



Large scale areas are being left permanently deserted by the continuing trend of deindustrialization. A particularly striking example of this phenomenon is observable in the states of the former Eastern Block, continuing from the 1980s to present day.

The tendency towards urban and peri-urban decay has catalyzed the emergence of necrotic, idle and uncontrolled landscapes, often in the immediate proximity of metropolitan centres, as well as the systemic erasure of industrial and cultural heritage in these regions.

While the approach towards maintaining and reclaiming such sites has been a focal point of architectural and urbanistic research and planning in Central Europe since the late 1970s, the particular socio-economic characteristics of Eastern Europe have not been closely examined, leading to maladjusted solutions in the few cases where the necessity for intervention had been identified.

The grafting of superficial urbanistic and architectural concepts, often „borrowed“ from successful projects in Western Europe, onto sites that are not fit to support them, lead to unsustainable solutions facing a plethora of issues that local planners and communities are struggling to solve.

The role of industrial architecture as a generator of memory and remembrance is to be clarified and exemplified, as well as the aesthetic quality of decay. The research aims to interrogate the minimal scale of interventions that can still lead to sustainable re-use, maintenance and preservation of chosen sites. The concept of curating disrepair weaves into the exploration of structured strategies of transformation and a broader view onto representations of ruins, both abandoned or in transition.

The underlying questions are whether abandoned industrial ruins in Eastern Europe can be approached with an architec-

tural purpose, and what parameters can be defined in order to identify sites that can be worked on and with, in order to create sustainable solutions for their preservation.

Two projects, both located in the city of Sibiu, Romania, have been currently identified as relevant and available for research: the transformation of the „Sinecon“ concrete prefab factory into theatre spaces for „Fabrica de Cultura“, based on my project from 2012, and the yet unexamined derelict site of „Independenta“, which harbours significant potential for transformations.

The focus falls on transformative processes: the objective is to explore these complex yet inexact pursuits through methodic research as well as design.

My research investigates whether strategies can be developed in order to formalise the morphological, functional and social disparities of these types of territories.

