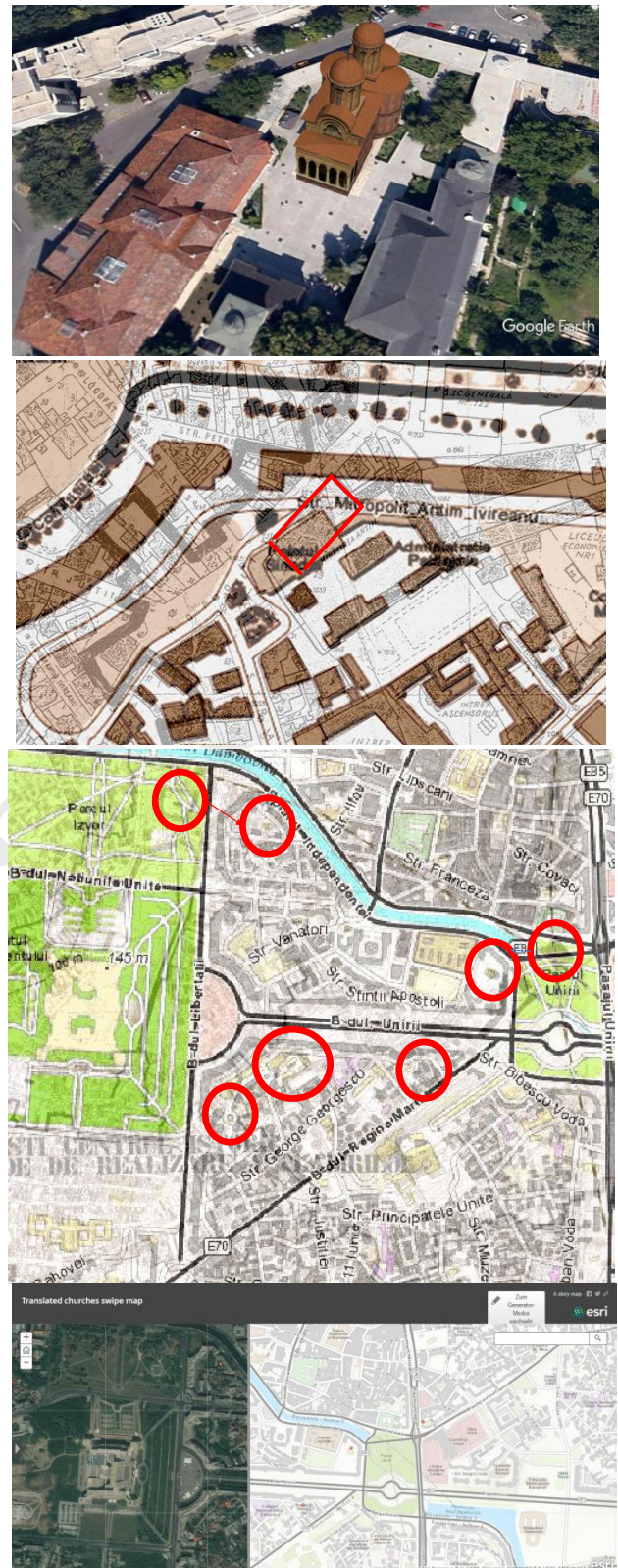
	Translated churches	Year constructed	Year translated	Distance
1	Schitul Maicilor church	1726	1982	245m
2	Olari church	1758	1983	
3	Saint Ilie Rahova church	1838	1984	51m
4	New Ioan church Unirii place	1774	1986	23m
5	"Capra" Pantelimon road church	1877	1986	90m
6	Saint Stefan "Cuibul cu barza" church	1760	1988	16m
7	Mihai Voda church	1594	1985	289m/6m
8	Sinod's palace at Antim church	1912 (1715)	1985	
9	The statue of Domnita Balasa at the corresponding church	1885	1988	
10	A church in Resita		1985	
11	Church in Rimeti		1988	



The reason was to cover the churches by the newly raised blocks, as seen in Fig. 5. This way, the panorama which we saw in Szathmary's picture would be covered. A proposal for further research is to sketch the silhouettes in this panorama for 3D reconstruction as for the pre1755 earthquake Azulejos panorama in Lisbon (Bostenaru Dan *et al.*, 2013). Modern digital geographic tools build a possibility for analysis of the images, and as such the GPS added image of the map before could allow identifying the changes in a swipe map (Fig. 3). The research on 3D models and databases has to be seen in connection with another research we are doing, on the lost heritage of Magheru boulevard (Bostenaru *et al.*, 2013).

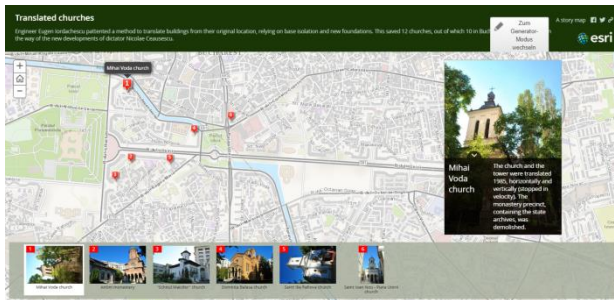
The translation of churches was a mean to save the churches by the construction ambitions of the dictator. Eugen Iordăchescu patented the method and recently several exhibitions were dedicated to this, in Brăila, Bucharest and Venice (Fig. 6). The exhibitions were accompanied by the launch of the Trinitas TV documentary DVD [7]. The translation of buildings continues to raise attention internationally, for example the meeting of the ICOMOS committee of ISCARSAH is dealing with historic Zeynelbey Mausoleum in Hasankeyf Batman (1100 tons about 2 km distance using SPMT as a consequence of a dam). In case of the totalitarian regime translation meant saving the churches, as over 20 were demolished, but today's approach in the context of authenticity needs consideration. The context of the neighbourhoods along the so-called Victoria Socialismului, presented in the watercolours of Gheorghe Leahu (1995) was broken, and projects were made to re-establish it (Enache *et al.*, 2013).

We used ArcGIS online to reconstruct the way the churches were translated, through swipe maps and story maps, and also superposed the original drawings from 1974 with the current GIS map of Bucharest. This way geographic mapping can reflect changes induced by the master plan. Further works will concentrate on working with the imagery including that of Szathmary (Ionescu, 2014, Ciupei, 2013). The method of Bostenaru *et al.* (2013) can be applied to the silhouettes in the photography similarly to those of Lisbon pre1755 azulejos.

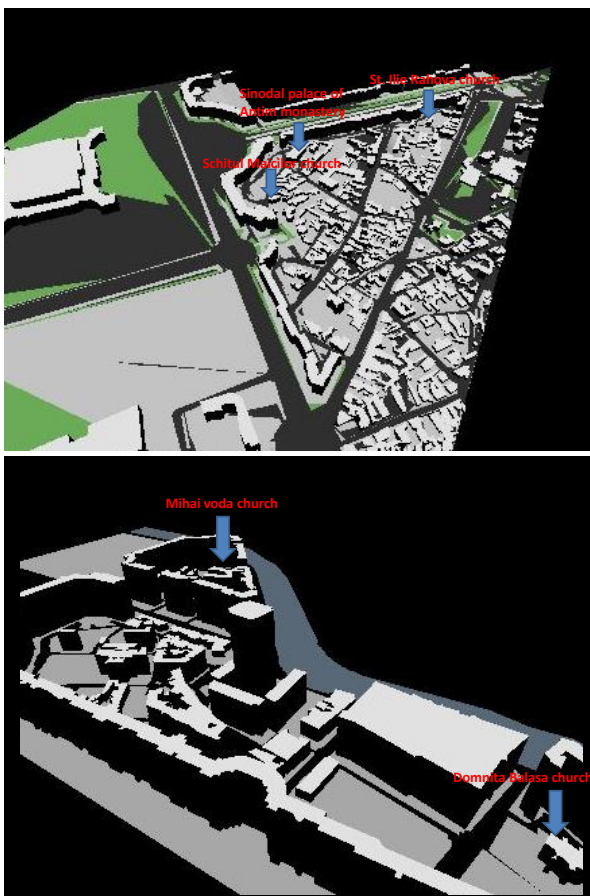


**Figure 3.** Superposition of maps before (1974) and after demolitions and translations (today, Esri Romania, Esri, HERE, DeLorme, INCREMENT P, USGS, METI/NASA) for Antim monastery and the whole zone. 3D model of Antim monastery (c) Google Earth. Swipe map. <http://arcg.is/2dH86eF>





**Figure 4.** Story map of translated churches.  
<http://arcg.is/2dcM8jH>



**Figure 5.** Position of the translated churches in the current civic centre. New markings on 3D models in Adobe director after CAD models (students in the course *Protection of localities against risks*)

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**Figure 6.** Exhibition dedicated to Eugen Iordachescu's translation of churches at the ICR in Venice.

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