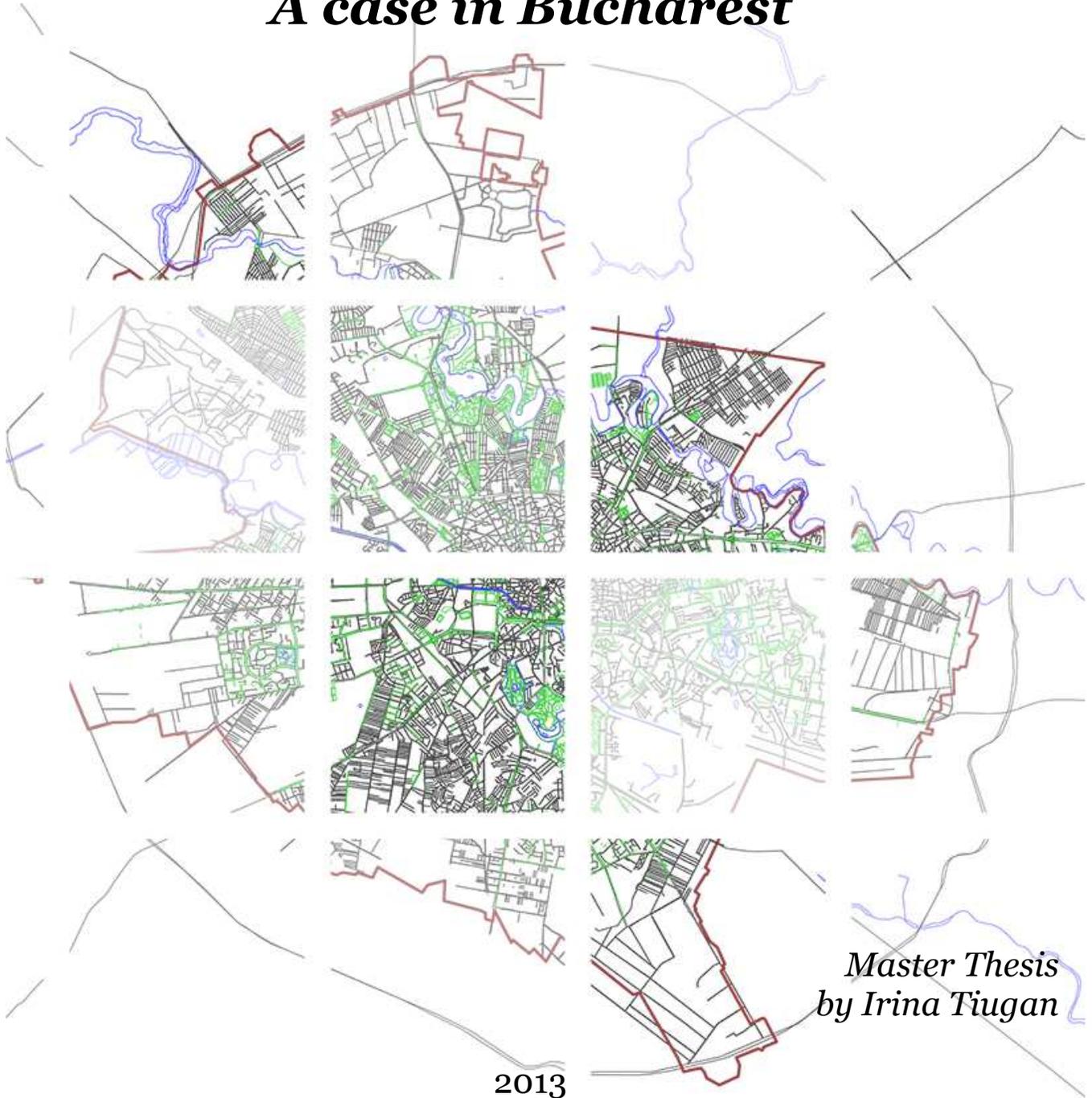# *Urban Regeneration Projects and the Impacts on the Built Heritage: A case in Bucharest*

*Master Thesis
by Irina Tiugan*

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# *Urban Regeneration Projects and the Impacts on the Built Heritage:*
## *A case in Bucharest*

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**Preface**

This research is developed as a requirement for the completion of the Master of Science in Environmental and Infrastructure Planning (EIP), Rijksuniversiteit Groningen. The main focus of this Master Thesis will be the impact of urban regeneration projects on the built heritage, by taking a study case in Bucharest.

Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisors: Professor G. J. Ashworth and Eduardo Oliveira for guiding me through the process of writing this paper as well as for having patience and knowing how to listen to my ideas. To Professor Ashworth, the books have thought me a lot and I look forward to the moment when I will meet you in person. To Eduardo, thank you for all those times when you helped me, especially before the deadline. Secondly, I would like to thank Professor Hanna Derer and Professor Constantin Enache for providing me with research data, such as Zonal Urban Plans and official documentation from the project. Furthermore, I would like to thanks all the people who agreed to be interview by me. Finally, I would like to thank my parents, who gave me the resources (emotional and economical) for completing this master and to my friends who where there with me through the entire process. A special thanks goes to my EIP classmates for providing me with those relaxing days (and nights).

**Abstract**

The existence of buildings with architectural and urban value has always been a part of the urban environment in Bucharest. The actions realised towards the preservation and **conservation** of these buildings, however, have always been a subject of debate. The paper presents the direction chosen by the municipality of Bucharest in regards to the **built heritage** by showing an ongoing **urban regeneration** project. The *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest* was developed as a solution for the increasing car traffic, but without paying too much attention to the value of the built heritage from that area. The beginning date of the project, 2006, along with the fact that in 2013 it is still in progress shows the weakness of the **Romanian planning system** and legislation. The problems that appeared are seen by many as expected bumps as a result of this system. Even so, it is first a change in mentality that will need to happen so that later changes in the legislation and the actions taken towards a better life can occur.

**Summary**

The paper will present the impacts that the urban regeneration project *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest* had on the built heritage in Bucharest. Structured in 6 main parts, the paper tries to give a clear idea of how the project was realized and what happened with the built heritage during the implementation process.

In the second part of the thesis is presented the methodology used for gathering the necessary data. It starts with an explanation of why this project was taken for analysis, presenting afterwards the main research questions. Several documentation of the project were obtained and carefully analysed and through the interviews, a more subjective view of the project was portrayed. A brief description of a project that was realised in the beginning of the 19th is also given in order to give the reader an idea of how spatial planning in Romania was done over one century ago.

The third part presents the theoretical framework. The idea of presenting all the concepts, urban rehabilitation, urban renewal and urban regeneration, came from the desire to support the reader with the right conceptual differences and the uses between them. Regarding to the heritage these concepts have different approaches. Furthermore, the concept of heritage and what can be considered a resource for the heritage is presented. Two main directions in protecting these resources are later explained: preservation and conservation, also discussing about the economic factor.

A necessary step in order to better understand the study case is the presentation of the planning system in Romania and the heritage legislation, the fourth part of the thesis. They are directed towards giving the reader the basic knowledge about a project development process and about the rules and regulations that need to be followed regarding the built heritage: how are the monuments classified, what are the steps necessary to classify or downgrade a building.

The fifth part is the empirical analyse, which contains a brief description of the history of the built environment and an overview of the transport system in Bucharest. They come in support for the case study. A presentation of the project is realized by analysis the necessity and urgency of the project, the stakeholder's participation, the description of the built environment and the implementation process. The chapter concludes by presenting the problems that appeared in the implementation process, with a focus on the heritage and afterwards presents some possible solutions for future developments, in the recommendation subchapter.

The thesis finishes with the general conclusions in which the main research questions are restated and answers are given. The answers are both from an objective as well as a subjective point of view.

## List of abbreviation and acronyms

**CEMAT** – Conférence Européenne des Ministres Responsables de L'aménagement du Territoire

**DUP** - Detailed Urban Plan

**EU** – European Union

**GUP** - General Urban Plan

**GUP** - General Urban Plan

**LHM** - List of Historical Monuments or **LMI** - Lista Monumentelor Istorice*

**MC** – Ministry of Culture

**NGO**s - Non-governmental organizations

**PATJ** - Country Spatial Plan - Plan de Amenajare a Teritoriului Judetean*

**PATN** - National Spatial Plan - Plan de Amenajare a Teritoriului National*

**PATZ** - Zonal Spatial Plan - Plan de Amenajare a Teritoriului Zonal*

**PUD** - Detailed Urban Plan - Plan Urbanistic de Detaliu*

**PUG** - General Urban Plan - Plan Urbanistic General*

**PUZ** - Zonal Urban Plan - Plan Urbanistic Zonal*

**UNESCO** - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

**ZPC** - Protected Built Areas - Zone Protejate Construite*

**ZUP** - Zonal Urban Plan

*In Romanian language

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## 1. Introduction

Urban areas are complex and dynamic systems. They reflect the many processes that drive physical, social, environmental and economic transition and they themselves are prime generators of changes. No town or city is immune from either the external forces, that dictate the need to adapt, or the internal pressures, that are present within urban areas and which can precipitate growth or decline (Roberts, 2000). Changes that happen inside the administrative territory usually require the development of urban regeneration, renewal, revitalization, rehabilitation or restoration projects.

The concept of urban regeneration can be found in the earliest days of urban planning and although some may not agree, others consider that one of the major projects of urban regeneration is the transformation of Paris by Georges-Eugene Haussmann (1853-1870). According to Couch et al. (2008, p.2) *"Haussmann's restructuring of central Paris in the mid-nineteenth century was a programme of urban regeneration".* Haussmann came with a modernization plan for Paris which had the purpose to create a more splendid, more hygienic and more secure Paris, and the project that was developed tried to bridge the urban dimensions such as environment, transportation network, and population in the city centre. Since that time, many urban regeneration projects were developed all around the world with the purpose of improving the urban space but also having multiple impacts on the other components of the city, such as the built heritage.

The aim of this thesis is to present what are the impacts of urban regeneration projects on the built heritage, by applying a case study methodology. The case study that will be presented and analysed is an urban regeneration project developed in Bucharest, the capital city of Romania. The project is named the *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest* (original name in Romanian language – *Dublare Diametrala Nord – Sud Bucuresti*). The project will affect six streets and it was divided into two stages, the first one is the regeneration on the streets *Buzesti, Berzei* and *Vasile Parvan,* and the second part is for the streets *B.P. Hasdeu, Uranus* and *Calea Rahovei.*

The project is about the enlargement of the streets *Berzei* and *Buzesti* with the purpose of creating a new connection between the northern and the southern part of the city and to facilitate the car traffic. In order to protect the city centre and the main historic boulevards, the streets *Berzei, Buzesti* and Uranus, at the west of the city centre, were proposed as a bypass.

The project is under development right now, the documents being first approved in 2006, but changing constantly because of the many problems that are raised by different Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other entities. Since the beginning of the project it raised a lot of questions and discussion, not only with the residents of the neighbourhood, but also with specialists from different fields, such as urban planners, heritage experts, economists, sociologists and geographers. The thesis is developed according with the following structure.

### 1.1. Structure of the thesis

After the introductory *item* (1), the methodology and research questions are presented (*item* 2), in order clarify the argument and the steps to develop the empirical case.

The *item*3 presents the theoretical framework. The difference between urban rehabilitation, urban renewal and urban regeneration will be discussed and then a definition of the concepts of heritage and conservation will be given with the purpose of providing the reader the knowledge necessary to understand the topic researched. For a better understanding of the planning process in Romania, the *item* 4 presents the main points regarding the heritage and then the planning system. In the end the way in which they cooperate will be explained.

The *item*5 is reserved for the description of the research area and the case study *Doubling Axis North South Buchares*t. Concerning this project the main topic that will be discussed is the direct and indirect impact that the project has on the built heritage. The direct impact refers to how the monuments in the area proposed for regeneration were treated and the indirect impact refers to how the monuments from the vicinities of the area are influenced by the project. Understanding here that a monument is "a structure built in a public place to celebrate an important person or event" or "a place of historical importance" (*Macmillan Dictionary*). By taking the second definition, the focus will be on *"buildings as monuments, selected according to sets of supposedly objective and obvious intrinsic criteria, such as age or beauty, preserved by legally protective designations, imposed by 'experts' in public taste who defined their role as being guardians of public cultural assets"* (Light *et al.*, 1994, p.15). Furthermore, at the end of this item, recommendations are given for future urban regeneration projects. The *item*6 discusses the main conclusions of the research.

## 2. Methodology

A qualitative research by taking the *Doubling Axis North – South Bucharest* urban regeneration project as case study was conducted. The research question and the interviews applied gave the necessary information to support my research.

Literature review was used in order to establish a theoretical base for the research. For this particular research, books and academic articles on heritage, urban regeneration or renewal and infrastructure projects were consulted and then the key concepts and the theoretical framework developed. The objective is to provide the reader with enough knowledge about the key concepts in order to later understand the research.

### 2.1. The case study

Case studies represent a type of qualitative research. Through case studies, researchers hope to gain in-depth understanding of situations and meaning for those involved. A qualitative approach was taken with the collection and the analysis of texts, documents and interviews. Through documentation analysis several objectives will be reached and the interviews will help in getting a clearer idea about the decision making process and the way in which the stakeholders collaborated. This analysis is used with the purpose to gather all the necessary information about the key concepts of the thesis: urban regeneration, built heritage, conservation and about the project. Also, by consulting the legislation, a picture will be given about the heritage and the planning system in Romania. The possible impacts on built heritage with the practical implementation of the *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest* urban regeneration project motivates me to develop this research.

Since 1989 there have not been any major urban development project in Bucharest and certainly no projects that have raised so many discussions as the *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest*. The changes implemented on the urban structure had big impacts on the built heritage of the city and also the management of the entire process has led to many discussions. An objective analysis of how the design and decision making process and also the development of the project can help answer the research question.

After the choice of the case study, a collection of primary data was done. Since the project is still in development there is no academic literature about the process or the impacts it has, but there are numerous articles in architectural/urban planning Romanian magazines. A consultation of some of the articles was done because they also include general description of the project and interviews with several actors involved. Analysing the built heritage will lead to some conclusions of why the *Buzesti, Berzei* and *Uranus* area was taken for regeneration and why the approach used is consider to be a good approach: why was not the street enlarged differently (only the west front of the street was destroyed), why adding trams in the area and so on. The data that will be gathered from the magazines and the different project documentation regards several characteristics of the area.

First, the physical condition of the built environment before the beginning of the project will be presented. This will give a general idea to the reader of the situation of the neighbourhood and, for the monuments; this will help in understanding what their situation was. Bucharest is an old city with a rich history but with a reduced budget. This associated with the low level of education of the inhabitants, their lack of money or the lack of knowledge on how to access to different funds from the European Union (EU) regarding the monuments has led to a poor condition and wrongful use of many heritage resources. One of the most important aspects that will be discussed is the list of buildings classified as monuments. Since the built heritage is the main topic of this thesis a close look will be given to the monuments and to how many buildings were actually classified as monuments and what has happed so far with them. It is necessary to understand if and how they influenced the project design.

The geographical position of the area, close to the city centre and to other important landmarks gives the region a great significance. Therefore, for such an area it is very important to be supported by economic development. The existing land-use shows the functions that were found there and if they were sufficient for the growth of the area. Even if it is mainly residential neighbourhood, related functions are needed and also the location creates a demand for other activities.

Since the project is about improving the transport system in Bucharest, another important aspect that will be analysed and discussed is the accessibility in the area. Not only the accessibility at the local level (neighbourhood level) but also at the level of the city. A route intensely used before the project, but with a low quality of the transport analysis. Also, this analyse will also help determine why this specific area was chosen and how it is desired to be after the completion of the project. The study of the number and type of actors (public parties, NGOs, local organizations, among others) involved in this project is done with the purpose of determining if it was a communicative planning or top – down planning. Also to understand if it was a good planning approach or if it should have been done differently – did the actors collaborate with each other? Was the decision made by taking into account the opinions of specialists regarding different fields and so on?

Hence, for the description of the project the physical condition of the built environment and the list of monuments will clarify the case study. The accessibility analyse will help determine the necessity and the reason why this route was chosen and the type and number of actors will help in the understanding of how problems have risen.

### 2.2. Research question

#### 2.2.1. Main research questions

The aim of the thesis is to understand the impacts on the heritage of a certain area in Bucharest during major intervention on the urban structure within a lack of the necessary instruments. Thus, two main research questions arose and will be discussed.

- ✓ How the urban regeneration project for *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest* area is influencing the built environment?
- ✓ Why the urban regeneration project for *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest* area contemplates the demolition of built heritage? Can it be seen as positive?

#### 2.2.2. Secondary research questions

Secondary objectives such as describe the legislative framework in Romania, both concerning the built heritage and the development of urban design projects; the understanding of the existing situation, before any actions regarding the project started and also the development of the project are taken into account. Another important aspect of the project is the stakeholders involvement and how did they cooperate during the process. This can be considered as the most important aspect, since it was the decision making process that raised all the questions and that delayed the development.

The case study *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest* (the official name in Romanian language *Dublare Diametrala Nord – Sud Bucuresti*) will be presented and analysed with the help of several sub questions:

- ✓ How can an urban regeneration project be characterized (i.e. definition of urban regeneration, legislative framework, stakeholders engaged, resources needed)?
- ✓ What is the past and the current state of the built environment in the area up for regeneration?
- ✓ Who are the actors responsible for the protection of the heritage resources and how can they be involved in an urban regeneration projects (i.e. ministry, agencies, specialists)?
- ✓ What are the legal instruments needed for downgrading a monument and under what condition can the built heritage be destroyed?

In order to understand the planning process and why so many problems appeared during the implementation process of the *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest* urban regeneration project some data was collected through interviews.

### 2.3. Interviews

The people interviewed represent both the team that developed the project and also the parties that were opposed to it. The following experts interviewed are architects because before 1996 there was no urban planning school in Romania. The planning tasks were actually developed by architects that have done urban planning projects their whole carrier and are officially recognized as 'architect-urbanist', because of their membership in *Romanian Registry of Urbanists.* Petrisor, (2010, p. 147) clarify that *"due to the huge responsibility of the professionals, a public institution was created in 2004 and assigned the responsibility to monitor urban/spatial planning, namely the Romanian Registry of Urbanists, which is also a member of the European Council of Town Planners (ECTP). (...) 'Architects-urbanists' hold a 5-years Bachelor's degree in architecture and work experience of 6 years for those who graduated before 2002 or a 2-years Master's degree in urbanism/spatial planning with at least 120 credits."* Here, the following is list of the interviews realized:

- ✓ *Prof.Dr.Arh. Constantin Enache*: Professor at University of Architecture and Bucharest "Ion Mincu" – specialist in Romanian planning institutional and legal framework (University of Architecture and Urbanism "Ion Mincu", Bucharest).

- ✓ *Prof.Dr.Arh. Hanna Derer*: Professor at University of Architecture and Bucharest "Ion Mincu", department of History & Theory of Architecture and Heritage Conservation (University of Architecture and Urbanism "Ion Mincu", Bucharest).

- ✓ *Lect.Dr.Arh. Mihaela Hermina Negulescu:* Professor at University of Architecture and Bucharest "Ion Mincu", department at Urban Planning and Territorial Development - specialist on mobility (University of Architecture and Urbanism "Ion Mincu", Bucharest).

- ✓ *Arh. Liviu Ianasi*: Professor at University of Architecture and Bucharest "Ion Mincu", department, department at Urban Planning and Territorial Development – participated in the project in the begging with the fundamental studies.

The person/experts interviewed have been selected on the base of their involvement in the project or knowledge of entire process of implementation. No people from the government have been chosen because of the degree of difficulty to actually arrange an interview (in Romania, specialists in urban planning from the local authority are hard to reach).

Based on the analyses that address the social side and that were realised in the area, the residents presented a low level of culture and low living standards. Most of the people that leave in the houses from this neighbourhood are occupying them illegally, while the rest are usually older people that have lived in this area their entire life.  So, the residents have not been asked about the project because their answers and their knowledge about planning are not relevant especially because the study case does not emphasis on the social side.

### 2.4.Comparative studies

A comparative study can help understand how projects are developed in Romania and how the planning process works. Because of the lack of information and the fact that no other similar situation could be found in Romania, a small description will be given on the *Lascar Catargiu Boulevard,* a boulevard created in the beginning of the 19th century, with the same intention (to take some of the traffic from *Calea Victorie*) and realized almost the same way as the project analysed here. It appeared in 1898 as part of a broader campaign of correction and standardization of road routes, which aimed at ordering the urban structure and to facilitate movement.

*Lascar Catargiu Boulevard* is one of the two actual connections between the north and the south of the city. At the beginning of the 19th century the only street that ensured a direct connection was *Calea Victorie*. It was then an important axis on the north – south direction and was connected with other important streets from Bucharest, like *Calea Grivitei*, which ensured the connection between the east and the west of the city. *"The traffic on Calea Victoriei is very thick and obviously it will increase continuously in relation to the population growth, the only thoroughfare which crosses the city from north to south, from the centre to the periphery and is crossed by all the main streets in the direction east to west"* (Lascu, 2011, p. 49) [translated from Romanian].

*Lascar Catargiu Boulevard* is part of a bigger axis that links the north with the south and it crosses the historical centre of Bucharest. The current form of the avenue was developed in the beginning of the century, here initially being a narrow street with an irregular form that created a row of small squares at the intersection with the historical streets. The boulevard primary links *Victoriei Square* with *Romana Square* and when it was designed it had a different cross section than the other boulevards of Bucharest. The roadway had nine meters, the directions being separated by a green space of eight meters, flanked on both sides by trees. For the development of the boulevard massive expropriations were realised, houses were demolished and streets disappeared. The entire axis proposed then had three parts, each with a different land-use character and aesthetics. The expropriation in the first part on the boulevard were realized in such a way that new, spacious plots with a wide opening at the street will appear, plots that were destined for mansions and elite houses, giving the area a character of parade in order to show off the owner's social position. Many houses categorized as monuments were destroyed during the expropriations, but later, through this intention to create a new neighbourhood for wealthy people, many new houses were built, houses with great architectural value that now give the area historical importance.

## 3. Theoretical analysis

In the beginning of this chapter the differences between urban regeneration, renewal and rehabilitation will be explained and the way each of these models of planning involve the heritage resources will be discussed. Also the definition of heritage will be explained, presenting the two main actions taken upon heritage resources: preservation and conservation. *"These* (preservation, conservation and heritage) *are used in a bewildering variety of ways, sometimes explicable by different cultural contexts and planning histories"* (Ashworth, 1991, p. 2).

Although projects with the characteristics of urban regeneration projects have first been developed in the mid-1800s, it is after the Second World War, when most eastern European cities had to fight the problem of obsolete housing, when the idea of reconstruction, renewal and regeneration appeared. From the late 1950s, each country started developing programs of housing renovation and area improvement, because the *"growing urban deprivation and the fracturing of traditional communities were causing growing social problems: alienation, racial tension, crime, marital breakdown and mental illness. At the same time the physical infrastructure of many cities, particularly those that had expanded rapidly in the late eighteen and nineteen centuries, were becoming obsolete and in need of replacement, often at great cost"* (Couch *et al.*, 2008, p. 1). Before defining the concept of urban regeneration, several concepts have been used but the narrow characteristics they defined and the limited problems they addressed created the need for improvement.

In the 1950s, urban reconstruction referred to the action of demolition with the purpose of building something new or extension of an urban sector. In the 1960s, urban revitalisation was introduced and represented a continuation of the previous term with a start in rehabilitation. Urban renewal, in the 1970s, defined as a reinvestment in situ, with an underutilized economic potential, with a remodelling of the neighbourhoods that includes demolition and reconstruction. *"The experiences of 20 years of urban renewal show the need of connecting the physical-technical aspects to juridical, management and social aspects. All this points to the conclusion that the present problem definition of urban renewal is too limited, as it does not pay attention to the connection of the physical, spatial and social aspects in order to tackle the complex problem"* (Hulsbergen and Stouten, 2001, p. 328).

In the 1990s, the concept of urban regeneration was introduced, a concept that tackled all these problems. A process of sustainable development of the cities that does not just focuses on the built environment, but also on the social, cultural and economic changes (see Table 1 - The evolution of urban regeneration (1950-1990), page 19).

### 3.1. Urban rehabilitation and restoration

Urban rehabilitation and restoration aims at the conservation of the urban fabric without destroying any existing buildings. *"Urban rehabilitation and restoration which aims mainly at regenerating and conserving the built heritage or the urban environment, including the ecosystems. In addition to the refurbishment of historical buildings and townscapes, such activities also comprise the modernization and upgrading of technical facilities and the respect of environmental and security norms and standards"* (CEMAT, 2007). The focus of such projects is mostly on the built heritage, but different improvements can also happen. No destruction is necessary, buildings being either rehabilitated or modernized in order to improve the quality of life or the economic gain of the area. Urban rehabilitation can also be described as *"putting new use of old forms in the service of contemporary demands"* (Ashworth, 1991, p. 5).

### 3.2. Urban renewal

Urban renewal is a broad term and its definition usually varies from country to country and different times. The first definition describes urban renewal as a narrow concept belonging to the field of physical planning and housing policy, *"(...) the complex of building activities aimed at restoring the decayed and obsolete physical urban elements and thereby making them functionally sound again according to the standards of the time"* (Buissink, 1985, p. 56).

Unlike the urban regeneration and revitalization projects, urban renewal focuses on the social side – although the actual modifications are on the built environment, the project aims at improving the life of the residents. "*Urban renewal, comprehensive scheme to redress a complex of urban problems, including unsanitary, deficient, or obsolete housing; inadequate transportation, sanitation, and other services and facilities; haphazard land use; traffic congestion; and the sociological correlates of urban decay, such as crime. Early efforts usually focused on housing reform and sanitary and public-health measures, followed by growing emphasis on slum clearance and the relocation of population and industry from congested areas to less-crowded sites, as in the garden-city and new-towns movements in Great Britain"* (Britanica, 1994). The areas proposed for renewal have as the main objective the improvement in the quality of life. By taking an old neighbourhood as example, with apartment blocks, the actions that can happen in this area can be the reconfiguration of the apartment blocks (two small apartments can be transformed into one, with more square meter per person), the construction of public spaces, playgrounds and new facilities and so on. The aim is not to destroy the buildings in the area and to construct everything from the ground, but to improve the existing built environment. One accepted definition of urban renewal is the one time action applied to an area in order to combat the decay (Voogd, 1990, p. 37). In this context decay may include the bad state in which the economic and social side of an area is, but it can also refer to the physical deterioration of the built environment. Just like urban regeneration, urban renewal isn't necessarily linked with the heritage. *"Only rehabilitation necessarily implies the re-use of existing structures while the revitalisation or renewal of cities and areas could and frequently is based on*

*comprehensive redevelopment of urban form" (Ashworth, 1991, p. 6).*According to Hulsbergen and Stouten (2001, p. 328)*"urban renewal is an intensified adjustment of the residential, working, production and living environment (in the built-up area before 1970) to the current demands and standards, in such a way that the existing deprivation is overcome stepwise, for the benefit of those who live in, work at and have their business in the deprived districts; maintenance and management are therefore excluded."*

### 3.3. Urban regeneration

Compared with the urban rehabilitation and restoration and urban renewal explained above, urban regeneration is a more complex concept that relates with the functioning of the cities. Changing an area of the city taking into account all the factors – the built environment, the economic development, the social and cultural side –in that area is usually done through a project of urban regeneration.*"Regeneration is concerned with the regrowth of economic activity where it has been lost; the restoration of social function where it has been dysfunction, or social inclusion where there has been exclusion; and the restoration of environmental quality or ecological balance where it has been lost. Thus urban regeneration is an aspect of the management and planning of existing urban areas rather than the planning and development of new urbanization"* (Couch *et al.*, 2008, p. 2).The development is usually focused on the social and economic side and also taking into consideration the relations between these and the built environment. Demolishing some of the buildings is done only for the benefit of the project, the aim not being of improving the built environment through destruction but through the selective process: some buildings are renovated, some have they functions changed, new buildings are constructed on empty plots and maybe just a couple are destroyed. It all depends on the area that is up for regeneration. *"Comprehensive and integrated vision and action which leads to the resolution of urban problems and which seeks to bring about a lasting improvement in the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of an area that has been subject to change"* (Roberts and Sykes, 2000, p. 17).

Urban regeneration projects do not necessarily involve the heritage, but if monuments are found in the area that is up for regeneration, they can play two important roles. The first role refers to the morphological structure of the area that the heritage imposes and to which new functions may or may not be in accordance. The second and more important role is the economic gain that it brings to the area. Heritage if often linked with tourism or other heritage based activities that can themselves be important revitalising functions (Ashworth, 1991).

**Table 1 - The evolution of urban regeneration (1950-1990)**

| Period Policy type | 1950s Reconstruction | 1960s Revitalisation | 1970s Renewal | 1980s Redevelopment | 1990s Regeneration |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Major strategy and orientation | Reconstruction and extension of older areas of towns and cities often based on 'masterplan'; suburban growth | Continuation of 1950s theme: suburban and peripheral growth; some early attempts at rehabilitation. | Focus on in-situ renewal and neighbourhood schemes; still development at periphery. | Many major schemes of development and redevelopment; flagship projects; out of town projects. | Move towards a more comprehensive form of policy and practice; more emphasis on integrated treatments. |
| Key actors and stakeholders | National and local government; private sector developers and contractors. | Move towards a greater balance between public and private sectors | Growing role of private sector and decentralisation in local government. | Emphasis on private sector and special agencies; growth of partnerships, | Partnership the dominant approach. |
| Spatial level activity | Emphasis on local and site levels. | Regional level and activity emerged. | Regional and local levels initially; later more local emphasis. | In early 1980s focus on site; later emphasis on local level. | Reintroduction of strategic perspective growth of regional activity. |
| Economic focus | Public sector investment with some private sector involvement. | Continuing from 1950s with growing influence of private investment. | Resource constraints in public sector and growth of private investment. | Private sector dominant with selective public funds. | Greater balance between public, private and voluntary funding. |
| Social content | Improvement of housing and living standards. | Social and welfare improvement. | Community based action and greater empowerment | Community self-help with very selective state support. | Emphasis on the role of community. |
| Physical emphasis | Replacement of inner areas and peripheral development. | Some continuation from 1950s with parallel rehabilitation of existing areas. | More extensive renewal of older urban areas. | Major schemes of replacement and new development 'flagship schemes'. | More modest than 1980s; heritage and retention. |
| Environmental approach | Landscaping and some greening. | Selective improvements. | Environmental improvement with some innovations. | Growth of concern for wider approach to environment. | Introduction of broader idea of environmental sustainably. |

*Source*: Authors own based on Stöhr (1989) and Lichfield (1992) in Roberts and Sykes (2000).

### 3.4.Heritage

As many specialists in the field have described heritage is a way to link the past with the present and the future (Millar, 1989; Bizzarro and Nijkamp, 1996; Ashworth, 2000) and it is linked with the people, the activities and the places the form a city, a region and even a country. What is considered to be part of the heritage is usually what a group of people think it's important and it has a value to the city and as Ashworth and Howard describe it in 'European Heritage Planning and Management' (1999) *"people and their needs lie at the very centre of heritage".*"The interpretation of the past in history, the surviving relict buildings and artifacts and collective and individual memories are all harnessed in response to current needs (...)"*(Ashworth and Tunbridge, 1999, p. 105).

With regards to the resources, *"the raw material from which the heritage product is assembled are a wide and varied mixture of historical events, personalities, folk memories, mythologies, literary association and surviving physical relics, together with the places, weather sites or towns, with which they are symbolically associated"* (Light *et al.*, 1994, p. 16). Ashworth and Howard (1999) divide the resources from which heritage can be created into seven categories: nature, landscape, monuments, artefacts, activities, people and sites.

Nature resources consist of plants, animals, ecosystems and other non-made elements, while landscape refers to an area that is being protected because of its aesthetic appeal or cultural evidence. Monuments are considered buildings of importance in the construction of local identity or because of their architectural value and sometimes just considered important because of their ability to attract tourists. Just like the monuments, artefacts are also manmade but they are objects that people consider important and that can be curated in collections and museums, either public or private (a private collection of stamps). They can be at any scale, so either a coin or a large ship can be considered artefacts. Activities are what people are proud of and what to pass on to their children: traditions for different holidays or special events in life, religious practice, food and drinks and so on, and is some cases even people can be considered heritage. Sites are the last category of heritage resources and it is characterized by no physical remains at all. An example is the Bran Castle from Transylvania which is the 'site' of Dracula's castle (Ashworth and Howard, 1999).

Many people merge these categories and place the resources as part of 'architectural heritage', 'natural heritage' and 'intangible culture', where monuments, artefacts and sites are considered 'architectural heritage', nature and landscape are 'natural heritage' and activities and people are considered 'cultural heritage'. As an example, the *Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe* from 3rd of October 1985 adopted at Granada where the expression *"architectural heritage shall be considered to comprise the following permanent properties: monuments, groups of buildings and sites"*(Council of Europe, 1985).The same division of the heritage resources is used in the Romanian legislation.

These three categories in which the elements of the architectural heritage can be divided are all part of the built environment of an area or a city. *"The 'built environment', as we define it, comprises urban design, land use, and the transportation system"* (Handy et al., 2002, p. 65). Elements that create the built environment are buildings, streets, roads, parks, urban spaces and so on. But, when talking about the built environment one cannot just talk about the elements, but also has to take into consideration the relations between them, since it is these relations that provide the foundation of a good urban form (Alfansi and Portugali, 2007). Furthermore, the function of these elements can differ from shelter, security, services, purchase of good to social interaction, leisure and so on, creating a wide range of human needs, one more important than the other. It is the importance of these functions that has changed over time, creating new demands, and so requiring the regeneration of the built environment. The built heritage, in this situation, *"is not a result of haphazard survival, but rather the outcome of individual and group consciousness relating to a 'sense of place'. The built environment as it has survived is a cultural construction, its appearance and meanings dependent on a complex process of selection, protection and intervention"*(Ashworth and Phelps, 2002, p. 3).

Heritage *"is the contemporary usage of a past and is consciously shaped from history, its survivals and memories, in response to current needs for it. (...)The cities of Central Europe have long been the heritage showcases that reflected the complex historical and geographical pattern of the region's changing governments and ideologies"* (Ashworth and Tunbridge, 1999, p.105).

### 3.4.1. Preservation and conservation

The idea that some buildings, areas and even cities of architectural and cultural value should not be destroyed or replaced, regardless of their physical condition, appeared in the 19th century. This idea, defined as preservation, is a deliberate act of keeping old buildings or areas in the city for an educational, tourist or even aesthetic purpose. Hewison (1987) *"defines preservation as the maintenance of an object, building or landscape in a condition defined by its historical context and in such a way that it can be studied with a view to revealing its original meaning. (...) In contrast, conservation may involve preservation but also restoration of the physical fabric"* (Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge, 2000, p. 16). Even so, in some cases, some may argue that parts of the existing built heritage are just an accidental act of preservation. The negligence of the authorities to develop an area, the lack of motive or resources (as is the case of Romania) is what has saved buildings from destruction, buildings that now poses architectural value.

Often confused with preservation, the concept of conservation is much wider and distinctly different. This somehow problematic key concept in the field of heritage planning has been described by Burke (1976) as *"giving not merely continued existence but continued useful existence."* Many questions have been raised about the elements that are being conserved, but the most important ones are: 'what should be conserved?', 'in what quantity?' and 'at whose cost or for whose benefit?' and for the

answers at these question it all depends from who's point of view it is discussed. Architects will evoke the 'aesthetics' argument while other experts will tell that an older building gives a more stability feeling and the rapid environmental change is upsetting. From a political and ideological side, conservation is justified through its role in the education and most often through its economic gain. Conservation is most usually justified by the fact that it represents the past, an accurate record of what has happened, it sometimes implies the idea of future use and most likely is profitable (Ashworth, 1991).
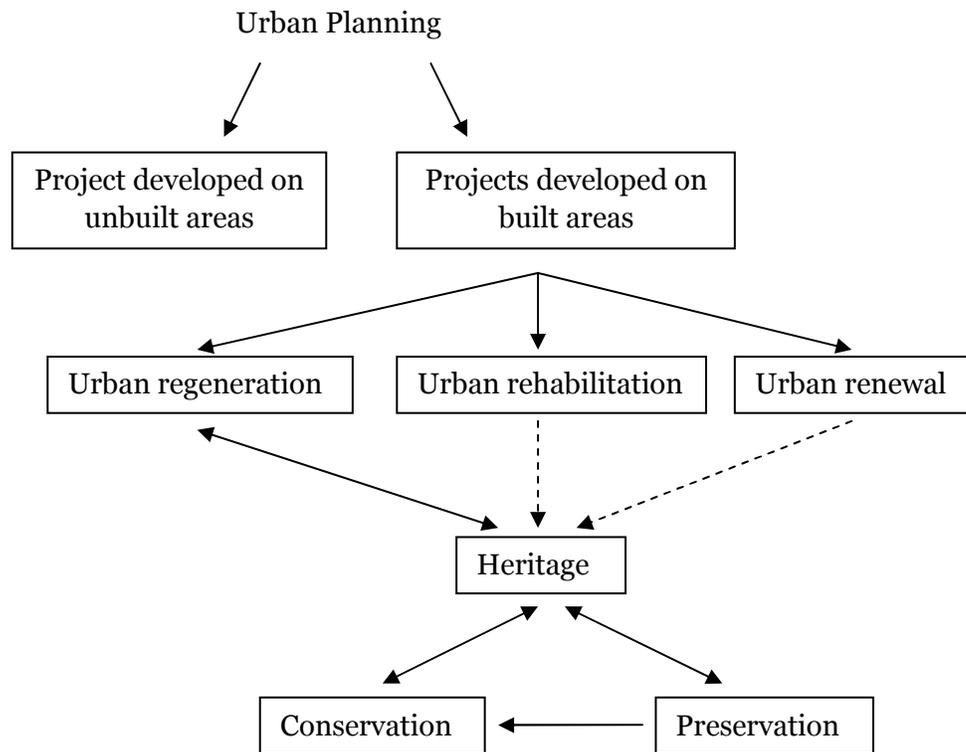
### 3.4.2. Economics and Conservation

Even though many consider the economic gain from conservation to be the most important benefit, it is also raising problems. Some consider that the preservation, renovation and maintenance may cost more than the demolition and the rebuilding, but still can be quite difficult to prove since many estimates are needed, estimates such as life expectancy, future maintenance cost and so on. In the same time, conservation of the built heritage can bring a huge fallback to the economic development if the building is not able to create profit. *"Most extant heritage artifacts, collections, buildings, sites and places would continue to exist, fulfil most of their current functions, and be endowed with much the same values by contemporary society, even if it could be demonstrated that they possessed no intrinsic economic worth and made no contribution to economic well-being"* (Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge, 2000, p. 129).Another argument for the economic gain that the heritage brings is that heritage itself is a resource, which repays investment. The most known use of this resource is heritage tourism, which, these days, is the main reason for travelling. People are interested in learning about different cultures and the heritage of every country, area or city tells a story about the local architecture, the life style of the people, the history of the nation and so on.  A downside to this is that sometimes it can transform in a trivial place, which arguably destroys the heritage resource. *"It is not necessarily contradictory to argue that heritage can both stimulate and retard economic development, while economic development may both support and destroy heritage resources"* (Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge, 2000, p. 156).

### 3.5. Conceptual model

Urban planning attempts to develop a street, a neighbourhood or the urban space as a whole. In the case of the development of a city it can be done in two different ways: developing an entire new area, an unbuilt space, or developing an area within the city, where the interventions are done by changing the existing built environment. The development of projects that require using the existing fabric of the city can be divided in three types of projects: urban rehabilitation, urban renewal and urban regeneration. From these approaches, urban rehabilitation deals better with the built heritage as the way to conserving it and the urban fabric without destroying it. The other approaches deal with heritage resources if they are found in the area of intervention but they are not conditioned on their existence.

The two ways of keeping the built heritage 'alive' are through preservation or conservation. Preservation is keeping a monument in its original state. An involuntary act of preservation is when buildings with architectural and urban value still exist because of the negligence of the authorities or other private investors to develop the area, leaving the built environment untouched. Conservation is not just the act of preserving a heritage resource, but it can also include the restoration to the original state and giving to it a sense of existence. (Figure 1)

Urban Planning

Project developed on unbuilt areas | Projects developed on built areas

Urban regeneration | Urban rehabilitation | Urban renewal

Heritage

Conservation | Preservation

**Figure 1 - The conceptual model of the thesis**
***Source*:** Authors own

The theoretical framework described in this chapter aims at providing information about the main concepts that theoretically support the present research: urban planning as a whole and the veins of urban regeneration; heritage and conservation. The concept of urban regeneration was developed over the years in an attempt to integrate the social and cultural side of the city in projects that were mainly focused on the economics and the built environment. Furthermore, the growth of the city started to take into account the history of the places and the way that we can protect and exploit the heritage resources. Urban regeneration projects are essentially focused on improving an existent built area, by taking in considerate onto all the other factors: the people, the activities, the heritage, and the economic development of the area.

## 4. Heritage and planning in Romania

In order to better understand why some of the problems appeared in the project, it ss interesting for the reader to know how the planning system is done in Romania and also what the legislation says about the built heritage. Knowledge of the plans required for a project, the way they are approved and, in the case of a monument, the actions that need to be done in order to classify or downgrade a building, will help in the understanding of the implementation process of the case study *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest*.

### 4.1. Planning system

In Romania, planning has two levels: urbanism and spatial planning. Urbanism has as main goal the development of settlements, both urban and rural, through the development and implementation of strategies on a short, medium or long period of time. Spatial planning, called in Romanian 'amenajarea teritoriului' from the French version 'aménagement du territoire' is responsible for the development of larger scale territories: counties and regions or parts of them. On both levels the elaboration of plans and documents is required. *"The elaboration and approval of these documents is subject to numerous laws changing rapidly, controlled by local and central authorities, and involves a long and complicated bureaucratic process"* (Petrisor, 2010, p. 139).

But the differences between urbanism and spatial planning are not just at the scale level. Romanian Law number 350 of 2001 on spatial planning and urbanism shows that urbanism is operational, integrative and normative, while spatial planning is global, functional, prospective and democratic:

- ✓ Spatial planning *"is global (coordinates different sectoral policies in a holistic entity), functional (accounts for the natural and built environment based on common values and interests), prospective (involves the economic, ecological, social, and cultural trends), and democratic (provides for the participation of population and its representatives)"* (Petrisor, 2010, p. 144).

- ✓ Urbanism *"is operational (details and delimits in the territory the results of spatial planning), integrative (synthesizes sectoral policies on managing the administrative territory), and normative (specifies how land is used, defines the designation and size of buildings, including infrastructure, utilities, and plantations)"* (Petrisor, 2010, p. 144).

At each level of the country there are different authorities that are responsible for the planning process (see Table 2 – Planning system in Romania, page 26), but the most important ones are at the national and local level. At the national level there is the Parliament of Romania and the Government of Romania. The Parliament is the one that debates and promulgates the laws of spatial planning in the country. The Government has several responsibilities, such as coordinating the urban and spatial planning work, adopts the National Development Plan and so on. The Ministry coordinates urban and spatial planning at national level and exerts state control over the enforcement of the provisions of the documents on urban and spatial planning. MRDPA is the specialized body of the Government in the

field of urban and spatial planning. At the local level there are The Local Councils who are responsible for the overall urban planning work carried out over the entire territory of the administrative-territorial unit; they approve the urban and spatial planning documents (General Urban Plan, Zonal Urban Plan and Detailed Urban Plan) and are responsible for the implementation of the urban development plan.

- ✓ The General Urban Plan (GUP) is done in conformity with the National Spatial Plan and it presents a development strategy for 10 – 15 years. The GUP include analysis, planning regulations and local regulations for the administrative unit. Also, the general urban plan establishes general rules, which have to be respected later in the development at smaller scales of the zonal and detailed urban plans.

- ✓ The Zonal Urban Plan (ZUP) is a project in urban and spatial planning that is based on the local regulations from the GUP and it has a specific regulation character for an area within the town/ city, covering all land-uses: housing, services, production, circulation, green spaces, public institutions, etc. The ZUP establishes objectives, actions, priorities; planning regulations (permissions and restrictions) needed to be applied in land use and construction compliance in the study area.

- ✓ The Detailed Urban Plan (DUP) is also based on the local regulation from the GUP and it is the documentation that provides the conditions for the placement, sizing, compliance and public utilities of one or more objectives. The GUP has a regulation character, while the ZUP and DUP have legislative nature.

The development of urban plans can be realized by universities, research institutes and private companies, based on funds from the local or state budget or from any interested investors. These plans are then later sent to the municipality and different committees and *"undergo specific procedures, consisting of their acceptation by technical committees within the ministries or local authorities and final approval by the central or local authorities. The approval is a bureaucratic process conditioned by the existence of the acceptance proofs, which is essential for urban/spatial planning documents since they can be sued in justice courts and constitute the background of local and regional development"* (Petrisor, 2010, p. 150).At this level is when sometimes problems appear. In the case of Romania, if the municipality asks for the development of a project giving certain ideas that have to be introduced in the plan, the urban planners design the project, as required, sometimes not taking into consideration the pre-analysis studies of the area. These analyses are done by specialists in sociology, heritage, and others and aim at helping the planners in the designing process. Moreover, doing a project that will please the municipality sometimes means ignoring the pre-analyses. In the case on *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest* this led to multiple debates regarding the built environment.

**Table 2 – Planning system in Romania**

| Geographical level | Responsible institutions | Department within the institutions | Urban/spatial planning documents | Other responsibilities |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| National level | MRDPA-Government of Romania | Department of Territorial Development | **National Spatial Plan** (*Plan de Amenajare a Teritoriului National - PATN\**) | Development of the General Regulation of Urbanism; Approval of draft legislation on urban planning activities; collaboration with ministries and other central public administration bodies to substantiate, in terms of urban planning, sectorial strategic programs; approval of planning documentation. |
| Regional level | No administrative authority | - | - | - |
| Country level | The Country Council | Department of Urbanism – led by the Architect Chief of the country | **Country Spatial Plan** (*Plan de Amenajare a Teritoriului Judetean - PATJ\**) **Zonal Spatial Plan** (*Plan de Amenajare a Teritoriului Zonal- PATZ\**) | Coordinates the planning at the country level according to law; Establishes general guidelines for the organization and development of urban settlements based or urban plans; Coordinates the local councils and give them specialized technical assistance; Ensure the takeover provisions contained in the planning documentation for the administrative territories of towns in the country; |
| Local level | The Local Council | Department of Urbanism – led by the Architect Chief of the city | **General Urban Plan** (*Plan Urbanistic General - PUG\**) **Zonal Urban Plan** (*Plan Urbanistic Zonal - PUZ\**) **Detailed Urban Plan** (*Plan Urbanistic de Detaliu - PUD\**). | Coordinates and is responsible for all planning activity undertaken across administrative-territorial unit and ensure compliance with the provisions of the approved planning documentation for implementing the program of urban development of localities of the village or town; Cooperate with the country Council and is supported by them in planning activities; Cooperate in the preparation of the program of urban development of localities and institutions, economic, governmental bodies and national interest, country or local level. |

Source: Authors own. * The original name in Romanian language.

### 4.2. Heritage legislation

The law number 422 (*Legea numarul 422*), promulgated by the Parliament of Romania on the 18th of July 2001, presents the rules and regulations that concern the built heritage in Romania. It is based on the legislation of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), so as far as resources for the built heritage are concerned, *"the present law establishes the following categories of historical monuments, immovable property situated underground or underwater: monument, ensemble and site."* In 2010, in the *List of Historical Monuments* from the Romanian Ministry of Culture – LHM (*Lista Monumentelor Istorice* - LMI, in Romanian language) 2.621 monuments, ensembles and sites were classified in the city of Bucharest. Beside this categories, in Bucharest are also 98 *Protected Built Areas.* They are in addition to the *General Urban Plan* by supplementing the existing regulations, with an emphasis on the built heritage and on the area as a whole. Even so, except the buildings that are individual classified in the LHM, the legislation does not protect the other edifices from the protected area: it does not forbid the destruction of the buildings, nor it offers the owners or the investors any advantage in case of the preservation. In the case of the protected built areas, it can be considered harmful, because it means that changes can be made to the structure or characteristics of a building, a building that has not the necessary individual importance to be considered as a monument, but in relation with the vicinities, it contributes to the local identity.

Concerning the monuments, the law describes several situations and establishes rules for each of them. They can either be in private or public property and in this cases, it's either the owner or the local public administration that is responsible with the security, maintenance, preservation, consolidation, restoration and so on. Also the monuments are classified according to the importance that they have. So there are monuments of local or national and international importance. Regardless of their status, the interventions that can be done on the monuments need to have approval from the Ministry of Culture (figure 2). These interventions can be: research, conservation, construction, expansion,

**Figure 2 – The heritage management system in Romania**
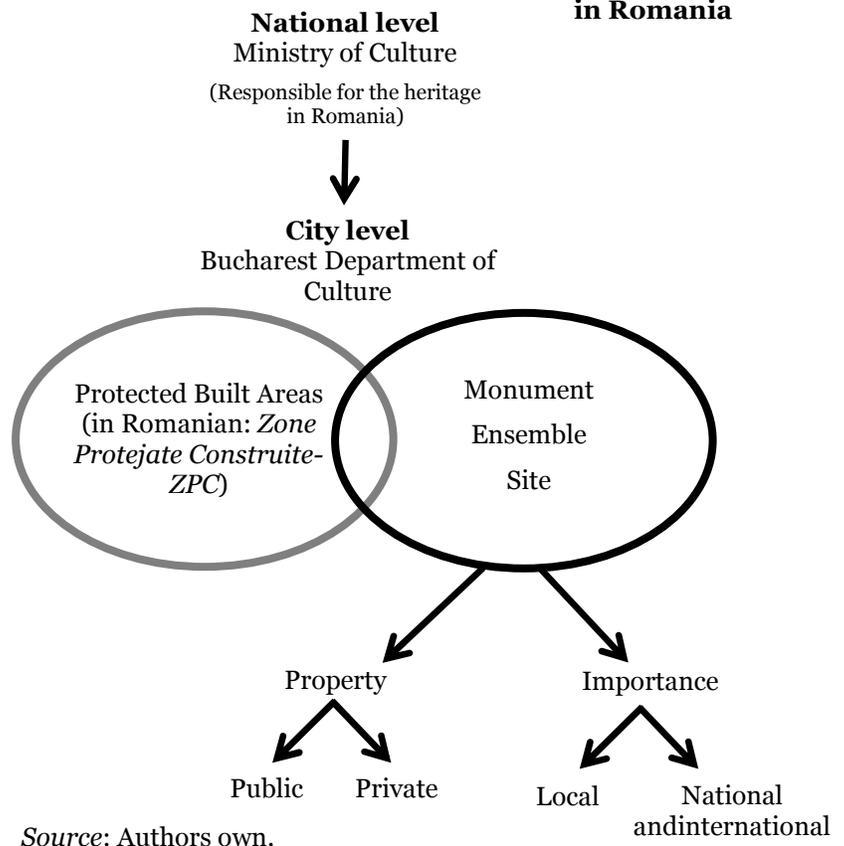


*Source*: Authors own.

consolidation, restructuring, temporary or permanent placement of fences, building protection, billboards, or any signs on and monuments, changes in the function and purpose, relocation of historic monuments or design of access roads, pedestrian and roadway, utilities and so on. For both the upgrading and downgrading of a monument, a file containing all the information about the building has to do realized and sent to the Ministry of Culture, who is responsible for the approval or disapproval of the monument. In the case of upgrading, it can be done by default by the Departments of Culture from the administrative unit in the following situations: when the property is owned by the state or local government unit, by religious institutions or when the property is discovered accidentally or under systematic archaeological research; or by request from the private owner, municipality, different associations and so on. The downgrading can also be done by default or by request in case of the disappearance of the monument or the loss of its importance.

Reflecting upon the main elements of how the heritage and planning in Romanian are linked, I conclude that with a top-down planning system Romania still has a lot to learn in order to have a coherent expansion of the cities. Economic factors and prepare a response to transportation issues are considered the main pillars in the development of spatial planning projects in Romania. This approach to planning will emerge from the case study as well. Although considered as a main factor in the existence of t the city, the heritage is sometimes forgotten in the planning process. Furthermore, even if there is the necessary legislation to help in the preservation or conservation process, the spatial planning system in Romania creates gaps and gives the owners the opportunity to 'go around' the law.

## 5.  Empirical Analysis

Bucharest is the capital of Romania and also the largest city, being situated in the southeast of the country. The city has a rich culture and history, being the centre of Romania's culture, art, and politics.  A brief history about the buildings in Bucharest will give the reader a general understanding about the heritage and its road during the communism. One of the most important problems that Bucharest is facing today is the transport system, a problem that the municipality, in the last years, has decided to fix. Why the streets in the city are in this condition and what has the municipality decided to do in order to improve the traffic are explained in the item *'Transport system in Bucharest'*. These two problems collide nowadays, mostly because of the different points of view from the citizens, different organizations in the city and the municipality have. The project *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest* will give a clear description of a case in which the authorities had to chose between the built heritage and the transport network and will show what their approach was.

### 5.1. History of Bucharest in brief

The built environment in Bucharest has suffered many chances during its existence, mostly because of the political regime and the way of thinking. In the 16th and 17th centuries a lot of buildings with religious character appear, churches and monasteries built in the *Brancovenesc* style – this is an architectural style that was popular in Romania in the 17th and 18th century. The term comes from the name of the ruler *Constantin Brancoveanu*, an exceptional personality from the late 17th century and early 18th century, who marked not only the national history, but also the culture from that period. The *Brancovenesc* style was mostly used in the construction of churches and monasteries and it is represented by a mixture from *Western Renaissance*, from *Byzantine*, *Baroque* and *Gothic* art.

The 18th and 19th centuries were a period in which the architecture of the city bloomed. Worth discussing is after 1862 when Bucharest became the political capital of Romania and the city started to develop more and more. The second half of the 19th century brought the city gas lighting, horse-drawn trams and limited electrification, making the population of the city to increase dramatically. The architecture of the period and the cosmopolitan life from that period made Bucharest to be known as "Little Paris" and the famous boulevard *Calea Victoriei* to be compared with *Champs-Élysées*. It was after the middle of the 19th century when most of the houses from the *Buzesti – Berzei* area were built. The farmer's market 'Hala Matache' was built in 1887 as a consequence of the urbanization of the area, urbanization that was triggered by the construction of the train station (currently '*Gara de Nord*').

In the 20th century the most important changes that Bucharest and Romania faced were under the communist regime. The program of 'systematization' realized with the orders of *Ceausescu* is one of the most known changes. Systematization is an urban planning program that started in 1974 and that was characterized by the demolition and reconstruction of some of the existing town and villages, although in the beginning the systematization was orientated just towards the villages, in order to
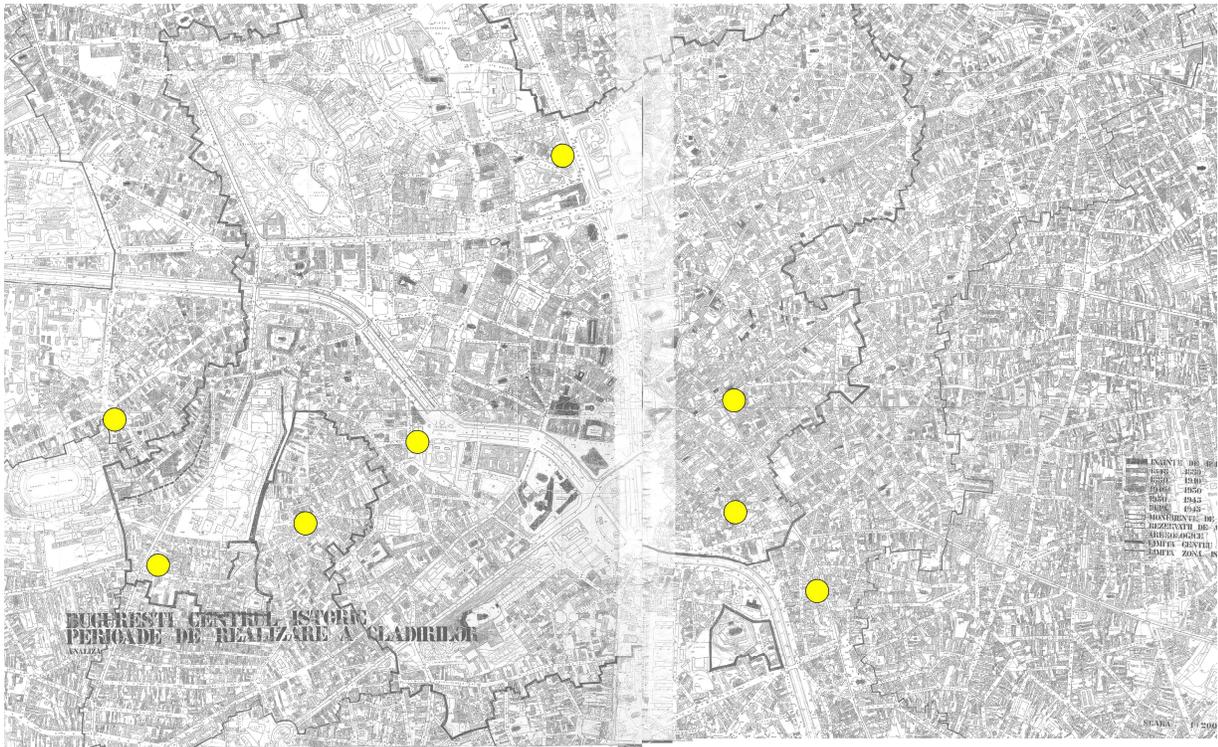
**Figure 3 – Several of the demolish churches in the communist regime**
Source: Authors own
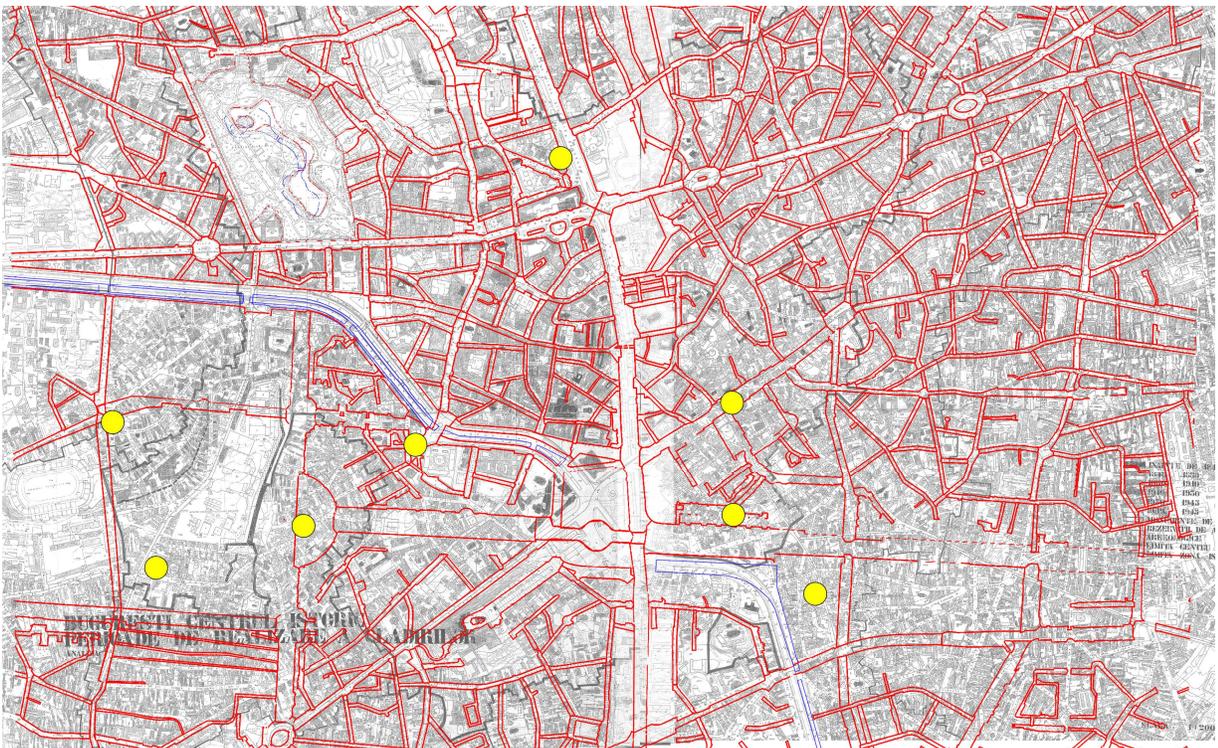


**Figure 4 - Several of the demolish churches in the communist regime + current street network**
Source: Authors own

bring the advantages of modern age to the countryside. Hundreds of villages were to become urban centres through the investment in schools, housing and industry – an ideology used in all the communist countries in order to improve the economy and the life style of the population.

Bucharest developed a lot on the industrial and social side but with a great cost on the built heritage. Vast parts of the city centre and historical monuments were demolished in order to make room for highly dense apartment blocks. Big changes in the urban structure, such as the construction of the House of the People and the boulevard *Unirii*, were done destroying some of the old neighbourhoods of Bucharest: *Uranus, Izvor, Rahova* and *Antim.* Out of the 500 hectares destroyed in the systematization project, 250 hectares were urban districts of historical significance, representing around 20–25% of historic Bucharest. Among other destroyed monuments were 27 Orthodox Christian churches –counting eight relocated churches, six synagogues and Jewish houses of prayer and three Protestant churches. (Figure 3 and 4)

### 5.2. Transport system in Bucharest

Bucharest is considered to be one of the most important communication hubs in Romania. The street network is developed in a radial ring structure with major boulevards leading to the city centre (Figure 5), with a complex configuration in terms of the diversity of the urban tissue. Even so, the network is structured by a series of important hubs (squares): *Unirii Square, Universitatii, Romana, Victoriei Square* and so on. With the exception of the ring-road network, is also possible to talk about three areas that are formed by the configuration of the streets: the central area, where, by the number, are concentrated most of the streets, narrow streets with a sinuous line; the middle area, streets build in the modern area of real estate expansion and industrial development and the peripheral area (peri-urban area) where the streets are not clearly defined and the municipal equipment is missing on most of them.
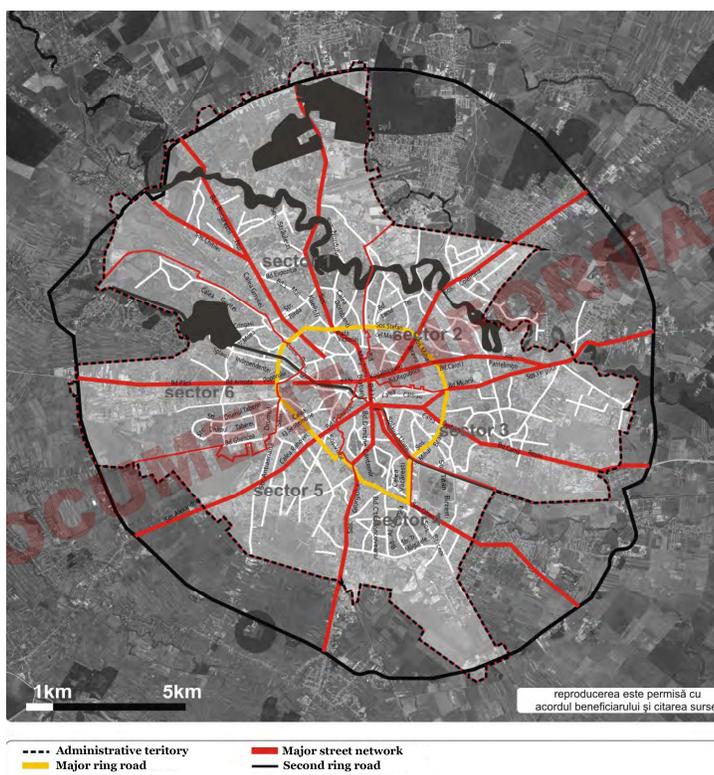


**Figure 5 – Bucharest road network**
*Source*: *Bucharest Development Strategy 2035,* http://www.csb2035.ro/

Some of the problems that appeared from this development of the city are functional segregation, monocentric urban structure and an overcrowding of the city centre. The functional segregation appeared because of the mono-functional neighbourhoods that were built near large industrial sites; industrial sites that have today reduced function or are completely closed. The current status of these sites makes the residents to find jobs in other places and generates flows over long distances. The monocentric structure of Bucharest and the crossing of the main axis north – south and east- west through the centre brings to on overcrowding of the heart of the city. Also, because of the high number of personal cars Bucharest is also facing a problem with parking. This is not common just in the city centre, but also in the residential neighbourhoods. The parking spaces are not sufficient for the number of cars, so many of them are parked illegally.

Since the fall of the communist regime in 1989 Bucharest hasn't had any major intervention into the built environment, this leading to more and more problems that the authorities have to face these days. The transportation network, sufficient in the past, has proved in the last years to be overcrowded and inefficient. One of the main reasons for this is the explosive rise of the traffic volume, which is a direct cause of the increasing number of private cars. This also led to the enlargement of the existing boulevards by reducing the sidewalks and so, offering less and less space for pedestrians. A very important case is the city centre and the two major arteries that are crossing it, the boulevards *Calea Victoriei* and *Lascar Catargiu-Magheru-I. C. Bratianu,* which are also the main connection between the northern and the southern part of the city. In addition, it is often said that the development of Bucharest was stopped after the communist regime because of a psychological effect, meaning that the authorities have not done any major changes in the urban tissue of the city because they are afraid of being compared with *Ceausescu* – he order the destruction of entire neighbourhoods and did not involve anybody else in the decision. Developing a large project in Bucharest will also require the destruction of parts of the built environment, a process that many residents will disapprove off, so the municipality would have to act without consulting the public opinion. Also because of *Ceausescu* and the restriction that he imposed before 1989, these days the authorities are trying not to enforce any car use limitations – in the communist regime people had just a certain quantity of fuel every month, the cars allowed on the streets were alternating, one Sunday the cars with even numbers and the next one the ones with odd numbers.

These problems that the authorities have been facing are somehow even harder to resolve because of the funding and the lack of legislation. Lately, since it is not just the traffic that is increasing but also the administrative territory of the city, the construction of new transportation corridors was a necessity and so the municipality had to find the resources necessary to start developing the city. Project such as "*Basarab Overpass"* (a road overpass that is part of the inner city's ring, open to the traffic on 19 June 2011), other *o*verpasses (sections of Bucharest's second city ring) and "*Doubling Axis North South Bucharest*" are just some of the recent infrastructure projects developed because of

the urgency of resolving the problems that appeared. As project manager *Constantin Enache* said *"the urgency referred to the traffic measurements made at that date in key areas of the city. Unirii Square has reached full capacity, given that Bucharest is unprepared for alternative solutions that will discourage the traffic in the city centre"* (2011) [translated from Romanian].

## 5.3. Debating the case study

The municipality of Bucharest is facing some problems, such as increasing traffic, degraded built environment, few public spaces etc., but however still attracting new habitants and visitors. The increase demand of people to live in Bucharest asks for a change at the structures of the city, in particular a functional transportation network and improvements on the physical conditions of the system, for instance roads, pedestrian areas and public spaces. This, along with the few and scattered empty spaces that cannot be used for future expansion has led to the utilization of a new approach in the urban planning in Romania, where the urban regeneration project *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest* fits. An attempt for realizing a project in an integrated approach - taking into consideration all the aspects of the city, such as the built environment, the economic development, the social and cultural dimensions, boosted the development of the urban regeneration project *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest*. The objectives of the project pinpoint the need to:

- ✓ Improve the built environment as the state of the buildings and the public spaces were in a poor condition;
- ✓ Attempt to economically development of the area by attracting new investments (e.g. service activities);
- ✓ Attempt to a better quality of life of the citizens as a better quality of the built environment and better accessibilities will improve the life of the residents;
- ✓ Regain space for the pedestrians on the city centre and of a major and iconic boulevard – the new axis will divert the traffic from the city centre;

Motivated by several factors and supported by the municipality the project was approved and later discussed and analysed.

### 5.3.1. The Urban Regeneration Project for the area *Buzesti - Berzei*

The case study that will be presented and analysed in this thesis is a project developed in Bucharest city capital of Romania. The project it's called *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest* (*Dublare Diametrala Nord – Sud Bucuresti*) and will intervene in six streets and it was divided into two stages, the first one is the regeneration on the streets *Buzesti*, *Berzei* and *Vasile Parvan*, and the second part is for the streets *B.P. Hasdeu*, *Uranus* and *Calea Rahovei*. The Zonal Urban Plan (ZUP) for the first part was approved in 2006, but the project is still in development because of the many impediments that appeared since then. Later, in 2008 by the recommendation of the Ministry of Culture, several ZUPs were applied in smaller areas affected by the project, urban islands situated at the west of the axis, islands delimited by streets.

Discussing how an urban regeneration project can influence the built heritage I will take and analyse just the first part of the project, the street *Buzesti*, *Berzei* and *Vasile Parvan*. The aim was the enlargement of these streets with the purpose of creating a new connection between the northern and the southern part of the city. It was developed as a solution for the motorized traffic in the city centre and on the two main existing connections between the north and the south, where the car traffic is very intense and the pedestrians and the bicycles are almost neglected. Hence, in order to protect the city centre and these two historic boulevards, an alternate route at the west of the city centre, was proposed as a bypass. One can argue about the poor decision of the municipality to improve the traffic on some arteries by creating a new one, since this one may not take over from the number of existing cars, but actually lead to an increase. A better infrastructure may attract some of the people that previously chose the public transport to change to private cars. Not just in Bucharest, but in all the other cities of Romania, when faced with the problem of traffic, the municipalities are more willing to try to find solutions that do not include restricting the traffic because, as professor Enache  also states in one of his interviews (2011), *"a first utopia that we have identified is that the citizens of Bucharest would accept to leave their cars at home and move from Victoriei Square to the Parliament and the future National Cathedral only by subway or surface transport"* [translated from Romanian].

The route for the bypass was determined by several factors. The first and most important is its location in the city. The streets are situated at the west of the city centre, out of the Protected Built Areas in Bucharest, where a lot of restrictions regarding the built environment have to be considered (Figure 6 and 7). It starts from one of the most important squares in Bucharest, *Victoriei Square*, and it intersects the major east-west connections: *Calea Grivitei*, *Mihai Kogalniceanu* and *Splaiul Independentei*. Because of the intersection with these boulevards, there is a fast accessibility with the other important squares from Bucharest (*Romana, Universitate* and *Unirii*) and with the city centre. Also, the streets proposed for the bypass are close to the biggest train station in the city/country and to other major landmarks: the Ministry of Transport, the Palace of the Parliament (or People's House – how it was named by *Ceausescu*) and so on. Besides the location of these streets, the physical condition of the built environment was another important factor, many buildings being close to collapsing.

**Figure 6 - Bucharest city centre**
**(Urban Regeneration Project – *red line)***



| | |
|---|---|
| ▬▬ Berzei - Buzesti - Uranus | ☐ The city center |
| ▬▬ Important boulevards in Bucharest | |
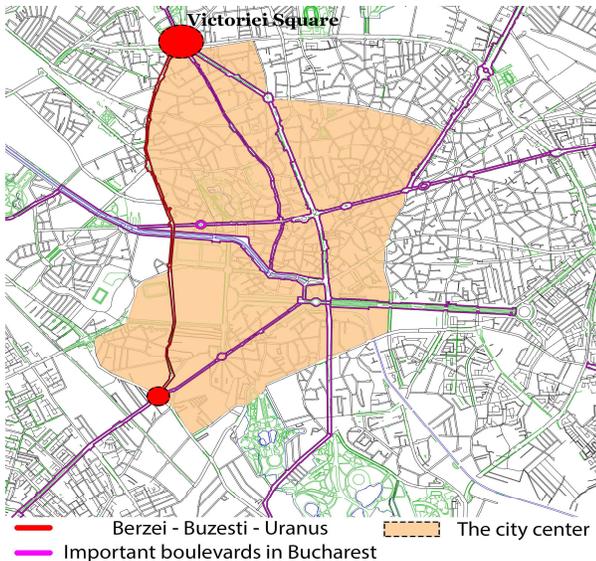
*Source*: Authors own.

**Figure 7 - The protected areas of**
**Bucharest (green areas)**



*Source*: Arhitectura Magazine number 6, 2011

### 5.3.1.1.     Necessity and urgency

The development of the project came as solution to some of the problems that the municipality is facing since 1989. An important moment in time, the fall of the communism brought with the idea of individual freedom. The free use of cars was perceived by many people as a right, since in the communism there were many restrictions regarding the use of cars. During the communist regime people had just a certain quantity of fuel every month, the cars allowed on the streets were alternating. The increasing number of private cars led to an almost explosive growth in traffic. Another problem is the lack of financial resources and the time required to develop a public transport network, manly subway, but also busses and trams of quality and with a density able to become a real alternative. Although the surface transport system is rather developed, the non-existent bus lanes make the travel time the same as with the cars. This and also the lack of comfort, the busses are usually crowded and not as comfortable as a private car, brings to the constantly increasing car traffic.

The decreased number of jobs in the industry sector from the large production platforms and the growing number of jobs in the tertiary sector developed mostly in the city centre and in the north part of the city made the traffic in the centre to grow to saturation at certain hours of the day leading to blockages. This, with the specific street network that Bucharest has, radial-ring, with the major boulevards leading to the city centre amplified the traffic congestion (see figure 5, page 31).

When asked what is the main reason for this urban regeneration project, the municipality and the urban planning specialists enhanced on the fact that the most historical street from Bucharest is extremely crowed and there is almost no space for the pedestrians (Figure 8). In the beginning of the 19th century the same reason, *Calea Victoriei* is too busy, was invoked in order for a new boulevard to be built, *Lascar Catargiu Boulevard* detailed in the methodology as a comparative study. More than 100 years later, the development of the *Berzei – Buzesti* axis is reasoned by the same problem: *Calea Victoriei* is suffocated by the traffic, so another connection has to be built in order to help relieve the car problems and to bring back the street to the pedestrians. *"In the past 40 years, I see a continuous degradation of Calea Victoriei, first through negligence, by reducing trade and urban life in the evening, and after 1989, by scaring pedestrians with the priority given to the cars, in some places there are almost no sidewalks"* (Enache, 2011) [translated from Romanian].
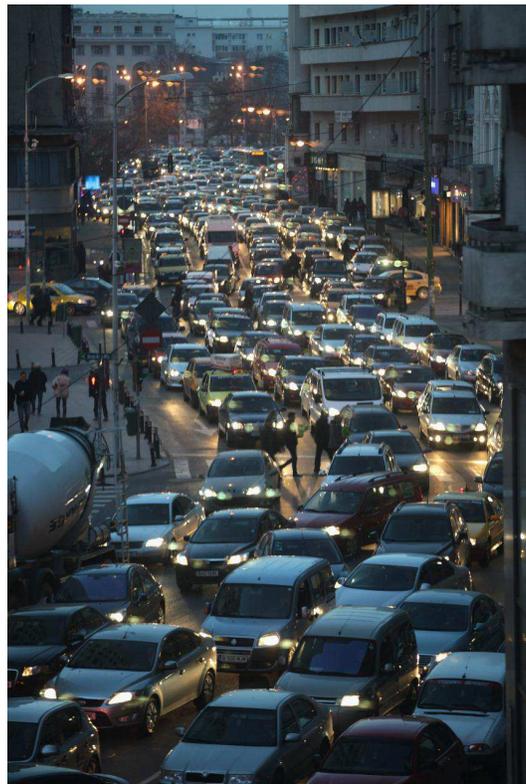


**Figure 8 – Traffic congestion on Calea Victoriei**
Source: Google images

This urban regeneration project is also very important for the built environment and the economy. Because most part of the existing urban tissue is old, many buildings are in an advance state of degradation. Also, a contributing factor to that are the people leaving in this area, people with a low social - economic status. The municipality hopes that, once the project is completed, the area will develop economically and so the quality of life will improve.

When the municipality decided to develop the idea of a new axis between the north and the south, they also enhanced on the fact that this is an urgent matter; this also can be seen in the time the municipality thought the project will be completed – seven months. Muresanu and Muresanu (2013) also talk about the rushed development of Bucharest: "*regarding the urban development, there is an understandable tendency to regain the lost time in a short period. But on the downside, the lack of synchronization between the faster capital flow of the open market and the slower adaptation of the urban society to changes leaves room for urban conflicts*" (p. 229). The NGOs and specialists of heritage did not agree with the necessity and urgency of the axis and so, seven years later, the project is still in development due to the many actions taken in order to stop it.

### 5.3.1.2. Stakeholder's participation

The main participant of the project is the municipality of Bucharest. The development of the project is being supervised by the Department of Urbanism and Spatial Planning. Also directly involved in the project are the two organizations responsible for the urban design: *Centrul de Cercetare, Proiectare, Expertiza si Consulting* (C.C.P.E.C.) - *Ion Mincu University of Architecture and Urbanism* (U.A.U.I.M) and the *Atelier de Urbanism* URBIS'90, with Professor Constantin Enache as project manager.

As main opponents of this project several NGOs, such as the *Observatorul Urban Bucuresti* and heritage specialists can be identified. Two of the most vocal opponents are Professor Hanna Derer and the President of Romanian Union of Architects and Architect Serban Sturdza, one of the most distinguished representatives of his profession being mainly interested in urban regeneration and the restoration of historic monuments. The urban design and planning field in Romania is not so developed so the same few specialists are usually involved in a project in different ways. Before the project was designed several fundamental studies were realized (e.g. social and historical studies). The historical study was done by Hanna Derer, which had no decision in the design process, but later become one of the most vocal opponents of the project.

The project mainly faces the opposition from NGOs. They are not formed from specialists in the domain but from people who care about Bucharest and its history. Although, they fight to save and preserve the built heritage from Bucharest, they do not have all the necessary knowledge in the field of urbanism. One of the major problems discussed in the press and on online platforms was that the monuments were demolished without respecting the law. The fact that the three ZUPs commissioned by the Ministry of Culture were not approved does not mean that the monuments cannot be demolished. For demolition a notice from the ministry is sufficient, notice of permanent demolition or of demolition with the condition of being rebuilt. Only in the case of rebuilding the monument a ZUP is required, a ZUP that will specify the new location. Losing the battle with some of the monuments on *Buzesti – Berzei*, the NGOs and the specialists have turned their focus on *Hala Matache*, which become a symbol in their fight with the municipality, because, although of architectural and social importance as some may argue, the market was not entirely worth the actions that were realized.

Just like in many projects that are developed in Bucharest, the public opinion was never consulted. The reason for this is because the municipality considers that the general public does not have the necessary knowledge to give its opinion about a project of this scale. Romania it is a country known for corruption and so, not consulting the public opinion also allows the municipally to fulfil its own agenda without responding to any questions or problems that may arise.

### 5.3.1.3. Description of the project

The first part of the *'Doubling Axis North South Bucharest'* will be the area up for discussion in this thesis and it consists of three streets that will be enlarged (*Buzesti*, *Berzei* and *Vasile Parvan*) and one street (*Street Gara de Nord*) that will be extended up to the new boulevard. Because of this extension monuments that were located on several other secondary streets, *Baldovin Parcalabul* and *Cameliei*, were affected (see Figure 9).

On the right side of the streets *Buzesti* and *Berzei* the buildings are part of the Protected Built Areas, so the designing team decided to enlarge the street only on the left side, destroying on this part the built environment. Meaning that, out of the 24 monuments that are in the area (on both sides of the street), only a number of 14 were actually directly influenced by the project. From this 14, two houses were not classified individual but as being part of an ensemble. For these two, although there is no need for a downgrading documentation, they are still required to have a notice from the Ministry of Culture regarding the demolition. The other twelve houses, which were individually classified as monuments by the *List of Historical Monuments*, needed to go through the whole process of downgrading from the status of monument:

- ✓ 2005: one monument downgraded;
- ✓ 2010: three monuments downgraded;
- ✓ 2011: four monuments downgraded.

These 8 monuments, although considered important, did not raise so much the interest of the NGOs. They tried to keep them from being downgraded but they realized that there is no solution to save them. The spot light was on Hala Matache, built in 1877, and on two other buildings, Berzei 81 (built in 1897) and Berzei 89 (built

**Figure 9 – Street network of the project**
Source: Authors own



between 1895 - 1899), to which a group formed with architects, heritage specialists and NGOs representatives have found a solution to saved them from being demolished. Although considered by the municipality, the final solution was still the original one in which these three monuments were
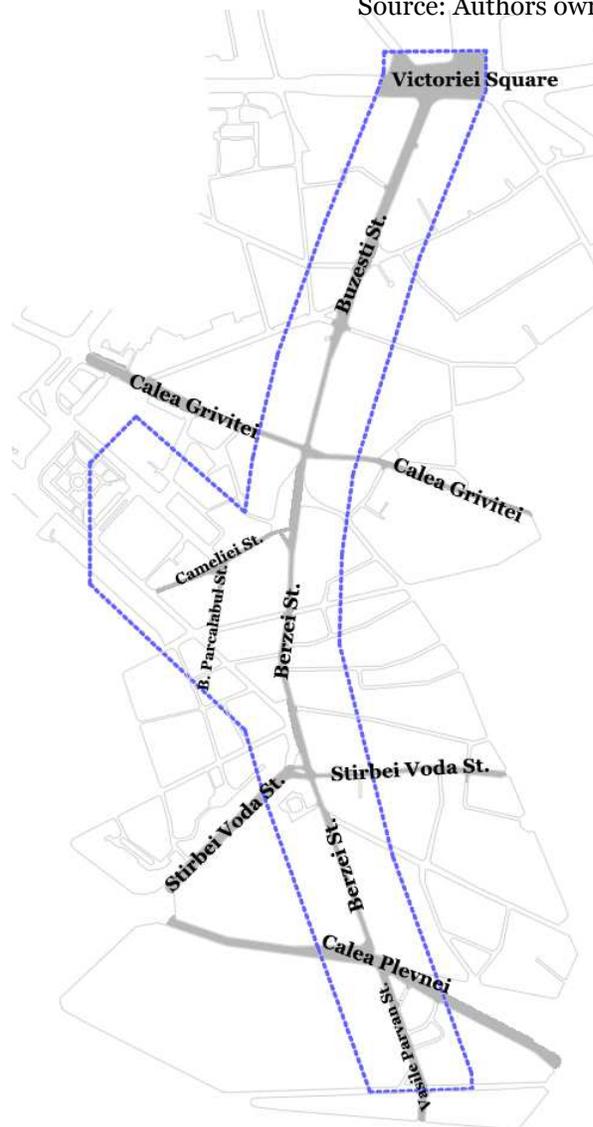
demolished with the condition of being rebuilt. In the present there is still one monument left standing, Calea Plevnei no. 40 (see Figure 11). All the monuments were in private ownership at the beginning of the project, and all of them had to be expropriated.

The situation of the monuments before the project started:
1. Buzesti no. 1 – only the facade of the building was still standing (Figure 12)
2. Buzesti no. 3 (Marna Hotel) – in good condition and functioning (Figure 13)
3. Buzesti no. 5 (a house where Romanian poet M. Eminescu lived) - (Figure 14)
4. Calea Grivitei no. 119 (part of an ensemble) - (Figure 15)
5. Botescu Haralambie no. 1 (Hala Matache – 1887) – in good condition and still functioning in the moment of expropriation (Figure 10)



**Figure 10 – Hala Matache**
*Source: Idei Urbane - http://www.ideiurbane.ro/bulevardul-nou-de-la-piata-matache-la-occidentului/*

6. Berzei no. 81 (1897) – still functional but in a degraded physical condition (Figure 16)
7. Berzei no. 89 (built between 1895 - 1899) - in a degraded condition (Figure 17)
8. Baldovin Parcalabul no. 16 – functional and considered (by the Romanian standards) as in a average physical condition (Figure 18)
9. Baldovin Parcalabul no. 18 – same as Baldovin Parcalabul no. 16 (Figure 19)
10. Cameliei no. 20 – same as Baldovin Parcalabul no. 16 (Figure 20)
11. Cameliei no. 22 – still functional but the illegal interventions on the appearance of the building decreases the aesthetic value  (Figure 21)
12. Cameliei no. 24 – same as Cameliei no. 22 (Figure 22)
13. Stirbei Voda no. 89 (part of an ensemble)
14. Calea Plevnei no. 40 (a house where Romanian poet George Cosbuc house)
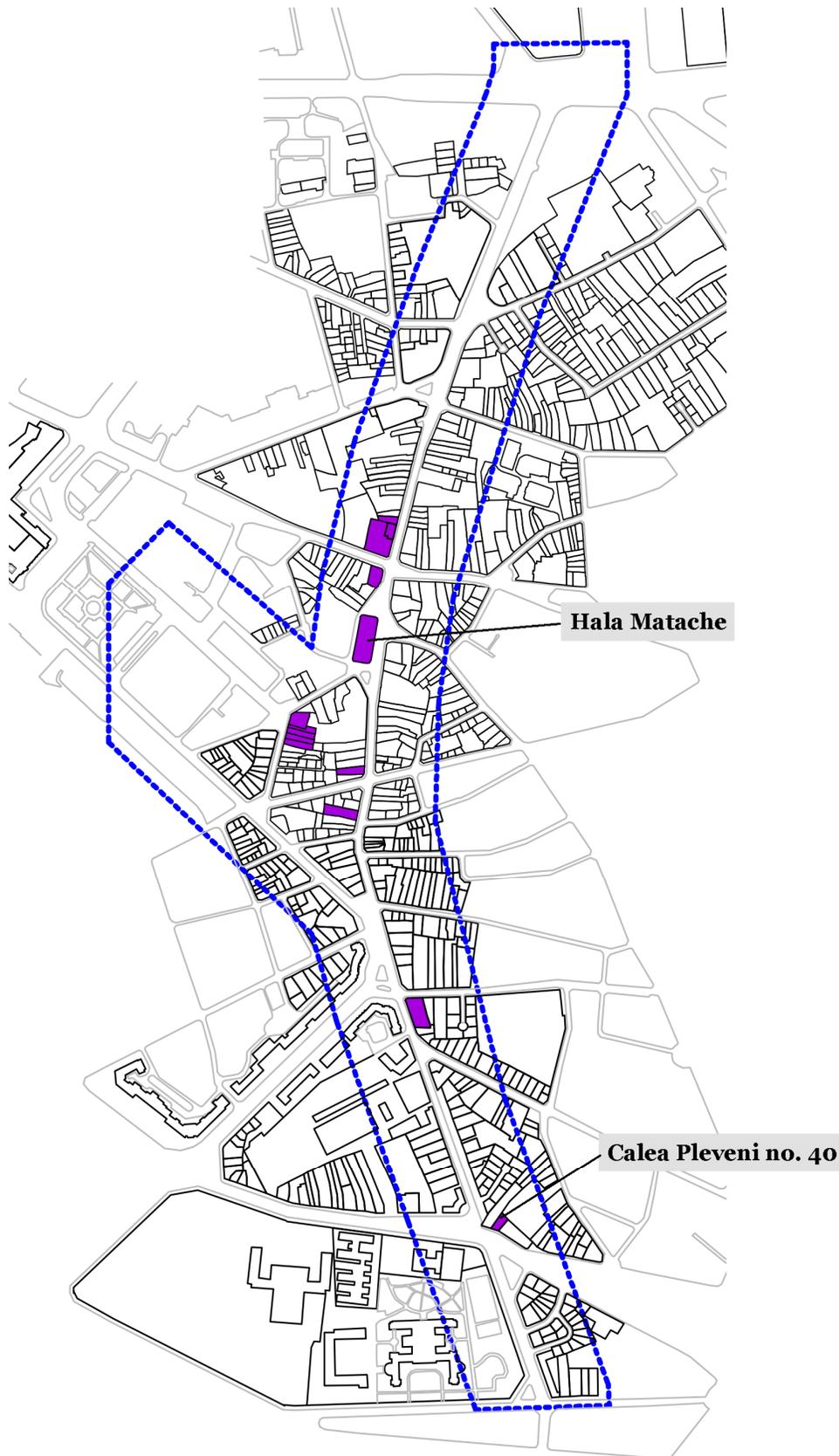
**Figure 11 – Location of the monuments on the map**
Source: Authors own
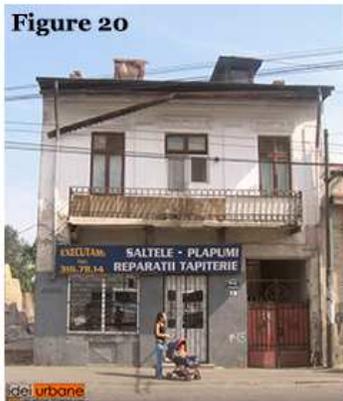
Source: IdeiUrbane

### 5.3.1.4. Implementation of the project

The idea for this project was not fast developed, the creation of the boulevard first appearing in the GUP of Bucharest from 2000 (Figure 23). On the other hand, the documents for the axis were realized in a fast pace and approved by the municipality, from 2005 – the moment of deciding the responsible organization with the urban design, till 2006 when the documentation was approved. Although they were approved in 2006, it was in 2010 when the first visible actions started, demolition of the houses. During this period several discussion sessions were realized and the most important topic was the one of the built heritage, because in the first ZUP all the monuments were proposed for destruction. In 2008 the Ministry of Culture (MC) recommended that three smaller ZUPs should be realized on the axis, ZUPs that will show better the situation of the monuments and the intention of the municipality towards them; the plans were finished in 2011 and were given to the municipality for approval. Also, from 2006 till 2010, documents for the expropriations have been realized and approved.
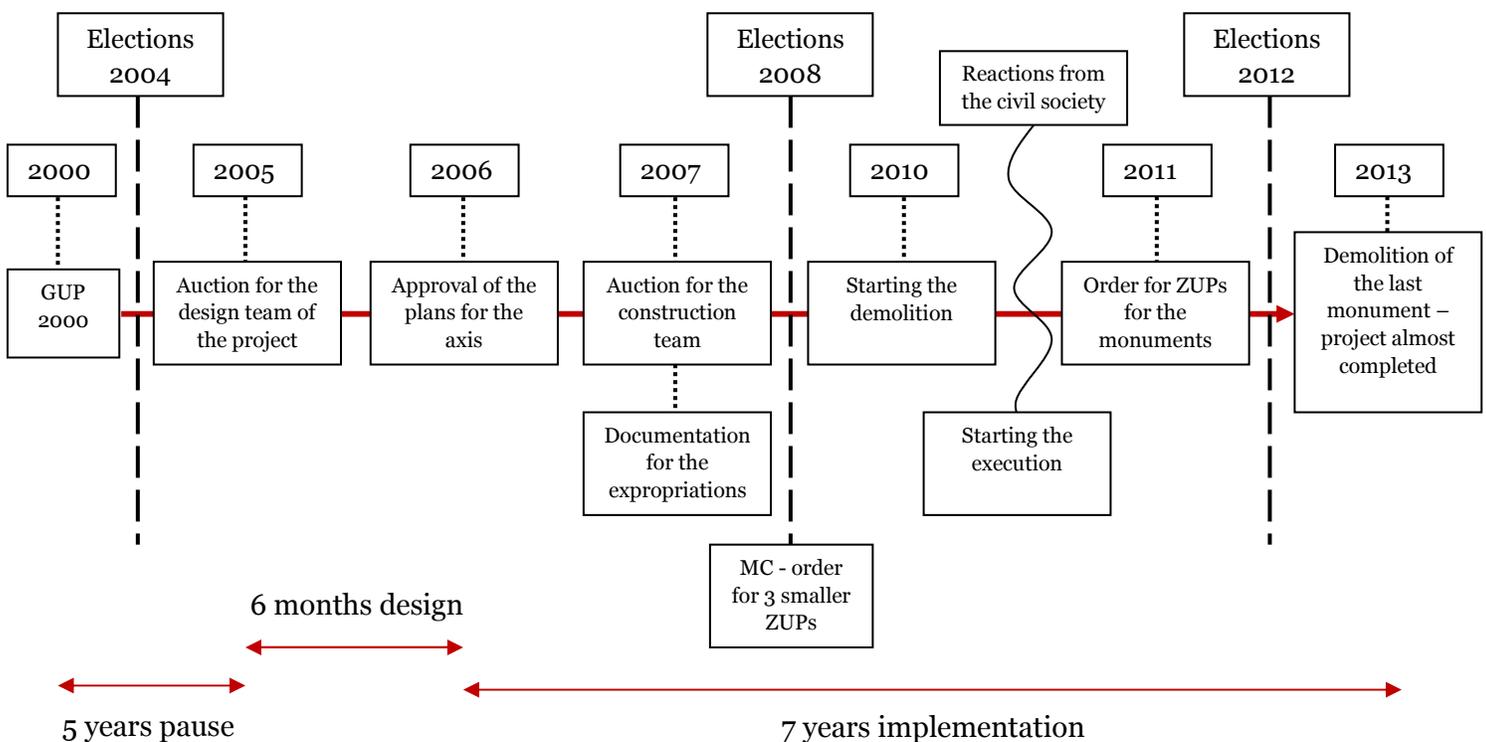


**Figure 23 – Implementation process of the project** *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest*
Source: Authors own based on scheme by Professor Enache.

### 5.3.1.5. Problems during the implementation of the project

The impacts that the project had and some of the problems encountered can be easily identified in the development and the implementation of this project and are in a strict relationship with the actions of the local authorities.

A first problem is the fact that the municipality of Bucharest chose to handle the problem of the increased traffic by building a new connection in the city. A quick response to this is the question: why was this approach chosen? There have been many discussions between academics from Romania wondering why the authorities have chosen to build new infrastructure projects that contemplates the destruction of the built environment and why they did not choose a more modern approach for this problem. Also this direction brought even more problems to the municipality. Romania is still perceived to be a less developed country and along with the unawareness of the authorities to manage the local budget made this project even harder to implement. This lack of financial resources, together with the lack on human resources and the failure of the specialists to successfully communicate and reach an agreement had a big part in the delay of the project. There was no preliminary phase in which several options were discussed and then the final route for the project chosen. This was one of the reasons why the heritage specialists started contesting the project. They believed that a deeper analysis of the situation could have revealed a different route that would not contemplate the destruction of the built heritage. Afterwards, when none of their actions stopped the project they decided to try and save some of the monuments by presenting alternatives: the construction would be on the same route but the bike lanes of pedestrian lanes could be treated different of several portion in order to keep the monuments of their existing places.

A second problem is the desire of the authorities to create a better Bucharest, but without fully analysing the impacts of the projects proposed. In the case of *Doubling Axis North  South Bucharest* we can see the direct impacts on the built heritage and indirect impacts more on the social side – people being forced to move from the houses that were up for destruction. But even in this case, the approach that was taken shows many problems. An example was given by Professor Enache in the interview realised with him. When the project was developed the municipality wanted to have a low cost for it so the expropriations were realised only for what it was necessary, meaning that some plots were not fully expropriated. This created smaller plots that sometimes don't have the required square meters for future developments (Figure 24). Although the municipality justify the project as a call to the progress and economic development of the area, the way in which it was realised actually makes it even harder to develop economically. From a comparison between the way this project and the enlargement of the *Lascar Catargiu Boulevard* were done, we can see that the legislation in Romania actually got worst rather than getting better. The project for the *Boulevard Lascar Catargiu* provided that the expropriation should be done is such a way that after completion, new plots, with a bigger

**Figure 24 – Expropriations**
Source: Authors own based on the official documentation

opening at the street should be formed and that houses of an important status should be built. In the case of *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest* the legislation did not give the authorities the power to expropriate more or to develop this project in a public private partnership. Ianasi (2011) states that "*for a general economic gain, things needed to be done differently. It was necessary for the project to be at least a public-private partnership between the municipality and the surrounding land owners, but this is very poor concept in the Romanian legislation"* [translated from Romanian].

One of the major problems is the fact that the municipally chooses to solve traffic problems by building new roads and not by trying to decrease the car use. In the western countries this approach was used in the 1970s, projects like Paris Seine urban motorway and London M25 circular motorway, but by 1974 they realised that these ideas were wrong and that they do not solve anything (Ashworth, 2013). This brought to the planning practice new methods of increasing traffic without forcing the car owners to stop using them (like it was done during the communist regime in Romania). Solutions came rather quickly and the one most used today is promoting alternatives means of mobility and transportation in some European cities:

- ✓ A good infrastructure for cycling made some city famous, such as Amsterdam and Copenhagen, for the high number of bicycles.
- ✓ A good public transportation system, either subway or busses and trams, with good travel condition and not high prices attracts many citizens, helping to reduce car usage.
- ✓ Another solution that was developed was by making motor traffic more difficult and expensive. Raising the prices that the owners have to pay for the cars, like pollution taxes and even road taxes, will bring to a decrease in the car usage.

If some of the above solutions have been productive for different cities in Europe, why did not the authorities in Bucharest use them as well? Perhaps, one of the reasons for this is because, for the politicians and other participants in the development of major projects, these solutions will bring no economic gain. According with my perspective influenced by past research, in Romania the decisions are still made by the taking the economic factor as preponderant. Furthermore, some politicians and decision makers still consider that, in order to create a better city, the infrastructure for cars has to be developed. Therefore, this attitude reveals that environmental, economic and social sustainability are not yet so developed in Romania. Sustainability is applied in the housing sector and to increment the usage of alternative energy resources, but when it comes to sustainable transport, people would rather 'turn their head' and continue using the car instead of walking or using the bicycle as daily transportation.

What was done do try to stop the implementation of the project? Beside the continuous protests from some specialists and NGOs in trying to protect the monuments, no other actions were carried out. The residents of the area are mostly occupying their houses illegally and have no rights. Therefore, without institutional support or even legitimacy they cannot really protest. The area is also composed by elderly people that do not have the power to complain or protest against the municipality. Plus the fact that they live in degraded houses, having no money to fix them, makes the solution of being expropriated and moving into a new place more attractive for them.

In *item 4* 'Heritage and Planning in Romania', I gave a description of how a project is developed and what are the necessary steps in order to start constructing something in Romania and also what is necessary to do for a monument to be downgraded and destroyed or just destroyed and moved. In the case of *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest* the steps were realized but some may say that not entirely legally. *"It is a complicated site on which you can intervene only after extensive research. Perhaps the time forced the planner to go over necessary stages and therefore the result is questionable, being part of a reflex of the past: an experience of 40 years in which the historic urban fabric resources were disregarded"* (Sturdza, 2011) [translated from Romanian]. The NGOs and the heritage specialist based they appeal to the court on the fact that the documents for downgrading a monument were not approved by the right actors or that some on the monuments were destroyed before the documents were approved.

But problems also appeared because of the misunderstanding of what should be classified as a monument and what should not be. Professor Enache, in his interview, argued the fact that the list of monuments was done unprofessionally and many houses were put on the list mostly because of a desire to create a heritage: *"a list of postal codes"* (Enache, 2013).

Professor Ianasi (2013), in his interview, agrees with the fact that the list is not done properly and that the fight to protect all of the monuments on that list should stop. No matter how many laws will be given in order to save the monuments, this will still be a matter of economics. The restoration of the monuments is directly related to the investments made and, also in the case of Bucharest, *"a growing stock of protected buildings and their inescapable costs of maintenance is an increasing burden on public finance"* (Ashworth, 1991, p. 13). Professor Ianasi also claims that we should shift from the mentality used in the communist regime: creating a big list to be sure that some of them will actually be saved. In previous interviews Ianasi (2011) states that *"we should be careful not to fall in the other extreme: we list only the ones that are in a really good shape. We should find a middle way, listing both monuments with good physical condition but also the ones valuable but in not such a good state. There must be a balance and certain priorities"* [translated from Romanian].

Also, regarding the monuments, in Romania, there is a big gap in the legislation. Although the owner of a monument is required to maintain the building in a good condition, he is not required to use it. Another issue is the fact that a lot of the monuments in Bucharest are under the ownership of the municipally, which prefers to direct its money to different purposes than to maintain the monument in a good condition and functional, or under the ownership of people with a low income, which cannot afford to preserve the building. One of the issues faced by the owners of monuments is the poor information on the obligations, rights and the funding possibilities that are offered to them by the municipality. That is why many buildings with historic value are now in a poor physical condition, some of them being close to collapsing. This was also the case of some of the monuments that were in the area of influence of the project *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest*. This and the fact that some of the buildings had a greater value than the others made the NGOs to focus their attention first on three monuments and later just on one, the *Hala Matache* (figure 10, page 39). This market became more of a symbol of the fight that the NGOs and the heritage specialists had with the municipality. Some of the professors interviewed, which are also involved in the project, sustain the fact that this monument is not of such great importance and that there are many other buildings that should be saved before this one. On the other side, the heritage specialist Hanna Derer, in an attempt to save the market, claims that in could have been classified as monument of national importance.

It is a debate even between the specialists of what can be considered part of the built heritage or not. According to Ashworth and Howard (1999, p. 6) "people and their needs lie at the very centre of heritage." Therefore, the process of upgrading a building to monument (becoming part of the heritage of certain place) should also be target for a debate with the local communities in order to understand the value they give to the building. It should not be just the decisions of the specialists of what is or not a heritage resource, since the *"buildings as monuments, selected according to sets of supposedly objective and obvious intrinsic criteria, such as age or beauty, preserved by legally protective designations, imposed by 'experts' in public taste who defined their role as being guardians of public*

*cultural assets"* (Light et al., 1994, p. 15) will sometimes be classified on subjective terms. This also happened in the case of *Hala Matahce*, where some of the specialists would even upgrade the monument from local importance to national importance. Even so, the public opinion, seen on different online communication platforms, most of the times even doubts the local importance that the building has.

As a conclusion, from my perspective and based on the interviews realized, the most prominent problem can be identified as being the lack of collaboration between the municipality, the urban design team and the specialists in different fields. This is the problem from which all the other problems appeared. Furthermore, the fact that the legislation is not a strong point in the urban planning process in Romania, led to all the debates of what is good and what is bad and should be changed. It is necessary that everybody learns something from the way this project was done. From the project ideas and rules should be drawn so that future developments like this (in case the municipality continues to develop Bucharest in this direction) can be realized without breaking any rules or destroying important parts from the built heritage of the city.

### 5.3.1.6.    Recommendations

The recommendations that are given in the next part of the thesis are focussed to directly or indirectly help in the process of conserving the built heritage of Bucharest. This sometimes requires changes in the planning process or just the way the built heritage is treated in Romania, emphasizing his role in the future development of the city of Bucharest and other cities in Romania.

The project *Doubling Axis North – South Bucharest*, although considered by many and having all the characteristics of an urban regeneration project, it cannot be regarded as one, since in Romania there are no specific laws to support projects regarding urban regeneration, or rehabilitation. Rules and regulations concerning the built environment and the social and economic aspect of urban regeneration project have to be developed. Additionally, the project should be carefully analyzed and after debates between specialists in different fields related with urban planning, a set of instruments and methods to support urban regeneration projects in Protected Built Areas should be developed.

For the monuments that are outside of the protected built areas, the problem has to be taken care of in the actual circumstances. The *List of Historical Monuments* (LHM) *"was made hastily and without sufficient funding in 1993, in an attempt to protect the city, by a few employees from The Direction of Historic Monuments who have covered the majority of streets and marked some addresses at which they assume that are houses of interest for the city"* (Enache, 2011) [translated from Romanian]. Thus, suggesting a more in-depth analysis of the area and of all the monuments that will be affected by the project in order to decide what the best strategies for an intervention are. A building that is classified as a monument but is in a degraded condition may bring more gain if is

destroyed instead of being target of an architectural regeneration (i.e. the area on which it is built can be used for future developments). That does not mean that all the monuments in a bad physical condition should be destroyed, but a selection of what is worth to be conserved and what not should be realized.

As a recommendation, for future urban projects, is the fact that they should be realized within a communicative approach to planning (see Figure 25 - Spatial planning and the communicative approach). It is necessary that the municipality of Bucharest and their decision making process and approach to planning changes from a top-down planning system, as today, to a bottom-up system. The people and different organizations should at least be consulted during the development of new projects. It is for the benefit of the people that new developments are realized and making strategies and projects just from the point of view of the authorities may cause more harm to the city than good. Furthermore, a shift from government to governance will beneficiate not just the planning system, but in general the economic and social development of the country. Moreover, a vertical collaboration in planning processes means that the local municipality will answer to the national authorities, and further to international organizations. A horizontal collaboration requires interaction between the authorities and different organizations such as NGOs, private investors, experts and so on. Such a collaboration between all the actors that are involved should happen from the beginning of the project so that situations such as *Hala Matache* can be avoided (all the discussions about keeping the position of the market or about moving it were realised after the plans for the project were already approved and not before).
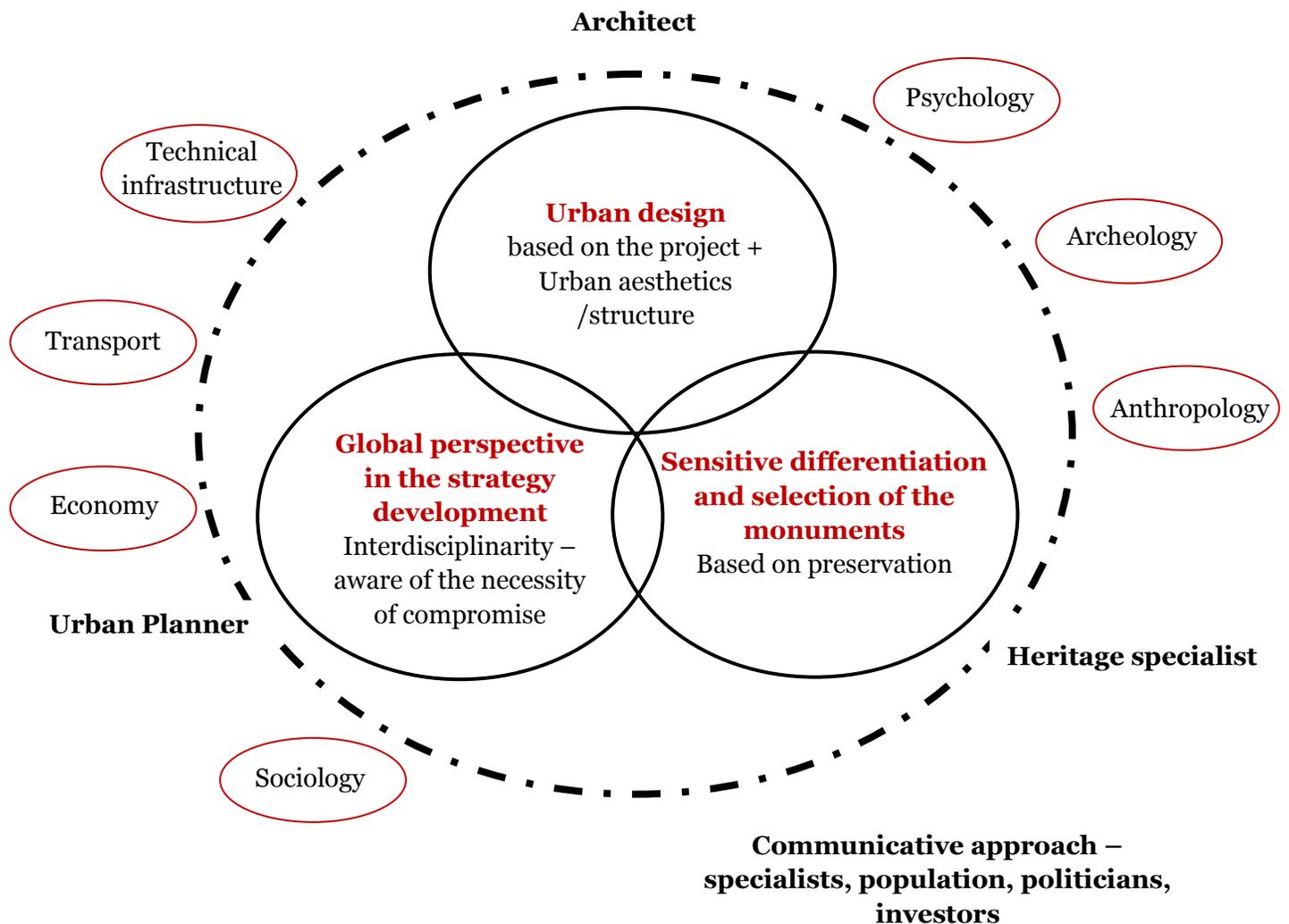
**Figure 25 –Spatial planning and the communicative approach**
Source: Authors own based on scheme by Professor Enache.

In Bucharest, as in other past communist cities, the built environment possesses architectural and urban value that collides with the social housing at the traditional communist area, so, giving it a harder degree of development. The *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest* is a project that has raised many debates and problems. It was done in a hurry, disrespecting the law and without taking into account the opinions of the specialists in fields such as heritage and sociology. Although many have argued that the project is beneficial for Bucharest, the way in which it was done was the reason for many discussions. The plans were done in a shorter time than the necessary, and a lack of detailed pre-analysis studies, resulted in the destruction of city built heritage and also a wasted of time and resources - the project was supposed to last seven months but turned into eight years.

Bucharest could take some examples from other cities around the world in terms of urban planning and to deal with traffic issues. For example, cities in Europe, mostly at the western part, and also cities in the USA have stopped in the last decades developing major infrastructure projects in the city centre, mostly because of the negative effects such as pollution, social segregation and traffic congestion. Using the private car as a transport method is considered by many specialist as not being sustainable, unlike using the public transport, cycling or walking. In addition, *"trying to increase the supply of road/parking space is always ineffective as it prompts increases in demand. The solution is to decrease demand by both increasing alternative transport systems and making private motor travel more difficult / expensive"* (Ashworth, 2013). Considering all this, an important step in a positive growth of the city is the development of strategies. They should take into consideration not just the economic factor but also the social and cultural factors. In the planning process, people should play as an important role as the built environment, especially in urban regeneration interventions where the residents of the area are the first to be affected. Furthermore, the component of sustainability should be integrated more in the planning strategies for Bucharest, in particular regarding the transport. Cities as Copenhagen and Amsterdam have become famous for their cycling infrastructure and the high number of people that choose the bike in favour of the private car, therefore contributing to their own quality of life (cycling is a healthy activity) and to the city environment (cycling is not pollutant).

Bucharest could design an integrated development strategy for the city, with solutions at the European level. When developing such a vision the context has to be taken into account, the strategies being developed by looking at the city as a whole not as separate neighbourhoods. Even more, in the development of these strategies, there is a need to engage the residents and non-profit organizations that are trying to support the development of different domains in the city, plus coordination between them and the actors involved in the development of the strategies (e.g. the municipality).As a good example in dealing with city traffic problems, *"in Copenhagen, the number of parking spaces in the central area was limited by local authorities in the last twenty years in order to persuade people to use public transport and thus reduce traffic downtown. In London, every car entering the centre must pay a "congestion fee" of £ 8 per day, an amount high enough. And the amounts collected from these fees are intended to improve the quality of public transport"* (Platforma pentru Bucuresti, 2011, p. 6) [translated from Romanian].

## 6. General conclusions

The phenomenon of the city 'flooded' by the increasing number of cars that took place in the 1970s in the western cities, when the number of the cars has increased exponentially, important squares in the city have become parking spaces and the space for the pedestrians was reduced. This scenario is what Bucharest is facing today, with a delay of 40 years. But this should be seen as an opportunity since Bucharest can learn from all the spatial planning actions that were taken in other countries aimed to transform cities with friendly and dynamic public spaces that promote a high quality of life (Platforma pentru Bucuresti, 2011, p. 4). Although having the example of western cities, in Bucharest the approach to the development of new infrastructure projects followed the traditional planning processes, mostly because municipality takes the major control and dictates the rules with a lack of communication and collaboration with other city actors.

Looking at one of the main research questions 'How the urban regeneration project for *Doubling Axis North – South Bucharest* area is influencing the built environment?' the answer can be divided in three parts, depending on the scale we look at: i) local, ii) neighbourhood and iii) city.

i)   At the local level the attention was focused on the buildings. On the left front of the street - all the buildings were destroyed, not even the monuments were saved, and therefore the impact of the project was at this level negative over the built environment.

ii)   At the neighbourhood scale, the visible change was the way the plots were developed. The neighbourhood is characterized by small plots with a narrow street opening and a high depth, plots that will probably be wrongly used in a desire to increase the economic development of the area: *"if we take the area immediately adjacent , which is probably most sensitive, the difficulty of a public private development will result in either an awaiting that will damage the existing buildings, as in many places in Bucharest, either in a overuse of some plots or even of some islands that are now unprepared for a different land use or intensity of use"* (Ianasi, 2011)[translated from Romanian].

iii)   At the city scale, all the specialists talked about the way this new road will help to decrease the traffic on Calea Victorie and so protecting the built environment on that street. The aim was to reduce the number of cars that use this street in order to make space for pedestrians. Public spaces will be created, the sidewalks will be enlarged and the monuments will be valued more, with friendly activities for pedestrians. Professor Enache states that, *"for me, Calea Victoriei, with the monuments and the atmosphere it has, is the soul of this nation from which the capital was born, she is the custodian of what represents us in Europe. Calea Victoriei identifies us more than the shopping area Lipscani. In the past 40 years, I see a continuous degradation of Calea Victoriei, first through negligence, by reducing trade and urban life in the evening, and after 1989, by scaring pedestrians with priority given to cars: in some places are almost no sidewalks"* (2011)[translated from Romanian].

The answer for the second research question 'Why the urban regeneration project for *Doubling Axis North – South Bucharest* area contemplates the demolition of built heritage? Can it be seen as positive?' it depends from who's perspective we look at the project. The heritage specialists argue that, mostly because of the heritage resources lost in the communist regime, is necessary to protect all the buildings that are now on the List of Historical Monuments. Based on the research that I did for this project, I have to agree with the other side, the one that realises that in order to save the important part of Bucharest, a sacrifice has to be made. Furthermore, in the item '*Description of the project*', the state of the monuments affected by this project is presented and, in my opinion, some of them are not in a physical state that is worth the fight for conservation. Even more, on some monuments, the interventions were realised illegally, like painting the facade, or the degraded state in which they are, makes the building not worth anything anymore for the built or cultural heritage.

Urban planning in Bucharest is still under serious development and even if the planners are trying to develop the city as best as they know, their ideas are sometimes dictated by the municipally. And, as in many other countries, the main governmental authorities ask for development projects at urban level without consulting the different entities that are interconnected with the urban space.
In the case of *Doubling Axis North South Bucharest* project the municipality did not take into account the effects the project will have on the built heritage. Although some local actors, such as some of the experts I interviewed, consider this project to be a major loss for the heritage of Bucharest and without any spectacular impact for other areas in the city: *"I choose to protect Calea Victoriei in the detriment of some building that I had to sacrifice on streets Berzei and Buzesti, near the intersection with Calea Grivitei. I did not hesitate, although I did not do it with pleasure"* (Enache, 2011) [translated from Romanian].

Up to this point, in my perspective, the project can be considered as a failure since it took more time than it was initially suggested and, even with the continuous fight that specialists and NGOs had to protect the built heritage, no monuments were actually saved. Furthermore, the success of this project will be based on the completion of the second part of the axis and the actions that will be realized in order to actually save the monuments on *Calea Victoriei*. Also this project can be looked at as a 'waking up call' for the municipality, the heritage specialists and different organizations. There is a need to save the built environment for heritage while the buildings are still in good physical condition and functioning. To try to conserve a monument when it is close to destruction will not bring any benefit, either economic or cultural. A building that is in a degraded physical condition, represents a potential danger to the people. Moreover, this also affects the aesthetics of the built environment and does not valorise economically and culturally the place. *"Very rapid change in almost all aspects of life led to both considerable destruction of the monuments, buildings, landscapes and urban patterns of the past, but also, in reaction a perceived need to maintain some link with the past as an anchor during a period of fundamental instability."* (Ashworth and Howard, 1999, p. 37)

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**Annex 1**

*Questions applied during the interviews:*

1. Could you clarify your perspective about the current phase the project is now?

2. Do you consider this project to be important for the development of Bucharest? Would you have chosen a different approach?

3. When I chose this project as my case study I knew several things about it but searching for more detailed information I found that the way the project was presented for the public does not really match with what is actually happening there. Do you think that the information for the public was accurate? And I would like if you can also refer to the monuments.

4. Some of the monuments were in a really bad condition. Economically speaking, do you think that they were worth saving?

5. Do you think that monument "Hala Matache" is worth all the discussion and actions done by different organization in order to save it?

6. Taking into account the physical condition of the neighbourhood and of some of the monuments, don't you agree that this was a good area to regenerate?

7. So now that most of the project is completed, do you think that the previous objectives will be reached? And I mean the decrease of car traffic on *Calea Victorie*i and the boulevards of *Catargiu – Magheru – Bratianu.*

8. Do you think that the area would have been economically more profitable as it was then after this regeneration project will finish?

9. Do you think that after the completion of the project this area will develop at the potential that the municipality is hoping?

10. On the social side, do you consider the regeneration project a plus for the area?

11. How many laws do you think have been "worked around" effective implemented? In the process of this project? And here we can talk about the fact that some monuments where declassified just before the project was approved.