An Image for the Nation:

Architecture of the Balkan Countries at 19th Century Universal Exhibitions in Paris

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Abstract

In this research I analyse the architecture of the Balkan nations at four 19th century universal exhibitions in Paris as well as their reception by the French audience. I argue that by way of participating and designing "national" architecture, the countries from the Balkans had to pose new questions and find quick answers related to national representation, architecture and cultural heritage. None of these were truly defined at that time so with this occasion a big impetus was given to the development of national styles, to a number of architect's careers and to researches on the historical architectural heritage.

The participating countries, Romania, Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria, promoted themselves with national pavilions, restaurants and other decorations inspired by their most prized historical monuments, all with the purpose of promoting their nation. However, even if the goal was to assert their unique features, they often displayed similar constructions, inspired by the common heritage of the peninsula. Another paradox represents the French perceptions, often contradicting the official national discourse of the Balkan nations. They saw these countries as a group, drew many parallels with the Orient and even sometimes criticized their pavilions.

I finally show that a multitude of actors were involved in the process of designing a national architecture, French and locals, making it an exchange hub, in which ideas and influences spread with ease and had long term repercussions for the Balkan cultural landscape.

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Introduction

In 1866 the young Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alexandru Odobescu, faced the biggest challenge of his life: He was named the organiser of the Romanian section at the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1867. His country was a young one too. It had been Romania only for one year and it had yet to gain what everyone dreamt of: Independence from the Ottoman Empire. But this was less important now because Odobescu had the chance of representing Romania as an independent state in front of the whole world. He even obtained the right to have a national pavilion, a first among the Balkan nations.

With the characteristic enthusiasm for the Romanian national cause, that was to guide most of his career, Odobescu set to work. He quickly hired his old friend from the time of his studies in Paris, the architect Ambroise Baudry, to build the Romanian pavilion. He sent him large drawings and photographs of the most famous monuments in the country to be imitated for the pavilion. One of these, the monastery of Curtea de Argeş, was also reproduced in miniature in the main exhibition building. Odobescu knew that these types of ancient monuments were a way to display a glorious unique past of a country that had survived Ottoman rule. His surprise must have been great when the pavilion was seen by the French audience as rather an expression of an Oriental culture, thus connecting it directly with the Ottomans, and in one publication it was even compared to a mosque. What is more, the pavilion itself was located among the Oriental countries section and close to the "exotic" part of the exhibition.[1] Of course, Odobescu was aware

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[1] The Romanian Pavilion at the Parisian Exhibition of 1867 and its reception is described in detail in Chapter 3

of the long Western tradition of orientalising the Balkan Peninsula but he surely did not expect that even the carefully designed "traditional Romanian" architecture was to be seen in this way.

The episode described above was not unique, but rather the first case in a series of perceptions of Balkan national architecture at universal exhibitions. As we will see, Western views were the result of a mixture between old stereotypes, different perception of architectural forms and the French mediated exhibition. After all, the architect was French and even if the Romanians decided what monuments to present as sources of inspiration, the resulting building was still his work. Therefore the way national architecture was conceived was a result of a complex process that would lead to various often contradictory results.

In light of this, my aim is to address the question how a variety of actors created a national architecture for the Balkan countries at the Parisian universal exhibitions. They were French and local officials, French and local architects who had to obey strict rules and work in a team to come up with a design that would satisfy both the participating countries and the French organisers. This collective effort posed new questions the Balkan nations had to ask which in turn reverberated into the cultural and architectural landscape of the Peninsula.

I shall take into account only the universal exhibitions of the 19th century, where some or all the Balkan countries participated with a national pavilion. These were held in Paris every eleven years: in 1867, 1878, 1889 and 1900. The countries analysed from the region are those that obtained a great degree of autonomy or indeed were independent at various points in this period: Greece, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria.[2] I will only exclude Bosnia, which had a national pavilion in 1900 but not organised by itself, as it was still part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

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[2] Montenegro was also an independent nation but did not take part at all in any world exhibition until the First World War.

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I have chosen 19th century Paris as the location of my research because it was only at the world exhibitions located in Paris that several or all the Balkan countries took part, thus making a truly comparative perspective possible. In addition the type of architecture that employs shapes from different historical buildings, and tries to assert its "national" character by appealing to historical heritage and "traditional" culture, is only specific to world fairs until the First World War. The Parisian exhibitions were also preeminent in terms of visitors, expenditures and world wide popularity.

The region I have hitherto referred to in my research has been the object of many terminological debates. For the purpose of this thesis I will refer to "Balkans" as the area now considered in Europe, which had been a part of the Ottoman Empire almost uninterrupted from the 14th to the 19th centuries. Its common characteristics acquired during this period, the backbone also for other studies of the Balkans, are the main reasons behind my comparative approach. The region defined by its common Ottoman heritage helps me above all to explain the French common view and the various similarities in the way the countries presented themselves.

Here a further terminological issue needs to be clarified. When I am referring to "national styles" in architecture, I am not using the common sense of the word "style" that defines various constructions employing certain established forms. But it is a style created ideologically. It was seen and promoted as "national" by the countries in the Balkans and by the organisers at the exhibitions. In the same manner, the architectural forms employed are "national" only in discourse and not in reality. In addition "national styles" were more an umbrella term for the same phenomenon in different countries. The styles themselves have different names in each of the

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Balkan nations. Thus, in Romania it has been called "Neoromanian"", in Serbia, "Serbian baroque" or "Serbo-byzantine" and in Bulgaria, "Byzantine". However, all of these styles were defined ideologically to represent the nation and especially at the World Exhibition were defined as "national".[3]

A first implication of my research is the obvious similarity between the architecture exhibited by these countries, a fact noticed also by the French. Proof, perhaps, of the common cultural and architectural heritage of the Balkans, which was interpreted as "national" by the new states in the peninsula. This led to the paradoxical architecture exhibited at the exhibition in 1900, where Greece, Serbia and Romania all had national pavilions in the shape of a Byzantine church, despite the fact that these buildings were intended to be, above all, unique constructions which would assert one's national identity and cultural diversity on the Rue des Nations. Here one underlying issuewas the Oriental architectural heritage that was present throughout the Peninsula, denied by the new nation-states, but employed nevertheless by local and foreign architects as something particularly suitable for national representation at universal exhibitions. The Balkan - Orient connection was made further more direct by the location assigned for tBalkan pavilions in the exhibition space, the descriptions expressed in the French publications on the event and the selection of architects whose work experience in Oriental countries made them supposedly ideal candidates to also create Balkan countries' national architecture.

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[3] Two scholars dealing with the Balkan architecture have also recently used "national styles" with the same meaning: Carmen Popescu in *Le style national Roumain. Construire une nation à travers l'architecture. 1881-1945*, (Presses Universitaires de Rennes and Simetria, 2004) and Bratislav Pantelić in "Nationalism and Architecture: The Creation of a National Style in Serbian Architecture and Its Political Implications", *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (Mar., 1997), 16-41.

One must not forget that these exhibitions were not taking place in a closed exclusivist environment. It was rather the opposite. In a time where means of communication were rapidly progressing, developments exhibited at the exhibitions had influence in every part of the world.. Therefore, it would seem pertinent to allude to a hitherto almost unnoticed fact: the connection between exhibition architecture and the development of the national styles in the Balkan countries. The fact is supported above all by yet another paradox: the French organisers at the universal exhibitions demanded from the participating countries that their architecture be presented in "a national style". However, a style of this sort had not yet been defined in the Balkans. As a consequence, local and French architects, with the help of local and French organisers, teamed up in an essential collaborative effort to create the first examples of what a national style in architecture could be like. The most conspicuous example of the connection with the architectural developments "back home" was the case of the Romanian architect Ion Mincu. Heworked for his country's architectural representation at two universal exhibitions and would create, what subsequently has been seen as, "the Romanian style" in architecture. Mincu's contribution and his interactions with the universal exhibitions have been overlooked in the studies on his career so far, even if he is one of the most well-known architects in his country.[4] A similar situation can also be seen in other cases and this is why my research will be an important contribution to the study of a number of other architects' careers.

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[4] A notable exception is the work on Ambroise Baudry, the architect for the Romanian pavilion in 1867 and the Serbian one in 1900: Marie-Laure Crosnier Leconte and Mercedes Volait, *L'Egypte d'un Architecte: Ambroise Baudry, 1838-1906*, (Paris: Somogy Editions d'art, 1998). The case of the French architects specialised in Oriental architecture is described in Lorraine Decléty, "L'architecte orientaliste", *Livraisons d'histoire de l'architecture*, n°5, (2003), 55-65.

By analysing architecture's entanglement with Balkan nationalism, I will also provide a fresh approach on nation building studies in the region. If the causes of nationalism, its needs and obstacles have been studied for some time, the actual nationalistic discourse in each specific country has only recently become the focus of scholars.[5] Thus, my research on national architecture will contribute to this emerging field.

The subject of my research has only been touched upon in academic literature and this is why I am counting chiefly on primary sources to develop my conclusions. Research dealing with national representation have until recently been embedded in the teleological and Marxist trends of the pre 1989 period. Comparative studies are almost non-existent regarding national architectural styles in the Balkans, let alone their connection with the universal exhibitions. A pioneer in this domain has been the Parisian-based historian of architecture Carmen Popescu.[6] Important have also been the few studies regarding national architecture in each of the Balkan countries, where the exhibition architecture remains only briefly analysed.[7]

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[5] See as examples *Discourses of Collective Identity in Central and Southeast Europe (1770-1945)*, Vol. 1-4, (Budapest: CEU Press, 2006 – 2009); Hannes Grandits, Nathalie Clayer, and Robert Pichler, eds. *Conflicting Loyalties in the Balkans: The Great Powers, the Ottoman Empire and Nation-building*. (IB Tauris, 2011); Raymond Detrez, and Pieter Plas, eds. *Developing cultural identity in the Balkans: convergence vs. divergence*. (Peter Lang, 2005).

[6] She has two important articles on the issue that provided the starting point for my research: "Un patrimoine de l'identité : l'architecture à l'écoute des nationalismes", *Études balkaniques*, no. 12, 2005 and "Le paradoxe de l'orientalisme balkanique : entre géopolitique et quêtes identitaires. Lecture à travers le cas roumain", in Nabila Oulebsir et Mercedes Volait (ed.), *L'Orientalisme architectural entre imaginaires et savoirs*, (Paris: Picard, 2009), 253-272. She is also the author of the seminal work on the Romanian national style, unfortunately available only in French: *Le style....* A sole study is entirely dedicated to a Balkan construction at the World Exhibition, namely the Romanian pavilion in 1867: Marie Laure Crosnier Leconte, "Du savoir archeologique a la reconstruction de fantasie: Ambroise Baudry a Troesmis e a L'Exposition universelle de 1867 a Paris", in Carmen Popescu, Ioana Teodorescu (eds.), *Genius loci: national et régional en architecture; entre histoire et pratique = national and regional in architecture; between history and practice*, (Bucharest: Simetria, 2002).

[7] In this field there is also a need for further studies, as with the sole exception of Romania, the literature is also scarce. The most well-known studies are for Greece: Eleni Bastéa, *The Creation of Modern Athens: Planning the Myth*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Neni Panourgiá, "Colonizing the ideal: neoclassical articulations and European modernities, Angelaki", *Journal of the theoretical humanities*, vol. 9, nr 2, august 2004. For Serbia: Bratislav Pantelić, *Nationalism and Architecture: The Creation of a National Style in Serbian Architecture and Its Political Implications,* Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Vol. 56, No. 1 (Mar.,

I have found useful works that analyse the architecture and representation of the Oriental and Latin countries at the world fairs, among which several parallels can be drawn.[8] The two books mentioned here set important precedents for analysing the architectural representation of other cultures at these Exhibitions. Zeynep Çelik described the Oriental pavilions and the architects involved with an accurate eye of an art historian but did not dwell at all on the institutional limitations and the variety of influences that led to the creation of this architecture. Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo offered a detailed account of Mexico's participation at the world expositions until the Second World War. However the author is detailing the architecture of only one pavilion before the World War 1, of Mexico from Paris 1889, and thus his endeavour is paralleling mine in a very limited way.

In this thesis I will also add a new dimension to Balkan studies where publications echoing Said's Orientalism by analysing mainly literary works have come to define the region in terms of Western perceptions and influences.[9] A glance at the Balkans through the Universal Exhibitions, however, offers examples of mutual influences, negotiations and entanglements in a far more nuanced view.

1997). 16-41. For Romania the seminal work is Popescu, *Le style.* See also Shona Kallestrup, *Art and Design in Romania 1866 – 1927. Local and International Aspects of the Search for National Expression*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006). For Bulgaria only some elements of its national style have been analysed: Mary Neuburger, "Housing the Nation: Facades and Furnishings in the Bulgaro-Ottoman Revival House", *Centropa*, no.2, (2008), 147 – 159; Nikolai Voukov, "Le monastère de Rila: incarnation du passé national bulgare", *Études Balkaniques*, 12, (2005), 177-179.

[8] Zeynep Çelik, *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth-Century World's Fairs,* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1992); Timothy Mitchell, "Egypt at the Exhibition" in *Colonising Egypt*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988; Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, Mexico at the World's Fairs: Crafting a Modern Nation, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996. Christiane Demeulenaere-Douyère, "Expositions internationales et image nationale: les pays d'Amérique latine entre pittoresque « indigène » et modernité proclamée", *Diacronie*, No. 18, forthcoming (2014).

[9] Besides Todorova's seminal work, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford University Press, 1997)*,* see also Vesna Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998). Focusing mainly on Russia and Eastern Europe is Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

Finally, my research deals with notion of symbolism, identity and self-identity and language thus could be seen as part of the "cultural turn" that moved away from traditional historical tools like statistics, economic trends, institutions, and structures and employs other research methods offered by other disciplines within the social sciences.[10] Within world exhibition historiography,the latter topics have been explored in works with rather limited impact,[11] while new approaches have enriched domains like post-colonial studies and art history.[12]

The main primary sources I have relied upon are the archives, created by the French organisers, kept in Paris. These comprise of the correspondence between the French organisers and the local committee and with the French ambassador in the concerned countries. Such correspondence contains important instructions given to the participants as well as various issues raised by them. Here all the plans and drawings of the constructions made at the exhibitions can also be found. In addition, I have investigated the Romanian Foreign Affairs archive where the correspondence between the Romanian ambassador to Paris and the local organizing committee offers valuable insight.

[10] Jürgen Kocka and Haupt, Heinz-Gerhard "Comparison and Beyond: Traditions, Scope, and Perspectives of Comparative History." in Jürgen Kocka and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt (eds.), *Comparative and Transnational History. Central European Approaches and New Perspectives* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2009), 17 - 18. For general works on cultural turn see Terrence J. McDonalds, *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1996); Peter Burke, *Varieties of cultural history*, (Cornell University Press, 1997).
[11] Linda Aimone and Carlo Olmo, *Les expositions universelles: 1851-1900,* (Paris, Belin, 1993); Patricia Mainardi, Art and politics of the second empire. *The Universal Expositions of 1855 and 1867*, (London, Bath Press, 1989); Laurențiu Vlad, *Imagini ale identității naționale. România la expozițiile universale și internaționale de la Paris, 1867 – 1937*, [Imagines of national identities: Romania at the Universal and International Exhibitions of Paris, 1867 – 1937], (Iași: Institutul European, , 2007); Ibid., *Pe urmele „Belgiei Orientului": România la expozițiile universale sau internaționale de la Anvers, Burxelles, Liege și Gand: (1894 – 1935*) [Following the "Oriental Belgium": Romania at the Universal and International Expositions of Anvers, Burxelles, Liege and Gand], (Bucharest: Nemira, 2004).
[12] Çelik, *Displaying;* Timothy Mitchell, , *The World as Exhibiton*, *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* Vol. 31, No. 2, (1989), 217-236.

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In addition to the archival material consulted, the official publications of the time, generated by both the French organisers as book, journals, statistics, and the participating countries in the form of presentation booklets have been crucial to my research. Among such primary published source material the French press, were essential to understanding how the Balkan constructions were received in Paris.

By looking at these sources, adding also an analysis of the building themselves as well as the architects themselves, a complex picture has emerged regarding how Balkan architecture was created and the multiple overtones that come with it.

Throughout the current thesis, I will limit myself to conclusions that are only taken from architecture and the meanings ascribed to it. More general considerations related to the representational discourse employed for the Balkan countries should take into account the larger exhibition apparatus that involved innumerable exhibits among which one can count various products, myths, traditions, crafts, industries, geographical elements, and so on. My work on architecture can also be seen as part of this larger context on which parallel comparative research can be successfully conducted in other domains. However the national pavilions had a certain visibility and expressed neatly the aspirations of young countries. As Çelik remarked:

> The pavilions erected on the grounds of the universal expositions raised serious and complex questions about cultural definition and the role of architecture in representing cultures. As temporary installations, they could be experimental and ask these questions boldly. And, because of the high visibility of the national pavilions and the attention they received in contemporary publications, both scholarly and popular, their regional and cross-cultural impact was disproportionate to the short life of the buildings themselves.[13]

I shall begin the thesis with a theoretical chapter in which, after I survey the peculiarities of nation-building in the region, I shall explain the main concepts behind my approach with an

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[13] Çelik, *Displaying,* 137.

emphasis on "relational" or "entangled" histories, which I believe are the best suited to capture the various dialogues and exchanges involved in the creation of exhibition architecture. The following chapter has again two parts. First, I shall address the issue of symbolism in architecture and I shall exemplify how architecture can acquire national meaning in the case of Romania, on which I have the best access to local sources. Then following subchapter, which deals briefly with the national architectural styles in the Balkans, but is essential to the understanding of exhibition architecture and how it meant to represent "the nation".

The research part of my thesis begins from chapter three where before I quickly survey how some ideas and stereotypes about the Balkans have developed, I embark on the analysis of Balkan countries' architecture at the Parisian universal exhibitions of the 19th century. The final chapter is pivotal to the argument, as the amount of information on the largest exhibition of that time, the one in 1900, allows a more thorough analysis.

Thus, my research and thesis argument concludes with a study of the dynamic relations between the Balkans and the Western World seen at the world exhibitions of Paris. Threaded throughout the argument is the examination of the tension between the images created by the west and one's own perception of the displayed image.

Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework

a) A Comparative, Transnational and Relational Approach

My research is foremost positioned in the world of Universal Exhibitions, an exchange hub where nations displayed "their" culture at the same time and place, in competition but also mutually influencing each other. The connections created are of utmost importance and this is why in my research I am dealing with what has been called the study of networks or the "relational" approaches.[14] At the same time, my approach is comparative, necessary for analysing the countries' participation at the World Exhibitions. In the Balkan context, comparison between nations means revealing similarities, shared cultural heritage and unrecognised past relations that in turn lead to a strong transnational orientation. In the following pages, I will briefly explore the concepts of comparative, transnational and relational history applied to my research, and I will argue that it is a case of combining all these theoretical frameworks, in line with what some have recently advocated.[15]

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[14] For networks study see Philipp Ther, "Comparisons, Cultural Transfers, and the Study of Networks: Toward a Transnational History of Europe", in Haupt and Kocka (eds.), *Central European Approaches and Perspectives* (New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2009), 204 - 225. The term "relational" approaches has been used in Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann. "Beyond Comparison: Histoire Croisée and the Challenge of Reflexivity." *History and Theory* 45, no. 1 (2006): 30-50: 31.

[15] "It is the task of the future to better combine comparative and entanglement history", Jürgen Kocka and Haupt, Heinz-Gerhard "Comparison and Beyond: Traditions, Scope, and Perspectives of Comparative History." in Jürgen Kocka and Haupt, Heinz-Gerhard (eds.), *Comparative and Transnational History. Central European Approaches and New Perspectives* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2009): 21. An idea also expressed in Hartmut Kaelble, "Between Comparison and Transfers – and What Now? A French-German Debate" in Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka (eds.), *Comparative and Transnational History*, (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2009).

Since the mid-1990s, the orientation towards a transnational and entangled history has been built upon a criticism of comparative approaches.[16] Moving away from a focus on fixed units of analysis, usually nation states, the new approaches have stressed the importance of exchanges, influences and transformations. Consequently, comparison has been seen as a method highly selective, based on a too mechanistic framework which also reinforces the nation states as historical actors.[17] These critiques were positioned against a trend most visible in the German milieu, where comparison was used to better clarify a single unit by looking only at a limited number of elements from others, a methodology that has been called "asymmetrical comparison".[18] However, a comparison done on equal footing can actually lead to a transnational approach, where "one's own national history" appears not so unique, but rather similar to that of the others.[19] This has been the case in my research, where, through a comparative perspective of the Balkan nations, I explained the common cultural heritage which led to similarities in architecture and in their presentation by the French at the Universal Exhibitions. This is also why I will try not to lean towards an "asymmetrical comparison", meaning a study of the best known case, the Romanian participation, with the added advantage of offering a common transnational view on the Balkan Peninsula.

In addition, my project responds to other critiques that have made comparative approaches "a minority" in historical studies.[20] By comparing actors through one phenomenon,

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[16] The seminal text for this critique is Michell Espagne, "Sur les limites du comparatisme en histoire culturelle", *Genese*, 1994, 112 – 121.

[17] Phillip Ther, "Beyond the Nation: The Relational Basis of a Comparative History of Germany and Europe.", *Central European History,* vol. 36, no. 1 (2003), 45-73.

[18] The debates around the German *Sonderweg* are the best illustration of this. See Jurgen Kocka, "Asymmetrical Historical Comparison: the Case of the German 'Sonderweg'," *History and Theory* 38 (1999): 40-51.

[19] Kaelble, "Between Comparison", 37.

[20] The following critiques of comparative endeavours are taken from Kocka, "Comparison and Beyond" *History and Theory* 42, (2003), 41 – 42. See also Koka, Haupt, "Comparison and Beyond", 13 - 15.

the Universal Exhibition, I avoid the increasing dependence on secondary sources, which often comes with comparing more and more cases. In my project I will focus on the documents created by the organisers of the Exhibitions and by French viewers, as I was able to directly access both types of sources.

Comparing participations at the World Exhibitions also means moving beyond the isolation process of the units compared, which would be inherent in any classical comparison. In fact, it is one of my main arguments that the process of creating architecture for the World Exhibitions lies in the interconnectedness and entanglement between the actors, the French organisers and the participants. Thus, I will pass from comparison to a study of networks and back.

Another critique brought to comparing stresses the tension between the synchronic and the diachronic logic, as any comparative approach must "freeze its objects in time" even if dealing with transformation over a certain period.[21] But in my research this "freezing" comes naturally at World Exhibitions, where countries had to present themselves or be presented at a certain fixed period. At the same time, I also address the diachronic dimension by following the various transformations at four exhibitions, along most of the long 19th century.

It has also been pointed out how comparison brings forth a fixed, unbending viewpoint, which in my case could be identified as the French perspective on the architecture of the Balkan countries.[22] Building on this, the advocates of more recent historical methods felt the need for a constant switch of viewpoints, and for paying special attention to cases of "intercrossing of points

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[21] Werner, Zimmermann, "Beyond Comparison", 35. See also Kocka, Haupt, "Comparison and Beyond", 16.
[22] Kocka, "Comparison", 41.

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of view".[23] My research illustrates such a case when the perspective of the Balkan countries comes in line with the French desire, even though that was often contrary to the nation building discourses in the Balkans.[24] Besides, I often tried to describe the other side too, meaning the participating countries and how they saw their presentation. But even if I will constantly switch points of view, an analysis from the French perspective is part of my main argument, especially considering that there is limited information regarding the participations at the World Exhibitions in the Balkan states, and a future project starting from this standpoint would encounter difficulties regarding the availability of sources.[25]

Another argument against comparative perspective is related to the isolation and selection of units in order to make them comparable. Indeed, one cannot compare say a Romanian restaurant with a presentation of the Laurium silver mines in Greece, even if both were displayed at the World Exhibition of 1889. But the architecture, as one of the main media of self-representation, is suitable for a comparative exercise, while at the same time providing an obvious limit: the selection of only a part from a more complex representational process at a World Exhibition. However, following postmodern appeals to constant reflexivity on these selection processes, I will also refer to the larger context, and when I have the opportunity, I will also consider other representational strategies.[26] An important example is again the Romanian

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[23] Werner, Zimmermann, "Beyond Comparison" 40 - 41.

[24] See the case of "self-colonisation" presented in my research and theorised in Alexander Kiossev, "The Self-Colonising Cultures", in Dimitri Ginev and Francis Sejersted (eds.), *Cultural Aspects of the Modernization Process*, (Oslo: TMV, 1996).

[25] This is the situation even for the Romanian participation in World Exhibitions, although I did a thoroughly archival research in Bucharest. The few works written from this standpoint have ended up merely reproducing facts from the official publications of the Romanian commissions at the Exhibitions. See for example Laurenţiu Vlad, *Imagini ale identitatii nationale. Romania la expozitiile universale si internationale de la Paris* (Iaşi: Insititul European 2007) and *Pe urmele Belgiei Orientului,* (Bucharest: Nemira, 2004).

[26] Among the appeals on reflexivity see Monica Juneja and Margarit Pernau, "Lost in Translation? Transcending Boundaries in Comparative History" in Kocka and Haupt (eds.), *Comparative and Transnational History*, 108 – 110; Werner, Zimmermann, *Beyond Comparison*, 48 – 49; Kocka, Haupt, "Comparison and Beyond...", 14.

restaurant in 1889, where, in the eyes of the French, the musicians and the food were more visible that the architecture. None the less, reflexivity is required in establishing the criteria for constituting the units of comparison. In this sense, my project can be seen as a continuous reflection on the constructed nature of the Balkan states and its high degree of randomness.

A possible critique of my project could be related to the typological undertaking: as I am constantly looking for typologies of Balkan architecture at World Exhibitions, the risk of over-generalisation or of leaving multiple aspects aside is always present.[27] But I consider that potential future debates around this issue could only be useful for an under-researched area, as the national architectural styles in the Balkans still are.

The comparative and transnational framework can be seen as a background serving to analyse the relational processes at the World Exhibitions. In fact, recent theoretical works have given a relational focus on the transnational approach, in an attempt to distance themselves from a more direct macro-historical or regional approach. Accordingly, transnational should mean a "level that exists in interaction with the others, producing its own logic with feedback effects".[28] This also applies to my research, in the sense that the transnational level at the World Exhibitions is developing in the relations between the French organisers and the concerned Balkan nations. It is an indispensable tool in assessing how these countries were received and presented. In fact, one of my arguments is that the process of creating an architecture representing the nation "reveals a network of dynamic interrelations".[29] Intertwined with this is the shared architectural

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[27]Koka and Haupt, "Comparison and Beyond...", 7. Bernhard Ebbinghaus, *Comparing Welfare State Regimes: Are Typologies an Ideal or Realistic Strategy?,* Paper presented at European Social Policy Analysis Network, (Edinburgh, UK: 2012).

[28] Werner, Zimmermann, *Beyond Comparison,* 43.

[29] Ibid.

heritage of the Balkan Peninsula, which has been selected and used in various ways, both by foreigners and by local architects. With this complex web of relations, my research is once again coming close to concepts like "entangled history" or the history of transfers.[30]

These new methodological developments have been influential and have enriched the field of postcolonial studies.[31] Their main assumption, that the influences of Western Europe were not so straightforward, but far more nuanced, producing dialogue and negotiations, can also be identified in my research.[32] In fact, the focus on relations and dialogues, in line with the principles of entangled history, has helped post-colonial studies to move beyond the one-dimensional perspective of Said's *Orientalism*.[33] Todorova and others, paralleling Said, have shown how the image of the Balkans was constructed by the West, using mainly literary examples.[34] But by stressing the different entanglements and dialogues between Balkan peoples and the West, the World Exhibitions are a good opportunity to "give a voice" to the locals, and to add a new dimension to Balkan studies. In other words, the focus is no longer on the unidirectional export of European science and technology but on situations "which investigate complex transfer processes in specific historical contexts."[35] This is the methodology underlining Çelik's research on Oriental countries at the World Exhibitions. She noticed how "European

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[30] More about these methodological trends in Werner, Zimmermann, *Beyond Comparison*, 31. See also Wolfgang Schmale, Cultural Transfer, EGO; Hartmut Kaelble, "Between Comparison and Transfers - and what now?", in Haupt and Kocka, *Comparative and Transnational History*.

[31] See Robert Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001).

[32] See a critique of the Europeanization process by Sebastian Conrad, "Double Marginalization: A plea for a transnational perspective on German history" in Haupt and Kocka, *Comparative and Transnational History*, 56.

[33] Juneja, Pernau, "Lost in Translation?", 116.

[34] Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Vesna Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998). Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

[35] Veronika Lipphardt, Ludwig, David, "Knowledge Transfer and Science Transfer", in *European History Online (EGO),* 2011-12-12. URL: http://www.ieg-ego.eu/lipphardtv-ludwigd-2011-en [02.04.2014].

paradigms were not simplistically appropriated; they were often filtered through a corrective process, which reshaped them according to self-visions and aspirations."[36]

A further consequence emerges from the parallel with the "real" European colonies together with a stress on exchanges: a more flexible concept of Europe, one not defined by national and political borders but seen "as a space of communication and interaction", that continually opens up, integrates and excludes.[37] This type of network studies is particularly suitable in a research about the World Exhibitions.

b) Nation-Building in the Balkans

My research is organically intertwined with the study of nation-building process in the Balkans by way of two parallel phenomena. First, for Balkan countries, the national representation at the World Exhibitions was a way to assert themselves as nation-states. Thus, they tried to support this by defining and promoting certain "characteristics" which would constitute a nation. A country was supposed to have a glorious history and a rich culture, demonstrated above all by ancient monuments. Expressing this was the role of the national architecture inspired by the most glorious constructions on its territory. Second, part of the nation-building process is also the creation of the national architectural styles in the Balkans on which, as one of my main arguments goes, the architecture at the World Exhibition has been deeply influential. Throughout the peninsula, some architectural forms were seen as "national", were

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[36] Zeynep Çelik, *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth-Century World's Fairs,* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1992), 11.
[37] A call made by Ther, "Comparisons", 215.

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used in public buildings, and were promoted by the state as part of the official ideology. Consequently, as a relevant background to my topic, I will sketch some of the features of nationalisms in the Balkans, as described by some of the most influential theorists on the topic.

In general, nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe has been described by way of a derogatory comparison with the Western European one. This has been the case ever since Ernest Gellner wrote about a "less prepared" population who would be in need of a "forceful and assertive cultural engineering".[38] This idea has led to a very popular form of binary opposition, of which the most famous distinction is between a "civic" nationalism for the West and an "ethnic" one for Eastern Europe.[39] Echoing it are the works of Hans Kohn, who considers that in the Balkans "the nationalism grew against the existing state" as "the frontiers of a state and of a nation were rarely the same", as opposed to the West, where nationalism would have been applied by the political elites on already existing frontiers.[40] Another cliché states that in Central and Eastern Europe ethnic groups "lacked their own nobility, political unit or continuous literary tradition", as opposed to the West.[41] Hugh Seton Watson sees the East-West opposition as one between old and new nations, the former having "a national consciousness or a national identity before the appearance of nationalism".[42] This is why the new nations would need intellectuals to

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[38] Ernest Gellner, *Națiuni și naționalism. Noi perspective asupra trecutului,*[Nations and Nationalism. New Perspectives of the Pas] (Bucharest: Antet, 1997), first editions: 1983, 152.
[39] See Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*, (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991); For a recent critique of these view see Stephen Shulman, "Challenging the Civic/Ethnic and West/East Dichotomies in the Study of Nationalism", *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 5, (2002), 554 – 585.
[40] Hans Kohn, *Western and Eastern Nationalisms,* in John Hutchinson, Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 164.
[41] Miroslav Hroch, "From National Movement to the Fully-formed Nation: The Nation-building Process in Europe", in Gopal Balakrishnan (ed.) *Mapping the Nation,* (London, New York: Verso, 2012), 80.
[42] Hugh Seton Watson, "Old and New Nations"*,* in Hutchinson and Smith, *Nationalism,* 134.

diffuse the national ideology, "a movement in the educational and propagandistic realm rather than the political sphere".[43]

The role of intellectuals has been identified as fundamental in the "Eastern" type of nationalism by many scholars. A famous example of this is Hroch's comparative analysis of various types of nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe. According to him, one can distinguish three phases of national movements: firstly, intellectuals develop a scholarly interest "for the study of language, the culture, the history of the oppressed nationality"; then they mount an "active patriotic agitation"; and finally "national consciousness has become the concern of the broad masses."[44] An example of an intellectual who would fit Hroch's model in my research is Alexandru Odobescu, a Romanian archaeologist, art historian and politician who was in charge of Romania's participation at the 1867 Universal Exhibition in Paris. Other intellectuals who advocated a national orientation in the artistic sphere are considered in the chapter 2a.

Intellectuals lie also at the heart of some important differences identified by scholars among nationalisms in the region. As such, depending on who took a decisive action, it was proposed that there would be a "bourgeois" nationalism in Czech Republic, an "aristocratic" one in Poland and Hungary, a "popular" one in Serbia and Bulgaria and a "bureaucratic" nationalism in Turkey, Greece and Romania.[45] In Greece and Romania, the "bureaucratic" nationalism meant that "the government became the leader of the national movement", while in Serbia and Bulgaria

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[43] Ibid.

[44] Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985), 22 – 23.

[45] Peter Sugar, *Nationalism in Eastern Europe* in Hutchinson and Smith, *Nationalism*, 172.

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there was no small nobility, so that "nationalism was developed by the native clergy and the merchants who were living outside the borders of the Ottoman Empire".[46]

Besides differences, some major similarities have also been described among the nationalisms in the Balkans. For instance, it has been argued that the past – an "invented" rather than a "discovered" one – would have played a peculiar role in Balkan nationalism. Experts (historians, folklorists) played an important part in publicizing what was called "our tradition", and it was mostly this perceived legacy which was esteemed and selected for preservation.[47] This has been conceptualised as a "mission of the whole nation based on a more profound nationalism than the Western one", in a view more sentimental towards the past for the Central and Eastern European countries. [48]

The mixed and shared cultural heritage and traditions, as well as the use and "abuse" of the past[49] can be identified in the architectural designs that were meant to represent the nation. An idealised view of history was both a case of Western influence, as the Balkans have often been seen as "mythical" or "exotic" regions, and a way for the Balkan countries to distinguish themselves as unique. This interplay of representations can be spotted very well at Universal Exhibitions, where countries had to compete against each other. At the same time, the entangled Balkan landscape, as noticed by the authors mentioned above, consolidates the region as a single transnational unit of analysis, which is the point of departure in my research.

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[46] Ibid., 175 – 176.
[47] Hercules Millas, "Etnic Identity and Nation Building. On the Byzantine and Ottoman Historical Legacies" in Raymond Detrez, Barbara Sagaert (eds.), Europe and the Historical Legacies in the Balkans, (Bruxelles: Peter Lang, 2008), 17. For the new, "national" traditions that reinforce the idea of the nation state see Eric Hobsbawn, "Inventing Tradition" in Eric Hobsbawn and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
[48] *Hans Kohn, Western and Eastern Nationalisms*, 164.
[49] To paraphrase here the title of Nietzsche's famous critique "On the Use and Abuse of History for Life" in *Untimely Meditations*, 1974.

Chapter 2: The First National Architecture in the Balkans

a) Meanings in Architecture: Theoretical Considerations and Examples from the Romanian Case of Nation-Building

To explain how architecture transmits ideas, symbols or various messages, the most common parallel is with language, comparison called "one of the oldest tropes in the tradition of Western European architecture.[50] An example of the semiotic approach towards architecture is offered by Donald Preziosi who explains how the exterior aspects of buildings are formed by "architectonic signs", that convey meaning "in culture-specific and code-specific ways".[51]

In the context of national self-determination, Akos Moravanszky even equates the vernacular language of the peasants rediscovered and promoted as the "maternal" language of the nation with another kind of "language" that helped the national discourse, the vernacular architecture.[52] The rural buildings were indeed often seen as representing "the spirit" of the nation and it provided sources of inspiration for the creation of national styles in Central and Eastern Europe. To extend the comparison one can also say that as the national languages were often modern creations, constituted by former dialects reshaped and purified (see the Greek case as the most obvious but also the Romanian one) so the national architectural styles were modern

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[50] Anthony Alofsin, *When buildings speak: architecture as language in the Habsburg Empire and its aftermath, 1867-1933*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 8. A review of the main points and literature on architecture as language in William Whyte, "How do Buildings Mean", *History and Theory*, No. 45 (2006), 154. For a history of the idea of architecture as bearing meaning see also Ibid., 160 – 168.

[51] Donald Preziosi, *Architecture, language and meaning: the origins of the built world and its semiotic organization*. (Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1979), 4. See also Ibid., 8

[52] Akos Moravanszky, *Competing visions. Aesthetic Invention in Central European Architecture, 1867–1918*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998), 218.

constructs, inspired from old monuments and vernacular constructions. Specifically in my paper the architecture of the pavilions fulfils the role of national representation and is designed to "tell" the official nation-building discourse of the Balkan states.

But the metaphor of architecture as language has its obvious shortcomings, explored by scholars. Anthony Alofsin stresses the idea that every work must be analysed foremost in the context when it was built, and the materiality of architecture together with its social and historical context must be considered inseparable.[53] But he ventures nevertheless to explore five "languages" of architecture in the Habsburg Empire, seen as conveying different meanings. Others though have tried to distance themselves completely from the language metaphor. William Whyte says that architecture "should not be studied for its meaning, but for its meanings" because unlike language it serves a function, it is subject to the laws of physics, it is an art form and it involves a wide variety of "media and genres"[54]. The observation is valid in the case of exhibition pavilions as they bear multiple meanings for the French audience and for the local countries. Thus the French often described the pavilions having in mind either its purpose, to represent a nation, according to some predefined symbols (like the Oriental or Byzantine motifs) or taking into account solely their aesthetic value.

Every reference to an exhibition pavilion should consider its spatial context, namely its placement in the peculiar world of a Universal Exhibition. Scholars have long time noticed how architecture's meaning is influenced by the urban design and by its "spatial relation" with other structures.[55] In our case the foreign nation's pavilions were usually grouped together, in a space

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[53] He has named his method "Contextual formalism": Alofsin, *When Buildings Speak*, 11.
[54] Whyte, "How do Buildings Mean", 153 – 154.
[55] Lawrence Vale, *Architecture, power, and national identity*. (Yale University Press, 1992), 9. On the importance of space in assessing the meaning of architecture see also Andrew Ballantyne, *Architecture Theory: A Reader in*

described as forming an "international cultural grammar" where each state exhibited the necessary elements in order to be "a nation". [56] In architecture this is an entangled process. Representatives of the concerned country and French architects worked to create an architecture to represent the nation.

The central role of more than one actor, usually the architect, has been stressed in the creation and consequently the meaning of architecture. Adrian Forty, interpreting English 17th century writer John Evelyn, considers that architecture consists of four elements: the architect, who makes the designs; the patron, who sponsors the endeavour; the workers; and the critics, "the architects of words", who talk about architecture and assign meaning to it.[57] So here also the commentators are considered equally important. Others even see the physical shape of the building only as a base on which the meaning is conveyed by its role as a symbol of something, by interpretations of others, usages of the building or own knowledge of the observer.[58] Goodman even concludes that "More than any other art, architecture makes us aware that interpretation cannot be so easily distinguished from the work itself"[59]. Whyte also argues for interpretation as a fundamental process in developing meaning to architecture. He sees three stages in which ideas are "transposed" and during which the meanings are reshaped and transformed: the conception of the idea, the actual construction and the interpretation.[60] Accordingly the job of the historian is to explore these transpositions to correctly asses the meaning of an architectural work.[61] This

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Philosophy and Culture, (Bloomsbury Academic, 2005), 232 – 243.

[56] Orvar Lofgren, "The Nationalization of Culture*", Ethnologia Europae*. Vol 19, (1989) quoted in Bjarne Stoklund, "The Role of the International Exhibitions in the Construction of National Cultures in the 19th Century" in *Ethnologia Europae*, Vol. 24 (1994), 35.

[57] Adrian Forty, *Words and buildings, A vocabulary of Modern Architecture*, (Thames and Hudson, 2000), 11.

[58] Nelson Goodman, "How Buildings Mean", *Critical Inquiry*, (1985), 649.

[59] Ibid., 650.

[60] Whyte, "How do Buildings Mean", 155.

[61] Ibid., 175.

is why in my paper I tried to analyse as much as possible the echoes produced by the buildings among the French audience. And the meaning ascribed to the national pavilions appears as something emerging from the commentaries of the time. In this way I can avoid the trap of assessing the buildings from my perspective and with my biases.

To round up Alofsin gives a complete list of factors besides the building in itself that are to be considered in analysing its meaning:

> political and social conditions; the building site; identities of the client and the architect, and the relationship between them; building program; design sequence, which is often deduced only from drawings, sketches, and documents; construction sequence; the building's fabric and its spaces; the interaction of the user and the object; movement patterns on the interior and exterior; and public reception of the building over time.[62]

Having the necessary data for all these aspects is an ideal case. Nevertheless the historian must still take them into account and be aware of his limits. In my case the knowledge of previous sketches and designs, the interior of the pavilions as well as the movement patterns are limited. When these data were available, they were not for all the pavilions so my comparative analysis could not apply. This together with a lack of space in my paper gave me the reasons to concentrate as much as possible on the exterior aspect of the building and its reception.

The Romanian Case of Nation-Building

In the context of my paper, that of nation building, one can see very well how meaning is ascribed to architecture by way of discourses. In the long 19th century, the goal was to fulfil yet

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[62] Alofsin, *When Buildings speak,* 12.

another possible purpose of architecture, that of creating an identity.[63] To exemplify this I will briefly analyse the ways in which Romanian intellectuals used and referred to architecture in the nation-building discourse, at the dawn of the Romanian national state.

Generally those who promoted "national" sources of inspiration, a "national" character and so on, were directly against foreign influences, represented almost exclusively by France. In fact the distinctive feature of Romania amongst the Balkan countries was the strong reliance on the Parisian model in all domains of activity. Almost all the main figures of the 1848 revolution in Wallachia and Moldova studied in Paris and returned there when the revolution failed.[64] France in turn, through Napoleon III, advocated the Romanian national cause and was a strong determinant in the union of Wallachia and Moldova in 1859.[65] Around this time the first Romanian artists, painters and later architects, went to study in Paris. The "national" painter, Nicolae Grigorescu (1838 – 1907), and the "national" architect, Ion Mincu (1852 – 1912), both studied in Paris and started their career with works in the French style. Meanwhile the architectural landscape of the two former capitals, Iași and especially Bucharest, was completely remodelled according to the French style in fashion by French architects. Architects like Gottereau, Galleron, Ballu, Bernard, Blanc and others designed the most important buildings of the new state and the private villas of the Romanian bourgeoisie.[66]

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[63] Ibid., 9.

[64] Details in Lucian Boia, *Istorie si mit in constiinta romaneasca*, Humanitas, Bucuresti, 1997, pp. 20 – 27. Examples of a whole range of intellectuals who had very close ties with France, going as far as being "totally assimilated" in Monica Spiridon, "The Manifold Faces of Romanian Paris" in Marcel Cornis-Pope and John Neubauer (eds.), *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe*, Vol. 2, (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2004), 429 – 431.

[65] For a collection of studies about Napoleon III's influence, with a stress on the artistic sphere see *Napoleon al III-lea și Principatele Române,* Catalog de expoziție, Muzeul Național de Artă al României, 2008

[66] A recent colective volume on this phenomenon is Augustin Ioan (ed.), *Influențe franceze în arhitectura și arta din România secolelor XIX și XX*, [French Influences in Architecture and Art of Romania in 19th and 20th Centuries], (Bucharest: ICR, 2006). For a general work on French influence see Pompiliu Eliade, *Influența franceză asupra spiritului public în România*, [The French Influence on the Public Spirit] I-II, (Bucharest, Univers, 1982)

The process of voluntary adoption of "alien values and models of civilisation" has been characterised by some as "self-colonisation".[67] The concept is also central to my analysis of the architectural styles bearing a national meaning because those who created it transferred many of the ideas acquired in Western schools and this type of architecture was also encouraged and promoted by the West through the Universal Exhibitions.

If in France the response to the style promoted by the Fine Arts Academy in Paris are found towards the end of the 19th century in the Art Nouveau movement, in Romania, in the same period the responses were the various attempts to create a national Romanian style. It has been remarked how:

> both conceptually (the interest in local specificity, the vernacular, traditional architecture, and the applied arts) and from the point of view of its formal vocabulary (the desire for innovation, manifested in the first instance at the level of decoration, followed by the need to create modern, functional spaces, the observance of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* ideal) the first phase of the Romanian national style can be related to the Art Nouveau movement.[68]

So against the French influence were those who advocated a return to the "national" sources of inspiration and a rejection of foreign borrowings. They formed the theoretical and ideological background that corresponded to the discourses around the representation at the Universal Exhibitions that in turn promoted every nation's specificity in cultural and artistic terms. In fact the first Universal Exhibition, that of London in 1851, is contemporary with the first opinions of this sort in Romania. A famous example is that of the future prime-minister, Mihail Kogălniceanu, who spoke mainly against the foreign influences when he emphatically advised:

> By preaching hatred for all that is native, we have borrowed from the foreigners only superficialities, the word but not the spirit [...] But a nation that denies its past is threatened by a

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[67] See Aleksander Kiossev, 'Notes on self-colonising cultures', in *After the wall: Art and culture in post-communist Europe*, ed. B. Pejic and D. Elliott (Stockholm: 1999);

[68] Ada Hajdu, *Art Nouveau in Romania*, Noi Media Print, (Bucharest, 2013), kindle edition.

great and terrifying danger because a true civilization is the one who finds its roots in itself, by reforming and improving the past institutions[69]

Titu Maiorescu, famous for his theory of "shapes without content", also spoke for the orientation towards the local and against the foreign borrowings, referring to the foreign institutions and habits applied uncritically to the Romanian context.[70] Key to this discussion in arts is the notion of "national genius", taken up in the same period by people like Dimitrie Berindei, who considered that "arts are necessarily a medium of expression for the genius of the nation."[71]

But the first traces of this attitude in the artistic sphere come from one of the fiercest advocates of Romanian art, the critique and statesman, Alexandru Odobescu. The future Minister of the Monuments and long time archaeology professor, he studied in his youth, at the beginning of 1850s, in Paris. His professors were known advocates of the Romanian national demands, Jules Michelet and Edgar Quinet and as colleagues he had many of the former revolutionaries from 1848, like Nicolae Bălcescu, Nicolae Golescu or C.A. Rosetti. He was speaking in Paris, among them in 1851, when he advised against the foreign architectural styles seen as a "bizarre confusion" that "have nothing in line with the needs of the future world."[72] The answer for the architects was to observe the "local" by "adopting the shape of the peasant hut".[73] 20 years after

[69] Mihail Kogălnieanu, *Opere* in Popescu, Le style, 47: "Ainsi, en prechant la haine pour tout ce qui etait autochtone, nous avons emprunte des etrangers que des superficialites, la lettre et non l'esprit [...]. Mais une nation qui renie son passe est menacee par un grand et affreux danger, car la vraie civilisation es celle qu'on tire de notre sein, en reformant et en ameliorant les institutions du passe par les idee et les progres du temps actuel".

[70] Titu Maiorescu, « În contra direcției de astăzi în cultura română » [Against the Current Direction of the Romanian Culture], *Opere*, 1973, 153.

[71] Dimitrie I. Berindei, „Despre arte şi despre cultura lor în Țara Românească" [About the arts and their culture in Wallachia], *Analele* I/5 (mai 1890), p. 110. The study dates from 1862.

[72] *Viitorul artelor în România* [The Future of the Arts in Romania], Paris, 17 March 1851 in A. L. Odobescu, *Opere*, (Bucharest: Editura de stat pentru literatură și artă, 1955), 18.

[73] Ibid: "arhitectul român are trebuință a adopta forma colibei şi a bordeiului țărănimei".

he first advocated a national style, he would still express the same ideas, considering that "no art will have more charm to the Romanian eye [...] than those who will be inspired by the lucky instincts of the people, from the most glorious ancient traditions".[74] In the same conference he referred directly to the architects, advising them to build a future "national style":

> Study the remains, no matter how small, of the artistic production from the past and make from them the root of a grand and rich art [...]do not miss any opportunity to use artistic elements found in the Romanian monuments left from the past; but remake them, develop them, if you know how.[75]

Odobescu even uses the phrase "Romanian style" that "emerged in our most turbulent past" and that has to be used by today's artists.[76]

The proponents of these ideas would found around 1890 the first architectural journal and the first architectural school in Bucharest. It was also the time when the first important figures for the Romanian national style emerged: Ion Mincu and Ion Socolescu. Mincu, who is regarded until today as the "father" of the Romanian National style designed the plans for the initial Romanian restaurant at the 1889 World Exhibition in Paris.[77] The building inspired by Romanian country houses, as well as by medieval princely architecture, can be looked upon as an illustration of the advices given in the first handbook for the history of arts, which appeared in Bucharest in the same year:

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[74] *Artele din România în periodul preistoric* [Arts from Romania in the Prehistoric Period], Ateneul Român, 17 decembrie 1872 in Opere complete, vol III, Bucharest, 1908., 82: "nicio artă nu poate să prezente mai multă adimenire ochilor romînești, [...], decît acelea care se vor inspira din norocitele instincte ale poporului, din cele mai glorioase tradițiuni străbunești".

[75] Ibid., 83: "Studiați remăștițele, oricît ar fi de mărunte, ale producțiunii artistice din trecut și faceți dintr-însele sorgintea unei arte mărețe și avute [...] nu pierdeți nicio ocaziune d-a vă folosi de elementele artistice ce vă prezentă monumentele românești rămase din vechime; dar prefaceți-le, dezvoltați-le, daca știți".

[76] Ibid., 168: „s-ar fi ivit și în trecutul nostru cel mult tulburat manifestațiuni estetice care, în felurite ramure ale artelor, constituie până la un oarecare punct, un adevărat stil românesc".

[77] For the reasons why Mincu is considered the "father" of the mentioned style see Chapter 4, especially note 26.

> If from how the temple looks can be deduced the kind of belief of a people, from how its houses and its towns look like can be appreciated its degree of culture and its social welfare... Even from the type of architecture we can see, up to a point, also the character of a people.[78]

The examples above show that a true theory of national architecture would not be defined before the first buildings in the new style. Or in other words, the theory followed the architectural practice. As was the case for the French *regionalist* style, the architects in their works draw on still ambiguous principles that only afterwards were analysed by theoreticians.[79] To define what a national style is and to promote its sources of inspiration was in fact the main role of the first journal of Architecture, *Analele Arhitecturii şi ale artelor cu care se leagă* [The Annals of Architecture and of the arts with which it relates] founded by Ion Socolescu in 1890.

b) The Balkan Architectural Context and the National Styles in the Balkan Capitals

Balkan's Cultural and Architectural Background

The 19th century development of the Balkans indisputably followed the Central and West European model. In the realm of architecture and urban planning this is even more preeminent as

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[78] Nicolae Idieru, *Istoria artelor frumoase. Architectura, sculptura, pictura, musica din toate timpurile şi din toate ţările, inclusiv Rumânia* [The History of the Fine Arts. Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, Music from all the times and all the places, including Romania] , (Bucharest: Tipografi Joseph Gobl, 1889) in Ada Hajdu, *Arhitectul Ion Mincu în context local şi regional*, unpublished, 2014, 7: „dacă după înfăţişarea templului se poate judeca felul credinţei unui popor, din înfăţişarea caselor şi oraşelor sale putem aprecia gradul lui de cultură şi starea lui socială. ... Ba chiar, prin felul arhitecturii putem judeca, până la un punct, şi caracterul unui popor".
[79] Ada Hajdu, *Arhitectul Ion Mincu în context local şi regional* [The Architect Ion Mincu in Local and Regional Context], unpublished, 2014, 3.

Balkan cities were completely reshaped in the process called "Europeanisation".[80] But towards the end of the 19th century alternatives to the imported Western architectural styles appeared. These were the so-called "national styles" in the Balkans, also closely connected to Western ideas but this time having as a goal to be unique, to draw inspiration from the history and tradition of the country and, of course, to serve the national ideology. In the following I will briefly trace the beginnings of this new style in the architecture of the Balkans by following the development in the focal point of the national ideology, the capital cities of Greece, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria. But firstly I will consider some features of the social and cultural landscape of the Balkans at the dawn of modernity.

Before the creation of nation states, starting with the long Greek war of independence (1821 – 1832), the Balkans was a largely agrarian region, where small peasant holdings formed the backbone of society.[81] With the exception of Romania, there was no native ruling class.[82] Only the serfs and the peasants ethnically belonged to the concerned lands.[83] This is why cultural life, that was later to be used as a fundamental pillar of state formation, was comprised almost exclusively of folk crafts, traditions and oral literature.[84] In the future nation-building discourse the peasant was surrounded by myth from various folk tales and was seen as a definitive proof of

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[80] For a discussion of the concept see Wolfgang Schmale, *Processes of Europeanization*, European History Online (EGO), (Mainz: Institute of European History, 2010). URL: http://www.ieg-ego.eu/schmalew-2010b-en [2014-04-21]. An example of the use of the concept in the Balkans see Tanja Zimmermann, Aleksandar Jakir, *Europe and the Balkans: Dacades of Europeanization'?* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2014).

[81] Feature called "one of the most significant and enduring socioeconomic legacies of the Ottomans" in Şuhnaz Yilmaz and İpek K. Yosmaoglu, "Fighting the Spectres of the Past: Dilemmas of Ottoman Legacy in the Balkans and the Middle East", *Middle Eastern Studies*, 44:5, (2008), 677-693, 680.

[82] The so called *boyars*, the native Romanian ruling class were the future intellectuals who were instrumental in creating the future modern state and in the promotion of the same peasant culture.

[83] Tibor Iván Berend and György Ránki, *East central Europe: in the 19th and 20th Centuries*. (Budapest: Akademiai Kiado, 1977), 29.

[84] Charles Jelavich and Barbara B. Jelavich. *The establishment of the Balkan national states: 1804-1920*, Univ of Washington Press, 1986, 266.

a national genius. They were important not only for their cultural production, but also for their struggle for land and private property, seen in the nation building discourse as a fight for independence from Turkish domination.[85]

The mythical gaze on peasant culture was a phenomenon also specific to Western and especially Central Europe. But while within the borders of the former Habsburg Empire the tendency was to see a certain region as expressing the purest national ideals (Kalotaszeg for Hungary, Zakopane in Poland, Slovacko for Czechs), in the Balkans the vernacular culture had no specific time and space, could be found anywhere and the cultural productions could be taken from anytime.[86]

In the realm of architecture the vernacular production would also play a defining role in creating the national styles. Less in Greece and Serbia, where the classical and Byzantine heritage would be at the forefront of this process but particularly obvious in the Romanian and Bulgarian case. Still for the period analysed in this paper, the 19th century, the usage of vernacular architecture remains an exception.[87] Preferred is the architecture that reminds of one's history, beautiful and impressive enough to represent the country.

Overcoming the Ottoman heritage was a fundamental drive in the nation-building process. The emphasis on language and religion as a defining feature of the Balkan nations or the metaphors like "bridge" or "crossroad" to refer to their historical status helps undermine the undesired Ottoman elements.[88] In the realm of architecture, the most common used strategy is

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[85] Berend and Ranki, *East Centrel Europe*, 19.
[86] For mythical regions of Central Europe see Moravansky, 248. For some differences between the rediscovery of vernacular in the Balkans and in Central Europe see Shona Kallestrup, "Romanian 'National Style' and the 1906 Bucharest Jubilee Exhibition", *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (2002), 149.
[87] One of the exception can be considered the Romanian case and the works of Ion Mincu, who mixes vernacular and historical motifs. See Popescu, *Un Patrimoine*, 53.
[88] Edin Hajdarpašić, "Out of the Ruins of the Ottoman Empire: Reflections on the Ottoman Legacy in South-eastern

what Hartmuth calls "nostrification", the adoption as "national" of various constructions.[89] This

is the case of Ottoman houses, spread in Anatolia as well as the Balkans, and taken to be

"national" by the Bulgarians. Or of the church of Curtea de Arges, with a majority of oriental

features but central to the Romanian national discourse.

Related to a national ideology, directed against the Ottoman heritage, is also the choice

of the Capital cities. This is the case of Athens, Belgrade, Sofia and Tirana, all of them not being

Capitals at the beginning, as other towns were more important economic and social centres.[90]

Greece had as Capital city from the start of its revolution, in 1821, the Peloponnesian town of

Nafplio. When Athens was chosen to serve as Capital and royal seat of King Otto, in 1834, it was

a little town gathered at the foot of the Acropolis, of no more than "300 houses, the rest being

piles of stones".[91] Subsequently, as we will see, mainly West Europeans tried to revive the former

antique glory of the city in what Neni Panourgiá has called "a case of colonisation of the ideal".[92]

In comparable developments, the capital of the autonomous Serbian state was Kragujevac

between 1818 and 1839, when finally the less important town of Belgrade was chosen. And in

Bulgaria, at the moment of the much awaited autonomy from the Ottoman Empire the capital was

designated as Veliko Tarnovo, quickest and most obvious choice. It remained the Capital for

Europe", *Middle Eastern Studies*, 44:5, (2008), 715-734, 717. Also Alexander Vezenkov, "History Against Geography: Should We Always Think of the Balkans as Part of Europe?" in History and Judgement, eds. A. MacLachlan and I. Torsen, Vienna: IWM Junior Visiting Fellows' Conferences, Vol. 21, 2006. http://www.iwm.at/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=153&Itemid=12

[89] Maximilian Hartmuth, "De/constructing a 'Legacy in Stone': Of interpretative and historiographical problems concerning the Ottoman cultural heritage in the Balkans", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 5 (2008), 695–713, 701 – 702.

[90] Hartmuth, *Negotiating Tradition*, 17.

[91] Leonidas Kallivretakis, *Athens in the 19th century: From regional town of the Ottoman Empire to capital of the Kingdom of Greece*, Conference Archaeology of the City of Athens, Atena 1994. URL: http://www.eie.gr/archaeologia/En/chapter_more_9.aspx

[92] Neni Panourgiá, "Colonizing the ideal: neoclassical articulations and european modernities", *Angelaki, Journal of the theoretical humanities*, volume 9, number 2, august 2004, 166.

almost a year before it lost its status to Sofia. With the exception of Bucharest, these were all small cities for modern standards and in dire need of urban development. The architecture was very much at the forefront of this process.[93]

Following Carmen Popescu, we can briefly sketch the main stages of development in the Balkans' architecture leading to the appearance of the national styles: First there were foreign architects that built in Western European styles; in the second half of the century the first generation of Western-trained local architects returned home and a search for a national expression in architecture began; shortly after the first architectural journals, architectural schools and architectural societies emerged, all of them being strong advocates of national sources of inspiration; all this led to a period of glory for the national styles starting earliest at the beginning of the 20th century, when the states officially promoted it.[94]

Athens

I will now briefly trace the appearance of this architecture which was meant to express the nation in the Balkan capital cities, starting with the special case of Athens. Since it had been chosen as capital for the new Greek state, in 1834, the Bavarian king Otto brought with him some of the most famous architects and urban planners of Europe: Karl Friedrich Schinkel, Eduard Schaubert, Leo von Klenze, Theophil and Christian von Hansen, and Ernst Ziller. They embarked

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[93] Even if Bucharest was much bigger at the time Romania became autonomous in 1859 (it had more than 100,000 inhabitants), contemporary depictions see it as a village like settlement, with lots of irregular houses, streets, lots of orchards and empty plots. Thus a modern redevelopment was immediately considered necessary also in this case. For the most exhaustive analysis of Bucharest in the 19th century see George Potra, *Din Bucureştii de ieri*, [From the Bucharest of Yesterday], Vol. 1-2, (Bucharest: Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1900).
[94] Popescu, "Un patrimoine... ".

on a grand project of restoration, urban planning and construction. Among the first works were a new modern master plan for Athens and the transformation of the Acropolis by removing the Turkish stronghold and rebuilding the main ancient temples.[95] The neo-classical style imposed itself naturally as the symbol of new Greek identity.

This was, however, an identity more related to Europe's imagination than with the historical legacy and tradition of the Greek territories. The Orthodox Church, maybe the most visible element in the everyday life of the Greeks, was rather left aside in the ideology of the new state, together with other traditions and customs.[96] This is why in the second half of the 19th century when the Greek nationalists wanted to assert their national specificity, they promoted mainly the Greek Byzantine heritage. The political doctrine of *Megali Idea*, the works of Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos, Spyridon Lambros and the creation of the Christian Archaeological Society (1882) and the Municipal History Museum (1889) all advocated an emphasis on the Byzantine culture.[97]

However, in architecture examples of a Byzantine style remained few. Christian Hansen designed the eye hospital of Athens (Ophtalmiatreion) using Byzantine-inspired shapes very much in fashion also in Western Europe. The first attempt at a new "Greek-Byzantine" style had been made in ecclesiastic architecture by his brother, Teophil Hansen, with his design for the Cathedral of Athens, a loose interpretation of Byzantine shapes.[98] Teophil Hansen had an

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[95] Panourgiá, "Colonizing the ideal", 166 – 174.

[96] Antonis Liakos, "Hellenism and the Making of Modern Greece: Time, Language, Space" în Katerina Zacharia (Ed*.), Hellenisms. Culture, Identity and ethnicity from Antiquity to Modernity*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2008, 206.

[97] See a survey of these trends in Nasia Giakovaki, "Medieval and Recent History: A New Consciousness about the City of Athens at the End of the 19th Century", *Archaeology of the City of Athens*, (Atena: 1994). Also details in Liakos, "Hellenism...", Haris Exertzoglou, "Shifting Boundaries: Language, Community and the "non-Greek-speaking Greeks"*, Historein*, vol. 1, (1999), 75-92; Yannis Hamilakis, *The Nation and its Ruins: Antiquity, Archaeology, and National Imagination in Greece*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2007, 109.

[98] The final project was however a completely different one, in an eclectic style by the architect Demetres Zezos.

important role also for the Byzantine style in Serbia, where his disciples "diverted the European fashion for this architecture for the profit of national ideology".[99]

Maybe the most obvious assertion of the Byzantine legacy in architecture was not made in Greece but at the 1900 Universal Exhibition in Paris. There the Greek national pavilion was built in the shape of a Byzantine church, having as a model the 11th century church of Saint Theodore.[100] It was a bold statement showing the Byzantine heritage of Greece, since at the previous two Parisian World Exhibitions its pavilion followed the neoclassical model.

Belgrade

Ever since the first movements against the Ottomans, Serbia started to forge close ties mainly with the Habsburg Empire. Its influence could be seen in virtually every sphere, making some authors call the new Serbian state "an obedient satellite of Vienna".[101] It was indeed Vienna and its academy that were very influential also in the architecture of Serbia's capital, Belgrade. This is how the Viennese inspired baroque architecture became a trend around the middle of the 19th century, where it was seen as a local development under the name "Serbian baroque".[102]

See Vassilis Colonas, « La cathedrale d'Athenes et la naissance du style "greco-byzantin" », in Bruno Foucart, Françoise Hamon, *L'architecture religieuse au XIXe siecle*, (Paris: PUPS, 2006).
[99] Popescu, "Un patrimoine"
[100] The source of inspiration for the pavilion has been mentioned in the official documents regarding Greece: Archives Nationales de France, Serie F 12, box concerning "Correspondance de la Grèce".
[101] David MacKenzie, "Serbia as Piedmont and the Yugoslav idea, 1804-1914", *East European Quarterly, East European Quarterly*, Vol. 28, (1994). http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_7063/is_n2_v28/ai_n28650617/ accessed on 12.03.2012.
[102] Bratislav Pantelić, *Nationalism and Architecture: The Creation of a National Style in Serbian Architecture and Its Political Implications,* Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Vol. 56, No. 1 (Mar., 1997), 16-41, 16.

Illustrated foremost by Belgrade cathedral, it was the first form of architecture that was attributed a national meaning.

But it was again the second half of the 19th century when the focus on the country's own cultural heritage started to emerge. Mihailo Valtrović was one of the main promoters of a Serbian culture. He would do archaeological researches on Serbian medieval architecture, would publish works of art history and would emphatically declare: "architecture best characterises the spirit of a nation".[103] The Byzantine forms were again seen as appropriate for national representation. In fact for all the countries analysed the Byzantine heritage was a way to put into brackets the Ottoman period by relating to a different past. This is why the national architecture often led to similar forms.[104]

In Serbia's case the first example of a Byzantine monument recognised as expressing a national identity was a church actually built between 1861 – 1869, not in Serbia but in Trieste, by the local community. Shortly after that the first generation of foreign trained architects returned home. Almost all of them had been students in Vienna of Theophil von Hansen, ardent promoter of a romantic style full of Byzantine elements.[105] They would hold key post in the administration, would build churches throughout the country only in the Byzantine style and would promote the church as central for Serbian national ideology.[106]

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[103] Ibidem, 20.

[104] The most obvious example is from the 1900 World Exhibition in Paris, where Serbia, Greece and Romania had national pavilions in the shape of a Byzantine church, paradoxically contradicting the unwritten rule of the exhibition that each building must be unique.

[105] A style not at all accurate that quoted in a vague way the most famous Byzantine monuments like Saint Sophia or Saint Marc from Venice. See also Bojan Aleksov, "Nationalism in Construction: The Memorial Church of St. Sava on Vračar Hill in Belgrade", *Balkanologie VII* (2), 2003, 47-72, 56.

[106] Pantelić, *Nationalism,* 22; Bratislav Pantelić, "Designing Identities. Reshaping the Balkans in the First Two Centuries: The Case of Serbia", *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 20, Nr. 2, 2007, 4.

Besides churches, the path breaking monument for the new style was captain Miša's mansion in Belgrade, finished in 1863, a building where lots of Hansen's byzantine elements can be noted. Its architect was the Czech, Jan Nevole, who studied with Hansen and who employed the usual elements favoured, seen as "Byzantine" in Central Europe: round arches and the powerful polychrome facade. It was thus the case of a purely Western inspired style that came to be seen as specific for the Serbian nation.

In 1895 works started on the biggest monument in Belgrade inspired by Byzantine architecture: the great cathedral of Saint Sava (completed in 1989). The Serbian state had only two requirements for the architects: to be of monumental dimensions and to be in a Serbo-Byzantine style.[107] Defining this style was thus a constant matter of debate that reinforced Serbian nationalism and enriched the process of nation building.

Bucharest

In the new Romanian state the creation of a "National Romanian Style" in architecture was closely related to the French influence. A periodization of the style reflects this trend but also closely follows developments in other Balkan countries: according to Gavris and Zahariade, there is the early period, 1886 – 1906, when the style it was created by French trained architects; the "classical", mature period, 1906 – 1918, when the artists were in the majority of cases also French trained architects; and the late, inter-war period, where the architects came from the newly created School of Architecture of Bucharest.[108]

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[107] Bojan Aleksov, *Nationalism*, 56.
[108] Mihaela Gavris si Ana Maria Zahariade, *The Neo-romanian style: elements of language,* în Carmen Popescu,

In the Parisian environment of Bucharest, the first building subsequently considered in the national or neoromanian style was Lahovary villa, built by Ion Mincu in 1886. Ion Mincu himself would be considered "the father" of this new style and would become the most well-known figure among Romanian architects.[109] Lahovary villa's main characteristics are a central porch that reminds one of a similar one in traditional houses, wooden columns taken from the vernacular architecture, trilobe arches taken from medieval Romanian architecture and the glazed ceramic freeze, a material in fashion at the time throughout Europe. The overall shape of the building does not prove a solid knowledge of historical Romanian architecture and in fact Mincu himself admitted this: "I saw a few old monasteries and some photos taken by Alpar. It was all my documentation when I began working. (...) I used the polychromy which is in the nature of the Romanian people and the faience for durability reasons. I hope all these give a Romanian atmosphere".[110] In fact Mincu only followed what his patron, the general Lahovary, wished, a house in "a Romanian style".

Soon other orders for a Romanian style followed for Mincu. In 1888 he built the Central School for Girls in Bucharest, one of the few public buildings in a national style before it became official in 1906.[111] Here he further adds the median belt (inspired by the 16th century churches of Walachia) and an inner porch that reminds one of medieval monasteries.[112] In the same year Mincu received a commission to build a Romanian restaurant for the Universal Exhibition in

Ioana Teodorescu (eds.), *Genius loci: national et régional en architecture; entre histoire et pratique = national and regional in architecture; between history and practice*, (Bucharest: Simetria, 2002), 59 – 60.

[109] A good example of work that enforces this image is Mihail Caffé, *Arhitectul Ion Mincu*, (Bucharest: Editura Ştiinţifică, 1960).

[110] Nicolae Petraşcu, *Ioan Mincu*, (Bucharest: Cultura naţională, 1928), 10.

[111] After the *Romanian General Exhibition*, where almost every pavilion was built in this style that reached national fame.

[112] Popescu, *Le Style, 59.*

Paris. Eventually it would not be built for that purpose, but in Bucharest, 4 years later, on the main walking avenue of the city. It was the building that consolidated Mincu's role as the creator of a national style and the restaurant was praised as "expressing with the highest degree of success the initial ideals of the so called *neo-Romanian* style".[113]

In ecclesiastic architecture in a similar manner as in all other Balkan countries, a Byzantine style modelled after the European fashion began to appear. The best example from Bucharest is the church of Princess Bălaşa, built in 1881 in a style promoted by the Vienna Academy but seen as having a national specificity in Romania.[114]

After the turn of the century more and more buildings appeared in a national style, including some of the most important in Bucharest, the Palace of the Public Administration or the City Hall. The start of the constructions for the latter building coincided with a defining moment in the affirmation of national style, the Romanian General Exhibition of 1906. At this exhibition almost all the pavilions were built in this style, for the first time on a grand scale and in a variety of forms that proved to be a solid base for its long lasting legacy in the interwar period.[115]

Sofia

As the last country to obtain its autonomy, in 1878, after the Russo-Turkish War, Bulgaria's architectural developments were, as a consequence, delayed compared to its Balkan

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[113] Kallestrup, *Art and Design,* 76.
[114] Popescu, *Le Style,* 101.
[115] See Shona Kallestrup, "Romanian 'National Style' and the 1906 Bucharest Jubilee Exhibition", *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 15, (2002), 147-162.

neighbours. Before its autonomy one significant example of national architecture stands out: the Rila Monastery. Founded in the 10th century, the monastery saw a long rebuilding process, between 1816 – 1870, in neo-byzantine style. It was considered the appropriate style for a monument representing the unity of the Slavs against Greek oppression and the "peak moment for Bulgarian national awakening".[116]

After the autonomy, if the Serbs had the closest ties with the Habsburg Empire and the Romanians with France, the Bulgarians' connections were the strongest with the Russian Empire. It was the Russians, also a Slavic people, who fought for them to be autonomous and it seemed a good opportunity for the young Bulgarian state to distance itself from the Ottoman heritage and Greek influence by way of close ties with Russia.

In architecture this connection was emphatically displayed by the great cathedral of Sofia (1896). It was a monument almost entirely dedicated to the Russian Empire. Its style was a variant of the neo-Russian byzantinism; it was built by a Russian architect well familiar with this style, Alexander Pomerantsev, professor at the Fine Art Academy in Saint Petersburg and a known advocate of the romantic style in architecture; and finally it was intended to commemorate the Russian soldiers that died in the "liberation" war of 1878, as well as to honour the Emperor Alexander the second, named "the liberator of Bulgaria".[117]

Ecclesiastic architecture in the Russian inspired Byzantine style was something that became almost a rule in Sofia around 1900. Churches like Saint Nikolai Novi (1896), Saint Chiril

[116] Nikolai Voukov, *Le monastère de Rila : incarnation du passé national bulgare, **Études Balkaniques***, 12, 2005, 177-179.http://etudesbalkaniques.revues.org/index112.html
[117] Ljubinka Stoilova, Petar Iokimov, *The Search for Identifiably National Architecture in Bulgaria at the End of the 19th and During the Early 20th Century* in Genius Loci. National and Regional in Architecture Between History and Practice Bucharest: Simetria, 2002, 96.

and Methodius (1899), Saint John Rilski (1902) were built by a wide range of architects from different generations and with a different type of education. They all had in common a taste for the Bulgarian fashion of the time, the neo-Byzantine style. In fact the fashion, even if completely neglected in the historiographies of this region thus far, had been an essential driving force in the creation and spreading of these styles. It was manifested mainly in the patron's desires and the extreme flexibility of the architects in switching styles. This is how the patron or the state suddenly became maybe more important than the artist. In a quick example from the already mentioned Romanian case, Ion Mincu built at the same time constructions in the newly invented "national" style and in the fashionable French academic style. He was mainly listening to the patrons' desire, who in turn looked at the prevailing custom of the time. This is how it was easy also for foreigners to build in a Romanian national style. An example is the Italian Giulio Magni who designed buildings in Bucharest in a historicist style (Traian covered market, 1894; private villas) but at the same time in a national style, with motifs similar with the ones used by Mincu (the Communal School, 1897, or the project for the City Hall). These developments are in line with some of the characteristics of modern art according to Brettel: it was meant to be displayed in front of a large audience; it was dependent on art shops, galleries, in other words it was meant to sell; and artists are part of a general style or atmosphere and not related to a certain geographical area.[118]

Finally I should also mention that the creation of national styles cannot be attributed solely to a Balkan phenomenon. This type of architecture must be linked more with a general European trend that appeared towards the end of the century: regionalism in architecture. Very much related

[118] See Richard Brettel, *Modern Art 1851-1929*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 2 and 57.

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with the art nouveau movement, regionalism advocated the use of local style, materials and tradition.[119] These principles reached Romanian artists by way of France, where the style was starting to become popular.[120]

The European influences can best be seen in the special case of Bosnia. Even if a region under the Austrian Empire at the turn of the century, it also had a national style, but one created directly by the Austrians. Its features were obvious Oriental shapes, similar with the Moorish architecture from Spain and Northern Africa but very popular in the Austrian milieu.[121] In this way Bosnia's style could be Oriental but not Ottoman, and thus unique and adequate for a national representation.

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[119] Eric Storm, "Regionalism in History, 1890-1945: The Cultural Approach", *European History Quarterly*, Vol. 33 (2003), 10.

[120] See Jean-Claude Vigato, *L'architecture regionaliste, France 1890-1950*, Norma Editions, 1994.

[121] Maximilian Hartmuth, *Negotiating Tradition and Ambition: A Comparative Pespective on the "De-Ottomanisation" of Balkan Cityscapes,* Ethnologia Balkanica, No. 10, (2006), 15 – 33, 19.

Chapter 3: Displaying Balkan Architecture for the First Time at Universal Exhibitions

a) Balkans under the Western Gaze

How the Balkan nations were perceived at the World Exhibitions, the French expectations and the way they influenced the display is intimately connected with the historical view France and Western Europe had of the region. This is why before embarking on an analysis of the participation of Balkan countries at the Parisian world exhibitions it is necessary to survey the most important elements of Western and especially French perception of the Balkans.

Scholars agree that the view of the Balkans as a distinct region, with its own cultural, social and geographical features can be traced back to the enlightenment milieu of the end of the 18th century.[122] Until then the Balkans were seen as part of the Ottoman Empire and the people living there were sometimes called "Greeks", in accordance with the Turkish denomination for the Christians in the Empire.[123]

In the same period the new geographical concept of Europe, spreading until the Bosporus strait, including thus the Balkan Peninsula, started to emerge.[124] Larry Wolff notices in this

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[122] Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, (Oxford University Press, 2009), 62. Larry Wolff. *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*. (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1994), 144 – 195. See also other works on the "discovery" of the Balkans:,Ludmilla Kostova *Tales of the periphery: the Balkans in nineteenth century British writing*. Vol. 4. (Universitetsko izd-vo Sv. sv. Kiril i Metodii, 1997); Slobodan Markovich G., *British perceptions of Serbia and the Balkans*: *1903-1906*, Vol. 1. Bibliothèque Dialogue, 2000; Dušan I. Bjelić and Obrad Savić, eds. *Balkan as metaphor: between globalization and fragmentation*. MIT Press, 2002; Katherine Elisabeth Fleming, "Orientalism, the Balkans, and Balkan historiography", *The American historical review* 105.4 (2000): 1218-1233.

[123] Victor Roudometof, "From Rum Millet to Greek Nation: Enlightenment, Secularization and National Identity in Ottoman Balkan Society, 1453–1821", *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, Volume 16, 1998, 19.

[124] Alexander Vezenkov, "History Against Geography: Should We Always Think of the Balkans as Part of Europe?"

context a displacement of the old north/south dividing line between the civilised south and the barbaric and backward north to a new east/west line.[125] Indeed the Balkans were generally contrasted with the West, liked for their exoticism but despised for their perceived backwardness. Still the European view became more and more favourable, culminating in sympathy for the Greek struggle for independence.

The former territories of ancient Greece were the first parts of the Balkans discovered by Europe. Initial contact was made by way of the "Grand Tour", when travellers and intellectuals reached Sicily and saw for the first time the antiquities of the Greek civilisation. Under this impetus they became interested in all the former Greek lands. Numerous accounts of travellers in Greece are proof of the perception of an idealised territory, opportunity for romantic day dreaming of the lost word of antiquity that contrasted with the current state of the territory and with the "illiterate and barbaric" peasantry. [126] Soon famous writers and politicians like Chateaubriand, Friedrich Schiller, Byron or Keats would spread the vision of a country held as a „prisoner" under the Turks and would advocate its liberation.[127] The Greek war of independence was the defining moment in this struggle, an occasion for some to even fight along the Greeks (Lord Byron's example is probably the famous one). By this time the Balkans were seen as fully European not only geographically but also from a historical and cultural point of view.[128]

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in History and Judgement,, eds. A. MacLachlan and I. Torsen, Vienna: IWM Junior Visiting Fellows' Conferences, Vol. 21, (2006). http://www.iwm.at/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=153&Itemid=125

[125] Larry Wolff. *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment.* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1994)

[126] Yannis Hamilakis, *The Nation and its Ruins: Antiquity, Archaeology, and National Imagination in Greece*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 72.

[127] Pamela Ballinger , "Definitional Dilemmas : Southeastern Europe as "Culture Area" ?", *Balkanologie*, Vol. III, n°2, (1999);

[128] Vezenkov, *History Against Geography*

The name of the Peninsula goes hand in hand with the developments illustrated above. Towards the end of the 18th century, Western travellers started to use the name "Balkan" (meaning mountain chain in Turkish) for the local mountain chain instead of the ancient name Haemus and also extended the name to the whole region.[129] The first written reference dates from 1809 when it appears in the work of the German geographer August Zeune, published in Berlin.[130] Despite this, "Balkans" became the usual way to name the European countries that used to be under the Ottoman rule only after the Berlin Congress of 1878. Until then terms like European Turkey, The Oriental Peninsula, the Greek or the Greek – Slavonic Peninsula were more popular.[131] The verb *balkanise* meaning to split something in small and hostile entities would emerge only after the Balkan wars.[132]

For my purposes, certain stereotypes created with the discovery of the Balkans are especially important. During the 19th century and especially in the popular literature it appeared as a mystical region, an exotic place where one can see the unspoiled state of society, almost the original state of Europe, before industrialisation.[133]

The Balkans were further seen as place of contrasts: between beautiful lands but backward people, or beautiful women and primitive men. This is closely related to another persistent feature of the Balkans, that of a transitory place, between two worlds, the Oriental and the Western one. They were seen as semi developed, semi oriental or semi civilised.[134] The view goes hand in hand with the Balkan countries self-fashioned national images. All the states referred to

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[129] Todorova, *Imagining,* 22.
[130] Vesna Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination,* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), 15.
[131] Todorova, *Imagining*, 27.
[132] Goldsworthy, 2002, p. 16
[133] Goldsworthy, 2002, p. 54.
[134] Todorova, 2009, p. 34.

themselves as culturally "In between", situated at a "crossroad", constituting "a bridge" over two cultures, or a "wall" defending Europe from the Turkish invaders. [135] In fact all these metaphors helped the Balkan countries to discard the Ottoman heritage, making it just an influence among so many others.[136]

However the Orient was closely associated with the Balkan Peninsula. In France, Eastern Europe was known as *Europe Orientale* and the entire region got "many of the stereotypes and prejudice traditionally ascribed to the Orient.".[137] More so after Greece became independent, the Western fascination gradually faded and comparisons with the Orient were more and more used.[138]

At the World Exhibitions all these stereotypes were put in practice by the French organisers. Although foreign countries were in charge of their display, the French by numerous practices that I will analyse in the following chapters, managed to give to the Balkan nations both an orientalising and an exotic look.

b) The Beginnings: Universal Exhibitions in Paris in 1867 and 1878

The Universal Exhibitions not only created an opportunity for self-representation but also the need for this. Countries that since their autonomy or independence from the Ottoman Empire

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[135] Vezenkov, *History Against Geography.*
[136] Ibid.
[137] Ezequiel Adamovsky"Euro-Orientalism and the Making of the Concept of Eastern Europe in France, 1810–1880." *The Journal of Modern History* 77.3 (2005), 592 and 599 – 600.
[138] Konstantinos Chatzis and Georgia Mavrogonatou, "Greece at the Paris Universal Exhibition in 1878", *Quaderns d'Història de l'Enginyeria*, Vol 8, (2012), 12.

had been satisfied with employing Western architectural styles in new state buildings suddenly had to display a unique, "national" architecture for the World Exhibitions. This was one of the dilemmas facing the young Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alexandru Odobescu, when he started working in his newest position, as organiser of the Romanian section at the 1867 Universal Exhibition in Paris. In his country there were few trained architects, most of the new buildings being built by foreigners, and no schools of architecture. For Odobescu it also seemed easier to find a foreigner for the Romanian pavilion and even more convenient at a Parisian exhibition, for this foreigner to be French. Thus in 1866 he decided on a young architect, Ambroise Baudry, who did some archaeological surveys in Romania just the year before where he had met Odobescu.[139]

The process of creating a representative architecture was not left solely in the hands of Baudry. As we will also see in other cases it was more a negotiated process in which as a general rule the local committees established the sources of inspiration and the French architect interpreted them. Here too Odobescu and others in the organisation committee decided on the most representative historical monuments of the country to be used by Baudry in creating a national exhibition pavilion. And they focused on mainly one monument, the 16th century church of Curtea de Argeş.(figure 1) The sculptor Karl Stork was commissioned to do a two and a half meter tall model of the monastery; the main work written about it by the Austrian Ludwig Reissenberger was translated into French and displayed at the exhibition; and large drawings and

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[139] At only 28 years of ages Baudry spent around 6 month at different sites in Romania. The story is told by Odobescu himself in Alexandru Odobescu, *Opere complete*, vol 2, (Bucharest : Minerva, 1906), 319. For a good monograph dedicated to the life and oeuvre of Baudry, including his work in Romania and at the International Exhibition of 1867 see M.-L. Crosnier-Leconte et M. Volait, *L'Égypte d'un architecte : Ambroise Baudry 1838-1906*, (Paris: Somogy, 1998).

pictures of the monument were sent to Baudry that would serve as the main model for both the national pavilion and the Romanian section in the main gallery.[140] Consequently he built a structure also in the shape of a byzantine church that was intended to be a personal replica of the Argeş monastery, with some elements from another ecclesiastic construction from Romania. (Figure 2)[141]

The resulting pavilion was seen as a rather unaccomplished structure. It has been remarked how the church looks suddenly shortened towards its eastern part where the altar should have been and also that the two twisted domes are „much flatter than their original and mostly, being twisted divergent and not convergent, this makes them particularly unattractive".[142] For my goal however, the aesthetic considerations are of secondary importance to the way the building was presented and received. In the official publication presenting Romania at the exhibition, the pavilion was seen as a type of „Greco-Roman" architecture, with a rich interior decoration and with twisted towers, „not similar with anything of the entire old architecture"[143]. However the French had a rather different interpretation. They saw a representation of an oriental culture, languorous, in vivid colours, and with a strange choice of a Greek church for a Latin nation.[144] The pavilion was further seen as an unfortunate mixture of architectural styles, proof that

[140] See these exhibits explained in the catalogue *Napoleon al III-lea şi Principatele Române*, (Bucharest: National Museum of Arts, 2009) 156 - 158.m

[141] The second source of inspiration was Stavropoleos monastery from Bucharest, an 18th century monument. Baudry didn't see also this building but pictures of it were also sent by Odobescu.

[142] Marie Laure Crosnier Leconte*,"*Du savoir archeologique a la reconstruction de fantaisie: Ambroise Baudry a Troesmis e a L'Exposition universelle de 1867 a Paris", in Carmen Popescu, Ioana Teodorescu (eds.), *Genius loci: national et régional en architecture; entre histoire et pratique = national and regional in architecture; between history and practice*, Bucureşti: (Simetria, 2002), 124.

[143] Alexandru Odobescu, Petre Aurelian, *Notice sur la Roumanie: principalement au point de vue de son économie rurale, industrielle et commerciale, suivi du catalogue spécial des produits exposés dans la section roumaine à l'exposition universelle de Paris, en 1867, et d'une notice sur l'histoire du travail dans ce pays, (*Paris: Librairie A. Franck, 1868), 318 – 319.

[144] Laurenţiu Vlad, *Imagini ale identităţii naţionale. România şi expoziţiile universale de la Paris, 1867-1937,* (Iaşi: Institutul European, 2007), 84 – 85.

"Romania doesn't exist by itself. It doesn't shine. (...) It is Greek, Russian, French, German, what else?"[145] Even the most unwanted comparison, with the Orient, was sharply emphasised in one place:

> (…) an architecture that is no more Byzantium than Moscow. Let us take the Romanian church as it is, a transition between Byzantine and Oriental art. What these three cupolas are missing is a magnetic needle like the one in Mecca. One more time, there is something of a mosque and of Kremlin in this architecture, half imported half imposed; it is an art of the middle, if I can say so, that looks for its medium but does not find it, in the same way as the country that it represents .[146]

More in the official guide of the 1867 Universal Exhibition the pavilion was compared with famous Oriental structures like Alhambra and the Bosporus pavilion and it was criticized for its lack of proportions.[147]

This double and often contradictory perception could also be noticed at other Universal Exhibitions, surrounding mainly the notion of „Oriental". The Balkan countries tried to put their Ottoman and Oriental heritage into brackets while the West often made parallels between the Balkans and the Orient. These two different views have correspondence in the two main clichés regarding the peninsula in the 19th century: The Balkans as a "bridge" between Occident and Orient and as the "Orient of Europe"[148]. The contradiction is further emphasized by the World Exhibitions where the West and in our case France was in search of the exotic, the spectacular, while the countries from the Balkans wanted to assert themselves as "modern" or "European".

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[145] *L'Exposition illustrée*, tom II, 1900, 130-132: "Ce qui manque à la Roumanie, c'est de ne pas exister par elle-même. Elle ne rayonne pas. Elle reçoit la lumière de tous côtés, du nord comme du midi, du levant, du couchant aussi. Elle sera grecque, russe, française, allemande, quoi encore?".

[146] François Ducuing, „L'Eglise roumaine", in *L'Exposition illustrée,* tom I, (1867), 53.

[147] Michel Chevalier (coord.), *Rapports du jury international*, (Paris: Imprimerie Administrative de Paul Dupont, 1868, 305 – 307.

[148] Carmen Popescu, "Un patrimoine".

Nevertheless with this Universal Exhibition, the first example of Romanian national architecture appeared, an important episode in defining a true national style.[149]

At the Universal Exhibition of 1878 for the first time all the foreign pavilions were displayed in the same place, along *Nation's street*. It consisted of a juxtaposition of buildings, one near the other, without any separating space, and having as distinctive architectural feature a façade measuring 5 meters. Although far from the amplitude of the next *Nation's street*, at the world exhibition of 1900, it was still seen as "one of the most interesting sights and the most visited by the crowd".[150] Here for the first time the architectural diversity of the whole world was promoted and the problem of "national" architecture was raised.[151]

Greece was the only country from the Balkans that took part in the exhibition, mainly because it was the only one not involved in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877 − 1878, in which Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro gained independence and Bulgaria autonomy from the Ottoman Empire.

During this time, Western attitudes towards Greece had been characterised by sympathy for the efforts the new state had made in its quest for "modernisation", considering "the historical circumstances that were not of her own making". [152] The same attitude is expressed by Alexandros Mansolas, a member of the Greek commission, who wrote an official booklet on the occasion of this exposition: Whoever wants to judge in what measure the Greek efforts in this

short period of 40 years succeeded, must not forget the miserable state it was when it shook the yoke of Ottoman tyranny.[153]

The Greek pavilion position is a clue for yet another type of attitude of the West, the connection made with the Orient. In a project for "international facades" kept in the Parisian archives, Greece is positioned between Portugal and Turkey, starting a row of Oriental countries that continued with Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco.[154] As we will see Greece's positioning in 1889 was very similar, being right next to the Cairo Street and the Moroccan pavilion, again near the Oriental section. This connection will be reinforced, as we have seen in the Romanian case at the previous exhibition, by the French publications, which often broughtthe notion of Orient into discussions when referring to the Balkan nations.

The architecture of the pavilion referred to ancient Greece, by using very distinguishable neoclassical shapes.(figure 3) Those who designed what was referred to as the "national facade" for Greece were again foreigners, namely two French architects, J. Olive and Paul Bénard.[155] In the documents kept by the General Commission of the exposition it can be seen how the two architects asked for the approval of Georges Berges, the official responsible for the foreign section on a number of issues.[156] Berges is even credited with the idea of creating a nation's street.[157] Therefore he and his team of architects must have played a decisive role in shaping the

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[153] Alexandros Mansolas, *La Grèce à l'exposition universelle de Paris en 1878, notions statistiques, catalogue des exposants*, (Athens, 1878), VI : quiconque voudra juger à quel point ont réussi les efforts de la Grèce pendant la courte période de quarante ans dans la carrière de la civilisation, ne devra pas oublier l'état misérable dans lequel elle se trouvait quand elle a secoué le joug de la tyrannie Ottomane.
[154] *Archives Nationales de France*, Paris, F/12/3493.
[155] In a letter to the General Commissioner of Greece it is mentioned that "it has been demanded to each country the construction of a section of national façade.", letter from 1877, F/12/3493.
[156] *Archives Nationales de France*, Paris, F/12/3493.
[157] "L'architecture au Champs-de-Mars", *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, (Paris, 1878), 732: "to the Director of the Foreign Sections we own the first idea and the difficult realisation of the *Nation's street*"

appearance of the foreign facade. The situation was similar at the next two World Exhibitions, where the foreign commissions had to seek approval for their plans from the central French commission, which would often give additional advice to the architects. Thus what are among the first examples of "national styles" in the Balkans were actually designed for a foreign public under the strict supervision of the French organisers. However the Greek case was in this respect a particular one as the neoclassical architecture was designated as "national" from the first moments of its independence and remained like this throughout the 19th century.

The Greek pavilion was meant to represent a typical artist's workshop from the classical period.[158] Suggestively named "The Pericles House", its most conspicuous element was the first floor balcony with its Doric columns and the decorated architrave. Under it stood the bust of the Goddess Athena, a motif that would be repeated at the exhibition of 1889. One of the two architects, Paul Bénard also worked at the Swedish and Russian facades, the latter in collaboration with the famous Russian architect Ivan Ropet[159]. So Bénard was an extremely polyvalent architect, who built very different buildings at the same exposition. We will see in the next chapters that these types of artists, specialised in exhibition architecture, who could adapt easily to different requirements were very common at World Exhibitions in Paris.

The pavilion received mixed reviews in the French press. Those who praised it were reminded first of all of Greek antiquity, but others criticised its aspect and inaccuracy. From the first category are comments like "We thus congratulate the Greeks for giving us in their facade so restraint and so narrow of their exposition, a reminder that their antique architecture is our

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[158] Mavrogonatou, "Greece...", 12. Also see *Journal official de la Republique Francaise*, May 3, 1878.
[159] Ivan Ropet was one of the main promoters of a vernacular inspired Russian national style, based on wooden architecture from rural areas.

classical architecture"[160] or "Everything is simple, sober, pure and of a supreme elegance. Greece is still the country of arts and of grace".[161] However one critique thought that "Greece, which long ago gave so many exquisite models of architecture and sculpture to the world, gave us this time a construction without grace and without proportions (...) and under the name of polychromy a mixture of crude and indigestible tones"[162] An equally harsh critique can be read in the *Gazette des Beaux Arts* where the lack of historical accuracy was the main problem. So the Greeks couldn't have built "a loggia that has the appearance of a temple tetra style" as only "our modern construction" has the technical abilities to design it.[163]

The Greek architecture in 1878 referred to the ancient heritage but was not central in the overall display. The majority of its exhibits were contemporary products designed to assert the modern state and the progress it had made since independence.[164] The fine balance between displaying the modernity or the traditional, vernacular and in Greek case the ancient was a common issue for all the participating countries at the world exhibitions. In the next chapters we will also see other examples of dual display strategies where again an obvious case is the Greek one.

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[160] Clovis Lamarre, Queux de St-Hilaire, *La Grèce et l'Exposition de 1878*, (Paris, 1878).
[161] *Journal official de la Republique Francaise*, May 3, 1878.
[162] Charles Blanc, *Les Beaux-Arts a l'Exposition universelle de 1878*, (Paris, 1878).
[163] "L'architecture au Champs-de-Mars", *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, (Paris, 1878), 747.
[164] Mavrogonatou, "Greece...". 12.

Chapter 4: First Time Together: Balkan Countries Architecture at the Paris World Exhibition of 1889

a) Overview of the Balkan countries participation

As early as 1884 France issued the official decision to organise a World Exhibition in Paris, in 1889. The purpose was to celebrate the centenary of the Republic together with keeping the tradition of 11-year intervals between Parisian World Exhibitions. It turned out to be the biggest exhibition so far: between 5 May and 31 October 1889, 28 million visitors could see 61,722 exhibitors on a surface of 95 ha.[165] It had been noticed how if the French state were to cover all the costs of 41,5 million francs, it would consume 15 percent of the revenues of France for the year 1889.[166]

The exhibition had 3 locations in the very centre of the city: *Champ des Mars*, a military training field, across the Seine, the *Jardin du Trocadero* and the nearby Esplanade des Invalides. The main attraction was the newly built Tower of 300 meters that would later be known as Eiffel Tower.[167] Together with it another iron construction was an even greater technical feat: The Machine Gallery, designed for the exhibition of industrial equipment, was the largest covered space in the world, at 420 m long and 115 m wide.[168] These were in stark contrast with the very

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[165] By comparison in 1878 the Universal Exhibition in Paris had 16 million visitors and 53,100 exhibitors. Caroline Mathieu, *La Tour Eiffel et l'Exposition Universelle* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1889), 40.
[166] Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo,. *Mexico at the World's Fairs: Crafting a Modern Nation*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 16.
[167] Details of its construction and reception in Myriam Bacha, Beatrice de Andia and Jean-Pierre Babelon, *Les Expositions Universelles a Paris De 1855 a 1937* (Paris: Action Artistique de la Ville de Paris, 2005), 105 – 106, 117 – 125;
[168] Ibid., 112.

decorative architecture fashionable in Paris at that time, of which two palaces next to Eiffel Tower, of Fine Arts and Liberal Arts, are the most famous examples.[169]

Another famous architectural display was the set of buildings called "The History of Habitation". Built by the architect of the Opera in Paris, Charles Garnier, it comprised 44 houses meant to illustrate types of dwellings from all periods and places, from Egyptian to Eskimo.

However the Exhibition of 1889 was in danger of suffering a major setback: because of its purpose to celebrate the Republic by commemorating 100 years from the French revolution and thus since the abolition of the Monarchy, the majority of Europe's kingdoms refused an official participation. This was also the case of Romania, but not of Greece and Serbia who are among the few monarchies that had an official participation. But due to the enormous prestige of Parisian exhibitions as well as the economic interest of companies around Europe to present their products, eventually the European monarchies found the solution to sponsor private comities, and eventually had participations equal in magnitude with the countries that participated in an official way.[170]

With the exception of Montenegro (that would not take part in any 19th century Universal Exhibition), the rest of the independent Balkan countries, Greece, Serbia and Romania, were represented and had different constructions in Paris. At once noticeable are the various connections made between them and with other Oriental or *exotic* countries. They were positioned in the same place, they were presented often as a group in the official publications and various similarities were also found by the French authors. What is more the Balkan countries

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[169] Both were designed by the future architect of the Romanian pavilion in 1900, Jean Camille Formigé.
[170] The sole European countries that did not participated at all were Germany and Montenegro. Brigitte Schrœder-Gudehus, "Les grandes puissances devant l'Exposition universelle de 1889" in *Le Mouvement social* : *Mise en Scène et Vulgarisation: L'Exposition Universelle de 1889,* No. 149, (1989)*,* 15-24, 15 ; Bacha et all, *Les Expositions*, 105.

were located near the Oriental and some Far-East nations. Therefore in the search for asserting their nation as a distinct European country, they immediately encountered a double obstacle from the part of the French audience: the tendency to treat the Balkan peninsula as a whole, making them less unique; and the direct connection with the Oriental and exotic part of the exhibition, thus making them less "European".

One of the most telling examples of the connection between the Balkan nations comes from the vast volume dedicated to this event, *Les Merveilles de L'exposition,* where before embarking on an analysis of each Balkan country, the author felt the need of an introduction in, to use a contemporary term, a transnational perspective:

> These people, different as origins, race and aspirations, show at the same time certain similarities that a world exhibition emphasises. (...) There are between the majors industries of these countries, local industries in the first place, striking analogies. Could not we assign these semblances to the Turkish yoke that had been oppressing for centuries these people, dictating them habits and tastes that the again earned independence did not make them yet to disappear[?][171]

In the same publication we can also read that "the pavilions of Serbia and Greece successfully continued the facades of the Oriental Countries". [172] Also as a rule the Balkan countries not only were presented together in the newspapers and booklets dealing with the Exhibition but were also presented in chapters following those dedicated to the Oriental colonies, as in the case of *Figaro-Exposition 1889*.[173]

The location enforced very much the Balkan – Orient connection. On the far right of *Champ de Mars*, along *Avenue Suffren*, continuing the *Cairo Street*, the main Oriental attraction and the Moroccan constructions, were the pavilions of Japan, Serbian and Greece, one next to the

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[171]*Les Merveilles de L'exposition*, (Paris, 1889), 846.
[172] Ibid., 847.
[173] An example is in *Figaro-Exposition 1889*, Boussod, Valadon & Co., Paris., (1889), 66.

other. Exactly across was the Romanian Restaurant, having on its right the Siam pavilion and on

the left the Chinese one. The mixture of cultural displays must have been important if even in

pictures presenting the Greek pavilion or the Romanian restaurant, there can be noticed visitors

on donkeys, driven by Egyptians from *Rue de Caire.*(figure 4)

The *Cairo Street* was one of the most popular attractions at the exhibition and at the same

time a good example of Saidian Orientalism. 160 Egyptians have been brought together with 50

donkeys to populate an imagined street from the old Cairo.[174] Comprised of 25 houses from

different periods and different architectural styles, it was rather a creation of European fantasy.

Even Delort de Gleon, the one who coordinated its construction said that "it was more authentic

than the streets in Cairo itself" as you could not find any more an untouched old street in Cairo.[175]

The popularity of the attraction contrasted heavily with the impressions of the Egyptian visitors,

shocked especially to see inside the mosque that "Egyptian girls performed dances with young

males"[176].

In the case of the Balkan nations this type of display could never happen as the countries

organised themselves the exhibition whereas the Oriental ones had been shown exclusively by

the French organisers. But the example of Cairo Street shows what a very popular attraction looks

like and how strong was the search for exoticism and picturesque, urge that concerned also the

display of Balkan countries. The main goal of the organisers was that each nation to have an

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[174] Details in Zeynep Çelik, *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth-Century World's Fairs,* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1992), 75 – 80. Mathieu, *La Tour Eiffel*, 109.
[175] Celik, *Displaying the Orient,* 76.
[176] Timothy Mitchell, "The World as Exhibiton", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 31, No. 2., (1989), , 217 : "The Egyptian visitors were disgusted by all this and stayed away. Their final embarrassment had been to enter the door of the mosque and discover that, like the rest of the street, it had been erected as what the Europeans called a facade. Its external form as a mosque was all that there was. As for the interior, it had been set up as a coffee house, where Egyptian girls per-formed dances with young males, and dervishes whirled"

attractive exhibition so the participating countries had to take into account also this "popular" dimension.

In charge of the architectural display of the participating countries at the World Exhibition of 1889 were several commissions and a number of specialists, proving an entangled decision process. In the case of an official participation, like Greece and Serbia, each country had two organising commissions: one back home, more honorific, led usually by the Foreign Affairs minister and comprising local decision-makers or politicians; and one commission in Paris, led by a local general commissioner from the participating country and comprising a mixed team of local and French specialists in different domains. From this second commission was part also the French architects who built the pavilions of Greece and Serbia.

In the case of a non-official participation, the participation was organised by only one private commission based Paris. It also had a general commissioner that in the case of Romania was George Bibescu, a Romanian living for many years in Paris and the commission itself comprised very mixed specialists from Romania and France, foreigners and locals.[177]

These commissions were in charge and had to support the whole display of their nation. The organisers in Paris would only provide the space and a 50% reduction for the transportation of the exhibits.[178] So the resort of the majority of Balkan countries to French architects appears a result of practical reasons: they were experienced in designing constructions for World Fairs and were already available in Paris.[179] Oscar André, the architect hired by the Romanian commission,

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[177] Detail lists of all the comissions of the participating countries in "Commissions étrangéres", *Exposition Universelle Internationale de 1889*, , (Paris, 1889);

[178] *Sections étrangeres: Renseignements Généraux*, (Paris: 1889), 4.

[179] They usually would advertise themselves as proves a letter to the Romanian ambassador in Paris related to the Universal Exhibition of 1900: Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bucharest, Fond Paris, Culturale, Vol. 281.

is an example of experienced artist in designing and working at the Universal Exhibitions as he was also hired in 1889 by the French state to build the Telephones pavilion at the same exhibition.[180]

b) Romania

Even if Romania did not participated officially in 1889 the state funded the private commission with the exact same sum as did in an official way Greece and Serbia. This added to the amount raised by the committee through a lottery, making Romania's exhibition in fact twice as expensive.[181] The constructions presented in Paris were a restaurant, a bar and the Romanian section in the Gallery of Diverse Products. Probably due to the private participation, Romania could afford to replace the traditional national pavilion with a more crowd friendly restaurant.

A type of architecture to represent the nation has been brought up only marginally in the intellectuals sphere in Romania. Still in 1889 appeared in Bucharest the first handbook for the history of arts were it is made a direct connection between the nation and its architecture:

> If from how the temple looks can be deduced the kind of belief of a people, from how its houses and its towns look like can be appreciated its degree of culture and its social welfare... Even from the type of architecture we can see, up to a point, also the character of a people.[182]

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[180] Mathieu, *La Tour Eiffel*, 256.

[181] The economic details are presented by the General Comissioner in Gheorghe Bibesco, *Expositiunea universala din Paris, 1889. Raport despre lucrarile comitetului national roman, de la 20 iulie 1888 la 20 martie 1890*, (Bucharest: F. Gobl fii, 1890). See also Laurențiu Vlad, *Imagini ale identității naționale. România la expozițiile universale și internaționale de la Paris, 1867 – 1937*, Institutul European, Iași, 2007, pp. 93 – 102.

[182] Nicolae Idieru, *Istoria artelor frumoase. Architectura, sculptura, pictura, musica din toate timpurile și din toate țările, inclusiv Rumânia* [The History of the Fine Arts. Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, Music from all the times and all the places, including Romania] , (Bucharest: Joseph Gobl, 1889 in Ada Hajdu, *Arhitectul Ion Mincu în context local și regional*, unpublished, 2014, 7: „dacă după înfățișarea templului se poate judeca felul credinței unui popor, din înfățișarea caselor și orașelor sale putem aprecia gradul lui de cultură și starea lui socială. ... Ba chiar, prin felul arhitecturii putem judeca, până la un punct, și caracterul unui popor".

But these types of opinions represented only minor steps towards defining a Romanian style in architecture. Thus certainly the Romanian General Commissioner, George Bibescu, had difficulties to respond to the demands of the French organisers for a so called "Romanian style", elusive notion at that time. It was the General Commissioner of the Exhibition himself who asked in a letter for a "decorative facade in the Romanian style".[183] The same "Romanian style" was demanded also by the people exhibiting for the country as proves a demand by a merchant from *Calea Victoriei* [Victory Avenue]: "on the arrangement or the decoration of the Romanian section, [should be] a man that has this specialisation in the country, who proves that he knows the Romanian style".[184]

For the creation of this "Romanian style", Bibescu summoned a diverse team of architects:[185] Paul Gottereau and André Lecomte de Nouy were French working in Romania, the first one having designed important constructions in Bucharest and the latter being the most important restorer of historical monuments; Ion Mincu and Grigore Cerchez were Romanians that graduated from the Fine Arts School in Paris and would later become the most preeminent promoters of the future "national" or "neoromanian" style;[186] and finally two Paris-based French architects, Charles LeCoeur and Oscar André, who were friends with Bibescu.[187] As we will see

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[183] Letter of G. Berger form 19 July 1888. Romanian Academic Library, Buchares, Manuscript Cabinet, Fond George Bibescu, XI VARIA 1 – 148, leaf 171.

[184] Letter of August Clouard, *marchand-granier*, Calea Victoriei 134. Ibidem,, leaf 41: „După construcția Galeriei care delimitează spațiul de 375 metri patrați, privind aranjarea sau decorația secțiunii românești, [să se asigure] un om care are această specialitate în țară, care demonstrează că cunoaște stilul român".

[185] They are mentioned in George Bibescu, *La Roumanie avant-pendant-apres*, (Paris, 1890), 90, 92, 96, 105. Also see Gheorghe Bibesco, *Expositiunea universala din Paris,* 1890, 19.
Oscar André is not mentioned here but in several French publications.

[186] Also Lecomte de Nouy has recently been seen as having a major role in the development of this style; See "L'étranger: Lecomte de Nouy" in Carmen Popescu, *Le Style National Roumain. Construire une Nation a travers l'Architecture 1881 – 1945,* (Rennes : Presses Universitaires de Rennes/ Simetria, 2004),68 – 77.

[187] Charles LeCoeur even designed the house in Paris of George Bibescu, decorated among others also by the painter Auguste Renoir. LeCoeur and Bibescu were in fact friends from their youth, when they were students. More details in Alexandra Chiliman Juvara, "Reședința Principelui George Bibescu de la Paris. Componente artistice." [The

none of the three booklets written by Bibescu on Romania's participation at the exhibition of 1889 details the contribution of each of the architects. But the image that emerges is that of a truly team work, were various influences and negotiations led to the creation of "Romanian" architecture.

We only know for sure that Ion Mincu made the first designs for a Romanian restaurant that was dropped off probably because it was too expensive.[188] However in the long term Mincu's project had a fortunate destiny, having been being built 3 years later in Bucharest where it still functions today as a restaurant (figure 5). The building has subsequently been seen as the best example of a national style, "the renaissance of the Romanian architecture"[189] and Mincu himself is still regarded today as the "father" of the Romanian national style.[190] The traditional porch with wooden columns, the trilobe arches and the glazed ceramic decoration employed in this first project would become archetypal elements of a national architecture. Despite this, the initial role of the Restaurant, as an exhibition pavilion, has not been taken into account until recently when

residence of the Prince George Bibescu from Paris. Artistic Components], *Monumentul XI*, (Iaşi:, 2009). The most important review of the career of Charles Le Coeur in the catalogue Marc Le Cœur, *Charles Le Cœur (1830-1906), architecte et premier amateur de Renoir*, (Paris: Les dossiers du musée d'Orsay, Réunion des musées nationaux, 1996) [exposition du 16 octobre 1996 - 5 janvier 1997].

[188] The designs signed by Mincu are kept in the collection of the National Museum of Fine Arts in Bucharest. They have been shown at the exposition *Ion Mincu. Desene și proiecte de arhitectură,* MNAR, 2009 – 2010; On the motivation that the initial restaurant would cost too much see Nicolae Petraşcu *Ioan Mincu* (Bucharest: Cultura naţională, 1928), 19; Shona Kallestrup, *Art and Design in Romania 1866 – 1927. Local and International Aspects of the Search for National Expression*, (New York: Columbia University Press , 2006), 76.

[189] Petraşcu, *Ioan Mincu,* 20. See also Kallestrup, *Art and Design*, 76. Popescu*, Le Style*, 57.

[190] Mincu (1852 – 1912) is known as the inventor of this style even if he designed a limited number of buildings and after him other architects built very different buildings also considered in this style. Ion Mincu's fame dates from the pre-war period, due to his students, and can clearly be seen in the first monograph on his life and works written by his friend Nicolae Petraşcu *Ioan Mincu* (Bucharest: Cultura naţională, 1928). A second monograph written in the communist period will definitely establish Mincu as "the creator" of a new style: Mihail Caffe, *Arhitectul Ion Mincu*, (Bucureşti: Editura Ştiinţifică, 1960).

the demands for the building to be as spectacular but at the same time as authentic as possible have been emphasised.[191]

Another argument for a decisive influence of the exhibition architecture in creating a national style back home is also the fact that two other architects that would build and restore buildings in a national style in Romania were part of that team, Grigore Cerchez and the French specialist in restoration of ancient monuments André Lecomte de Nouy. The former will take over from Mincu and build also a vernacular-inspired pavilion after 15 years, at the Liege 1905 Universal Exhibition. The case of the latter is worth pausing upon. Lecomte de Nouy is famous in Romania for his controversial restoration of monuments like the church Saint Nicholas from Iaşi, Saint Dmitry from Craiova or the monastery Curtea de Argeş. His method of rebuilding completely and sometimes transforming the monument, in the manner of his master, Viollet le Duc, the most famous French restorer of that time, was heavily criticized. However the ways in which he reinterpreted and revived the Byzantine heritage is important in defining a national style as often after his restoration almost a completely new building replaced the old one.[192] In this way it is no coincidence that the main sources of inspiration for the Romanian architecture at the exhibitions of 1867, 1889 and 1900 are exactly the monuments he restored: the churches Curtea de Argeş and Trei Ierarhi from Iaşi.

Returning to the World Exhibition of 1889 in Paris, Romania will eventually build a restaurant also in the shape of a Romanian country house, very similar with the first one designed by Mincu (figure 6). In fact even Bibescu says that "The drawings of the *cabaret* remind of two

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[191] Popescu, *Le Style*, 57 – 58.
[192] Details in Carmen Popescu, *André Lecomte du Nouy (1844 – 1914) et la restauration des monuments historiques en Roumanie*, (Paris: Société de l'histoire de l'art français, 1998).

or three of the most joyful motives from the Mincu project"[193] and recently it has been mentioned the possibility of a remaking of the Mincu project into something less expensive.[194] Nevertheless it seems at least that Mincu collaborated also at this second project. In one place he is even taken to be the architect, "assisted by Oscar André"[195] but the French publications give the name of André as "constructor". [196] So a French-Romanian collaboration seems the most viable hypotheses at this example of vernacular architecture, praised to be a real house, not some fantastic construction, thus "arousing a serious interest in [its] practical application". [197] The house also reflects the appeal on folk creation in the official publication of Romania at the exhibition, where the general commissioner George Bibescu mentions that "the most authentic expression of the nation is the Romanian peasant, his way of life and what he creates".[198]

This team of architects also made the facade of the Romanian Section in the Gallery of divers industries. It is noticeable at first glance the main monumental gate, flanked on both sides by two other similar constructions, small kiosks with a bell-tower on top and between them a kind of shop windows (figure 7). In the same picture it can be seen further inside a pavilion described by Bibescu as being 11 meters in height, "copy after the baptistery of Curtea de Argeş".[199] Indeed the shape of the tower but also the decoration above the main entrance gate and of the kiosks look very much like that of the fountain in front of Argeş monastery.[200] And

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[193] Bibescu, *La Roumanie*. 96.
[194] Popescu, *Le Style*, 57.
[195] Mathieu, *La Tour Eiffel*, 257.
[196] *Moniteur des Architectes*, 1890, 3; *Figaro-Exposition 1889*, 66-67.
[197] *Le Moniteur des architectes*, 1889, 15.
[198] Georges Bibesco, *Notice sur la Roumanie. Productions-Industries*, J. Kugelmann, Paris, 1889.
[199] Bibescu, *La Roumanie*, 110.
[200] In fact the famous construction in Argeş is not a baptistery as Bibescu called it but a fountain for the Holy Water, a structure typical of the Paleolithic churches but that can also be found in front of mosques. See Ioana Iancovescu, „Fântâna"[The Fountain] in *Repertoriul picturilor murale brâncoveneşti I. Judeţul Vâlcea*, (Bucharest: UNArte, Bucureşti, 2008) 147-148.

here comes in important observation for us: The fountain that provided the source of inspiration for the Romanian section is not the original one, but a reconstruction of André Lecomte du Nouy, who also rebuilt the church. So if in general the architects transform an established motif or construction to create an architectural style for national representation, here we have a case of double transformation: first by the restorer, then by the architect who interprets in turn the restored building. It also seems probable that Lecomte du Nouy himself suggested the fountain from Argeș as a source of inspiration. But in the same way Mincu might be responsible for the creation of the glass windows with the trilobe arches, a recurrent motif in his work.

We can also notice the use of the Curtea de Argeș monastery as a source of inspiration for the exhibition architecture in all the 19th century Universal Exhibitions Romania took part. This Oriental looking church gives the Romanian architecture an orientalising character even if this is precisely the image Romania wanted to deny in its nation-building paradigm. Popescu citing other examples talks about the phenomenon of "self-orientalisation" in which Romanian architects used in different ways Oriental motifs in their work.[201]

The connection with the Orient is also made in the French publications, but mostly regarding the atmosphere of the Romanian Restaurant. The Romanians *Lăutari*, Gypsy singers of folk songs, the traditional food and the waitresses created an atmosphere unanimously appreciated.[202] The popularity was such that the restaurant became a usual place of meeting for the Parisian high class.[203] And the music was a way to have romantic reveries, it was "slow" or

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[201] Carmen Popescu, „Balkan Orientalism: Geopolitics and Self-Invention: A Reading of the Romanian Case" în *Centropa*, no. 2, (2008), 172-185.
[202] See Annegret Fauser, *Musical Encounters at the 1889 Paris World's Fair*, (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, Rochester, 2005), 252 – 261.
[203].*Guide Bleu du Figaro et du Petit Journal*, (Paris : Figaro Petit journal, 1889), 216 – 217.

"languishing" [204] and had "a sonority more feminized and less appropriate for the interpretation of the heroic sentiments".[205] These all are epithets usually attributed to an Oriental culture. In the *Revue des Deux Mondes* the music was even an opportunity for romantic metaphors: "these strings and these reeds [the pan flute tubes] contain all the passion frenzies, all the tears that the earth has ever drunk".[206] The same the music was considered "charming and full of poetry"[207] or having the authenticity of a "rural people with bucolic insertions". [208] The association Orient/Romania has been remarked, even if not in a direct way, also in publications dealing with music at the world expos, were "Picturesque" music comprised the Oriental and the Gypsy one.[209]

Indeed in the joyful atmosphere of the Romanian Restaurant, the architecture of the building was probably the least important for the public. Still it received praises, as a "reproduction of a Romanian house" or as an "authentic architecture". [210] But overall the restaurant can be placed in what has been called "entertainment areas", where there is no special message sent to the audience but the goal is just to offer simple entertainment.[211]

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[204] "Those slow and languishing waltzes are seemingly essential Romanian". *Figaro exposition*, 1889, 100: "Ces valses lentes, langoureuses, sont, paraît-il, essentiellement roumains".
[205] *Le Menestrel,* 1889, 275: "Il en résulte une sonorité plus efféminée et beaucoup moins apte à la interprétation des sentiments héroïques".
[206] *Revue des Deux Mondes*, tome 94, (1889). 944: "ces cordes et ces roseaux contiennent tous les délires de la passion, toutes les larmes qu'a jamais bues la terre".
[207] L'Exposition chez soi, 735: "leur musique est charmant et pleine de poesie".
[208] *Figaro exposition*, 100: "peuple pasteur, avec note champetre".
[209] Annegret Fauser, *Musical Encounters at the 1889 Paris World's Fair*, University of Rochester Press, Rochester, 2005.
[210] Other descriptions of the Romanian restaurant in Maurice Brincourt, *L'Exposition Universelle de 1889,* (Paris : Librairie de Firmin-Didot, 1890), 239 and *Figaro-Exposition 1889*, (1889), 100.
[211] Burton Benedict, „International Exhibitions and National Identity" în Anthropology Today, Vol. 7, No. 3 (Jun., 1991), pp. 5-9, p. 9.

c) Serbia

Serbia has been the first nation to confirm the official participation at the World Exhibition of 1889.[212] As early as April 1887 the French ambassador to Belgrade announced his country's participation.[213] Still the exposition was among the smallest one, with only a national pavilion were all the Serbian products were displayed.

Its commission comprised only two foreigners, as architect Alfred Labouige and Armand B. Gibert, probably chosen for his familiarity with Serbia.[214] In the French publications appears also the name of Lafanège, as the architect of the pavilion so collaboration with Labouige is probable.

The location of the pavilion "in the gallery of the countries from the Orient and Far East [extréme Orient] profoundly dissatisfied the Serbs.[215] Relevant fact for the display strategy of the Balkan nations, they demanded a place "that is included with the countries from Europe" and the general commissioner tried apparently without a success "to approach Serbia from the countries from Europe".[216] So we have the proof of a direct and conscious try to position Serbia as a European country, as if being part of the continent was not a thing taken for granted. In fact the direct reference to a Balkan country as not being part of Europe only reinforces the general attitude of the French organisers at these Universal Exhibitions.

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[212] *Guide Bleu du Figaro et du Petit Journal*, (Paris : Figaro Petit journal, 1889), 221
[213] Archives nationales des France, Paris, F/12/3762
[214] Gibert published in 1885 *Quelques jours en Serbie et a Constantinople*, Mars-Avril 1885
[215] Leter from the General Commissioner of the Exhibition to the Foreign Affairs Mionister of Serbia, 12 August 1888, Archives Nationales de France, Paris, F/12/3763.
[216] Ibid.

The French team of architects, Labouige – Lafanège, managed to design a construction by using the elements seen as "traditional" Serbian: large round arches and the polychrome façade decoration that together quote the so called "byzantine style", very much in fashion in Serbia as well as in Central Europe were the most important Serbian architects studied in the 19th century (figure 8). This view is enforced by the French publications that praised the pavilion as "absolutely giving the impression of Serbian national architecture" and of being in "the purest Serbo-Byzantin style".[217] However in the same magazine there is also the recognition that "we can find few traces of byzantine architecture in Serbia as the Turkish occupation destroyed all the monuments".[218] Thus paradoxically it is praised a Serbo-Byzantin byzantine style inspired by the historical monuments that are no more, relevant statement although not recognized for the invented character of this styles.

The most talked about element on the Serbian pavilion façade were the glazed ceramic tiles, seen as a beautiful example of Serbian decorative art. But the glazed ceramic was also a central element in the Romanian architectural discourse. The architect credited with the invention of the "national Romanian style", Ion Mincu, used ceramic as one of the main motives in what should have been the Romanian pavilion for the same exhibition. In fact, this is a case of appropriation by both Romania and Serbia as a national decoration of what was a rather commonly used motif throughout Europe at the turn of the 19th century.[219] And actually Mincu and Labouige received almost exactly the same education: had the same professor at the Fine

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[217] S. Krakow, *Guide Bleu du Figaro et du Petit Journal*, (Figaro Petit journal, 1889), 221-222.
[218] Ibid..
[219] Popescu, *Le style*, 55.

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Arts School in Paris, Julien Guadet and were admitted there in successive years (Mincu of 1881, Labouige of 1882).[220]

d) Greece

Next to the Serbian pavilion was the Greek one, country that had as general commissioner, like in the Romanian case, a specialist who was based in Paris, the engineer Ernest Vlasto.[221] He assembled a team formed almost entirely by Greeks, the only exception being the architect, Aimé Sauffroy.[222] He studied like all the other cases at the Fine Arts school in Paris and has as his most famous work the Casino of Paris, opened in 1891.[223]

Greece already had a stereotypical image in the West as the inheritor of the antique civilisation and most of the comments in the French publications refer to it.[224] Specifically at the Universal Exhibition it was generally seen as a nation waken up from its long time sleep that tries to regain the lost glory of antiquity but that nevertheless has an impossible task in it. As a consequence the young Greek nation could only impress with its technological and economical progresses made in a short period of time. Maybe considering this double perception and trying

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[220] Julien Guadet is known as one of the most ardent promoters of the regional specificity in architecture, spreading many of the ideas important for the national styles. Popescu, "Un Patrimoine…", 60: "Julien Guadet, the spiritual father of French regionalism".

[221] He is called "engineer in Paris". Archives Nationales, Paris, F/12/3762.

[222] The fact is relevant for the much mediated nature of the national architecture at the World Exhibition, involving all the time foreigners and locals.

[223] Delaire, *Les architectes*

[224] Details of the idealisation of the Greek nation and how this was reflected in the architecture in Neni Panourgiá, "Colonizing the ideal: neoclassical articulations and european modernities", *Angelaki, Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, vol. 9, no. 2, (2004). See also Manos G. Birēs și Marō Kardamitsē-Adamē, *Neoclassical architecture in Greece*, (Los Angeles : J. Paul Getty Museum, 2004).

to relate ancient Greece with the modern Greek state the Hellenic organizers commissioned Sauffroy two frescoes on the main façade: on the left of the main entrance, one related to the ancient history that represented a view of the Acropolis and on the right side a view of some major industrial works of the modern state like the Corinthian channel or the mines from Laurium (figure 9). The façade of the pavilion was made under the supervision of the French based Greek engineer Ernest Vlasto and had nevertheless as the most visible elements still the symbols of the classical antiquity: the statue of Athena in the centre and on each side the shield of the goddess with the head of the Medusa on it. In addition, that the plans for this pavilion had to be approved by the French Paul Sedille and Charles Garnier, one of the star architects of the exhibition after building the series of fantasy houses named *Histoire du Habitation Humaine*. In this way the usual image of an entire team of architects that contributed to the final design begins to take shape.

The Greek example is the most conspicuous for the tendency to balance two display strategies: to promote a modern nation, by way of its industry, cities, arts, etc., that can compare at least in certain aspects with the West; and to promote one's unique cultural heritage by way of traditions, historical or vernacular monuments and crafts. Usually, as was the case with the Balkan nations, the architecture was meant to show the latter dimension, by using unique "traditional" elements and inside the pavilion one could find also modern industrial achievements or contemporary art products that asserted the "modern" nation.

Other examples of this dual display strategy, often at odds which other, are offered by Latin America countries, another group of newly independent nations. [225] Eager to present

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[225] Tenorio-Trillo,. *Mexico,* 9.

themselves in front of the "modern" world, they had one of the biggest and costly displays.[226] Brazil, Argentina El Salvador or Bolivia presented pavilions made in the fashionable style in that time in Paris, a way to assert their modernity and also to attract European immigration.[227] An opposite example is offered by Mexico which has chosen to relate its pavilion the pre-Columbian times by presenting a building modelled after an Aztec temple, therefore referring to an indigenous tradition from.[228] Also an exception was the choice of an all-Mexican team to work at the pavilion: the engineer Antonio Anza, the architect Luis Salazar and the archaeologist Antonio Penafiel, whose discoveries were the start for the reconstruction of the ancient temple.[229] As a matter of fact monuments from before the colonial period barely existed in Mexico and to recreate them required besides archaeological work also a high degree of imagination from the architect. But as we already saw in the case of the Balkan nations an "imagined" architecture taken to represent something real from the history of the nation was something quite common at the Universal Exhibitions.

Looking again at the three pavilions of the Balkan countries we can also notice the obvious connection between the motives and styles used at this exhibition and the architectural

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[226] The Latin American countries that took part were Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Chile, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, El Salvador, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Mexico. Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo,. *Mexico at the World's Fairs: Crafting a Modern Nation*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 18;

[227] However the "modern" architecture of the Brazilian pavilion was counterbalanced by the tropical garden around it, that included even a river: "Argentina y Brasil en la Exposición Universal de París de 1889", *Relics and Selves: Iconographies of the National in Argentina, Brazil and Chile* http://bbk.ac.uk/ibamuseum/texts/FernandezBravo02.htm#top

[228] Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs*, 66.

[229] Details in Christiane Demeulenaere-Douyère, "Expositions internationales et image nationale : les pays d'Amérique latine entre pittoresque « indigène » et modernité proclamée", *Diacronie*, forthcoming (2014). See also Christiane Demeulenaere-Douyère, *Exotiques expositions: lex expositions universelles et les cultures extra-européennes, France, 1855-1937*, (Paris : Archives nationales, 2010).

developments at home. Thus, the Serbian pavilion with its succession of round arches reminds of the very successful similar motive from Serbia, starting with Captain Miša's Mansion finished more than 2 decades earlier. The Greek case shows that the prestige of the classical heritage proved to be impossible to overcome by a medieval or vernacular inspired "national" style. And finally the Romanian pavilion, an example of vernacular architecture is telling for the sources of inspiration of the initial Romanian national style. The deeply intertwined nature of the exhibition architecture with the artistic developments in each of these countries are seen even more clear at the next Parisian World Exhibition in 1900 were all the Balkan nations had chosen to promote with their pavilions the Byzantine cultural heritage.

Chapter 5: The Paradox of National Representation: Balkan Countries Pavilions at Paris Universal Exhibition of 1900

a) The Balkan Countries at the 1900 Universal Exhibition

In the biggest World Exhibition to date, four of the five independent or autonomous Balkan countries participated and were represented with national pavilions.[230] Greece, Serbia and Romania had constructions in the shape of an Orthodox church, while Bulgaria's one also reminded of ecclesiastic architecture. Opting for representation through the shared Byzantine cultural heritage, the Balkan countries contradicted the principle of national representation at World Fairs, which was asserting each country's uniqueness. Also, they bluntly contradicted the desire of the French organisers, who specifically demanded a diversity of buildings on the *Nations' Street*.[231] In order to explain this paradox, first I will sketch some particularities of the Paris 1900 World Exhibition, then I will look at the Balkan nations' participation as a whole, and finally I will detail the peculiarities of each country's involvement. The focus will be on the process of creating a national architecture and on the actors involved, the French and local architects. Throughout the chapter, I will stress crucial similarities regarding these architects' careers, as well as the reception of the Balkan pavilions in French publications.

The 1900 Universal Exhibition in Paris has been considered a kind of swan song for the "big manifestations of the 19th century", occasions for unprecedented experiments in the field of

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[230] The only exception is Montenegro, which has not participated at any World Fair until the Second World War.
[231] *Archives Nationales de France*, Paris: F/12/4270, F/12/4242: "it is wished though, to obtain of the entirety of these small Palaces an interesting and varied effect".

architecture.[232] The last exposition in Paris before 1937 surpassed by far all the previous events in every aspect, particularly in the spectacular number of visitors, fifty millions, a record which would last until the Osaka exhibition of 1970.[233]

The core of the event were considered the newly built *Petit Palais* and *Grand Palais*, designed in the French *Beaux-Arts* style, "the masterpieces of the Exposition", connected with the *Esplanade des Invalids* through the new bridge *Alexander III*, (named in the memory of the Czar Alexander III, who concluded the Franco-Russian Alliance of 1892).[234] These types of buildings have led to the often stated conclusion that in 1900 stone triumphed over iron, and that the Beaux Arts and Art Nouveau constructions covered and overcame the iron frames, so visible at the previous Exhibition in 1889.[235] The aforementioned constructions can still be seen today in Paris, together with the *Gare d'Orleans* (nowadays the d'Orsay Museum) and the first metro line. Thus, the 1900 Exhibition left the most prominent marks on the French capital.

At the same time, in 1900 one can notice what has been called "a real turn in organising the international fairs", the entertainment of the crowd with all sorts of popular amusements.[236] Some examples are the "moving sidewalk", "the up-side-down house", "the magic mirror" or the "Mareorama", which contrasted with the more traditional displays like the *Nations' Street* (Rue des Nations).

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[232] Caroline Mathieu, *Les expositions universelles à Paris: architectures réelles ou utopiques*, (Paris : Musée d'Orsay, 2007), 16.

[233] Alexander C.T. Geppert, *Città brevi: storia, storiografia e teoria delle pratiche espositive europee, 1851-2000*, "Memoria e Ricerca", No. 17, (2004), p. 9. Worth noticing is that France had at that time "only" 41 milions inhabitants.

[234] Mathieu, *Les expositions,* 16. See also Gilles Plum, l'Exposition Universelle de 1900, in Jean Pierre Babelon, Myriam Bacha, and Béatrice de Andia, *Les expositions universelles à Paris de 1855 à 1937*, (Paris : Action Artistique Ville Paris, 2005), 135 – 139.

[235] See "The 1900 Paris Exhibition" in Debora L. Silverman, *Art Nouveau in Fin-de-Siecle France*: Politics, Psychology and Style (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989)

[236] Sylvain Ageorges, *Sur les traces des Expositions Universelles. Paris 1855 – 1937*, (Paris: Parigramme, 2006), 110.

However, the 2.24 km long *Nations' Street*, along the left bank of Seine, is mentioned every time as one of the main attractions. Here, the sovereign states displayed on two rows their national pavilions. Celik remarked how this allocation of space emphasised a hierarchical classification. While the sovereign nations had their national pavilion on this street, the oriental colonies or other "exotic" nations had their pavilions in other sections.[237] Therefore, the *Nations' Street* could be seen at the time as "a unanimous and emotional manifestation of the civilized world", where for the first time the Balkan nations were included.[238] As a matter of fact, the drive to assert modernity and progress was felt ubiquitously. This is why the Balkan nations' exhibits included as much as possible modern constructions, engineering feats, industries, modern arts, etc. The architecture of the pavilions themselves could have been designed to express the modernity of the Balkan states, by way of a fashionable architectural style like the Art Nouveau. But the express desire of the French organisers left no doubt on how the pavilion architecture should look like. Every Balkan state (and presumably other states too) received the following indication by way of official letters from the French organisers:

> The character of the construction is also left at your appreciation; it is wished though, in order to obtain of the entirety of these small Palaces an interesting and varied effect, for every country to choose from its national architecture, either old or modern, types of habitation or of monuments, the reproduction of which would clearly characterise an era from the history of the country, or a region of its territory.[239]

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[237] Celik, *Displaying the Orient*, 89.

[238] Albert Quantin, *L'Exposition du Siècle*, Le Monde Moderne, (Paris, 1900), 127.

[239] "Le caractère de la construction est également laisse à votre appréciation; il est à désirer toutefois que pour obtenir de l'ensemble de ces petits Palais un effet intéressant et varie, chaque pays choisisse dans son architecture nationale, soit ancienne, soit moderne, des types d'habitation ou des monuments dont la reproduction caractérise nettement une époque de l'histoire du pays ou une région de son territoire." The exact same text in the letter to General Commissioner of Serbia, 5 October, 1897, *Archives Nationales de France*, Paris, F/12/4270; and in the letter to M. Delyannis, Greek ambassador to Paris, October 1897, *Archives Nationales de France*, Paris, F/12/4242; also see the letter to C. Stoicescu, Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs from the Romanian ambassador in Paris, telling the exact same advices received from the French organisers (23 Feb. 1897). Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bucharest, Fond Paris, Culturale, Vol. 281.

In this statement there are noticeable traces of a positivist way of thinking, part of a larger trend in *fin-de-siècle* France. Accordingly, a country already has a national architecture, represented by "old or modern" monuments, from which it could pick up several "types" to be reproduced at the World Exhibition. Even if she does not quote the above indication (which might have not existed for Oriental countries, though) Çelik identifies a similar method of constructing the Oriental pavilions, "which were often architectural collages incorporating various periods and regions of Islamic civilization". [240] She sees the starting point of these creations in the architectural renderings of the Orientalist paintings, where also various forms from different places and historical periods are combined in a quest defined by "the obsession with authenticity".[241] So, we notice again the same reference to a "national architecture" as was the case at the exhibition of 1889, even if the concept was not defined at all in the Balkans.

Confused as the Balkan nations might have been in the beginning by this rule imposed by the organisers, we will see that the French indications set in motion a search for "national" monuments, by way of reassessing and then presenting one's own architectural heritage. Acquiring knowledge and rating monuments of architecture is part of a larger phenomenon involving schools of architecture, archaeological societies, societies for the preservation of ancient monuments, and handbooks and journals of architecture. A thorough research of this phenomenon is still to be done for the Balkans. However, in this paper I will demonstrate what role the pavilion architecture played in this discussion.

Once the plans for the constructions were finished, they had to be presented for approval to the organisers. There were five officials (among them two architects) in charge of validating

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[240] Çelik, *Displaying...*, 56.
[241] Sylviane Leprun, *Le Théâtre des colonies* (Paris, 1986) 48 – 83 in Ibid.

the appearance of each pavilion: The Chief Architect of the General Installations; the architect in charge of the Foreign Sections; the director of the Architectural Service; the General Director of the Exploitations; and the General Commissioner of the Exposition.[242] Thus, every design had to take into account the strict control imposed by the French. The official documents issued in this regard offer at least one justification for this control. In the correspondence with the Romanian organisers, kept in the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the French demanded to see the plans "as soon as possible", so that they could in return "send the observations that would be suggested to us by the necessity of maintaining among the diverse constructions, at the same time, the diversity and the harmony that must assure a good decorative effect".[243] The desire for "diversity" reinforces the paradox I talked about at the beginning of this chapter, and renders the resemblance among the pavilions of the Balkan countries even more puzzling.

The paradox is further emphasised by other elements denying the idea of national uniqueness, one of the main principles underlying the discourse of national representation. Firstly, all the pavilions were grouped together at one end of *Nations' street*, and the two pavilions that resemble the most, the ones of Greece and Serbia, were one next to the other, in one of the most visible spots of the street. Even if in the French publications the general trend was to promote the distinctive features of each nation and therefore of each pavilion, the obvious similarities between the Balkan pavilions were not overlooked. For instance, one could read that

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[242] The article 52 of the official regulations stated: "The indoor "installations" and the pavilions are built by the foreign commissions, on their expenses. However, the plans must be submitted in advance for approval by the French commission for the exhibition". ANF, Paris,F/12/5223. Approval letters for each of the Balkan countries are found in *Archives Nationales de France*, F/12/4223, F/12/4242, F/12/4262, F/12/4270.

[243] "[...] envoyez les observations qui pourraient nous être suggérées par la nécessité de maintenir entre ces diverses constructions à la fois la diversité et l'harmonie qui doivent en assurer le bon effet décoratif", letter from the General Director to the Romanian Ambassador, March 18, 1898, Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ibid.

"the Serbian Palace is of a picturesque architecture, quite analogue in its entirety with the Greek one",[244] or that "the same as for the neighbouring Greece and Romania, the Byzantine Style turns up in the Serbian pavilion, too."[245] Even a parallel with Oriental architecture is made when the Serbian pavilion is described as forming "together with the Greek pavilion a very joyful Oriental harmony".[246] Moreover, in French publications the four pavilions of the Balkan nations were almost every time presented on consecutive pages, often even on the same page, making it easy for the reader to observe them and judge them together.

Nevertheless, as we will see in other descriptions from official publications or the French press, the comparative perspective was just lurking under a "national" appreciative discourse, and therefore did not bother the participating countries. In fact, publications from the Balkans also make references to the other neighbours from the Peninsula. A conspicuous example is the one from the Serbian paper *Videlo*, where even the term "Balkan states" appears: "[in 1889] Besides Greece and Romania, among the Balkan states, Serbia also took part at that exhibition".[247] This is followed by a direct comparison with a Balkan nation: "[in 1889 Serbia had a budget] of 53008 (sic!) Francs while Romania had given more than 200 thousands francs".[248]

These sorts of comparisons and connections can be interpreted as being in opposition to the idea of national representation because they mainly reveal similarities among the Balkan

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[244] *La Rue des Nations et la Berge de la rive gauche de la Seine (Melun, 1901)*, 10.
[245] *Guide Illustré de Bon Marché*: *L'Exposition et Paris*, (Paris, 1900) 57.
[246] The official description kept by the French officials, F/12/4270 : "L'ensemble, œuvre de l'architecte Baudry avait une élégance remarquable et formait avec le pavillon grec une harmonie orientale des plus heureuses."
[247] *Videlo,* 13 November 1896
[248] Ibid.

countries. The point can also be made that their display at the World Exhibition, taken together with the discourses around it, was not that successful in terms of asserting one's nation.

In the following, I will describe the process of choosing an architect and of creating exhibition architecture for the Balkan countries. I will pay special attention to the peculiarities of each case and to the relevant comments in the French publications. I will start with a general overview of the institutional process set in motion by the participation of foreign countries, a direction which has not been explored so far in publications dealing with World Exhibitions.

As early as 1895, the foreign ambassadors in Paris were contacted concerning their country's participation. Once they confirmed, it was the responsibility of each of them to establish a budget, and to form a national committee in Paris that would see over the organization of their exhibition and build a pavilion and other constructions. It was a complex task involving, as at the World Exhibition of 1889, both local and French specialists, responsible for the national pavilion and for a maximum of other seventeen places where exhibits could be displayed. [249] The Romanian case appears again to be the most complex. Romania displayed four buildings in different places (a pavilion, a restaurant, a tobacco kiosk and an oil pavilion), as well as a number of other sections within larger exhibition spaces. They all included decorations and different constructions. [250] Regarding the Balkan nations, an important change seems to have happened since the previous Parisian World Exhibition. If in 1889 they have chosen as General

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[249] Usually by categories of products. For example, the aforementioned *Grand* and *Petit Palais* hosted the Fine Arts Exhibits. See Alexander C. T. Geppert, *Fleeting Cities: imperial expositions in fin-de-siècle Europe*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, 85.

[250] However, considering that other Balkan nations displays are not so well documented, I will focus in this paper only on the most visible forms of architecture, namely the national pavilions and in the Romanian case, its restaurant.

Commissioner a local who lived in France and was well integrated in the French society, now, with growing confidence, they appointed their own General Commissioner to Paris.

The General Commissioner's first step was to form a team for the different constructions required in Paris. Sometimes he received offers from companies or private persons who were offering their services in organizing the construction team. For example, a certain Marquis de Bouval Montferrat tried to convince the Romanians to appeal to him and stated that "the Commissionaires will have on their hands a group of engineers and architects" and will have to negotiate with them, "being very little knowable of our habits and of the local customs".[251] Consequently, "we can either make the plans and the construction ourselves, or we can appeal to others, chosen by the Commissionaires". The name de Bouval Montferrat does not appear anymore in the documents related to Romania, but we know that all the countries appealed to French architects in designing their pavilions. Once appointed, the architect was an employee of that certain country and the French organisers referred to it accordingly, proving that they tried to give as much freedom as possible to the participating countries.[252]

We must also not forget that the Commission in Paris had to keep closely in touch with the other important Commission, the one based at home, which was in charge of collecting the exhibits from producers all over the country.[253]

Beside the national pavilion, another important construction for the Balkan countries was their restaurant. In this respect, Romania seemed to have had an advantage, as it was the only one

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[251] Letter to the Romanian Ambassador in Paris, March 31, 1897. Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bucharest, Fond Paris, Culturale, Vol. 281.

[252] In a letter addressed to the Bulgarian commission by the officials at the exhibition, Henri Saladin is referred to as "your architect". Letter, 18 December, 1898 addressed to the General Commissioner of Bulgaria at the Exhibition, M. Guechoff, *Archives Nationales de France*, Paris, F/12/4223.

[253] A very detailed account of Mexico's process of gathering the exhibits from all over the country and of making a display in "The 1889 Wizards of Progress", in Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs...*, 49 – 63.

to build a special construction. Greece and Serbia, being on the first row of *Nations' street*, assigned for their restaurants a special space in the basement of their pavilions. While I do not have any information regarding a possible Bulgarian restaurant, I will refer to the Romanian one, situated close by, being very visible and having a peculiar architecture.

b) Greece

Greece was at its third participation to a World Exhibition. Since the first one in Paris (1878), its display gradually grew in size, and the country showed a more and more confident rhetoric, far from the justifications offered in 1878, such as "one must not forget the miserable state the country found itself when it shook the Ottoman yoke"[254].

As early as 1895, Greece confirmed its participation and expressed its desire to have a national pavilion in the first row on *Nations' street.*[255] Finally, after several discussions regarding the dimension of the space, the Greek General Commissioner Nicolas Sacilly received the final details: the pavilion would be on the first row, along the Seine's bank, and would have a facade of 20 m wide with 28.5 m in depth, with another space for a restaurant underneath.[256] A peculiarity of the Greek case is that the architect, the French Lucien Magne, was not chosen by the General Commissioner, but by the Greek ambassador to Paris, Delyanni.[257] He knew Magne since the architect's study trip in Athens, in 1896, when he had worked in several archaeological

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[254] A. Mansolas, La Grece a L'Exposition Universelle de Paris en 1878, (Athens: Imprimerie de la Philocalie, 1878) V.

[255] Letter to M. Delyanni, Greek ambassador in Paris, October, 1897: *Archives Nationales de France, Paris*, F/12/4242.

[256] When original names were not available, I used the French spelling. Letter from August 1898, Ibid.

[257] "L'Exposition Universelle. Le Pavillon de la Grece" *Journal de debats, politiques et litteraires*, 30 March 1900".

sites, including the Acropolis, making drawings and plans for various restorations. Subsequently, Magne exhibited in Paris various photographs and drawings made in Athens, and published a book on the Byzantine churches in the Greek Capital.[258] At this point, it is worth drawing a parallel with the Romanian case in 1867, when the architect Ambroise Baudry was chosen in a similar manner due to his expertise, having worked in Romania a year before. These French architects had become a kind of experts in the architecture of the countries concerned, and when the locals needed to find someone who knew their architectural heritage and could build a representative "national" architecture, they paradoxically appealed to these French experts. The picture becomes even more interesting considering that, in the cases of Serbia and Bulgaria, the architects chosen had worked in the Orient and were specialists in Oriental architecture, but were nevertheless regarded as appropriate for designing pavilions for these Balkan countries.

Here we must add that all the architects working for the Balkan nations were also accustomed with working at Universal Exhibitions. Lucien Magne was one of the organisers of the previous exhibition in 1889, when he published a retrospective of the 19th century French architecture.[259] After the 1900 exhibition he became inspector of ecclesiastic monuments in France, and his most well-known feat is that he worked as a chief architect of *Sacré Coeur* Basilica (between 1904 – 1916), a very influential neo-Byzantine building.

Thus Lucien Magne, an expert in the architecture of Athens, who published a work on the Byzantine churches of Athens, was commissioned to build a national pavilion for Greece, inspired by the same Byzantine architecture (figure 10). It was the first time Greece decided not

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[258] Lucien Magne, *Églises grecques des XIe et XIIe siècles dont la coupole centrale est portée sur un tambour polygonal par des trompes qui reportent les charges sur huit points d'appui intermédiaires.* The work is mentioned in Ibid.

[259] Lucien Magne, *L'Architecture Francais du Siecle*, (Paris, 1889).

to be represented by the neoclassical style, which reminded of the ancient Greek civilisation. This turn can be considered a reflection of the political developments back home, where the drive to conquer the ancient territory of the Byzantine Empire, at that time mostly under the Ottomans, aspiration known as *Megali Idea*, had become very popular.[260] By way of the *Megali Idea*, the Byzantine cultural heritage came into the attention of intellectuals, a movement best illustrated by the monumental work of the future "national" historian of Greece, Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos. In this work published between 1860 and 1874, the Byzantine period was considered as taking over the glory of Antiquity, bridging it with the modern times, and thus ensuring un-interrupted continuity in the history of the Greeks. Because of that, and because it also offered legitimacy for the irredentist aspirations of the Greek state, the Byzantine period became just as important as the Antiquity.[261] Even though the *Megali Idea* suffered a huge drawback in the Greek defeat of 1897 against the Ottomans, traces of it can be identified in the architecture of its pavilion at the Exhibition in 1900 in Paris.

The Parisian archives preserve short questionnaires in which each nation had to mention the style of its pavilion, the name of the architect and any other important details regarding its architecture.[262] These questionnaires included a brief, unsigned description of the pavilions: these are the most valuable sources for finding the "national" monuments used as inspiration for the

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[260] See for details Haris Exertzoglou, *Shifting Boundaries: Language, Community and the "non-Greek-speaking Greeks",* Historein, vol. 1, (1999) 75-92 and K. E. Fleming, "Athens, Constantinople, Istanbul: Urban Paradigms and Nineteenth-Century Greek: Nationl Identity", *New Perspectives on Turkey*, Vol. 22, (2000), pp. 1-24.

[261] See Antonis Liakos, "Hellenism and the Making of Modern Greece: Time, Language, Space" in Katerina Zacharia (Editor), *Hellenisms. Culture, Identity and ethnicity from Antiquity to Modernity*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2008, 201-236.

[262] Under the title *Demanded Statistical Information*, at part 10, there is the section: "Information regarding the peculiarities of the construction of the installation (Nature of it and employment of materials – The style of the construction, the monument from which elements have been borrowed, etc.)" [« Renseignements sur les particularités de la construction de l'installation: (Nature et mise en œuvre des matériaux; - Style de la construction. Monuments auxquels en sont empruntés les éléments, etc.) »]. These questionnaires can be found in almost all the archival boxes mentioned in this chapter. See for instance the Greek case in the following footnote.

constructions at the exhibition, as well as for other relevant details. Information included in these questionnaires is also reproduced in several publications of the time, a fact which could indicate that the organisers delivered these descriptions to the press, which in turn opted to publish them almost with no additions.

The description of the Greek pavilion mentioned the following:

> It is the reconstruction, along general lines, of Saint Theodore's Church, the construction of which dates to the 11th century, the most interesting era of Byzantine architecture. (...) The ensemble is excessively enjoyable, very precise regarding the style. (...) The coloration is harmonious and proportions are studied in an admirable way.[263]

The questionnaire further mentions that "The plan is inspired by Byzantine plans having a single big room in the shape of a Greek cross".[264]

In the French press, some other monuments are also mentioned as sources of inspiration: the churches in the town of Mistra[265] or the Kapnikarea Church in Athens (11th century).[266] Nevertheless, they all praise the Byzantine heritage in Greece, comprised of "those delightful Christian sanctuaries of the Middle Ages that ornate the countryside of Attica,"[267] of which in Athens "only five remain of the over 300 churches which were standing in the city in the 11th century".[268]

For the purpose of this research, the exact model for the pavilion is not very important – and in fact the Kapnikarea Church and the Saint Theodore's Church are two Athenian churches quite similar in appearance, belonging to the same architectural type and built in the same period;

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[263] *Archives Nationales de France, Paris*, F/12/4242.
[264] Ibid.
[265] "L'Exposition Universelle. Le Pavillon de la Grece" *Journal de debats, politiques et litteraires*, 30 March 1900"
[266] A. Quantin, *L'Exposition du Siècle*, Le Monde Moderne, Paris, 1900, p. 151.
[267] "a pris pour modèle un de ces charmants sanctuaires chrétiens du moyen âge qui ornent les campagnes de l'Attique" Louis Rousselet, *L'Exposition Universelle de 1900*, (Paris: Librairie Hachette & Cie, 1901).
[268] Quantin, L'Exposition.

however, the church mentioned in the archives as being the direct inspiration, the Saint Theodore's, was considered at the turn of the century the most richly ornamented example of Byzantine architecture in Greece.[269] But for a Universal Exhibition, even those rich decorations were not enough for a monument to proudly represent its country. Therefore, Lucien Magne tried to make his pavilion-church as spectacular as possible. One of the most obvious embellishments he added is at the windows system of the dome. Saint Theodore has a double window system (compared to the single one of the Kapnikarea church), but Magne made a triple-window system for the dome of the pavilion. It is a relevant detail for the underlying principles of the exhibition architecture, which had to be as lavishly decorated as possible.

Along the same principle, Magne made use of abundant ceramic decoration, an element which was employed as "traditional" for the Serbian and the Romanian pavilions in 1889, as we saw in the previous chapter. It is worth mentioning that for French architectural theory and general public, ceramics was a material denoting modernity. The association of ceramics with modern construction techniques is often made in the descriptions of the Greek pavilion published in the Parisian press: "[A pavilion] so modern through the judicious usage that has been made of the new construction materials, the iron and the ceramics;"[270] or, in another place: "a very fortunate use of bricks and ceramics (...) [that] give the structure a modern and national character".[271] The ceramics was indeed heavily used at the Universal Exhibitions by French architects, a famous example being the abundant use of ceramics in the two palaces made by

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[269] Andreas Xyngopoulos (1929) in Nikolaos Gkioles, "The church of Kapnikarea in Athens: Remarks on its history, typology and form", *Zograf*, No. 31, (2006) 15-27.
[270] "L'Exposition Universelle. Le Pavillon de la Grece" *Journal de debats, politiques et litteraires*, 30 March 1900"
[271] *La Rue des Nations et la Berge de la rive gauche de la Seine* (Melun, 1901), 9.

Formigé for the 1889 exhibition and praised as being modern. [272] Formigé would also use ceramics for the Romanian Pavilion and Restaurant in 1900, keeping with this trend in designing the exhibition architecture for Romania. But the fact that the Balkan nations took this element as being "traditional" and historically related to their countries sheds light on the invented nature of the national architectural specificities. Moreover, in one publication the journalist mentioned the "modern and national" character of the pavilion. This remark is especially relevant for the different perceptions of what could be architecturally representative for a nation: if in the Balkans national specificity could be asserted only by using history or established (i. e. ancient) cultural traditions, for France modernity could also be national, an idea further enforced at the World Exhibitions where the French gave national connotation to their modern achievements.

The story of the Greek pavilion has a happy ending: it was the only one made not to be ephemeral. It had an iron frame designed so as to be dismantled after the exhibition and taken to Athens, were it still stands today as an orthodox church named "Agios Sostis".

c) Serbia

The same strong drive in promoting the Byzantine heritage can also be noticed in Serbia towards the end of the 19th century. A local variant of neo-Byzantine, inspired by medieval Serbian churches, became the exclusive style in church architecture throughout the country.[273] As one of the main features of the national discourse was the promotion of Byzantine heritage

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[272] For it Formigé had to hire a ceramist, Émile Muller, who created 600 models of ceramic tiles for the hundreds of thousands of tiles employed at the two palaces. "Exposition universelle de 1889. La céramique" in *La Construction moderne*, 8 June 1889, 409.
[273] Pantelić, "Nationalism and architecture", 21-22.

(the 13th and 14th century churches),[274] it was almost unavoidable for Serbia to exhibit the same type of architecture as its pavilion at the Universal Exhibition in 1900 in Paris (figure 11).

In the following, I will make an overview of the possible models for the Serbian pavilion, all of them churches built in the period of the Serbian medieval kingdom, in the 13th and 14th centuries. In the official description and in the questionnaire it is mentioned that the Serbian national pavilion is built in the "Serbo-Byzantine style of alternating red bricks and white stones", and that it has motives borrowed from the Studenica, Žiča and Kalenić monasteries.[275] However, none of these medieval monuments can be directly connected to the pavilion of 1900: they do not have a Greek-cross plan, they only have one central dome, and, above all, Studenica (a church with a longitudinal plan), has many Romanesque (and thus Western) architectural elements.

Bratislav Pantelić, who wrote briefly about the pavilion in his analysis of the Serbian national architectural style, considers it to be a direct statement against Austria-Hungary, and identifies the model as being the five-domed church of the Saint Archangels in Kosovo (at that time under Ottoman rule).[276] The monument was the mausoleum of Ștefan Dušan, who was considered the greatest king from the Nemania family, because he managed to expand the borders of medieval Serbia much further than before. Therefore, King Dušan was a model for the 19th century Serbian politicians, who dreamed of liberating all the territories inhabited by South-Slavic speakers, including those under the Austrian-Hungarian rule, and thus remaking medieval Serbia.[277] As such, a copy of Dušan's church in the form of a pavilion should have expressed the

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[274] See Dimitrije Djordjevic, *Ottoman Heritage Versus Modernization: Symbiosis in Serbia During the Nineteenth Century*, Serbian Studies, Vol. 13, No. 1, (1999), 29 – 59; Bratislav Pantelić, "Designing Identities. Reshaping the Balkans in the First Two Centuries: The Case of Serbia", *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 20, (2007).
[275] *Archives Nationales de France*, Paris, F/12/4270
[276] Pantelić, "Nationalism and architecture", 28.
[277] Ibid.

irredentist aspirations of the Serbian state. However, the hypothesis is not backed by any documents, and the Saint Archangels church had been completely destroyed in the 17th century. Thus, a direct model could only have been the church of the Gračanica monastery, the only five-domed church dating from the glorious period of the Serbian medieval kingdom, and still standing at the end of the 19th century. Founded by Stefan Milutin, grandfather of Dušan, Gračanica, like the Serbian pavilion at the Exhibition, is a Greek-cross plan church, with five domes and with overall similar features. The church has a porch added later, similar to the one of the pavilion.

Who exactly designed this pavilion is not so clear. As was the case for Romania at the World Exhibitions in 1889, there is more than one name mentioned, obviously indicating the idea of a team work. All plans found in the archives are signed by one person, Ambroise Baudry, former architect of the Romanian pavilion at the exhibition of 1867 in Paris. He is called in the official documents "the architect of the Serbian Commission" or "the architect of the Royal Pavilion of Serbia"[278]. Moreover, he seems to have played the role of a middleman between the Serbian General Commissioner and the French officials, as proved by the letters regarding the location of the pavilion, which were addressed only to Baudry, who, in turn, communicated the decision to the Serbian General Commissioner.[279]

However, another name appears as the architect in the official publication of the exhibition, *Catalogue General Officiel*¸ where it is mentioned that "the plans have been made by M. Kapetanovich [French spelling] (…) [and] the works were executed under the direction of the

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[278] See for example the list of persons proposed to receive honorific decorations *Archives Nationales de France*, Paris, F/12/4270.
[279] Letters from October 1, 1897 and October 5, 1897, Ibid.

eminent architect M. A. Badury, who added to the previous plans, decorations of a gracious effect".[280] Milan Kapetanović, professor at the Polytechnic School in Belgrade, is taken to be the architect of the pavilion by Pantelić, too,[281] while in official documents Kapetanović is mentioned with the function of "Deputy Commissioner".[282] Kapetanović was a well-regarded name in Serbia, had an important role in the Serbian delegation in Paris, and surely had his say on the design of the pavilion. He could be considered a specialist in Serbian medieval architecture. On the other hand, the true expert was Baudry. He had designed the Romanian pavilion for the 1867 Exhibition in a neo-Byzantine style, so he was familiarized both with the style, and with the work at a World Fair. He had also been working in Egypt for fifteen years (1871 − 1886), creating an "Arab style" for European officials, by employing ancient motifs or incorporating older authentic fragments in new buildings.[283] In quite a similar manner, when designing for World Exhibitions, Baudry copied various architectural parts belonging to ancient monuments, and recombined them to create "national styles" for the different countries he worked for. Ambroise Baudry was an architect with relevant expertise in designing the Serbian pavilion, while prior to 1900 Kapetanović had only employed the French *Beaux-Arts* style in his designs.[284] To conclude, we have at least two architects collaborating, one a specialist in recombining ancient forms into new architectural styles and with experience at Universal Exhibition, and the other one a well-known figure in his country, familiar with its architecture.

[280] *Notice concernant le Pavilion royal de la Serbie,* Volume annexe du Catalogue General Officiel, Imprimeries Lemercier, Paris, 1900.

[281] Pantelić, "Nationalism and architecture", 28.

[282] In the list with the Serbian commission and on a postcard. ANF, Paris, F/12/4270.

[283] Mercedes Volait, "Dans l'intimite des objects et des monuments: l'orientalism architectural vu d'Egypt (1870 - 1910)" in Nabila Oulebsir and Mercedes Volait, eds. *L'orientalisme architectural entre imaginaires et savoirs*. (Paris: CNRS, 2009), 240.

[284] For instance the elementary school in Dorcol (1893) or the house of Jevrem Grujić in Belgrade (1896).

The result of their work, the Serbian national pavilion in Paris in 1900, was well received in the French publications, particularly because of its position, the first at one end of the *Nations' street*.[285] It was perceived as being in "Byzantine style"[286] and as reminding "of the religious monuments of Serbia, the only monuments in a country where there is no domestic architecture" [287]. The last is an unusually frank remark for a French journal, drawing attention on the scarcity of sources for that something all the Balkan countries tried to appropriate and nationalize, the Byzantine architecture.

d) Romania

The last two Balkan countries represented with national pavilions, Romania and Bulgaria, were again next to each other not only on *Nations' street*, but also in the main gallery in Champ de Mars, with their national sections. Moreover, their pavilions had a very similar rectangular shape, with the side facing the river four times as long as the lateral side, being two stories high, and having an inner staircase in the centre of the composition.[288]

Romania's participation was confirmed in 1897, and next year the Parliament voted a budget of 1.3 million francs for the participation (as compared with the 400,000 francs in 1889).[289] As a general picture, we can agree with Vlad that Romania promoted the rural world, tradition and folk products less than before, and focused on the industrialisation of the country

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[285] For example in Armand Silvestre, *Guide Armand Silvestre de Paris et de ses environs et de l'Exposition de 1900*, (Paris: Mericant, 1900), 177 or in Quantin, *L'Exposition*, 151.
[286] Louis Rousselet, L'Exposition Universelle de 1900, (Paris : Librairie Hachette & Cie, 1901).
[287] *Paris Exposition 1900*, (Paris, Hachette, 1900), 242.
[288] See the plans in ANF, Paris, F/12/4262 and F/12/4223.
[289] Letter to the Minister of Commerce of France, April 1898, ANF, Paris, F/12/4262.

and on the urban society.[290] This intention to promote a modern Romania could also be identified in the designs of the lavish pavilion, embellished with the help of modern materials and techniques, although inspired from medieval monuments.

The government decided that Petru Poni would be the General Commissioner, Jean Camille Formigé the architect of the pavilion and restaurant, and Andre Lecomte du Nöuy the architect of the whole Romanian section.[291] Not everyone was happy with these decisions, though. The Conservative Party, in opposition at the time, criticized them, and the appointment of Formigé as architect was called "an insult addressed to the country".[292] However, when they came to power in April 1899 and could have made different appointments, no one was replaced. Only Petre Poni resigned, and in June 1899 Dimitrie Olănescu was installed ad the new General Commissioner.

Besides the two French architects mentioned above, we must add another three important Romanian names: Ion Mincu, who was in charge of "the installations"; Petre Antonescu, who designed the tobacco pavilion; and George Sterian, who held the bidding for the construction and approved the plans.

To convey a picture of the process leading to the creation of the Romanian architectural display, I will describe briefly the expectations of the French organisers regarding the pavilion; the constructions itself; and then the team of architects by following the contribution of each.

In the Romanian case we have a further confirmation of the rule that the pavilions should be inspired by "national architecture". On an inquiry addressed by the Romanian Minister of

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[290] Observation made by Laurențiu Vlad in Vlad, 2007, pp. 166 – 168. See also Dimitrie C. Ollănescu, *România la exposițiunea universală din Paris, 1900*, Imprimeria Statului, București, 1901.
[291] Kallestrup, *Art and Design*, 82.
[292] *Adevărul*, 8 aprilie 1898 in Kallestrup, Ibid..

Foreign Affairs, C. Stoicescu, the Romanian ambassador to Paris responded that "it would be advisable that the building reminds of one of the national monuments".[293] In the same letter, another relevant detail comes up: "Mister Picard [the General Commissioner of the Exhibition] also added that all countries of secondary importance preferred separate pavilions, so as not to blend their exhibition in different groups, where they would be meaningless"[294] – it seems that among Romanian officials the fact that their country was "of secondary importance" was openly acknowledged. In this context, a certain urge to promoting all features which would make Romania be perceived as a country equal to the Western ones was obviously desirable. The Royal pavilion of Romania in 1900 fulfilled this function by representing, through the shapes of medieval monuments, its glorious history, one of the attributes of modern nations (figure 12).

In a description of the pavilion found in the archives in Paris, in one single instance, there is mention of one more architect who would have worked for the pavilion besides Formigé: Henri de Sevelinges, the architect of the Bulgarian pavilion (together with Henri Saladin) at the same exhibition. However, his named is crossed out with a pen in what seems to be a correction and he does not appear anywhere else, in the archival documents or in the press. Therefore, we can suppose that Sevelinges was not engaged in planning the Romanian pavilion, but this mistake could be relevant for the degree of entanglement involved in the design of exhibition architecture, and suggest how easily it could have been for actors, ideas and influences to circulate and spread around.

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[293] "Dl. Picard a mai adaugat ca țerile de importanță secundară au preferat tote pavilioane separate, spre a nu-și îneca ceea ce vor expune în diferitele grupuri, unde n'ar mai avea nici o însemnătate". Letter n. 283, from 11/23 Feb. 1897 addressed to C. Stoicescu, Ministry of Foreign. Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bucharest, Fond Paris Culturale, Vol. 281.
[294] Ibid.

The same description continues by briefly describing the pavilion and, important information for us, by mentioning its main sources of inspiration. It starts by mentioning "the Byzantine style", a common feature for all the Balkan pavilions: "the architects have been inspired by the main monuments of the country, like the church of the Three Hierarchs in Iaşi, the Curtea de Argeş and the Hurezi monasteries, which are in Byzantine style, but have a special character of elegance and elevation with their towers covered by domes".[295] Further details are provided: "[there is a] reproduction in the central hall of the narthex of Hurezi Monastery", "at the top of the lateral galleries of the building [there are towers] from the Argeş cathedral", "the church of Three Hierarchs in Iaşi has supplied the theme for the plan".[296] All in all, four names of medieval monuments on the territory of Romania are mentioned, each coming from a different region and dating to a different century: the monasteries of Argeş (16th century, Vâlcea), Stavropoleos (18th century, Bucharest), Hurezi (17th century, Oltenia), Three Hierarchs, (17th century, Moldova). As such, the models for the pavilions, all considered examples of Byzantine heritage, cover almost all the important areas of the Romanian Kingdom and encompass three centuries. This variety of buildings originating from different times, places or circumstances, but nevertheless coined as "Byzantine", points to the very elusive notion of the "Byzantine", a common feature for the Balkan Peninsula in general, for which the pavilions at this Universal Exhibition in Paris are illustrative. For this, the comparative perspective I adopted helps revealing the ambiguous way in which all three countries, Greece, Serbia and Romania, used the same shared cultural heritage, with the purpose of asserting their uniqueness while suggesting various political connotations.

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[295] ANF, Paris, F/12/4262.
[296] Ibid.

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Regarding the Romanian sources of inspiration, it is worth noticing that the main monuments, the *Argeș* cathedral and Three Hierarchs church had been recently restored by the same architect, the French Andre Lecomte de Nouy.[297] He had been part of the Romanian delegation at the Parisian exhibition in 1889, and we have already mentioned his influential role for Romanian architecture. In the case of the Exhibition in 1900, his role is again a prominent one, as I will demonstrate bellow. But besides being directly involved in the designs for this Exhibition, restoring the monuments used as model actually defined their importance, and when it came to national representation, his restorations were considered the most worthy of fulfilling the task.

The Romanian pavilion has been described as a "pick and mix approach", similar to other Balkan pavilions where elements from different historical monuments were selected and juxtapose in order to create the building.[298] A detailed description of the pavilion is offered in the newspaper *Journal des debats* where the "national Romanian architecture" is understood, according to the same positivist way of thinking, as a style formed by mixing various elements directly taken from different other constructions in the country. Quite relevant is the mention that the architect "did not at all try to innovate here", although the building could be regarded as an entire innovation, as all the "original" elements were modified and recombined in a highly personal manner by Formigé. [299]

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[297] The *Curtea de Argeș* cathedral and *Three Hierarchs* church had been restored in 1885 and 1889 respectively. See Cătălina Mihalache, Mânăstirea Sfinții Trei Ierarhi*, Monumente de Arhitectură*, (Iaşi, 2008), accessed May 10, 2014, http://www.monumenteiasi.ro/monument_de_arhitectura.php?id=314.
[298] The term "Pick and mix" is employed by Kallestrup, *Romanian national style*, 150.
[299] "L'exposition de 1900; La Roumanie", *Journal de debats, politiques et litteraires*, 29 August 1899.

Due to the amount of details and the focus on sources of inspiration, the description is

quoted here in its entirety:

> M. Formigé, similar in this regard with the architects of almost all the foreign pavilions, did not try at all to innovate here – as a matter of fact, it was not the place for it, but he rather tried to give us an idea, as exact as possible, of the Romanian national architecture. He went to the country and he studied for a long time the specific monuments, cloisters, churches, palaces. He came back with a wealth of documents, and all he had to do was to put them in his work. (...)
>
> The lines of the Romanian pavilion are of an elegant simplicity. (...) M. Formigé wanted to group in this ephemeral construction the prominent monuments with wich Romania boasts about. From the Argesch cathedral, reconstructed by a French, Leconte du Nouy (sic!), he borrowed its domes covered in polished cooper, and its campaniles with their twisted shafts covered in bright ceramics; from the Horezu monastery, its porch; from the church of Stavropol, its lateral windows, garnished with rigid ironwork; from one of the churches from Jassy, the ceramic freeze which covered, like a banner, the other façade, mixing the stylised foliage with a very peculiar fret saw decoration.
>
> The lateral facades have a little more invention. Their freeze frames the emblems of all the counties of Romania. Three domes covered, as we saw above, by a mixture of cooper and ceramic, dominate the pavilion. The two domes at the extremes, very tall on their drums, each flanked by four campaniles, are borrowed from Argesch cathedral.[300]

Not far from the national pavilion, also on the Seine embankment, stood the Romanian

restaurant, also designed by Formigé and described as "the reproduction of old houses belonging

to the rich landlords from the countryside" (figure 13).[301] Its inspiration were probably the few

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[300] Ibid. : "M. Formigé, se rencontrant, en cela, avec les architectes de presque tous les pavillons étrangeres, n'a nullement cherché, ici, a innover, - aussi bine n'en était-ce pas le lieu, - mais plutot a nous donner une idée exacte que possible, de l'architecture nationale roumaine. Il s'est rendu dans le pays et il en a longuement étudie les monuments caracteristiques, cloitres, eglises, palais. Il est revenu pourvu d'une abondante moisson de documents qu'il n'avait plus qu'a mettre en oeuvre. (...)
Les lignes du pavillon roumain sont d'une élégante simplicité.(...) M. Formigé, donc, s'est attaché a grouper, dans cette ephemeré construction, les élements saillants des monuments dont s'enorgueillir la Roumanie. A la cathedrale d'Argesch, reconstruite par un Francais, Leconte du Nouy, il a emprunté ses domes, revetus de cuivre poli et des gres brillants, ses campaniles a tambours tors; au monastere d'Horezu, son parvis; a l'eglise de Stavropol, ses fenetres latérales, garnies de rigides ferronneries; a l'une des églises de Jassy, la frise de grés qui courra, en bandeau, le long de la facade anterieur et ou se melent des feuillages stylises et une grecque d'allure particuliere.
Les facades laterales comporteront un peu plus d'invention. Leurs frises encadreront les écussons de tous les départements roumains.
Trois domes revetues, comme on l'a vu plus haut, d'imbrications de cuivre et de gres, domineront le pavillon. Ce sont les deux domes extremes, tres surelevés sur leurs tambours, flanqués chacun de quatre campaniles, qui sont empruntés a la cathédrale d'Argesch.
[301] La Roumanie à l'Exposition de 1900. Catalogue des Exposants. (Paris: Nouvelle Imprimerie E. Lasnier, 1900), LXI.

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examples of domestic architecture which survived from the "pre-modern" period, the boyar's or princely mansions. Characteristic for buildings like the famous Mogoşoaia palace or the fortified mansions from Oltenia, the *kule,* is the richly decorated open terrace on the first floor, with the row of arches and the intricate design of the balcony. One can also distinguish several details quite similar to the ones used by Mincu in his project for the Exhibition in 1889 and for the Lahovary house (considered the first building in national style): the slim wooden columns, the abundant use of ceramic disks under the roof and the exterior staircase. One can definitely suppose that Formigé knew Mincu's projects, and that he deliberate used what started to become established motifs for the Romanian national architecture.

I will now add some brief biographies of the architects involved in these displays, in order to capture the intricate relations between different actors as accurately as possible. There were two French and three Romanian architects. Andre Lecomte du Nöuy was the leading restorer of medieval churches in Romania for two decades already. A favourite of the King, I have mentioned in the previous chapter how he modified one of the most important monument in Romania, the Curtea de Argeş church, according to a very diligent scientific method, but in a romantic spirit inspired by his master, the leading French restorer of his time, Eugène Viollet le Duc.[302] He was also involved in the Romanian exhibition at the Parisian World Exhibition in 1889 and has been seen as an important figure in the development of the national Romania style in architecture.[303] But his most obvious role in creating the Romanian exhibition architecture is probably related to its sources of inspiration. Both the *Curtea de Argeş* church, which was used

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[302] Details of his most controversial restauration, of Curtea de Argeş church in Carmen Popescu, "André Lecomte du Nouy (1844 – 1914) et la restauration des monuments historiques en Roumanie", *Société de l'histoire de l'art français*, Paris, 1998.
[303] According to Carmen Popescu, "L'étranger: Lecomte de Nouy" in Popescu, *Le style*, 68 – 77.

as main model for the Romanian section at the exhibition in 1889 and for the pavilions in 1867 and 1900, and the *Three Hierarchs* church employed in 1900 were restored and heavily modified by him. The fact that his restoration works were chosen to be promoted on the international stage, and that he was a permanent representative of the Romanian state at the World Exhibitions could point at the role of advisor he might have had when it came to representing the country through architecture. In the same way as Lucien Magne was for Greece, Andre Lecomte du Nöuy, paradoxically a foreigner, became by way of his expertise in restoration an expert in assessing the architectural heritage of Romania. And his restorations became the most priceless monuments that had to be shown at the Universal Exhibitions.

Nevertheless, Lecomte du Nöuy was not acting alone. As one of my main arguments goes, he was always surrounded by a team of architects with different roles. In 1900, one of them was Jean Camille Formigé, the famous designer of the *Fine Arts* and *Liberal Arts* palaces at the previous exhibition, who appears in all plans and documents as "architect of the city of Paris", designer of the Royal pavilion and of the Romanian restaurant. Formigé was appointed by the then General Commissioner Petru Poni, who justifies his choice with the fact that the architect has already "been distinguished" working for an exhibition, namely the two palaces in 1889.[304] For this reasonable choice, the Romanian organisers are congratulated in the French press: "our friends, the Romanians, very artistic and very informed, have the good fortune to be able to appeal to M. Formigé.".[305] The good fortune was enhanced by the fact that he was working only for Romania and thus "[his] beautiful talent rested, unfortunately this time, almost inactive".[306]

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[304] "La Roumanie a l'Exposition de 1900", *L'independance roumaine*, 16 April 1899.
[305] *Journal des Debats*, 20 mai 1900.
[306] "L'exposition de 1900. La Roumanie*.", Journal des debats*, 29 August 1899.

Though he was experienced in building at the world exhibitions, similar to du Nöuy and to other architects involved, he was mainly a restorer. He had worked since 1885 for the famous rebuilding of the Paris City Hall, having been previously appointed as the architect of a bishopric.[307] He also designed buildings in a French neo-Byzantine style, like the Crematorium of Pere Lachaise (1887). All in all, his career is very similar to that of Lucien Magne, the architect of the Greek pavilion, who also was architect of a bishopric, worked at the exhibition in 1889, was a specialist in restoration, and contributed to the building of Sacré Coeur, a neo-Byzantine church very similar in conception to the Pere Lachaise Crematorium.

Some of the details of how he chose the sources of inspiration for the Romanian pavilion can be traced back from various period publications. In the summer of 1898 he made a visit to Romania, in order to study its architecture on site.[308] He visited the monuments which would be used for the pavilion and the restaurant, in Oltenia and Vâlcea counties, accompanied by Petru Poni, the then General Commissioner, and by two Romanian architects, Constantin Băicoianu and George Sterian.[309] What happened in that trip and among the four of them cannot found out, but probably Formigé, who did not have any expertise on the country's architecture, was directly advised on the monuments by the Romanian team. Thus, Băicoianu and Sterian also played key roles in the process of creating the exhibition architecture representing Romania.

Of the two, only the name of George Sterian appeared in the documents of the Exhibition as the "Delegate Commissioner of the Romanian Government", and he also signed for approval

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[307] Répertoire des architectes diocésains du XIXe siècle, http://elec.enc.sorbonne.fr/architectes/217.
[308] Dimitrie C. Ollănescu, *Raport general asupra participării României la Exposiţia universală din Paris* (1900), (Bucharest: Socecu, 1901), 55. See also Dimitrie Ollănescu, *Notice sur la Roumanie en 1900* (Paris, 1900).
[309] Ibid. See also the mention of the visit in *Jorunal de debats, politiques et litteraires*, June 30, 1898.

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all the plans related to the architectural display of Romania.[310] He was responsible for the bidding process of choosing a constructor for the pavilion and he is appointed as having "the honorific function of main delegate for the General Commissioner".[311] So, he is sent by the Government to be a supervisor of the designs and constructions, and in a French publication he is mentioned as "the third delegate" and is inferred that "his advices for building the pavilion (...) were, I think, invaluable".[312] In addition, a Romanian newspaper mentions that he also worked for some of the "interior decorations".[313]

George Sterian, representative of the Government, supervisor and part of the team of architects, has a revealing career for someone involved both in exhibition architecture, and the creation of a national style back home: he was firstly a restorer, trained in Paris and involved in the institutional development of the architectural business.[314] He was a colleague of Ion Mincu's at Fine Arts School in Paris, from where he graduated two years later than the "father" of the Romanian national style, in 1885. After returning to Romania, he specialized in the restoration of monuments and wrote an important study on restoration in 1889.[315] After three years, he would be the main figure behind the first law on the conservation and restoration of historical monuments in the country, and at the same time would found, together with others but he as the only architect, *The Commission for the Historical Monuments*. Together with Mincu and with other architects, he founded the first Romanian Architectural Society. At the turn of the 19th

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[310] ANF, Paris, F/12/4264.
[311] Ministry of Foreign. Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bucharest, Fond Paris Culturale, Vol. 281.
[312] L'exposition de 1900; La Roumanie: 29 August 1899.
[313] "La Roumanie a l'Exposition de 1900", L'independance roumaine, 16 April 1899.
[314] The career of George Sterian has not been studied in any academic work. I found the information presented here in the article Romulus Dan Busnea, "Un mare nume al arhitecturii romanesti: George Sterian" A Great Name of Romanian Architecture: George Sterian], *Ziarul de Bacău*, April 19, 2011, accessed May 4, 2014. http://www.ziaruldebacau.ro/un-mare-nume-al-arhitecturii-romanesti-george-sterian
[315] George Sterian, *Despre restaurarea monumentelor istorice în strainatate si în România*, (Iassi: 1889)

century, he restores many historical monuments, mostly in Bucharest: The National Theatre (1895), the Church Bărbătescu Vechi (1897), the Bucur Church (1905 – 1907).

The main Romanian expert on the restoration of medieval monuments, Sterian, is a much less known figure than the French who also worked in Romania, André Lecomte du Noüy. This is on the one had due to flaws in Romanian historiography, and on the other hand because he did not work on the most important monuments, and was not such a controversial figure as the French. He was also younger than Formigé, and he started working in Romania when the French was already an established figure. This explains why, in 1900, most probably Formigé had a greater influence on assessing the architectural heritage of the country, and him influencing Sterian in matters of restoration theory seems entirely plausible.

The other architect who accompanied Formigé in his study trip in Romania, Constantin Băicoianu, was also specialized in the restoring medieval monuments, having worked at the 16th century monastery *Mihai Vodă* from Bucharest. However, his name does not appear in the documents of the Universal Exhibition in 1900, where he probably did not take part.

Ion Mincu is the most well-known name in the studies of the Romanian national style and as we have seen, he was a central figure of the Romanian architectural display at the Universal Exhibition in 1889. A fact previously unknown, in spite of the general interest of scholars in his career, is that he also worked for Romania at the 1900 Universal Exhibition. In the list of the official Romanian delegation he appears as "former Deputy, Professor at the School of Arts and Crafts, architect of the installations".[316] Fortunately, we know exactly what installations he had designed, from a list including all the architects who worked for the Romanian display. Ion Mincu

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[316] ANF, Paris, F/12/4262.

was the designer of the constructions for exhibition groups 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14.[317] The work of Mincu consisted in small installations, merely decorative elements – entrance porches, supports or backgrounds for different Romanian products within larger exhibition spaces and between other nations. While going into the specific architectural details of every group exceeds the scope of my paper, I can mention the abundant use of the oriental trefoil arch in several of his decoration, the same motif being also used for the Romanian restaurant at the exhibition in 1889, and quickly becoming one of the central motives of the Romanian national style. All these decorations had to be individually approved by the French officials, a fact which suggests that one could consider their possible influence both on the architecture and on Mincu's way of thinking about national styles.[318]

We have already seen how Mincu might have been influenced in his development of a national style by the work undertaken at the former exhibition in 1889. Now, as I mentioned above, his architecture might have in turn influenced Formigé in the design of the restaurant, a building that includes elements of vernacular architecture.

Mincu appears as the only "real" architect, all the others being specialized in restorations. However, Mincu too would specialise in restorations. A few years after the exhibition, he undertook an important restoration of Stavropoleos monastery, one of the sources of inspiration for the pavilion in 1900. Therefore, it is possible that this exhibition would have raised the status of the monastery as an important "Romanian" monument, thus making it worthy of being restored. It is the process we have followed for other Romanian models, only this time in reverse:

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[317] Ibid. Besides him, the list includes Formigé as the architect of the pavilion and restaurant, Petre Antonescu as the designer of the tobacco kiosk, and another French architect, Piqout, for the pavilion of the Petrol.
[318] For instance the plans for Group 10, classes 60 - 62 shows that every architectural detail (entrances, decorations, windows had to be approved); ANF, Paris, F/12/4264.

the monument is restored after it has been promoted at the exhibition, whereas in the majority of other examples the monument enters the attention of architects designing pavilions due to a previous restoration. Nevertheless, Mincu's work in Paris in 1900 represents an important episode in his career, and a further evidence of his entanglement within the Universe of World Exhibitions.

Petre Antonescu, the last of the five architects I mentioned as important, is another well-known figure for the Romanian national architectural style. He is the youngest of all, having just graduated the year before from the Fine Arts school in Paris.[319] At just 26 years of age, he received the first important commission of his career, the building of the Tobacco kiosk at the Paris Universal Exhibition. The building, inspired by ancient monuments from Romania, has also been praised as a nice early example of Romanian national style. In this case, we can notice how the Universal Exhibitions appear to be for Romanian architects what they have always been for the French architects: a testing ground, where skills can be developed and abilities put to test. With his Tobacco kiosk, Antonescu has successfully launched a career, as after the turn of the century he would win the competition for designing one of the most important buildings in Bucharest, the City Hall, which he also built in a national style. Subsequently, and up to the Second World War, he would design many buildings in the Romanian Capital, in a variety of styles ranging from the already mentioned national style to French eclecticism and modernism.

Adding to the intricate picture of the persons involved in the Romanian architectural display is the French named in the documents only as Piqout, an architect specialised in industrial

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[319] Edmond Delaire, *Les architectes élèves de l'Ecole des Beaux-Arts, 1793-1907*, (Paris : Librairie de la construction moderne, 1907).

buildings, who designed the Petrol pavilion. However, he might have also very well collaborate or at least give advices for the other projects.

In the French press connected to the exhibition, it is interesting to note the parallel often made between Romania and the culture of the Orient, confirming a trend started at the first Universal Exhibition Romania took part in, in 1867 in Paris. The lavish decoration of the pavilion is seen as "Oriental" in one publication: "The Romanian Palace (...) concentrates and evokes all the types of Romanian architecture from the 16th to the 17th century, of this Byzantine architecture so elegant, so vivid, of a very oriental decorative luxury". [320] Other publications mention "the Romanian Oriental architecture [that] can be found in the motives of the polychrome ornaments decorating the different facades,"[321] and even an "Oriental style" in describing the pavilion: "It is the Oriental style with cupolas, campaniles, rows of diverse coloured stones, small and large windows, twisted forms in its ornamentation, blind windows."[322] These types of comments are part of the implicit comparisons made between the Balkans and the Orient, so frequent in various situations, including the World Exhibitions. However, in the case of the Romanian pavilion, they seem to be rather connected to attempts at describing the architectural style with reference to the Orient. Particularly of interest is a parallel with the Orient made while acknowledging the fact that Romanians wished to discard this influence: "We would say that it is the gracious Orient [in the aspect of the pavilion], if we would not be afraid to displease King Charles, whom we heard declaring in Sinaia that from now on the Orient stops at the Danube."[323]

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[320] *Paris Exposition 1900*, (Paris, Hachette, 1900), 243 – 244.
[321] *Guide Illustré de Bon Marché*: *L'Exposition et Paris*, (Paris, 1900) 58.
[322] *La Rue des Nations et la Berge de la rive gauche de la Seine* (Melun, 1901) , 10.
[323] *Le Petit Journal du dimanche,* October 14, 1900 : « Nous dirions que c'est l'Orient délicieux si nous ne craignions de déplaire au Roi Charles que nous avons entendu déclarer à Sinaïa, que désormais l'Orient s'arrêterait au Danube ».

e) Bulgaria

Bulgaria is the only country still not completely independent in 1900. It was autonomous, but officially under the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, a nation building process, with discourses aimed against the Ottoman Empire, was already under way for a while. In this endeavour, Bulgaria's most powerful ally was Russia, which obtained the autonomy for Bulgaria in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877 – 1878. Consequently, there were instances when the architecture in Bulgaria adopted a Russian inspired Byzantine style, represented at the turn of the century mostly by Greek-cross churches with several domes.[324]

Probably having this type of buildings in mind, the Ministry of Commerce and Agriculture announced the opening of a competition for designing the Bulgarian pavilion, addressed both to local and to foreign architects, who had to fulfil a single condition: "to be in a Byzantine style".[325] The competition was held in Sofia, but the architects chosen were two foreigners from Paris, Henri Saladin and Henri de Sevelinges.[326] After one month from their appointment, the plans for the pavilion were already sent for approval to the French officials. But surprise! They were turned back with the following advice: "It is desirable that the conception of

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[324] Ljubinka Stoilova, Petar Iokimov, "The Search for Identifiably National Architecture in Bulgaria at the End of the 19th and During the Early 20th Century" in *Genius Loci*. *National and Regional in Architecture Between History and Practice*, Bucharest, 2002, eds. Carmen Popescu și Ioana Teodorescu, (Bucharest: Simetria, 2002), 96.

[325] Doroteja Dobreva, "Bulgarien au der Pariser Weltausstellung 1900. Bilder von Eigenem und Fremden in den zeitgenössischen publizistischen Debatten über die Ausstelung", in Petar Popov, Katerina Gehl, Klaus Roth, eds, *Fremdes Europa? Selbsbilder und Europa-Vorstellungen in Bulgarien (1850-1945)*, (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2007), 101-152, 138 – 139.

[326] They are named in the official decision "M. M. Saladin et de Sévelinges, architects a Paris". Decision taken in Sofia on October 27, 1898. ANF, Paris, F/12/4223.

the façade of your pavilion would present a decoration characterising more clearly your national architecture"[327]

The final modified plans were approved after another two months, a decision reflected in the Bulgarian press with the mention that "competent opinions" declared the design suitable for an exhibition pavilion because it is "representative for foreign countries, it has beauty and elegance" (figure 14).[328] This short description does not have any references to some kind of "national architecture". Indeed, the construction seems to be the only one that does not point to any monument of the past, being rather a personal creation of the architects. In the questionnaire from the Paris archives, the style of the pavilion is characterised as "modern architecture", and the official description stresses the lack of any specific style:

> Bulgaria seemed to have wanted that the style of its pavilion would be neither Russian, nor Greek, nor Turkish. The architects, Mr. Saladin and de Sévelinges, imagined a monument in their personal style, joyfully coloured, but in which, by necessity, we find reminiscences of the styles forbidden by the program.[329]

Like all the other Balkan countries, Bulgaria also wanted a unique style for its pavilion, and specifically asked that it would not have any elements of the important neighbouring cultures, with which the "Bulgarian" culture could be mistaken. But unlike the other countries analysed in my paper, the architecture of the pavilion was not inspired by some old monuments perceived as being "national". Inspiration could have come for instance from the Rila Monastery, considered

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[327] Letter to the General Comissioner of Bulgaria at the Exhibiton, M. Guechoff, 18 December, 1898, ANF, Paris, F/12/4223: "El serait a souhaiter que l'ensemble de la façade de votre Pavillon (sic!) présentât une décoration caractérisant plus nettement votre architecture nationale".

[328] Balgarski targovski vestnik [Comercial Bulgarian Journal], No. 40 (1899) in Dobreva, "Bulgarien", 138 – 139. The original plan for the Bulgarian pavilion has not been published and it could be kept in some archives in Sofia, inaccessible to me at this point of the research.

[329] ANF, Paris, F/12/4223 : "Bulgarie, a voulu, parait-il que le style de son pavillion ne fut ni russe ni grec ni turc. Les architectes, M.M. Saladin et de Sévelinges ont du imaginer un monument de style personnel joujesment colore, mai ou, neceseraiment, on retrouve des reminiscenes des styles proscrits par le programme."

by the time the most important monument in the country. But Rila was a sole case of a confirmed, valuable historical monument. Besides this, in Bulgaria there were no foreign restorers to help promote an architectural heritage, nor archaeological societies or architectural schools. There was only the society and the journal of architects, founded in 1893 (Spisanie na BIAD). In this context, an architectural heritage was not yet defined. The two French architects, Saladin and Sévelinges, could not have been shown valuable historical monuments by the locals, as it happened in the Romanian case, because simply it was not clear which these monuments would be. Only later, in the interwar period, Bulgarian architects would identify their "national" architecture in the type of the Ottoman houses with projecting second floors to be found in cities like Plodviv or Veliko Tarnovo. But in 1900, the "modern architecture" was the only solution to express the wish of the Bulgarian General Commissioner: "to show to the civilised world the progress Bulgaria accomplished in such a short period of time"[330]. The French publications were indeed laudatory concerning the pavilion, even if we can still find comments like the pavilion would be "of a style half Byzantine, half Muslim"[331] or of "Byzantine style".[332] Rounding up, the Bulgarian case is relevant for a situation when all the elements important for creating an architectural heritage, are missing.

The architects of the pavilion have telling careers. Sévelinges was a rather unknown figure, graduating from Fine Arts Academy in 1882 and, similar to the majority of the cases studied, specialised in restoration (mostly of churches). Henri Saladin, on the other hand, was a renowned specialist in Oriental architecture and accustomed with working at the Parisian World

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[330] Letter from 29 April 1899, F/12/4223.
[331] Paris, Exposition 1900, Annual report, 10.
[332] Louis Rousselet, L'Exposition Universelle de 1900, Librairie Hachette & Cie, Paris, 1901.

exhibitions. After graduating from the Fine Arts Academy in Paris (1879), he was assigned to the archaeological mission of the French state in Tunisia. His role was to reconstruct in drawings the supposed state of the unearthed ruins, the exact same role Ambroise Baudry had in Romania in 1865. But in contrast to Baudry, who continued to work in Egypt, for Henri Saladin the visit in Tunisia would be the starting point of a career dedicated to the promotion of Oriental art in France.[333] In 1898 he founded *The Historic Association for the study of Northern Africa*, and in 1907 he published *The Handbook of Muslim Art*, the peak of his promotional activity for the Orient.[334] He also had a productive activity at the Parisian Universal Exhibitions. As the expert in Tunisian architecture, he would build the Tunisian pavilions in 1889 and 1900, as well as the Moroccan pavilion in 1900. He showed with this occasion a great mastery in directly coping and recombining different motives. For example, for the Tunisian pavilion he employed six parts originating from different monuments, religious, civilian and vernacular, in order to satisfy the desire of the locals, who wanted a "Tunisian style".[335]

He has been included in the category of "orientalist" architects, those who usually accompanied an archaeological mission to Oriental countries, discovered the local architecture and for the rest of their career worked there, promoted a style inspired by that architecture and wrote books about it.[336] We can regard them as the equivalents of the foreigners who worked as restorers in the Balkans, with the notable difference that they were working in a colonial context. If in the Balkan Peninsula, as we have seen, they restored, promoted and gave an impetus for the

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[333] Myriam Bacha, Henri Saladin (1851 – 1923), "Un architecte "Beaux-Arts" promoteur de l'art islamique tunisien" in Volait, eds. *L'orientalisme*, 215.
[334] Ibid., 217.
[335] Christiane Demeulenaere-Douyère, *Exotiques expositions: les expositions universelles et les cultures extra-européennes, France, 1855-1937*, (Paris : Somogy, Archives Nationales, 2010), 44-45.
[336] The term "orientalist architects" was coined and it is further explained by Lorraine Decléty in "L'architecte orientaliste", *Livraisons d'histoire de l'architecture*. n°5, (2003), 55-65.

creation of national styles, in colonial countries the architects were much more active, directly creating and building in a national architecture, coordinating archaeological sites and urban developments.

Thus, two specialists in Oriental architecture, Saladin and Ambroise Baudry, worked for the pavilions of the Balkan nations. Another one, Albert Ballu, who was in Algeria the equivalent of Saladin in Tunisia and of Baudry in Egypt, was also working in the Romanian Capital. For three decades he was the chief architect of Algeria, he designed the Algerian pavilions in 1889, 1900 and 1906 (at the exhibition in Marseilles), but he also designed one of the most important buildings in Bucharest, The Palace of Justice, in 1890. All three architects have been considered "specialists in and enthusiastic of the Orient"[337], in a time when the teaching of Oriental art at the Fine Arts Academy in Paris was not keeping the pace with the knowledge acquired in archaeological expeditions.[338] The fact that these architects have been assigned to work for the Balkan countries is telling for the thesis I mentioned several time in this paper, namely the connections made between Balkan and Oriental architecture.

As we have seen, parallels with the Orient have been made in the French press with regard to all the pavilions of the Balkan countries. However, only in the case of the Bulgarian pavilion this kind of remarks came also from the locals. The architect Anton Tornyov unleashed a trenchant critique of the Bulgarian pavilion. His opinion is all the more relevant, as he would later become an advocate and a creator of a "national Bulgarian style", first with his pavilions inspired by Ottoman houses for the Exhibitions in Liege (1905) and in Torino (1906), as well as

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[337] Mercedes Volait, "Dans l'intimite des objects et des monuments: l'orientalism architectural vu d'Egypt (1870 - 1910)" in Volaid (ed.), *L'orientalism*, 37.
[338] Marie-Laure, "Oriental ou colonial?" in Volaid (ed.), *L'orientalism*, 56.

with the articles published in the architectural journal *Spisanie na BIAD*. The future main figure

in the development of the Bulgarian national style, Tornyov profoundly disliked its country's

pavilion at the Paris World Exhibition in 1900:

> Our pavilion leaves to the foreigners the impression that represents a European colony recently
> saved by the Turkish oppression. The architectural ornaments and the decoration, together with
> the four Turkish cupolas and especially the red colour of the outside walls seem bizarre.
> (...)Wouldn't it have been easier and simpler to take the example of the Serbs, the Greeks, or even
> the Romanians?[339]

The painter Stefan Bobchev ironically describes the pavilion as been an *ashure,* a kind of

Turkish dessert, with the figurative meaning of a strange mixture with an Oriental aspect.[340].

Then he compares the Bulgarian pavilion with the other pavilions of Balkan countries. He

considers the Romanian one as being "a building having a church architecture characteristic for

Romania", the Greek pavilion as being "an original building in a pure Byzantine style", and the

Serbian pavilion as being "a beautiful building that, with its five domes in a Turkish-Byzantine

style, is reminiscent of an old Serbian church".[341] In this context, the Bulgarian pavilion,

particularly because it appeared as such a "bizarre" mixture, represented a stimulus for

discussions that would eventually lead to theorising and crystallising the notion of "Bulgarian"

architecture.

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[339] Tornyov, "Vse svetskata izlozhba v kraia na 19-to stoletie", *Spisanie na BIAD*, no. 5, (1900), 234 in Dobreva,
"Bulgarien...", 142.
[340] Bobchev (1900), in Dobreva, "Bulgarien...", 132.
[341] Ibid., 137.

f) Final overview

In the French press, the majority of descriptions concerning the Balkan pavilions were highly laudatory, asserting at the same time the idea of nation in each case. The critiques, the connections with the Orient or among the Balkan countries are frequent but not the norm. Thus, the Greek pavilion, although a Byzantine church, reminds of antiquity as "the only thing that is missing is a wreath of laurel, doves on the roof and the dome, and the sun from Attica".[342] Similarly, another journal expressed the hope that "the light of Hellas will gently stroke the gracious temple in rose, blue and green".[343] The poet Armand Silvestre writes about the Bulgarian pavilion that "its graceful construction successfully satisfied the Bulgarian expectations that did not want it to remind of the Turkish domination,"[344] and in another place we can read that it is "one of the most gracious and accomplished" pavilions.[345] In the same manner, the Romanian pavilion is "surely one of the most shimmering for the eyes".[346] Such evaluations of the pavilions of the Balkan countries are much more numerous than mentioned here, demonstrating the sympathy that foreign nations had from the part of Frenchmen with the occasions of the Universal Exhibitions.

In this chapter I have tried to accentuate mostly the intricate contribution of different architects in designing exhibition architecture, their careers and relation with others involved. It has been remarked how for the French architects the exhibitions were "platforms for architectural

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[342] Anatole France in Lucien Magne, "Les Arts à l'Exposition universelle de 1900 : l'architecture", *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, vol. 23, (1900), 383-396, 396.

[343] "L'Exposition Universelle. Le Pavillon de la Grece" *Journal de debats, politiques et litteraires*, 30 March 1900.

[344] Armand Silvestre, *Guide Armand Silvestre de Paris et de ses environs et de l'Exposition de 1900*, (Paris: Mericant, 1900), 180.

[345] *Le Petit Journal du dimanche*, April 22, 1900.

[346] Ibid, October 14, 1900.

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experimentation" as well as a way of living.[347] And in this case Paris was in the spot lights, as the city where four world fairs took place in the time span of thirty-six years. There were many opportunities and plenty of work for the French architects, who, in the cases I studied, designed several buildings for various events. This profession of "exhibition architect" could not have been taken up by the local architects; however, for them the world fairs were also opportunities for a greater freedom in their creation, especially at a time when constrains to artistic creation were being imposed by a variety of contexts. Adding to this the main requirement that the architecture at a World Exhibition needed to adequately represent a country, one can easily understand how these events became privileged places for experimenting with the national architectural styles.

The advice given by the organisers, that a country should choose several "national monuments" and reproduce them in one building so as to remind one of "an era from the history of the country, or of a region of its territory,"[348] offers a rare glimpse into the actual proposed method of creating the national architectural styles. The advice was more or less followed in the cases of Greece, Serbia and Romania, while the Bulgarian pavilion is an instance of what Celik calls the "intuitionists" method, relying on "feelings and fantasy as sources of inspiration".[349] This is because Bulgaria had no foreign restorers working in the country, it had no previous experience participating in World Exhibitions, and its institutional development was not yet advanced. Thus, a range of national monuments to select from, or what the national architecture would be, were questions simply not yet answered in 1900.

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[347] Celik, *Displaying,* 134.
[348]*Archives Nationales de France*, Paris, F/12/4270, F/12/4242;
[349] Celik, 137.

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At the Exhibition in Paris in 1900, the "experimental" national styles of the Balkan countries focused on the Byzantine heritage. This was not a random occurrence. Towards the end of the 19th century, as I briefly showed, in all the Balkan countries there were institutional and cultural developments that favoured a promotion of the Byzantine heritage. As a quick overview of the newly founded institutions that promoted the Byzantine art in the Balkans we can mention the *Christian Archaeological Society* (founded in 1882) and the Municipal History Museum (1889) in Greece; the first architectural journal (1890) and the Society of the Romanian architects (1891) in Romania; the Society and Journal of the engineers and architects (1893) in Bulgaria. In this context, monuments reflecting the Byzantine heritage were chosen as privileged sources of inspiration, and this choice caused the paradoxical situation in which three of the Balkan countries ended up with more or less similar national pavilions, even though they were intended to represent their specificity.

Further revealing is the elusive character of the "Byzantine style", used with great ease throughout the Balkans. At the Universal Exhibition of 1900, taken to be in the "Byzantine style" are monuments from the 11th and 12th centuries in Greece's case, from the 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries in Serbia's case, from the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries in Romania's case, and from the 19th century in Bulgaria's case.[350] So in a period of nine hundred years, in the space of the whole Peninsula, various medieval and post-medieval churches and sometimes other monuments were taken to represent a Byzantine heritage. The same ambiguity is also reflected in the French press, where one encounters terms like "Serbo-Byzantine", "Oriental" or "half-Byzantine", all

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[350] In the suggestions made by Tornyov and Mitov that the Bulgarian pavilion could have used as a source of inspiration the Rila monastery.

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referring to the same style. A thorough analysis of the usage of the Byzantine heritage in the Balkan Peninsula as a multi-faceted phenomenon is still to be done in academic literature.

I have also shown the importance of foreign restorers, who worked in the Balkans and paradoxically, became the main specialists in the architectural heritage of the country, being the first to be consulted when it was demanded to choose the most representative monuments of a country, for representation at World Exhibitions.

The shared architectural heritage is noticeable foremost in the similarities among the pavilions of the Balkan nations, but I have also briefly mentioned some shared architectural motives and materials. The most prominent example is that of ceramics, used as a traditional material by both Serbia and Romania, and that at the same time taken to be a modern material in France.

The usage of the kind of colourful materials like ceramics often incited parallels with the Orient, a comparison totally unintended and unwanted from the part of the Balkan countries. But even if the King of Romanian had declared, as quoted by a French journal, that "from now on, the Orient stops at the Danube" the concept of Orient was still very closely related with the representation of the Balkans.[351]

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[351] *Le Petit Journal du dimanche*, October 14, 1900.

Conclusions

The initial spark that raised my interest in this subject was a picture showing the almost identical pavilions of Greece and Serbia at the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1900. Behind them were also two church-like constructions, of Romania and Bulgaria. The flagrant similarities came at probably the least expected moment, when in front of the whole world each country should have promoted its unique features that makes it a nation. So only one image we have a vivid evidence against the trends of national historiographies, still so dominant in the Balkans, particularly in art history. The paradox is immediately reinforced by the fact that actually the official architects who designed these samples of national architecture were French. So I foresaw the intriguing possibility that the long praised modern national architecture in the Balkans was actually created by foreigners.

In this manner my project began as a statement for a transnational approach and against national historiographies. But it soon developed on two parallel axes: an assessment of the French influence, with their stereotypes and perceptions, and the issue of national architectures in the Balkans. The influence of world exhibitions on these particular styles was barely noticed in the academic literature. However, puzzling was something else. In spite of the obvious common architectural heritage in the Balkans, in spite of similar institutional developments in the realm of architecture and of common notions that the architects are referring to (e.g. the "Byzantine"), there has not been any study comparing these parallel developments among the modern nation states in the Peninsula. An endeavour like this would have far exceeded the scope of my research. However, a general picture of the national styles in the region, of which the pavilions at the World

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Exhibitions are part of, was necessary. This is why I did a brief comparative study that is appropriate for a more thorough investigation.

My primary chapters, 3, 4 and 5, gravitate around the main research question of my thesis: how a national architecture for the Balkan countries was created for international display at World Exhibitions. Here at once noticeable are the very diverse teams of architects and officials that influenced the final designs. In the majority of cases both foreign and local architects worked together under the supervision of French and local officials to come up with a satisfactory result. A usual situation was when the local commissions would choose French architects that were often advised by some local specialists and once the designs were ready, they had to be submitted for approval to the French officials. This was not merely a formality, as often the architects received additional suggestions and as the Bulgarian case shows, the plans were refused all together. So the picture that emerges is of multiple influences, negotiations and compromises, which I detailed in the last two chapters based on the theoretical framework of entangled histories and network studies.

The role of the French, by way of their architects and their commissions, appears fundamental. They were directly involved or at least closely oversaw the construction of "national" architecture for the Balkans. The reasons for this paradoxically creation of international representation by foreigners lie in both the peculiar world of Universal Exhibitions and the state of the Balkan architecture in the 19th century. Firstly, in many cases the French architects have been working in the country of the pavilion they designed, as restorers or beside archaeological missions. They specialised in the concerned country architecture and, enter another paradox, by way of restoration, became the main experts in its architectural heritage. In this way they were seen as the most suitable persons to decide on the sources of inspirations for

a national architecture at the world exhibitions. It was the case of Romania in all the analysed participations and also of Greece in 1900.

A particularly interesting case is the Romanian one where the monuments recreated by the French restorer were copied for the exhibition construction. This means that we have a double reinterpretation of the original historical monument: first by the restorer who recreated the monument in the romantic fashion of the time; then by the architects at the exhibition who in turn redesigned the monument, but this time the restored one.

The issue offers a glimpse into the larger and not researched phenomenon of creating one's architectural heritage. At the dawn of nation states all the Balkan countries had to come to grips with sorting, evaluating, promoting and using its architectural remains from the past. And from my research so far it seems that in the first phase the foreigners, French or others, did this. So rounding up we can notice a double role of the foreigners: in the creation of a national architecture at the exhibition and in the creation of an architectural heritage in the Balkan countries.

Other architects were also mainly restorers but with experience in the Oriental countries. This is especially the case of Ambroise Baudry and Henri Saladin, who dedicated their careers to promoting and developing Oriental architecture. The fact that they were assigned for designing the Balkan countries architecture speaks of the connection that underlines all my research: that between the Balkans and the Orient. This can further be seen by the positioning of the Balkan countries, close to the Oriental ones and by the parallels often made in the French press. It goes without saying that the Balkan nations themselves were presented as a group, appropriate for the transnational analysis I undertake.

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The exhibition architecture was a fortunate testing ground for the architects, where they had certain freedoms in making crowd-friendly and spectacular buildings. In the Romanian case, the commission took advantage of this opportunity to send in young architects who worked alongside more experienced French ones. This is the case of Ion Mincu, Grigore Cerchez, Petre Antonescu and George Sterian, who all would later be main figures in the creation of a Romanian national style.

We reached here another important point in my research: the intrinsic connection mentioned at the beginning between the Balkan architecture at world exhibitions and the national architectural styles in the countries. Among the first samples of these styles were the pavilions built for an international audience at the Parisian Universal Exhibition. The organisers were very specific, demanding that each country should build a "national" architecture. We saw the most direct connection in the case of Romania where the future developers of this architecture worked for the first time at the Parisian universal exhibitions. More, the restaurant designed by Ion Mincu for the 1889 fair was subsequently considered one of the first and finest examples of Romanian national style. So we can conclude that all the young Romanian architects learned how to design architecture which had as a goal to affirm the nation in the peculiar atmosphere of world exhibitions. The echoes of the world exhibitions were important likewise for the discussions back home related to a national style. An eloquent example is the case of Bulgaria in 1900 when the future creator of a vernacular-inspired Bulgarian style, Anton Tornyov, heavily criticised his country's pavilion.

Then in the case of all countries the exhibitions were a step in acquiring knowledge of one's historical monuments. Determining what is important, what should be displayed

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reverberated also in the architectural developments back home. This process again saw the French restorers as the leading figures.

The construction at the world exhibitions helped also assign national value to some materials or shapes. I have shown how ceramics, for example, was taken to be "national" by both Romanian and Serbia, while Western Europe considered it a modern material that had been in use for a short time. Also one of the most widely used motifs in the Romanian national style, the trilobite arch, was extensively employed for the first time at the three Parisian world exhibitions of the 19th century.

By looking at the architectural developments in the Balkans I also considered similar institutional developments: the schools of architecture, archaeological societies and architectural journals, all appeared throughout the Peninsula in the last two decades of the 19th century. All these new institutions proved to be important for a national orientation in architecture, being entangled also with the representational process at World Exhibitions.

My thesis opens up a number of possible researches that can push forward the field of art and culture in the 19th century Balkans. The creation of national architectural styles and their subsequent developments in the region are under researched topics. The same is the case for the creation of an architectural heritage, in which I have shown how the World Exhibitions have an important contribution. The time frame of my research can be further expanded and include other exhibitions up until the First World War or even further. One can consider for example the case of Liege Universal Exhibition of 1905 where Romania and Bulgaria both switched at the same time to vernacular-inspired pavilions.

Another inherent limit in my enterprise can become a thriving field for future researches. I only considered here the architecture in the face of a multitude of aspects that comprise the

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display of a country at the world exhibitions. But different products or display tactics were also created or brought to represent the nation and are suitable for similar endeavours.

The issue of French influence on nation building through universal exhibitions can be seen also in the case of other countries. I have already cited works that look at the young South-American states. But French architects also designed pavilions for Russia or Far East nations like China and Japan among others, cases in which there is still room for investigation. It may be that for other countries as well the peculiar world of Universal Exhibitions developed into an exchange hub, in which ideas and influences spread with ease. Nevertheless for the Balkan nations it was an experience that helped them raise new questions and find quick answers related to national representation, architecture and cultural heritage.

Appendix: Short Resumes of the Main Architects Mentioned in the Text

Antonescu, Petre (1873 – 1965)

At just 26 years of age, he received the first important commission of his career, the building of the Romanian Tobacco kiosk at the exhibition of 1900. Graduated from the Fine Arts School in Paris in 1899, worked for his whole career in Bucharest; member of the Commission for the Historical Monuments, member of the Romanian Academy (1945 – 1965). Main Works: City Hall Palace, Bucharest (1906); Crețulescu Palace, Bucharest; Sinaia Casino (1912); Triumphal Arch, Bucharest (1921); Law Faculty Palace, Bucharest (1935).

Baudry, Ambroise (1838 – 1906)

Designed the Romanian pavilion in 1867 and collaborated at the Serbian one in 1900. He drew the survey of the Troesmis stronghold in Romania (1865) before embarking on a 15 years stay in Egypt (1871 – 1886). Main works: Villa of Delort de Gléon, Cairo (1872); Gizeh palace, Cairo (1875 – 1877); Haichois Castle, Bretagne (1888).

Bénard, Paul

Born in 1834, entered the Fine Arts School in Paris in 1855; at the Universal Exhibition of Paris he made the national facades of Greece, Swedish and Russian.

Formigé, Jean-Camille (1845-1926)

He was the architect of the Romanian Royal pavilion and restaurant at the exhibition in 1900. He is however more famous at the universal exhibitions for designing the palaces of *Fine* and *Liberal Arts* at the Universal Exhibition of 1889. Diocesan architect of Auch, chief architect of the gardens and promenades of Paris, chief architect of Arles, member of the Commission for Historical Monuments in Paris (1887 – 1892), chief architect of the same commission.
Main works: City Hall, Paris, collaborator (1885), Crematorium of Pere Lachaise (1887), the glasshouse of Auteuil (1898), the square in front of Sacré Coeur Bisilica. Restored churches throughout France starting from 1878: Notre-Dame-la Grande, Chauvigny, Poissy, Saint-Jacques tower, Paris; He rebuilt several Roman monuments at Arles and Orange.

Kapetanović, Milan (1854 – 1932)

Collaborated with Ambroise Baudry to design the Serbian pavilion in 1900. Professor at the Polytechnic School in Belgrade and later Minister of the Economy in Serbia (1911 – 1912) and Minister of Constructions (1918 – 1919). Main works: Belgrade fortress renovation, Belgrade synagogue (1908), several other houses and schools in Belgrade.

Labouige, Alfred

Architect of the Serbian pavilion in 1889 together with Lafanège. Born in 1853, graduated from Fine Arts School in Paris in 1877, from the class of Julien Guadet. He subsequently built several block of flats in Paris.

LeCoeur, Charles (1830 – 1906)

Collaborated at the Romanian display at the exhibition of 1889, being named "Chief architect of the installations". He was friend with the Romanian General Commissioner of the time, George Bibescu, which house in Paris he designed. Graduated from the Fine Arts School in Paris in 1852. Main works: thermal establishments, casino and theatre in Vichy (1901 – 1903), several Parisian high schools (Condorcet, Fénelon, Montaigne, Louis-Le-Grand).

Magne, Lucien (1849 – 1916)

Designed the Greek pavilion in 1900 and was among the organisers of the 1889 exhibition, occasion with which he published *L'Architecture Français du Siècle*, (Paris, 1889). He was mostly known for his works of restoration at the Greek Pantheon in 1896. Graduated from the Fine Arts School in Pairs in 1868, at the class of Honoré Daumet; Professor of history of architecture at the Fine Arts School, Paris (1891 – 1916), professor of applied arts at the National Conservatory, Paris (1899 – 1916); general inspector of the diocesan monuments, general inspector and chief architect of the Commission for the Historical Monuments, Paris (1901). In 1896 he goes to Athens and restores buildings on the Acropolis, several Byzantine churches and publishes when he returns to France a work on these churches. Main Works: Sacré Coeur Basilica (1904 – 1916), the markets of Port-Royal, Gros-Caillou, etc, several privat mansions in Paris. Restorations: multiple monuments at Angers and churches throughout France.

Mincu, Ion (1852 – 1912)

Part of the Romanian delegation of architects for the Paris Universal Exhibitions of 1889 and 1900. He designed for the first one the plan for a restaurant and for the second, several decorative motifs for the installations. Graduated from the Fine Arts School in Paris in 1883 at the class of Julien Guadet; founding member of the Romanian Architects Society (1891) and of the Romanian

School of Architecture (1892); professor at the mentioned school (1898 – 1912); Deputy in the Romanian parliament (1895 – 1899); President of the Romanian Architects Society (1903 – 1912); Considered the creator of the Romanian National Style. Main works: Lahovary House (1886), Central School for Girls, Bucharest (1890), The *Buffet* form Kisselef Road, Bucharest (1892), the tombs of Ghica, Cantacuzino, Gheorghieff, Bucharest (1900 – 1904), Administrativ Palace, Galați (1905 – 1906). Restoration works: Monteoru House (1887 – 188), Stavropoleos Church, Bucharest (1904 – 1910).

Nouy, André Lecomte de (1844-1914)

Part of the Romanian delegation at the Parisian exhibitions of 1889 and 1900. Disciple of Eugène Viollet-le-Duc, he was recommended by him as a restorer for the most important Romanian monuments. Main restorations: The monastery from Curtea de Argeş (1875-1880); *Trei Ierarhi* church, Iaşi (1882-1890); Saint Nicholas, Iaşi (1890 – 1904); Saint Dmitry church, Craiova (1889); Metropolitan church, Târgovişte (1889 – 1893).

Saladin, Henri (1851 – 1923)

Designed together with Henri de Sevelinges the Bulgarian pavilion in 1900. He further designed at the world exhibitions the pavilions of Tunisia (1889 and 1900) and Morocco (1900). Graduated from the Fine Arts School in Paris in 1879, at the class of Honoré Daumet. He did a study trip in Tunisia between 1882 and 1883 and subsequently publishes a Manual of Muslim Art (1907). He also published a monograph on the Great Mosque of Sidi-Uqba, Tunisia.

Sauffroy, Aimé

Design the pavilion of Greece at Paris Universal Exhibition of 1889. Studied in the Fine Arts School at the class of Julien Guadet. Main works: Figaro hotel, Paris; Casino of Paris; New Circus, Paris.

Sevelinges, Henri de

Designed together with Henri Saladin the Bulgarian pavilion in 1900. Born in 1860, he graduated from the Fine Arts School in Paris in 1891, at the class of Honoré Daumet. He did mainly restoration works in France like the churches of Fourges and Blandainville

Sterian, George (1860 – 1936)

Worked at the 1900 Universal Exhibitions as the main representative of the Romanian government, in charge of supervising and approving the constructions. Graduated from the Fine

Arts School in Paris in 1885; in 1889 finished a study on the restoration of historical monuments; founding member of the Romanian Architects Society (1891) and of the Commission for the Historical Monuments, Bucharest (1891); in 1992 worked on the first law regarding conservation and restoration of historical monuments; vice-president of the Romanian Architects Society (1901); main restorations: The National Theatre (1895), the Church Bărbătescu Vechi, Bucharest (1897), Bucur Church, Bucharest (1905 – 1907), Cașin Monastery, Bucharest (1920 – 1925); main works: Casino from Slănic Moldova (1894), Municipal Theatre, Bacău (1927).

Torniov, Anton Mladenov (1868 – 1942)

One of the most important figures in Bulgarian architecture after the turn of the century. Obtains his diploma of architect at the University of Stuttgart in 1895. President of the Association of Bulgarian Engineers and Architects (since 1897). Presidentof the Union of the Bulgarian Freelance Engineers and Architects. Chief editor of the journals Spisanie na BIAD (Journal of the Association of Bulgarian Engineers and Architects) (1905 – 1908) and "Technical Tribune" (1915-1934).

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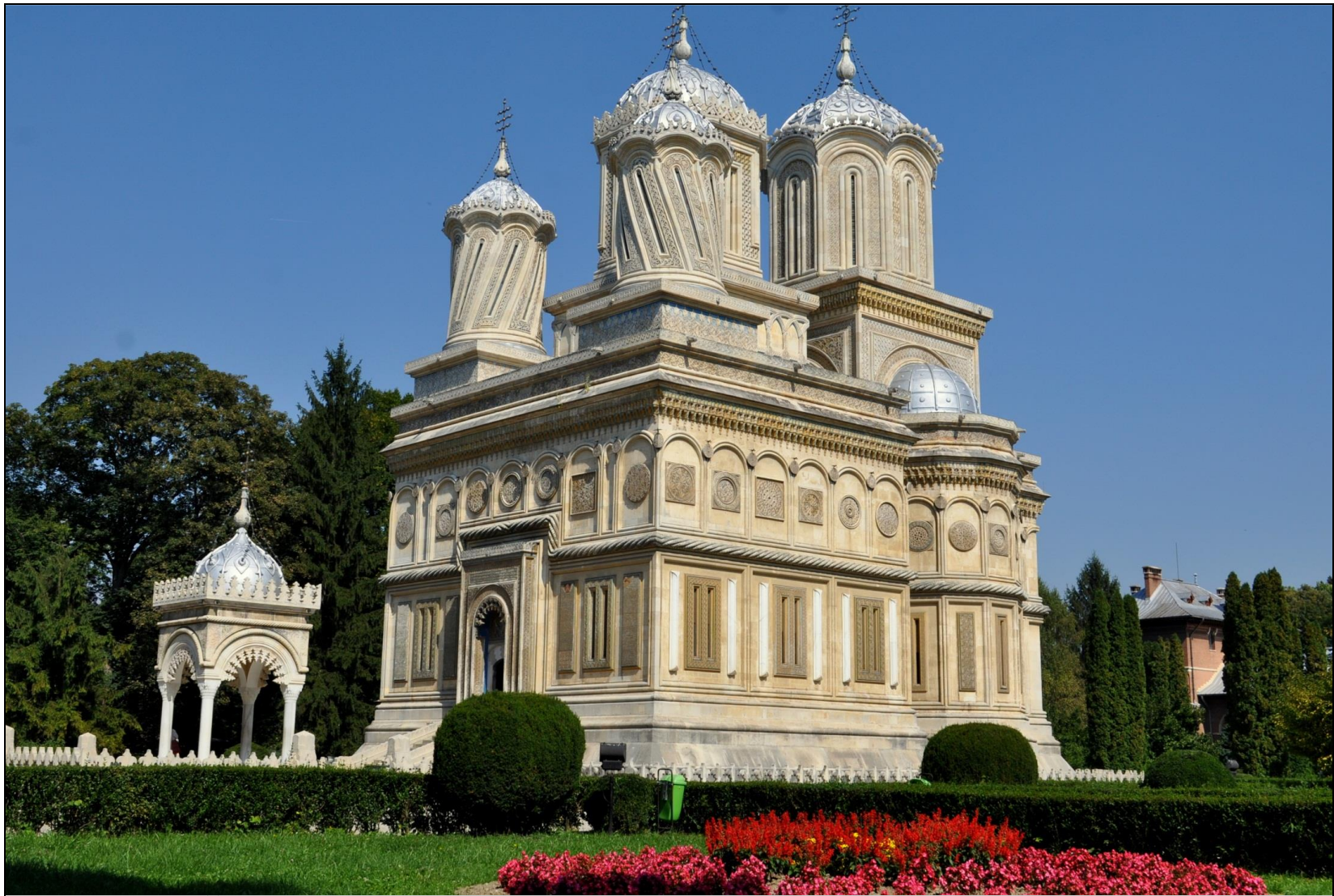
Figure 1: Curtea de Argeș Monastery (16th century), Argeș, Romania

Figure 2: Romanian National Pavilion, Paris, 1867.

Figure 3: (first on the right) Greek national façade on *Nation's street,* Paris, 1878.

Figure 4 : Illustrations from the French press with the Greek pavilion (left) and the Romania restaurant (down), Paris, 1889

Figure 5:
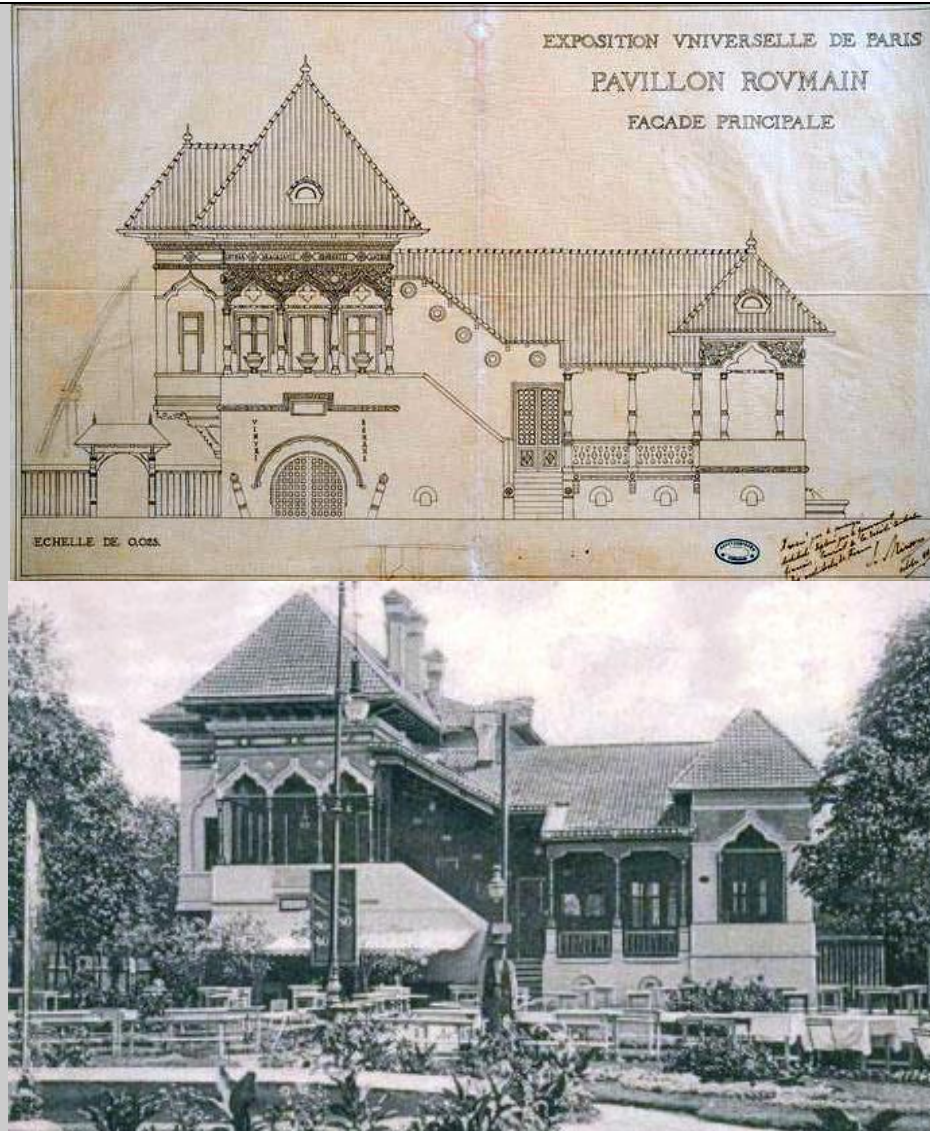The Romanian "Bufet". The initial plan as an exhibition pavilion (up) and the built construction in Bucharest, on *Kiseleff* boulevard (down)

Figure 6:
The Romanian restaurant at the Paris 1889 Universal Exhibition
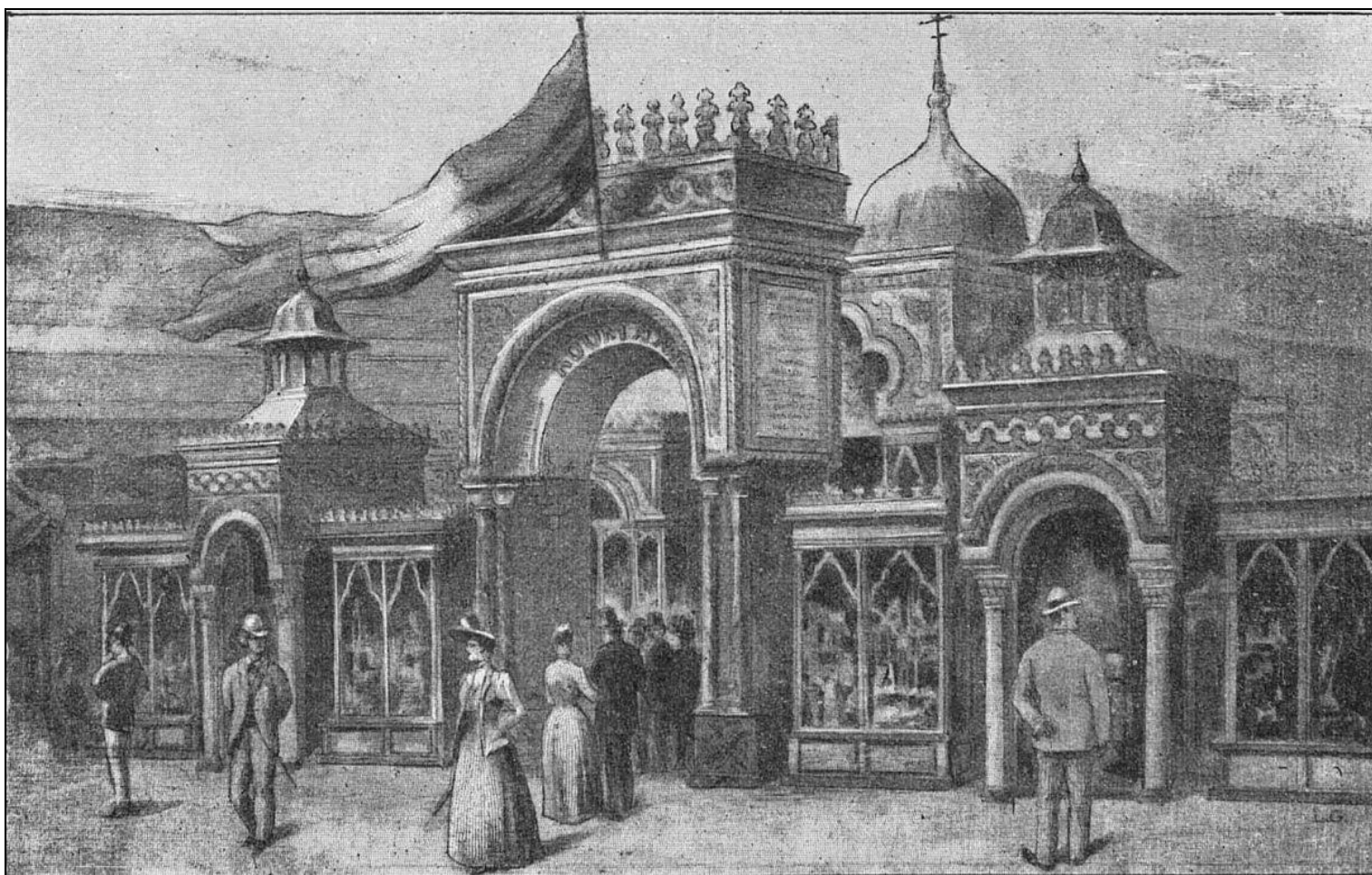
Figure 7 : Romanian section in the main Gallery of Diverse Products, Paris, 1889.

Figure 8: Serbian National Pavilion, Paris, 1889.
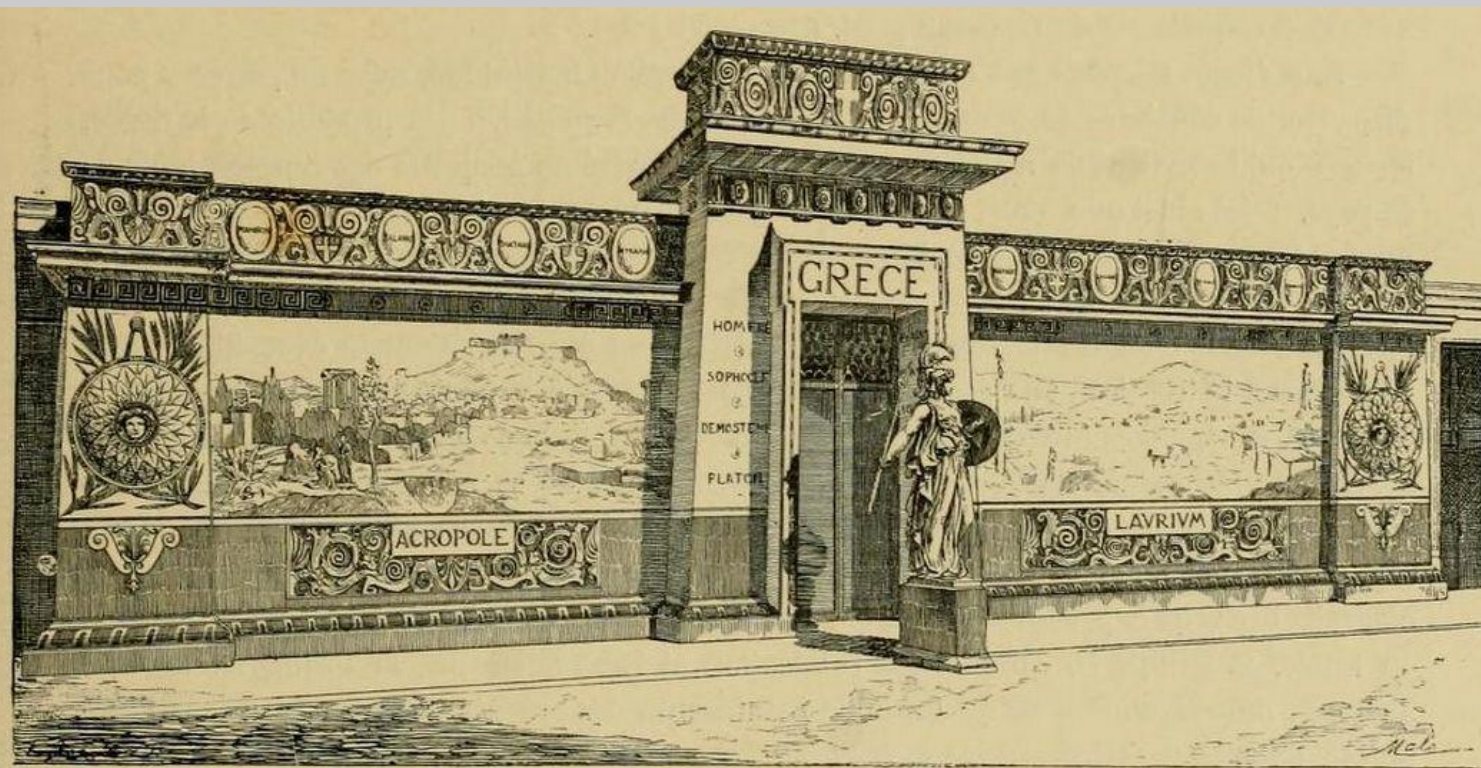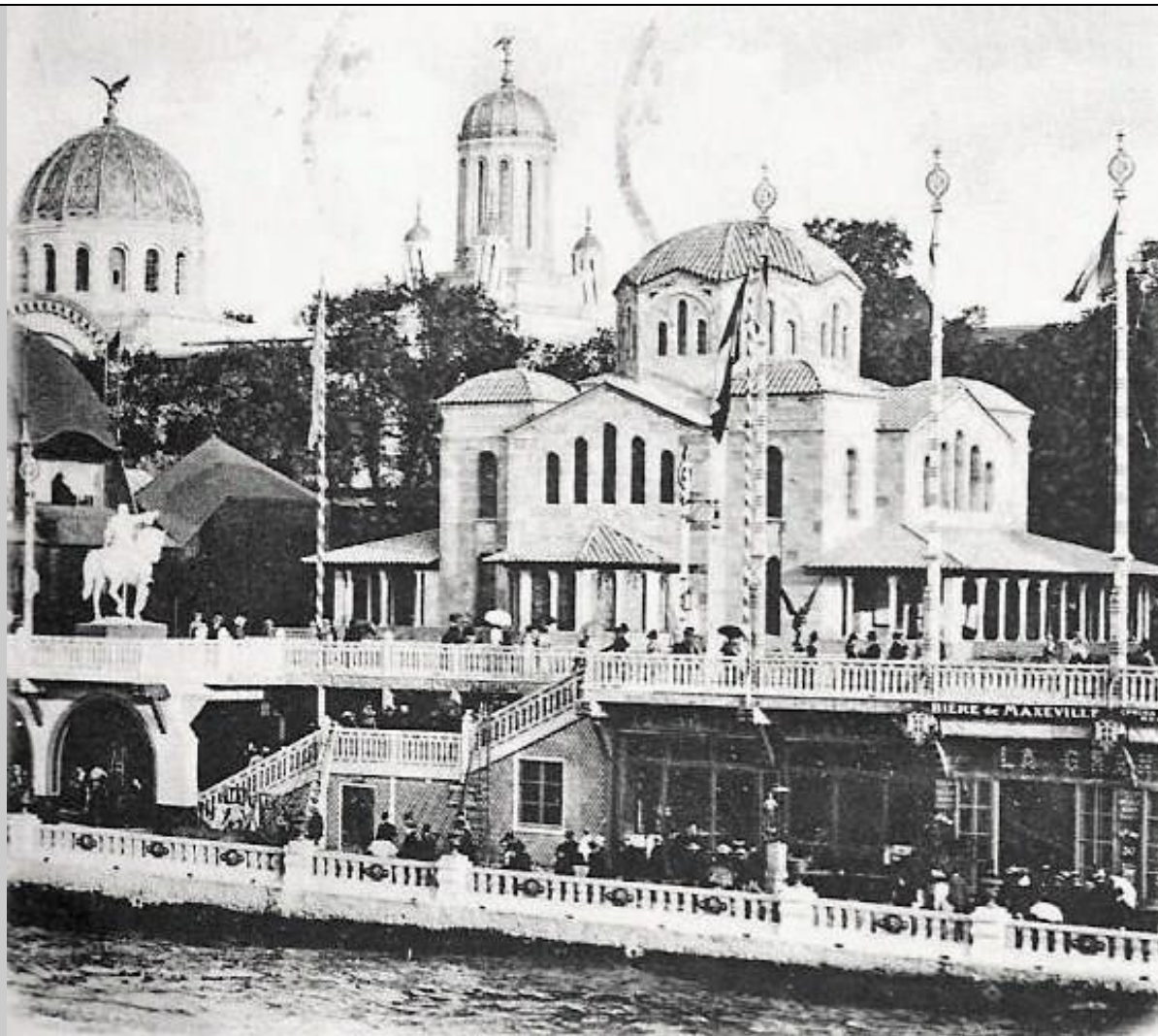
Figure 9 :Greek National Pavilion, Paris, 1889

Figure 10: Greece National Pavilion, Paris, 1900. Behind, the domes of the Romanian pavilion.

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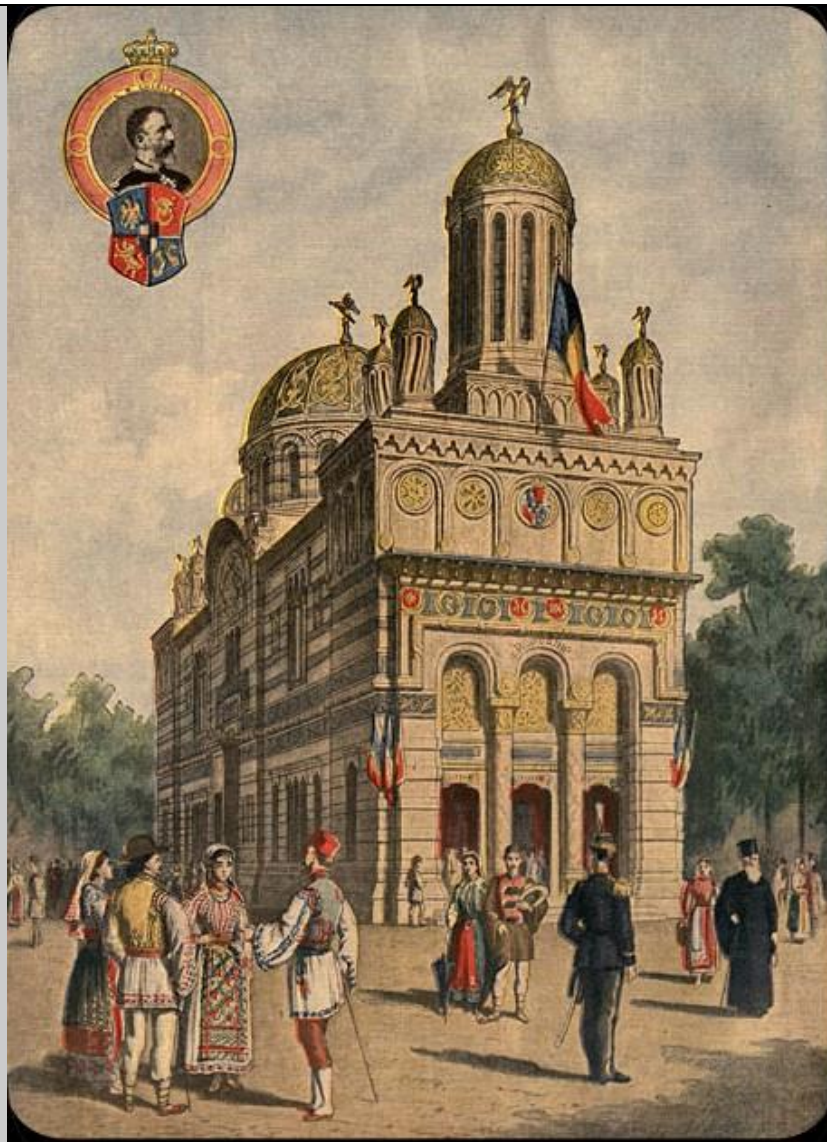Figure 11: Serbian National Pavilion, Paris, 1900.

Figure 12:
Romanian National Pavilion,
Paris, 1900

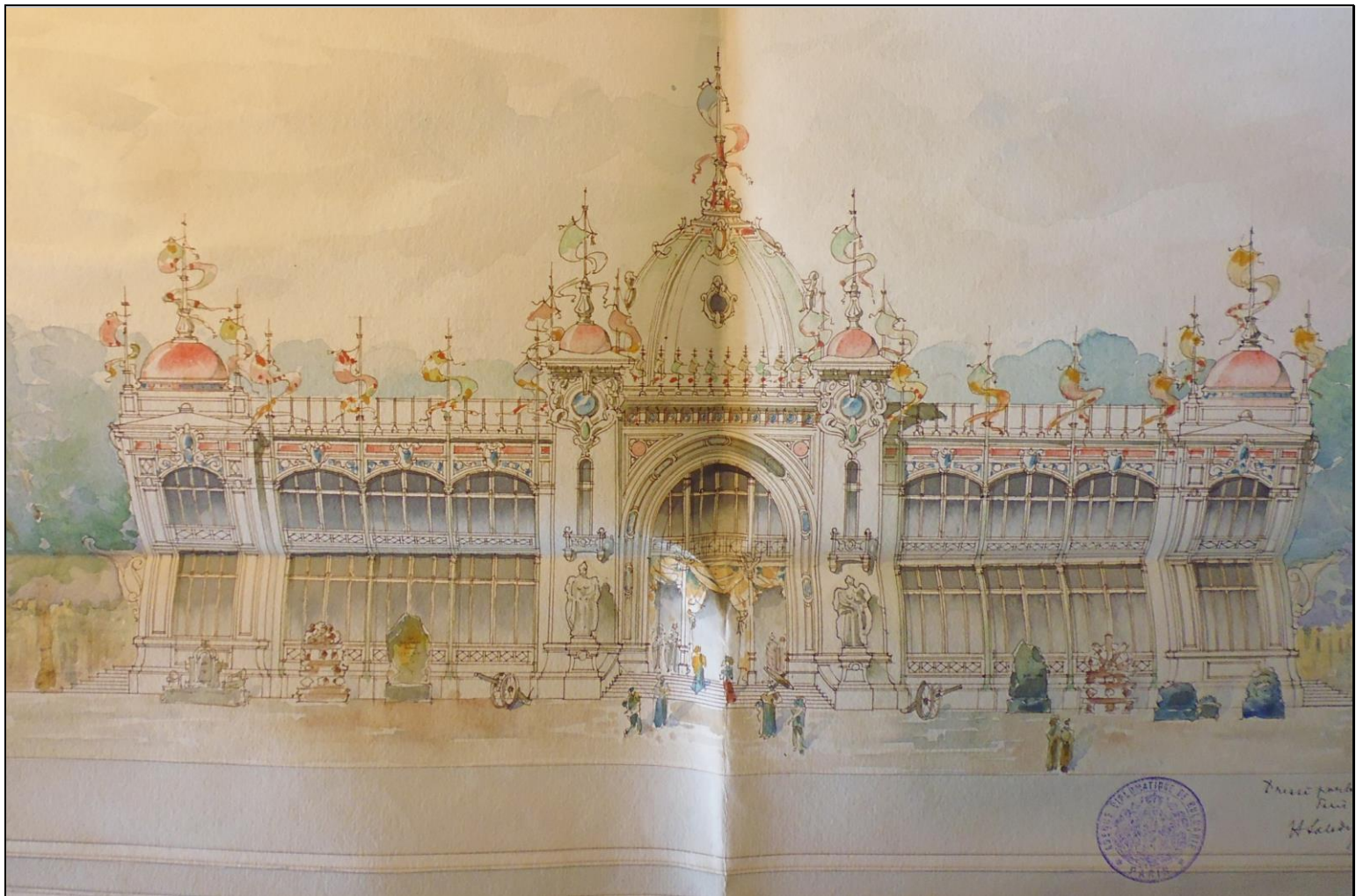Figure 13: Romanian Restaurant, front façade (left) and a lateral façade (right), Paris, 1900.

Figure 14: Drawing in watercolours of the Bulgarian National Pavilion, signed by the architects Saladin and Sevelinges, Paris, 1900.

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