

Article

Historical Buildings and Monuments as Cultural Heritage In Situ—Perspectives from a Medium-Sized City

Cristiana Vilcea , Liliana Popescu * and Amalia Niță 

Geography Department, Faculty of Sciences, University of Craiova, 200585 Craiova, Romania

* Correspondence: liliana.popescu@edu.ucv.ro

Abstract: The research presents the results of a survey carried on in Craiova, one of the largest Romanian cities, which contains numerous buildings from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, some of which were reconsolidated and brought back to use, while others are still decaying. The aim was to spatially investigate residents' perceptions of the built heritage in the historical city center of Craiova based on questionnaires and mapping perceptions using the Emotional GIS (EGIS) methodology proposed by Wang (2021) and the extent to which this heritage could be a valuable asset for cultural tourism. The alteration of function as well as the context for part of the historical area of the city center testify to the musealization of the study area. The large number of buildings included on the heritage list outlines the characteristics of a living open-air museum, capitalizing on the heritage in situ.

Keywords: emotional GIS; built heritage; musealization; living open-air museum; Craiova

1. Introduction

Cities are often conceived as a cultural superstructure undergoing a permanent process of development, displaying temporal layers that hark back several generations to the nineteenth century or even earlier, shedding rings of past cultures [1]. The repositioning of the contemporary urban area through representations of its past has been identified as a defining characteristic of European cities, with urban landscapes becoming sites of memory and representations of identity that are continuously being rewritten in response to social and political change [2]. In the European context, heritage has been directly linked to the conservation of the (imagined) past [3], an important aspect of its power, stemming from trying to relive, re-create, or, more accurately, emulate it [4].

As heritage is regarded as intrinsically specific and local, it can be used as an instrument for the creation and expression of the unique character of settlements [2]. However, dealing appropriately with this valued legacy of the past [5] is not an easy endeavor, with its importance being continuously reevaluated. While, initially, individual buildings, structures, and other artifacts were protected, later on, policies were targeted toward groups of historic buildings, townscapes, and the spaces between buildings, and more recently, policies have focused on the revitalization of the protected historic heritage. Thus, if 'the preservation policies had largely been concerned with the pastness of the past, the later conservation and revitalization policies were about a future for the past' [5].

Tourists and day-visitors alike make intensive use of the historic centers of the cities, since these historic city centers are one of the most important elements of the European cultural heritage [6]; this particular cultural heritage ensuring, to a large extent, the quality of their experience [7]. As these 'new', 'post-mass', 'increasingly sophisticated' tourists [8] have flocked to novel and unusual destinations globally, the cities of post-communist Central and Eastern Europe have come up with new products, new experiences, and new destinations for heritage tourism, which is seen as the largest segment of 'new' tourism [9]. Not only capital cities, but also regional centers have mobilized heritage and culture to



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capitalize on a shared architectural cultural heritage with Central and Eastern Europe [9–11], through place promotion and marketing.

The research hypothesis was that the revitalization projects involving historic urban quarters affected by physical and economic obsolescence often lead to musealization for the sake of sustainable capitalization of the built heritage. To test this hypothesis, we chose Craiova, a medium-sized city in Romania as a case study. The objectives were twofold:

The first objective (O1) was to map the historical buildings in Craiova (spatial distribution, current use, and state of conservation) and assess residents' perception of this built heritage.

The second objective (O2) focused on analyzing the strategy chosen by the local authorities to revitalize part of the historical area of the city from the point of view of musealization.

The final aim of the paper is to draw up a plan explaining how the partial transformation and revitalization of the historical area of the city of Craiova can be used for further development, emphasizing a spectrum of activities and characteristics that favor the creation of an open-air museum in the context of urban preservation and capitalization of heritage through tourism.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Urban Emotions and Emotional Communities

Emotions have been studied from a multitude of perspectives, starting with psychologists [12] and neuroscientists [13–15] up to sociologists or geographers, and later on from interdisciplinary perspectives [16,17]. In terms of affectual and emotional geography, geographers have taken up a variety of positions and have also shifted position over time, the terrain being mapped out expanding continuously as it is woven out of many threads [18]. Nevertheless, for geographers, emotions reside in the nexus of bodies, minds, and places [19]. Cities are seen as sites of emotional norms, emotions having a great role in urban transformations since they are not just the by-product of change [16]. However, even though emotion is an underlying trait of being human, its presence in maps and spatial data is hardly commonplace [19].

Interdisciplinary approaches combining spatial planning, geo-informatics, computer linguistics, and sensor-technology methods have been developed in order to collect data on the emotional perception of space [20–24]. Lately, there has been a surge in researching the emotions of urban dwellers and sensory mapping, exploring the link between the urban environment and psychophysiological arousal responses using biometrics and other kinds of tracking and remote technologies. Considering that different urban spaces influence the emotional experience of individuals, current technologies are able to detect and recognize emotions felt by citizens. By applying bio-sensor technology for peripheral-physiological measurements (sensor-wristband with GPS), experiences in pedestrian precincts (comfortable and uncomfortable), as well as emotional arousal maps, were achieved [25], capturing the location of emotionally relevant places in Lisbon. Kauklauskas et.al. [26] developed an Affective System for Researching Emotions in Public Spaces for Urban Planning. Specifically, it gathers and analyzes emotional, affective, and physiological states and the arousal and valence of individuals residing or visiting a particular city by employing a neuro-decision matrix.

However, emotions measured by technical sensors cannot be unambiguously correlated with the type of emotion people experience and the context of that particular emotion [17]. Moreover, most research has aimed at assessing spatial–emotional interactions and has focused on the individual perspective, only a few studies have attempted to aggregately map the emotional patterns of multiple individuals throughout the urban fabric [27–30]. Using an ambulatory sensing device for collecting physiological measurements, a dedicated smartphone app, and surveys, Shoival et.al. [29] explored the subjectively perceived level of arousal of tourists in Jerusalem. With the help of location-triggered surveys at specific areas of interest, participants rated on a seven-point Likert scale their subjectively perceived level of arousal; thus, objective and subjective emotional measures over the city

of Jerusalem were mapped. Most importantly, this study confirmed that due to their characteristics, certain sites within the city evoke a consistent and recurring emotional response from a large number of individuals, no matter the age, ethnicity, religion, or gender.

2.2. Place Attachment Mapping and Emotional GIS

A better understanding of the spatiality, distribution, and actual status of the historical part can be accomplished with the use of Geographic Information Systems. GIS is widely used to analyze and visualize geographical data for various purposes. However, the use of GIS has been limited in representing and analyzing emotions. The integration of emotions in GIS has given rise to a new paradigm called Emotional GIS (EGIS). EGIS has emerged as an important research area that investigates the potential of GIS in representing and analyzing emotions. This new dimension of GIS was explored in the present study in an attempt to visualize the attachment and the emotions that one can experience while enjoying the history of the city in different forms.

Emotions have been recognized as a fundamental component of human experience and are a critical factor in decision-making processes. GIS has traditionally focused on quantitative data analysis, neglecting the subjective and emotional aspects of human experiences. EGIS addresses this gap by providing a framework for integrating emotional responses and experiences into GIS, making spatial data more comprehensive and meaningful.

Emotional Geographic Information Systems represent a relatively new and rapidly evolving area of research at the intersection of geography, psychology, and computer science. The objective of EGIS is to incorporate emotional responses and experiences into GIS to improve the analysis, communication, and understanding of spatial data. This new concept of mapping emotions in a GIS environment combines geographical information systems (GIS) with emotional data, aiming to capture, visualize, and analyze the emotional responses of people to different locations, events, or situations. This technology can be used to understand how people feel about their environment and how their emotions are influenced by different factors, such as weather, noise, traffic, and social interactions [31–34].

A major challenge of EGIS is how to capture and represent emotions in a GIS context. One approach is to use qualitative methods such as interviews, surveys, and focus groups to elicit emotional responses from individuals. Another approach is to use physiological sensors, such as heart rate monitors, to capture physiological responses associated with different emotional states. These methods have been employed in a variety of studies to assess the emotional responses of individuals to various spatial phenomena such as landscapes, neighborhoods, and urban environments [31,33,35–38].

The existing research on EGIS can be broadly categorized into two categories: (1) theoretical research and (2) practical applications. Theoretical research focuses on the conceptualization and development of EGIS frameworks, while practical applications focus on the implementation of EGIS in real-world scenarios. The theoretical research on EGIS has been focused on the development of frameworks that integrate emotions in GIS, while the practical applications have been focused on the implementation of EGIS in various domains, such as urban planning, transportation, tourism, and environmental management. In the tourism industry, EGIS can help to develop more personalized and emotionally engaging travel experiences by incorporating information about the emotional responses of tourists to different destinations [36,39,40].

In urban planning and environmental management, EGIS can assist in the design of more livable and emotionally stimulating urban environments by incorporating information about the emotional responses of residents to their surroundings [31,34,37,41]. Furthermore, public health can also make use of EGIS, as it can be used to identify and mitigate the emotional stressors associated with different environmental factors such as air pollution and noise [33,42,43].

Despite the potential benefits of EGIS, there are several challenges that need to be addressed to make it a widely adopted and effective tool. Some of the main challenges are the lack of standardized methods for measuring and mapping emotions, as well as

the need for standardization in data collection to ensure consistency and comparability across different studies. Another challenge is the lack of integration between GIS and other disciplines that study emotions, such as psychology and neuroscience. Moreover, the development of user-friendly interfaces that can effectively communicate emotional data to different stakeholders, including policymakers, planners, and the public, could be helpful. Future research should focus on developing standardized methods for measuring and mapping emotions in GIS, and on integrating GIS with other disciplines to gain a more comprehensive understanding of emotions.

2.3. Musealization of Urban Quarters

The term ‘musealisierung’, meaning musealization, was coined by the German scholar Joachim Ritter who employed the term to describe how pasts that were once tradition come into modernity to be institutionalized [44]. While German scholars have used this term for several decades now, in other European languages researchers frequently refer to musealization/museumification. Musealization has been defined as ‘a form of temporal anchoring in the face of loss of tradition and unsettlement brought about by the increased tempo of technological and related change’ [44]. As stated in the reference tool developed by ICOM’s International Committee for Museology [45], musealization generally means ‘transforming a center of life, which may be a center of human activity or a natural site, into a sort of museum’; this process does not necessarily imply ‘taking an object to place it within the confines of the museum’, but rather a change of context and display, which cause a change in the status of the object. It is a strategy for transforming urban spaces, with a significant influence on the social, cultural, and aesthetic efforts directed toward the visible reconstruction of the past [1]. It is closely connected with programs focusing on the revitalization or urban preservation and urban renewal of historic town centers, being associated with conservation and restoration, with the requalification of streetscapes, reuse of building stock, and appropriation of public spaces [46]. This transformative process called musealization leads to *museality*—a scenario that describes towns as a museum—is also a phenomenon that can be foreseen, measured, and planned in heritage towns [47]. Initially, the act of musealizing referred to the transference of objects into a museum [46] following three major processes, namely: (i) ‘loss of function’ or ‘alteration of function’; (ii) ‘alteration of context’; and (iii) ‘a new relation between the subject (viewer) and the object, whereby the viewer takes on a posture of admiration’ Sturm, 1990, cited by (Nelle 2009).

Musealization as a transformation process has been documented for historical city centers that are part of the World Heritage List [46,47], as well as smaller [48,49] or larger cities throughout the world [50,51].

The use of EGIS can be beneficial in the process of the musealization of cities. By analyzing emotional data, EGIS can help identify the most emotionally significant places in a city, such as historic landmarks, cultural institutions, or natural environments. This information can be used to create more engaging and immersive cultural experiences for visitors, by highlighting the emotional connections that people have with these places [32,34,39,41,52,53].

3. Materials and Methods

The research methodology for the current study consisted of several stages. It began with quite an extensive desk research related to the importance of urban heritage, revitalization of historic quarters, and approaches to heritage conservation and international practices with focus on museality, followed by examination of documents and official plans related to the study area.

The second step consisted of several field surveys and relied on extensive use of GIS and EGIS tools. Since all three authors have been living in Craiova almost their entire lives, we were quite familiar with the area and the changes it has faced over the last decades. However, for a proper investigation, a much more thorough analysis was needed. So, there were two visits to the old city center (June 2020, June 2022) to have a clear inventory of the use of the buildings and to locate, mark, and photograph buildings

that were vacant or left in ruin. Elements of street art (building paintings, statues, and other elements reminiscent of the Belle Epoque) were also located and photographed. Elements of musealization were also identified in the area. A third field investigation was needed in order to locate and assess the current state of each and every building included on the Heritage List drawn up by the National Institute of Heritage (current use, conservation status, correlation to the neighborhood characteristics/other heritage units). These buildings are scattered throughout the city; although, there are several clusters, mainly near the city center. All the information gathered during field surveys as well as that from the official documents (construction period, owner, initial use) was used to complete the extensive ArcGIS database. Based on it, several scaled maps were achieved in a GIS environment depicting the location of historical monuments and the areas with a higher density of such monuments.

Then, we analyzed residents' awareness and appreciation of the built heritage, since residents are key stakeholders for various actions, including the landscape monitoring and safeguarding process [54], while also offering insights relating to the lived experiences of urban landscapes [55]. Hence, a specifically tailored questionnaire was designed based on studies focusing on residents' perceptions and awareness. The survey instrument, which was posted online on the website of the Geography Department, started with a brief introduction about the research carried out, followed by several sections including the elements that residents find attractive or representative of the identity of the city, the architectural symbols that locals would recommend to tourists/friends/emotions, as well as the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. The sections of the survey that were used for this study included several open-ended questions ('What are your favorite places in the city for spending time with family and friends?'/ 'What is the main element that gives the city its identity?'), but mostly 5-point Likert scale questions. Part of the responses yielded during these surveys was used in two different studies, focusing on the identity of place and residents' attachments to third places [56,57]. The qualitative data were represented in a GIS environment in an attempt to capture the emotional dimension (appreciation of and interest in the history and heritage of the city, attachment, connection with place) related to the past decades of the city and to highlight the attitudes and emotions of residents towards the cultural and historical heritage of the city, which can represent important attributes for promoting Craiova as an open-air museum city. The most attractive and highly recommended places were determined based on the number of responses selected by the residents. The choices were quantified for both areas considered attractive and recommended as worth visiting, and were represented as points on the map (each response for one place equals one point); then using the point density function we generated the attractive areas and most recommended places. We also added columns proportional to the number of responses indicating the respective place mentioned on the map. Except for Nicolae Romanescu Park and Botanical Garden, all other places are concentrated in the old city center and have multiple attractions and give opportunities to spend time with friends and family of all ages. Additionally, a statistical correlation was made between residents' interest in the city's history and their level of knowledge of the existing heritage monuments in Craiova.

Finally, extending the concept of musealization to historic city centers, we applied the methodology proposed by Noelle [46], namely that the attributes of a musealized environment pointing to an alteration in function are the predominant use of ground floors by visitors and of public spaces for the consumption of tourists; the alteration of context includes pedestrianization, street furniture, and the way people use the spaces.

4. Results

The case study for the current research was Craiova, a city of approximately 300,000 inhabitants in the south-western part of Romania, with a history of more than five centuries, which plays an important role at the regional level (a growth pole for the entire region, not necessarily only for Dolj county) [58]. Although many century-old buildings were

demolished during the communist period to make room for new collective residential development projects and various economic facilities, the city still preserves in the city core numerous sturdy brick buildings with elaborate masonry envelopes. Decades of neglect during various political regimes, as well as contested legal ownership, have left their mark on many of these buildings. However, the financing offered by the European Union through several programs, as well as slight pressure from public authorities and heritage councils toward the owners of heritage buildings, has successfully managed to improve this situation (for more details, please see [56,57]).

4.1. Mapping Heritage and Emotional Attachment

The historical value of a city is given by the existence of the remains from different periods of time in various conservation stages; it considerably increases if this cultural and historical evidence is recognized, preserved, and promoted, and even more if the people know about them and their history.

According to the list of historic monuments drawn up by the Ministry of Culture, Dolj county has about 700 historical monuments officially registered (in 11th place out of 41 counties). Some 308 monuments (mostly old buildings from the 18th and 19th centuries, parts of which have been restored) are located in Craiova providing the city with a rich inventory of heritage buildings. Most of them are located in the central area, the oldest part of the city, while a few are located across the city. There are three main areas with a high density of historic monuments (Figure 1). The largest one overlaps the central area of the city (this area does not include only the historical part that underwent major revitalization works), including grandiose mansions and headquarters of various institutions lining the main streets of the city in the late 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, when the city was the residence place of great boyars and landowners, which escaped demolition during the Communist period. While at the time they were built, 70% of them were private dwellings, followed by religious buildings (16%), and to a much lesser extent industrial, administrative, or educational facilities, currently only 56% of these buildings are private dwellings, while some 15% are boutique hotels, restaurants, and cafés (this category witnessed the highest increase, most of them being converted from grandiose dwellings), a share similar to that of churches and other religious buildings.

The biggest cultural and historical potential is given by important places (highly appreciated and recommended by the residents) such as the old city center (newly renovated in the Belle Epoque style), Romanescu Park, and other 14 buildings that are considered of national importance. The remaining 292 monuments are weighed as locally important, but they complete the historical picture of the city witnessing the passage of time.

Although the majority (80%) of the surveyed residents claimed they were interested in the history and cultural importance of the city's heritage [56], when associating heritage with notions such as culture, history, architecture, and legacy, they have limited knowledge about the heritage buildings. Thus, only 14 buildings (5 of which were mentioned only once) are considered by residents to be representative of the city's image (Figure 1). This could also be a result of the authorities' involvement in promoting and conserving the city's cultural heritage. This is also indicated by the responses of the residents who, although they acknowledge the local authorities' investments in the rehabilitation of the central area (77% see it as appropriate), consider that most of Craiova's heritage buildings to be in a poor or very poor state of conservation (50.3%) or, at most, satisfactory (36%). Nevertheless, the filed investigation revealed that 16% of the heritage buildings are decaying. The fact that some of the largest and most well-known buildings in the city that house several administrative and educational institutions are in dire need of conservation and restoration (Carol I College, City Hall, and Court of Accounts, to name just a few) may explain residents' perception. This finding testifies once more that people in general are often superficial observers of urban landscapes [59]. Almost a third of the city's residents believe that the main cultural institutions alongside the local authorities do not attractively and conclusively show the

cultural heritage of the city, as 69% of the people consider that temporary museums and exhibitions are few.

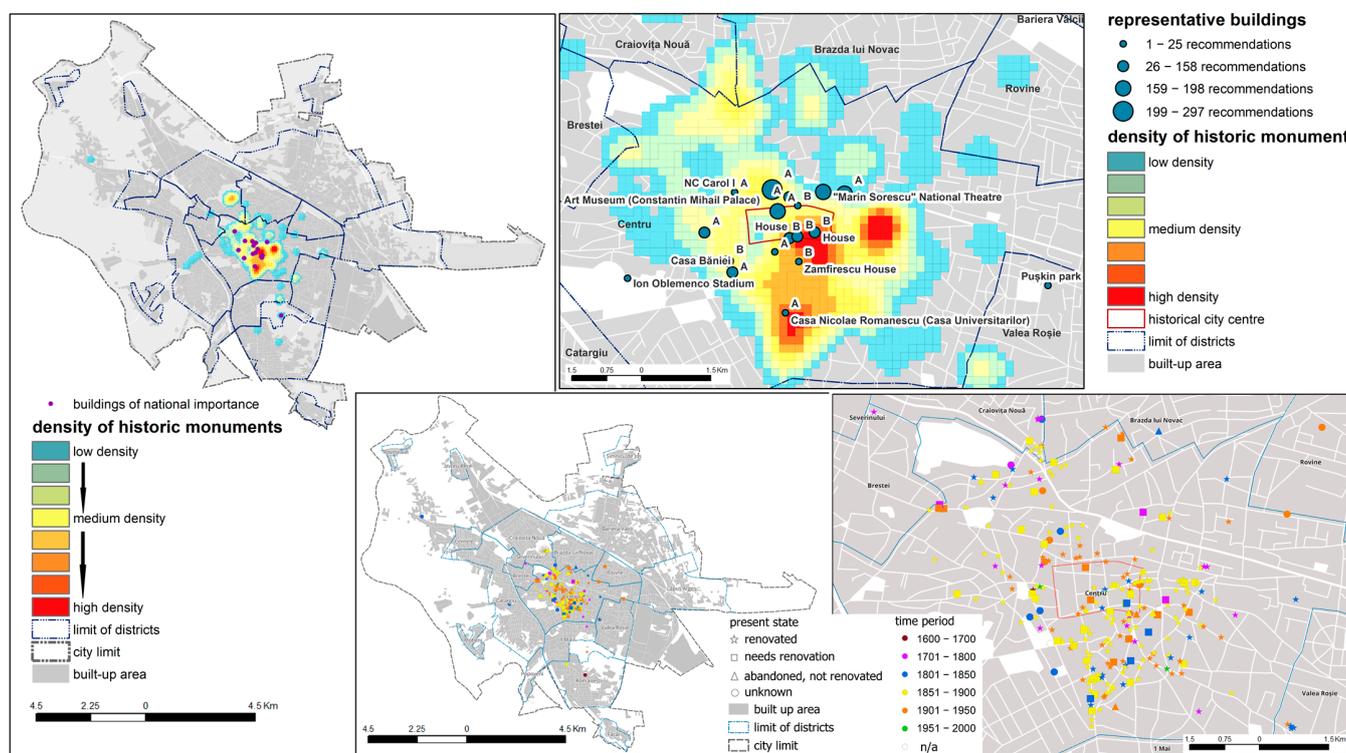


Figure 1. Distribution and density of historic monuments in Craiova.

The results of the survey indicated that most of the residents consider Romanian Park and the historical city center as the most attractive parts of the city, namely because of the various experiences that can be had there, but also because these are the places that benefited the most from renovation investments during the last years (Figure 2). Because of the multiple possibilities to spend time offered, the same two places are also considered by more than half of the residents for spending time with family or friends and are also their top recommendations for visitors. Both places are on the list of the Ministry of Culture. There was a correlation between the areas of the city considered attractive and those areas that one may highly recommend to a tourist or a friend to visit. However, when comparing the two maps, one can easily see that not all the clusters with a high density of heritage buildings are perceived as attractive/are recommended by residents. In fact, only the city center ranks high both from the point of view of heritage and residents' appreciation, while the other two clusters with high density of heritage buildings are not seen as the most attractive nor recommended. One of the reasons may stem from the fact that these clusters mainly include private homes on local residential streets, headquarters of local service providers, or expensive restaurants.

4.2. Musealization of the Historical Urban Area

The second objective of the study was to document the musealization of the historical city center, by focusing on the transformation process following the revitalization of the study area. Consequently, three attributes of museality were assessed, namely: loss/alteration of function, alteration of context, and absence of signs of temporary urban life and posture of admiration.

Out of the 151 buildings in the historical center of the city, almost 40% changed their use following the revitalization project—the dwellings account for the most affected category together with public services, while restaurants and pubs as well as commercial plots

witness the biggest surge in the area. There are hardly any dwellings on the ground floors (with the exception of houses that do not line the main streets and are placed somewhat in the backyard). There is also a sort of functional specialization in the area—hotels, restaurants, and catering facilities (HORECA units)—which is found mainly along Panait Mosoiu, Oltet, and Traian Demestresu, while the boutiques and various shops are found on Lipscani and Romania Muncitoare Streets, which actually continue a century-long tradition. (Along these streets, there are two-story buildings, erected at the end of the 19th to the beginning of the 20th century, owned by craftsmen and salesmen. The ground floors of these buildings housed various shops and workshops, while the upper floors served as dwellings for the persons working downstairs.)

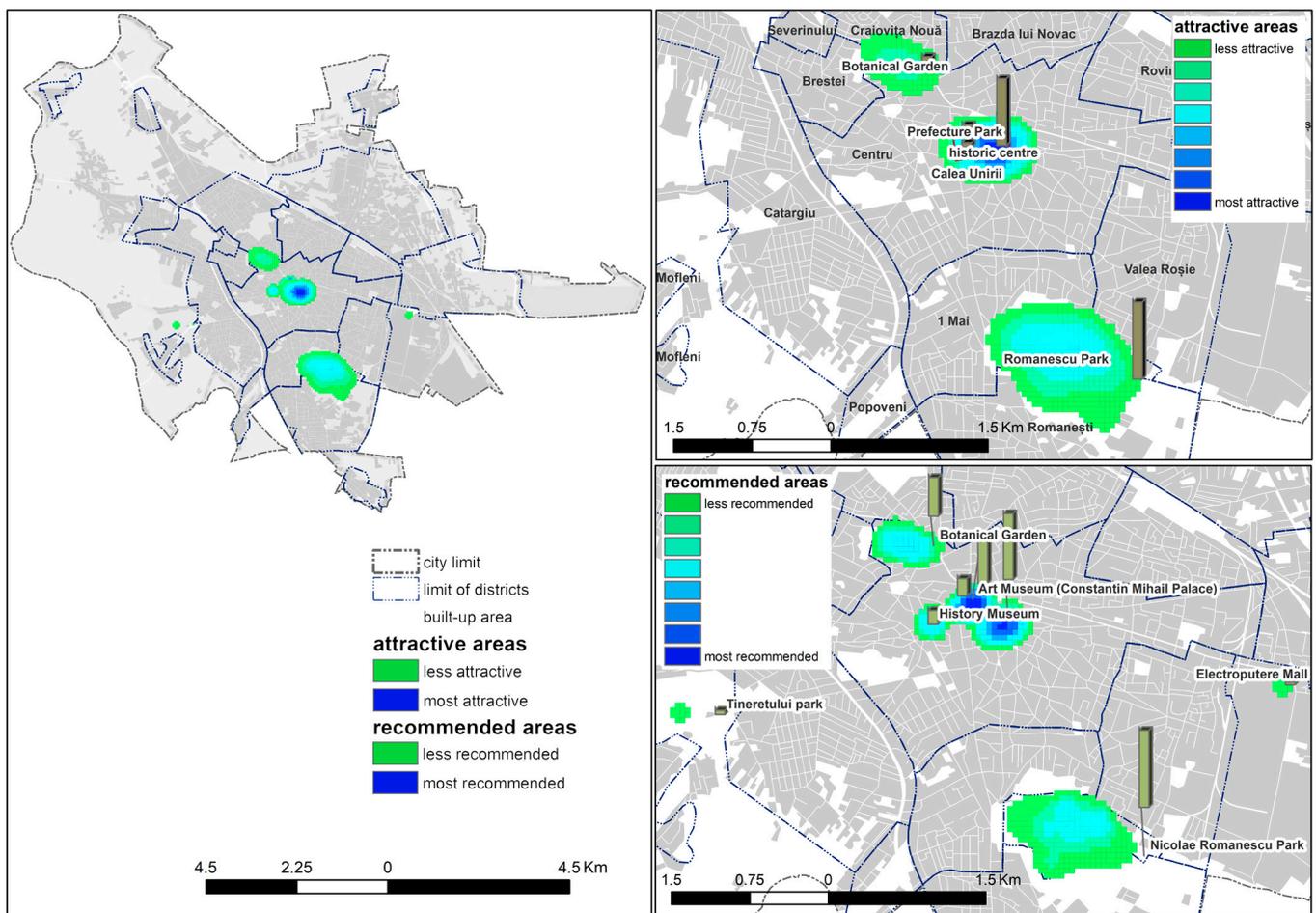


Figure 2. Distribution of most attractive areas according to residents' survey.

A new public square (Buzesti Square) was established following the revitalization works, where various cultural and leisure events and activities take place, especially during the warm period of the year. There are frequent open-air photo exhibitions taking place, focusing on the history of the city and the region as well as other themes, in an attempt to raise awareness about the city's heritage and rich history. As for the predominance of visitors in public spaces, we can safely say that both tourists and residents flock to this area, which ranks among the top choices for meeting with friends and family and as a recommendation for tourists.

The alteration of context is perhaps the most visible attribute of museality within the study area due to the significant changes: the entire area is destined for pedestrian use, the facades of the buildings have been restored, and the pavement of the streets also reflects the atmosphere and practices at the beginning of the 20th century together with the

street furniture and light fixtures, testifying that changes are inherent features of places, transforming places and people's perception of places [60].

To further add to the atmosphere of the beginning of the 20th century, there is an abundance of signs that 'enhance a historic image', with large urban paintings on the walls of some of the buildings. Moreover, even the signs of contemporary urban life (various infrastructure boxes that could not be relocated) have been painted so as to fade into the background (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Patterns of museality within the city center that underwent a revitalization process.

The third characteristic of museality is the 'posture of admiration' adopted by visitors of a museum, which can be seen while being in the area. Visitors generally stroll and quite often linger in appreciation, taking photos, pointing in several directions, and discussing with friends. Few people in this particular area are in a hurry and choose the shortest route. Even residents take their time once they enter the pedestrian area, with most of the residents visiting the area at least once a week and spending here 1 to 4 h [57].

5. Discussion

To ward off the large-scale decay of historical buildings, several projects and considerable investments (mostly through European financing programs) have been undertaken to preserve the historical buildings in the city center of Craiova city, mostly those on the Heritage List. Once the financing was secured, one of the main issues faced by stakeholders was related to the need to preserve the area while also retaining a useful function within the city. Thus, many of the buildings in the city center could no longer retain their initial use, consisting mainly of workshops, small shops, and rather poor dwellings. Following the revitalization works, most of the central area has changed its functionality, from mainly

residential and commercial to various forms of consumption, namely, leisure, tourism, and some extent retail. Apart from old restored buildings, the pedestrian streets, green areas, and the newly created public spaces for social and cultural activities emphasize the value of built heritage and its cultural worth, enhancing the historic environment. Part of the historical area in the city center has thus faced a process of musealization, a strategy adopted throughout Europe [46–50].

The overall objective of the research was to draw attention to the understanding of musealization as a valuable process that can actively influence both the preservation of the built heritage and the economic and social revitalization of the historic area. This process of musealization of historical quarters can be further capitalized by transforming this urban space into an open-air museum, where visitors can learn about the history, culture, and identity of a place. Throughout the world, open-air museums feature buildings that are representative of a previous historical period; the last decades have witnessed somewhat of a shift by applying the open-air museum idea to themes other than rural culture and vernacular architecture, namely the old urban core of some of the cities that still preserve old urban structures and built heritage that are currently used for entertainment and recreation, as well as some commercial activities.

This process usually involves creating heritage trails, public art installations, interpretive signage, and other cultural attractions. Today, open-air museums offer also some urban or industrial phenomena, demonstrating that ‘museum activity could be carried out not only *in the open* and *in situ*, but also within the framework of man’s modern social structures’, with buildings and the cultural landscapes, together with man’s relationship to the place in which he lives, all being included in the concept of an open-air museum in the 21st century [61]. Considering that open-air museums emerged during an age of complex social change [62] and that the central area of Craiova is a testimony to these particular changes throughout almost two centuries, it is important to successfully maintain its relevance not only for tourists, but also for the city’s inhabitants.

The concentration of heritage elements in the central area of the city facilitates the delimitation of an area functioning as an open-air museum, displaying the heritage *in situ*. The buildings already have a standard inscription on their side wall, with a symbol testifying for their inclusion on the Heritage List and information about the name of the building and the period it was built. Considering the easy access to most of the sights and the fact that they are already marked and visible to any visitor, a step further could be the placement of QR codes on each heritage building, where more information on the building and its initial residents can be easily presented in different languages. This can increase the interest of both the locals and tourists in the city of Craiova. The large mural paintings, located in a place full of history and culture, can become pieces of art in an open-air museum [63]. By including these objectives on the “routes of an open-air museum” it may also facilitate investments for the renovation of buildings currently in a poor state of conservation. However, this can be made difficult by the building’s ownership situation. Some buildings, privately owned by individuals or legal entities, currently have various uses (residential, restaurants, hotels, shops, educational institutions, etc.), and the renovation processes did not always comply with the legislation in force, altering the patrimonial value of real estate (the decorative elements have been plastered over or insulated, or PVC joinery has been used instead of the original stained-glass windows, due to the lack of proper knowledge). Hence, this educational initiative could also impact the everyday lives of citizens [64], with visits to the area being about more than sightseeing [65]. Considering that Craiova residents perceive differently the relation between people and urban places, with older generations seeing the city center as an economic space, while younger generations consider it more a leisure and social urban space [57], it is highly necessary to find a way to sustainably capitalize the heritage while preserving it and keeping it accessible to tourists and residents alike, no matter the age or income level.

The use of EGIS can be beneficial in this process. By analyzing emotional data, EGIS can help identify the most emotionally significant places in a city, such as historic landmarks,

cultural institutions, or natural environments. This information can be used to create more engaging and immersive cultural experiences for visitors, by highlighting the emotional connections that people have with these places. EGIS represents a promising area of research that has the potential to improve the analysis, communication, and understanding of spatial data by incorporating emotional responses and experiences. Although several challenges remain, the increasing availability of advanced sensing technologies, big data analytics, and visualization tools provide new opportunities for advancing the field. As such, future research should focus on developing standardized methods for data collection and representation, improving user interfaces, and exploring the potential applications of EGIS in different domains. Overall, the use of emotional GIS can help museums and cultural institutions to better understand their visitors' emotional responses and create more engaging and immersive cultural experiences. By collecting and analyzing emotional data, museums can tailor their exhibitions to better connect with visitors and create more meaningful experiences. For example, museums could use EGIS to track visitors' emotional responses to different exhibits and adjust the exhibit's layout or content accordingly.

6. Conclusions

The paper aimed to assess to what extent the project for the revitalization of the historical part of the city center has led to musealization and if the built heritage of the city can be an asset for cultural tourism. It is rather hazardous to assume that local authorities envisaged a musealization of the central area of the city, beyond a mere aestheticization and preservation of built heritage. However, according to Mullers's definition of musealization, i.e., the effort to preserve this intergenerational architectural ambiance [1], this is exactly what has happened in the Craiova city center. Part of the buildings was repurposed as restaurants and bars, as well as hotels and cultural facilities, such as exhibition spaces and private educational units, while the number of dwelling units considerably decreased; traffic use was replaced by pedestrianized areas, urban paintings, furniture, and light fixtures, recreating a different time period; and part of the city center has been preserved and displayed as if it were a piece in a museum.

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