

# From Socialist Industrial Iconic Representation to Present Patrimonial Perception

The Case Study of Hunedoara Steelworks, Transylvania

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IN 2000 for the first time after the political and economic shifts of 1989, and for the first time after the dissolution of the monuments committee in 1977<sup>1</sup>, the act concerning the consolidation of a preservation framework at Romanian national level through the definition and designation of ‘protected areas’ in the context of a reorganization of planning activity was adopted<sup>2</sup>. Afterwards, in 2001, the Historic Monuments act was issued<sup>3</sup>, marking the *crescendo* evolution of the preservation practice in Romanian context. Even though at present the Romanian legal framework offers a wide variety of tools concerning the safeguarding and preservation of built heritage, this evolution occurred at a slower pace than the change in mentalities, approaches and (ethical and civic) attitudes towards the built environment. The development of a legal framework for preservation as well as the increasing interest in the field, in some cases, appears to have occurred at an even slower pace than the territorial transformations under the pressure of the post-1989 political, economic and socio-cultural shifts, with direct consequences in the disappearance of certain typologies of built heritage.

Referring to these post-1989 territorial transformations in the broader context of Central and Eastern Europe, the scholar Mariusz Czepczynski, in 2008, identified a series of common phenomena for all the ex-socialist countries: in a first phase, the elimination of all socialist symbols from the urban built environment, something that became a political act dealt with differently in all countries; a second phase in which the elements of the ‘older order’ (pre-communist) were stressed in a process of re-writing national historic identities; finally, a third phase of alignment with European trends in terms of ‘consumerism’ and globalization<sup>4</sup>. Almost simultaneously, in the Romanian context, some aspects of the post-1989 built environment transformations were visually captured by way of the derelict industrial structures that by that time came to symbolize a common feature for the entire Romanian territory<sup>5</sup>. Thus, in 2007, the issue of abandoned industries was brought into discussion under the label of ‘ethical duty,’ through the case of former metallurgic sites (ferrous and non-ferrous) that were at that moment abandoned and in an advanced stage of degradation. The chosen cases are part of a territorial typology well-defined in the Romanian context: the mono-industrial towns of medium and/or small size, intensely developed in connection with heavy industries during the socialist years (1945–1989), and which were drastically affected by the post-1989 political and economic changes. Moreover, these specific cases of derelict industries are associated with the ‘misfortune’ of a political built legacy, receiving further negative economic and social connotations.

*Hunedoara, Călan, Călărași, Zlatna, Coșca Mică, Valea Călugărească, Babdağ, a while ago just names of towns, have recently become—for us at least—significant landmarks of Romanian decay. [...] The Industrial Units of the Golden Era are totally resistant to any effort to reshaping. Built in badly chosen places accordingly to absurdly conceived designs, with poor quality of both the material used and of the way the entire project was carried out, the lack of any concern for building something durable, those are probably some of the typically Romanian ingredients of this despicable situation. (Andreșoiu B., 'The Irretrievable Percent of Ideology,' in *Kombinat. Industrial Ruins of the Golden Era*, Bucharest: Igloo Patrimoniul, 2007)*

Due to the intense deindustrialization process visibly manifest after the shift towards capitalism in recent Romanian history, the entire national territory found itself marked by the presence of obsolete production sites, especially belonging to the large category of the heavy industries. Of great impact is the frequency with which the derelict industries can be found on the wide national territory. Indeed, their territorial distribution is based on the post-1945 intense industrialization process, or hyper-industrialization, developed during a period of larger geo-political shifts determined by the rise of communism in Central and Eastern Europe (the Eastern Bloc). Moreover, during the years 1945–1989, the industry saw the involvement of the state from both an economic and an ideological point of view, becoming a central feature of all socio-cultural and territorial transformations. The manner of relating to the built environment in official propaganda influenced its common perception, with possible reminiscences in the current approach to the built environment, directly linked with the communist period, and presenting further possible reminiscences of the recent political past in the present contemporary society. This was especially the case in a propaganda focused on the illustration of architecture, urban space and landscape, based on the ideological beliefs that form, function and space organization were important tools of empowering the socialist system and its leaders<sup>6</sup>. Where the industry played an important role in all aspects of the socialist system, the propaganda found its own symbols in it.

This paper will look into the interconnections between the common imaginary of the built socialist symbols and the perception of the built environment in the post-1989 Romanian context. The attention will be directed towards the case of socialist built propagandistic symbols, such as those introduced by the industrial architecture, and their impact on the current patrimonial endorsement of the 20<sup>th</sup> century industrial legacy. This is analyzed through the specific case study of Hunedoara, a former metallurgic town from southwest of Transylvania. During communism, Hunedoara Steelworks became an example of 'monumental industrial architecture'<sup>7</sup> due to its priority investment role in the economic socialist development, despite its multi-layered metallurgic development dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, during the post-socialist period, soon after the effects of the deindustrialization started to be visible, its derelict industrial facilities were captured, illustrated and labelled as a symbol of 'Romanian decay'<sup>8</sup>. This case study not only proves how vulnerable the industrial legacy is in the Romanian context, but brings into debate issues such as the post-1989 territorial transformations and the industrial territory's fast disappearance, especially when labelled as a 'misfortune' of a political built legacy.

Positioned in southwest Transylvania, in proximity of the Poiana Ruscă Mountains, Hunedoara represents a landmark for both Romanian and Hungarian history, stated visibly through the presence of the Corvin Castle. Hunedoara is also directly linked with the iron and steel industries developed throughout the entire region starting with the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, directly dependent on the presence of natural resources, iron ore in particular, in the Poiana Ruscă Mountains<sup>9</sup>. The industrial site of Hunedoara went through a variety of industrialization phases contextualized in the various political, socio-cultural and architectural settings of Transylvania (during late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century) and later on Romania (after 1948), becoming a national priority investment in metallurgy during the post-1945 socialist policies of economic revival.

From a quantitative point of view, during the communist period, Hunedoara increased tenfold in size, becoming the epitome of the socialist industrialization success, while from a material-architectural point of view it became an ‘experimental laboratory’ for planning practices in the context of centralization and the implementation of the Soviet model after the rise of communism<sup>10</sup>. With direct reference to the industrial architecture built here during the years 1947–1989, it became a reference point for the Romanian scene through its most publicized examples of ‘monumental industrial architecture’<sup>11</sup> and, therefore, brought into discussion specific issues for the architectural practices of the time, like the architectural models of influence divided between *east* and *west*, such as the centralization and control of architectural practices, the dialogue between the capital and the territory in planning practices, the construction materials (*concrete* vs. *metal*) or standardization, prefabrication and the industrialization of the construction industry<sup>12</sup>.

Around Hunedoara and its metallurgic territory and community, an entire iconography specific for the socialist propaganda was created in order to stress the official image of the system and its success in the matter of industrialization–urbanization. In this context, the built environment of Hunedoara, just like all other industrial towns developed in the period of the socialist hyper-industrialization, played an important role in visually quantifying the state investments in the ‘better life,’ but quantifying also the benefits offered by the system: the housing areas, the socio-cultural facilities, and most importantly, the working place (the industrial site).

The role of architecture as a direct result of the planned economy, and therefore of the socialist system in all its complexity, was underlined in every specialist publication during communism, through texts that accompanied the publicized constructions. Probably an even larger impact was achieved by its visual representations, either drawings, paintings or photographs, in a context in which the visual arts were strongly affected by the political censorship. In fact, as component parts of the visual arts, all graphic illustrations of architectural projects and accomplishments were directly influenced by the political shifts in socialist Romania, and presented variations in the use of propagandistic elements considered of importance in strengthening the official image of the regime<sup>13</sup>.

As the magazine *Arhitectura* was the main and officially accepted architectural and urban planning periodical, its pages reflected the changes in architectural representation, and it actually became a main archival documentation source in this sense, as considered and analyzed by the researcher Juliana Maxim in her work concerning architectural representations in socialist Romania during the 1950s and 1960s<sup>14</sup>. Besides the individualization of an aesthetical pattern in architectural representation structured in such a way as to underline the ‘order, organization and future perspective’ of the socialist system, the researcher argues that the major change is noticed starting with 1959, when architecture photography increases its presence in the pages of *Arhitectura*, almost eliminating the graphic illustrations (drawings and blueprints)<sup>15</sup>.

The first *Arhitectura* issue of the year 1959 is entirely dedicated to the topic of industrial constructions, from the general aspects and issues pertaining to territorial industrial planning, through the design of specific industrial areas and buildings, with evident emphasis on the economic efficiency as a determinant factor in decision making, to a sort of inventory of the last 10 years’ achievements of a variety of state design institutes specializing in industrial planning and design<sup>16</sup>.

While photographs of relatively small dimensions, making difficult the visual identification of the architectural features of the constructions, are used to illustrate the general thematic article signed by the architect Ladislau Adler<sup>17</sup>, the thematic industrial projects are mainly represented through drawings of blueprints, grouped according to the industrial branches, and therefore, according to the different state design institutes specialized in industrial planning. The stress was mostly on the complexity and diversity of the approached ‘industrial design themes.’ For example, some projects, like those presented by IPROMET (*Institutul de proiectari metalur-*

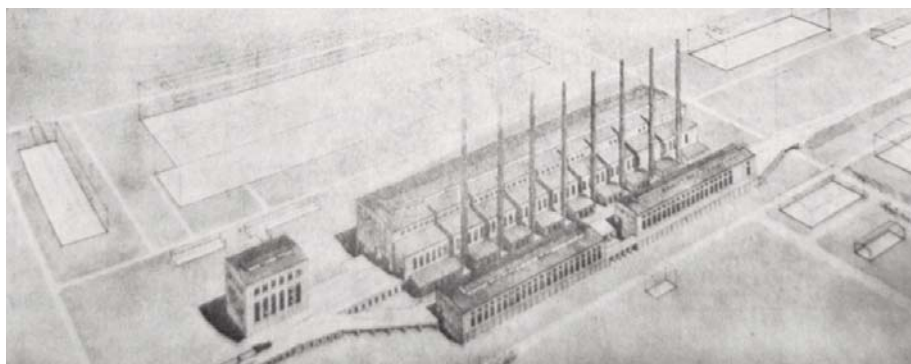


Fig. 1. The Siemens Martin Steel mill from Hunedoara Steelworks designed by IPROMET in 1952. Source: *Arhitectura* RPR no. 7, 1956

*gice/Metallurgic Design Institute*)<sup>18</sup>, were published either as photographs or as graphic illustrations of the blueprints, while other institutes based their presentations entirely on drawings. The interesting aspect of the IPROMET section is the fact that all published projects illustrate two of the largest industrial sectors of Hunedoara Steelworks: the rolling mill section, under construction at that moment, and the steel mill section, through some of its component parts such as the Siemens Martin steel mill no. 2 and the steel mill mixer.

These two industrial sectors, found in different phases of planning design or construction, are documented in various issues of *Arhitectura* throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, bringing into discussion general themes connected with the design complexity of ‘a metallurgic site’ (blooming – *Arhitectura* RPR 1951), the standardization and prefabrication of construction elements (blooming and the steel mill sector – *Arhitectura* RPR 1956), the ‘contemporary and modern approach’ to an industrial complex (650 mm rolling mill – *Arhitectura* RPR 1959) or, more specifically, the IPROMET accomplishments (*Arhitectura* RPR 1959; Adler L., Solomon Z., 1964) (fig.1).

Hunedoara Steelworks’ rolling mill ensemble was initially designed by IPROMET during the early 1950s, and built throughout the 1960s and 1970s under the IPL (*Institutul de proiectari laminoare/Rolling Mill Design Institute*)<sup>19</sup> coordination, with various technological modifications and upgrades, on the basis of the planned steel output. By the end of the 1970s, this industrial section came to have 10 different production lines for blooms, processed steel, and wire. Furthermore, by the end of the communist regime in 1989, and especially following the closure of the main production line in 1999 at the height of the deindustrialization process, the Peștiș rolling mill ensemble came to occupy a wide area of more than 110 hectares, presenting a complex architectural composition. However, overall images of the rolling mill sector were only partially published, no complete image or further details concerning the specificity of the production line being provided for the further identification of the buildings. Of the entire industrial complex, the blooming (1951–1953) and the 650 mm rolling mill (1958–1959) were the structures that gained the status of iconic representations: the first was associated with the Socialist Realism architectural aesthetic principles and considered a ‘pilot project’ in terms of the standardization, prefabrication and industrialization of constructions during the early 1950s; the second became an iconic example of ‘monumental industrial architecture’ for the national context, being associated with the ‘contemporary and modern’ architectural appearance amid shifting architectural aesthetics.

This architectural reference to Hunedoara Steelworks, together with a relatively detailed chronological development of the site during the socialist years, is visually illustrated in the main industrial architecture publication of the mid 1960s, *Industrial Architecture in Romania: 20 years....* signed by the architects Ladislau Adler and S. Zolomon<sup>20</sup>. This publication offers a systematic presentation of



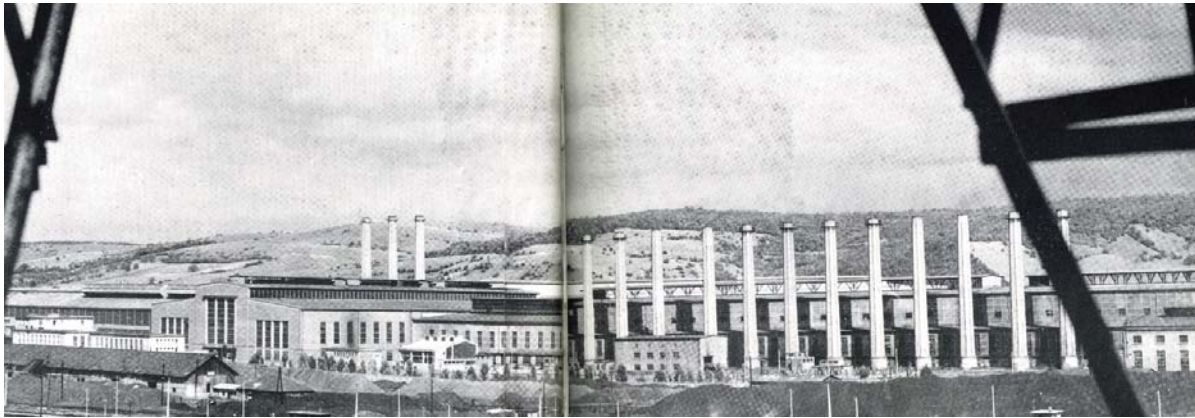


Fig. 2. The blooming – component part of the rolling mill sector designed initially by IPROMET (1953). Source: Adler L., Solomon Z., 1964



Fig. 3. The 650 mm rolling mill was component part of the Pestis rolling mill sector designed by IPL (1958 – 59). This particular image was published initially in *Arhitectura RPR* no. 3 1961, and later on, in the Adler L. and Solomon Z 1964 publication.

Source: *Arhitectura RPR* no. 3 1961

all industrial branches of interest, with a visual (photographed) inventory of the most important industrial accomplishments, or at least of those considered so by the official propaganda of the time. (fig.2, 3)

The photographs of the industrial sites and buildings, all black-and-white<sup>21</sup>, used symbolic elements to suggest the mentioned monumentality of the industrial complexes, individual buildings or industrial installations, with shots ranging from a general view to the detailed facades of the buildings. Just like in the general case of architectural representation, the photography of industrial elements was capturing the object of interest in a de-contextualized matter, separated from its original environment, either built or natural topography. By 1964, when this analysis of the socialist industrial accomplishments was published in which a variety of industries are placed specifically on the Romanian map, the industrial projects were presented in the journal *Arhitectura* without the exact specification of their territorial location, making their identification very difficult. The ambiguous presentation, with the omission of the exact location and name of the plant or industrial site, appears to have been the *norm* in the architectural literature, especially during the 1950s<sup>22</sup>. Thus, the fragmentation and de-contextualization of the industrial *element/composition* was realized not only visually through photography, but also in writing, when the descriptive text of the projects was focused on the quantitative indexes of the investments, duration of execution and technological status and performance. The published projects from Hunedoara Steelworks were also

part of this “normality,” especially considering the lack of reference to the overall planning theme in the early 1950s, as in the case of ‘a metallurgic site’ planning and construction illustrated through the project of the rolling mill sector (*Arbitectura RPR* 1951).

However, in this context of territorial de-contextualization, the presence of the Corvin Castle in the industrial landscape of Hunedoara offered a singular character to the photographic representations, creating the opportunity to individualize and recognize the setting, and moreover, allow-



Fig. 4. General view towards the metallurgic site with Corvin Castle in forefront. Source: Adler L., Solomon Z., 1964

ing the community to identify itself with the local symbols emphasized by the official propaganda. For this reason, some of the most publicized shots are the ones featuring in the foreground the Corvin Castle, symbolizing the physical connection with Romanian history, with the metallurgical site symbolizing the socialist future in the background. This specific setting was captured throughout the different industrialization phases of the steelworks, from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and mostly during the communist years (fig. 4).

Some of the most common representations of the town of Hunedoara were those that captured both *the city* and *the industry*, together, one contextualizing the other, defined as a whole territorial entity. Actually, by the late 1960s, the ‘industrial landscape’ was mentioned<sup>23</sup> as main tourist attraction of Hunedoara, while images of the town and the metallurgic site started to be published in a variety of economic, geographical, historical, and architectural publications, as

well as in local and regional tourist guides, newspapers and postcards. The majority of the photographs are taken from the city towards the industry, having in the foreground various parts of Hunedoara, with priority to the residential ones, while the industry always provided the background of the ‘flourishing Socialist life.’ The straight, direct connection of the town with the industry, especially with the residential areas, with the main entrance gates of the metallurgic site, was intensely used as main perspective point. The industry as the ‘future’ and as the background to daily life was used not only in the Romanian context, but rather represented a propagandistic visual pattern used in all throughout the Eastern Bloc<sup>24</sup>, bringing a sort of uniformity in the matter of the visual representation of the industry, and acting as a powerful propaganda tool of the system.

While analyzing the variety of pictures representing Hunedoara Steelworks’ architectural accomplishments during communism, the main sensation is that the large production plants were the only and main interventions worthy of being mentioned (the rolling mill and steel mill sections). However, the continuous investments meant to increase the industrial output and diversify steel production had an important impact on the site’s overall development and on the diversification of industrial structures as well. Additionally, the concept of ‘integrated metallurgical site’<sup>25</sup> impacted greatly on the surroundings of Hunedoara, which were not captured in detail in the official publications, leading to an interpretation of this ‘industrial landscape’ only in terms of the quantified built environment, while completely disregarding the variety of topographical features transformed over time due to the industrial activity in the area. Just like in case of any other industry, tracing back the variety of processing flows at Hunedoara, upstream towards the exploita-

tion points, the entire territory was transformed by wide industrial infrastructures, structured for both the manpower and for the transportation of materials and electricity, by the change in topography (Cinciş dam), by the processing facilities and waste tips. All of these elements represent tangible traces of the industrial past of Hunedoara.

Despite the wide industrial territory that was created in Hunedoara and its surroundings, with a variety of tangible components of its industrial legacy, nowadays this territory is less represented (quantitatively speaking) on the historic monuments list<sup>26</sup>. This aspect presents a discrepancy in terms of what exactly is perceived and endorsed as (industrial) patrimonial value.

The re-opening of the preservation issues during the first post-1989 campaign of territorial survey of the cultural heritage (1992) brought Hunedoara under the spotlight, with its major historical icons such as the Corvin Castle, its archaeological sites, the Orthodox and Catholic churches and pieces of architecture that were most representatives from an aesthetic value for the pre-1945 Romanian scene. In what concerns directly the matter of the industrial heritage, the official and legal acknowledgement was oriented towards the pre-1945 elements, endorsed rather from a technological and technical point of view and linked with Hunedoara's industrial territory, and not with the metallurgic site itself: the Govăjdie furnace dated 1813 and located in proximity of Hunedoara, or the Ghelari iron ovens dated in the 9<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup> centuries. The only industrial structures listed as historical monuments and located on the premises of the metallurgical site were the Ironworks Administrative Pavilion (1906) and the Apprentice School (1936–1938). Both buildings are in fact deeply connected with the overall industrial development of Hunedoara, and with the development of their vicinities and of the metallurgic site itself. However, it is not clear why other elements connected with Hunedoara's pre-1945 industrial phases were not taken into consideration for their patrimonial value, such as the thermo-electric plant (1915), the mechanical plant (1930s) or the Siemens-Martin steel mill and the 800 mm rolling mill assembly (1939–1941). In other industrial areas found in the proximity of Hunedoara and directly interconnected during their industrial development, such as the Jiu Valley Basin or the Mountainous Banat area, component elements of the industrial heritage dating mainly from the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century appear listed in a wider variety of contexts than in the case of Hunedoara. This is the case with production units and technological equipment, residential dwellings, socio-cultural facilities and other tangible aspects of the industrial heritage<sup>27</sup>.

By 2008, when the industrial heritage administration and management act was issued, defining in a quite complex and detailed manner what is to be perceived, acknowledged and endorsed as industrial heritage<sup>28</sup>, Hunedoara Steelworks was undergoing its first reclaim project commissioned by the local administration<sup>29</sup>. This reclaim project was requested by the local administration as a main tool in the urban regeneration process, the only solution offered being a *tabula rasa*: the complete demolition of the derelict industrial structures. Approximately 138 hectares were the subject of brownfield reclaim, with emphasis in the official documentation on the recycling, re-use and re-selling to external bodies (mainly construction companies) of the construction materials recovered from the site. Being an environmental project, it did not require any type of historical survey and analysis of the industrial structures, site and/or territory, and no other specialized local or national entity brought in discussion such an aspect.

In 2010, when the current List of Historic Monuments and Sites was adopted and implemented, another brownfield regeneration project included Hunedoara in a wider European context, together with a variety of former industrial sites from Central and Eastern Europe (Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic)<sup>30</sup>. Despite its wider approach in terms of identifying possible actors and strategies for further intervention projects here, this project states the same opinion as the previous one concerning the remaining ruins: total demolition, as they have “no value.” Therefore, still today, the demolition interventions on the site razed the industrial structures to the ground, almost in their entirety.





Fig. 5. Photographic survey of tangible traces of Hunedoara industrial territory. Source: Paolo Mazzo, July 2013

The physical disappearance of the industry, previously considered as the main transformation-driven factor, and therefore associated with a certain sense of centrality both in the local and territorial context, generated a certain shift in *central-peripheral* connections at urban level. Moreover, the disappearance of the main production sections (blast furnaces, the steel mill and rolling mill section, the coke-chemical plant) is commonly perceived and associated with the complete disappearance of the industrial legacy, and therefore, denies any potential patrimonial value of the place from this perspective. This loss is testified also by the present initiatives developed in the local context and linked with the various aspects of the industrial heritage, focusing on the material and technological testimonies of the industrialization processes of the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and on their connection with the surroundings of Hunedoara, though not necessarily with Hunedoara itself<sup>31</sup>.

When analyzing its previous metallurgical flow in detail, and with it all the various tangible and intangible connections in the territory throughout the entire period of industrial development, Hunedoara still represents an important material testimony of its own industrialization. The low percentage of the remaining industrial elements on the site and territory, together with the industrial town itself, represent an important diversity of industrial built legacy, with the potential of becoming ‘samples’ of the different industrial phases of the town throughout the entire 20<sup>th</sup> century: the civic buildings found in direct connection with the industrial production—dwellings, administrative, educational, social and entertainment buildings; the exploitation and processing areas of natural resources, on the surface or underground; transportation infra-



structure; industrial landscapes, on a limited area, representing those natural and urban environments in which essential features of the industrial past are preserved; documentary funds, private or public, video and audio records and any other type of documentation connected with the industrial and technological field<sup>32</sup>.

Through that, it might be even possible to have these patrimonial testimonies as a starting point for any further initiative directed towards safeguarding and enhancing the local industrial identity. (fig. 5)



## Notes

1. In the Romanian context, the Directorate of the National Cultural Patrimony (*Directia monumentelor istorice*) was abolished in 1977 amid strengthened centralized control over planning activities, while the communist state's main direction was oriented towards an intense territorial systematization through the 'modernization' of old historic city centers and rural areas. This had major consequences for the Romanian built heritage, traumatizing entire urban and rural communities through the mass destruction done in the name of such officially justified 'modernizations.' The case study of Bucharest city center remains probably one of the most emblematic for the issue of patrimonial loss. See Giurescu D.C, *The Razing of Romanian Past*, New York: World Monuments Fund, 1990.
2. *Legea nr. 5 din 6 martie 2000 privind aprobarea Planului de amenajare a teritoriului național – Secțiunea III – Zone protejate* (Law no. 5 of March 5, 2000 concerning the national territorial systematization plan – Section III – Protected areas).
3. *Legea nr. 42 din 18 iulie 2001 privind protejarea monumentelor istorice* (Law no. 42 of July 18, 2001 concerning the preservation of historic monuments).
4. Czepczynski M., *Cultural Landscapes of Post-Socialist Cities. Representation of Powers and Needs*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008, pp.116–118.
5. Andreșoiu B., Ioan A., Oțoiu A.N., Chelcea L., Simion G., photographer Bonciocat S., *Kombinat. Industrial Ruins of the Golden Era*, Bucharest: Igloo Patrimoniul, 2007.
6. Czepczynski M., *Cultural Landscapes of Post-Socialist Cities...*, 2008, p.116.
7. Adler L., Solomon Z., *Arhitectura industrială în RPR: 20 de ani de realizări în domeniul construcțiilor industriale 1944 – 1964*, Bucharest: Ed. Tehnică, 1964.
8. Andreșoiu B., "The Irretrievable Percent of Ideology," *Kombinat. Industrial Ruins of the Golden Era*, Bucharest: Igloo Patrimoniul, 2007.
9. The presence of the Teliuc and Ghelari iron ore in the proximity of Hunedoara generated a series of territorially dispersed iron producers such as Toplița (1754), Govăjdie (1813), and Călan (1867). See Lazu C., *Mines, usines siderurgiques et domaines de l'Etat Roumain a Hunedoara – dressees par la Direction generale de la Mise en Valuer des Biens de l'Etat et de l'Energie*, Bucarest: Ministère de l'Industrie et du Commerce, 1928; Rusu A., *Uzinele de Fier ale Statului din Hunedoara: descriere activitati probleme*, Bucharest: Ed. Standard Graphica, 1947; Wollman V., *Patrimoniul preindustrial si industrial in Romania* (Vol. I), Sibiu: Ed. Honterius, 2010.
10. The issue of the industrial architecture and industrial planning in Hunedoara during the socialist years was approached during the doctoral research carried out at Politecnico di Milano (PhD program Preservation of Architectural Heritage, 2010–2013, coordinator: Prof. Carolina Di Biase). The research intended to approach the material knowledge of the industrial built legacy in Hunedoara, presenting the industrial site as a direct material result of all its industrial development phases, and therefore, tangible testimonies of different political and socio-cultural settings. What came to attention in this case are the variety of planning processes and metallurgical projects developed in Hunedoara for the first time after the rise of socialism in the Romanian context, creating a certain opportunity for experimenting with industrial planning and architecture models that were later on implemented at a larger national level. See Tiganea O., *Industrial Architecture in Communist Romania. Hunedoara: Construction and Destiny of a Major Steel Plant 1947–1999*, PhD Thesis, Politecnico di Milano, 2013.
11. Solomon Z.; "Zonele industriale ale metalurgiei" (*Arhitectura RPR*), no. 4, 1965, pp. 33–35.

12. Țiganea O., 2013.
13. The visual arts, including photography, even though the latter was not perceived as an individual art, were influenced by the political shifts occurred in Romania during communism, from the 1950s Socialist Realism to the late 1950s return to modernism and later on to the 1970s 'revival of nationalism,' presenting variations in the use of propagandistic elements considered of importance in strengthening the official image of the system. In this entire context, the built environment played an important role in visually quantifying the state investment in a 'better life.' In the Romanian context, powerfully influenced by the Soviet one at least during the 1950s, the mission of the 'official photograph' was to document the events and changes in favor of the system, being used as an important visual tool for mass communication. Thus, the 'official photographer' affiliated to a variety of state institutions and officially accepted magazines and periodicals was treated as a normal employee and not at all as an artist. Moreover, during Socialist Realism it was banned from the realm of the arts, even if some of the painted representations, especially the leaders' portraits, were based on photography. See Dickerman L., "Camera Obscura: Socialist Realism in the Shadow of Photography" (October), vol. 93, 2000, pp. 139–154. Despite its not being officially declared a visual art, the entire socialist propaganda was based on photographic representations. See Maxim J., *The New, The Old, The Modern. Architecture and Its Representation in Socialist Romania 1955-1965*, PhD Thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2006, pp. 168–223.
14. The third part of the PhD thesis of art and architectural historian Juliana Maxim is entirely dedicated to the photographic representation of architecture during Socialism, during the transition from Socialist Realism to modernism, taking into account the overall architectural achievements, without a differentiation of the planning themes. See Maxim J., *The New, The Old, The Modern ...*, 2006, pp. 168–223.
15. Ibid. 14.
16. *Arhitectura RPR*, no.1, 1959.
17. Adler L.; "Eficacitatea economică a investițiilor, problema de bază în proiectarea industrială" (*Arhitectura RPR*), no.1, 1959, pp. 16–22. During the communist years, the architect Ladislau Adler was especially involved in industrial architecture and industrial territorial planning, publishing a great number of articles in *Arhitectura*, as well as a few thematic monographs on the matter.
18. In the context of the intense centralization and restructuring of the planning activity, starting with 1949, a state design institute in charge of industrial facilities was created at Bucharest (IPI – *Institutul de proiectare industrială*/Industrial Design Institute), followed by its further thematic division and specialization during the 1950s on the basis of the industrial branches approached in the planning activity. Among these later industrial design institutes, IPROMET was among the first to specialize in metallurgy (planning and construction).
19. The diversification of the industrial branches starting with late 1950s had a direct impact on the planning activity in this field, determining a further diversification of the state design institutes affiliated with different industrial ministries. Thus, in the particular case of metallurgy, besides IPROMET, starting with 1962–1963 there emerged a design institute specialized in the design and planning of rolling mills (IPL).
20. Adler L., Solomon Z., *Arhitectura industrială în RPR: 20 de ani de realizări în domeniul construcțiilor industriale 1944 – 1964*, Bucharest: Ed. Tehnică, 1964.
21. The majority of architecture photographs were published in black-and-white format throughout the entire communist period, favoring an aesthetical perception based on the black-white contrast. Also, the black-and-white photographic composition suggests a sense of order, organization and, moreover, a clean environment, even though the big metallurgical sites were among those that had the most important visual impact on the landscape as a result of iron oxides emissions. See Maxim J., 2006.  
Maxim J., "Developing Socialism: The Photographic Condition of Architecture in Romania, 1958–1970," *Visual Resources: An International Journal of Documentation*, vol. 27, 2011, pp. 154–171.
22. The articles published in connection with industrial projects in *Arhitectura RPR* during the 1950s make reference in general to 'a steel mill' or 'a rolling mill' or 'a general production plant,' without exactly specifying the industrial site or the geographic location. In some cases not even the precise production line is specified. See *Arhitectura RPR* no. 1–2, 1952; *Arhitectura RPR* no. 7, 1956; *Arhitectura RPR* no. 5, 1957; *Arhitectura RPR* no. 9, 1957; *Arhitectura RPR* no. 8–9, 1958.
23. Floca O., *Hunedoara: ghid al județului*, Deva, 1969.

24. Gibas P., “Steel, Rust & Photography: Fetishization of Time within (Post)Socialist Representation of Industrial Cities” in *Conference Handbook ‘Rust, Regeneration, Romance...’*, Ironbridge, 2013.
25. The concept of an ‘integrated steel plant’ in reference to Hunedoara was initially mentioned in a 1947 general technological and economic survey done by the engineer Alexe Rusu. On the basis of his study, Hunedoara Ironworks are mentioned as a key element in restructuring the Romanian postwar heavy industry. The concept of an ‘integrated steel plant’ or ‘integrated metallurgic site’ makes reference mainly to a diversification of the industrial production flow from iron-ore exploitation and processing to pig-iron and steel production and processing. See Rusu A., *Uzinele de Fier ale Statului din Hunedoara: descriere, activități, probleme*, Bucharest: Ed. Standard Graphica, 1947.
26. For the purposes of this study we analyzed the territorial surveys conducted in 1992, and the 2004 and 2010 Lists of Historic Monuments and Sites officially approved by the Ministry of Culture.
27. See the List of Historic Monuments and Sites 2010 (LMI 2010, <http://www.cultura.abt.ro/Files/GenericFiles/LMI-2010.pdf>).
28. *Legea nr. 6 din 2008 privind regimul juridic al patrimoniului tehnic și industrial M.O. Partea I nr.24/11.01.2008* (Law no. 6 of 2008 concerning the juridical administration and management of industrial and technical heritage).
29. *Hunedoara, Regenerare urbană în zona fostindustrială* (Hunedoara–Urban regeneration in the former industrial area); Author: Romair Consulting; Beneficiary: Hunedoara County, October 2007.
30. TIMBRE – Tailored Improvement of Brownfield Regeneration, [www.timbre-project.eu](http://www.timbre-project.eu).
31. While the Corvin Castle plays the dominant role in the tourist revitalization of Hunedoara, the local initiatives directed towards the valorization of Hunedoara’s industrial heritage are mainly directed towards the Hunedoara–Govăjdie railway or the Govăjdie blast furnace. However, in 2010, the documentation put together for the regional development strategy of Hunedoara County proposed the preservation of the former metallurgic site, but with direct reference to those buildings of a certain *antiquity* patrimonial value. See *Strategia de dezvoltare a județului Hunedoara (pe obiective și direcții de dezvoltare) și pe planul de măsuri aferente (Iunie 2010)*, Hunedoara County, [www.cjhunedoara.ro](http://www.cjhunedoara.ro).
32. See The Nizhny Tagil Chapter for the Industrial Heritage, July 2003. *Legea nr. 6 din 2008 privind regimul juridic al patrimoniului tehnic și industrial M.O. Partea I nr. 24/11.01.2008* (Law no. 6 of 2008 concerning the juridical administration and management of industrial and technical heritage).

### **Abstract**

#### **From Socialist Industrial Iconic Representation to Present Patrimonial Perception (The Case Study of Hunedoara Steelworks, Transylvania)**

This paper will look into the interconnections between the common imaginary of the built socialist symbols and the perception of the built environment in the post-1989 Romanian context. The attention will be directed towards the case of socialist built propagandistic symbols such as those introduced by the industrial architecture and their impact on the current patrimonial endorsement of the 20th century industrial legacy. This is analyzed through the specific case study of Hunedoara, a former metallurgic town in Transylvania. During communism, Hunedoara Steelworks became an example of ‘monumental industrial architecture,’ despite its multi-layered industrial development dating from the 19th century, while during the post-1989 period, under the visible effects of deindustrialization, it was labelled as a symbol of ‘Romanian decay.’ This case study not only proves how vulnerable the industrial legacy is in Romanian context, but brings into debate issues such as the post-1989 territorial transformations and the disappearance of derelict industries, especially when labelled as ‘misfortunes’ of a political built legacy.

### **Keywords**

Hunedoara Steelworks, socialist propaganda, industrial architecture, built legacy