

Visegrad Scholarship at the Vera & Donald Blinken Open Society Archives

Final Report

Research Project:

Picking up the Pieces from the Communist Past. Transitional Heritage in post 1989 Romania and Germany

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The proposed project for the Visegrad Scholarship was designed to broaden and complement the reference body of primary and secondary sources I refer to in the PhD thesis in progress. The doctoral research I am currently conducting aims at highlighting continuities and discontinuities in heritage preservation and its legitimisation once the political regime changed in Romania and Germany post 1989. However, a look into the conditions of monuments preservation, meaning institutions, legislation, discourses prior to the political change of 1989 is mandatory for this research.

Objectives of the Research

The proposed research project conducted at the OSA Archives, is precisely addressing issues that have been relatively little explored, and require a thorough analysis; such as, the conditions affecting heritage preservation in particular in socialist Romania, and during the immediate period following the regime change of 1989. In that respect during the research period at the OSA Archives conducted in July 2016, I analysed documentation referring to the following aspects:

- the cultural heritage preservation policies,
- the role of cultural institutions, ministries, and local administration in managing cultural heritage,
- politics of urban systematisation and modernisation processes in particular affecting Bucharest and Transylvania region during the 1980s,

- legislation concerning preservation,
- cultural heritage destruction an issue for ‘human rights’ protection,
- case studies: the construction of the Civic Centre in Bucharest and national history museums development,
- transformation processes and reform in the events following the political change of 1989.

Therefore various files have been identified in the OSA Archival holdings which are of high value to better understand in particular the controversial politics of urban and rural systematisation during Ceausescu’s regime, the promoted cultural policies and its internationally contested interventions concerning urban modernisation to the detriment of heritage preservation.

In this context a particular attention I dedicated to the analysis of the role of the dissent movement, international press and of the Radio Free Europe in raising awareness concerning heritage destruction campaign promoted by Ceausescu in particular during the 1980s, once the Commission for Historic Monuments Preservation has been dismantled. Nevertheless, this highlighted an aspect which was little discussed in my doctoral research, namely the issue of cultural heritage destruction as a matter of concern for human rights protection. Also the relationship with the Orthodox Patriarchy during the socialist regime and its position concerning destruction of religious monuments carried out during the 1980s has been successfully documented.

The transition following the regime change of 1989 is documented partly in the OSA Archives. However relevant material has been found that documents aspects linked to institutional reform concerning cultural heritage preservation, and the urbanisation processes in Romania post 1989, with a particular focus on the House of the People in Bucharest.

However less information could be gathered regarding museums development and museum collections during socialism and the transition period following 1989. Also another gap in my documentation that could not be consistently covered by research at the OSA Archives, remains the collaboration between the socialist government with various international bodies such as UNESCO, ICOM and ICOMOS.

Nevertheless the research conducted in the OSA Archival holdings successfully opened new paths for future research that received limited attention until present. Namely, to better understanding the role of the Orthodox Church in the politics of preservation during Ceausescu’s regime, and moreover the analyse the impact of Ceausescu’s policies on the

cultural heritage of various minorities in the country, and developments concerning minorities following the regime change of 1989.

Documentation

During the one-month research period I collected and analysed documentation from the Records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute, Records of the Open Media Research Institute, and Records of the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights. My research focused on examining newspaper clippings, internal analyses, reports, legislation, press agency releases, copies from the national and international press.

The consulted material successfully complemented limited information available in archival institutions in Romania on such matters. The Securitatea surveillance activity of the dissent group has been documented in the Securitatea Archives in Bucharest, however sufficient material has been provided by the Radio Free Europe holdings to complement and counter-balance the information by Securitatea apparatus on this issue.

The overall research period at the OSA Archives proved as extremely productive by providing relevant documentation for the doctoral thesis in process, and nevertheless opening up new paths for future research.

Appendix: Files Processed during the research scholarship

OSA Archival Collections

Reference code	Title	Date(s)	Archival Boxes
HU OSA 205-2-20	Files of Dan Ionescu Crime and Corruption	1990-1990	Archival boxes #5 / No. 1
		1991 – 1991	Archival boxes #5 / No. 2
		1992 – 1992	Archival boxes #5 / No. 3
		1993 – 1993	Archival boxes #5 / No. 4
		1994 – 1994	Archival boxes #5 / No. 5
		1994 – 1994	Archival boxes #6 / No. 1
		1995 – 1995	Archival boxes #6 / No. 2
		1995 – 1995	Archival boxes #6 / No. 3
		1996 - 1996	Archival boxes #6 / No. 4
	Democracy: General	1989 - 1989	Archival boxes #9 / No. 1
	Democracy: General	1990-1990	Archival boxes #9 / No. 2
	Democracy: General	1991 – 1991	Archival boxes #9 / No. 3

	Democracy: Laws	1990 - 1992	Archival boxes #9 / No. 7
	Democracy: Traditions	1990 - 1992	Archival boxes #10 / No. 6
	Housing: General	1968 - 1991	Archival boxes #70 / No. 1
	Law: General	1993 - 1993	Archival boxes #78 / No. 2
	Law: General	1994 - 1994	Archival boxes #78 / No. 3
	Monuments: General	1981 - 1984	Archival boxes #86 / No. 1
	Monuments: General	1985 - 1988	Archival boxes #86 / No. 2
	Monuments: General	1993 - 1996	Archival boxes #86 / No. 3
	Monuments: Essays	1975 - 1990	Archival boxes #86 / No. 4
	Monuments: Portraits	1976 - 1987	Archival boxes #86 / No. 5
	State Symbols: Conflicts	1990 - 1992	Archival boxes #94 / No. 6
	State Symbols: Statues	1990 - 1993	Archival boxes #94 / No. 8
	State Symbols: Statues	1994 - 1994	Archival boxes #94 / No. 9
HU OSA 205-4-71	Culture: Cultural Patrimony	1975 - 1983	Archival card boxes #2 / No. 16
	Academy: Institutes	1955 - 1992	Archival card boxes #1 / No. 1
	Academy: Romanian Academy	1968 - 1994	Archival card boxes #1 / No. 2
	Culture: Cultural Policy	1970 - 1989	Archival card boxes #2 / No. 17
	Culture: Aesthetics	1953 - 1992	Archival card boxes #2 / No. 8
	Culture: Awards	1951 - 1988	Archival card boxes #2 / No. 9
	Culture: Ceausescu	1965 - 1989	Archival card boxes #2 / No. 11
	Culture: Congress of Culture	1975 - 1982	Archival card boxes #2 / No. 12
	Culture: Criticism	1968 - 1980	Archival card boxes #2 / No. 14
	Culture: Exiles	1970 - 1984	Archival card boxes #2 / No. 20
	Culture: Fine Arts	1957 - 1989	Archival card boxes #2 / No. 21
	Culture: Heritage	1975 - 1989	Archival card boxes #2 / No. 23
	Culture: Generation	1960 - 1981	Archival card boxes #2 / No. 25
	Culture: History	1975 - 1988	Archival card boxes #2 / No. 26
	Culture: ideologische Abgrenzung	1978 - 1989	Archival card boxes #2 / No. 29
	Culture: Marxism	1968 - 1983	Archival card boxes #3 / No. 1
	Culture: Mass Culture	1970 - 1982	Archival card boxes #3 / No. 2
	Culture: Museums	1971 - 1987	Archival card boxes #3 / No. 4
	Culture: RCP	1970	Archival card boxes #3 / No. 11
	Culture: Realism	1975 - 1983	Archival card boxes #3 / No. 12
	Culture: Specific National	1976 - 1984	Archival card boxes #3 / No. 17
	Departments	1990 - 1992	Archival card boxes #3 / No. 26
	Ministries: New Ministries	1990 - 1992	Archival card boxes #6 / No. 17
	Ministries: Old Ministries	1970 - 1990	Archival card boxes #6 / No. 18
	Organisations: Domestic Organisations	1990 - 1991	Archival card boxes #7 / No. 3
	Organisations: International	1969 - 1993	Archival card boxes #7 / No. 4

	Organisations		
	Research: Building	1970 - 1991	Archival card boxes #8 / No. 9
	Research: History	1968 - 1990	Archival card boxes #8 / No. 13
	Study Institutes: Architecture	1991 - 1992	Archival card boxes #8 / No. 27
	Study Institutes: Arts	1962 - 1991	Archival card boxes #8 / No. 29
HU OSA 205-4-201	History: Monuments: Preservation of Historical Monuments	1992 - 1994	Archival boxes #112 / No. 1033
HU OSA 205-2-20	Government: Provisional Government	1989 - 1990	Archival boxes #67 / No. 5
HU OSA 205-4-70	Social Issues: Students: Architecture	1990 - 1990	Archival boxes #269 / No. 10
HU OSA 300-60-1	Administration: People's Councils: Town	1985 - 1989	Archival boxes #5 / No. 13
	Administration: People's Councils: villages	1968 - 1988	Archival boxes #5 / No. 14
	Administration: People's Councils: village destruction	1988 - 1988	Archival boxes #5 / No. 15
	State Apparatus: Ministries: Education: Culture	1962 - 1987	Archival boxes #743 / No. 4
	State Apparatus: Ministries: Education: Culture	1951 - 1991	Archival boxes #741 / No. 3
	State Apparatus: Ministries: Architecture and Systematization	1948 - 1977	Archival boxes #736 / No. 3
	State Apparatus: Party: Ideology	1986 - 1990	Archival boxes #679 / No. 3
	Culture: General	1948 - 1961	Archival boxes #98 / No. 3
		1957 - 1961	Archival boxes #98 / No. 4
		1961 - 1965	Archival boxes #98 / No. 5
		1962 - 1973	Archival boxes #98 / No. 6
		1983 - 1989	Archival boxes #99 / No. 1
		1984 - 1989	Archival boxes #99 / No. 2
	Culture: Ideological Proposals of N. Ceaușescu	1971 - 1971	Archival boxes #100 / No. 3
	Culture: Literature: Heritage	1973 - 1980	Archival boxes #120 / No. 3
	Culture: Science: History: Various	1984 - 1989	Archival boxes #137 / No. 6
	Culture: Patrimonium	1984 - 1990	Archival boxes #146 / No. 6
	Culture: Patrimonium	1985 - 1985	Archival boxes #147 / No. 1
	Culture: Patrimonium	1986 - 1988	Archival boxes #147 / No. 2
	Culture: Cultural Contacts: East Germany	1962 - 1987	Archival boxes #149 / No. 1
	Administration:	1989 - 1990	Archival boxes #3 / No. 3

	National Committees: Village Destruction		
	Resistance and Criticism of the Regime: Cultural	1951 - 1969	Archival boxes #532 / No. 4
	Standard of Living: Housing:Architecture, Design	1979 - 1990	Archival boxes #546 / No. 5
	Standard of Living: Luxuries	1951 - 1973	Archival boxes #546 / No. 6
	Standard of Living: Luxuries:Corruption	1981 - 1988	Archival boxes #546 / No. 7
	Description of the Country: Capital: București	1951 - 1953	Archival boxes #631 / No. 1
	Description of the Country: Capital: București	1954 - 1955	Archival boxes #631 / No. 2
	Description of the Country: Capital: București	1983 - 1983	Archival boxes #635 / No. 1
		1989 - 1991	Archival boxes #636 / No. 1
	Description of the Country: Village Destruction	1982 - 1987	Archival boxes #650 / No. 5
		1988 - 1988	Archival boxes #651 / No. 1
		1989 - 1989	Archival boxes #651 / No. 3
	Description of the Country: Systematization	1971 - 1975	Archival boxes #650 / No. 4
	Corruption	1972 - 1989	Archival boxes #657 / No. 1
	Corruption	1990 - 1991	Archival boxes #657 / No. 2
	State Apparatus: Party: History	1983 - 1987	Archival boxes #678 / No. 1
	State Apparatus: Ministries: Architecture and Systematization	1948 - 1977	Archival boxes #736 / No. 3
	Administration: People's Councils: Systematization	1967 - 1987	Archival boxes #5 / No. 10
	Description of the Country: Systematization	1971 - 1975	Archival boxes #650 / No. 4
	Administration: People's Councils: Systematization in Other Countries	1985 - 1987	Archival boxes #5 / No. 11
	Propaganda: Monuments	1961 - 1984	Archival boxes #515 / No. 4
	Culture: Museums	1951 - 1960	Archival boxes #146 / No. 2
	Culture: Museums	1961 - 1962	Archival boxes #146 / No. 3
	Culture: Museums	1963 - 1976	Archival boxes #146 / No. 4
	Culture: Museums	1985 - 1985	Archival boxes #146 / No. 5
	Culture: Ideological	1971 - 1971	Archival boxes #100 / No. 3

	Proposals of N. Ceaușescu		
	Culture: Ideological Proposals of N. Ceaușescu	1971 - 1971	Archival boxes #100 / No. 4
	Culture: Ideological Proposals of N. Ceaușescu	1972 - 1975	Archival boxes #101 / No. 1
	State Apparatus: Personality Cult: Ceaușescu, E.	1976 - 1983	Archival boxes #699 / No. 5
	State Apparatus: Personality Cult: Ceaușescu, E.	1984 - 1985	Archival boxes #700 / No. 1
	State Apparatus: Personality Cult: Ceaușescu, E.	1986 - 1987	Archival boxes #700 / No. 2
	State Apparatus: Personality Cult: Ceaușescu, E.	1986 - 1989	Archival boxes #700 / No. 3
	State Apparatus: Personality Cult: Ceaușescu, E.	1988 - 1988	Archival boxes #700 / No. 4
	State Apparatus: Personality Cult: Ceaușescu, E.	1989 - 1989	Archival boxes #700 / No. 5
HU OSA 300-1-2	National Monuments crippled for Festival	1953-11-2	Rolls of 35mm microfilm in microfilm cabinet #30 / No. 390
	Communists destroying valuable art Monuments	1956-4-26	Rolls of 35mm microfilm in microfilm cabinet #68 / No. 198
	1952 Building Construction in Bucharest	1952-8-15	Rolls of 35mm microfilm in microfilm cabinet #13 / No. 163
	The "Scanteia" Palace in Bucharest	1952-9-17	Rolls of 35mm microfilm in microfilm cabinet #14 / No. 327
	The Historical Museum at Bucharest "The People's Revolutionary Fight"	1952-8-13	Rolls of 35mm microfilm in microfilm cabinet #13 / No. 7
	Monuments Destroyed	1954-8-9	Rolls of 35mm microfilm in microfilm cabinet #41 / No. 500
HU OSA 300-120-13	Romania Culture	1979 - 1986	Archival boxes #113 / No. 4
	Romania Culture	1987 - 1992	Archival boxes #113 / No. 5
	Romania Democracy	1987 - 1989	Archival boxes #113 / No. 6
	Romania Democracy	1991 - 1992	Archival boxes #114 / No. 3
	Romania Dissent	1965 - 1985	Archival boxes #114 / No. 4
	Romania Dissent	1986 - 1988	Archival boxes #114 / No. 5
	Romania Dissent	1988 - 1988	Archival boxes #115 / No. 1
	Romania Dissent	1989 - 1989	Archival boxes #115 / No. 2
	Romania Dissent	1990 - 1992	Archival boxes #115 / No. 3
	Human Rights: East Europe: Romania	1977 - 1988	Archival boxes #45 / No. 1
	Human Rights: East Europe: Romania	1989 - 1993	Archival boxes #45 / No. 2

	Cities: East Europe: Romania	1980 - 1993	Archival boxes #12 / No. 3
	Urban Planning: Romania	1974 - 1991	Archival boxes #141 / No. 3
HU OSA 300-2-1	Urban Romania	1974 - 1975	Archival boxes #60 / No. 10
HU OSA 300-60-7	Foreign Press Survey on Romania	1974 – 1989	Archival boxes #19 / No. 4-56
HU OSA 300-60-3	Records Relating to Romanian Opposition and Protest Movement	1985 - 1989	Archival boxes #2 / No. 3
HU OSA 300-7-3	Buildings and Monuments	1952 - 1968	Archival boxes #1 / No. 9
HU OSA 300-80-2	Mass Media and Culture: Cultural Policy Monuments Mass Media and Culture: Cultural Institutions: Museums	1988 – 1991 1984 - 1991	Archival boxes #15 / No. 2 Archival boxes #14 / No. 4
HU OSA 318-0-5	Romania: Destruction of Culture and History	1984 - 1989	Archival boxes #106 / No. 4
	Romania: Rural Resettlement Plan: Operation Villages	1989 - 1989	Archival boxes #115 / No. 2
HU OSA 318-0-5	Romania Legislation	1973 - 1986	Archival boxes #110 / No. 3
	Romania Transition	1990 - 1990	Archival boxes #115 / No. 9
HU OSA 300-120-5	Romania: Museums and Monuments	1984-1990	Archival boxes #158 / No. 6