

ARCHITECTURE

I - THE " RED " - BANLOC GOODRICH BLOCK, which later became the headquarters of IPCM

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in the Gf + 5 / Gf + 8 floors building from 218 Calea Victoriei, Bucharest

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**I - THE "RED" BANLOC
GOODRICH BLOCK,
which later became the
headquarters of IPCM**

THE "RED" BANLOC GOODRICH BLOCK, which later became the headquarters of IPCM

A. HISTORY

1- 1946 – The Banloc Goodrich Building

The building was built after the earthquake of 1940 by the construction company of Engineer "**Emil Prager**", who also drafted the structural project.

The architectural concept belongs to Architect Octav Doicescu and the building was the Bucharest office of the Goodrich American tire manufacturer, associated with Princess Elisabeta. The building was designed and erected in 1943-1946, under the careful supervision of the architect, as shown by the plans with details and studies kept in the project archive of UAR (The Union of Romanian Architects) Bucharest. -*1

Short history : *After the financial crisis of the 1930s, the American tire manufacturer B.F. Goodrich Company became an associate of King Carol II's sister, in order to establish a tire factory in Romania. The factory was first supposed to be opened in Banloc, Banat region, where Princess Elisabeta had a property. This did not happen and, in the end, the factory was built in Prahova, in Florești, under the plans of Architect Doicescu, in 1936-1938. The factory was closer to the oil fields. In 1939, production began under the name of the Banloc-Goodrich Company. The factory prospered during and after the war, so that an office building designed by the same architect, Octav Doicescu, was erected in Bucharest in 1943-1946. In 1948, Princess Elizabeta was forced to leave the country, together with all the members of the royal family. *-2*

NOTE: 1948-1963

For the period 1948 – 1963, we did not find data on the building.

2 - 1963 It became the headquarters of IPCM – the Institute of Design for Factories and Installations used in the machine construction industry

In 1963, the building became the headquarters of a design institute, after the decision of the Government.

NOTE: The institute bore various names during the communist period, but I chose the name that was used most of the time.

*DECISION no. 191 of April 12, 1963, chap. 4 pt. 19 - see * -3*

" On April 1, 1963, the following design institutes are established:

a) At the Ministry of Metallurgy and Machine Construction:

- The Institute of design for factories and installations used in the machine construction industry (IPCM), based in Bucharest (....)"

EXPANSION BY BUILDING A NEW UNIT (Unit B) - 1968

Since a lot of buildings were erected at the time, and the machine building industry was in full swing, it was necessary to expand the office area. A new building unit was added in the back of the building, a Gf + 5 building, erected in 1967-1968.

NOTE: We have not found any other written information about this building unit.

CONSOLIDATION 1986 (after the earthquake of March 4, 1977)

In 1977, during the 7.2 Richter scale magnitude earthquake, the building was damaged, but continued to be used. It was only in 1985-1986 that a partial consolidation was made.

For this purpose, a team of structural engineers from IPCM (Eng. M. Stefanescu, Eng. Adrian Ionescu and others) led by Professor Engineer Alexandru Cismigiu were tasked. The professor, a well-known personality in the field of seismic engineering, was responsible for coordinating many projects of great importance that had to be made safe, civil buildings and churches located in various localities in the country.

The consolidation of the IPCM headquarters was done under the pressure of time (hundreds of employees being sent to work in other locations) and there was a large load of work (as there were many buildings that still needed repairs). That is why it was decided to consolidate the building only up to the 6th floor, including it.

NOTE: We did not find, in the documentation, written data regarding this consolidation work.

After 1990, the load of work decreased, as well as the number of employees. Two new groups were formed, based in two institutes: the SC "IPCM" – S.A. Bucharest and SC "IPCMG" – S.A. Bucharest.

In June 2004, after an exchange of real estate assets, the building was transferred into the administration of the state. -*4

DECISION no. 867 of June 3, 2004

Article 2 – We approve the transfer of the building mentioned at art. 1 para. (1), found in the administration of the General Secretariat of the Government, from the public domain of the state to the private domain of the state.

Article 3- (1) We approve the exchange of the real estate asset mentioned at art. 2 with the building located in Bucharest, 218 Calea Victoriei, District 1, with the identification data listed in Addendum no. 2, found in the portfolio of the "IPCM" – S.A. Bucharest Company and of the "IPCMG" – S.A. Bucharest Company.

NOTE: The building has been unused since 2004.

Various studies were made in order to modernize and consolidate the building and to use it in various ways.

- a** - in 2010 a feasibility study was made by the SC Carpati SRL Company for the Romanian Immigration Office, beneficiary of the Ministry of Administration and Interior Affairs
- b** - in 2012, a larger project was made. It reached the DALI phase (Documentation Needed to Approve Intervention Works), also prepared by the SC Carpati SRL Company for the Prosecutor's Office attached to the Bucharest Court of Appeal. This project recommended the consolidation, reshaping and updating of the building at 218 Calea Victoriei.

Bibliography:

*-1 - drawings photographed from the archive of the Union of Romanian Architects, obtained with the support of Architect Rodica Panaitescu

*-2 -

<https://newsweek.ro/auto/uzina-victoria-floresti-de-la-decretul-regal-si-banloc-goodrich-la-michelin> Răzvan Scăeșteanu, Updated on 26.07.2019

*-3 - DECISION no. 191 of April 12, 1963 regarding the organization and planning the design activity, as well as some measures for increasing the working capacity of design organizations and for improving their activity / Issued by: The COUNCIL OF MINISTERS / published: THE OFFICIAL BULLETIN no. 21 of July 6, 1963

*-4- DECISION no. 867 of June 3, 2004 regarding the change of the holder of the property and administration right of some properties in the city of Bucharest. Published in the OFFICIAL GAZETTE no. 519 of June 9, 2004. <http://legislatie.just.ro/Public/FormaPrintabila/00000G1PEU4TTX597W31HS1ML36EE9KX>

B. DATA ABOUT THE BUILDING - architecture and construction -

Unit A (Banloc, 1946), towards Calea Victoriei, is the studied building.

Note: Regarding Unit B, designed and erected in the back of Unit A in 1967-1968, we did not find any verifiable information. The only data we have are those obtained from sketches to scale.

1- APPEARANCE/DESIGN

Placed in downtown Bucharest, on Calea Victoriei, the Banloc Building was first used in 1946.

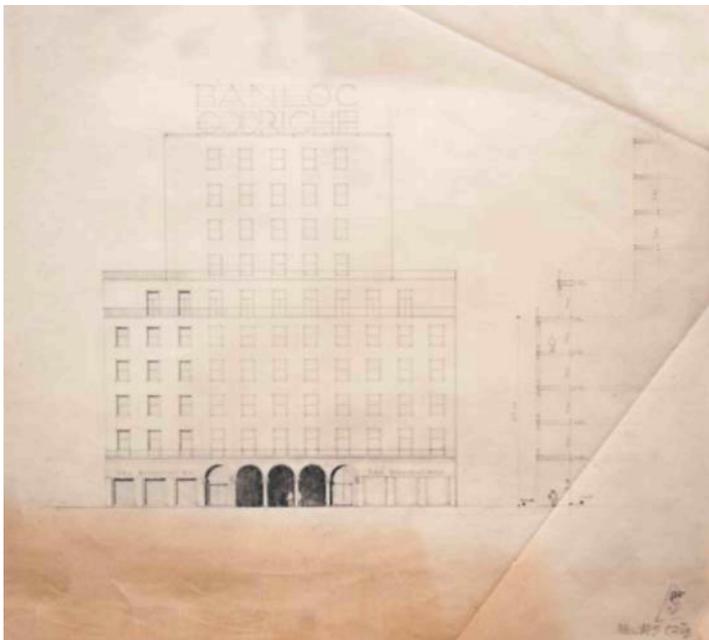
Calea Victoriei, the former Podul Mogoșoaiei Street (Mogosoaiei Bridge), was the first avenue ever built in Bucharest. The original name was given due to the fact that the road, on the north-south axis of the city, was “bridged” to the Mogosoiaia Palace by wooden slabs laying over the beaten land. -*5

The architect selected by the owner was Octav Doicescu, who had designed the Banloc Goodrich factory building in Florești a few years earlier. At the time, administrative offices were needed in Bucharest. The architect worked for three years, trying out various variants of plans and facades, coming up with detailed solutions on the building yard and supervising the works along the way, as shown by the plans kept in the archives of the Union of Romanian Architects - UAR.



Logo - stamp of the architect - * - 1

Drawings drawn by architect Octav Doicescu, the UAR archive: - * 1



The variant which fully used the land at the edge of Calea Victoriei - it was not approved - * 1



Study of perspective - Calea Victoriei (variant) -*1



Color study of the faade towards Calea Victoriei -*1

Located between two properties, between two long blind walls, the office building, with an opening of about 38 m towards the street, is smartly designed in the plan, having the shape of letter "U", in order to provide additional natural light for as many workspaces as possible.

The central part is higher, more secluded from the street, and has Gf + 8 floors that end with an attic. The sides, the arms of the "U", start from the street limit and have Gf + 5 floors, ending at the terrace, with symmetrical façades.

MODERNISM and A MIX OF STYLES

The order, the symmetry, the rhythm of the empty spaces are all elements followed up by the architect when designing the facades. The building is in accordance with the international architecture, but also with the Romanian architecture of the 1940s and it belongs to a trend called "**Modernism**".

Architect Doicescu was a representative of this style, he designed a lot during this period and wrote articles about it in magazines such as "Contimporanul" (1922-1932) and "Simetria" (founded and led by G. M. Cantacuzino together with O. Doicescu, Matila Ghyka, Tudor Vianu, P.E. Miculescu, Marica Cotescu, Haralamb Georgescu). *-6

*"The ideology and formal vocabulary of the Modern Movement are nevertheless adapted to local circumstance, displaying the **specific nuances of Romanian modernism**: thus, the question of cheap housing, of the functionalist town, the social vocation and left-wing views - which represent the core of the original ideology - are much attenuated, their place being taken by the aesthetic debate. The progressist character of Romanian modernism mainly resides in the replacement of the "old aesthetics" with the "new aesthetics", an issue that often expresses, in a very incisive manner, the will of alignment to Western Europe, in clear conflict with the shut-off inside the traditional and idealized agrarian order and orthodox spirituality, both of them hostile to the inevitable modernization of Occidental background. (...) But this ideological transfer of the social into aesthetics does not exclude a **background, unostentatious rationalism**, nevertheless very obvious in the architecture of this period.*

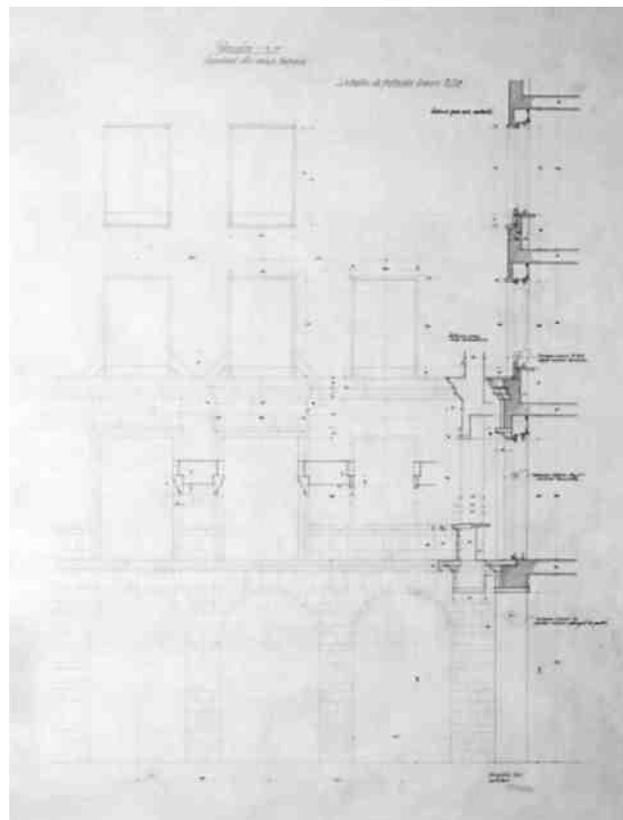
*Romanian modernism (as well as local avant-garde movements, to which it is very attached) attempts to summarize, under the pragmatic sign of immediate applicability, various formal tendencies of the Modern Movement. The result is an elegant architecture, with a reduced experimental character, closer to the moderate modernism of the Parisian architecture of that period (**with obvious Art-Deco influences**), than to the radical lines promoted by neoplasticists, constructivists, the Bauhaus School or Le Corbusier. Rarely, especially in Marcel Ianu's architecture, clear **expressionist** influences are visible. As it developed in time, it the **influence of Italian fascist architecture** became more and more obvious (especially in the architecture of exhibitions designed by Horia Creangă, in Duiliu*

Marcu's monumental architecture, etc).

Because the interest in economic architecture is very low, another formal, defining feature of Romanian modernism is the use of expensive, high-quality materials, which is not typical to the Modern Movement, but which means the constructions will have a remarkable strength in time." -*6

" Modernism constantly pursued the simple line, the clean volume and even the plan built according to the same cold geometry and cut of the right angle: "never has the song of geometry mastered man's feeling more intensely and magnificently. (...) Never has the splendor of a plan's nudity been more consciously used" postulated Marcel Iancu in "Contimporanul". (.....)

Octav Doicescu practices the neoclassical trend, which can be presented as an attempt to modernize the neo-Romanian style, as well as **"lyrical functionalism" – an attempt to "root-in" modernism**, which actually continued, after the interwar period, with the Stalinist style. Thus, this is no longer about a "profession of faith"; At the same time, quite often, the approaches intertwined, no longer preaching the absolute "purity" of the traditional model."
- * 7



Detail of the façade scale 1:20, drawn by architect Octav Doicescu / UAR archive: - * 1

At the Banloc building we can see the "geometry and cut of the right angle" as a feature of Modernism, the expression of the function in the rhythméd façade with large windows, the windfang portico with a succession of 3 or 5 arches, as well as the use of materials of a very high quality (natural stone slabs used on the ground floor and at window frames), the few "Art-Deco" decorations, the elevation of the central part with three more levels, so as to create the impression of importance and dominance, which seems to be of fascist or Stalinist influence, that is exactly the intertwining of styles we mentioned above.

- *6, *7

THE REDCOLOR OF THE FACADE

The unique red color of the initial façade was also used at the North Central Railway Station, with the visible brick (towards the Banu Manta Avenue). It was later studied as a work variant for other projects (the Opera Building).

Note: We do not know the date when the facade was plastered in gray. Probably in the years 1985-1989.

Comparisons – to other buildings, stylistic elements, reinterpretations

Some elements of the architectural language used by Octav Doicescu were common to other buildings designed by him, also resumed, reinterpreted in the Banloc Building. We refer to other office buildings or apartment blocks, all erected in the capital. We can talk about a particular style, with favorite decorative elements which perfected over time.

- In 1932, he designed the headquarters of the Gaz-Electrica Company, in Nicolae Balcescu Street, today 34 Mendeleev Street, Bucharest. Here we find evenly spaced large windows in the façade, natural stone cladding and horizontality marked by cornices.
- In 1937, he designed the project for the headquarters of the former Ministry of Information (National Propaganda) in Wilson Street, a building with arcades at the ground floor and the same rows of high windows. (The building was later used as headquarters of the National Institute of Tourism, later it became the headquarters of the Central Committee of the Union of Communist Youth, and the street was renamed Onești. Today, the building hosts the National Center of Cinematography in D. I. Dobrescu Street, renamed after the well-known interwar Mayor who modernized Bucharest.)

- In 1940, he designed a block of flats at 68 Stirbei Voda Street, cornering the L. Cazzavilan Street. The withdrawn area of the top floor made a comfortable terrace. The frames, the arches of the ground floor, the marking of horizontal registers by cornices, the dimensions of the windows, the blinds, are all similar to the ones he later used in the Banloc building at 218 Calea Victoriei.

- The "North" Central Office of the Telephone Company in Bucharest was built in 1940-1941, at 12 Banu Manta Avenue. In addition to the elements we already mentioned (arches on the ground floor, 5 cornices in this building, high rectangular windows arranged in order and symmetrically, the dividing cornice between certain levels, the withdrawal at the top floor), Arch. Doicescu used a red brick slabs and natural stone frames at the windows, which he later used at the Banloc building. This unusual red color led to many discussions.

- *"Petre Derer, the president of the Union of Romanian Architects, mentioned that, when Doicescu designed the post office building in the Banu Manta Street, covered in red bricks, the authorities in Bucharest criticized their choice of this color. We were at full war with the USSR and red was the color of the bolsheviks, but, despite the outpour of hatred, the post office was not demolished, unlike other buildings."*
<http://octavdoicescu.blogspot.com/2011/02/parintele-cartierului-primaverii.html>

- Between 1943-1946, the administrative building of the "Banloc" Company was designed and erected, on Calea Victoriei, at the same time as another building located nearby, the one in 109 Calea Victoriei, cornering Griviței Street. The latter is an apartment building, decorated with the same stylistic elements. It was designed together with Architect G. M. Cantacuzino. (The building later became the headquarters of the IPROMIN Company, then the Petrom Company Headquarters and is currently being rehabilitated.)

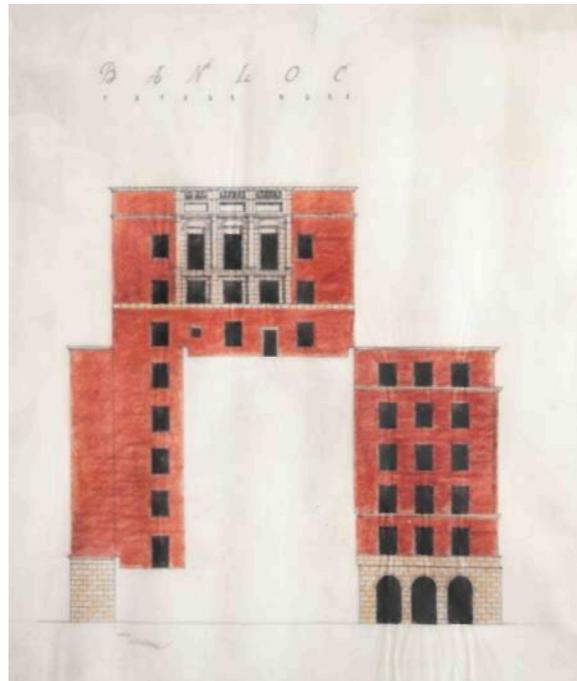
FAÇADE DESCRIPTION

For the facade of the Banloc block, Octav Doicescu used stone slabs in the area of the high ground floor. Then, there follows a cornice, while the upper floors were plastered with a red material, similar to the color of the bricks used in the Central "North" Office in Banu Manta Street.

The architect's son, Andrei Doicescu, said in an interview that this time too, the red color selected by his father led to many discussions. However, its use gave a certain touch to the building, and "the red block", as it was known at the time,

remained in the memory of the people of Bucharest, even now, so many years after a dull, impersonal gray layer was applied over the extremely resistant initial color.

By changing the color, the building lost its uniqueness, and the design of the author was changed.



The north façade, as it was colored by Architect Octav Doicescu, and the color was reproduced exactly in the making of the façade -*1- photographed drawings from the archive of the Union of Romanian Architects, obtained with the support of Architect Rodica Panaitescu.

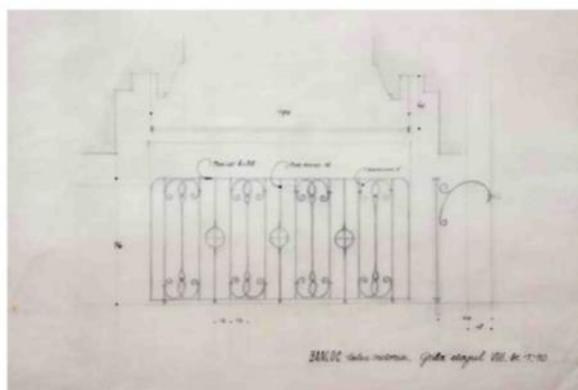
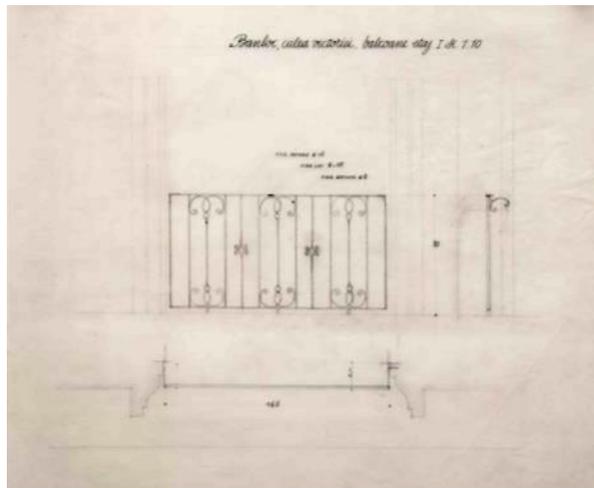
Although the land on which the building is located is not rectangular, the symmetry of the main façade hides this feature. In the plan, the building follows the lateral limits of the property, the two extended wings not being identical in the plan, but only in terms of the outer shell.

There are few decorations and the axes of the lateral buildings are marked by highlighting the central window on the 1st floor. In the central, withdrawn Unit, the few decorations are located on the upper floors, raised by an additional three floors, which emphasize the large scale of the building.

Due to its shape and position in the field, the building has a feeling of stability. One can also assume there was an influence of American architecture, for high buildings, brought here to a Romanian scale.

Inside, the spaces are large, while the structure of pillars and beams makes it possible to have a flexible repartitioning. Everything is made in symmetry, including the position of the two elevators and the two stairs, with a special focus to finishings and details.

The original drawings still exist, being collected in the archive of the Union of Romanian Architects.



Balcony grid details, 1st floor and 7th floor - **see -*1**

Bibliography:

-*5 - The story of a street

<https://www.historia.ro/sectiune/general/articol/povestea-unei-strazi>

"The history of Bucharest is intertwined with that of Calea Victoriei. This was the first paved street in România, where the cultural and political elites used to meet. Just like now, owing a building on this boulevard was a token of one's respectable social status.

The old name of Calea Victoriei is the Mogoșoaia Bridge. It was renamed in 1878, after the Romanian troops, as a result of victory they obtained in the War of Independence, made a triumphant entrance on this main street of the city.

The best known street of the capital owes its existence of Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, who became ruler of Wallachia in 1688. Four years later, Brâncoveanu cut a road that connected his mansion on the shore of Dâmbovița river to the one he had in Mogoșoaia, where will build a magnificent palace in the year 1702.

(...) In 1692, Prince Brâncoveanu ordered for the new road to be covered with wooden boards, resulting the name of Mogoșoaia Bridge. The wood paving system (due to which streets were named "bridges ") is very old in Bucharest: there are mentions about this system as early as the 16th century.

Thick oak boards called "podini" were placed all over the length of the road. They were 8 meters long.

*(...) In 1864, authorities began paving the street with cubic stone brought from as far away as Scotland. Close to the beginning of the First World War, Calea Victoriei was paved with asphalt for the first time." -*5*

*** 6 - modernism** http://www.e-architecture.ro/despre_enciclopedie.php

*** 7- doctoral dissertation: INTERWAR ARCHITECTURE. FROM TRADITION TO THE AVANTGARD, Architect Horia Dinulescu**

https://argument.uauim.ro/f/argument/attachment/ARG3_Dinulescu.pdf

2 - TECHNICAL DATA

a - CADASTRE

The land book extracts **209407 and 209408 from 10/03/2020** identify the land surface and the construction on, the right of administration being held by the NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF THE HOLOCAUST IN ROMANIA ELIE WIESEL, with the address: **218 Calea Victoriei-Plot 1, Bucharest.**

Urban land: **209407**

Surface: in documents = **1494 sqm**, measured surface = **1495 sqm**

Of which was built 209407-C1

Built surface on the ground = **1311 sqm**

Urban land: **209408**

Surface: in documents = **453 sqm**, measured = **455 sqm**

Cadastral number **209407 (previous cadastral number: 17332/1/1)** refers to the front side of the land, adjacent to Calea Victoriei, and consists of the Banloc building from 1946 + the additional building erected in 1968 and the land located in the front, towards the street.

Cadastral number **209408 (previous cadastral number: 17332/1/2)** refers to the backyard of the land, which is registered with the right of easement for two other buildings and a guard booth.

b- URBANISM

Urbanism certificate no. 484/1835344 of 28.04.2020, obtained for the purpose of drafting the documentation needed for the permit to do the construction works of consolidation, for remodeling the structure, updating functions, repairs at the façades, restoration of installations and finishings at current construction, including repairs at the fences.

Approved function = MUSEUM

Pursuant to the urban planning regulations, the PUG (General Urban Plan) phase approved by HCG MB (Decision of the General Council – the Municipality of Bucharest) no. 269 / 21.12.2000, in accordance with the provisions of Law 50/1991 with later amendments and completions, the following conditions were established in terms of technical operation:

- **The building is located in the protected area 16, a symbolic street of the city, Calea Victoriei**, with a maximum level of protection -the architectural-urbanistic, historical and natural environment assets are protected as a whole: the street network, the built portfolio, its urban character and value. Only interventions that preserve and enhance the current assets are allowed.
- **Allowed works:** at ground floor level: trade, public catering, tourism, culture or any other functions intended for the public; at the levels above the ground floor: offices, services, housing (...) The initial uses of the buildings that correspond to the current requirements remain unchanged or it is allowed to return to them. In terms of functionality, the conversion of monument buildings must comply with the following conditions: the function must not entail any change of the exterior architecture or the valuable character / elements of the interior; it must not affect the current vegetation, it must not involve the set-up of additional parking spaces inside the plot or upon the public domain.
- **Prohibited uses:** polluting production activities, entailing a technological hazard or which cause inconvenience by the generated traffic, temporary constructions, storage, parking and garaging vehicles in multi-storey constructions, any embankment works that can cause water leakage on

neighboring plots or works that prevent the evacuation and collection of rain water.

- **The current dimensions and shapes of the plots remain unchanged.**
- **Location of buildings in terms of the alignment:** It is not the case here, since no other buildings are erected.
- **Parking of vehicles:** It is allowed only inside the plot.
- **It is forbidden:** to have large glazed surfaces (curtain wall), imitations of materials or the improper use of materials (ceramic plywood or shiny metal surfaces), as well as the use of strident colors.
- **Maximum urban indicators allowed in the area:**

POT = 80% (Percent of Land Occupation)

CUT = 5 (Land Use Coefficient)

c- SITUATION OF THE BUILDING AT THE DATE OF THE THE SKETCH TO SCALE -

March-May 2020, in terms of architecture

FINISHINGS

Inside:

- In the walls and ceilings, we found cement plasters, loam and paints
- On the floorings: at the ground floor, in the entrance area, there is a marble floor mixed with rubbed mosaic. At the halls of the upper floors, there is a mix of Roman mosaic and rubbed mosaic; steps made of natural stone at the two main, symmetrically placed stairways; parquet in most office spaces, gritstone flooring, a leveled thin slab upon which some linoleum or carpet was probably glued at one point.

Outside:

- The Banloc building was covered with (light gray) stones at the ground floor. The window frames and cornices were also made of natural stone. The initial plaster, made of cement and painted in red, lasted well for about 40 years. Later on, sometime between 1980-1990, it was decided to change the initial color, so that the building is currently gray. At the upper floors, where the later added plaster deteriorated sharply, the initial color is also visible. The joinery is made of metal at the ground floor and of wood at the upper floors. The windows have wooden shutters that roll up in the boxes at the top. At the 9th floor, the attic has a wooden structure and tin roof. The area is heavily damaged and has missing parts, so that rain water enters the building.
- The terraces are covered with rubbed mosaic tiles.
- The Gf + 5F building, located in the back, erected in 1968: Gray plaster upon the facade and metal joinery. An additional emergency stairway was attached to the adjoining area, connected to a walkway on the 1st floor. The terrace over this unit is non-walkable and has a bituminous, felt-like cover.

The building was found to be unsafe after the 1977 earthquake and was partially consolidated in 1985-1986, up to floor 6, including it.

According to the witnesses (Stefan Totorcea, engineer of heating installations, who worked at the IPCM at that time, when he uncover the pillars and ceilings of the ground floor, he found routes for wall heating installations.

NOTE: Having been unused for a long time, about 15 years, the building in 218 Calea Victoriei has been subject to a process of physical disrepair, being exposed to the elements because a few windows and parts of the roof are missing, while water penetration meant that various areas and certain construction parts, especially the finishings, were damaged. A very large amount of dust has accumulated during this period, being visible in all areas. The building still contains obsolete furniture, papers and other items that were abandoned by the former users. All this waste material needs to be disposed of properly.

d- OTHER SPECIFICATIONS

LIST OF HISTORICAL MONUMENTS

According to the current list of historical monuments in Bucharest,

The property is not classified in this category.

<https://patrimoni.ro/monumente-istorice/lista-monumentelor-historical>

LISTS OF TECHNICALLY ASSESSED BUILDINGS IN TERMS OF SEISMIC RISK- updated on 17.03.2020

<https://amccrs-pmb.ro/liste-imobile>

The building located in 218 Calea Victoriei does not appear in this list.

THE NEARBY BUILDING - It should be mentioned that the nearby building does appear as expertized in 2014 and was classified in class 1 of seismic risk. The building at 220 Calea Victoriei is attached (to the building at 218) to the left of the blind wall at the heel and has a height standard of Ug + Gf + 4F, having been erected in 1938-1945. It can be found at entry 341 in the list.



Photos from the attic at the time of the survey (March-May 2020)

e- SURFACES – according to measurements and sketches to scale

Floor	Unit A	Unit B	TOTAL / floor
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Underground 500 sqm = this is a partial surface of the basement, that belongs the beneficiary. The rest of the basement has another owner.

Gr. floor	998 sqm	283 sqm	1281 sqm
Floor 1	928 sqm	263 sqm	1191 sqm
Floor 2	928 sqm	263 sqm	1191 sqm
Floor 3	928 sqm	263 sqm	1191mp
Floor 4	928 sqm	263 sqm	1191 sqm
Floor 5	903 sqm	263 sqm	1166 sqm
Floor 6	361 sqm	43 sqm	404 sqm
Floor 7	320 sqm	-	320 sqm
Floor 8	320 sqm	-	320 sqm
Attic	133 sqm	-	133 sqm

TOTAL 6747 sq.m. 1641 sq.m. 8888 sq.m.

Total built area Unit A + Unit B + partial basement = 8888 sq.m.

Built-up area on the soil (footprint) = 1281 sqm

Front yard = 162 sqm from the sketch to scale measurements

Backyard = 455 sqm according to the cadastre