

UC Berkeley

UC Berkeley Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Vernacularization for Comfort and the Politics of Housing Occupancy. Romania 1968-1989

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7mz1s8xs>

Author

Chinan, Ioana

Publication Date

2020

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

Vernacularization for Comfort and the Politics of Housing Occupancy.
Romania 1968-1989

By

Ioana Chinan

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Architecture

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Greg Castillo, Co-Chair
Professor Nezar AlSayyad, Co-Chair
Professor John Connelly

Fall 2020

Abstract

Vernacularization for Comfort and the Politics of Housing Occupancy.

Romania 1968-1989

by

Ioana Chinan

Doctor of Philosophy in Architecture

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Greg Castillo, Co-Chair

Professor Nezar AlSayyad, Co-Chair

In the wake of the 1989 historical turn, the Second World's new societies entered a new globalized world amid complex economic advancements. Within the remarkable transformation after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the communist experience emerged as a question of the modern and modernity. According to its many critics, communism, which this study perceives as one form of modernity among other modernities, sets itself apart by its purported failure. This dissertation departs from the early post-socialist years' failure mantra and attempts to reveal a more nuanced understanding of the communist world. To do so, this dissertation looks into the very ambitious project of urban development within which the housing program played a fundamental part.

For the students of the Second World, it is almost common knowledge to think of Eastern Europe's housing development as a fundamental part of spatial and societal transformation. As is the case with most former Soviet Bloc countries, housing development played a crucial role in shaping a new society envisioned by the communist ambition for economic and social advancement. From a low economic starting point, the Romanian post-war experience embarked on a fast-paced industrialization project that asked for a transformation of architectural design that accommodates standardization and prefabrication. What became a rigid design and construction system by way of heavy industry and the primacy of the economic efficiency was disrupted by a humanizing wave of spatial and "informal" transformations. Disrupting the spatial standardization of the socialist housing units was just one aspect of what I call the politics of housing occupancy. Within the workings of the housing project, the inhabitants' capacity for adaptability, transformation, negotiation, and interventionist participation led to a work of what was called 'system optimization,' as the technocratic state bureaucracy appropriated the inhabitants' spatial interventions. In this study, I explore the ways problematic forms of standardization and the lack of variety in spatial planning contributed substantially to the trend of housing "personalization."

Within the emerging project of housing development, carried at the scale of the entire country, I propose here that the socialist housing project allowed for a relational

interconnection between the population living in standardized apartments, architects, and the state. This relationality was only possible through the interdisciplinarity of state design institutions. The collaborative expertise of people brought together from different disciplines was inclusive of residents' transformative spatial practices in ways that contributed to improvements in the quality of housing units towards the end of the socialist period.

My research builds upon and challenges several general assumptions that govern the Romanian and international body of literature concerning the Communist state. On the one hand, during the socialist period, the Romanian authoritarian state-controlled its citizens at every level of their everyday lives. The main criticism of communism is concerned with the fact that the state exercised a totalizing control over the population through the state police as its sole means of maintaining power. Further, many accounts assert that the Communist state denied citizens privacy by confining them to spaces denying their rights. Additionally, the well-established post-socialist criticism assimilated every spatial transgression to resistance and dissent discourse.

I argue here that residents' different ways of dwelling, domestic practices, and their spatial appropriations, needs, and aspirations, revealed in their ways of living in the conventionally designed state apartments, were recovered by sociological research and re-inscribed in the practice of architecture. Architects and sociologists alike problematized residents' actions and reactions, as recounted in retrospect years later, and inscribed them within arenas of technocratic expertise. Sociological considerations about residents' spatial agency became embedded in architectural design, which was only possible through the interdisciplinary character of the state architecture and construction institutions in charge of housing design and construction.

In recent years, many scholarly works have explored everyday life during the socialist years in the former Soviet bloc countries. According to this scholarly interest, this dissertation explores the socialist housing project through archival documents of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, archived interdisciplinary research projects produced within state design and construction institutions, discussions with residents, and analysis of projects from the only architecture magazine published at the time.

In conclusion, the 'socialist modern' of the 60s and 70s aspired to comfort as a fundamental part of the communist vision of tomorrow. Wrapped within the ambivalent and all-encompassing notion of comfort, the theoretical articulation for housing betterment was frequently used to justify and support decisions on the different trajectories of the socialist housing project. The notion of comfort, albeit useful and malleable in its higher purpose, was, at times, just a propagandistic expression of the traditional/modern dichotomy built upon ambitions of a much-awaited and prosperous communist future.

Table of contents

Abstract	1
List of Figures	iii
List of Tables	v
Introduction	vi
The Modern Idea of Comfort.....	xii
Method	xvi
Overview	xix
Aknowledgments	xxiii
CH. I Modernist Ambitions: From Hyper-standardization to Political Pacification	1
A Communist Modernity	2
Urbanization and Migration.....	3
The Economic Imperative	6
Hyperstandardization: Economic Efficiency and <i>Social Comfort</i>	7
Proletarian Citizenship and Housing Policy	13
Personal Property: The Soviet Way	13
The Romanian Alternative to Socialist Property Rights	14
Apartment ‘Diversity’: A Strategy for Pacification?	17
State Policy and Political Urgency	19
Housing and Pacification.....	20
CH. II Comfort Through Flexibility by Apartment Exchanges	26
The Case for Design Interdisciplinarity	28
Sociology, Architecture, and the Political	29
From Users to Inhabitants	30
Planning for the Future and the Sociology of Housing	31
Bureaucratic Appropriation and the Politics of Housing Occupancy.....	36
The Politics of Housing Occupancy	36
Housing Exchanges for Adaptability	38
CH. III From Vernacularization of Space to the Right to Comfort....	52
The Romanian “Ghetto” of a Failed Modernity?	56
The Vernacular and the (Still-) Socialist Cityscape	57
The Informal, the Illegal, and the Vernacular, ...	58
Beyond the Private/Public Dichotomy	62
Austerity between Rationality and Innovation.....	65

The Vernacularized Balcony.....	70
Spatial Transgressions: The Appropriation of Balconies and Loggias.....	71
<i>Balconiada</i> : Architects in Search for Aesthetic Deliverance.....	78
The Vernacularized Balcony	80
Vernacularization for Comfort	82
Conclusion: Entangled Modernities	86
Notes	90
Bibliography.....	126

List of Figures

Fig. 1. Category I, one-bedroom apartment. The living area (<i>aria locuită</i>), which includes the kitchen, was to be between 24-36 sqm. The usable area (<i>aria utilă</i>) would be 52-55 sqm, and the built area (<i>aria construită</i>) 62-64 sqm.	22
Fig. 2. Category II, one-bedroom apartment. The livable area, which includes the kitchen, was to be 27-30 sqm. The usable area would be 35-41 sqm, and the built area, 45-54 sqm.	22
Fig. 3. Category III, one-bedroom apartment. The livable area, including a cooking area, was to be 24-26 sqm. The usable area would be 28-31 sqm, and the built area 36-42 sqm.	23
Fig. 4. Category III, one-bedroom apartment. The livable area, including a cooking area, was to be 22-24 sqm. The usable area would be 26-30 sqm, and the built area 32-39 sqm.	23
Fig. 5. Category IV, one-bedroom apartment.	23
Fig. 6 Examples of a traditional Romanian rural house showing the narrow, balcony-like space at the main entrance, the <i>prispa</i> . <i>Prispa</i> was threshold space, between outside and inside. It was space for interacting with the world outside.	60
Fig. 7 The <i>cerdac</i> in two examples, the image on the left showing it in front of the house entrance, above the storage space below.	60
Fig. 8 Privitera diagram of balcony evolution from the agrarian space of appurtenance to the elevated facade feature of the urban house.	70
Fig. 9 Balcony enclosure in the Grigorescu neighborhood of Cluj-Napoca, Romania. This image shows the balcony enclosure as was built before 1989. Photo by author, 2011.	72
Fig. 10 At times, the enclosures were partial and protected against lateral winds and noise echoing from near-by buildings. The lateral enclosures protected against the	

snow of windy winters, while remaining open towards outside in the summer time when the balcony is the most enjoyable space. Photo by author, 2011..... 72

Fig. 11 “Mr. Georgica’s neat balcony” (above) from Florin Poenaru research on balcony enclosure in the city of Constanta, Romania. The balcony enclosure presented here is a structural mixture between glass and a metal net with decorative purposes. On the right we have an instance of balcony enclosure with the ‘bus window’ system. The bus on the right is a typical late 60s model. 73

Fig. 12 The image on the left represents balcony enclosures from the city of Alexandria. The enclosures are the motor vehicles windows either from tractors or from buses. The Romanian forum user who posted the image revealed what was believed the origin of such enclosures as the old I.M.A.I.A factory near Roşiori de Vede and the city of Alexandria..... 73

Fig. 13 Balcony enclosures using the thermopane enclosure system. A practice often found in the post-socialist era 75

Fig. 14 An example of the IPCT-designed type-project in the early 80s. One can easily observe how each apartment has at least one balcony. The apartment building presented here was the result of a group of architects, under the leadership of architect Rodica Turicu with the partnership of architect Ioana Berceanu. The architects designed this particular type-project for seismic zones 6 and 7 in a climate zone nr. III. The structural system was of pre-stressed concrete structure. 77

Fig. 15 In the case of this type-project we note the corner façade with a balcony for each exterior wall. This apartment building has a concrete frame system and serves the seismic zone 6 and 7. The frame construction system allows for commercial space at the ground floor. The concrete frame system also allows for more flexibility in the interior space of the housing units. 77

Fig. 16 The imagery introspection ends with a more hopeful depiction of an open balcony, which displayed a much-desired situation. The residents were sitting at a table on the balcony surrounded by flowerpots hanging from the ceiling and on the balcony parapet. 79

Fig. 17 An idyllic look at what the balcony was meant to be, a place for people, vegetation, flowers.	79
Fig. 18 Blocks of flat in Bucharest of the 80s showing enclosed balconies and laundry hanging in everybody's sight.	80

List of Tables

Table 1. Types of apartments and prices proposed in the 1966 housing policy.....	17
Table 2. Distribution of apartments in 1968-1970 as proposed in 1966 housing legislation.....	17
Table 3. Housing built with state funds, by cooperative organizations; and housing built with occupant's own funds and state credits, constructed from 1951 to 1966.	18
Table 4. The Structure of the Total Number of Apartments.....	20

Introduction

During the night of August 20-21, 1968, 250,000 Soviet, Bulgarian, Polish, East German, and Hungarian soldiers crossed Czechoslovakia's borders.¹ Under the astonished eyes of Eastern and Western observers alike, the Soviet troops led the army of four other Warsaw Pact countries into the heart of Prague. The Soviet military move represented a swift response to Czechoslovak president Alexander Dubček's efforts at political reform.²

In support of the Czechoslovak cause and cementing its longstanding economic and political distancing from Moscow,³ the Romanian government denounced the invasion. On August 21, 1968, the General Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party Nicolae Ceaușescu's public address boldly condemned the five Warsaw Pact nations' unsanctioned incursion. From the balcony of the Romanian presidential residence building in Bucharest, the *Palatul Cotroceni*, Ceaușescu spoke to an audience of 100,000 people gathered in the Palace Square (*Piața Palatului*) below:

The invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Warsaw Pact military troops constitutes a grave mistake, and a menace brought upon the peace in Europe and upon the faith of socialism in the world; it is a shameful day for the international movement. There is no justification, and there is no reason to consider admissible, not even for a second, the idea of an intervention in the internal affairs of a brotherly socialist state (...). No outsider should have the right to determine the construction of socialism within a country.⁴

With this speech, Ceausescu's political balcony transcended its usual function as a mere architectural feature of the façade of the *Palatul Cotroceni*, the government building that was then the president's residence. Departing from the original agricultural function of an area of appurtenance,⁵ such a 'political balcony' was vested with a higher purpose: In Communist Romania particularly, it was transformed into a platform of political communication, a medium through which the political leadership could make visible important messages, not only to the people gathered in Bucharest's main plaza, but also to the entire nation. Its historical precedents seem inauspicious, if one looks back at some of the historical events that shaped Europe in the most unexpected but unforgettable ways. We are all too familiar with Mussolini's bellicose oratorical displays from his balcony above the *Piazza Venezia* in Rome, and Hitler's revanchist *Anschluss* declaration from the balcony above Vienna's *Heldenplatz* in 1938. Though, unlike its Fascist and Nazi precedents, Ceaușescu's 1968 balcony speech seemed to carry a symbolic white flag of peace and the promise of a more 'liberal' approach to the political leadership. Even more importantly, it seemed to announce the nation's own much-wanted protection from Soviet interventionism.

Condemning the Czechoslovak invasion was not a novel move in the process of Romania's achievement of relative political and economic autonomy from Soviet Russia. Scholars in Eastern European social and historical studies consider the post 1968 period in communist Romania to be of one of relatively lax government policies.⁶ Some consider Ceaușescu's August 21, 1968 speech the apotheosis of his political career, a moment of triumph.⁷ Perceived as a "maverick communist, a true reformer, and a courageous peer of Marshal Tito in the 'resistance to Soviet hegemonism'," Ceaușescu became the darling of the Western world and the harbinger of peace between the US and the Soviet Union.⁸

Five years after expressing this daring resistance to Soviet power, in 1973 Ceaușescu found himself on the balcony of the US's presidential residence, the White House, alongside President Nixon. By no coincidence, in the same year, Romania received its first World Bank loan for development. Courting the Western powers reached a *fait accompli* when Ceaușescu 'landed' on queen Elizabeth carriage in 1978. In fact, his openness towards the West in late 60s was short-lived; the 1968 historical moment in fact appears in retrospect to have announced a transition to greater authoritarianism rather than liberty. A resurgent nationalism followed Ceaușescu's visit to China and Korea in 1971. This moment was considered as marking the "official return to Stalinist rule"⁹ that characterized the late 70s and the early 80s.

As will be seen, the historical moment of 1968 also marks for Romania a clearly-defined shift in domestic as well as foreign policy with respect to the Soviet Union consequent upon the achievement of a measure of financial autonomy.¹⁰ It was the beginning of the end of the lax socio-political and economic processes brought about by the "thaw" of the 1960s. The Romanian denunciation of the invasion of Czechoslovakia opened up novel political, social, and economic trajectories, and also continued several developments in a series of spatial and economic decentralization processes that had been set in motion the previous year. These changes involved two major spatial trajectories: (1) an administrative transformation of the entire Romanian territory, which was set in motion by the 1967 program of decentralization; and (2) a nationalist stance the architectural language of the housing construction mirrored through a neo-traditionalis design aesthetic. The second trajectory gave the apartment buildings' façades a representational value.

The administrative reforms that were initiated in 1968 were crucial to these efforts, as the Communist government extended its urban development program to the entire country. In the early socialist years, the housing program was concentrated around already established industrial nuclei and the two country's major cities, Bucharest and Constanța. The administrative transformation departed from the Soviet model of territorial administration, the regions (*rayons*), adopted in the 1950s, in favor of smaller territorial units, the counties (*județe*), each with a designated capital-city, known as a *municipium*. The new administrative model facilitated a resource distribution that aimed at more building development throughout the country.

It was in these city centers, new and old, that urban developments were engaged in that embedded some of the characteristics that a civic center was to have.¹¹ These civic centers were focused architecturally on the residential program. Unlike traditional Romanian urban nuclei, the new city centers included relatively tall

(between five to ten stories), high-density apartment buildings. The civic center approach and the placement of buildings along boulevards endowed the façades of the newly erected buildings with representational value. This happened as the architectural profession was facing a new challenge: a transition from the ‘open urbanism’ of the 50s and 60s to what was called an ‘urbanism of prestige’.¹²

Ceașescu lost no time in advancing his own plans for grandeur and fame. The new urban developments were part of this. At the Third Conference of the Union of Architects, Ceașescu, criticizing the then-current state of the housing projects, lamented:

(...)...the apartment buildings are dispersed randomly; they do not create streets and boulevards, in a clear urban idea, (...) the architectural concern with a general social-cultural ambiance capable of meeting new living requirements is not profound enough (...) architects have quite often neglected the rich traditional values of Romanian architecture, our national specificity.¹³

Dubbed the “post-modernist manifesto,”¹⁴ the 1971 speech represented a significant cultural turning point towards “national specificity,” an ideology of Communist nationalism centered on Ceașescu’s new notions of the nation’s political and cultural mission.¹⁵ The architectural discourse and practices marked a break with modernism, with their ‘post-modern’ neo-traditionalism. Henceforth, the increased re-centralization with its reasserted ideological demands and requirements for strict submission propelled a more complex program of city and regional planning that overlapped with the political, economic, and social restructuring of the entire country.

It is within this context that the troubling urban phenomenon of the spatial appropriation of balconies emerged. Their very reality was at odds with the purportedly totalizing control of the official urban politics and the highly ideological divisions in the Romanian Communist Party of the mid-70s. As the new urban developments with their desired representational attributes—the nationalistically-charged architectural details—extended throughout many Romanian cities, Ceașescu’s “national specificity” began to take root. Meanwhile, the architectural practice turned towards ‘traditional’ signifiers that were applied to the new apartment buildings, another phenomenon that became visible. To the chagrin of elite architects, the residents inhabiting the newly acquired state apartments found a way to achieve some interior comfort within the confines of their apartments: doubling the façade of the apartment buildings with balcony enclosures.¹⁶ Architects and the urban elite of the time associated the appropriation of the balconies and loggias with resident’s low state of culture and their ‘uneducated’ rural background.

By the late 70s, in many Romanian cities one could find the façades of residential buildings riddled with residents’ interventions (such as balconies, loggias, and other ad hoc enclosures), making the socialist city, to the chagrin of architects, a place of “indispensable eyesores,”¹⁷ and some might argue, of a “failed modernity.” By 1982, the use of balcony and loggia enclosures had become a standard practice and a subject of debate among Romanian architects. Speaking at the Union of Architects

Plenum on “The Quality of Housing,” the architect Gheorghe Leahu called for regulatory measures:

If inside the apartment, the variety of functional relations, of comfort, of finishes remains to be appreciated by each inhabitant, the outside, towards the street, towards the boulevard, towards space collectively shared, the volumetric aspects and especially the originality of [the architectural] approach reveals the talent of each architect by distributing the loggias and the balconies. They ultimately determine the aesthetic aspect of the building. The loggias and the balconies are almost the only elements that can differentiate some apartment buildings designed following the same standardized layout.¹⁸

Leahu’s response to demand control: legislative measures prohibiting the enclosing of balconies and loggias facing representative boulevards. Leahu further underlined the status of the façades, balconies, and loggias as a ‘public good’, alluding to the façades of apartment buildings as ‘city property’.¹⁹ The use of balconies, and the façades of the residential buildings, became sites of contestation between architects and city planners on the one hand, and the ‘users’ of the buildings they had designed on the other. The cityscape crisis that was emerging at this time problematized the architects’ attitudes towards the people for whom they were designing the buildings.

Disrupting the spatial standardization of the socialist housing units was just one aspect of what I call the politics of housing occupancy. Within the workings of the housing project, the inhabitants’ capacity for adaptability, transformation, negotiation, and interventionist participation led to a work of what was called ‘system optimization’, as the inhabitants’ spatial interventions were appropriated by the technocratic state bureaucracy. In this study, I explore the ways problematic forms of standardization and the lack of variety in spatial planning contributed substantially to the trend of housing “personalization.”

Considering it in terms of vernacularization, I describe the process of transformation by inhabitants of standardized apartments, using materials and know-how established through local ‘informal’ networking, exchanges of goods, and hoarding of state resources. Such a practice is more often than not situated, in the literature on the ‘Second World’, within the ‘second economy’.²⁰ The questions that I will ask include: What were the socio-economic and political factors that made possible the politics of appropriation involved here. What do the inhabitants’ actions of space appropriation and policy-based negotiations tell us about the state-embedded architecture practice and its attempts in addressing the housing question through quantitative requirements under the imperative of the economic and social efficiency?

Within a relentless pursuit of aesthetically pleasing order, rhythm, and compositional balance, the state-driven architectural design of the socialist block of flats sought freedom from hyperstandardization, repetition, and homogeneity. The economically-efficient housing construction and design, using industrially prefabricated panels, led to standardized flats that were spatially, functionally, and aesthetically inflexible and functionally static. The design limitations instilled by the strict measures of economic efficiency allowed the façade to become the locus of

architects' freedom of expression and creativity. The architects proclaimed the façade sacrosanct, as a testament of architectural rigor and hard work.

From the balcony as a vehicle for political communication to a means of practical space extension, this transitory and liminal protrusion of semi-public and semi-private spaces reveals the paradox of socialist architecture in general. The balcony idea engaged several socio-political and economic actors: the state, by way of its ideological and institutional delineations; the architects, in their uses of it as an object of professional creativity and aesthetic fulfillment; and the inhabitants, seeking adjustments and adaptations to their way of life and life-cycle-related changes, of housing units that in themselves did little to accommodate the family's temporal changes because of their standardization and thus inflexibility. The critics of the socialist mass construction more often than not aimed at the rigidity of the spaces resulted from this propensity for typification in state-led housing construction.

What is often called typified or standardized construction consists out of a series of collective housing projects (plans, sections, elevations, construction details, and specifications) disseminated through catalogs that promoted serialization, standardization, and prefabrication, all in the name of economic efficiency and as an answer to quantitative demands of the post-war housing shortage. The Romanian architect and educator Dana Vais argues that the type-project was also a "tool" used as "the active interface between political goals and actual buildings."²¹ First as a policy directive that required exact repetition of few institutionally sanctioned catalogs of project-types,²² out of which housing was just a category, typification soon became a generalized technocratic practice.

In her book *The Socialist Life of Modern Architecture, Bucharest 1949-1964* historian of architecture Juliana Maxim explained that from the housing unit, the apartment, to clusters of apartments grouped around a vertical stair, the socialist type design was considered "the cause for visually and experientially monotonous buildings and spaces, and for loss of professional autonomy and expressive freedom."²³ Without contesting Vais's argument of the typification as a "tool" for control, Maxim expands our understanding of the type-project in the Romanian context. Maxim shows "how, in the particular intellectual and ideological context of those years, architects who were engaged in the effort to rethink the practice and role of architecture came to see reduced formal variation and centralized management of design as desirable characteristics." Moreover, the author concludes that far from impoverishing architectural design into cost-cutting or technical solutions," the typification process "provided a conceptual armature for the socialist preoccupation with cultural transformation and allowed architects to approach architectural form as an imminently social product."²⁴ Following Maxim's proposition, understanding typification as a technocratic method, and as a social product, the interdisciplinary nature of the centralized construction and architecture institutions proved a fruitful site for analyzing inhabitant's mechanisms of spatial appropriation within the state housing stock.

Institutional development of type-projects resulted in what became the centralized design production through project-directives. The Bucharest-located Institute of Standardized Construction (Institutul de Proiectare Constructii Tip – IPCT)

produced the bulk of housing project-directives to be replicated (and to some degree adjusted) throughout the country. Looking further into the technocratic mechanisms of the typification as a social product, its institutional aspects reveal another dimension of the standardization and prefabrication process that the housing production entailed. Within the process of centralized design production, be that architecture or engineering related processes, the replication of type-projects throughout the Romanian territory brought into question the possibility of repeating mistakes that might arise within the project-directive. At the architects' initiative and to avoid constructive and design-related errors, the IPCT leadership resorted to interdisciplinary housing research by inviting sociologists to team up with architects and engineers in analyzing the residents' spatial agency through surveys, interviews, and sociological reports among many other research projects.²⁵

The argument developed in this dissertation relies on the fruitful interactions between the fields of sociology and architecture. I argue here that residents' different ways of dwelling, domestic practices, and their spatial appropriations, needs, and aspirations, revealed in their ways of living in the conventionally designed state apartments, were recovered by sociological research and re-inscribed in the practice of architecture. Architects and sociologists alike problematized residents' actions and reactions, as recounted in retrospect years later, and inscribed them within arenas of technocratic expertise. Sociological considerations about residents' spatial agency became embedded in architectural design, which was only possible through the interdisciplinary character of the state architecture and construction institutions in charge of housing design and construction. In this way, and despite its limits, the program of socialist housing linked inhabitants' participation to the institutions of housing development and research. Working at the same table, architects and sociologists attempted to bridge the gap between the conspicuous notion of 'user' and one of the 'inhabitant,' as full-fledged citizen.

The socialist housing project allowed for a relational interconnection between the population living in standardized apartments, architects, and the state. This relationality was only possible through the interdisciplinarity of state design institutions. The collaborative expertise of people brought together from different disciplines was inclusive of residents' vernacularization activities, in ways that contributed to improvements in the quality of housing units towards the end of the socialist period. Moreover, housing policy, new tenurial practices (apartments owned personally by their residents) and the Communist party's economic austerity measures fueled this phenomenon and made its extensive development possible. Hence, the origin and principal explanation for the vernacularization process lay within structural functions and dysfunctions, standardized design (such as rigid prefabrication), and, ultimately, an ideologically charged and questionable decision-making.

The Communist government until the early 1970s had been the sole owner of housing stock and coordinator of housing policy, together with local administrations. Indeed, this was true for every Romanian city without exception. The housing policy transformation process started during the late socialist period, from the early 70s into early 80s.²⁶ when the nation's government decided to sell a portion of its housing stock to the population. It continued through with the advent of the socialist housing market

in the early 1970s to the termination of this process in 1986 due to rising inequalities and speculation in the housing market.

The analysis of the vernacularization by the spatial agency engages with the role and place of blue-collar migrant workers, who were the primary inhabitants of the state housing projects. The ‘socialist’ balcony became a battleground of disputes between users and architects, with the latter having the regulatory power on their side. For users, the enclosure of balconies and loggias was, in many cases, an outcome of changes in property policies in the early 1970s that made homeowners out of many residents who had been tenants. To many architects, the practice of enclosing balconies merely added further fuel to the vilification of socialist neighborhoods by the urban intellectual elite, as they symbolically and discursively transformed the blocks of flats into the “bastards of rural communities.”²⁷

The Modern Idea of Comfort

In the Romanian context, the leading theoreticians in housing studies, architects Mihail Caffé and Gheorghe Sebestyén, discussed extensively in their writing the concept of comfort. In the architectural discourse of the time, the two architects considered the idea of comfort as an expression of “global performance.”²⁸ This concept had been established internationally in design literature since the mid-80s, and seemed to suggest an effort at theorizing housing design and applying it holistically while operationalizing the factors that made possible its realization. The designer’s ability to meet an inhabitant’s housing requirements became a means of measuring the overall performance of the housing unit. This meant in practice that architects had to agree to various concessions and compromises, though they could measure the design quality of a house by both evaluating the potential future inhabitants’ requirements and also considering the cost, structural resistance, and design aesthetics. The inhabitant’s housing requirements were considered as having both subjective and objective characteristics. Caffé deemed the subjective factors to include psychological, cultural, and behavioral aspects, while the objective ones pertained to the “physiology of the housing processes.”

The architects had to be cautious in adapting an overall style for the sake of performance optimization, as the subjective and objective requirements could be effortlessly intertwined or interchanged, but also confused. At times, the subjective understanding of a building’s performance could seem random, defeating its “objective” purpose.²⁹

Sebestyén insisted on the holistic nature of the idea of comfort. By this he meant that the qualitative elements of housing design rest with the concept’s ability to be, what the author calls, “a synthetic notion.” The notion of comfort united the two fundamental dimensions of design, architectural (pertaining to particular buildings) and urban (on the scale of the city or community). For this purpose, Sebestyén argued for identifying “social” with urban comfort. However, the concept could not be understood in absolute terms. The measurable material conditions were the basis of what he called “the optimum comfort,” which generates psychological reactions of pleasure to aesthetic stimuli. Sebestyén considered the material conditions to be

“limited to physical aspects like the size of rooms in the apartment, the relationship between rooms, the finishes used, the sanitary equipment, appliances, and ultimately the microclimate of their interior space.” The relativity of comfort revealed itself even more when analyzed at the social level. With this in mind, one could think of social comfort as a measure of the variation in the level of comfort from one individual to the other, from one housing unit to the other, as it indicated the possibility of residents to live comfortably and access an optimal comfort. This accessibility in turn is a measure of social comfort.³⁰

By this logic, how should social comfort be realized? Sebestyén answers by proposing that the design process be understood as having three phases. Firstly, at the architectural conception level, a design must present a theoretical or abstract understanding of comfort in terms of preconfigured spaces. The second phase involves the attempt to identify the relationship in the preconfigured spaces between the possibility of actualizing the design and the process of achieving the imagined space. Ultimately, an analysis of a space’s post-occupancy character is necessary for an evaluation of the way in which the spaces are used in correspondence with the initial design.³¹ In this analysis, comfort is an expression of the *overall performance* of housing design. One can measure the design quality of a house by evaluating the potential future inhabitants’ requirements while also considering its cost, structural resistance, and design aesthetics. The excellence in the performance of a designed housing unit can then be measured according to the ability of the designer to meet the inhabitants’ requirements.

In terms of housing and architectural discourse in the Romanian context, Sebestyén and his colleagues presented the idea of *social comfort* as a quantitative expression “of the number of apartments for 100 households. The housing problem is practically resolved as a social problem at a moment when 100 single-family households have access to 103-105 apartments, certainly of adequate sizing [in terms of number of rooms] and equipment, in agreement with requirements considered necessary and possible.”³² In the early years of socialist urban growth, they note, Romania experienced significant demographic shifts. Taking into consideration the transformations of the population in general and the urban population in particular, the authors argued that the fundamental principles of the socialist economy involve prioritizing the satisfaction of the needs of the population, a population that was then growing based on modern technology and fast-paced production. These socio-economic forces were bringing significant changes in people’s consciousness, and implicitly revolutionizing their everyday life.³³

In addition to its social character, the concept of comfort involved a technical accommodation to people’s needs through thermal comfort and sanitation. For architects at the time, such as Șerban Ignace, housing was defined in terms of its functional attributes: “a dwelling’s protection function (against weather, noise, and any harmful elements); its biological and psychological functions; and ultimately functions determined by the dwelling’s connection with the exterior, with nature, with sun exposure and illumination, landscape, and the relaxation and calm given by an adequately constructed surrounding context.”³⁴ At some point in the history of housing development, building codes established precisely in square meters the usable area per

person, the total area, and a minimum volume. The same went for the equipment that ensured the comfort of the housing unit (sanitary installations, cooking equipment, and washing appliances): “The more the technical equipment ease up the everyday domestic life of the inhabitants, the more comfort they have.”³⁵ Comfort here is defined through access to modern equipment and proper infrastructure.³⁶ At the time of Ignace’s writings, the majestic “complex urban units,” which had been so prevalent in the 70s and 80s, were just a dream.³⁷ Most of the collective apartment buildings throughout the 60s were infill constructions.³⁸

The notion of living comfort proved to be useful in further elaborating a set of notions that were then common in the discourse of architectural and urban design professionals. It combined a subjective feeling with what were deemed adequate physical conditions for living well. This dual notion was considered important in guiding housing construction to meet people’s needs and in terms of an idea of a particular way of life to be supported and furthered.³⁹

Thus for the architects, the idea of comfort was associated both with an affective dimension, a feeling of comfort, and a notion of human needs. The anabolic functions were to be satisfied through thermal comforts, visual and sound design, natural light, and broadly, physical comforts associated with mental ones. All of these elements contribute to what we would call a well-defined and accommodating space in the space of dwelling. Calling for a systematic study of housing space, the architects and scholars in this school recognized the need for interdisciplinary research. They considered that a home should be economical, durable, aesthetically pleasing, suited to both privacy and shared forms of living, and flexible in allowing for the consolidation of spaces, functional overlap, and adaptability.⁴⁰

Theorizing the idea of comfort was not only a preoccupation of the socialist design intelligentsia. The well-known Italian design theorist Tomas Maldonado researched the idea of comfort extensively. In his seminal book, *Il Futuro de la Modernita* [The Future of Modernity], Maldonado argues that comfort is a particularly modern idea. It involved a particular development associated with societal understandings of class: “Before the Industrial Revolution, the need (or expectation) for comfort in the sense indicated by the above notion of convenience, ease, and habitability was the privilege of the few. Nevertheless, the progressive diffusion of comfort to the masses was not accidental. There is no doubt that it played, from the beginning, a fundamental role in the task of controlling the social fabric of the nascent capitalist society.”

Maldonado associates the idea of comfort with the notion of *livability*. He understands by livability “the services that a particular ambient reality can provide in terms of convenience, ease, and habitability (...).” This notion, however, is inadequate as it falls short of the complexity that the notion of comfort expresses. He understands the latter as a notion of social control, with roots in the nineteenth century, and deeply embedded in capitalist modernity,⁴¹ but including “*also* elements of substantial advantage to the daily life of humanity.”⁴² He sees the idea of comfort as “one of the factors contributing to the process of modernization.” It is “a question of knowing, in summary, why the process of modernization manifests itself in the qualitative and quantitative increase in the services that produce comfort.”⁴³

Comfort, however, “does not always come in the same way, but follows a dynamic that continually changes the terms of relating to supply and demand.” Conversely, comfort can quickly turn into discomfort, as it, “beyond a given critical threshold, can be transformed—as happens often enough—into the source of new hardships and sufferings. In short, comfort can flow into a negation of comfort.” It becomes clear, Maldonado concludes, that “there exists an undoubted relation of reciprocal dependency between the dynamic of modernization and the diffusion of comfort. There are ‘areas’ in which this connection of reciprocal dependency is fully revealed: the city, habitations, the workplace. In particular, the home considered as a microcosm perfectly exemplifies the relationship between modernization and comfort.”⁴⁴

Through the lenses of the process of modernization (conceptualized, it seems, as relevant in capitalist and socialist contexts alike), the standardized apartment was meant to provide just that: a close-knit relationship between the housing unit as object to be mass-produced and eventually inhabited by an already pre-established social nucleus, clearly defined by and oriented to social and biological reproduction. The question, then, becomes: in what way and to what extent does housing distribution complicate the architect’s assumptions about how one should design the modern mass-produced and highly-standardized apartment—or enhance it? To answer this question, an epistemological detour is necessary. We must add the questions: What were the Romanian architects’ assumptions in matters of how a mass-produced apartment should be designed; that is, their assumptions about the future inhabitants? Were these assumptions of a “bourgeois” character? The architect Gheorghe Sebestyén seems to think so.

In his short book review of the Hungarian author Gáboros Lagos’s *Amenajarea și dimensionarea locuinței*, Sebestyén signaled the Romanian architects’ propensity towards a rather bourgeois mentality. The article, published in 1957, with the title, “How to build dwellings that are less expensive and more comfortable?” Sebestyén starts with the following statement: “Specialists from both socialist and capitalist countries widely concluded that in order to answer the growing need for housing units, their usable area must be small.”⁴⁵ Sebestyén argues that to produce a comfortable housing unit within a small space, one must pay attention to every detail, and more than anything to endowing the unit with advanced equipment technologically, which is important for achieving a full integration between the design of the space and every component accessorizing the housing unit.

It was thus considered crucial to design the spaces with much attention to their functionality, in a holistic way that integrated furniture and equipment in such a way as to bring together comfort and use. Technology was key to this integration. In contrast, Sebestyén criticized the use of old, bulky furniture and what he considered a “petty bourgeois” style, which, he contends, “was still in the mind not only of those who buy but also of those who determine the models to be produced.”⁴⁶ The concern of many architects of the time with both functional integration and efficiency in construction was very much at odds with what they saw as the prevailing conservative and traditional approach to housing design. Sebestyén believed that technological integration through design required a change in the mentality of those in charge of the

design of apartments. More importantly, he also insisted that architects should take into account the way of life of the ‘new’ inhabitants:

In the sizing and spatial planning of the dwellings one must consider, on the one hand, the furniture and the equipment one will use, and their specifications, which will ensure their proper functionality (it must not be forgotten that complex specification data can be not only inefficient but also uncomfortable), and on the other hand, one must consider the composition and the specificity of the families who will inhabit the dwellings. Furthermore, this becomes more important when taken into consideration their cultural level, their acquisitions, and habits.⁴⁷

As Maldonado, notions of the comfortable or uncomfortable are relative. The architects understood achieving comfort for inhabitants in terms of enhancing diversity, spatial flexibility, and cultural and social integration, and lowered density. They did this in opposition to the purely technocratic approach advanced by some architects and engineers.⁴⁸ Since the idea of comfort implies a definite relationship to space, the designers (architects and engineers alike) emphasized comfort as the ultimate purpose, though it could be approached from either a micro or macro standpoint. Because it focused on the latter, the state’s housing policy, which depended on the prevailing technocratic ethos, sought more to minimize discomfort than to maximize comfort. Yet very little of that promise was accomplished.

Method

The politics of housing occupancy can be situated at the juncture of technocratic knowledge production and the governing bodies of the Communist political establishment. Everyday domestic practices became a central preoccupation of the latter. Construction, architecture, legislative measures, housing tenure, and housing policy all were seen as confronted and called into question by the character of the residents’ way of life. As a result, ‘users’ became ‘inhabitants’, and the inhabitants citizens, as technocrats were faced with the demands of these inhabitants, and, in the interpretations of the reality of contemporary life in Romania, microhistories and macrohistory coalesced, in ways that might involve or suggest a rethinking of the possibilities for a socialist modernity.

In recent years, many scholarly works have explored everyday life during the socialist years in countries of the former Soviet bloc.⁴⁹ Disillusioned with the results generated by interpreting, analyzing, and deciphering the political system in the various countries of Eastern and Central Europe, historians appealed to microhistory as a methodological approach. In his astute analysis from 2008 of what became known as the microhistory method in Eastern and Central European studies, the Hungarian historian Pèter Apor distinguishes it from the more common analyses of macrohistory. By macrohistory, Apor understands the interpretation of past events, whether of conflict (such as war, conflicts between countries, or territorial occupation), politics (such as the government leadership), or social and economic shifts that focused on the categories and value systems of the population in a given territory at a particular historical moment. In writing a microhistory, the social historian would renounce the

analysis of “high politics” through official documents in favor of work that “deconstructed the lifestyle, living conditions, fashion and dressing, leisure and consumption sexual habits and childcare of ordinary people.”⁵⁰

Disagreeing with the prevalent scholarly interest in the everyday, Apor argues that “while the new social histories of the socialist dictatorships have greatly added to our understanding of significant aspects of the social and political structure of these countries, they have also constructed a representation of everyday life as essentially impertinent to power. In doing so, they ignored the capacity of habitual social and cultural behavior in producing techniques of control and discipline.”⁵¹ Historians of the socialist world have generally approached the research and the analysis of sources in a way that is subtracted from the Communist context, a matter of suspicious disbelief and cautionary engagement with statistical data, Communist party archives, and much that the socialist system produced at all levels.

Much of the scholarship on the “Second World” has been fixated on the binary opposition between state-imposed control and personal freedom (usually associated with Western liberalism), as Alexei Yurchak puts it, “between ‘truth’ and ‘reality’, and ‘mask’, ‘revealing’, and ‘dissimulating’.”⁵² In his 2003 article, “Soviet Hegemony of Form: Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More,” Alexei Yurchak rightly points to the shortcomings of the Soviet scholarship, whose terminology was “used in describing socialist social phenomena through the use of particular binaries to describe Soviet reality, such as the Party and the people, repression and freedom, oppression and resistance, truth and dissimulation, official economy and second economy, official culture and counter-culture, totalitarian language and people’s language, public self and private self.”⁵³

Following Yurchak’s work on “late socialism” in the Soviet Union,⁵⁴ my own research builds upon and challenges several general assumptions that govern the Romanian and international body of literature concerning the Communist state. On the one hand, during the socialist period, the Romanian authoritarian state controlled its citizens at every level of their everyday lives. The main criticism of Communism is concerned with the fact that the state exercised a totalizing control over the population through the state police as its sole means of maintaining power.⁵⁵ Further, many accounts assert that the Communist state denied citizens privacy by confining them to spaces denying their rights. Additionally, the dissident criticism assimilated every transgression in terms of space modifications to the discourse of resistance and dissent.⁵⁶

In matters of the architecture design of housing, I rely heavily upon Romania’s sole building design-related magazine, *Arhitectura*. The magazine served as the primary source of analyses of the profession, as well as the production of knowledge concerning socialist housing projects in particular. *Arhitectura* magazine offers a bird’s eye view of Romanian housing projects through analysis, imagery, reports, statistics, and commentaries from architects, engineers, sociologists, psychologists, economists, and other professionals engaged with the architecture profession. Reviewing the periodical over time reveals significant shifts in the development of the nation’s socialist housing program.⁵⁷ The journal reflects some of the workings of the political leadership, as represented at the time by certain state institutions (such as

CSAC and CSCAS), and shifts in thinking within the architectural profession about public housing. It must be said that concerns for standardization and prefabrication were the predominant preoccupation of professionals in architecture and construction. The goal was economic efficiency, to be obtained through the industrialization of housing. The spatial planning of apartments was based on a frugality of resources and involved difficult adjustments to the technological constraints of the time, such as the size of cranes and their movements and especially height. The evidence found in *Arhitectura* helps in inferring the overall “movement” of the profession concerning housing practices and outcomes, which directly and indirectly influenced the users’ actions and reactions, and sometimes even the surface reactions of architects against the *vernacularization* phenomenon under study.

Developments in the 50s and 60s were at the basis of the significant developments in housing in the 70s, which Ivan Tosics called the “golden age of public housing.”⁵⁸ The 70s housing boom is also reflected in the number of articles on housing in that period in *Arhitectura*. Articles on housing by sociologists also appeared increasingly beginning in the late 60s, while a tradition of multidisciplinary research had been present since the early 60s.⁵⁹ This included work in the disciplines of psychology, social psychology, and economics. It seems that standardization and the rise of type projects brought with them a certain anxiety, a fear of how easy it can be for building construction to proliferate through standardized models of space planning and prefabrication. Also, architects and engineers called for analyses of the relationship between people and their newly acquired flats, and how their needs and aspirations could be fulfilled by architects, while being directed at what was, after all, a heretofore unknown, institutionally-created object. This concern culminated with the introduction of the Design Institute for Typified Constructions (IPCT). The studies developed within this institution concentrated on standardized projects, which, towards the end of the 70s, were linked to housing demand, and concerns about “whom” one designs for. In this, the inception of the Sociological Research Laboratory was also of utmost importance. Social science, specifically sociology, proved instrumental in transforming the “unknown user” into the “real” user.⁶⁰

Documents in Romania’s National Archives pertaining to the CC al PCR and the Party Council of Cluj-Napoca revealed the extent of citizen political participation, along with a “politics of inclusion and exclusion”⁶¹ pertaining to housing issues, as well as some of the repressive practices of the government at the time. Archival research can help in understanding the relationship between the center and the periphery (such as between Bucharest and Cluj-Napoca) and the ways in which information regarding housing issues was reported, directed, rejected, or sanctioned by Party members.

The legal frame is particularly revealing in understanding residents’ spatial interventions and how their housing tenure facilitated them. The Romanian Law Review reveals several clarifications about ways in which legislative and administrative housing policy enabled resident’s actions as what I am calling full-fledged citizens. Articles by Doru Cosma⁶² and Șerban Beligrădeanu,⁶³ both of whom published extensively through the late 60s and 70s, are the most telling. Their work helped to clarify the legislative complexity pertaining to housing rights. The new rules

of occupant tenure covered the right to use the property (legal conditions and obligations), the legislative boundaries of apartment reparations and extensions, the right to own, inherit, sell apartments as personal property, and apartment exchanges. All of this is pertinent to understanding the legal limitations of residents' spatial agency within the socialist state. The dominant issue of the 70s concerned how to understand the new legal framing of personal property that complicated housing policy in this period. Ultimately, I am trying to understand the nature of the relationship between personal property tenure and the apartments' interior and exterior transformations.

One cannot substantially analyze the politics of housing occupancy during the socialist era without understanding the relationship between housing policy and the design norms and standards that shaped how apartment spaces were transformed. This is of paramount importance to the study of the three housing laws of 1966, 1968, and 1973 that shaped personal property tenure, making the residents' practices of modifying their units possible. The selling of state housing units changed the ways that residents were involved in spatial production (at both the personal and urban levels). One of the earliest laws establishing norms for the distribution and use of living space, and the regulation of the relationships between the owner (the state) and the tenant, was Decree No. 78 of April 5, 1952.

Overview

In Romania during the period that is the object of this study, the socialist apartment became the main site of contestation for interdisciplinary knowledge in housing design. In this light, this study makes use of several levels of interpretation:

1. The everyday domestic space: understanding the spatial transformation and developments in apartment design, involving prefabrication and the industrialization of housing construction.
2. Interdisciplinary research focused mainly on connections between the fields of architecture and sociology.
3. Professional and popular literature with an aesthetic or educational focus, concerning architectural design ambitions and teaching urban 'peasants' how to become new urbanites on the model that was championed.
4. Housing politics at the level of the state-worker partnership (tenurial changes in property provisions, and the introduction of personal property), followed by the diversification of forms of apartment interior comfort.

Many Romanians came to think of the notion of comfort as a component of a socialist architectural discourse that became more and more inclusive of the domestic interior spaces of standardized state-built apartments. The architectural discourse of the time often included this notion, which was also common in the language of housing policy and Party directives, and ultimately among the inhabitants themselves. Why this concern with housing comfort? How was it imagined, defined, and conceptualized by the architects? What about by the policymakers? How did the inhabitants negotiate their housing comfort among themselves, with the Party

bureaucracy, and ultimately with the architects who were taking up a pedagogical stance in matters of the formation of taste, proper urban living, modernized home life, and gender relations?

The Communist project implied a transformation of the entire Romanian territory through intensive urban development. In pursuit of the complete urbanization of the country, this became in the mid-80s the infamous project of demolishing villages and turning them into urban enclaves.⁶⁴ It is relevant in this context that Romania had an agrarian-based economy throughout most of the 19th century, as urbanization processes had a late start compared with other countries in Eastern and Central Europe. Many historians have argued that Romania is a unique case, as the majority of its population had been until recently living in rural areas. However, the other Eastern and Central European countries also had a significant peasant population living what was considered a traditional way of life. The demographic revolution played a substantial role in the Communist project to revolutionize every aspect of the Romanian social fabric, with, at its core, the family.

The heterosexual nuclear family became an important target of intervention for the state. In its socialist ideal, the modern family was seen (at least in theory) as embodying the new man and woman with equal rights, opportunities, access to education, and participation in household income, and tasked with the reproductive work of training the future generation of workers. The 1966 law banning abortion was just one aspect of the Communist Party's ambitions in this respect. Notions of comfort were treated as part of the modernist understanding of societal development.

If the personalized transformations of apartments had not spilled outside them into public view, the resident's "participation"⁶⁵ would have remained unnoticed or been dismissed as a social phenomenon unworthy of architects' attention, let alone analysis. The "doubling of the façade"⁶⁶ inspired a debate within the architectural profession and in empirical research in the sociology of housing. The spatial appropriation of balconies was just one of the phenomena resulting from a strict and inflexible standardization, as sociological research revealed another intriguing phenomena, that of apartment exchanges. Driven partly by long waiting lists for available units, the allocation mechanisms became a basis of negotiation among residents engaging in housing exchanges. Situate these actions as part of the politics of housing occupancy, I will show how and when the vernacularization practices and the appropriation of housing occupancy mechanisms sometimes informed architectural practices, and sometimes did not. It is important to understand how these processes started, and what were the factors that contributed to the expansion of processes of vernacularization both inside the housing units and on their exterior.

The first chapter, "Modernist Ambitions for Social Comfort: From Hyperstandardization to Political Pacification," traces the modernist ambitions of the the socialist housing program in the early postwar years. The urban planning of the 50s and 60s was mostly dominated by the Communist Party's commitment to housing for all at the expense of qualitative measures of interior comfort. I argue here that, through hyper-standardization and the industrialization of housing production, the Communist leadership produced not only an unprecedented quantity of state-built apartments but also a large measure of social pacification. One example of this is the housing policy

initiated in May 1968 that doubled the nation's housing stock by 1970. With this, the Communist leadership began its grand housing program of the 70s. 1968 proved to be a crucial historical moment, which affected Romanian society on many levels: spatially, through the territorial reorganization of the entire country and the creation of new urban centres—implicitly marking the difference between center and periphery; culturally, through the novel openness towards the West; economically, with new foreign trade ties with Western countries; and socially, with new opportunities for social mobility through an unprecedented rural-to-urban migration.

The second chapter, “Apartments of the Future: Comfort through Interdisciplinarity,” looks at the historical development across the Atlantic of a relationship between the fields of architecture and sociology. I show how this identification came a long way from the US by way of France into Romanian knowledge production on the nation's housing program. It is interesting to see that after the 1968 political meltdown and the Westward-looking tendency of the technocratic output in architecture and sociology, one can often find references to the aspiration theory of sociologist Paul-Henri Chombart de Lauwe, whose work I will discuss, on the part of Romanian architects and sociologists alike.

The planning system naturally required the development of centrally-approved architecture and construction drawings grouped under what was known as project directives. The project directives were standard drawings, which generated a multiplication of several types of apartment buildings that were designed and built throughout Romanian territory. It is within this institutional production of standardized projects that sociology found its practical application to housing architecture. The Research Laboratory of Sociological Studies was born out of the work of specialists within the Design Institute of Standardized Constructions, fearing a proliferation of mistakes through multiplication as a result of standardization. The chapter focuses on the sociological Laboratory within IPCT.

The planning system resulted in high productivity and instilled a sense of knowledge and understanding of the future directions necessary for a healthy and wealthy society (as understood in terms of the Communist party's ambitions). Futurology and prognosis became important aspects of the scientific arm of the planning system, which required an accurate understanding of how cultures and societies evolve and how the Communist Party and the government should address the future demands and needs of the population in every aspect of its social development. This chapter will show the connection between design and empirical sociology in the context of interdisciplinary research, which, according to many commentators of the time, guided the production of housing and the activities of city and regional planning.

In the bureaucratic system of housing distribution, the waiting list was the way to access apartments, regardless of tenure. The waiting list became the site of negotiation for residents in choosing apartments according to their location within the city, their connection to their workplace, family members, and other requirements. This negotiation mechanism will be discussed here, together with the notion of flexibility in housing exchanges. The flexibility in design was counterbalanced by the resident's housing exchanges. A sociological analysis in the mid-80s shows how the inhabitants of conventional apartments found ways to exchange the apartments that

they inhabited according to family cycle (changes in size of the family), location, functional distribution, the location of the apartment within the building in terms of level or sun exposure, or proximity to their workplace or educational facilities (kindergartens, primary schools and high schools). This exchange program brought into question the architectural design concern with flexibility, especially with state-owned and rented apartments.

The third chapter, “The Right to Comfort: Negotiating Choice and Vernacularization,” covers the seventh and eighth decades of the socialist period and its housing programs. The analysis is centered on negotiating choice through bureaucratic mechanisms and vernacularization through the appropriation of space, primarily the phenomenon of balcony enclosures as symptoms of several political, social, and economic factors, including increased ideological dogmatism and the psychological effects of contagion and economic austerity. The standardization of the apartment buildings designed in the 70s was structurally more diverse. Diversity and flexibility became the new architectural desiderata for a more human habitat and a readiness to ensure the housing comfort so much desired by both architects and the population. The notion of a human habitat (*habitat humain*), another French import, found its way into the Romanian architectural discourse in the early 70s.⁶⁷

In the mid-70s, the global economic turmoil reached Romania, pushing the Communist leadership towards economic austerity, with innovations aimed at managing scarcity encouraged at all levels. The pressures of economic austerity drove state investments in projects with integrated solar systems and geothermal technology. Some of the later project directives were designed with the same technological advancements that we can also find in apartment buildings constructed in the mid-80s. At the same time, residents living in conventional apartments often took matters into their own hands when drastic energy-saving programs left people facing harsh winters without appropriate heating. I will argue that these severe austerity measures were among the fundamental factors in residents’ decisions to enclose the balconies of their state-built apartments.

Acknowledgments

The purpose of this dissertation is to analyze the interconnections between the Communist State, its architects, and the inhabitants of state-built apartments that were part of the socialist housing program during the later part of the communist era (from 1968 to 1989). The argument advanced here counters the usual view of Romania and other Eastern European communist countries as in essence having only the politically oppressive and socially inhibiting features of the totalitarian paradigm. Knowledge production in this paradigm has dominated, and to some extent still does, scholarship on architecture in East and Central European countries, and this worldview has more often than not remained unchallenged in architecture studies involving Romania.

In 2010, when I started my master's studies in architecture and initiated the research agenda that led to this work, I began by asking two puzzling questions: Why did many residents of apartment buildings in Romania change the facades of these buildings in the aftermath of the socialist regime, in the ways, and to the great extent, that they did? What were the specific causal factors that generated these interventions? In the transitional period of the 90s, the tendency among scholars was to consider these interventions simply as a product of the country's post-socialist liberalization and privatization. Could they be also, or instead, considered as a result of the policy void during the early part of the post-1989 period? As these inquiries developed into the fieldwork for my dissertation, I came to see that the phenomenon had a longer life, emerging in the socialist period itself. I found these *spatial transgressions* strange, considering the political context of the pre-1989 historical moment. How were they possible in an ostensibly totalitarian system under the tight control and political repression exercised by the *Securitate*, or state police, that was particularly strong in Romania, and figured so prominently in the mind and life of so many Romanians? Considering this, were these spatial transgressions part of a larger phenomenon at work in this period?

The fieldwork research that I conducted for 16 months in Romania brought to my attention further transgressions of spatial and bureaucratic order, which in fact appeared to form part of the very institutional apparatus of housing distribution. An administrative regulation of housing occupancy through apartment exchanges was already a common practice by the end of the socialist era. Sociologists and architects working in the main construction and design institute in Bucharest revealed extensive practices of spatial appropriation and exchange in housing use and administration. The external alterations made by the inhabitants of many blocks of flats, in tandem with those of architects, brought some comforts to the typically drab character of socialist and "modern" everyday life.

I would like to thank my supervisors for their excellent guidance and support during this process. I also wish to thank all of the respondents, without whose cooperation I would not have been able to conduct the analyses presented here.

To those of my friends and colleagues who let me toss around various ideas, and who thus were in a sense companions on my journey throughout the work of this dissertation, many thanks to you as well. I also am grateful for the support of my family. When I at times seemed in danger of losing interest, you helped keep me motivated. My mother deserves a particular note of thanks: Your wise counsel and kind words have, as always, served me well.

Finally, I thank the readers of this text, some of you no doubt unknown to me, as my hope is that you will find this work both useful and interesting, just as even the daily life of residents of highly administered socialist countries can be sometimes.

Ioana Chinan

Berkeley, December 16, 2020

CH. I Modernist Ambitions: From Hyper-standardization to Political Pacification

The housing project was hardly on the minds of the communist leadership in the early 50s. After WWII, the Romanian economy started with what US economist Michael Montias considered “extreme adverse conditions.” While massive investments were absorbed by the industry and transportation needs, in this period, other low-priority sectors were underfunded. Agriculture received 10 percent of state investments, while those for housing were even less. For the most part, the state directly built urban housing or provided state credits for housing development (e.g., cooperative housing). The demographic changes of cities added more pressure on the existing urban housing. The urban population had to have lounged through co-habitation in housing built before the war.¹ In the mid-60s, co-habitation – two families occupying the same apartment or multiple families inhabiting the nationalized urban houses – was still a common way to address the housing shortage, especially at the regional level outside the capital city. Therefore, a persisting housing shortage was one of the many issues Nicolae Ceaușescu inherited after his 1965 appointment as the Central Committee Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party. By 1968 the pressure on answering the housing questions was high. Under this pressure, the Communist Party achieved its goal of providing housing for all at the expense of state-built apartments' interior comfort quality.

This chapter traces the modernist ambitions of the socialist housing program in the early postwar years, and I argue that through hyper-standardization and the industrialization of housing production, the communist leadership produced not only an unprecedented quantity of state-built apartments but also a considerable measure of social pacification in the wake of the 1968 social turmoil. This chapter maintains that apartment space transformation was an inadvertent outcome that stems from the 1968 housing policy of over-densification and the communist state's commitment to achieving *social comfort*.

The first law that initiates the personal property tenure was the Decision 26/1966 of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Socialist Romania. Decree 445, from May 27, 1966, followed the initial decision. The decrees refer to the state financial help given for citizens to construct personal property houses and apartments in cooperative housing. The 1968 housing policy was a continuation of the 1966 Decision, which was later finalized and promulgated under Law #9 in May 1968, supported the standardization of housing types and defined specific ‘comfort’ categories of housing units as requirements of cost specifications for construction but also for commercialization. The administrative reform of 1968 and the housing reform of the same year enabled

extensive housing projects in different secondary cities and, to some extent, in middle-size towns. Hence, the 1968 personal property housing law promoted only four apartment-types to overhaul the housing project. However, it also added to the socialist housing stock numerous small, 30 to 40 square meters apartments, which ultimately intensified cities' over-densification. With this government decision, the Communist leadership began its grand housing program of the 70s and 80s.

Ultimately this chapter maintains that 1968 proved to be a crucial historical moment, which affected Romanian society on many levels: spatially, through the city and regional planning reform initiated through the territorial reorganization of the entire country and the creation of new urban centers—implicitly widening the difference between center and periphery and creating the urbanism of prestige which reached its pick in the 80s; culturally, by a redirection towards the West in transnational channels of knowledge production and exchange; economically, with new foreign trade ties and financial agreements with Western countries. All these aspects, coupled with a fundamental demographic transformation of cities as environments that create new opportunities for social mobility through an unprecedented rural-to-urban migration. The attempts at decentralization in early 1967 complicated the effects of the political and economic factors involved in the wake of the Czechoslovak invasion. In short, at the heart of this chapter is the Romanian housing policy's historical development and the architecture of housing that stems from it during the 50s and 60s.

A Communist Modernity

A fast-paced process of modernization characterized the early years of the post-WWII socialist era. At the time, the Communist leadership understood that the country must harvest all of its human and material resources to realize its agenda of prosperity and progress for all. This process was made possible by the country's wealth of natural resources, and the ambitions of the Communist planners for economic development through industrialization. In the Communist vision, economic development inclusive of all strata of the population required economic growth based on high-input investments in heavy industry. In truth, the first steps towards economic and social development taken by the Communist establishment were audacious, regardless of the country's meager investment capital and no significant financial help from other members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance.²

This chapter intends to show that the Romanian socialist modernization process and its manifestation in housing provisions fits the dominant model of development in Western modernity, albeit through the structural manifestations of a strong state, rather than the "invisible hand" of the free market. In 1992 the sociologist Dumitru Sandu maintained that the Communist project of modernization in Romania had been manifested through the same five "hard structures" embedded within the Western model: demographic structures, the educational system, changes in the occupational

dynamics, urbanization, and communications infrastructure (media, telecommunications, transportation). Consequently, specific classes of behaviors emerged out of this transformation, “which, by aggregation, result[ed] in demographic and social phenomena interpretable in terms of the dichotomy traditional-modern.”³

The “victors of the Cold War” were often quick to point to the case of the Romanian modernization process as a failure, “which can hardly be designated as equivalents of Western modernization.”⁴ However, the two processes, socialist and capitalist, in reality became two faces of the same coin. In the words of the Marxist economist Richard D. Wolff, their economic manifestations were strikingly similar: while the capitalist system claimed the power of property and the privatized means of production, the socialist system transferred this power to the state, without actually empowering the working class.

Urbanization and Migration

Following Sandu’s interpretation, we may ask: What are the overt and covert conceptual relationships between migration, demographic change, and design that were manifested through architectural practice in housing design and construction? Implicitly, what were its urban outcomes? To what extent did they emerge as a continuation of the modernizing ambitions expressed in the interwar years? As I will show in this chapter, the urbanization patterns and housing development differed from one period to another. Despite the generalized perception of socialism as an historical aberration and a flawed economic model, the modernization process professed by the Communist government followed most of the patterns of Western modernity and the associated Eastern European model of development. Ultimately, this study attempts to show how the urban population, through their housing practices, made claims to power, while crafting an in-between space of everydayness.

The sociologist Dorel Abraham has argued that Romanian urban development shared some of the typical traits of Eastern European urban development. In their early stages, patterns of urbanization and socio-economic development were similar to those in Western European countries. This was revealed by (1) a period of intensive urban growth followed by a decline in the percentage of the rural population, by (2) a constant positive rate of urban growth showing signs of slowing down in the mature phase of urbanization; and (3) a substantial rural-to-urban migration, and finally (4) a tendency to favor the rapid growth of big cities compared to smaller ones.⁵

The migration process in the socialist era cannot be understood thoroughly without recognizing that socialist development overall was manifested through different phases over time. Each phase implied a different set of perspectives and transformations of the society and its urban environment. The push-and-pull factors driving migration differed from one phase to another, and one can say the same about the urbanization pattern through housing construction. The urban sociologist Dorel Abraham has identified three fundamental historical trends of urbanization in modern Romania, pertaining to the period between 1921 and 1948, the era of socialist urban development that followed it, with two important sub-phases: 1948-1966 and 1966 to 1989.⁶

In the first period, 1921 to 1948, Romania was largely rural, with little industrial development.⁷ The few urban pockets followed already established patterns of development, along with resource-rich regional urban nuclei, in each of what were at the time the three regions of pre-modern Romania.⁸ Because of their peripheral status, at the far eastern edge of Western Europe, these regions served as ‘colonies’ with economic ties to the countries of Western Europe, Germany in particular.⁹ Despite some industrial activity during the last part of the nineteenth century, the towns developed slowly, and Romania remained a country with a predominantly rural population. Its agricultural production surplus, which was destined for sale abroad, was produced by a servile (*unfree*) rural labor force, a phenomenon known as “the second serfdom.”¹⁰ In the interwar period, industry developed slowly (including in infrastructure and industries like paper, textiles, and metals), but the economy remained predominantly agricultural.

In the early phase of Romania’s urban development, the trends of urbanization and the rural-to-urban migration were on a much smaller scale than the population movements that would follow in the socialist era. The period’s migrant population also remained confined to marginal urban slums. This was partly due to the local industry’s incapacity to absorb the labor force commuting into cities. In the early phase of its urban development, Romania had 114 cities small and medium-size towns. The most rapid urban growth was in the latter, with Bucharest remaining the country’s most populated city. The rural-to-urban migration was the hallmark of this first period of the socialist era’s urbanization process. The proportion of the urban population to that of the nation as a whole grew 70%. This phenomenon can be explained by the demand for manpower in the growing urban areas and the low standards of living in the places of origin, the villages. The process of “ruralization” of the cities was followed by a rise in the birth rate in the cities, the accessing of higher levels of skill in the migratory population, better education for their children, and improved living conditions compared to their places of origin.¹¹

Indeed, the urbanization process can only be understood through changes in the social structure and its spatial outcomes (at both the societal and domestic levels). As the sociologist Dumitru Sandu reminds us, that urbanization can be defined “as a process of distribution and accentuations of urban characteristics within a given territory, no matter the source that generated that process (city, state mechanisms etc.).” Therefore, Sandu continues, “social mobility, fertility, and differentiated mortality directly lead to modifications in social structure, composition, or population distribution according to social groups.”¹² Sandu describes migration “as a socio-demographic *event* that refers to the movement [*deplasare*] of a person—on his or her own or as a part of a group—outside his or her initial residing community, within a given period of time, to change his or her original residence and/or usual workplace.”¹³

The phenomenon of migration is also related to the phenomena of social integration and social mobility. For Dumitru Sandu, social mobility can be directly translated into changes in the occupational and class structure, which in the case of rural-to-urban migration generally means shifting from being a cooperative farmer to an industrial worker. For Sandu, it involves changes in status that have to do with the behaviors of their groups of reference. A reference group’s principal attributes might

remain the same between place of origin and that of relocation, while the interrelationships between group members become completely different. “We will consider,” Sandu stipulates, “that migration is a form of social mobility as long as the movement between the origin and the destination is followed by a change in at least one reference group.” Rural-urban migration is associated with a transitional process from an agricultural occupation to a non-agricultural one, and is a social phenomenon in which vertical mobility has shown itself an essential component. Vertical social mobility tends to be consequential for the life of the migrant, due mainly to its visibility within the groups in which it is manifest.¹⁴

Based on the theoretical model proposed in his book *Fluxurile de migrație*, Sandu shows that quality of life is a factor that directly influences the phenomenon of migration. The migration process often starts when people perceive the differences between the quality of life in their place of origin and that expected in their place of destination. To understand the role of the values that people identify with what we call their quality of life, we must ask: what are these values and how do they distinguish the aspirations of people seeking to migrate?

Sandu answers astutely:

The resources and values that members of a specific social group have at a certain point in time affect quantitatively, by a variety and by the degree to which these values address specific requests of the members from the same group. All these parameters—quantity, variety, and degree of value adequacy—are defining characteristics for what we call the quality of life. As a result of a social comparison process, the quality of life of a given social group is defined (by a member of that group) in respect to the values that the members of a different group can have. Between social “reference” groups to which the quality of life is referred to in the group of origin, the destination group of migration will be selected.¹⁵

Sandu further describes the concept of quality of life as follows:

The concept quality of life designates the degree of value adequacy (embodied in goods, services or social relations) at the disposal of the members of a social group, in the relationship to their needs. This value adequacy to the social group needs is judged according to a set of criteria, of evaluation by a cultural model, which can be of the analyzed group of people, or a model constructed by using elements of different origins (criteria of different groups, of the whole society, of the researcher etc.)

The quality of life model significant for the process of migration is the model defined by the migrants themselves.¹⁶

The components of the quality of life that relates to needs must be further analyzed. Sandu contents, “is useful to distinguish between the components of the quality of life in respect to satisfying the fundamental needs (eating, shelter etc.) or “needs-needed” and the non-fundamental needs, represented by “needs-aspirations.”¹⁷ What is called push-migration refers specifically to the means of satisfying needs-

needed of the population from the migration flux origin; while pull-migration is motivated mainly by the tendency to satisfy the needs-aspirations.”¹⁸

It becomes clear, the author continues, that the quality of life components have and objective and subjective sub-components: the “objects” that requires needs satisfactions and the subjective dimension, which embodies “the criteria of evaluation of the relation between the available values and needs.”¹⁹ The notion of *value* here is explained by the author as a natural element or a product of human activities considered desirable from a social point of view.²⁰

As a consequence of accelerated migratory patterns, in 1966, the nation’s 13 large cities had 51% of the urban population, compared with 34% in 1948. The proportion of the population living in small- and medium-size towns declined further after the new administrative and territorial divisions established in 1968, which curtailed the urbanization process, further exacerbating the difference between large and medium-sized cities. The uneven urban development (both economically and territorially) led to more substantial state intervention, bringing with it more intrusive political power, in the process of urbanization. This brought with it ill-famed city and regional planning (*sistematizarea*) efforts that extended from the late 60s to the end of socialist era in 1989. The state-led process of city and regional planning followed a totalizing process of spatial development, in part because of the ways in which the law was implemented under government decrees. These mostly issued from the highest levels of power.²¹

The Economic Imperative

As mentioned above, in the early years of the socialist era, state investment in housing was meager. In the years between 1956 and 1960, the state spent 5 billion lei on housing construction. In 1958, 8.3 housing units were built for every one thousand inhabitants. In 1960, the directives of the Third Congress of the Romanian Workers’ Party required that in each of the next six years, approximately 300,000 apartments would be built with state funds, three times more than in the entire period of 1954-1959. In the same year, the national economic development plan foresaw the end of housing scarcity by 1975, and ensuring all Romanians the necessary conditions for living comfort. The diversity of comfort parameters demanded a sophisticated approach in the execution of designs and construction. According to Roșianu et al., in 1943, 52% of urban areas did not have access to electricity, 45% of all houses registered were of sub-standard materials, 52% of cities and towns did not have potable water, and 73% did not have sewerage. Of the 5,300 streets in Bucharest, 3,000 did not have sewerage. Houses and apartments varied greatly in attributes of comfort in terms of functional, hygiene, aesthetic, and other standards. Technical and economic deficiencies were particularly marked.²²

Due to harsh economic conditions, the state made infrequent investments in housing in the first 20 years of socialism.²³ In light of the meager economic output of the country, I maintain that the socialist housing program emerged full-fledged only after 1968. Until then, housing construction remained isolated within Bucharest and some other cities, where the municipalities added only small pockets of infill housing,

far short of what was needed to address the housing crisis.²⁴ This claim is substantiated by contextualizing the socialist housing project within the postwar era's political and economic climate. In this respect, the economics-related literature covering early socialist Romania reveals several important points about the country's economic growth: it had a propensity for the development of heavy industry, a dramatic transformation of the agricultural system, a regional diversification, investments in social capital, and aggressive foreign trade.²⁵

Writing between 1963 and 1965, observers including the economist Michael Montias and United Nations Chief of Development Finance Karel Holbik,²⁶ claimed that the economic policies of Romania in its early stages of socialist development followed patterns of unbalanced growth.²⁷ As Holbik put it, "(...) Romania's economic progress has been unbalanced and this uneven course has resulted from the primary emphasis which the government has placed on industrial investment (initially under Soviet auspices)."²⁸ The economic growth of the postwar years started with a deficient economy based only on agricultural production and a nascent industry already depleted by the war's destruction. However, by the mid-60s, Romania had become the fastest growing economy in the Soviet Bloc.²⁹

By 1965, Romania had already made a mark on the global map with its unprecedented economic growth. In his article, "An Economic 'Miracle' through Investment Priorities?," Holbik answered his title's question as follows: "We feel free to attribute to Romania's remarkable economic achievements the quality of a 'miracle' not only because of her impressive record (...) but also in order to give expression to our view that, upon careful and judicious examination, the country's economic growth compares favorably with the well-publicized West European 'miracles', West Germany and Italy."³⁰ After twenty years of economic growth, Romania had advanced considerably, judging by international standards. The country abandoned its traditional economic role of supplier of raw materials, and moved to economic independence from the Soviet Union and its Comecon partners.³¹

In the early post-war years, the profession of architecture was transformed radically from a privatized individualistic and elitist endeavor into a state profession requiring obedience to political desiderata. More importantly, architectural practice became essentially technocratic. The profession was given a place in the Scientific Association of Technicians (Asociația Științifică a Technicienilor, AST) under the leadership of engineers, which older, mostly francophile architects, educated in the tradition of France's École des Beaux-Arts, deeply resented. The elite architects of Bucharest's interwar years were reluctant to pursue mass-produced collective housing projects, despite the acute demand for housing units. The limited social housing built in the 30s had done little to answer the burgeoning expansion of the peripheral *mahala*, expending at the edges of Bucharest and other Romanian cities. The technocratic mission seemed to be the answer to the early socialist housing question.

Hyperstandardization: Economic Efficiency and *Social Comfort*

The housing model of Soviet-type socialist realism proved costly, unproductive, and slow in delivering the number of apartments needed at the time.

Concurrently, for infill-housing construction (which was the type mostly used in large cities), it was difficult to apply the large, industrialized prefabricated concrete panels [*panouri mari*], with the technology still in its infancy.

In spite of all of its efforts, in the early 50s, working with the available construction technology, Romania failed to meet the high demand for housing construction. As the economist John Michael Montias revealed in his work on the Romanian economy, between 1950 and 1953 the needs of industry and transportation absorbed the bulk of investments, while the “low-priority sectors” were underfunded: “Only about 10 per cent of state investments in fixed capital went to agriculture, which was of course concentrated on state farms. Housing was also neglected. In cities, where virtually all new housing was built directly by the state or with state credits, the expanding population had, for the most part, to be crowded into lodgings built before or during the war.”³²

The Communist leadership revolutionized the construction and architecture industries in addition to its proclaimed ambitions of high social and economic efficiency, by creating a set of new institutions to serve as the main transmission belt for all standardized housing production throughout the country. This is how the IPCT (Institutul de Proiectare pentru Construcții Tip, or the Design Institute for Standardized Construction) was born. At its inception in 1952, the IPCT produced only standardized housing projects and cultural facilities that served residential neighborhoods, under the leadership of architect Gheorghe Trifu.³³ The IPCT was the starting place for all housing project directives (*proiect directivă*) during most of the socialist era, especially in the 1950s.

The Architecture Section of the AST [Asociația Științifică a Tehnicienilor – The Scientific Associations of Technicians] met for the first time in Bucharest November 12- 14, 1949. Along with other technocrats, the meeting gathered the *crème de la crème* of what remained of the old architectural elite in Bucharest. Presiding over the gathering, the AST’s General Secretary, the engineer Aurel Pârvu, demanded architects’ commitment to the First Economic Plan for 1950 and their rejection of cosmopolitanism, an internationalizing commitment to Western Modernism in architecture.³⁴ The scathing critique of cosmopolitanism that the architect Nicolae Bădescu presented in the meeting was later published in the first issue of *Arhitectura*, in 1950. In this extensive manifesto against Western modernism, Bădescu states:

Cosmopolitanism is the opposite of patriotism, its negation. Cosmopolitanism promotes total indifference for the country and its people’s faith. It negates the duties of a moral nature and the duties of citizenship that people have for each other and their country. It cultivates hatred against people, especially the working people, and it cultivates obsequious bowing [*ploconirea slugarnică*] in front of the bourgeois and the imperialist “Culture.”³⁵

Bădescu’s text complied with the association’s demands. It declares that the profession of architecture in Romania must be thoroughly anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist. In this, he signaled the technocratization of architecture. Moreover, the architect Bădescu—soon to become the head of the CSCAS [Comitetul de Stat pentru

Construcții, Arhitectură și Sistemizare - State Committee for Constructions, Architecture and Systematization] the most influential organization of architects in the country—proclaimed the engagement of architects with the society a patriotic commitment indicating the transition towards a socialized profession, in which the collective would overshadow the individual's creative powers. With this stance, Bădescu situated architectural design under the umbrella of socialist realism. He did so by underlining the class struggle in which the new “culture of the proletariat” was identified itself as original, authentic, and free of any Western influence, in an internationalism that was closely tied with the other cultures in the Soviet Bloc. The virulent language against cosmopolitanism thus was used to promote the profession's allegiance to Soviet-type socialist realism.³⁶

Western modernism became anathema, while the new built environment had to realize the percepts of socialist realism, in alignment with the demands of Soviet notions of modernity. Urbanism, and not architecture, was to occupy the center of efforts at planning that were aimed towards realizing the utopia of communism. This professional compliance confronted architects who valued their own disciplinary autonomy with a hostile terrain that entailed a certain struggle. The profession's call for addressing social demands meant to many elite architects an abdication from the task of artful construction, and a turn towards technocratic city-building, with hyper-standardization. All this would be done in the name of economic efficiency and social comfort.

In 1948, the first Commission of Standardization (*Comisiunea de Standardizare*, the local branch of the International Organization for Standardization, ISO), was tasked with trying to achieve the international integration of industrialized products and consensus on national standards for achieving economic efficiency.³⁷ In the name of economic efficiency and rational design, this body, under the leadership of construction engineers, coordinated architectural production with the demands of the construction industry. The propensity for standardization was accompanied by the introduction of prefabrication, which became the focus of architectural design in every domain of its application: housing, hospitals, and all manner of cultural and other public facilities. If many architects were enthusiastic about the commitment to standardization and prefabrication in the early post-war years, they would soon come to resent it.

In the early 50s, engineers and architects were highly committed to rationalizing construction. In the case of planned housing stock, the mass-produced collective apartments in urban areas were limited by standardized and prefabricated construction systems. In prefabricated construction, the design embedded how the social unit, the family, was to be envisioned, and how the design could be used to address the acute housing shortage. With this agenda in mind, the social unit of the family was itself subjected to the available standards, in what came to be called typification: production was oriented to satisfying the needs of type-individuals and type-families. It is this propensity for types in the early 50s that I call *hyper-standardization*. It involved attempts to categorize, measure, and standardize every aspect of everyday life, from domestic actions to the family cycle of births and deaths,

maturing and aging, that fit a pre-established standard, which was ultimately driven by economic efficiency.

In the years between 1956 and 1960, the state spent 5 billion lei on housing construction. In 1958, 8.3 housing units were built per thousand inhabitants. Issued the same year, the development plan for the national economy foresaw the elimination of housing scarcity by 1975, while also ensuring the necessary conditions for living comfort. Indeed, the two purposes of efficiency and comfort could be at odds, as the diversity of the comfort parameters demanded a highly complex approach in design and construction execution.

Recognizing the very short period allowed for such endeavors, Roșianu and his colleagues pointed out in the 1943 issue of the review *Tehnica și viața* [*The Technical and the Life*]: in that year, 52% of urban areas did not have access to electricity, 45% of all houses (registered) were of sub-standard materials, 52% of cities and towns did not have potable water, and 73% did not have sewerage. In Bucharest, out of 5,300 streets, 3,000 did not have sewerage. The diversity imposed by the comfort requirement largely consisted of functional, technical, and economic factors, and hygienic as well as aesthetic norms. The technical and economic factors were largely left behind in the approaches taken to housing, the authors argued.³⁸

The architect Dumitru Vernescu, advocating the extensive use of prefabrication, emphasized the relationship between urban planning solutions and the cost of the housing unit. In his essay, “Influența soluției urbanistice asupra costului locuinței” [The Impact on Housing Cost of the Urban Design Solutions],” he argues that this relationship is key to understanding the problems being articulated and solutions offered, which would later become the official Directives.

Vernescu identifies the main stages of urban design, to be kept in mind with the purpose of obtaining material and financial savings when building a housing complex [*complex de locuințe*]. These include choosing: the construction site location; the form and the size of the housing complex; density (inhabitants per unit of space); the location of buildings within the site; landscaping design solutions; and equipping the site with all of the needed and required public facilities [*lucrări edilitare*]. In a taxonomic exercise, Vernescu identifies types of housing clusters that can be correlated with different costs in terms of how the urban space is used. This includes, for example, groups of apartments that are located in the space between existing buildings, so-called “fillings” [*plombe*] or infill buildings. Another type of housing project is located in the center of cities that are sites of substantial demolitions. A third type is residential buildings situated on previously unoccupied land at the periphery of different cities.³⁹

Building in a city’s central areas has the obvious economic advantage that it can make use of existing infrastructure. Also, this approach can be useful for urban renewal in resolving some existing urban design problems. Constructing between existing, irregularly-shaped buildings is disadvantageous. The projects proposed had to be customized for each site. In these situations, standardized projects are out of the question, as they would require more design production (and implicitly, more labor), and this makes them more time-consuming and eventually more expensive. Due to

these spatial constraints, building design in this period tended to generate apartments with large living areas and unnecessarily large building volumes.⁴⁰

Diversity, density, and flexibility were closely connected in the architectural discourse of the 60s. Mihail Caffé's dissertation, "Contribuțiuni la stabilirea unei teme generale a locuinței urbane în R.P.R pe 1960-1965" [Contributions to the Development of an Urban Housing Program in the People's Republic of Romania, 1960-1965],⁴¹ takes issue with the exclusively economic and technical approach of the construction engineers and technical theoreticians. Among other things, Caffé argued specifically for adapting the standardization to some diversity in types of apartments. Using this measure, Caffé proposed increasing the usable areas in absolute terms (to the point that prices would allow), rather than through an the hypothetical development of interior equipment, which after all would trigger a reduction of the overall usable area.⁴²

In this way, functional diversification took account of the value of comfort as an indicator of a standard of living. The size of apartment was thus determined by a formula. This meant that "the larger the number of persons per apartment, the more the location and the objective layout of rooms became stricter." Therefore Caffé contends, "the problem of universality is reduced to a level that concerns each room separately. A room for two people was to be used by two children of any age, while rooms for one person were to be utilized by a child or an adult." This makes for quite a difference when it comes to density. Hence, functional diversification had to be supported by a substantial increase in the size of apartments. How and in what way did the three determining elements intertwine in the making of the socialist housing project?

From the early years of socialism through the 1970s, the prefabrication system consisted mainly of large concrete panels and slabs, which were used for exterior walls and slabs. Both the modularity itself and its technological limits dramatically constrained the design capacity of the various apartment layouts.⁴³ Ironically, and probably in spite of this, economic necessity driven by international trends forced the Romanian Communist leadership, especially after 1954, to an opening towards Western influences in architecture, as the "hidden modernism"⁴⁴ of the styles that had predominated until then gave way to the much-pursued industrialization of housing construction, and particularly prefabrication. According to the economic efficiency dictum, the architecture profession embraced wholeheartedly the minimum dwelling approach favoring mass-produced apartments units until the transition to open urbanism in the late 60s. How did this work within the Eastern European planning system, and its subsistence dwellings (called "existenzminimum")? How was the notion of social comfort operationalized into the architectural housing design through technical comfort?

To prioritize social comfort, the Communist leadership encompassed two major politically-, socially-, and economically-driven directions. One course of action addressed the high demand for housing in the post WWII years, along with the industrialization program (which involved a demand for a labor force in the newly-industrialized urban areas), the relocation of urban families, and substandard living conditions in poor neighborhoods (usually at the margin of existing large- and mid-sized cities). Truthful to its modernist trajectory, the socialist housing program found its legitimacy in supporting the socialist family by providing shelter with minimal

“comfort conditions,” as detailed in particular by the engineer Gheorghe Dorin Rosenberg.⁴⁵ The second direction was aimed at the “technical comfort” of housing units, often associated with modernist understandings of the “subsistence dwellings.” In this, the Communist leadership sought to bring to the less affluent part of the population better conditions of habitation and an improved way of life. However, if the redistribution system worked well for the less fortunate strata in the society, the Communist state forced well-off families (usually the old urban and industrial upper-middle classes) into sharing the same kinds of dwellings as the new urban proletariat, downsizing their living spaces and disturbing their everyday life.⁴⁶

Beyond housing policy and political developments, and the proclaimed ambitions of high social and economic efficiency, the Communist leadership revolutionized both the construction and architecture industries by creating new institutions to serve as the main transmission belts for standardized housing production throughout the country. This is how the new design institute, the IPCT, was born, in 1952, as the socialist housing program expanded. At its inception, the IPCT produced only standardized housing projects and social and cultural facilities in residential neighborhoods, under the leadership of the architect Gheorghe Trifu.⁴⁷ The IPCT was the starting place for all housing project directives (*proiect directivă*) for the most part of the socialist era, and especially throughout the 50s.

After the death of Stalin, when socialist realism became a thing of the past, the new neighborhood model, also of Soviet making, of the *microrayon*, (microdistrict) dominated architectural practice and its discourse. And this new trajectory coincided with the political opening to Western-based modernism. Prefabrication, standardization, and industrialization seemed to fit perfectly the Party’s agenda of socialist development and housing. At the same time, research in prefabrication technology, especially involving the large concrete panels, paved the way to what came to be understood as the open urbanism that predominated in the late 50s and throughout 60s. *Hyper-standardization* and open urbanism allowed the much-wanted full-fledged industrialization of construction.

The use of prefabrication enabled, and was aimed at, the economic efficiency to be realized through the construction of many housing units in the shortest period of time. In the early stages of the socialist era, the construction industry together with heavy industry became the leading forces in the economy. The party leadership stressed the interconnection between different industrial fields, like heavy industry (involved in heating systems and infrastructure), light industry (such as the production of domestic appliances), wood fabrication and prefabrication (furniture), and ultimately the (inner and inter-city) transportation of construction materials.⁴⁸ The tight economic interconnections outlined above entailed drastic architectural design constraints. These became evident not only through actual production, but also in the administrative and bureaucratic processes of obtaining building permits.

Proletarian Citizenship and Housing Policy

When the Central Committee of the Communist Party under the leadership of Nicolae Ceaușescu introduced personal property apartments (PPA), this changed many people's lives; it also represented a significant change in the architectural design of housing units in the late socialist years. The size, quality of construction materials (structure and interior finishes), and overall housing quality were enhanced little by little for personal property apartments, compared with apartments that were rented. The prices of apartments were different, of course, based on their size, but additionally in terms of the height of the building. In time, the price of apartments would come to differ based on location within the city as well. The number of PPA became proportionately larger than the number of apartments for rent; though, throughout the socialist era, apartments for rent remained available for families who could not afford to buy an apartment. To understand the significance and role of the PPA apartments and the novel form of housing tenure, we must look at their Soviet origins and how they emerged in that context.

After the Second World War, Romania and other countries in Eastern Europe following the Soviet Union's lead in these matters. In the case of Romania, personal property was introduced only in the late 60s and was "constructed" as a legal form of housing tenure in the context of the rising socialist housing market, when the state housing stock became available for Romanian citizens to purchase as apartments or use as a basis for building their own homes. Public housing provisions in the countries of the Soviet Bloc remains one of the most significant state-led endeavors in housing in history, which reached a large part of the population in the Soviet Union and its satellites. Understanding the socialist "modernist" approach to housing provisions is not only useful on its own terms, but also fundamental in uncovering insights into the socialist welfare state.⁴⁹

Personal Property: The Soviet Way

It was said that "[t]he word property has no passport to cross the frontiers of the collectivist state."⁵⁰ This certainly seemed true for those who, in the early days of the Soviet Union, took the radicals' claims seriously, leading the way towards a classless society. During its early development, the post-revolutionary Soviet state challenged established bourgeois property relations by nationalizing all means of production and eliminating private property, including in land and residential dwellings.⁵¹ At the same time, it embarked on a historical enterprise to create housing stock by building housing units and allocating them to the vast majority of Soviet citizens. In this section, I will briefly explain some of the areas of juxtaposition and interconnection between the socialist economic power of the plan and the role of Soviet civil law in shaping and reconfiguring property relations, in the new housing tenure that was by the Soviet establishment *personal property* (*lichnaia sobstvennost'*).

The "Red October" of 1917 raised new questions about property and reconfigured the ways in which private property and privacy were understood. In order to protect and strengthen the security of housing tenure in the Soviet Union, new government measures were required. With the introduction of personal property⁵² for

the first time in the 1936 Soviet Constitution, Stalin's administration sought to clarify the rights of workers to own, sell, transfer, buy, or inherit dwellings that had been obtained through income from labor. The terms of these new regulations on housing tenure were frequently reformulated in the Soviet Civil Code, a process that would culminate in what some authors have termed "the property dilemma":⁵³ the change in property tenure resulted in the commodification of the housing stock, whether state- or privately owned, which led ultimately to the rise of speculation within the emergent socialist housing market.

Personal property is linked to labor in Marxist theory, and so theoretically to earned income.⁵⁴ The socialist economy fueled the growth of the population's material well-being as a collective effort; in turn, it was linked with the quality and quantity of each citizen's work in a factory or on a state farm. Hence its collective dimension was based on and derived from socialist property.⁵⁵ The Soviet legal scholar Oleg Nicolaevich Sadikov defines personal property as the property that "provides citizens with the possibility of satisfying their various material and spiritual needs. All, or almost all, of the objects that surround us at home (clothing, furniture, a television, radio, refrigerator, bicycles, and much more), and for some the house itself constitute personal property (...). The right to personal property is the right of a citizen, granted under force of law, to possess, use, and dispose of property with the aim of satisfying personal needs." Sadikov further clarifies that to satisfy citizens' "personal requirements," property can belong to one regardless of his/her "dispositive capacity" and health.⁵⁶ The concept of personal property in the Soviet state developed over a long period.

In the Civil Code and family law, the legal provision of personal property evolved in several phases based on economic, political, social, and legal factors. The first phase was characterized by personal property being unclearly defined, with the dominant concern being economic development. In the 1920s, a constantly shifting economic policy led alternately to confiscation and denationalization of property on a large scale.⁵⁷ As the legal scholar George M. Armstrong⁵⁸ explains that between 1920 and 1936, "documents pertaining to the rights of individuals indicate that political leaders did not develop any comprehensive theories for explaining the capacity of the citizen to use and dispose of property. Thus, no one in a position of responsibility provided a theory that could harmonize the regime's treatment of various ways in which people relate to property such as homeownership (...)." ⁵⁹ As the post-revolutionary order was winding down and was then replaced by Stalin's Five-Year Plan, ownership relations at the citizen's level would often escalated into disputes. Since personal property was based on labor income, each citizen had the right to a share of private space.

The Romanian Alternative to Socialist Property Rights

Independently of its trajectory in the Soviet Union, the personal property law and its implicit housing policy integration within the Romanian Civil Code remained something of a puzzle. It turns out that the model for this program was the 1961 ordinance in which the Soviet Union extended the personal property provisions of the

1936 Soviet Constitution to its satellite countries.⁶⁰ However, it took six years for the Romanian Communist government to institute a corresponding housing policy. It was in this way that the commercialization of housing stock emerged, together with the advent of the socialist housing market. With the legal innovation of personal property in Romania and in other Soviet satellite countries, property relations during the socialist years became decidedly nuanced⁶¹—much more so than what the literature on the subject acknowledged. Nevertheless, during the late socialist phase, Romanian citizens made monthly payments through their salaries for most of the existing “personal property apartments.”⁶²

On April 20, 1950, as part of the Nationalization Act, many of the existing urban dwellings became socialist property, “the property of the people,”⁶³ that is, state property. Further changes occurred by decrees in 1952 and 1953, establishing rents, obligations of owners and tenants, and rules for housing exchanges.⁶⁴

Since Beginning in the late 1950s, Romanian planners became increasingly aware of the need to adapt the management and planning systems to the growing complexities of the expanding economy. Also, protest movements in some Eastern European countries, particularly Poland (culminating in the Solidarity movement) and Hungary, which also launched an economic decentralization, forced the system to approach different economic reforms. Internally, the change was also triggered by the development of the Romanian government’s conflict with the Soviet Union. Khrushchev envisioned a certain division of labor among the COMECON nations, which the Romanian government rejected: that of supplier of agricultural products to the rest of the community’s members.⁶⁵

Following its break with the Soviet Union, Romania’s foreign trade within COMECON diminished dramatically, to the point that by the end of the 1950s, Bucharest turned to the West for economic and political support. From this point on, Romania embarked upon frantic industrial development and developed aspiration for independence. This was pursued in a way that involved the expansion of membership of the national Communist Party, making Romania the country with the largest party enrollment in Eastern Europe.⁶⁶

To strengthen the nation’s political position, Nicolae Ceaușescu, the leader of both the Romanian Communist Party and the government, embarked on a process of ‘political innovation’ that aimed at a sense of participation and inclusion of new social and economic groups among the ‘working class’. The political scientist Jack Bielasiak has suggested that such efforts constituted a “mechanism of mass participation that would increase a citizen’s sense of involvement in socio-economic affairs, without significantly altering the regime’s policy preferences.”⁶⁷

The change was partly a way to extract resources from the population. The economist Michael Shafir⁶⁸ has suggested, “Ceausescu ‘proposed’ to translate ‘participation’ and ‘worker’s’ self-management’ into reality by allowing workers to buy, on an allegedly voluntary basis, 30% of the registered value of the fixed assets of the enterprises where they worked.”⁶⁹ The fixed assets also included state-provided housing that city municipalities allocated to workers through factories and state institutions. It seems that the purpose of the political decision to decentralize assets

was the alleviation of Romania's economic crisis at the time and the absorption of the population's surplus purchasing power. More importantly, this change in government strategy to address economic problems also represented the advent of new property relations and the beginning of what in bureaucratic language was called the Personal Property Apartment, as a new form of homeownership. The new personal property apartment objectified the concept of *personal property* that was transferred from Soviet discourse into the Romanian bureaucracy's own language of housing administration, which aided the pseudo-privatization of state housing stock in the early 1970s.

In fact, the reasons why the Romanian Communist leadership only implemented this idea of personal property in 1966 remains something of a puzzle. It was first announced in 1966 in a decree that followed a decision of the Romanian Communist Party's Central Committee. The decree speaks of citizens' rights to purchase state-built apartments in urban areas and to build second homes for vacations, in both cases sometimes allowing for financial help from the state. The decree set financial conditions involving mortgage payments and interest, the type of housing allowed, integration with the existing state-financed housing stock, land use, and restrictions on the number of housing units that any one person or family could buy.⁷⁰ The law required that buyers pay a minimum deposit of 30% of the home's value.⁷¹

In 1968, the National Assembly⁷² passed a measure providing for "state housing development, commercialization of state housing, and the building of personal property homes for leisure or tourism purposes."⁷³ The privatization, however, created problems concerning the criteria for financing credit and reimbursement strategy, which many citizens found very challenging or out of reach. The requirement of down payments based on the home's entire price favored those with the better jobs and higher incomes.

A revision of the law in 1973 established state financing or tax credits for some personal property apartments, as well as providing for more state-owned and managed apartments.⁷⁴

The lawyer and educator Dumitru Lupulescu⁷⁵ argued for a "right to personal property that has a socio-economic purpose."⁷⁶ Defending it in socialist terms, he declared that it should "by its nature, be destined to satisfy the material and cultural needs of its owner and his family, and the right to personal property cannot therefore be used for purpose of exploiting other's work, with speculative purposes or attaining it through other means but income based on labor."⁷⁷

The law provided financial guidelines for improvements to standardized apartments: if the owner made improvements such as enlarging the living area, or modernizing kitchen equipment, the initial deposit required was 40%. The state would help those interested in land use, design, and the construction of dwellings through housing credits for 15 years through the Romanian Investments Bank. Each person could obtain such a credit only one time. The house's or apartment's value was established based on existing construction estimations, based on the cost of the construction project plus commissions of 3% for the construction organization and 2% for the organization (e.g., factories, state institutions) responsible for the final contract

with the beneficiary (the resident). The units thus financed were granted exceptions from some existing standards and codes, and tax exempt for ten years.⁷⁸

The law provided financial bonuses of 2.5-5% in return for a higher initial deposit, and an additional 2.5% if they also moved out of their state apartment. The regional Peoples' Councils regulated the locations of, and available land for, the construction of new apartment buildings and their locations. The condition for people acquiring a piece of this land was that it should be connected to the city's infrastructure. The People's Councils were expected to adapt the existing standard plans to the needs and requirements of future beneficiaries.⁷⁹

Apartment 'Diversity': A Strategy for Pacification?

The new law of 1966 specified nine models of apartments to be allocated to 300,000 occupants. The apartments were to be built between 1966 and 1970. The variety of apartment types offered seemed to allow for the diversity of layouts that architects had been arguing for since 1960.⁸⁰ By 1967, urban housing consisted largely of existing housing stock and housing built by the ordinary people out of their own resources or with state credits. In the same year, the total number of urban housing units passed half a million, 1/3 of which consisted of existing housing stock. The state continued to play a major role in housing construction; out of 47.6 million square meters of existing usable area, approximately 21.6 million square meters was still state property.⁸¹

Table 1. Types of apartments and prices proposed in the 1966 housing policy

Type of Apts. (#Rooms)	Thousands of apts.	Min. Price/Apt. (leu)	Present			Future		
			# Pers. in location	Usable Area/Pers. (sqm)	Price/Pers. in location (leu)	# Pers. in location	Usable Area/Pers. (sqm)	Price/Pers. in location (leu)
A=1	56	37,600	1/2	17.00/8.5	37,600/18,800	1	17.00	37,600
B=1+1/2	60	50,000	3	7.82	16,669	2	11.75	25,000
C=2	78	54,800	3	9.77	18,266	2	14.65	27,400
D=2+1/2	46	65,320	4	9.50	16,330	3	12.67	21,770
E=3	36	67,400	5	7.91	13,480	4	9.89	16,850
F=2+2 ½	10	80,800	5	9.4	16,160	4	11.75	20,200
G=3+1/2	6	106,130	6	8.33	17,690	5	10.00	21,220
H=4	6	89,810	7	7.19	12,830	6	8.39	14,970
I=3 +2/2	2	118,950	7	8.43	16,990	6	9.83	19,830

Table 2. Distribution of apartments in 1968-1970 as proposed in 1966 housing legislation

Types of apartments		Distribution of the 300,000 according to CSCAS	Distribution of the approx. 100,000 apts. being built 1966-1967	Distribution of the 200,000 apts. that will be build in 1968-1970
Type A	Studios	56,000	20,000	36,000
Type B	1 room 1/2	60,000	-	60,000
Type C	2 rooms	78,000	50,000	28,000
Type D	2 rooms 1/2	46,000	-	46,000
Type E	3 rooms	36,000	26,000	10,000
Type F	2 rooms 2/2	10,000	-	10,000
Type G	3 rooms 1/2	6,000	-	6,000
Type H	4 rooms	6,000	4,000	2,000
Type I	3 rooms 2/2	2,000	-	2,000

Intentionally or not, housing policy between 1952 and 1959 made it difficult for people to build their homes with state credits. The credit system used for investments in building individual houses proved cumbersome. The production of construction materials fell short in answering the demand for housing construction. Moreover, the Regional Planning Conceptual Proposal (*Schițe ale Planurilor de Sistemizare*) omitted small residential areas of single-family houses. Consequently, these omissions restricted the permit approval for single home construction. Without attempting to resolve the issues in the credit system, the Communist leadership ended the program altogether in 1959. By 1963, statistics show, there was no individual housing construction with state credits (see Table 3).⁸²

Looking into past housing policy might help in understanding the significance of the 1967 decision and its social and political context. For those interested in building individual dwellings, the housing law of 1952 granted state credits for homes constructed under personal property tenure. People could build houses individually or within the cooperative system. The table below reveals the surge in housing construction with state credits from 1952 to 1959. Moreover, the 1953 Decision provided access to land for housing construction, while providing access to subsidized construction materials at advantageous prices and additional tax exemptions. By 1967, there were 19,000 apartments built by individuals with state credits.

Table 3. Housing built with state funds, by cooperative organizations; and housing built with occupant's own funds and state credits, constructed from 1951 to 1966.⁸³

Urban Housing Stock 1951-1966								
Years	TOTAL		State own housing stock and co-op housing		Housing build by the population out of their own funds or with credits given by the state		Housing built by the population with state credits	
	The number of housing units	Usable Area (thousands sqm)	Number of Apartments	Usable Area (thousands sqm)	Number of housing units	Usable Area (thousands sqm)	Number of Apartments	Usable Area (thousands sqm)
1951	9228	235	4945	148	4283	107	0	0
1952	8560	246	4786	143	3774	103	57	2
1953	14158	402	9097	270	5061	132	276	9
1954	17255	486	8133	239	9122	247	2491	76
1955	19665	575	9587	283	10078	292	3489	106
1956	17150	580	7008	234	10142	346	3235	130
1957	23625	810	7535	240	15990	570		166
1958	26519	923	10004	322	16515	601	2802	113
1959	28977	956	17668	522	11309		2039	85
1960	37556	1197	27057	799	10499	398	321	13
1961	46811	1558	37980	1211	8831	347	94	5
1962	48026	1549	39153	1248	8873	301	4	1
1963	46142	1446	39410	1236	6732	210	0	0
1964	52038	1638	45863	1439	6175	199	0	0
1965	54430	1684	47532	1473	6898	211	0	0
1966	53769	1676	46303	1434	7466	242	0	0

State Policy and Political Urgency

A report of the housing administration, based on an analysis of land distribution, shows that mismanagement and lack of leadership in implementing credit-based housing construction kept many people from building their own homes. By August 31, 1967, 20,000 applications had been made for construction permits for personal property houses and apartments. Not only did the state construction companies fall short in meeting the housing demand, but out of the 15,000 housing units that were to be completed by the end of 1967, only 12,000 were by then ready to inhabit.⁸⁴ Also, the housing policy had defined interior comfort in terms of the size of the apartments. The data shows that there a significant number of improvements were made in apartments in terms of increasing their size. The proportion of two-bedroom apartments grew from 16.4% in 1956 to 26.1% in 1966, while the percentage of one-room apartments decreased from 21.2 % to 12.8%. And despite the state's efforts, the density of living spaces—the number of individuals per inhabitable room—remained at high levels compared to other countries in Europe. In 1966, the Population and

Housing Census data collected showed the following indicators: household/housing unit – 1.2; the number of persons/room – 1.9; living area (sqm)/person – 7.7.⁸⁵

In the years between 1947 and 1966, the income loss in housing management expenditures was due to (1) low rents and (2) high expenses for the administration and maintenance of housing units. Rents stagnated while salaries were growing, and the administrative apparatus grew in number of employees. The sqm/living area tariff, from its inception in 1953, of 1.2 – 1.5 lei per sqm, did not cover administrative and maintenance expenditures. This tariff remained unchanged, while monthly incomes grew between 1953 and 1966 from 447 lei to almost 1,200 lei, and repair costs grew accordingly, due to salary increases for housing industry workers and increases in prices for materials.⁸⁶

Rent applied only to usable areas of a building, not auxiliary or common areas (stairs, hallways), and did not include bathrooms, kitchens, vestibules, and pantries. Nor did it vary by location of buildings within the city (such as in the center or periphery). Partly for this reason, losses were bigger each year by absolute volume. If in 1954 they totaled 192 million lei, in 1966 the amount had reached 537 million lei. The growth in the administrative apparatus also contributed to the financial losses. In Bucharest alone, the number of administrative employees doubled between 1960 and 1966, from 860 to 1700, respectively. This increase in administrative staff was partly due to there being many small government facilities, dispersed throughout the territory. The state was responsible for all expenses involving the housing stock, including the older ones, which were generally in a poor state. The institutions responsible for building repairs fell behind in making them, which led to further degradation. Most building repairs were expensive, and generally were not made a high priority, and it was also thought that the residents should handle most of them themselves, particularly inside their units.⁸⁷

Deficiencies were common in the maintenance of rented private property housing units, most often because of the owner's neglect and failure to make regular repairs. This was also partly because income from rents did not cover expenses for maintenance and repairs, tax payments, or insurance. Indeed, insurance and taxes sometimes could amount to as much as 60% of the rent.

Housing and Pacification

In 1969-1970, the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, based on Ceaușescu's 'indications', demanded an output of 240,000 housing units. This was up from 60,000 in 1968. In that year, Ceaușescu called for a doubling of housing units, with almost the same budget provisions. The proposal contained five essential points, referencing: (1) four categories of apartments (based on level of comfort); (2) interior equipment (plumbing and heating systems); (3) city planning specifications like land use, land density, and location of social and cultural facilities; (4) that the four categories were based on size (in number of rooms) and prices; and (5) the use of large prefabricated concrete panels.⁸⁸

Table 4. The Structure of the Total Number of Apartments⁸⁹

Category	Room Number	Number of Apartments	Percentage (%)
Ctg. I	1 to 4	20,000 apts.	approx. 16.7
Ctg. II	1 to 4	20,000 apts.	approx. 16.7
Ctg. III	1 to 4	25,000 apts.	approx. 20.8
Ctg. IV	1 to 4	30,000 apts.	approx. 25
Studios		25,000 apts.	approx. 20.8
TOTAL		120,000 apts.	100%

The Executive Committee of the Romanian Communist Party reviewed the proposal and the draft of the HCM, (Hotărîrea Consiliului de Ministrii – The Council of Ministers Decision) and commented on it. From the proposal, we learn that the CSCAS would design apartments introducing the four categories of layout design solutions differentiated by the number of rooms, equipment, finishes, and prices. The CSCAS developed the new design solutions in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. Local design institutes associated with the People's Councils from different counties (*județe*) and teams of architects associated with the Union of Architects contributed in proposing new apartment design solutions.⁹⁰

The CSCAS launched its first housing program (*Tematici de Principiu*), with local design institutions developing 150 proposals for apartment buildings, with different apartment layouts and site planning arrangements. The Central State Planning Committee (Comitetul de Stat al Planificării, CSP), together with the Ministerul Sănătății și Igienii [Ministry of Health -called the Hygiene Institute], approved certain proposed design solutions after making their own revisions. Because of additional economic constraints, and the minimization of built areas for both private and public use (apartments and social/cultural facilities, respectively), planners had to reduce infrastructure development in each urban area, and scale and ensure a reduction in the finishes used for the inside of apartments.

The CSCAS's proposals required making some exceptions in building codes and norms. The architects implemented these measures without reducing the functionality and safety of the proposed spaces.⁹¹ The Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party and the county's Party leaders⁹² reviewed the proposals and commented on the themes proposed in the above-mentioned five points. During the meetings, they would review the models of the architectural proposals and drawings attached to them. All present could address questions, ask for clarifications, and express their concerns.⁹³

The CSCAS proposal showed the apartment design solutions grouped in four categories (also expressed in the language of the decision, identified as Comfort Level I, II, III, and IV). Each category comprised housing units of two similar types, with one bedroom (a small unit of 10 to 11 sqm, with separate sinks and communal bathrooms) costing 12,000 lei, and a studio (called a *garsonieră* (bachelor's pad), which was larger than the one-bedroom unit and with a small bathroom and a kitchenette inside the single room. The other proposed apartments consisted of the

typical one-bedroom, two-bedroom, and three-bedroom housing units. These were called conventional apartments: they were units standardized and mass-produced to address the population's urgent needs, and situated mainly in urban areas.⁹⁴

All of the prices above were proposed based on current costs and legislation. When higher efficiency in industrialized construction through prefabrication was achieved, the price benchmark would be revised accordingly. For example, to stimulate the industrial production of prefabricated slabs, the Ministry of Construction (Ministerul Industriei de Construcții, MIC) issued a directive stipulating that raising the price of the prefabricated panels would require increasing the price of a one-bedroom apartment from 400 to 750 lei. This price increase did not even include urban infrastructure, which was addressed through supplemental costs and financial funds for housing. Additional funds would be provided in certain locations, based on various situations and justifications, as they were necessary for adjustments in the supply of raw materials needed in construction.⁹⁵

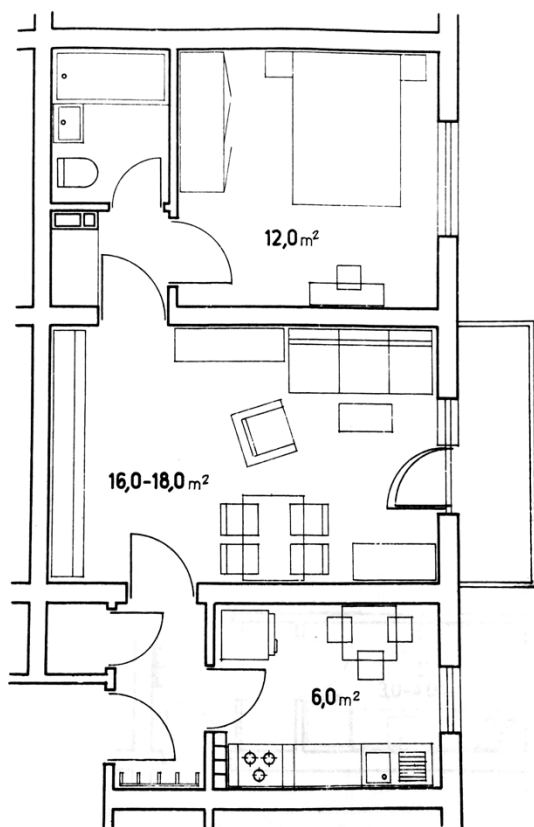


Fig. 1. Category I, one-bedroom apartment. The living area (*aria locuită*), which includes the kitchen, was to be between 24-36 sqm. The usable area (*aria utilă*) would be 52-55 sqm, and the built area (*aria construită*) 62-64 sqm.

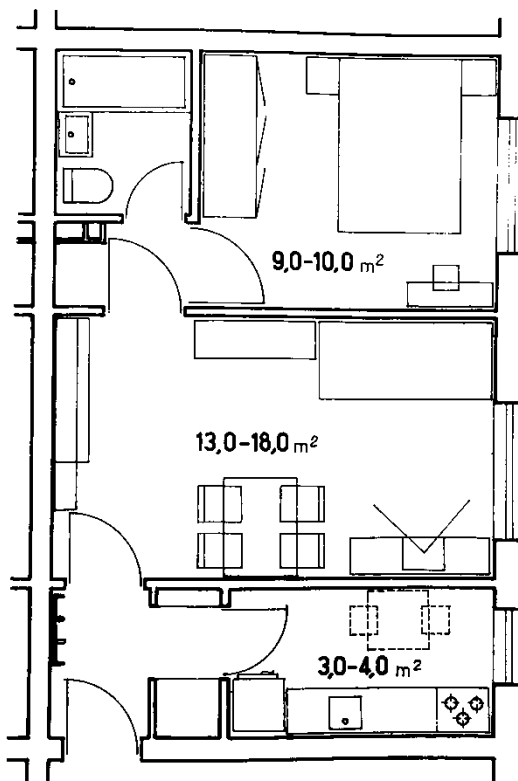


Fig. 2. Category II, one-bedroom apartment. The livable area, which includes the kitchen, was to be 27-30 sqm. The usable area would be 35-41 sqm, and the built area, 45-54 sqm.

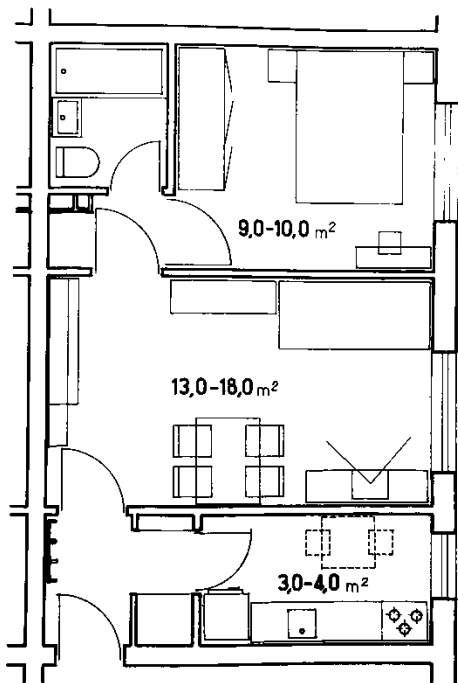


Fig. 3. Category III, one-bedroom apartment. The livable area, including a cooking area, was to be 24-26 sqm. The usable area would be 28-31 sqm, and the built area 36-42 sqm.

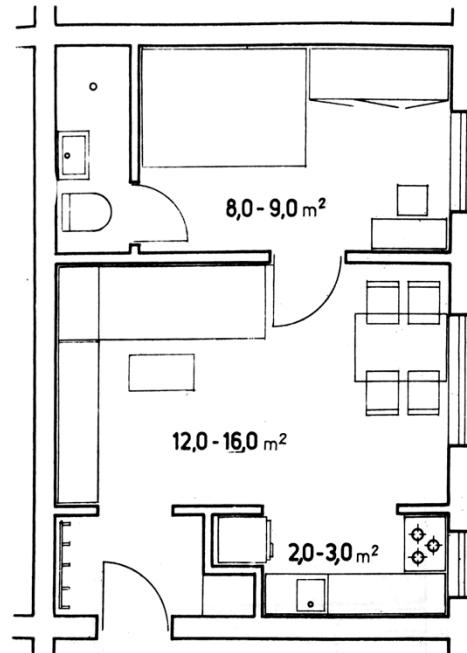


Fig. 4. Category III, one-bedroom apartment. The livable area, including a cooking area, was to be 22-24 sqm. The usable area would be 26-30 sqm, and the built area 32-39 sqm.

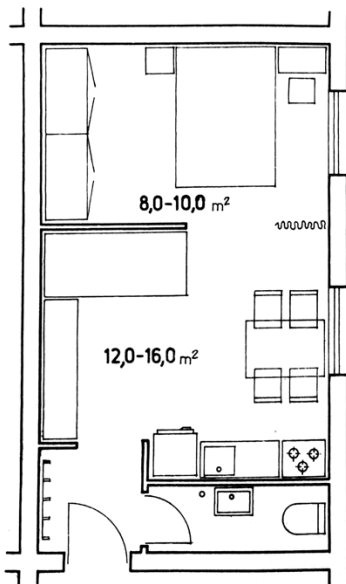


Fig. 5. Category IV, one-bedroom apartment.

Following Ceaușescu's requirements, the CSCAS proposed building 120,000 apartments each year. The proposal had a total cost of 3,900 million lei per year, close to the amount of money already planned for 1969 and 1970. At a meeting of the Central Committee, Ceaușescu stressed that it was essential to build mostly apartments in categories 3 and 4 both in the capital and throughout the country. At this one Executive Committee meeting, several trajectories crystalized for the housing program, at least up to 1970. Despite attempting to decentralize the political and economic system, the newly-formed counties had no decision-making power. Despite the program of 'diversification' of apartment types, housing policy emphasized building mainly the lowest cost and least-equipped apartments. It was precisely this 'diversification' that the Executive Committee used to promote thriftiness in resources when it came to the housing program. Lastly, a clear differentiation was made between personal property apartments, built for those who could afford to buy them. Ceaușescu underlined:

I think the comrades managed in a short period of time to create possibilities with the same amount of funds to reach 120,000 apartments and studios with considerable savings. We must realize that these projects can only be done by reducing the comfort, but this phase is absolutely necessary. Let us consider the prices here as the maximum threshold, knowing that we can only go lower for whatever much we need, maintaining the minimum comfort. Everybody should act and get involved to achieve the highest savings in materials and achieve those constructions in the shortest time-frame. Indeed, at the same time, taking all those measures should be analyzed to reduce labor output. If we realize the reduction in material consumption, we should, without doubt, figure out how to reduce the workload needed to build those spaces.⁹⁶

Ceaușescu maintained his intransigent position calling for drastic savings at every level possible, ensuring that everybody involved would do their best to contribute to saving resources as much as possible. He continued:

We are now in mid-year, a part of the constructions for 1969 already started, or a part of them are already finished. We must expedite those projects, not to start with the new workload, because by next year we should already start introducing the new type of small constructions, and move into building categories 2, 3, and 4 and more for category 3 and 4, taking in consideration that for category one we already have enough workload for years 1969 and 1970. We must orient our efforts in such a way that we can achieve 220,000 apartments in the current year. To emphasize the categories 2, 3, and 4 and make all the necessary calculations, with what has already been accomplished for 1969, in this way we must achieve at least 200,000 apartments up until the end of 1970, for both two years.⁹⁷

In the Romanian case, the priority given to providing shelter over aesthetics was not only at the core of the Communist leadership's approach to housing development; it was followed in the debates among different architects. Eventually, it became a cause of the very stigma carried by the architectural profession in Romania

up to the present time. The Architect Gheorghe Sebestyén discussed the contradictions and need for establishing priorities between the quantitative and qualitative aspects of architectural design. In his discussion of social comfort, which was in line with Gutman's claim, Sebestyén reveals the political establishment's priority for social comfort through housing provision driven by economic efficiency through standardization and prefabrication. The initial housing project of the post-war years, driven by the Soviet Union's costly and time-consuming socialist realism, national economic priorities, and underdeveloped construction technology, fell short of fulfilling the quantitative input necessary to answer the housing shortage, fueling the urgency of the 1968 housing policy.

Despite politically-driven efforts for even development throughout the Romanian territory, the uneven development in the interwar period was followed by the uneven development of urban areas, regardless of the highly-centralized planning efforts during the socialist period. The priority given to investment in the industry did not lead to the development of all urban centers. It happened because resources were already concentrated in some regions and cities, causing the rapid growth of medium-sized and large towns and relative stagnation in the development of small towns and villages.⁹⁸ Thus, the migration patterns towards industrial cities with a higher level of development resulted in spatially marginalized settlements at the periphery of large cities.⁹⁹ In the early post-WWII years, traditionally-established old industrial cities¹⁰⁰ were not equipped for the substantial demographic shifts that accompanied the socialist urbanization process.¹⁰¹ It is this very problem that the Communist leadership attempted to resolve with the administrative reorganization of the Romanian territory in 1968.

The economic developments in urban areas in the early socialist years, coupled with demographic transformations and autarkic political ambitions, activated the wheels of the technocratic machine that initiated the "golden age" of housing development throughout the 70s. However, the wheels were already squeaky at the get-go: the housing program started with a housing policy that curtailed the quality and diversity of the types of apartments. The Central Committee's 1968 decisions approved a very narrowly-diversified housing stock. According to this decision, the construction institutions produced one-bedroom apartments and studios at the lowest level of comfort (level 4). Hence, the hyper-standardization of the 50s and 60s, coupled with the political establishment's thirst for legitimation and pacification, led to a housing stock that would become the architects' nightmare for years to come.

CH. II Comfort Through Flexibility by Apartment Exchanges

“The housing comfort of the future inhabitants must be insured through spatial solutions in accord with a variety of ways of dwelling. Over time, the habitation needs have evolved in accord with the growing complexity of the housing estates.”¹⁰² With this statement, a group of architects from the Design Institute of Standardized Constructions (IPCT) professed their commitment to the inhabitants of the future while acknowledging the ever-growing complexity of the housing developments in socialist Romania.

In the first three decades of the socialist era and well into the 80s, public housing programs followed a historical trajectory along political lines and in accordance with the swift decisions of a planned economy. As seen in the first chapter, following the 1968 regional administrative re-distribution, political decisions and economic planning led to new urban housing buildings that would come to host the majority of people living in the nation's large and medium-sized cities. This urban development, and implicitly also the urban housing stock, extended well beyond the capital city of Bucharest and the most important secondary cities, comprising a new urban housing program that would eventually host the majority of the ever-swelling urban population.

In addition to the migratory patterns that led to the demographic transformations of the 50s and the 60s and the unprecedented growth in the urban population, in the 70s, the sharp increase in the birth rate and the building of many significantly larger residential units both acted as pull factors for the next migratory wave. The 1966 law against abortion generated a natality that was twice as strong in the cities compared with the rural areas. The increase in the population in urban areas also meant a rise in housing demand.¹⁰³ After the second wave of industrialization in the early 70s, the significant population movements were not only from rural to urban areas, but also between different urban centers. Following the demand for economic development, the state concentrated public investments in economically strategic urban nuclei, generating new urban complexities. The interdisciplinary partnerships emerged as a result of these new social changes.

This chapter centers on the intellectual partnership between sociology and architecture. I show how residents' different domestic practices, and the needs and aspirations revealed through their manner of living in the conventional state apartments, were recovered by sociological research and re-inscribed in the practice of architecture. Through applied sociology, the residents' spatial agency was re-embedded into architectural design, and this was only possible through the interdisciplinary character of the state architecture and construction institutions involved in the process of housing design and construction.

The typical one-bedroom apartment could easily become an uncomfortable space because of its size (usually no larger than 50 square meters), the construction system used in building it (prefabricated concrete panels), and the inability for residents to build extensions that would enable an appropriation of space beyond the given limits of their apartments. The same apartment type was object of the later vilification and ill repute of the socialist housing program, which fed later apartment exchanges.¹⁰⁴ In considering the changes in family structure through time, designers explored the possibilities and perils of designing standardized, mass-produced apartments. How did architects envision the relationship between the apartments to be designed and the families that would inhabit them? How understanding the phenomenon of apartment exchanges complicates the pursuit of space flexibility by design, a topic of great concern in the newly found humanism in the architecture profession of the late 70s? Ultimately, in what way and to what extent apartment exchanges helped achieve apartment adaptation to the urban inhabitant's needs and aspirations, implicitly to the space transformations inside and outside of the urban housing units?

The intellectual partnership in Romania between architects and sociologists bought together two disciplines historically at odds with each other. When considering the sociological data gathered post-occupancy, architects often would find the sociological findings 'rather obvious and banal. They would question or reject the findings of the social scientists in accordance with their ideas about objects of sociological analysis.'¹⁰⁵

In the previous chapter, I showed how the housing policy shift of 1968 sharply doubled the number of apartments for the years 1969 and 1970. With this move, the quantitative boost in standardized housing units, differentiated by size, type, and urban location (the center-periphery distribution), accompanied the development of urban housing showing qualitative difference in the interior comfort of the apartments. This spatial differentiation redefined the housing development strategy, whereby the city centers were host to amply-sized housing units, while units relatively low in comfort appeared in marginal areas, a strategy with a clear differential distribution between center and periphery. The number of small housing units (studios and one- bedroom apartments) were staggering. It is in fact this phenomenon, I contend, that most importantly drove residents' spatial interventions, which sociologists of the time called "participation."¹⁰⁶

The first chapter showed that the advancement of the socialist housing program was only possible through an *avant la lettre* 'privatization' of state-provided housing units and the advent of housing commercialization. By commercializing the housing units, the Communist leadership transformed the buildings from fixed assets into exchangeable goods, undermining the Marxist primacy of use-value over exchange value.

Accordingly, through the selling of the apartments to the population, the housing authority promoted qualitatively superior types of apartments, compared to the housing production of the early socialist period. Based on this housing policy decision, the housing units built in the 70s and 80s were more diverse in size, spatial and

functional relationships, and construction systems. Innovative construction systems allowed economic efficiency and shorter delivery time for people on the waiting lists. Hence, apartment commercialization not only meant accessing, and thus tapping into, peoples' savings, but also was a step forward in the much sought-after improvement of housing quality by way of its design.

The Case for Design Interdisciplinarity

I will begin by showing how the intersection between architecture and sociology came a long way from the US by way of France into Romanian technocratic channels. It is well-known that Western Europe and the US have a long tradition of interdisciplinary research in urban development and housing production. The concern for interdisciplinary research in architecture is widely known and experienced across the Atlantic and throughout the developed world. In particular, after the 1968 the technocratic production of Romanian architecture and sociology turned towards social theory of the French *dirigiste* school. The theoretical incorporation of the French school of sociology into technocratic design practices will further explain some of the interdisciplinary tendencies so common in the early 70s. The absorption of internationally-connected interdisciplinary practices integrated the Romanian architect's concern with social factors into a broader international context, while underlining the intellectual distance from Soviet knowledge production in the architecture and sociology of housing.

At the center of interdisciplinary design-related practice was the relationship between the planning ambitions of the Communist leadership and the theoretical underpinnings of knowledge production through what was called *futurology*, "the science of the future." For the purpose of this chapter's argument, I will explain the connection between design and empirical sociology, which was meant to guide the extensive program of both city and regional planning and national efforts in housing production. Moreover, on the basis of the recognized Communist principles, the economic planning was aimed not only at high productivity but also at the overall good of the society. Futurology with its prognosis became the scientific arm of the planning system, encompassing a supposedly rational understanding of how the society might evolve. According to the supposed possible visions, the Communist state had to address the society's future demands and needs.

The question of functionalist approaches to design in architecture goes deep, as in fact the relationship between architecture and its 'users' has always been at odds. What today are called 'social factors' in architecture emerged partly from the concerns of residents. The "conflation of social science with architecture" that took place around functionalism came to Europe from across the Atlantic with French architect Leon Festinger's 1940 analysis of the physical layout of dwelling entrances in a student housing project,¹⁰⁷ and sociologist Chombart de Lawe's study of the Parisian working

class absorbed into the mainstream under the *dirigisme* of France in the post-war years.

This chapter will attempt to unravel this relationship by looking at the development of the Research Laboratory of Sociological Studies as part of the IPCT (Design Institute of Standardized Constructions) in Bucharest, which was the principal site of interdisciplinary research in architecture and sociology. It was within this central institutional body that architects and sociologists worked together at the same table, with the declared ambition of improving the comfort of standardized state housing units and addressing the increased complexity of the urban housing projects.

Sociology, Architecture, and the Political

The discipline of sociology itself was at odds with Communist doctrine. Looking back at the stages that sociology passed through under socialism,¹⁰⁸ the sociologist Cătălin Zamfir writes: “Sociological knowledge, in its entire variety, was replaced with a philosophical paradigm as the sole and legitimate source of social knowledge, which, in itself, was a Soviet import: the philosophy of dialectical and historical materialism (Marxist-Leninism) competed with scientific socialism and socialist political economy, which expressed the Soviet conception. The Soviet model was taken over by the PCR [the Romanian Communist Party] as the sole basis for the construction of society. The new philosophical thought could have not possibly tolerated sociology.”¹⁰⁹

Indeed, from the beginnings of Communist rule in Romania in 1947, the Communist leadership attacked the field of sociology. The discipline had lost much of its elite to the war and the political repression that followed. Many of them had been killed, imprisoned, or forced into emigration.¹¹⁰ As a result, in the 50s, sociological publications fell to a historic low, while the aggressive politicization of sociological education led to the marginalization of the Bucharest School of Sociology. Fortunately, the political thaw of the 60s brought with it the discipline’s reemergence, and at least until the mid-70s, it enjoyed a relative autonomy from ideology and political dogmatism, under the umbrella of positivism. Two important sociologists were responsible for the reinstating of sociology: H. H. Stahl¹¹¹ and Miron Constantinescu.¹¹²

During the 60s and after, housing research became a major institutional outlet for sociologists to practice their intellectual calling. As revealed by the architect and author Miruna Stroe,¹¹³ several sociologists published short articles on housing-related issues in the pages of *Arhitectura*.¹¹⁴ The research partnership between the two fields had started much earlier, within the walls of the Research and Design Institute for City and Regional Planning, Housing, and Town Management [Institutul de cercetare și proiectare pentru sistematizare, locuințe și gospodărie comună - ISLGC]. Stroe refers to the ISLGC studies as the first post-occupancy sociological studies, with results that, more often than not, architects found surprising.¹¹⁵ “The investigation was a new approach, for sociology, which was recently rehabilitated as a discipline, and also for

the pluridisciplinary teams of architects and sociologists, which were of a different nature than the teams formed by architects and engineers.”¹¹⁶

Writing in 1987, Abraham attempted a summary of eleven years of knowledge production by people working at the Laboratory (sociologists, social psychologists, statisticians, psycho-economists, and others). According to him, the Laboratory produced 50 research studies (both theoretical and empirical) on the nation's housing program (including rural and urban systematization), involving more than 6000 inhabitants, from almost 5000 apartments. Specialists from the fields of education, hygiene, and medicine, as well as economists, architects, and construction engineers produced interdisciplinary research studies based on methods like observation sheets, surveys, interviews, time/budget forms, and content analysis. The multidisciplinary teams performed fieldwork research in Bucharest and many other Romanian cities, where the Laboratory had institutional satellites.¹¹⁷

The Laboratory's researchers proposed an extensive repertoire of research themes, which the IPCT leadership approved along with the ICCPDC. Most of the projects treated the relationship between the standardization and the performance of the housing units in post-occupancy.¹¹⁸ Some of the themes are worth mentioning: the adaptation of apartments to the dynamics of living aspirations;¹¹⁹ the adequate supply and demand for housing; and evaluations of living comfort within the housing unit (apartment). Other types of research undertaken with a sociological significance that had a direct impact on architectural housing design included prognoses for households with different types of families;¹²⁰ the functionality post-occupancy of different types of apartments;¹²¹ the adaptation of apartments to future family needs; the influence in the population of proposed design/architectural solutions;¹²² the evaluation of interior comfort as a social requirement for housing; rural-urban migration; and the adaptation of housing units to people's lifestyles.¹²³

From Users to Inhabitants

The architect's design ambitions relied on “social” motivations that included preventing inhabitants' supposedly superfluous efforts in post-occupancy to adapt their housing units to their own requirements. Sociological interpretation revealed that architects' motivations could also be “ideological,” predicated upon a generalized vision about different social groups. At the same time, modern architecture's social project of mass housing revealed the motivations of many architects as, according to some sociologists, “altruistic,” concerned to ensure the satisfaction of the inhabitant, which would also be at odds with a third possible motivation, the architect's “egotistical” claims for social recognition. Such motives might be supposed if the architects appeared to be imposing on the inhabitants a particular way of living, ironically on the grounds of concern for living comfort.

Housing may be considered as a certain type of use, a domestic use that complicates the relationship between the user and what he/she is using. Interest in users grew in socialist Romania, along with increased interest among architects in the social and economic factors in architecture. Thus, as Dorel Abraham put it, “housing

research, for example, was, in a curious way, initiated by the field of architecture and planning.”¹²⁴

The literature reveals several problems of representation. Architects, educated and trained through the mechanism of state-controlled institutions, were generally seen as mere technocrats with no creative power, reduced to following orders issued by an all-powerful state.¹²⁵ Some critics argued that architects understandably had little interest in the highly standardized mass production of state housing stock.¹²⁶ Often concerns specific to architecture were excluded, as socialist neighborhoods were considered essentially an urban design problem. These “proletarian” neighborhoods were sometimes considered little more than dormitories for the working class.¹²⁷ This study aims at providing a solid historical foundation for an analysis of the extensive socialist and modernist practices and the role of the architect as an active force in constructing a socialist modernity.

Planning for the Future and the Sociology of Housing

The planning system not only pursued high productivity, but also instilled a desire to understand the future direction of a society that would be healthy and wealthy at least in Communist terms. Futurology and prognosis became concerns of the scientific arm of the planning system, and these required a concrete understanding of how a socialist society evolves and how the state and party must address the future demands and requirements of the population, to be considered in terms of every aspect of its social development.

The Communist leadership launched this program of prognosis in the early 70s, establishing the State Commissions for Prognosis Studies. The Commissions were in charge of Romania’s social and economic development based on anticipating territorial and demographic development. This was assessed in terms of territorial organization, land use, urban development, and, most importantly, the reduction in the discrepancy between rural and urban areas of development. There were 28 Commissions, each responsible with different social and economic aspects of development.¹²⁸ The most important aspects of this study were related to sociology and city and regional planning and their points of intersection, in territorial prognosis. The state and party leadership, thorough prospective studies [*studii prospective*], would need to take into account the management of natural resources, and the workforce had to be located within specific urban or rural areas.¹²⁹

City and regional planning activity involving futurology, according to the architect Gheorghe Sebestyén, was a novel concern in early 1970s. This emergent science aimed to improve city and regional planning production by identifying the “future requirements of people, [in] this way contributing to the clarification and the future design program in city planning (...).¹³⁰ Sebestyén specifically refers to the disciplines invited to participate in the new knowledge production: sociology, demography, social psychology, and human ecology, with novel input from math and computer science.¹³¹ As the architectural and urban planning *project directives*

involved were designed to meet the future needs and wants of the society, a detailed understanding of those needs and wants needed to be in place.

The relevant decisions were both institutional and then political. The knowledge produced through institutions (such as statistical research) informed the political decision-making, although the *diktat* approach of Ceaușescu meant foregrounding its efficiency. Some of the information channels reached the top political echelon, but much of the critical knowledge needed for good decisions was strained and self-censored out of fear of political retaliation.

The institutional leadership in housing construction and design expected project directives to be flawless, and permitted highly-efficient construction and coordination with other industries (involving such things as the prefabrication of construction elements, furniture, the production of appliances, and heating systems), to organize the housing system for high quantitative output and productivity.

Urban planning in this context required an expansion of interdisciplinary knowledge production, inclusive of fields like sociology, urbanism, psychology, and others. The engine of this specific developmental approach was “the industrialization process accompanied by urbanization.” The emphasis on prognoses brought with it a rising concern about how different disciplines could inform decision-making and how “coordinated actions, exchanges of opinions, shared methodologies, and common indicators” were used for this purpose. The prognosis studies were concerned mainly with population and resources and their territorial distribution. When it comes to demographics, in order to understand the future, one must understand the past.¹³²

By the mid-80s, the issue of housing prognosis had become more intricate. The sociologist Dumitru Sandu writes in his article, “Proгноза locuirii urbane în țara noastră” [Urban Housing Prognosis in Our Country], that a balanced development that would achieve an equilibrium between the number of family households and the amount of housing supply was long overdue. In describing such balanced development, the author refers specifically to housing density issues and co-housing by way of considering housing exchanges and ultimately the development of different methodologies in predicting population shifts prognosis and housing needs. Sandu looks specifically at the evolution of housing projects within a given territory. Sandu defines housing “as the totality of activities by which the population uses some conditions (means) to satisfy requirements for restoring their work capacities directly and developing their personality and social relations in a given territory.”¹³³

With this definition, Sandu cleaves the idea of housing into three “housing requirements”: recovery from work, development of personality, and development of social relationships. Housing, he reveals, was “complementary” to “economic production,” and was “a domain in which one must establish the built environment, goods and services needed, as much as the means for production of those goods and services.” The interdisciplinary approach to housing was one that could take account the myriad of activities that are involved in living within a community. Sandu argues for a clear distinction between the ecological understanding of the people within a built environment and the notion of a “local community,” in which an active role is

played by the relationships between the residents. It is important to understand the social relations within the built environment, and the latter's sociological underpinnings, including, ultimately, the directive mechanisms of the command economy.¹³⁴

There were four types of intervention mechanisms that could bring about the needed level of optimization in the relationship between the characteristics of the built environment [*caracteristicile cadrului construit*] and the housing demand [*cerințele de locuire*]. The first type concerned the directive level: how many new housing units were necessary, how many of the old ones must be renovated and modernized, where (in the given territory) were they located, and finally the tasks of perfecting and renewing housing policy in terms of design features. The second type of action must happen at the design level. Here it is the flexibility, diversity, and functionality to be achieved by using and implementing information received directly from users. The third type of intervention was at the level of the juridical and social mechanisms of housing procurement and distribution: allocation of state housing stock, purchase of personal property apartments, and housing exchanges. Finally, there were the post-occupancy matters of improving the management of housing stock, repairs, and renovations, modernization inside the housing unit, and, ultimately, furnishing and equipping the housing unit.¹³⁵

The signs of a housing unit's being unsuitable for users' requirements and the adaptations by users in response to constraints imposed by the architectural and design of housing units can be "read" in terms of the health of inhabitants, their ability to do their jobs, family, school and social integration, and their perceptions of the quality of their housing and levels of the subjective states of satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Sandu believed that these various sociological concerns underscored the interdisciplinary nature of housing theory, which, he argues, "must include knowledge from city planning, architecture, ecology, and environmental hygiene." At the regional level, it was important to consider "the qualitative requirements of the housing conditions at the beginning of the prognosis period and the available resources for the given period, aiming for congruence between dwelling conditions, of residential groups' requirements, or the adaptation of the built development and the requirements of the users."¹³⁶

In 1976, the Urban Sociology Laboratory migrated to The Design Institute of Standardized Construction (*Institutul de Proiectare Constructii Tip*, IPCT), where it was "rebranded" under the name "Laboratory of Sociological Studies and Research," which was organized in the same way as the previous institution. In part for the sake of much-needed empirical research in housing, and in part as a reflection of the political visibility of the previous institution, the Laboratory was reinstated within the IPCT to produce scientific data (mainly through feedback from residents) to aid in the adaptation of standardized housing projects (the directive projects), including standardized industrial buildings along with socio-cultural facilities, to the needs and aspirations of the population inhabiting these buildings. The contributions to knowledge on the quality of the living conditions, labor force migration, social

housing forecasting of needs, and various other phenomena, were produced and partially published by sociologists Dorel Abraham, Mihai Macavescu, and others.¹³⁷

In socialist Romania, the conflation of sociology with architecture happened within the walls of the state Design Institute of Standardized Constructions (IPCT), in the Research Laboratory of Sociological Studies formed in 1976.¹³⁸ The Laboratory soon after its inception became the cradle of outstanding interdisciplinary research, which not only brought together the work of sociologists and architects, but also produced studies of collaborative research with construction engineers, economists, psychologists, social psychologists, physicians, and many others.¹³⁹

In 1987, the architect Mihail Caffé edited and published the book *Locuința contemporană: Probleme și puncte de vedere* (The Contemporary Dwelling: Problems and Perspectives),¹⁴⁰ the only theoretical and (to some degree) historical work focused on issues of dwelling (at the scale of the housing unit, not the municipal level!) in the 40 years of socialism in Romania.¹⁴¹ In his contribution to this book, the sociologist Dorel Abraham, then the head of the sociological Laboratory, summarized 11 years of work that had come out of this institutional arm. According to Abraham, the Laboratory produced 50 research works (both theoretical and empirical) on the theme of housing (rural and urban). The findings reflect studies of more than 6000 inhabitants (from almost 5000 apartments), and include the accounts of specialists from different educational and research institutions, including construction design.¹⁴²

The themes that stand out concern the adaptation of apartments to the dynamics and aspirations of living,¹⁴³ the adequate supply and demand for housing, and the evaluation of living comfort through housing functionality. To show the extent of the Laboratory's knowledge production, Abraham described various types of research with sociological significance that had a significant impact over architectural housing design. These included research on the prognosis for the future of different types of family households and their behavior,¹⁴⁴ on functionality post-occupancy¹⁴⁵ in different apartments, the adaptation of apartments to future family needs, the influence on the population of proposed architectural and design solutions, and, most importantly, the evaluation of interior comfort as among the social requirements of housing. The sociological research tried to combine the quantitative and qualitative evaluation of housing demand and supply, tying in the changes in family structure. In doing so, the sociological research revealed that in order to determine the structure of the required housing stock by type of apartments in cities and towns, calculations were required in addition to indicators by gender, changes in household membership (such as through the birth or departure of children), and by the additional housing stock made available through housing exchanges.¹⁴⁶ The research went beyond the issues of urban housing, extending to research regarding rural-urban migration and the adaptation of housing units to people's transitional lifestyles.¹⁴⁷

The declared purpose of this type of research was to reduce the gap between the housing supply and its demand with the purpose of "grounding into society the dynamics of housing requirements." With respect to interior and exterior housing comfort, Abraham mentioned research on the evaluation of comfort from the point of view of the social requirements of housing in public space, specifically, regarding

social and cultural facilities. Referring to the process of migration, Abraham referenced research regarding the capacity of the housing unit, the standardized apartment, to adapt to people's lifestyles in the transition from rural to urban.¹⁴⁸

The themes that particularly relate to design concerned the anatomy, psychology, and behavioral characteristics of the persons within a given space that generated requirements addressed through design. The sociological research also included research on social integration and group relations that had a noteworthy impact on the spaces being designed, research on the environment's impact on individuals' physical and mental health (including noise, aesthetics, and agglomeration),¹⁴⁹ research on social values, and the promotion of certain cultural values that added to the signification of housing from an anthropological, sociological, or psychological point of view, and which acted upon architectural design.¹⁵⁰

This new turn towards the inside of apartments was coupled with a new industrial wave in early 1970. Ceaușescu informed his audience of the new inward turn thus: "We are saying that the architect's vision shouldn't stop at the exterior walls of the block of flats."¹⁵¹ It was not only the interior of the housing units that received new interest; it was also the public facilities. From that point on, each housing ensemble would have its social and cultural center. The modern socialist times must reveal a democratic architecture transposed in the architect's participation as a citizen into a role in the leadership of the society overall. Besides, any citizen must be able to participate in the objectives that architecture was invited to formulate. Here the notion of "social conscience" was used to underline the democratic nature of this participation. In Ceaușescu's terms, the profession's political nature was tied in with "the problem of the ideological activity containing all aspects of social life."¹⁵² What is more important to underline here is the anthropocentric nature of the architectural practice, its humanism, or what propagandistically was defined as the man at the center of all concerns for the modern socialist leadership.

What was even more important in achieving the ultimate comfort aimed at, was that each family member would have their own room (so the number of rooms in an apartment should match the number of persons in the family). This was, in fact, the ultimate outcome envisioned of a proper contemporary housing design in Communist thought. To achieve the social comfort wherein all families would have the apartment appropriate to them, it was necessary to build as many units as possible, and in the fastest way possible. To what degree this was accomplished up to 1989 remains to be seen. The issue of inhabitants sleeping in the apartment's kitchen and the issue of the living room used as a sleeping room during the night remained a thorny one up until the end of the socialist period. These two issues were seen as opposed to pre-modern behaviors that were unworthy of the new urban lifestyle.¹⁵³

We learn from Lupescu that in 1969 the State Committee for Administration and Local Economy [Comitetul de Stat pentru Administrația și Economia Locală]¹⁵⁴ developed a study of the industrialization of housing construction and socio-cultural facilities for the period of 1970-75. In this study, the engineer reminds us that the

newly-formed institution provided and demanded high productivity through the industrialization of construction.¹⁵⁵

Bureaucratic Appropriation and the Politics of Housing Occupancy

The political establishment actively pursued the path towards a socialist consumption society. It did this by turning towards the interior quality of the housing stock, coupled with the urban development ambitions for political representation and legitimation. At the same time, the much-professed technological advancement reached a point where prefabrication and the industrialization of construction meant that one apartment building (typically four-stories high, with 44 apartments and a large prefabricated panels system) would be fully completed in a month. The accelerated housing production reduced the waiting list to two months of wait time. The Communist establishment was able to declare the official end of the housing crisis by 1975. After long years of architects' pleading for diversity in apartment types and floor plan layouts, little had been accomplished in this direction. The nine types of apartment diversified by the number of rooms accomplished through housing policy in 1966 were drastically curtailed to four types in 1968. Diversity by room number was not nearly enough; spatial flexibility was called on to address the changes in the family structure of the inhabitants living in state built apartments. Diversity and flexibility became the new desiderata for a *habitat humain*.

The notion of a *habitat humain*, another French import, entered the Romanian architectural discourse in the early 70s by way of the International Union of Architects Colloquium [Uniunea Internațională a Arhitecților - U.I.A.). A seminar on Humane Habitation took place on October 28, 1971, centered on an international dialogue between different specialists in diverse fields of knowledge from different countries discussing the state of the housing stock and the notion of habitat throughout the world. This was a moment when the participants appealed to the political role of the architect, while architecture's democratic dimension was called into question. The contribution of pluridisciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge production complicated the already complex process of urbanization and its relationship with the rural and the traditional, as revealed by the seminar's themes. What it managed to accomplish, however, was to put the 'user' at the forefront of the interdisciplinary preoccupation with planning for the people, and the 'real' relationship between humanity and the built environment.¹⁵⁶

The Politics of Housing Occupancy

In the process of housing distribution, the waiting list was the way that demand was expressed, as individuals requested state-built apartments regardless of their tenure. In this part of the chapter, I argue that residents transformed the waiting list

into a tool for obtaining the apartment of their choice. People chose apartments according to different personal criteria: location at the center or periphery, proximity to the workplace, changes in family structure, location by story level, sun exposure, and other considerations, which I will discuss later in the chapter. The system allowed for the eligible contract owner to refuse the apartment provided up to three times. However, one could add him/herself back on the waiting list an unlimited number of times, even if one were already living in an apartment (in the case of the rental system). One could not own or rent two or more apartments at the same time; thus, when a new one was granted the previous one had to be released within 30 days.

The housing unit exchanges were perhaps the most interesting social phenomenon to surface in the late 60s. This social and spatial phenomenon brought into question the very relevance of the concern for housing flexibility by design. The housing exchange phenomenon proved that the system was capable of optimization when it came to ways of adapting to the changes in inhabitants' housing needs and aspirations. This phenomenon involved questioning what lay at the very core of architectural design innovation: spatial flexibility. Sociological research revealed that the housing exchanges counterbalanced the architects' concern for flexibility by design. It seems that the system allowed for the much-needed adaptation of the rigid standardized housing units. Sociological data, however, proved that spatial flexibility remained a desirable feature of apartment layouts, as residents' aspirations today become tomorrow's needs. Overall, this chapter attempts to delineate and understand the connection between the residents' reactions to standardization and the cityscape transformation of the late socialist period. The study reveals a housing evolution involving not only the technocratic interventionist Communist state, but also bridging interdisciplinary knowledge production and people's ways of everyday living.

The chapter engages an inquiry that should reveal the relationship between comfort by design and comfort obtained through everyday practices of appropriation. These were actions, that, I would contend, situated the study overall in terms of the relational interconnection between the three major characters of this story: the state, the architects, and the users. What tied them together and what was the extent of their possibilities and limitations in a given system. If the understandings of housing comfort were different in accordance with subjective and objective understandings of several different culturally-situated ways of life, what can we comprehend about how residents would define their space of comfort compared with the architect's understandings of what types of space bring comfort for an unknown category of direct beneficiaries? What then did comfort mean for architects, and what did it mean for them when conceptualizing new forms of achieving comfort through design?

More often than not in the early years of the socialist era, the architect's idea of comfort was associated with what may be called the bourgeois idea of comfort. The latter was represented by a single-family house on a private lot. The Communist ambitions for housing identified the notion of comfort with specific numerical indicators often used to justify the social, economic, and technical trajectory of the socialist housing program. Still, the notion of comfort, to underline its accession to a 'superior' way of living, was more often than not a propagandistic expression of the

traditional/modern dichotomy. An apartment with all of the necessary equipment, including a bath and kitchen, was often contrasted to a rural house with an outhouse instead of a fully functioning and well-equipped interior bathroom.

As seen in the previous chapters, in the early years of socialism, the policymakers, planners, and architects were very much concerned with the notion of social comfort: a quantitative expression which stated the need for all families (and single persons) to access a housing unit. The political ethos of early socialism instilled the conviction that only after everybody was housed could there be a concern with improved housing conditions in terms of finishes (interior and exterior) and fully-equipped housing units, larger apartment layouts, and better public services, among other things. Although the Communists looked towards a “luminous” future, the financial austerity became harsher as the years passed, until the end of the 80s. By the mid-80s, the population became burdened with strict food rations and energy savings, resulted in frequently-occurring “blackouts,” siphoned off good-quality commercial goods while the internal market had to do with leftovers from exports and inferior quality goods. Despite the economic hardship, the housing program was never stopped.

As will be seen, the socialist housing project did evolve, even though this evolution resulted in superior housing quality only in specific areas, considered as prestige or privileged representationally. Here I am referring primarily to the newly-emerging urban centralities and civic centers specific to the late socialist urban environment. I contend here that despite all of the severe restrictions and political dogmatism, the system was inclusive of the actions and reactions from below.

The waiting list was part of the mechanisms of housing distribution. Housing Law 10/1968, regarding the administration of the state housing stock and the regulation of the relationship between the owner and the tenant, established that the state housing units were under the administration of the state companies and would be distributed to the population under the regulations approved by the Central Committee of the People’s Councils. Access to different housing units was conditioned by people’s existing housing situation, marital status, length of working experience within the company that provided the apartment, and contribution to production. Priority was given to qualified workers, specialists in certain fields, and families with many children. For housing units distributed outside of the centralized investments funds, which were given to ministries and organizations under their direct supervision, and organizations that had been selected for more important housing developments (*obiective mai speciale*), these were allocated only to employees, who were nominated by the organization that benefited from those housing units. The rental agreement was considered an accessory to the working contract.¹⁵⁷

Housing Exchanges for Adaptability

The housing exchanges reflected a quantitative analysis of supply and demand and their relationship. The sociological research revealed this aspect through evaluations of the social quality of the housing unit. This quality ties into what in the early years of the socialist era was understood as social comfort, to which was added

the dimension of density, such that dwellings could be over or under-dense. The number of people per room represented the housing density, a function of the number of family members inhabiting one apartment and the cyclical changes in the family size through time. Among other things (discussed below), the discrepancy between supply and demand and the inability to adapt the standardized apartments to changes in family structure were the primary causes behind the phenomenon of housing exchanges. In mid 80s almost three out of four units were exchanged or in the process of being exchanged. However, even if all of the desired housing exchanges had occurred, the over-density would only have decreased by around 10%.¹⁵⁸

By 1985, sociologists were declaring a substantial quantitative improvement in the nation's housing stock. It became clear around this time from the research in housing design and construction that there was a newly-emergent concern for modernization of the existing housing stock, in spite of the fact that over-density remained a yet unresolved problem. The "modernization" approach, understood largely as calling for the renewal of the housing stock, involved a reconsideration of the housing exchange model, as a means of social efficiency rather than in terms of qualitative measures. In fact, the housing exchange phenomenon had become a subject for sociological research much earlier, as the sociologist Stahl revealed in the discussions at the UA Conference in 1971.

Housing stock should, as Stahl suggested, account for different stages or levels at which members of the newly-formed urban population could adjust to a new spatial context. They could do so, as the research revealed, by exchanging their housing units, at least if they did so during the early years of transformation from rural to urban dwellers. The housing exchange phenomenon was described as a "spontaneous movement," in which people displaced themselves "from one neighborhood to another, from one apartment building to another, and from one floor to another." The phenomenon became a signal of the new urban populations' level of accommodation to the urban environment, and of "psychological mutations reflected in their new life style, especially for families with children born into urban areas, who had reached adult age."¹⁵⁹

With the intent, recognized in much of the sociological research,¹⁶⁰ of facilitating housing exchanges in the interest of social efficiency, the underlying assumption was that the housing exchanges could solve most housing problems. These were seen as usually involving faulty housing allocation, along with changes in family structure unaccounted for by housing design and construction. The problem could be seen as solved only when housing exchanges had become rare.

Understanding the housing occupancy mechanisms in the late socialist period adds to our existing understandings of socialist housing in Romania. It does so by revealing a rather peculiar feature of the system's *modus operandi*. In the sociological literature, the housing exchange reflects the analysis of the quantitative characteristics of the relationship between supply and demand. Empirical sociological studies of housing revealed these mechanisms through evaluation of the "social quality" of the

housing units. This quality had been understood, since the early years of the socialist era, as consisting of social comfort.

The flexibility question hovered above and beyond the design of mass-produced apartments. This was true even after several years of sustained efforts in housing production of the four types of apartments (as discussed in the first chapter), with the one-bedroom unit considered the most economically efficient unit. However, the lock-in of the mass-produced housing unit was brought into question by the humanistic turn towards spatial flexibility. Considering this, what could be done with what had already been built? It seems that the residents living in the state apartments found a solution: exchanging apartments among themselves, according to criteria that went beyond size, density, and spatial flexibility by design. These included the location of the apartment building within the city, the location of apartment by story level, its orientation in relation to sunlight, and various functional arrangements. Among architects, the concern for flexibility was predicated on the assumption that spatial flexibility would humanize the “machine of living.” With the much-desired comfort, it would bring humanism back into modern living, perhaps reclaiming the lost paradise of a true sense of home.

In light of the revelations in sociological research about the housing exchange phenomena in the early 70s, the quest for spatial flexibility in design was often questioned as possibly superfluous. The sociologist Marilena Luca, one of the researchers working at the Research Laboratory of Sociological Studies, asked: should resources be allocated towards housing design and architects’ efforts to find solutions offering more spatial and functional flexibility in apartments, or should the resources be directed towards state mechanisms for housing exchanges? More importantly, the housing exchange phenomenon brought into question the validity of homeownership altogether, since the exchange was easiest to achieve when units were rented rather than owned through the personal property provision. At the same time, the temporary character of rental housing could be a deterrent factor in seeing the apartment as one’s home.

In an effort to understand the social implications of the housing question, in the mid-60s several architects argued for an understanding of the social elements that underlay many of the design decisions in the makings of the housing program, which revealed, they thought, a disconnect between the architects and the people for whom the housing was intended. The sociological assumptions were related to gendered employment relations and family structure. They concluded that, given the way in which the typical modern family develops and changes, the average number of family members was three, with an average of 11 square meters per person. This conclusion may lie at the heart of the choice of the one-bedroom apartment as the solution to the housing shortage at the time, although a direct causal relationship is hard to establish, given the hierarchical network of decision-makers at the time.

Sociologists showed that the housing exchanges reflected the way in which housing demand and supply were related. In a planned economy, where the political leadership dictated prices, supply and demand were independent of the exchange value of housing units. The demand for housing was considered primary, and housing supply

had to be directed to addressing it. Sociologists found that the demand for housing was heavily shaped by the desire of many people for exchanges.

By the mid-80s in Bucharest, of apartment exchanges was staggering. The phenomenon was present in other cities, but to a lesser extent.¹⁶¹ Sociological studies showed that spatial flexibility in housing design was a predominant theme in the architectural discourse, particularly in the pages of *Arhitectura*.¹⁶² The economic austerity that started in 1978, followed by the energy crisis of the 80s, instilled a sense of emergency, to which people reacted promptly. This abrupt change in state policy after 1978 influenced how people would transform the space they inhabited.¹⁶³ Sandu sees this moment as a “provocation to diversity and the culture of housing.”¹⁶⁴

It was above all to the rental mobility question that the housing exchanges seemed to provide an answer. As the sociologist Marilena Lunca pointed out, the apartment exchanges challenged the very core of the flexibility question: why design adaptable apartments when the occupancy mechanisms made it so easy for people to exchange their locations according to their own criteria of comfort or discomfort. When a family increased its members, an ad would be posted in the newspaper *România Liberă*, looking for some other family in need of, say, a post-divorce housing situation or a couple of retirees in need for downsizing their living accommodations for a more affordable housing unit.

Sociologists at the Research Laboratory of Sociological Study under the leadership of Dumitru Sandu finalized the first extensive research on housing exchanges in 1985. The study was mainly concerned with the apartments built following the project directives. The post-occupancy research revealed some of the characteristics of the housing units through the experience of residents taking into consideration the advantages and the disadvantages of collective living. It also considered the flaws new residents found in standardized housing units. Studies also analyzed different categories of incentives for housing exchange at the moment when an occupied housing unit ceased to accommodate in a satisfactory manner the family or individuals inhabiting it. What were the main motivations for the housing exchanges? What did they reveal about housing design, and what were the improvements proposed through sociological research? According to Lunca, the declared purpose of these studies was system optimization and improvement of its *modus operandi*, resulting ultimately in adjustments in the system’s objectives.¹⁶⁵

Future inhabitants of apartments were considered “the potential users” [*utilizatori potențiali*], meaning “persons or social groups that manifest the intention of obtaining/occupying a housing unit, different from the one they already inhabit, or a person who is expected to manifest in the future this intention/demand.” “Potential users” were divided by family type, and changes in family structure over time were among the many reasons for housing exchanges. At the same time, sociological researchers found that apartment exchanges based on size criteria did not entirely satisfy the need for flexibility, which remained a concern architecturally throughout the socialist era.

Residents' preferences, as measured through supply and demand (regardless of allocation or exchange), tended to consider, in this order: (1) the spatial planning and functional arrangements within a housing unit (usually apartments), in terms of comfort type (with increased demand for *comfort 1* and *comfort 2*); (3) the location of the apartment by story level; (4) functional relationships (*comandare* vs. *decomandare*); and (5) for specific story levels, usually 2, 3, or 4.¹⁶⁶

The same sociological report revealed some of the social and demographic characteristics of the groups under study that were engaged in the housing allocation process, compared to those engaged in the activity of exchanging apartments. As can be seen from Table 3 below, the number of people demanding apartments from state housing stock for the purpose of renting was higher than the number of people exchanging apartments; there was also a difference in the size of the apartments involved in exchanges. The apartments for exchange were generally larger than the apartments allocated (as seen in Table 4 below). Also, the apartments where an exchange had taken place were on average larger (2.5 rooms per apartment) than those where an exchange remained incomplete (averaging 2.15 rooms per apartment).¹⁶⁷

According to the sociological report *Project 7041*, the allocation and exchange mechanisms had the following features: (1) the housing administration had to insure that apartments would accommodate families according to their size (number of family members); (2) there was a reduction in density with both exchanges and, especially, allocation. In spite of some improvements in the housing conditions through allocation and exchange mechanisms, the sociologists identified several "malfunctions" in the system. First and foremost, they pointed to a lack of coordination between the apartments involved in exchanges and the finalizing of them: only a small number of exchanges were finalized compared to the number of exchanges initiated. The research also shows that there was a '*plateau*' (standstill) in density adjustments through housing allocation mechanisms. Though there was some reduction in density, in most cases, the density before and after allocation or exchange remained the same.¹⁶⁸

The large number of singles, unmarried couples, students, and widows or widowers may explain the high demand for studios.¹⁶⁹ The sociologists had argued that the architects should design studios so that their size, construction system, and technical equipment would accommodate a wide variety of households, and at the same time address the imbalance between the supply and demand of studios available for rent.¹⁷⁰ In addition, researchers proposed a solution whereby the state would allow the construction of additional apartments for exchange purposes, proposing that 3-5% out of the total existing housing stock be set aside for this.¹⁷¹

The research of Sandu and his colleagues pointed to several questions concerning the housing exchange process. What did the criteria reveal for architectural housing design? The ability of families to relocate within the same city from one neighborhood to the other for work purposes was one of the main reasons for exchanges,¹⁷² though this could have little impact on housing design, which could not easily take into consideration likely proximity to the residents' workplace. From its inception, urban planning decisions for the socialist housing program considered locating housing supply near main large factories as a priority, but there was no way of

predicting for certain where people would work . Most housing exchanges were driven not by the need for proximity to factories, but by residents changing their work place from one area of the city to another. Another important category of reasons for exchange was the desire to be near center rather than at the periphery of the same city.¹⁷³

At this point in time, both the research on housing design and construction and sociological studies regarding housing issues revealed an increased concern with modernization of existing housing stock. The amount of housing construction during the seventies created a perfect ground for sociological research. The sociological research on housing seemed increasingly concerned with knowing and manipulating existing housing conditions, and finding ways of improving the quality of the existing housing fund. The phenomenon of housing exchanges entered the field of sociological interest through investigations of existing housing conditions and needs.

The sociologists saw the housing exchange phenomenon as involving a confluence between the configurations of dwellings, people's needs and institutional mechanisms. The institutional mechanisms concerned the way this process was organized, and the way a social sector could be said to function both as an economic institution and a service sector. The question was raised whether all of the housing units were subject to the housing distribution, or if only the state housing stock were concerned. In fact, the housing law was vague in delineating the rights and obligations of those who engage in exchanges.

Art. 23 of Law no. 10/1968 gave people the right to housing exchanges "with undeniable generality"; it referred to those exchanging as "main inhabitants" [*locatari principali*], without making any distinctions among them. When it came to personal property tenure, the law allowed exchanges in cases where the owner was not using the housing unit to be exchanged. It held that "the exchange constitutes an accessory right to the right to use [*dreptul de folosinta*] born out of the process of housing allocation" (p. 29). What we can conclude from this is that the legislative delimitations for housing exchanges were mainly expressed along general lines which added more questions to be answered. In fact, the authors of the legislation were trying to paste together legal clarifications from the Civil Code and judicial declarations relating to exceptions in how housing exchanges are performed, when no clear laws to regulate those procedures were in place.

The authors then concluded that units could be exchanged even when the exchange involved mixed-tenure housing units (that is, rentals of personal property apartments). Personal property apartments could always be exchanged if they were subject to housing allocation. The main contract holders could effectuate exchanges with housing units that belonged to other categories of housing stock (such as state or personal property). In those cases where the rental contract was an accessory of the work contract, the exchange process was only permitted between employees of the same state organization. Housing policy and new juridical clarifications further regulated and clarified the process of housing exchanges. This study focuses on the voluntary housing exchanges.¹⁷⁴

The regulation of housing exchanges was further developed and delineated by Law no. 5/1973 regarding the management and administration of the state housing stock and the regulation of relations between owners and tenants. At this moment in time, the number of apartments exceeded the plan for the period 1971-1975 by 190,000 apartments. By the end of the 70's, the number of apartments reached over 1 million, compared with 513,000 built under the previous Five-Year Plan. There were also between 250–300,000 apartments that were proposed based on what was known of potential resident funds.¹⁷⁵

People had various subjective and objective reasons for exchanging housing units. Their reasons could be related to the need for proximity to their workplace, or to family members, or to modifications in family structure, changes in workplace, or a need to care for an older family member. In 1974, the Supreme Court established that: “The cause for housing unit exchanges between main rent contract holders of the same city (locality) is related to the fact that each co-exchanger’s [*coschimbasî*] aim is to obtain a housing unit more adequate to their needs.”¹⁷⁶ Compared with the previous housing exchange policy, Law no. 5/1973 simplified the exchange procedure, eliminating the tedious procedure of first approving the exchange and then issuing the requisite housing distribution order. Also, the new policy prohibited housing speculation and fictitious exchanges.

The legal regulations of this act did not allow for a “juridical qualification.”¹⁷⁷ Law no. 5/1973 provided that the exchange process would be realized based on an agreement with the main inhabitant (the contract holder), and with the approval of the state institutions in charge of administrating and renting the housing units to be exchanged.” It was based on a civil convention involving an exchange and the administrative act of the state institutions managing the housing units to be exchanged.¹⁷⁸ The law stipulated that this exchange convention was a willful accord between two or more people with the features that both parties consent, possess the capacity to engage in a contract, and there is a determined object and a licit cause. Lupulescu clarifies that the cases of exchanges are inclusive of personal property apartments. The main conditions for the exchange were that: (a) the housing units must be situated in urban areas; (b) the owner or his/her family were not to inhabit the unit; (c) the owner, according to the law, was not to express the intention to move into the housing unit to be exchanged.¹⁷⁹

Law no. 5/1973 simplified the juridical measures involved in renting state housing stock. It eliminated some of the difficulties in housing distribution, and specified that “the housing can be occupied after the completion of the rental contract.” In fact, Lupulescu maintains, the procedures for housing exchanges were never really regulated. First, in order for the exchange to be possible, there was a need for the socialist state institutions to approve the housing exchanges. The Plenum of the Supreme Court no. 5/1975 decision regarding the exchanges was fundamental in regulating the procedures involved in the exchange. In addition to the Supreme Court’s decisions, we also have Decision no. 1/1971 of the Committee for the Problems of the People’s Councils, which approved the instructions through which were established the forms necessary for the application process in requesting housing exchanges.¹⁸⁰

Together with the actual paperwork for the application process, the co-exchangers had to bring other documents, which might show their motives for the exchange, such as birth certificates, marriage certificates, divorce documents, or proof of address. The standard form showed the identity of the contract holder (the main tenant), the number of family members, the address, details regarding their housing unit, the number of rooms, and other relevant details. On the form the co-exchangers had to show if the housing unit was accessory to a work contract or if there were any previous legal litigation still in process.¹⁸¹ Subsequently to that, the facts were confirmed, the paperwork was completed, the state institutions could approve the exchange and the process would be finalized. The institutions in charge of the approval would verify at the location both of the housing units to be exchanged in order to confirm the reality of what was presented in the documents submitted by the co-exchangers.

The number of cases of housing exchange in the 1980s in Bucharest was staggering. The phenomenon was present in other Romanian cities as well, albeit on a smaller scale. At the time, considering the interest of people in exchanging apartments, the question of spatial flexibility by design became an important one: why would architects even concern themselves with spatial flexibility if residents had already found a way to adapt to their changing household needs and aspirations by merely exchanging units among themselves? When a family grew, they would post an ad in the newspaper *România Liberă*, hopefully reaching some other family, maybe two retirees wanting to downsize, who would be willing to exchange their large apartment for a smaller one.¹⁸²

The social and behavioral studies conducted were conducive to system optimization, improving its operations and adjusting its objectives.¹⁸³ The future inhabitants were defined as *potential users [utilizatori potențiali]*, more specifically as “persons or a social group that manifests the intention of obtaining/occupying a housing unit, different from the one they already inhabit, or a person who is expected to manifest in the future this intention/demand.”¹⁸⁴ In fact, most of the “potential users” were couples, married or un-married, in different stages of their family cycles, with the intention of buying, renting, or exchanging housing units. One of the main characteristics of the housing units according to which inhabitants would exchange them was their size and density. Families intending to exchange were mostly aiming for housing units that would insure less density, and so were aiming to move from a smaller apartment to a larger one. They also would sometimes move between apartments of the same size, or even from a larger to a smaller one, especially when the number of family members had decreased. Families moving between different sized apartments made up 72-75% of the total “housing migrations” [*migrații locative*]. Migrations between apartments of the same size were fewer, making up 25-28%; the reasons for exchange in this case was connected to other features (such as comfort level, heating system, or division of space). The size criteria was the predominant one in terms of reasons for exchange.¹⁸⁵

From the data above, Sandu Kivu and Luca concluded: “at the present time, there are a myriad of factors that make for a fast change in the average dimension of

the households, making them incompatible with the size of the housing unit.” Moreover, this was due to too many small-sized apartments, lack of flexibility in spatial organization inside the apartments (one reason why larger apartments were wanted), but also issues connected to high rents and high utility expenses in proportion to the family’s income (in cases when smaller apartments were desired). Yet, in terms of its practical purpose, the housing exchange, based on the size of apartments, did not resolve the flexibility question. The architectural design of flexible housing units remained an issue to be addressed. The table below shows the average period of a family’s stay in an apartment before an exchange. With such a short period before housing exchanges, modifications in the size of apartments could not be, on the average, too big. Therefore the researchers assumed that a considerable number of apartment exchanges were desired for reasons other than size. In the previous 10 years in Bucharest, there had been an increase in demand for larger (in number of rooms) apartments than the occupants had before the exchange. Two-bedroom apartments were the most sought-after according to what the researchers discovered. Also, the two-bedroom apartments were the fewest exchanged, only 3%. According to the researchers, this may have been due to other organizational and administrative factors. The reduction in density through state housing allocation reached a level of 0.8 persons/room for the sample under research. Many people declared themselves unhappy with respect to the size of the apartment received.¹⁸⁶

In the housing allocation, it became evident that there was a high demand for studios. It also became clear that the supply of one-bedroom apartments was greater than the demand.¹⁸⁷ The researchers wanted studies based on social typology, and demographic and cultural categories, but as late as 1985, no such research had been accomplished. The pluridisciplinary researchers found that the groups of people and size of samples studied were not large enough to support a general conclusion.¹⁸⁸ The group of people demanding apartments (to rent) from state housing stock was higher than the number of people wanting to exchange apartments; and there was also a difference in size, as the apartments involved in exchanges were larger than those allocated: the number of realized exchanges was small compared with the number of attempted exchanges initiated.

There was a “plateau” of housing density through allocation mechanisms, and although there was some reduction in density, the density before and after allocation remained the same. The authors called for research subjects who would allow for knowledge production on the positive and negative aspects of apartments from the point of view of the user: including the ways in which they intended to obtain an apartment (buying, allocation, exchange, self-help construction), and acknowledging their social and professional affiliations, cycle of family life, of city or town, housing experience, and education. The authors argued for a differentiation in type of apartments in accordance with generational changes, and including differences such as those between designing or building for two newly married people or for two retirees, even if both would make a household of two persons.

The researchers sought a better correlation between the design solutions and the allocation or commercialization of housing units. Interestingly enough, they continued to design studios that in size, construction system, and technical equipment would

accommodate as many types of households as possible and reduce the problems raised by the inadequacy between supply and demand of studios for rent from the state. Moreover, the researchers proposed that the state allow the construction of apartments as “reserves” for the purpose of exchange, for which they proposed 3-5% out of the total existing housing stock.¹⁸⁹ This housing exchange research project was part of a larger project undertaken by the Research Laboratory of Sociological Studies in IPCT. Marilena Luca’s contribution, under the leadership of the sociologist Dumitru Sandu, was the product of empirical sociological research on residents living in state apartments (not personal property apartments). Luca starts by explaining the complexity of the relationship between housing needs and the socio-political mechanisms that underpinned the process of adaptation of housing. In the process of adaptation of dwellings to the needs of the residents through apartment exchanges, there were several mechanisms to consider: the design of the apartments, the system of official directives, the construction process, the bureaucratic process of distribution, and the functional rearrangements of apartments and apartment exchanges.¹⁹⁰ The relationship between changing housing needs, family cycle (evolution), and capacity of apartments to address this evolution were all factors.¹⁹¹

The researchers identified the relationship between family evolution and the state of the housing unit as the main “generator of adaptation strategies.” Family evolution is the proportion between the number of family members, and the “economic standard,” “cultural standard,” or the overall “evolution of the personality of the individuals by age.” In this way, the housing unit “can be seen as a conglomerate of characteristics which are, or not, in accordance with the needs of the residents,” and which can be seen as a systemic or structural modification (functional modifications are temporary and reversible, and they can only superficially modify the structure of the housing unit). With this in mind, the authors present several scenarios, keeping in mind two underlying assumptions: that adaptation to needs is relational (in two directions) and that not all situations that lead to a lack of adaptation can activate an adaptation mechanism.¹⁹² A third instrument is an analysis of housing law 5/1973 with regard to the administration of the housing stock and the regulation of the relationship between the owner and the tenant.

Central areas of cities were preferred, and so peripheral areas were supplied in exchange for them. For example, apartments in the central area of Bucharest were sought by 52% of exchange and other areas 29%.¹⁹³ Centrally located housing units made up 62% of those offered for exchange, while those situated in peripheral areas were 32%, though often the one was exchanged for the other. It is also important to mention that the most frequent criterion for housing exchanges was the division of apartments by number of rooms. This was followed by level of interior comfort, administrative considerations, communal use of the housing unit, and height of the building. Apparently, the initial ‘size hypothesis’ was incorrect, as size was not a fundamental criterion for housing exchange.¹⁹⁴

We can only conclude that the pursuit of personal comfort evolved in tandem with both institutional technocratic intervention and inhabitant agency. The inhabitants’ agency was manifested through a system-embedded politics of housing occupancy driven by the appropriation of housing distribution mechanisms and

housing exchanges for adaptability. The system-embedded politics of housing occupancy reveals the inhabitants' agency in personal and urban space creation. The inhabitants' appropriation of housing distribution mechanisms and their engagement in apartment exchanges for the sake of adaptability complicate our understanding of the political within the socialist spaces of everyday life and within the workings of the professedly Communist state.

Was the partnership between architects and sociologists a successful one? Did it improve the quality of the apartments designed and built after 1976, the moment of the sociological Laboratory's inception? These are among the questions that I will attempt to answer in the following chapter. What can be concluded at this point is that interdisciplinary research within state institutions (of design and construction) was closely tied to the socialist planning system. In fact, city and regional planning became almost identified with the centralized political decision-making, starting in the early 1970s. The centralized planning approach to country's overall development relied on the careful use of existing resources for future development. In order to know what this future might look like, interdisciplinary research was called on to realize this engagement. In the case of housing development, control at every level of this endeavor implied continuous improvement in apartment comfort: what were the mistakes of the past and what could the architectural design of apartments do to provide better ways of living in the future?

Architects initiated the conflation between sociology and architecture in the Romanian context in the mid-60s. The work of Gheorghe Sebestyén, Mihail Caffé, and Alexandra Florian, as well as Caffé's own testimony, shows that their scholarly contributions, as early as 1964, proved fruitful and laid the ground for what later evolved into an unprecedented partnership between sociologists and architects through design practice.

I have shown here that in the Romanian context the concern for interdisciplinary research stemmed from the interwar period, reflecting the legacy of the sociologist Dimitru Gusti and one of his most prestigious students, Henri H. Stahl. Following Stahl's life and work, in spite of the ups and downs of the sociological school, shows that his legacy for interdisciplinary knowledge production was, without doubt, highly influential on architectural housing production during the late socialist period.

Though sociological research appeared in the pages of *Arhitectura* beginning in the mid-60s, sociological findings proved, at times, surprising for architects. There was an interesting tension between these two disciplines. This tension was manifested at the junction between what architects could do as limited by political pressure, rigid design standards and norms, and their own knowledge of, or ability to predict, the future inhabitants' ways of dwelling. If there were no direct program requirements from the future inhabitants, how could an architect design for people whom he/she did not even know? Having a discussion with a 'client' and finding out his/her requirements was not possible for personalized housing units. Still, architectural and sociological work came together under what the sociologist Dorel Abraham called the "dichotomy between a relative uniformity of dwelling and its 'personalization'".¹⁹⁵

Understanding this “personalization” was the key to perfecting the future apartment. The partnership had at its heart this very issue. This was an issue no different than what Montgomery had argued for, as discussed at the beginning of this chapter: when inhabitants become a problem, they are ripe for being studied, measured, categorized, and ultimately transformed. Even though the partnership started much earlier than the sociological Laboratory within the IPCT, problematizing people as residents with a poor urban culture, and as migrants, workers, fathers and mothers, and so on, represented after all the core of the relationship between these two disciplines.

“When architects sit at the drawing table, they must think first about the people. Accordingly, they must not forget that there will come a time when they themselves will inhabit the same housing ensembles they design.” With this statement Ceaușescu invited all of his country’s architects to think of housing design, as if they were designing for themselves. And this was certainly the case, since much of the new generation of architects did indeed end up inhabiting the “proletarian apartments” in the new housing complexes of the 70s. The texts from *Arhitectura* in the early 70s showed the architectural discourse of the housing project turning towards humanism while questioning the state of the *habitat humain* and urban development. This happened under the political pressure of the moment and the technological advancement that allowed for a greater number of apartments and a better distribution of housing units, enabling the Communist leadership to declare the official end of the housing crisis by 1975.

The standardization of the apartment buildings designed in the 70s was structurally more diverse. Diversity and flexibility became the new architectural desiderata for a more humane habitat and a readiness to insure the housing comfort so much desired by both architects and the population. The notion of *habitat humain* found its way from France into Romanian architectural discourse in the early 70s. The International Union of Architects (Uniunea Internațională a Arhitecților – UIA) held a Seminar on Human Habitation on October 28, 1971, which was set to achieve a dialogue between specialists in different fields from several European countries to discuss the state of the housing program in Europe, and implicitly in Romania. In this period, the political role of architects was being called into question as architecture’s democratic dimension called for ‘scientific’ participation through interdisciplinary research.

In the bureaucratic housing distribution process, the waiting list was the way to access apartments, regardless of the applicant’s tenure. The waiting list became a territory of negotiation for residents in choosing apartments according to location within the city, connection to their work place, family members, story level, and other needs. For example, one individual, the husband or the wife as holder of the contract, was allowed to refuse an apartment made available up to three times. The negotiation mechanism involved will be discussed in the next chapter, together with the notion of flexibility in housing exchanges.

The pursuit of flexibility by design was counterbalanced by the residential housing exchanges. A sociological analysis in the mid-80s showed how inhabitants of

the conventional apartments found ways to exchange them according to family cycle (changes in size of the family), location, *comandation* and *decomandation*, the location of the apartments within the building by levels or sun exposure, and proximity to the work place or to different education facilities (kindergartens, primary and high schools). In this, this exchange program brought into question the design concern with flexibility, especially with state-owned apartments.

This chapter has delineated the trajectory from the hyperstandardization of the early 50s to the concern for flexibility that architects sought in trying to achieve optimum living comfort through spatial construction. This became harder to do once the housing program was set in place after 1968, as we have seen in the first chapter. How does one achieve comfort in a one-bedroom apartment when it becomes undersized for the families as they grow larger in members? Changes in family cycle had been a concern of architects since the early years of the socialist housing project. What should one do when their apartment has become uncomfortable? What then does comfort mean for residents, and what does it mean for the designer/architect when conceptualizing new ways of achieving comfort through design? More often than not, the architect's idea of comfort (especially in the early years of socialism) was associated with 'bourgeois' ideas of comfort. Here one can specifically think of the comfort provided by a single-family house on one's own private plot. This was an ideal that some architects equated with the future of housing comfort, as most prestigious architects in the earlier years of socialism had come from well-to-do families. In the minds of many architects, modern living called only for an intermediary phase of small units for the poor or a rural domestic environment, which were premodern and *museified*, to the large units of the Communist future. Somewhere in between these was the one-bedroom apartment.

The Communist ambitions for the housing program identified the notion of comfort as fundamental to what 'socialist modernity' aspired to achieve. Here also lay the profound interest of the theory of aspirations so often used to justify different social, economic, and technical trajectories within the socialist housing program. The notion of comfort was at times invoked as a propagandistic expression of the traditional/modern dichotomy. An apartment with a full set of equipment, including bath and kitchen, in addition to living spaces, was often contrasted to rural houses, where one would have an outhouse instead of a fully-functioning and equipped interior bathroom.

In the early years of socialism, as discussed in the previous chapters, architects were very much concerned with the notion of social comfort. It was a quantitative expression that stated the need for everybody (families and single people alike) to access a housing unit. Only after everyone had been housed, could there be concern with larger housing units, better public services, better housing conditions. Budgetary constraints remained unchanged throughout the entire socialist period, and in spite of the economic austerity of the 80s, the housing program continued full-fledged. Regardless of the ills and shortcomings of the socialist housing program, there was, as we have seen, an evolution in the quality of apartments, an evolution entangled with socio-economic and political factors. The political, however, did not remain a top-

down process, but was fueled with actions and reactions from below, from within the base of the socialist economy.

CH. III From Vernacularization of Space to the Right to Comfort

Romania in the 1990s inherited a weak social system, a legacy of strict economic austerity and poverty, and a chaotic housing market. The over-industrialization of the Communist times had caused severe urban problems due to an increasingly large urban population, and an equally aggrandized social housing stock. The introduction of the Western liberal political practices of entrepreneurial freedoms, privatization, and market deregulation weakened the welfare state. The ‘socialist’ workers were first to take the hit. Unemployment among blue-collar workers was at its highest. Fortunately, those who had already settled into a state-provided flat at least did not have to worry about losing their homes: continuing to pay minimum rent gave them the certainty that they would be able to keep a roof over their heads.

After 1989, many of the former dissidents and freedom fighters proclaimed the previous era to have been one of a failed modernization process, uprooted and divorced from its Western European counterparts. This stance was quick to be embraced by the new-born liberals as they raised the flag of freedom, signaling the much looked-after political transformation brought on with many lives lost in the streets of the December 21, 1989 revolt. Many authors proclaimed socialist Romania’s failure to modernize.¹⁹⁶ This entrenched tendency to look upon the nation as inferior and unaccomplished subscribes, I would contend, to what Vladimir Kulić deems a new form of orientalism. It made use of a rather misplaced rhetoric ascribing to the defeated regime some of the traits of colonies, as underdeveloped and perhaps only of exotic appeal, in backwardness and resistance to modernization. Communism was now understood as an episode of failed revolt against modernity, failing to overcome the incapacity of the nation to truly modernize and rise to the level of Europe as site of a historically advanced civilization. The words of sociologist Jóhann P. Arnason strike an all-too-familiar discursive chord of a conundrum in the emerging anti-Communist ethos of the transitional 90s:

The Communist episode central to the historical experience of the twentieth century but brought to an abrupt end by unforeseen developments is now widely dismissed as a failed revolt against modernity. For the victors of the Cold War and for the emerging post-Communist elites, the most convenient way to close the book on Communism is to insist on its pre-, anti-, or pseudo-modern character. The issue this ideological stance excludes from consideration becomes more visible if we allow for the possibility that the defunct model might – for all its disastrous flaws and irrationalities – have been a distinctive but ultimately self-destructive version of modernity rather than a sustained deviation from the modernizing mainstream.¹⁹⁷

Árnason here proposes an interpretation of Communism different from those centered on political economy: now seen as an alternative version of modernity, a

manifestation of the modernizing project of the nineteenth century. He argues, “If Communism can be located within the spectrum of multiple modernities, the crisis and collapse of the Soviet empire may have some bearing on the question of more general crisis tendencies inherent in modernity.” The intrinsic contradictions and the problems of Communism, in the newly-emerging post-1989 neoliberal context, “take on a new complexion when they are seen as the legacy of a disintegrating mode of modernization: the promise of the ‘shock therapy’ [appealed to and undertaken by advocates at the time of neoliberal primitive accumulation] could only be taken seriously by those who mistook Communism for a total rejection of modernity, followed by a total collapse.” It became common knowledge that Communism could be “widely dismissed as a failed attempt to revolt against modernity.”¹⁹⁸

In the early years of the '90s, the dominant intellectual discourse presented the socialist neighborhood and its blocks of flats as spaces of ‘proletarianization’,¹⁹⁹ a spatial mechanism converting the peasant migrants who were the new urbanites into ‘real’ city dwellers and ‘glorified’ workers. The Romanian writer and scholar of Communist-era urban planning, Ruxandra Cesereanu, aptly expresses this view:

(...) the Romanian ghetto, if it even exists, can only be discussed in terms of the phenomenon of proletarianization. The proletarian ghetto is inextricably connected with the artificial construction of Communism after the Second World War. The story is relatively simple and well-known. Like many of the countries in the former Soviet Bloc, post-WWII Romania was far from being an industrial country, sufficiently ripe, in Marx’s vision, to receive the light of the utopian socialism. More suitable countries for the Communist experiment were the western ones, but chance and Lenin’s ‘genius’, made the East the chosen place for the political experiment of Communism. Since at that time, the East lacked raw material for the construction of Communism—the proletarians, in particular—it had to be invented in the shortest period. As for its early realization, one can connect the massive, forced ‘modernization’ process of converting a country that was predominantly agrarian into a producer of ball bearings.²⁰⁰

The book from which this passage is excerpted, *Crammed Romania*,²⁰¹ presents the neighborhoods of socialist blocks of flats through the eyes of several of their inhabitants. Most of this book’s contributors reveal their personal experience as part of the second generation of inhabitants living in a block of flats in the Romanian city of Cluj-Napoca. The book aims at a literary critique of the collective life in the blocks of flats, but turns into a diatribe on the everyday life of the inhabitants. The writers present the socialist block of flats as the ultimate neo-rural environment, a ‘ghetto’ of peasant subculture, a place of failure for the rural migrant with respect to the attempted modernizing proletarianization. The title of the book is suggestive of the self-stigmatizing ethos so characteristic of the transitional years: “box of matches” [*cutii de chibrituri*] and “canned food” [*conserva*] are both well-known derogatory expressions employed in the socialist and post-socialist years.

The everyday housing practices of the socialist era reflected a critique of cultural inequality with regard to high modernism in architectural design. The everyday participation, and policy-based negotiation, that transpired through waiting

list access to housing units, apartment exchanges, and the appropriation of resources (for housing construction) formed a nascent public sphere made possible only by the expansion of public space, as professed in the socialist ideology. These everyday practices were made possible through political measures that revolutionized housing policy. This new housing revolution began what came to be known as the golden age of housing and the high modernism of the 70s. Paradoxically, the housing tenure revolution that emerged between 1966 and 1968 not only financed the glorious years of the housing project, but also led to the much-debated and ill-famed vernacularization of the socialist cityscape.

In the previous chapter, I analyzed residents' spatial agency, uncovering the intellectual partnership in Romania between sociology and architecture, and I argued that residents' different ways of dwelling, domestic practices, spatial appropriations, needs, and aspirations, as revealed through their living in the conventional state apartments, were recovered by sociological research and re-inscribed in the practice of architecture. Through applied sociology, the residents' spatial agency was re-embedded in architectural design, and this was only possible through the interdisciplinary nature of the state architecture/construction institutions vested with the process of housing design and construction. The spatial appropriation of balconies, which by the early 1970s was already visible, started reshaping the face of the 'socialist' cityscape. The two intrinsically social phenomena evolved in tandem, while the already disintegrating political progress towards a 'bright' and long-awaited Communist future, fell prey to its contradictions.

In this chapter, I argue that in late socialism, inhabitants' living in the socialist blocks of flats asserted their claims to interior comfort through the appropriation of the semi-public space of balconies. In doing so, inhabitants vernacularized the socialist façade, bringing high modernism into the workings of the everyday. The study situates these spatial transgressions within the economic makeup of a broader geopolitical context. The energy crisis of the early 1970s not only was a factor making possible the doubling of the façade by vernacular interventions; it also became the basis for emerging housing experiments that resulted in the design and construction of residential project-directives with systems based on renewable energy. Several project-directives that the IPCT designed in the late '70s implemented solar panels and geothermal technology. Hence, systemic and vernacular manifestations of spatial production pursued in tandem the interior spatial comfort of the future.

This chapter will present the origin of the residents' spatial transformations through the findings of the Research Laboratory of Sociological Studies, part of the IPCT. I will argue that residents' spatial transgressions were not a consequence of their rural backgrounds, but part of a specific socio-economic context characterized by the economic scarcity that engendered social networks for procuring construction materials by hoarding and barter. They represent 'informal' architectural practices, but they were also a formal means, as people's housing demands were addressed through petitions and complaints addressed to local party administration. I am claiming here that juridical housing rights laid the ground for the subsequent transgressions, and that this helps explain the ambiguity of housing policy and the negotiating powers of citizens as 'homeowners'. Also, the study suggests that interventions in 'personal

property apartments' were made possible by the same housing laws and housing claims, and that this new form of tenure eased the way to spatial transgressions.

The possibility of housing personalization rights was given by family law together with housing policy, paralleled by architects' search for spatial flexibility, which evolved in a way that allowed for the vernacularization²⁰² of apartment spaces. At the same time, it explains the disdain among architects for 'vernacular' expression that found its way into criticisms of the well-crafted modernist/post-modernist façades of centrally-located apartment buildings. This disdain for vernacular interventions was transparent even through the acknowledged and commonly-known disinterest of architects in designing buildings for housing. Most of the well-known architects were 'well-known' for their contributions not to the production of housing but to essential cultural or social facilities or public institutions, or their role as urban planners/designers.

It is the 'civic center' that brought housing design (at the municipal level, though not there only) to the forefront of the architects' interest. Here was a place for a discussion of the new post-modern trajectory of façade designs, which had to follow the new 'national specificity' in terms of traditional symbols used to embellish the façades, to which residents would at the same time 'contribute' mostly in a manner unwanted by the architects and authorities. Thus, I will argue that the façade became a site of contestation among inhabitants, architects, and the state, with the architects on the side of the state regulators. Relevant to this too were the restrictions, enforcements, and regulations that were applied much more drastically to the central boulevards, and centrally-located apartment buildings.²⁰³

The main question that guides this study is why did the architects and social scientists unite in a professional partnership in an effort to understand how people living in blocks of flats negotiated the vernacularization of their apartments. They did so while challenging the architectural design assumptions about the institutionally- and statistically-created 'unknown user' intrinsic to the modernist social project and embedded in the provision of standardized housing. What does it mean to uncover a modernist social project within the totalitarian approach to reengineering a traditional society through spatial (architectural and urban) means by transforming rural migrants into new urbanites? In what ways did their family life, domestic demands, ideological constructions of gender roles, and labor requirements contribute to the transformation and appropriation of space inside and outside of the state apartments? What forms of negotiation can one find between the inhabitants and the state by way of residential space? What did such negotiation mean in the Communist system? What forms of negotiation can one identify between the architects and the state? Was negotiation even possible between architects and the users they were designing for (in the case of housing design)?

The Romanian “Ghetto” of a Failed Modernity?

The block of flats became the symbol of a degraded and crumbling socialist system. Its distorted aesthetics revealed the bankruptcy of design practice in Romanian architecture, as many have been quick to argue. The generalized critique of this new proletarian ‘ghetto’—presented as a symptom of the Second World turning into part of the Third, by way of its inhabitants’ spatial misbehavior—serves as an apocalyptic idea of a modernization process gone wrong. The figure of the universal subject, the modern socialist man and woman, fails to be civilized, and that of the peasant prevails. They still beat up their wives and children. They still come back late at night in a drunken ruckus. They still kill pigs in the back yards of the block of flats and use ad hoc smokehouses for conserving meat. They still store homemade fruits and vegetable preserves in the pantries of their ‘proletarian’ apartments. This vilifying discourse relocates the once-marginalized historical *mahala*²⁰⁴ into a newly-created ‘center’, the block of flats. In this vision, ‘the proletarian *mahala*’ becomes the medium for the ‘leveling agglomeration’ of the masses, who are allegedly to be led blindly into the Communist future.

Nevertheless, despite the associated infamous practices, one can situate the resident of the proletarian apartment, not just as a passive ‘user’ of the modernist project, but rather as the ‘inhabitant’, a socially-charged individual whose practices, however problematic they might be, reveal his/her position as a maker of space. In this context, the user becomes both a problem and an agent of intervention. This is in contrast to the ghettoization argument, which characterized the inhabitants of the blocks of flats as uncivilized, backward, and violent.

The migrants in what is considered the first wave of migration were the inhabitants of the urban squatter settlements of the nineteenth century. They were described as a “floating population ripe for the later socialist proletarianization.” The Romanian ‘ghetto’ starts there, since “architecturally and rhetorically, the socialist city was built around the denunciations of the slums and claimed to reverse its process of appearance and growth.”²⁰⁵ For the people living in slums, the socialist block of flats was the ultimate luxury.

The migrant-resident, as a social problem and a factor of ‘ghettoization’, speaks of the entrenched class dichotomy of Romanian urban culture, in general, and self-vilification in particular, often revealed by the anti-Communist discourse. Such vitriolic and demeaning characterizations of a considerably broad category of the Romanian population would have seemed to many somehow understandable in the transitional years of the ’90s. It was a class-based stance further fueled by the disdain for the societal transformations imposed by the Communist leadership. The inversion of previous class relations, such that power lies within the working class, eroded what, until World War II, was profoundly embedded in a political system that benefited, for the most part, the well-to-do and in which the ruling powers kept the vast majority of the population segregated along ethnic and economic lines. To think of Romania as a ghettoized country, only by way of the alleged incapacity of rural migrants to adapt to urban settings, is to purposely ignore the real social and economic factors that kept

Romania at a level of ‘backwardness’ and poverty, and that sustained the population’s political disfranchisement.

The Vernacular and the (Still-) Socialist Cityscape

I borrow the notion of *vernacularization* from linguistics: “The action of making, or fact of being made, vernacular or native to a language,”²⁰⁶ or “to translate into the natural speech peculiar to a people.”²⁰⁷ The word refers to the bringing into the everyday of something that simple people would deem inaccessible. It can also be understood as pertaining to the relationship between high and low culture. A more interesting interpretation can be associated with bringing ‘high modernism’ into the everyday, by actions that bring ‘formal’, professionally-designed architecture into the workings of the everyday and the informal. The notion of vernacularization is used in the literature of theory in three ways: (1) to describe the evolution of spoken language;²⁰⁸ (2) in terms of the relationship between ‘classic’ literature and that written in the spoken language of the common people;²⁰⁹ and (3) in conceptualizations of the everyday in transnational contexts typically involving the Global South.²¹⁰ What I find essential here is the bringing of what had been top-down processes into a relation with bottom-up, popular, ones by way of a recognition of their everyday character, particularly that of social processes and spaces, which previously were relegated to an outside.

Vernacular architecture has been defined thus:

Vernacular architecture comprises the dwellings and all other buildings of the people. Related to their environmental contexts and available resources, they are customary, owner- or community-built, utilizing traditional technologies. All forms of vernacular architecture are built to meet specific needs and ways of living of the cultures that produce them.²¹¹

My intent here is to look at inhabitants’ actions involved in the spatial transformation and personalization of standardized housing units (apartments) by considering the environmental context-related resources that they could make use of without traditional technologies, to meet their needs as they understood them in terms of their culture. I am not referring to appropriation, transformation, and adaptations as ‘vernacular architecture’, since those actions are an additional layer to the standardized structure the blocks of flats already provide. However, there is an interesting connection between the informality of apartment transformations and squatter settlements. The post-WWII surge of the populace into cities in many developing countries produced a different form of urbanization, that of the squatter settlements that Paul Oliver in his encyclopedia of vernacular architecture calls neo-vernacular:

While they differ in many respects from the vernacular traditions represented here, acknowledgment of the relationship of the squatter settlements to the vernacular is made in the number of entries. To compound the problems of nomenclature, ‘neo-vernacular’ is sometimes applied to architect-designed buildings influenced by, or in the forms of, vernacular tradition.²¹²

In this study, the spatial process of vernacularization is significant for reasons that go beyond the mere idea of spatial appropriation, its forms, and the reasons given by inhabitants for them. An answer to the ‘why’ question cannot do justice to the social and political implications of this phenomenon for understanding so-called ‘really-existing socialism’. It is crucial to understand the underlying aspirations of the tenants that were entangled in the life-cycle of a household family that occupied a housing unit. What is the logical connection between vernacular architecture and the vernacularization of architecture?

The spatial appropriation of balconies, which by the early 1970s was already visible, began to reshape the face of the ‘socialist’ cityscape. The two intrinsically social phenomena evolved in tandem, while the already disintegrating political progress towards a ‘bright’ and long-awaited Communist future fell prey to its contradictions. The agents of vernacularization revealed a popular resistance not only to the workings of the Communist state, but also to the architects’ ambitions of promoting urban upper-middle-class aesthetic values. These were values that the elite architects deemed superior to those of the everyday life of the urban ‘peasants’ who populated most of the country. What, then, does vernacularization mean for this study? What does the concept of vernacularization explain in architectural practice and urban planning and development in Romania? To think of a tentative answer would be to identify what were the practices residents engaged in to personalize the space of their standardized apartments. I intend to reveal the relationships between the way problematic forms of standardization and the lack of variety of spatial planning contributed substantially to the overlapping layers of housing ‘personalization’. Through vernacularization, I describe the process of inhabitants’ transformation of standardized apartments utilizing materials and know-how established through local ‘informal’ networking, exchanges of goods, and hoarding of state resources. These were practices that in the literature of the Second World, more often than not, situated within the second economy.²¹³ Conversely, drawing from Alexei Yurchak’s ‘living *vnye*’. I place inhabitants’ ‘informal’²¹⁴ practices within the official economy, benefiting from state resources, creating social and professional networks, but at the same time, not following some of the established parameters.

The Informal, the Illegal, and the Vernacular,

In its established use, the concept of vernacular architecture as developed by Paul Oliver situates the dwelling formed in the tradition of the vernacular that “embraces what is known and what is inherited about the dwelling, building, or settlement. It includes the collective wisdom and experience of a society, and the norms that have become accepted by the group as being appropriate to its built environment.”²¹⁵ Thus, beyond its contextually grounded motivations and in the case of this study, the vernacularization of the façade contained what the historian Dell Upton calls dichotomies of difference. The concept of the vernacular ultimately entails the moral and cultural superiority of *us* against *them*, the others:

It might equally apt to demonstrate the superiority of ourselves to our neighbors within: of the respectable to what the eighteenth century would

have called the mob; of the urbane to the oaf and the bumpkin; of the moderate to the over- and underachiever; of the open to the secret. Yet at other times dichotomy has engendered envy, excitement and titillation at the picturesqueness of the underworld or the colorfulness of the peasant. More often, it reinforced a nostalgic sense of inferiority and loss and consequent unfavorable comparison of ourselves with the noble savage and sturdy yeomen of other places and times (...). The concept of the vernacular was and still is permeated with these dichotomies and with both negative and positive readings of difference. Consider the qualities that are said to characterize the vernacular: all depend explicitly or implicitly on inside-outsider distinctions.²¹⁶

In past scholarly work surrounding the question of urban informality, the informal and the illegal are vernacularized and aestheticized. As Ananya Roy argued, architects tend to aestheticize the informal and romanticize the vernacular.²¹⁷ The informal has been turned into a romanticized picture, an articulate image that represents the vernacular, the peasant, the pre-capitalist; and something to be recuperated, preserved, monumentalized, and maybe upgraded through beautification – and all of which is elided by the political economy of land and power.²¹⁸ Contrary to the established aestheticization of the vernacular, the informal and illegal in balcony enclosures in the Romanian context were de-aestheticized. This reflects Upton's notion of otherness and the failure meme concerning the socialist housing 'ghetto.'

Preservation of the building's façade brought with it the architects' pleas for professional aestheticization of the de-faced façades. From the architect's point of view, the balcony should remain untouched, maintaining its designed purpose. To support this position, the architects symbolically endowed the balconies with indigenous characteristics—in this way, making it a space that rural migrants would find familiar. Architects assumed that the porch was the origin of the balcony. The porch was a transitional space, traditionally built, as an exterior extension of a peasant dwelling's main entrance. Most rural dwellings were endowed with entrance porches, regardless of the country's different regions. To argue against the balcony enclosures, architects invoked the balcony's alleged rural beginnings, romanticizing its origin. In this spirit, the balcony became a locus of intervention and regulation, the carrier of an aestheticized architectural order.

The architects' critiques of residents' interventions on their balconies were generally fairly harsh. Thurman's article starts with an image of a balcony, presented in the conspicuous, and anonymous detail, of a building with lush climbing vegetation and flowers, amid which 'some' people were looking down at the photographer. Thurman then continues by quoting an article from the magazine *Flacara* in which the architect Paraschiva Iubu "underlined a well-known feature"²¹⁹ of houses, for Romanians and Hungarians alike: they "express an openness towards nature."²²⁰ Traditionally, "a small porch [*prispa*], a veranda [*pridvorul*], and the traditional balcony [*cerdacul*] are elements of connection with the others, a projection of the interior towards the exterior."²²¹ He notes that "[t]hese functions, in the contemporary blocks of flats, are fulfilled by the balconies and loggias."²²² Then he points to the fact that the balcony "can be a real space for recreation. Camping-like furniture can be

used, or preferably, wicker patio furniture.” He concludes: “greenery may always serve to warm out the coldness of glass and concrete.”²²³



Fig. 6 Examples of a traditional Romanian rural house showing the narrow, balcony-like space at the main entrance, the *prispa*.²²⁴ *Prispa* was threshold space, between outside and inside. It was space for interacting with the world outside.²²⁵

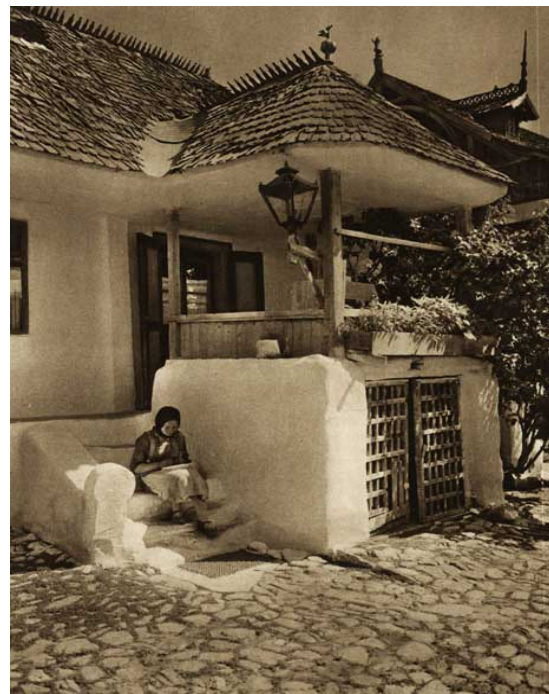


Fig. 7 The *cerdac* in two examples, the image on the left showing it in front of the house entrance, above the storage space below.²²⁶

References to the traditional spaces often found in Romanian peasant houses, whose *prispa*, *pridvorul* and *cerdacul* were used to justify the use of a balcony in the design of standardized blocks of flats. This was often the argument used to justify, not only the extensive use of this architectural form, but also the enclosing of it, as in the case of a veranda, with the same rural references. By 1980, the play on façade compositions had reached another level. While in the early ‘modernist’ years, the balconies were horizontal bands of endless orderly rhythms, in this period, the curved forms of balconies dominated the cityscape.

Architects and regulatory urban institutions at first considered the balcony enclosures illegal. The dilemmas of mass-produced housing result from the fact that it means designing for unknown inhabitants. As discussed in the previous chapter, this ‘unknown user’ was the center of housing research, in architecture and sociology alike. The anonymity of the possible subject of habitation represented an abstract entity who had no say in the process of housing design and construction.

This form of intervention was and remains a highly controversial problem, especially within the profession of architecture. In my discussions with the architect Mihail Caffé, this issue was briefly engaged. As I was trying to explain the focus of my study, residents’ interventions within their apartments, Caffé made it very clear that he considered that “residents’ interventions don’t exist.” By interventions, he meant those of future residents who might sit down with an architect and communicate his/her design requirements as the basis of an architectural program that would comply with them. That is, someone who was more like a client. But in mass-produced housing, there is no such a thing. The resident (the *locatarul*, renter) became the “unknown future resident,” an abstract entity who could have no say in the process of housing design.

On the façades of the socialist blocks of flats, the formal, the informal, and the vernacular combined in opposition to the state’s glorious achievements of high modernism in architecture. If we accept that the balcony enclosures were an informal and illegal outcome, following Roy, we must ask: what then was the state’s role in creating them? Far from being the result of the rural inhabitants’ lack of urban culture, the spatial appropriation of balconies resulted from specific socioeconomic and political factors, transcending the ideological constructions of the illegal and the informal. Ultimately they were a political act, recognition of which took the form of both state inaction and tolerance, in the context of the acute self-imposed economic austerity measures of the late ’80s.

While appealing to their rural origin, Thruman ridiculed the enclosure of balconies and loggias. And as his commentary becomes more and more abrasive, he resumes in the same tone, but somewhat ambiguously: “In principle, the freedom of the resident [*locatarului*] to manifest his ‘personality’ is important.” This seems to have been a continuation of municipality’s arguments in a somewhat cynical tone. He ended on a similarly sarcastic note: “The taste of the resident ‘beautifies’ the building, breaking down its monotony, and offering, at the same time, protection against the wrongdoings of potential intruders.” Thurman’s derision aimed at the balcony and loggias enclosures was blunt:

The balcony – once enclosed – can be converted to storage, to an arts and crafts workshop (light industry must be encouraged!), or, more often, to a greenhouse for flowers. Aviaries – full-blown menageries – for exotic animals can be easily found, just by browsing through the list of small animal breeders! There are even balconies transformed into “small guest bedrooms.”²²⁷

Recognizing that sometimes the “simplistic adaptation” of standardized projects did underline the architects’ neglect of all factors that could influence the useful functioning of the balcony (in dimensions, orientation, or position), Thurman demanded solutions from those who know (the specialists, mainly architects) how to address those issues, not solutions from the inhabitants frowned upon as “dilettantes,” which surely would be followed by the disastrous outcomes the public witnessed at the time.

As the problem of the balcony enclosures came to the attention of the IPCT teams, some standardized projects were proposed with glass enclosures, as was shown in *Arhitectura* magazine). According to the sociologist Dorel Abraham, discussions were taking place in meetings at managerial levels in the IPCT. Abraham himself witnessed those discussions and informed me that architects had proposed such projects, the existence of balconies was discussed, and they even wondered if the balconies should be designed at all.

Beyond the Private/Public Dichotomy

In the post-socialist literature, the critique of socialist spatial practices employed this understanding of ‘private’ space as a response to, and way of resisting, the state’s practices of intrusion. In *Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Block*, Susan E. Reid and David Crowley argue that the interior space of state apartments were for the occupants a space of refuge, and of personal freedom, in which one could flee the overpowering and controlling ‘eye’ of the state. The authors argue that interior spaces were both secure spaces of resistance and sites of a depoliticized individuality. In their acceptance, all spaces within the Communist system were automatically political spaces, subordinated to a singular ideology or dogma.

Moreover, this political space was of a specific ideological color. All spaces were ‘socialist’ spaces: built by the ‘socialist’ state for the ‘socialist man’ (that is, person), and lived in through a ‘socialist’ domesticity. In his study, *On the Socialist Balcony: State, Citizen, and Ideology in a Romanian Neighborhood*, Florin Poenaru constructs his argument along this line of thinking. Appropriating and reconfiguring the spaces of the state-provided flats was an act of everyday domestic life. It was an undertaking that represented the privacy of residents exteriorized into the public realm. This ambivalence, and this overlap of private and public, were at the core of the Communist ideology in a way that went back to the early Soviet Union. The private/public overlap can be related to issues of property stemming from the idea in certain variants of Soviet Marxism that everything should be a public, common good, collectively possessed. In this respect, private property, as the term ‘private’ indicates,

delineates the boundaries of privacy. Marxist-Leninist ideology, in rejecting the legitimacy of private property, introduced a new concept of privacy, or a private sphere. Defining the boundaries between private and public was the goal of the new regime of personal property, implemented in the 1936 Soviet Constitution.

In the early days of the Soviet revolutionary fervor, the state-driven nationalization of property changed common understandings of private and public space. On the one hand, public and private were collapsed by removing traditional demarcations (for instance, with the advent of the communal apartment). On the other hand, linguistic reconstructions of public and private appealed to etymological stems within the Russian language that distinguished them from Western terminology. This terminology called for special attention that would further clarify the new meanings given to notions of private and public space.

Before the 1917 Soviet Revolution, individual actions were held to take place in the private sphere, which was the authentic space, “while the fake world was the world of public complicity.”²²⁸ In Russia, those places, previously on the margins, in particular, the ‘domestic’ front, came to be of utmost importance for the socialist restructuring of the society. There are two peculiar stances that emerged, following Alexei Yurchak’s concept of being *vnye*, or the more interesting notion of a new form of ‘soviet’ public, the *svoi*. I am situating the research in empirical sociology of housing together with the inhabitants’ spatial appropriation and transformations within this abstract conceptualization of inside and outside, of social practice in Romania in the late socialist period. One of Yurchak’s arguments is that in Soviet Russia, late socialism was characterized by a diversity of everyday ways of living that were situated both inside and outside the system, which he calls ‘being *vnye*’. Yurchak understands *vnye* to mean being within a system so as to benefit from it, but not following all of its parameters. More precisely:

(...) the meaning of this term, at least in many cases, is closer to a condition of being simultaneously inside and outside of some context—such as being within a context while remaining oblivious to it, imagining yourself elsewhere, or being inside your own mind. It may also mean being simultaneously a part of the system and yet not following certain of its parameters.²²⁹

In his research, Yurchak identified several groups of people, as a part of a late socialist generation of young professionals, artists, and intellectuals in these milieus, who were disbelievers in the Soviet system, but at the same time “heavily drew on that system’s possibilities, financial subsidies, cultural values, collectivist ethics, forms of prestige, and so on,” while, “they actively reinterpreted the cultural parameters of that world.”²³⁰ This milieu represented a form of public *svoi*, related to an authoritative discourse neither supporting nor opposing the State. This ‘public’ was represented by networks made up of different people connected to each other by interests, occupation, or discourses. “Explicit opposition, just like explicit support, was avoided.”²³¹ What this new understanding of the Soviet everyday achieved through Yurchak’s research was to mark a departure from the anti-Communist discourse of the post-1989 period. They confined any forms of action (private or public, political or apolitical) to the binary of resistance vs. submission to the Communist system, ideology, and dogma.

The birth of a new form of ‘the public’ was famously equated with the rise of totalitarianism by Hannah Arendt in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951) and *The Human Condition* (1958). Arendt argues that when the private matters of households are scrutinized in the public eye, the household ceases to be socially and politically separated from the ‘city’;²³² and thus means, in fact, that it is depoliticized:

To be political, to live in a polis, meant that everything was decided through words and persuasion and not through force and violence. In the Greek self-understanding, to force people by violence, to command rather than persuade, were pre-political ways to deal with people characteristic of life outside the polis, of home and family life, where the household head ruled with uncontested, despotic powers, or of life in the barbarian empires of Asia, whose despotism was frequently likened to the organization of the household.²³³

That organization was long given by the need to manage the provision of life’s necessities, with women responsible for the care and nurturance of children, and men for working to provide other needs. The private sphere was thus a realm of necessity, which “ruled over all activities performed in it.”²³⁴ In Greek and Roman antiquity, domestic space was also a space of despotism, with the head of the family ruling over his ‘subjects’: wife, children, and slaves.

In discussing the rise of the sphere of the ‘social’, Arendt brings to our attention the notion of privacy, which in the modern world ceases to be merely one of deprivation of the freedom specific to the public realm. With the rise of modern individualism, “[t]he decisive historical fact is that modern privacy, in its most relevant function, to shelter the intimate, was discovered as the opposite not of the political sphere but of the social, to which it is, therefore, more closely and authentically related.” Arendt makes the case for the nation as like a household, which in the modern period was absorbed into ‘society’. Arendt considered that “[an] irresistible tendency to grow, to devour the older realms of the political and private as well as the more recently established sphere of intimacy, has been one of the outstanding characteristics of a new realm.” What had been the prerogative of “the private realm of the household as the sphere where the necessities of life, of individual survival as well as of continuity of the species, were taken care of” was now subsumed by the state. This was possible because “[s]ociety is the form in which the fact of mutual dependence for the sake of life and nothing else assumes public significance and where the activities connected with sheer survival are permitted to appear in public.”²³⁵

In the modern age, public space, the ultimate locus of political freedom, was subordinated to private space, where rules of governing are identified with a form of housekeeping. This meant, according to Arendt, that modern nations were transformed into “household nations,” where public participation was silenced by paternalistic forces, just as Greek and Roman domestic spaces were sites of paternalistic authority. Perhaps, one can imagine that Arendt’s domestication of the public can be looked at differently. Can one consider the spatial transgressions of inhabitants’ living in the state built apartments an inversion of that relationship? Instead of interpreting the spatial practices as sheltered from the public, a space of resistance against the state, this study looks at the appropriation of space as an extension of the public within the

private space. In doing so, the transgressive acts become public, hence political in nature.

Austerity between Rationality and Innovation

“When architects sit at the drawing table, they must think first about the people. Accordingly, they must not forget that there will come a time when they will inhabit the same housing ensembles they design.” With this statement, Nicolae Ceaușescu invited all architects to think about housing design as if they were designing for themselves.²³⁶ The texts from *Arhitectura* in the early '70s showed the architectural discourse of the housing project turning towards humanism (to the enthusiasm of many architects tired of the ever-present emphasis on the qualitative aspects of the housing project and concern with technology in design production), while questioning the state of the *habitat humain* and urban development. The debate among architects about the technical vs. the creative commitments of the architectural profession remained, as the events shortly to be discussed will show. The question remained: technology in the service of the people through housing or the poetics of architectural creativity through innovation?

The political establishment actively pursued a path towards a socialist consumption society. I have turned in this work to looking at the interior quality of the housing stock, coupled with the urban development ambitions for political representation and legitimation. At the same time, the much-professed technological advancement reached a point where the prefabrication and industrialization of construction accomplished only one apartment building (a four-story-high, 44 unit building, using an extensive system of prefabricated panels) fully completed in a matter of a month. The accelerated housing production reduced the waiting list to two months of wait time. After all, the Communist establishment did declare the official end of the housing crisis by 1975.

After long years of architects' pleading for diversity in apartment types and floor plan layouts, little has been accomplished in this direction. The nine types of apartments diversified by the number of rooms accomplished through housing policy in 1966 were drastically curtailed to four types in 1968. Diversity by number of rooms was not nearly enough; spatial flexibility was called on to address the changes in the family structure of the inhabitants living in state-built apartments. Diversity and flexibility became the new desiderata for a *habitat humain*.

This notion, of *habitat humain*, as mentioned, a French import, entered Romanian architectural discourse in the early '70s by way of the International Union of Architects Colloquium (Uniunea Internațională a Arhitecților—U.I.A.). It held a ‘Seminar for a Humane Habitation’ on October 28, 1971, centered on an international dialogue between different specialists from various fields of knowledge and different countries discussing the state of the housing stock and the notion of habitat throughout the world. This was an exciting moment for participants who appealed to the political role of the architect, while at the same time architecture's democratic dimension was being called into question. The contribution of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge production complicated the already complex process of urbanization and

the relationship of the discipline to the rural and the traditional, as revealed by the seminar's themes. What it managed to accomplish, however, was to put the 'user' in the forefront of the interdisciplinary preoccupation with planning for the people, and the 'real' relationship between humanity and the built environment.²³⁷

The change in scale from the object to the urban underlines the ties between housing, the national economy, and the architecture of cities. By this token, policy changes emerged, like the directives of the Third Congress of the Romanian Workers' Party (Partidul Muncitoresc Român— P.M.R.), which established the housing construction parameters for the 1960-65 period. The directives insisted on three main aspects: (1) raising the levels of comfort and quality of the apartment, (2) the industrialization of housing buildings; and (3) a reduction in design-related construction costs. The economic efficiency of the design was an ever-recurring premise, while rationality and comfort were presented as mutually inclusive. Achieving comfort meant creating a rationally-designed space. The space of the apartment had to answer the requirements and needs of a single family as the primary social nucleus. There was thus a consensus on the single-family apartments "with appropriate square footage and minimum circulation, with services allocated, sized, and equipped rationally."²³⁸

As the sociological research revealed, housing comfort had to be improved by implementing measures on the level of directives and the design of new housing units: the grounding of the five-year program of housing development on a solid knowledge of the quality of housing stock and how it was used and occupied.²³⁹

As the sociologist Dorel Abraham recognized, the problem with the quantitative approach was that targeting a maximal efficiency (in consumption of resources) can result in adverse effects on living comfort. Research was needed to aid in replacing the 'average man' (*homunculus mediu*) with the 'real man' (*homunculus mediu în omul real*). The 'real man' in Abraham's usage represents the "consumer of goods and the producer with a lifestyle and concrete aspirations." The needs theory is intrinsic to the Romanian modernist approach to housing provision. Following the same theory, Romanian sociological and architectural discourse connected needs and values and quantified them without fully developing the subjective understandings of users.²⁴⁰

The appropriation of balconies signaled the advent of a larger economic crisis, situated at a particular historical junction in relation to the workings of Romanian foreign trade. By 1988, the energy crisis had become exacerbated into inhumane austerity measures culminating, among other things, in a reduction of thermal comfort. The architects were quick to make the connection between the self-imposed economic austerity and the doubling of the façades in the socialist neighborhood. In 1982, at the Union of Architects Plenum, the architect Gheorghe Leahu observed: "At the same time with the beginning of the energy crisis, justifying the enclosing of balconies and loggias for the purpose of protecting the interior temperature, became a repetitive reason that the condominium associations and the inhabitants advanced. To enclose the balconies, each according to their own inspiration and improvisation, is to forget that these façade elements are the only elements by which the architecture of the blocks of flats can be personalized."²⁴¹ With this statement, Leahu uncovered not only the

connection between the energy crisis and the enclosing of balconies, but also the role of the balcony as only an aestheticizing element and a reflection of architects' personalization of the façade's architectural design. Here, personalization by inhabitant and personalization by architect remained at odds.

However, the energy crisis was just one aspect of the emerging economic and social upheavals of the early '80s. The roots of the problem lay with the geopolitical dynamics of the time. In the 1970s, exporters, Western creditors, and governments were looking into expanding business relations with the countries of Eastern Europe. In this context, the US played an essential role in some of the trade-related aspects of the Romanian economy. In 1975, the US-Romanian trade agreement granted "reciprocal most-favored nation treatment."²⁴² In international trade relations and international politics, the most-favored-nation treatment was a status accorded by one state to another, meaning that each country would receive the status of most favored in trading practices. More specifically, it is an economic position in which a country enjoys the best trade terms given by its trading partner. The most-favored nation status is part of a practice of trade non-discrimination that was directly connected with the development of GATT, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, first negotiated in 1974.²⁴³ Romania entered the GATT trade agreements in 1975.

With the new foreign trade deals and access to Western capital, between 1975 and 1980, Romanian exports grew at an 18% annual rate while US imports grew at an annual rate of 30%.²⁴⁴ During the same years, the Romanian foreign debt tripled: "In 1981, after it incurred \$10.5 billion in debt, Romania could no longer meet its debt servicing obligations." To service the astronomical debt accrued, Romania implemented a debt reduction policy through hard currency surpluses (in dollars), by which the country had fully repaid its foreign debt by April 1989. In 1988, after a large part of the foreign debt had been paid, Romania unilaterally canceled its most-favored nation status, thus making the post-debt economic recovery much harder to attain. The causes of the debt and energy crisis were intertwined, and they reflect several internal and external factors that can be historically situated. Some of the causes of the economic crisis in the late socialist period harken back to "a coincidental occurrence of several internal and external events." The foreign debt had been a national priority since 1974, nine years after Nicolae Ceaușescu became General Secretary of the Communist Party. In terms of Romanian economic policy and foreign relations, the crisis can be traced back to the country's "unique historical development as a centrally planned economy."²⁴⁵

The uncertain status of Romania within the socialist world, its movement towards industrialization rather than accepting the existing mixture of agriculture and light industry, set Romania in conflict with some of the CMEA countries,²⁴⁶ and followed a path of unbalanced development.²⁴⁷ Despite Romania's abundant raw resources, like petroleum and lumber,²⁴⁸ the ambitious industrialization project forced it towards reliance on the importation of raw materials and technology:

The failure of export capacity to keep pace with the growth of the debt was partially due to the mismanagement of Romania's centrally planned economy. Rather than use the borrowed funds to modernize plants and equipment, investments were wasted in 'hair-brained' industrial projects.

Moreover, the incongruence between Romania's domestic pricing system and relative international prices resulted in Romania receiving lower revenues for exports than were expected on the importation of the raw materials used to produce them. Thus, between 1970 and 1980, imports outran exports, creating annual trade deficits with Western nations, which were financed through additional borrowing from Western lending institutions. In effect Romania borrowed money to supply the previously borrowed funds that had failed to produce the expected return.²⁴⁹

Romania's indebtedness to western banks grew from 40% of its total debt in 1977 to 65% in 1980. In 1978 and 1979, more than half of the current account deficit was financed through short-term credits. In 1979, 50.5% of Romania's debt owed to banks had a maturity of less than one year. "Between 1981 and 1982, Romania faced an insurmountable 'hump' in its repayment obligations due to an unfavorable maturity profile." While Romania's struggling economic recovery involved aiming for debt repayment, the Polish debt crisis forced western lending institutions to reevaluate their lending policies to each of the countries of Eastern Europe. As a result, Romania's dubious creditworthiness caused lenders to refuse additional credits and call in short-term credits rather than allow them to roll over.²⁵⁰

Needing more oil to continue the process of industrialization, so as to carry through with all of the social and political projects envisioned, while continuing its import substitution policy, Romania's economy became susceptible to the external oil price hikes of 1974 and 1979. In 1976, Romania increasingly became a net importer of oil despite its plentiful local oil resources. Also, the 1977 earthquake worsened the economic situation: it reduced Romania's export capacity, and the necessary recovery expenses drained the funds available for investment. Also, the extremely harsh winters of 1980 and 1981 destroyed crops, thus reducing export revenues and forcing additional expenditures on imports of agricultural products.²⁵¹ The sociologist Dumitru Sandu writes regarding the energy crisis in Romania and its effects on the quality of housing: "The energy problems of the '80s favored grave qualitative imbalances between the capacity for dwelling protection and inhabitants' claims to interior comfort."

The reduction of average building height and the promotion of architectural and constructive solutions that favored an increase in the thermal protection of apartments were, Sandu observes, just a couple of examples of 'answers' to this kind of problem."²⁵² Pointing to the "challenge of the diversity and culture of the housing," he claims: "The diversity of lifestyles and the enhancement of the general level of education and culture of housing will strongly affect the obsolescence of small housing units, with little functional flexibility, and unfavorable locations. To this new kind of challenge, the design community responded by introducing new spatial planning solutions that allowed for more flexibility. At the same time there was expected a modernization of housing, the proliferation of experimental housing units, the development of conditions for resident participation in decisions regarding their apartments, and an increase in rental mobility."²⁵³

Despite some evolution in standardized housing design, the vernacularization processes increased dramatically in the '80s. This must be understood in relation to the

energy crisis, with the resulting rationing of resources, including electrical energy, natural gas, and water, as well as food, clothing, and furniture due to the economic austerity that accompanied the energy shortage. Electrical energy in particular was in short supply, which was a central problem for housing, which was second only to industry in its dependence on it. Another trigger for vernacularization was the new trajectory of urban planning: called ‘closed urbanism’, it meant aligning tall apartment buildings along broad boulevards, creating a ‘tunnel’ effect, which meant strong winds flowing between these constructions, posing a threat to the already flimsy wooden window frames and balcony doors on the façades facing high-traffic boulevards.²⁵⁴ These façades were in fact under the purview of the state (through the Party), and considered as important objects of supervision. They served as a site of the greatest political contestation, accompanied by images of architecture as a bastion of order, cleanliness, and the supremacy of aesthetics. Statistical data showing the trajectory of energy consumption is illustrative of this relationship.

By 1973, the crunch to saving energy was already underway: “For the saving and rationing of fuel consumption, electric energy, and thermal energy, according to the 1973 provisions, the rationing of thermal energy consumption through central heating systems under the administration of the Ministry of Electrical Energy is on its way. In 1973 a savings of 1 million Giga calories will be made.”²⁵⁵ In the mid-1970s, when the post-war housing crisis had supposedly been fully overcome, the petrodollar crisis finally hit the Romanian economy. Economic austerity, the rationing of resources, and savings at every level of the economy became dogmas of the Communist leadership. The austerity measures, however, spurred a wave of research and studies in renewable energy, such as solar and geothermal energy with practical applications in housing construction. By the late ’70s, the IPCT was already producing project directives implementing these technologies, and by the early ’80s one could find blocks of flats with solar panels on their roofs. Conversely, the drastic energy-saving efforts pushed residents living in state-built apartments to take matters into their own hands when left facing harsh winters with no appropriate heating supply in poorly thermo-insulated blocks of flats. As a result, they started enclosing balconies and loggias to gain more protection against wind gusts, snow, and the dusty air of busy boulevards. By enclosing balconies and loggias, residents claimed to achieve an acceptable temperature increase and better thermal comfort inside their apartments. Also, as sociologists and architects argue, there was a psychological dimension. The debate spurred by the residents’ actions will be discussed in the second part of this chapter.

By 1973, the crunch of saving energy was already on its way. This included the rationization of fuel consumption, electric energy, and thermal energy; it also included the rationing of thermal energy consumption in central heating systems, under the direction of the Ministry of Electrical Energy, calling for a savings of 1 million Gcal in one year.²⁵⁶ A recycling program involving the collection of waste of various types.²⁵⁷

The Vernacularized Balcony

The balcony as a feature of urban architecture began around this time to appear on apartment building façades with great variations from one region to another and one country to the other. In some cases, balconies first appeared and were later transformed under specific conditions. Access to sunshine, type of use, and structural materiality were among the factors in the use of the pre-modern architecture involved in the appearance of balconies and loggias. Originally, the balcony resulted from what remained from the area of appurtenance. In an earlier time, houses occupied a plot with an area of appurtenance designated for agricultural practices. As density changed under rapid urbanization, the area of appurtenance diminished in size until it disappeared. In its place, one could often find an elevated space abutting the façade opening. In cities on the Mediterranean coast, the balcony as a typological feature helps to regulate the effects of heat and light from sunshine. In the cold seasons, the buildings need wide and tall openings to collect the maximum amount of natural light. In summertime, the same openings need protection from solar overheating.

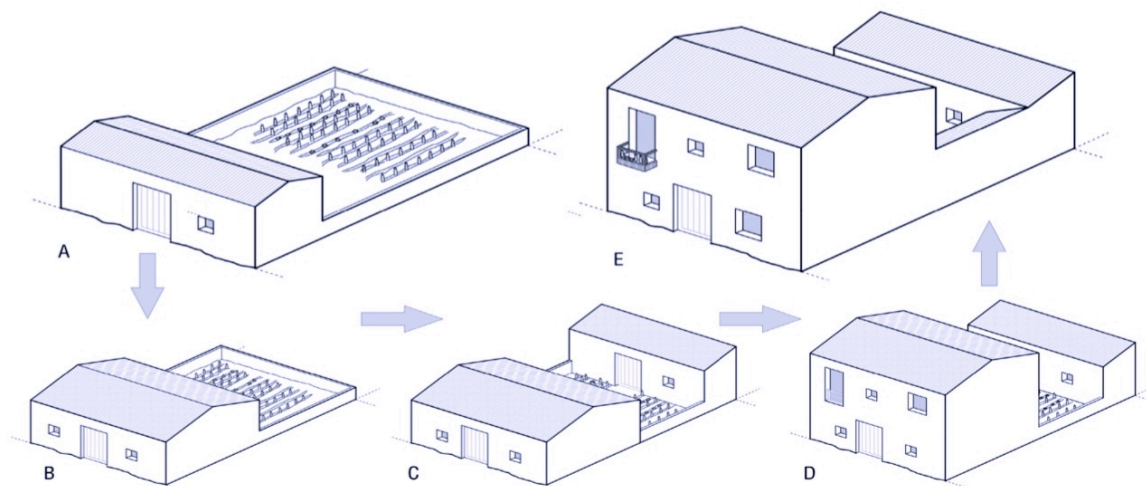


Fig. 8 Privitera diagram of balcony evolution from the agrarian space of appurtenance to the elevated facade feature of the urban house.²⁵⁸

The loggias common in Italy constitute a predominant façade system that is protected against the ever-present solar rays. In Barcelona, the textiles used in covered balconies provide shade in the warmer months, from May to October.²⁵⁹ Beginning in the nineteenth century, balcony textile shading was a dominant presence in southern European cities. In the second half of the century, they rapidly disappeared, as they were now considered a public eyesore. In his analysis of balconies in traditional urban architecture, Paolo Privitera concludes: “According to the theory of solar radiation, traditional architecture pursues the strongest climatic coherence in order to rationalize

the use of natural resources disposable in a set environment. Nevertheless, migrations of architectural models as well as local regulations are capable of producing solutions that are incompatible with the climatic characteristics.”²⁶⁰

The urban façade was often the site of public restrictions on what were seen as private tendencies that were deemed inappropriate for the public eye. The idea of public interest as a primary concern in urban development appears to be an intrinsic part of the European urban tradition. For example, Paolo Privitera explains that in the city of Valencia, in 1707, urban regulations counteracted private interests as legal instruments were used by the administrative powers to prohibit overhanging elements of urban façades along important streets of the city.²⁶¹

Spatial Transgressions: The Appropriation of Balconies and Loggias

The balcony and loggia enclosures differed in their construction and materiality between the socialist and the post-socialist years. The socialist apartment inhabitants constructed the balcony and loggia enclosures using different systems with variations in their materiality from metal frames to wood frames. As a common practice, the inhabitants mounted the enclosures on the balcony/loggia’s parapet. They adapted the enclosure systems to the type of balcony parapet (metal or concrete), the layout of the balcony or loggia, and the vertical relationship between different floors. The enclosures varied between a rudimentary iron frame with glass and, at times, a ‘high-tech’ system that made use of tractor cab window glass or reclaimed bus windows or doors. The simpler systems were made out of welded L-shape iron frames holding pieces of glass caulked by hand upon the metal frame. At times, for security or aesthetic purposes, a metal grid would protect the glass frame.

In its early forms, the balcony enclosure usually included a metal frame made out of L-shape iron trims holding sheets of glass. The system resembles a rudimentary window with fixed and movable parts, structurally attached to the top of the existing balcony or loggia parapet. The enclosure frames differed according to specific balcony or loggia layouts, and were constructed out of materials whose availability depended on residents’ financial means. They differed according to the ‘informal’ shops that produced them. As some of the residents, who had enclosed their balconies before 1989, revealed, the shops producing such balcony enclosures were informally located inside state factories. In the city of Cluj-Napoca, for example, a network of improvised shops within the C.F.R. (the Romanian Rail Company) provided balcony enclosures at a price. At times, residents constructed the balcony enclosures system used for the windows and doors of buses. Inhabitants who enclosed their balconies or loggias obtained installation services from the network of shops that produced the enclosure systems.



Fig. 9 Balcony enclosure in the Grigorescu neighborhood of Cluj-Napoca, Romania. This image shows the balcony enclosure as was built before 1989. Photo by author, 2011.



Fig. 10 At times, the enclosures were partial and protected against lateral winds and noise echoing from near-by buildings. The lateral enclosures protected against the snow of windy winters, while remaining open towards outside in the summer time when the balcony is the most enjoyable space. Photo by author, 2011.

The ‘high-tech’ systems were in great demand because of their insulating properties against outdoor humidity, rainwater, and even noise. The bus or tractor windows enclosures were constructed out of glass elements surrounded by a dense rubber window locking gasket. The rubber frame provided a secured weather strip seal solution, and was usually inserted securely between a metal body panel and a glass window. Such windows insured resistance to high heat and freezing temperatures, which make them perfect for temperature fluctuations from one season to another as well as sustained sun exposure on south-oriented facades. Nevertheless, before the thermopane enclosures of the post-socialist years, the bus and tractor cab windows were the closest to a protective enclosure that one could acquire on the socialist market with its heavy scarcity.



Fig. 11 “Mr. Georgica’s neat balcony” (above) from Florin Poenaru research on balcony enclosure in the city of Constanta, Romania. The balcony enclosure presented here is a structural mixture between glass and a metal net with decorative purposes. On the right we have an instance of balcony enclosure with the ‘bus window’ system.²⁶² The bus on the right is a typical late 60s model.



Fig. 12 The image on the left represents balcony enclosures from the city of Alexandria. The enclosures are the motor vehicles windows either from tractors or from buses. The Romanian forum user who posted the image revealed what was believed the origin of such enclosures as the old I.M.A.I.A factory near Roşiori de Vede and the city of Alexandria.²⁶³

The ill-famed thermopane enclosures were the windows of choice in the post-socialist years. These enclosures, with the thermal panes and double-glazed window system, insured a degree of thermal, hygrothermal, and noise protection that was better than any of the previous enclosure systems used during the late socialist years. One can hardly contest their efficiency, as the system became the main target for scorn and dismay in the unfolding struggles for the ‘face’ of the post-socialist city.

It goes without saying that the thermopane enclosures of the transitional years did not sit well with the ‘vernacularization’ of the socialist façade.²⁶⁴ The merger of ‘rural’ practices with urban aesthetics complicated the cultural relationships involving these threshold spaces. For some architects, to vernacularize these liminal spatial transgressions meant associating such practices with the rural migrants. The direct connection between lack of social integration and the transgressive acts of spatial appropriation were never explicit. The balcony enclosures were relegated to the informal, the illegal, and the second economy. For architects, the enclosures of balconies and loggias were informal acts, in an informality that needed to be removed, tamed, and cleaned. By referencing the rural spaces of the *prispa* or *cerdacul* (porch) and their ‘rural’ purity, architects invoked the order and preservation of a claimed ‘pastoral’ past. An article by the architect Thruman, as I discuss below, is the most eloquent example of such a position. The argument of this chapter is built upon this tension between the formal, informal, and so-called ‘vernacular’ balcony.

The story of the uses and missues of apartments is as diverse and conflicted as one might imagine for such a large housng stock. Between 2007 and 2008, the Romanian social anthropologist Florin Poenaru conducted a social study of balcony enclosures in the city of Costanta (see Fig. 11).²⁶⁵ In this study, Poenaru revealed the story of the Sezen family, which, in the form of young couple, had moved into a newly-acquired two-bedroom apartment in the early ’80s. Poenaru’s “kitchen with a view” story is telling of a phenomenon that one could often encounter in the Romanian apartments during late socialism. The case of the Sezen family reveals a paradigmatic model of family adaptation to socio-economic changes that were beyond their ability to control.

The austerity measures of the ’80s forced the young couple into co-habitation with their in-laws. When the family grew with the arrival of their first child, they acted according to the new situation: the couple converted the living room into a bedroom for the grandparents, while they extended the kitchen onto the balcony, which also served as passageway to a small living room in lieu of the old one. The balcony, enclosed with the usual metal and glass framing, became the kitchen window through which the mother remembers supervising her child playing in the front-yard of the block of flats. For her, the retrofitted kitchen window gained a new meaning, that of comfort, as she was able to observe her child playing safely outdoors, under her own strict supervision.²⁶⁶



Fig. 13 Balcony enclosures using the thermopane enclosure system. A practice often found in the post-socialist era

The architects designed the standardized apartments with balconies. In general terms, and according to the project directives, the housing units all had at least one balcony or loggia. Their number in each apartment would grow with the number of rooms. By the early '80s, apartments located in downtowns or along main boulevards would usually have two or three balconies. The balconies were located according to adjacent room function and the orientation of the apartment building in relation to the sun. For some residents, it was paramount to have the balcony near the kitchen so that they could use it to smoke a cigarette and drink their morning coffee. For others, it was necessary to have the balcony near the bedroom, so that they could step outside for fresh air and sunshine. Transversal apartments, meaning units located transversally across the building – the double-façade units – had two balconies, one on each exterior wall. For such apartments, in which the bedrooms received greater sun exposure, architects provided a loggia that, on the opposite side the balcony, connected with and formed part of the kitchen. Moreover, in the process of housing distribution, apartments with balconies were in great demand. More often than not, workers on the factories' housing waiting lists rejected flats that did not provide for exterior access through balconies. Immediate access to the outdoors was considered necessary, especially in the case of high-rise apartment buildings.

The standardization and prefabrication systems played a crucial role in the advent of balcony and loggias enclosures in the early '80s. The predominance of prefabrication systems in housing construction led not only to the creation of the balcony and loggia enclosures, but also the ill-famed interior modifications of

apartments, as residents were looking for functional and spatial flexibility, especially in the personal property apartments where housing exchanges were impossible. Several questions must be addressed in this respect: what was the connection between standardization and balcony enclosure? What were the prefabrication's shortcomings that might have led to the balcony and loggia enclosures?

The questions motivate here a brief analysis of the state of prefabrication and housing construction in the early '80s. According to a 1981 report of the CNIT (Consiliul Național al Inginerilor și Tehnicienilor [The National Council of Engineers and Technicians]) on "The Improvement in the Quality of Buildings" (*Înbunătățirea calității clădirilor de locuit*), from the Cluj-Napoca conference on construction and prefabrication, the construction systems of 'closed prefabrication' generated rigid, inflexible, and mostly small housing units, as seen in chapter one of this dissertation. Some of the authors concluded that the propensity for closed prefabrication could be associated, among other factors (discussed in the previous chapters) with economic constraints and access to technology. Additionally, in the late '70s, the construction industry encountered reduced access to qualified construction site labor. The reports revealed that in 1981 the construction industry designed residential apartment buildings throughout the country by using type-projects for over 90% of all the large residential ensembles built.²⁶⁷ In 1980, according to Decree no. 418/1980, the central planning institutions selected 33 type-projects from a pool of existing type-projects, and which could be modified according to regional demands.²⁶⁸

The architects of the time diversified the apartments and the building clusters by number of rooms, building height, seismic region, and construction systems (total prefabrication, partial prefabrication, masonry systems, mixed masonry/prefabrication systems, and frame structure).^{269,270} Those architects who were based in regional institutions (outside the capital) decided on the type and scale of diversification according to local site conditions and requirements.²⁷¹ In the book *Locuința Contemporană* [The Contemporary Dwelling], the engineer Florin Dabija discusses some of the important aspects of prefabrication, including its potentialities and shortcomings. There was no substantive and direct connection between prefabrication systems and balcony enclosures.

However, the lack of spatial flexibility for housing units that could not be exchanged remained a thorny issue for the architects who designed apartment buildings, as much as it made living in such units very difficult when unforeseen changes in the life of a family appeared. As discussed in chapter one, the features in question included open and closed prefabrication using prefabricated elements like slabs, columns, and prefabricated panels for facades, and an underdeveloped technology of pre-stressed frame construction. The design of the apartments reflected the inflexibility of prefabricated construction systems, the rigidity of the uses of space, and the propensity for 'form' by way of 'national specificity' as priorities in housing design. Florin Dabija summed up the negative factors that may have been conducive to inhabitants' decisions to enclose their balcony or loggia, and in so doing to transform the original designed space of their apartments. The extensive use of large prefabricated panels induced hygrothermal problems.

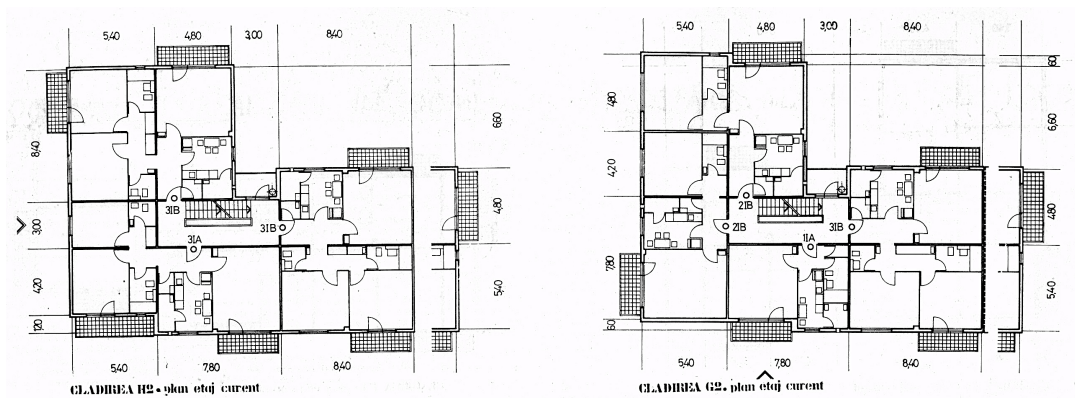


Fig. 14 An example of the IPCT-designed type-project in the early 80s. One can easily observe how each apartment has at least one balcony. The apartment building presented here was the result of a group of architects, under the leadership of architect Rodica Turicu with the partnership of architect Ioana Berceanu. The architects designed this particular type-project for seismic zones 6 and 7 in a climate zone nr. III. The structural system was of pre-stressed concrete structure.²⁷²

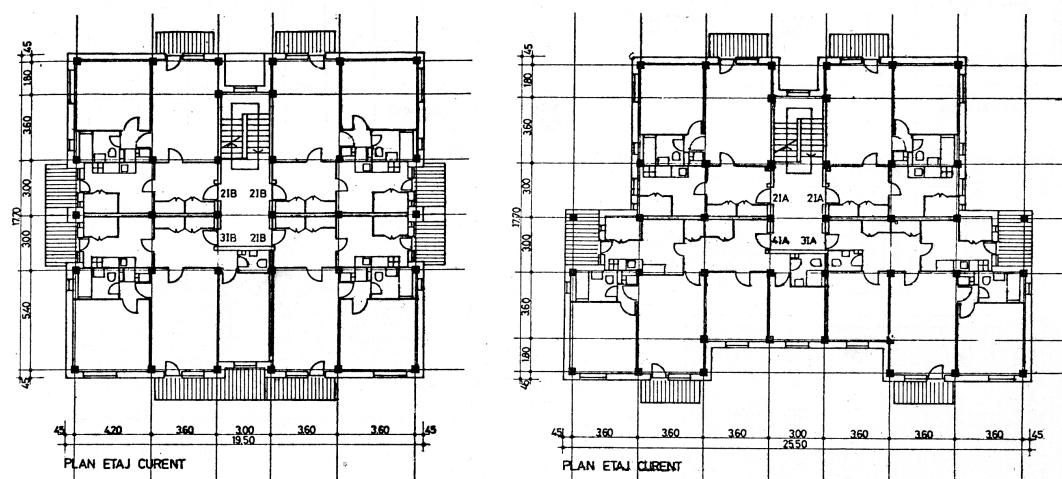


Fig. 15 In the case of this type-project we note the corner façade with a balcony for each exterior wall. This apartment building has a concrete frame system and serves the seismic zone 6 and 7. The frame construction system allows for commercial space at the ground floor. The concrete frame system also allows for more flexibility in the interior space of the housing units.²⁷³

The buildings with hygrothermal deficiencies included residential buildings constructed in their entirety out of prefabricated panels, or with a mixed system such as a masonry structure with prefabricated façade panels.²⁷⁴ The energy crisis lowered the standard temperature in the interior of apartments to 18 degrees Celsius (64.4 degrees Fahrenheit), aggravating the condensation and mold that would form inside the

apartments due to a hygrothermal unbalance.²⁷⁵ For example, in the case of the five-story apartment building with a construction system of large prefabricated concrete panels, approximately 80% of the apartments had condensation problems,²⁷⁶ as did 12% of all apartment buildings.²⁷⁷ Enclosing the balcony or loggia led to an irrational consumption of energy, as the inhabitants would use radiators and gas stoves for heating in about half of all cases and with an average of at least 3 hours a day.

Balconiada: Architects in Search for Aesthetic Deliverance

If the horizontality so present in the architecture of the '50s and '60s presented the apartment 'block' as an object of modernist design, the post-modern façade, emerging in the late '70s, engaged the urban boulevards with fragmented façades. To be 'locked' into a one-bedroom, or any standardized, apartment was not conducive to a comfortable lifestyle. This fact made the notion of flexibility important, and it became the hallmark of architecture in the late '70s and all through the '80s. Flexibility in the use of space was synonymous with achieving the desired housing comfort. The association between apartment design and family development became a concern of architects throughout the '70s. Families are not fixed social entities. By the notion of 'family cycle' was understood the contraction and expansion of a family over time through its own development (births, marriages or departures of young adults, and deaths), while the apartments remained the same. Judging by many one-bedroom apartments, they became tight shells, which residents sought to either reshape, or engaged in apartment exchanges.

According to an article on balconies and loggias from 1982, homes in Romania and Hungary tended to suggest "an openness towards nature."²⁷⁸ "A small porch [*prispa*], a veranda [*pridvorul*], and the traditional balcony [*cerdacul*] are elements of connection with the others, projection of the interior towards the exterior. These functions, in the contemporary blocks of flats, are fulfilled by the balconies and loggias."²⁷⁹

References to traditional spaces are often found in Romanian peasant houses. The use of the balcony in the design of standardized blocks of flats was often an argument used to justify not only the extensive use of this architectural form, but also the enclosing of it, as the case of verandas, with similar rural references. In the '80s, the play on façade compositions reached another level. In the early 'modernist' years, the balconies were horizontal bands of endless orderly rhythms; in this period, the curved forms of balconies dominated cityscapes. Examples include the blocks of flats built in Bucharest by the architects Cristian Severin and Mihaela Hariton.

As the problem of the balcony enclosures reached the attention of the IPCT teams, some standardized projects were proposed with glass enclosures shown as found in *Arhitectura* magazine. According to the sociologist Dorel Abraham, discussions of this took place in meetings at managerial levels of the IPCT. Abraham himself, who witnessed some of these discussions, informed me that architects proposed projects such as these, and the existence of the balconies was discussed, with some wondering whether balconies should be designed or not. Enclosing balconies

was recognized as an alarming possibility, and little discussed. The only reference to this that I have found in the literature is a discussion in *Arhitectura* 2/1982, in an article authored by Gheorghe Leahu, in a speech at the Union of Architects Plenum about the quality of housing units.



Fig. 16 The imagery introspection ends with a more hopeful depiction of an open balcony, which displayed a much-desired situation. The residents were sitting at a table on the balcony surrounded by flowerpots hanging from the ceiling and on the balcony parapet.²⁸⁰

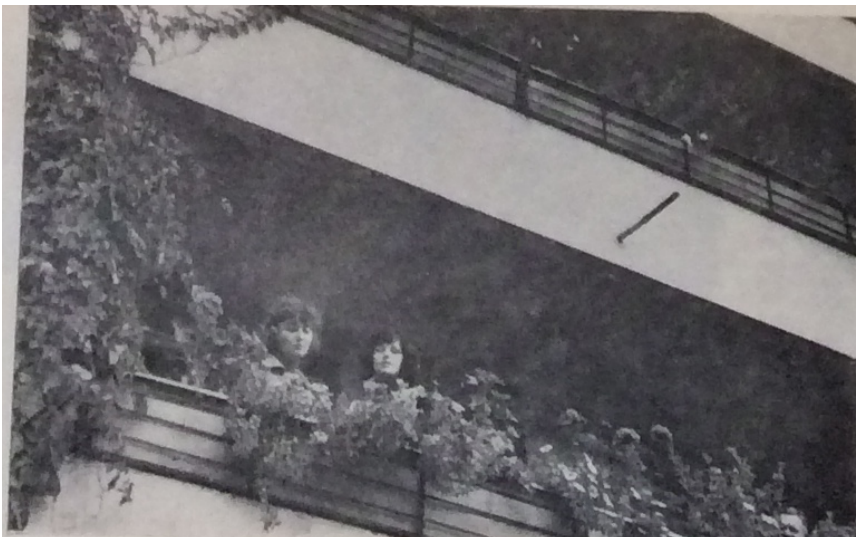


Fig. 17 An idyllic look at what the balcony was meant to be, a place for people, vegetation, flowers.²⁸¹

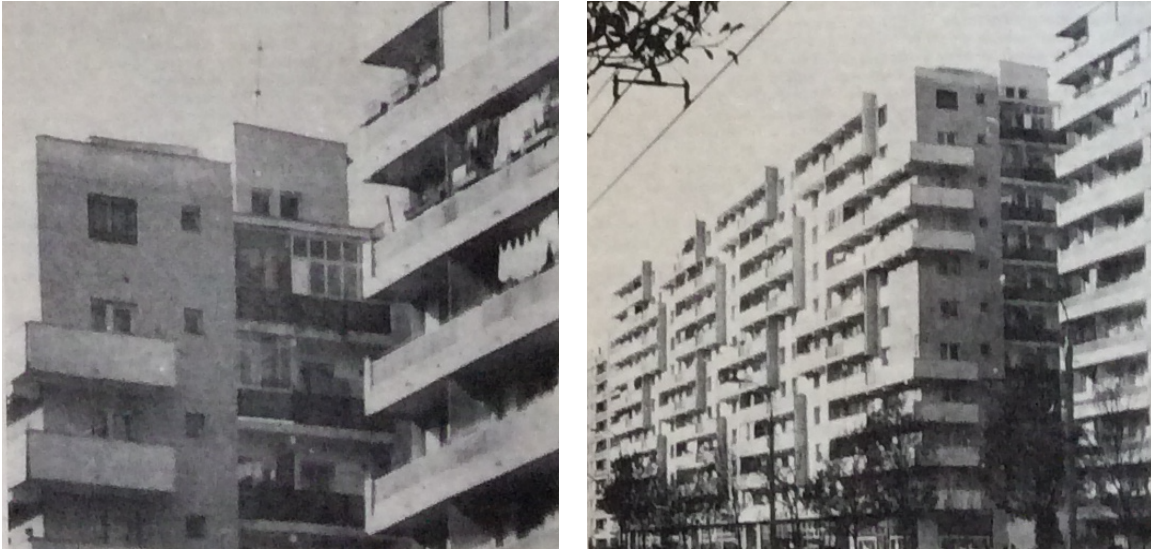


Fig. 18 Blocks of flat in Bucharest of the 80s showing enclosed balconies and laundry hanging in everybody's sight.

The results of inhabitants' interventions in the façades of apartment buildings was an issue that was at the heart of many debates within the architecture profession. Some architects argued that there was a need for their profession to adjust its understanding of residents' ways of living and change the way their apartments were designed. At the same time, other architects would demand that municipalities enforce regulations designed to correct the residents' behavior, alluding to their poor urban culture and inability to adapt to urban environments.²⁸²

The Vernacularized Balcony

"About this very small component of the housing unit, it would seem trivial to speak of, on such an occasion. But the modifications phenomenon, on a mass scale, of the functions of the apartments and the façades of buildings, out of some residents' initiatives, modifications that harm the aesthetic attributes of buildings, compromising the hygiene and comfort of the modern dwellings – [these things] architects should not ignore. Considering how much we speak of [national] specifics in architecture nowadays."²⁸³ In his article, "The Balcony and the Loggia in the New Housing Buildings," Thurman, as lead architect for the city of Târgu Mureș, summed up just a few of the issues that the balconies and loggias of the socialist apartment buildings had brought to the fore. Thurman supports his argument against balcony and loggias enclosures with a study by the department of Hygiene of the Medical and Pharmaceutical Institute of Târgu Mureș, Report no. 609, in 1980. From this report resulted the judgment that: "The modifications of the microclimate through balcony enclosures have negative effects on residents' health. Next to illnesses, which cannot be addressed by simple medication, the immune system is affected, work productivity is impeded, and there is a high chance for illnesses to appear."²⁸⁴

Many architects were quick to point to the insignificance of such an architectural element. When enclosed in a random and improvised manner, it could significantly alter the architectural function of the façade. The result was the architects' worst nightmare: disorder. By 1982, architects already considered the balcony and loggia enclosures a mass phenomenon demanding their attention. At the Union of Romanian Architects Plenary session in 1981, the architect Gheorghe Leahu expressed an equivalent level of opposition to a phenomena that was then spreading at an alarming rate throughout the new socialist blocks of flats. In the meeting, Leahu presented the balcony and loggia enclosures as a phenomenon that "directly affects the state's efforts and the work of architects and construction engineers, while altering the compositional qualities of the new housing architecture."²⁸⁵ In the same issue of *Arhitectura*, the sociologist Dorel Abraham published for the first time some of the sociological research on urban housing. Even though the balcony and loggia enclosures were already visible in the early '70s, the architects seem to have paid little attention to them. By the time of the debate in the early '80s, different state institutions were conducting interdisciplinary research in the areas of sociology, hygiene, and health. One could hardly deny the gravity with which the phenomenon at hand was being perceived. However, a microanalysis of this phenomenon would do little justice to the complexity that lies behind its inception.

The inhabitants' appropriation of balconies and loggias in urban areas cannot be understood without contextualizing their underpinnings on a larger scale. Thus, as I maintain in this chapter, the act of spatial appropriation that is under discussion here relates to questions of housing policy, urban planning, and ultimately economic strategies that the Communist leadership ultimately approached. In the previous chapters, I have shown how a new housing tenure emerged, and how at times housing exchanges resolved the spatial flexibility question and allowed for a better adaptation of apartments to family cycle and budgetary constraints. More importantly, I have also shown how housing tenure fueled space appropriations and interior transformations, as personal property apartments could not be exchanged, forcing families to make do with what they had purchased.

Moreover, the 1968 changes in urban planning policy played a key role in the advent of spatial transgression and housing negotiations in late socialism. After the administrative transformation of the Romanian territory, Housing Law #9 of 1968 differentiated the apartment types at the regional level. The policy aimed at the still-persisting housing shortages of the 50s and the 60s while maintaining a strict standard of over-densification, serving the demands of economic efficiency. Because of budgetary constraints, this housing policy generated a large housing stock of one-bedroom apartments built between 1970 and 1980 (the total number of such units was 1,389,7590), which amounted to 52% of the total housing stock produced in this period.²⁸⁶

The 1968 decision also led to what I call the urbanism of prestige. This included a city planning strategy that concentrated large apartment buildings along main boulevards of cities or in what became known as the 'civic centers.'²⁸⁷ These buildings of every functional type, be it residential, commercial, or that of public institutions, were endowed by the architects with nationalist signifiers of 'Romania-

ness', and it was partly in relation to this that the balcony debate emerged. The effort subscribed to the emerging Communist leadership's ambition for national independence, which transpired partly in the architectural profession by asserting a cultural commitment to *national specificity*. As an originally American model, traditionally the civic center model uses institutional and commercial buildings, not apartment buildings, to create new urban centers.²⁸⁸ The new urban strategy located, in an unconventional way, residential buildings with little regard to environmental factors such as sun orientation, noise exposure, and dominant wind trajectories. Thus, a housing policy that initiated the construction of many undersized housing units in an effort to resolve the problem of housing co-habitation (several families inhabiting the same housing unit), coupled with questionable urban development strategies, laid the ground for the highly contested spatial transgressions under discussion in this study.

"It is easy to acknowledge that, besides the shape and the location specific to each block of flats, what makes them unique is exactly the appearance of the loggias and balconies." Architects' uses of balconies extended to their role as elements of differentiation. The passers-by could hardly differentiate one apartment building from another when the use of type-projects led to identical apartment buildings, as many such buildings had similar spatial planning that led to similar facades.²⁸⁹ Contrary to the architects' position, the engineer Petru Vernescu, then the head of IPCT, criticized the architectural field's propensity to identify its human concerns with the resort to a variety of façade projections embodied by balconies and other volumetric artifices. Instead, he argued that the 'humanism' specific to architecture does not depend, in absolute terms, on the quality of its design; there are many buildings in different countries with a monotonous aesthetic, with simple forms but made out of pleasant materials, well-constructed systems, including buildings without 'many balconies'.

Vernacularization for Comfort

Despite some evolution in standardized housing design, the *vernacularization* processes increased markedly in the '80s. As mentioned, the energy crisis that had started the previous decade and in Romania was continuing, was one of the causes. Another trigger for vernacularization was the new trajectory of urban planning: 'closed urbanism', which meant aligning tall apartment buildings along broad boulevards, creating a 'tunnel' effect, which caused strong winds to flow between these constructions, weakening the already flimsy wood window frames and balcony doors on façades facing the high-traffic boulevards. What is interesting is that those apartment transformations, especially those involving the closing-off of balconies, were largely associated with one-bedroom apartments, according to studies that came out of the SocLab in the mid-'80s. Dorel Abraham argues that in sociological research of an interdisciplinary nature it is paramount for architects to understand inhabitants' adaptations of their dwelling to fit their ways of living. Sometimes the changes are due to changes in the demographic structure of the family, which can bring with them some lifestyle changes.

Currently, as research shows, even with the highly-standardized typology and low degree of adaptability of Romanian apartments, almost 40% of them present at

least one modification. Among the total number of modifications, 55% are structural modifications. The most common ones are enlargements of the hallway achieved by dismantling storage areas to obtain a multifunctional room, enlargement of usable space by an accumulation of auxiliary spaces such as a storage room, or the enclosure of a loggia or balcony. Such modifications are most common for one- and two-bedroom apartments.²⁹⁰

Indeed, the high number of one- and two-bedroom apartments is a particularly interesting phenomenon. The one-bedroom apartment was seen as a solution for achieving social comfort. The research results from the SocLab in the early 1980s reveals that in 1986, 82% of the apartments built were one- or two-bedroom units,²⁹¹ though many families were large enough to need larger apartments. How did this come about? With findings from archival materials of the Romanian Communist Party, I will show that this phenomenon may be, at least partially, explained by the political events of 1968, which dramatically changed the trajectory of the nation's housing program and laid the ground for what Ivan Tosics called the "golden age of public housing" throughout the '70s.²⁹²

In today's professional discourse, the balcony enclosure phenomenon in Romania is considered to be not a continuation of a previous set of ownership relations, based on socialist morality and de facto property rights, but an outcome of rural migrants' inability to adapt to urban culture. Attributing the balcony enclosure phenomenon to the clash between existing urban elites and rural migrants fails to account for what socialist social change entails, and also fails to address or understand workers' agency in the socialist city as a favored class with the full rights and powers of legal ownership. Socialist workers and their rural backgrounds have become the centerpiece of critique on the part of the intelligentsia in post-socialist Romania. However, the current intellectual discourse fails to account for several new realities of the post-socialist city, like the thermal rehabilitation of the socialist apartment buildings, the changes in property relations, and a lack of coherent state regulations at local levels. Furthermore, new consumer practices pressure residents into making domestic decisions that go beyond their means or choices, adding more pressure to already financially stranded citizens.

Under the liberal state, former socialist neighborhoods in Romania have been increasingly politically and financially neglected and epistemologically and socially marginalized. Users (residents) are more constrained in today's post-socialist times in terms of their status position, the uses of space (balconies), and the level of 'freedom' of the housing market and homeownership. This is influenced by several factors: (1) the vilification of former socialist neighborhoods in discourse due to their appropriation of balconies changing the urban face of the city; and (3) ultimately, the urban intellectual elite's blaming the rural background of migrant workers living in former socialist neighborhoods for their use of balconies in ways unbecoming of real urban dwellers.

Regarding the role of architects, one can conclude that there was a significant shift of power from the users to the architects, as the power of the latter increased after the fall of the Communist regime. Furthermore, this was influenced by three different factors: (1) the role of the architect as a consultant in the local administration; (2) the

shift from preeminence of class to professional, independent architects with no direct ties to government structures; and (3) the architects' belonging at the same time to a new striving middle class.

At the level of the built environment and urban evolution, the differentiation of the socialist and the post-socialist periods is a myth, fueled by dissent-oriented discourse, and designed to separate the two eras as ideologically and politically different. Property relations have also displayed a natural continuation from personal property to private property. This difference is a superficial construct based upon a new form of economic relations: consumerism.

The literature on the mechanisms of the socialist system has focused on issues of ownership, whether this is or is not a matter of social class, and on the nature of the class structure, but there has been no specific study of resource allocation or the manner in which it would specifically apply to the housing stock. It is important to understand how this dynamic relates to people's access to the housing stock as well as how it relates to the formation of housing complexes. Socialist neighborhoods are composed of a complex mixture of different ethnicities, professional types, social statuses, and income levels. These distinctions were also the main drivers of the allocation mechanism during the 1950s and 1960s, when the State launched a massive industrialization process, and housing allocation was made through different industries and manufacturing enterprises.

Market demands now require residents to invest in the thermal rehabilitation program. Private and public spaces are no longer defined against an imposing state, but against an imposing market. People are resisting new regulations by not complying with the demands of the Thermal Rehabilitation Program due to their lack of financial resources or access to state funds. Professionals and administrators have not been able to introduce a reliable and functional system that provides a rational context for harmonious, holistic, and aesthetically pleasing interventions into the 'socialist' façade. Ultimately, the example of housing allocation and the role of the Romanian Communist state and its bureaucratic mechanism show the dynamics involved between the state and its citizens and how the state redefined this relationship (under economic pressure).

Housing allocation processes played a crucial role in the spatial formation of socialist neighborhoods. Since factories and state institutions were the primary state housing allocators, blue- and white-collar workers were equally beneficiaries of this process. However, what was once a homogeneous spatial redistribution changed drastically in the moment of new policy reform in the early 1970s, and the commercialization of state housing stock redefined accessibility to housing based on income. Now workers with minimal income would have less financial capacity to access better-quality flats compared with professionals or the new socialist elite. From 1975 to the mid-'80s, Romania struggled through harsh economic austerity measures. The state brought housing construction to a minimum, and access to cities for work opportunities was drastically curtailed. Weakened social and economic provisions pushed the population through food rationalization, power outages, and limited access to consumer products.

The question of the resident-migrant, as a social problem and as a factor of "ghettoization," speaks of the entrenched class dichotomy of the Romanian urban culture, in particular, and the self-vilification in general, often revealed by the anti-communist discourse. Such vitriolic and demeaning characterizations of a considerably broad category of the Romanian population would have been somehow understandable for the transitional years of the '90s. However, finding the same attitude well into 2006 stands as an incomprehensible testament to the still retrograde and intolerant class position. A class-based stance further fueled by the disdain against the societal transformations imposed by the communist leadership. The class inversion, where power lies within the working class, eroded what, up until the World War II, was profoundly embedded into a political system which benefited, for the most part, the well-to-do and where ruling powers maintained the vast majority of the population segregated along ethnic and economic lines. To think of Romania as a ghettoized country, only by way of rural migrants' alleged incapacity to adapt to urban settings, is to purposely ignore the real social and economic factors that maintained Romania at 'backwardness,' poverty and which sustained the population's political disfranchisement.

Michał Murawski's proposition of (still-) socialist urbanism opens a long-awaited discussion on the failure mantra in the post-socialist era. We are witnessing a critical undertaking of the liberal hegemony, a "de-planning," in Murawski's words, followed by the neoliberal city's spatial and economic stratification. In his scathing critique of the recent literature on East and Central European built socialism, Murawski situates the dwellings, public facilities, and most institutional manifestations of the socialist era, at the intersection at two emerging ethnographic and historic discourses: one perceiving socialism as a failure of its over-centering on economic development driven by industrialization and the other on the aesthetic and cultural decomposition.²⁹³

The author concludes "by suggesting pathways for a comparative scholarship that consider built socialism in terms of not only collapse and disintegration, but also success and endurance, not simply of either economy or aesthetics, but also their reciprocal inter-determination and co-dependence. We must look beyond the lens of imported theories and consider "vernacular" or "emic" concepts rooted in the specificities and singularities of the socialist city itself." It is with this proposition in mind that this chapter aims to unravel the inner 'self' of built socialism, by situating the vernacular, per se, as an intrinsic part of the socialist era where, most peculiarly, one can address questions of individual agency, social and political participation.

The space appropriation of balconies reshaped the face of the 'socialist' cityscape. The two intrinsically social phenomena evolved in tandem, while the already disintegrating political progress towards a 'bright' and long-awaited communist future fell prey to its contradictions. The agents of vernacularization revealed an intrinsic resistance not to the workings of the communist state, but to the architect's ambitions for promoting urban upper-middle-class aesthetic values. Values that the elite architects deemed superior to those of the everyday urban 'peasant' populating most state-provided municipal housing units.

Conclusion: Entangled Modernities

In the post-socialist 90s, many former dissidents claimed that Communism in Romania was a failed attempt at modernization,²⁹⁴ and as such distinct from its Western European counterparts. This idea was widespread, with the new market liberalism identified with progress. The Communist experience became recognized as a question of modernity and ‘the modern’.

The emerging elites in the field of architecture were no different. In the early eras of the People’s Republic, the profession of architecture was swiftly revolutionized and transformed from a ‘liberal’, privatized, and highly individualized endeavor into one embedded in the mechanisms of spatial production under the bureaucratic and technocratic state construction institutions.²⁹⁵ The profession lost its creative edge through the primacy of concerns for the economic and the technical. The hyperstandardization of the post-war years was followed by urban housing developments of high density and inflexible serial project-directives implemented by way of constrictive building permits and strict quantitative priorities based on social units (the family) rather than individuals.

The trope of failure, often employed in association with the Communist form of modernity, was understood as pointing to the inadequacies in the relationship between the state and its governing bodies and the society overall. It also was thought of as explaining various economic, social, and cultural problems. These included a poor educational system, a corrupt and overly empowered bureaucracy, a perpetual state of economic scarcity, dependence on informal networks, and even the ‘religiosity’ of the plan. Politically, the system was characterized by ideological dogmatism, lack of plurality, indoctrination, and pervasive corruption. Much of this can hardly be denied. However, such a descriptive approach leaves much to be said about what the Communist system ultimately achieved for its target ‘constituency’. Without a doubt, the emerging working class—the urban working class and ‘converted’ rural migrants alike—were the primary beneficiaries of what the system had to offer. However, the benefits of the socialist welfare state extended well beyond class boundaries.

Understood as a liberating and untainted dissident elite, the liberal leadership of the early post-socialist era built its own political and intellectual legitimacy on the basis of the economic loss of an entire social group: blue-collar workers.²⁹⁶ The ‘marginal’ residential belts of the socialist city housed the majority of the working people. With the failure argument at the forefront, the benefits reaped by the newly disenfranchised proletariat came last. Yet, under socialism there were some positive developments that the failure argument overlooks. These included increased social mobility, unrestricted access to jobs, affordable housing, new educational and health infrastructure, the rise of new professions, improvements in the quality of life, and a broad regional economic development.²⁹⁷ Yet, the “actually-existing success”²⁹⁸ of the Communist heritage was buried by this trope of failure.

Moreover, as the post-socialist housing discourse revealed, the social and economic changes were followed by a cultural and aesthetic decline. The socialist housing project was seen as only reflecting a drab modernism, plagued by oversimplicity and uniformity. Much historiography in the early post-socialist period reduced the housing standardization to industrially-embedded construction practices, which limited architects' creative agency. The socialist neighborhood was now regarded as the outcome of a relentless serialization of type-projects by way of building permits and project-directives. Under the dominance of this narrative, the politically-driven transition moved architecture further towards fulfilling the technocratic ends of economic efficiency and the merely statistical treatment of popular demands.

It is within this context that I have situated the politics of housing occupancy, and the vernacularized housing practices analyzed in this dissertation. I argue that there was a dense and productive network of interconnections between the inhabitants of state-provided urban housing units, the architects working in government institutions, and the Communist state leadership. This was possible only through a sustained promotion of interdisciplinarity within state design institutions. The collaborative design- and construction-related disciplines (such as architecture and construction engineering), the social sciences (sociology, economics, law), and health-related domains of architectural and planning research and practice as bound by urban planning policies, institutionally brought together under state tutelage, were inclusive of residents' effective political actions with regard to housing occupancy, including the mechanisms of housing allocation, apartment exchanges, and the vernacularized processes of space appropriation. The study concludes that because of these things, the technocratic inputs leading to the subsequent system optimization steadily enhanced the quality of housing units towards the end of the socialist period.

As I have shown in the first part of this dissertation, the socialist era and its accompanying urban housing program evolved following what economists have called "unbalanced growth" and uneven development. The economic growth was driven by the priorities given to different aspects of the economy, partly in alternation. By this measure, the Communist leadership unevenly directed resources to the housing program. Particularly in the '50s and '60s, priority was given to the process of industrialization, while the development of housing received little attention. What it got was largely limited to the capital and a few of the secondary cities. In the first chapter, I argued that the socialist housing program began with some of the economic, political, and territorial transformations that materialized around the year 1968.

The Communist ambition for economic growth and social change was built upon the unidimensional development of heavy industry, an objective that, as I showed in the first chapter, was fully linked to more significant economic decisions within the CMEA and involving foreign trade. The paths of industrialization, and the drastic restrictions in lumber consumption in the '60s, inevitably lead to the construction industry's being reliant on prefabricated concrete panels. Economic constraints and poor political decisions removed the possibility of introducing thermal insulation of any kind, leaving the walls of most apartments bare, with no thermal protection, and for this reason making the 4 million urban apartments heavy consumers of energy.

With the territorial transformations of 1968, the development of urban housing was subject to efforts at regional and urban planning, with an explicit political agenda aimed at economic independence. The organizational transformation of the Romanian territory expanded the scale and enhanced the complexity of the housing stock, requiring interdisciplinary technocratic participation. The second chapter reveals and discusses the interdisciplinary partnership between sociology and architecture, going back to the interwar period, an intellectual legacy carried on by the work of the Bucharest-based Gustian school of sociology and one of its most prestigious students, Henri H. Stahl. This school, with its reliance on interdisciplinary knowledge production, was highly influential on architectural housing production during the late socialist period.

The ‘modern’ approach to housing provision through prefabrication and standardization provoked over time many debates among architects. On the one hand were concerns about density, flexibility, and adaptations of the housing unit to the family cycle; on the other, there were the limitations given by the dominant construction system, which was prefabrication. Strict processes of building permit applications were imposed by the project directives, and demand was not dictated by local need, but by central command resource allocation under the State Planning Commission.

By the early ’70s, architects began to recognize the inadequacy of mass-produced apartments to adapt to family changes in time. Critiques of the lack of flexibility, and the failure to accommodate to inhabitants’ future aspirations or changes in their way of life brought the standardized apartment to the close scrutiny of sociological researchers. To everybody’s surprise the phenomenon of apartment exchanges reached a staggering scale, especially in the Bucharest area. Already a minor practice in the late ’60s, the complex urban units of the ’70s caused this phenomenon to become accepted as necessary.

The 1953 housing policy had provided for the possibility of housing exchanges (see policy). Sociological studies are not clear when exactly the practice originated, but there is no doubt that in the early years of socialism the still scarce housing stock made housing exchanges rare. As Stahl commented, the housing exchanges were later successful in addressing the flexibility question. At the same time, the standardized apartment units provided little flexibility in adapting to family changes by birth, marriages, deaths and other perceived or unperceived events. This was an issue that became a major concern of architects. As sociological studies showed, questioning the very relevance of flexibility by design led to the conclusion that design answers to the flexibility question should remain a constant interest to the architectural profession, in light of the need for innovation.

The ‘socialist modern’ approach to architecture and urban planning aimed at the residents’ comfort as a fundamental part of the Communist vision. Within the ambivalent and all-encompassing notion of comfort, the theoretical articulations of housing betterment, coupled with a profound interest in the French-based theory of aspirations, was frequently used to justify and support decisions on the different trajectories of the socialist housing project. The somewhat malleable notion of

comfort, albeit useful, was also discussed in terms of the traditional/modern dichotomy, and given an ideological tenor thereby.

In the Romanian case, the priority given to providing shelter over aesthetics was not only at the core of the Communist leadership in housing development, but was also followed in the debates among different architects. Eventually, it became a sign of the very stigma carried by the architectural profession in Romania up to the present time. The ever-present economic constraints frequently obstructed hopes for a shift to include aesthetic priorities. The budgetary limitations remained constant throughout the entire socialist period, and they were reinforced by the strict austerity measures of the '80s.

The socialist housing program, in all its complexities, relied heavily upon the capacity of architectural design for innovation. The austerity measures of the mid-'70s called for the design integration of alternative energy sources, like solar panels and geothermal energy systems. Because of the substantial economic constraints, by 1989, few such projects had been implemented. They were not tied to ecological protections, but only reminiscent of the requirement for energy savings that were still prominent in the late '80s. In this context, achieving some thermal protection by doubling the façade was something residents could do without worrying about regulatory restrictions. Thus, considering the ubiquitous presence of balcony enclosures in Romanian apartments today, the study started by asking how the phenomenon emerged in the first place, and why municipal officials accepted the enclosure of balconies to the great extent that they did. It has been seen that by 1989 the balcony enclosures, to the chagrin of many architects, had become widely accepted as an urban reality.

The research coming out of the centralized construction institutions tried to adapt to this emerging trend. As shown in the third chapter, some of the proposed project-directives included as design solutions apartment buildings with enclosed balconies. In these new proposals, the balcony remained an essential element in an apartment's functional qualities, which might be used as a verandah or a greenhouse. If the doubling of the façades had remained under the control of the architectural discipline, the phenomenon of space appropriation would probably have remained uncontested. In fact, the crisis of the urban cityscape remained an under-discussed and appreciated topic among architects. Without the residents' initiative, their negotiating power with city officials would have largely escaped the architects' notice, while the their demands for spatial appropriation might have been trivialized into oblivion.

In the final chapter, I argued that the contested socialist façade of the residential buildings became a testament to the possible expansion of the public space, rendering the acts of spatial appropriation liminal and in-between different political manifestations of the everyday. By encroaching into the semi-public space of the balconies and terraces, residents advanced citizenship claims in an emerging new public sphere, where the politics of housing occupation became visible and transgressed the subtlety of the appropriation of housing's allocative and linked occupational processes by apartment exchanges. It is this visibility that most led to my interest in exploring by advancement of the vernacularization argument. It is this visibility of an emerging new public that was the main cause of the vernacularization of the practice of spatial appropriation. And without doubt, it gained value by

revealing the apparent disconnect between architecture design and people's needs, and the contradictions between economic, political decisions, and social outcomes. Paradoxically, the transgressive actions disclosed the interconnection of the social, aesthetic, and economic, with regard to these small and apparently insignificant spaces. In this respect, the entangled practices of Communist modernity revealed the professed relationality, further strengthening the complexity of the socialist everyday, and bypassing the simplicity of the binary private/public divide.

The city officials accepted the doubling of façades²⁹⁹ by turning a blind eye³⁰⁰ in light of the austerity measures that the Communist leadership promoted in the late '70s, especially the energy crisis, which, more often than not, left apartment dwellers exposed to thermal discomfort.³⁰¹ The performative municipal restrictions³⁰² encouraged the trend and posed intermediary concerns in the relationship between inhabitants and state officials. To address what had already become a mass practice, the IPCT architecture teams proposed project-directives with façade designs in which balconies and loggias were included in the architectural solution. The space of the balcony is presented as a liminal, intermediary space, glass-protected from the outside, though still maintaining its semi-public autonomy.

Despite the economic austerity of the '80s, the housing program continued full-fledged. Notwithstanding all of the shortcomings of the socialist housing program, I have maintained that this massive project involved a steady improvement in the quality of apartments, especially concerning the issues of density and size. The actions and reactions of the population became a part of the political decision-making, in contrast with the system's rigidity and its top-down approach.

If we dare to try to understand this period as involving a complex modernizing process with different actors responding to the actions of others, and one not essentially different than its Western European counterpart, while abandoning the dominant anti-Communist rhetoric, we may find ourselves open to different political possibilities.³⁰³ We at least could look back on the socialist context as one in which the architecture of housing maintained its civic commitment. At the same time, architects could rediscover the importance of their own political role within an alternative public space of urban housing production.

Notes

¹ Central Intelligence Agency CIA, "A Look Back ... The Prague Spring & the Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia — Central Intelligence Agency," accessed June 11, 2020, <https://www.cia.gov/news-information/featured-story-archive/2008-featured-story-archive/a-look-back-the-prague-spring-the-soviet.html#top>; See CIA Intelligence Memorandum, "Military Intervention in Czechoslovakia" (CIA, August 20, 1968).

² After the Stalinist Communist Party Secretary Antonin Novodny was deposed in December 1967, Dubček embarked on a novel, politically pluralist, decentralized, and less repressive political approach dubbed "Communism with a Human Face," in what

would become known as the Prague Spring. These attempts at reform struck the core of the Soviet concern to prevent the possible end of its domination in East Europe, which led to the invasion in August 1968. Albania and Romania were not a part of the military mission, and Albania withdrew from the Warsaw Pact later that year.

³ John Michael Montias, *Economic Development in Communist Rumania* (MIT Press, 1967). Ironically, the dissenting Romanian economic position within the CMEA (the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) had at its center the conflict of economic trade interests between Czechoslovakia and Romania, as revealed by the economist Montias.

⁴ “Apoteoza Lui Ceaușescu – 21 August 1968 [Ceaușescu’s Apotheosis - August 21, 1968],” [adevarul.ro](https://adevarul.ro/cultura/istorie/apoteoza-ceausescu-21-august-1968-1_50dc9b51596d72009141826b/index.html), 1356635255, https://adevarul.ro/cultura/istorie/apoteoza-ceausescu-21-august-1968-1_50dc9b51596d72009141826b/index.html.

⁵ P. Privitera, “Balconies in Traditional Urban Architecture through Typology and Solar Radiation,” in *Vernacular and Earthen Architecture: Conservation and Sustainability*, 2017, 669, <https://doi.org/10.1201/9781315267739-110>.

⁶ Augustin Stoica, “Communism as a Project for Modernization: The Romanian Case,” *Polish Sociological Review*, no. 120 (January 1, 1997): 316.

⁷ Lavinia Betea, ed., *August 21 1968. Apoteoza lui Ceaușescu* (Iași: Polirom, 2009).

⁸ French President Charles de Gaulle visited Romania in April 1968, and President Richard Nixon in 1969. Vladimir Tismăneanu and Bogdan Iacob, “Betrayed Promises: Nicolae Ceaușescu, the Romanian Communist Party, and the Crisis of 1968,” in *Promises of 1968*, ed. Vladimir Tismăneanu, NED-New edition, 1, Crisis, Illusion and Utopia (Central European University Press, 2011), 258, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7829/j.ctt1281xt.17>. A less-mentioned visit of a high-ranking state official was that of the newly-appointed President of the World Bank, Robert S. McNamara, in July 1968.

⁹ Stoica, “Communism as a Project for Modernization,” 316.

¹⁰ Montias, *Economic Development in Communist Rumania*.

¹¹ For an illuminating study of the new civic centers in the early 70s and throughout the 80s, see Alex Răuță, *Negocierea Centrului Civic. Arhitecți și politicieni în România secolului XX [Negotiating the Civic Center. Architects and Politicians in 20th Century Romania]* (București: Editura Universitară “Ion Mincu,” 2013).

¹² Residential buildings were placed in such a way that would follow the orientation of the sun and the direction of the wind, and be surrounded by green open areas, in an urbanism of prestige with buildings abutting plazas, main streets, and boulevards.

¹³ Ana Maria Zahariade, *Arhitectura în proiectul comunist : România 1944-1989 [Architecture in the Communist Project : Romania 1944-1989]* (București: Simetria, 2011), 60. Cited from *Arhitectura 2/1971*.

¹⁴ Zahariade, *Arhitectura în proiectul comunist : România 1944-1989 [Architecture in the Communist Project : Romania 1944-1989]*.

¹⁵ Zahariade, 61.

¹⁶ Miruna P. Stroe, “Modificarea Apartamentelor - Originea Unei Practici [The Modification of Apartments - The Origin of a Practice],” *Dilema Veche*, 2012, <http://dilemaveche.ro/sectiune/tema-saptamanii/articol/modificarea-apartamentelor-originea-unei-practici>.

¹⁷ Mélanie van der Hoorn, *Indispensable Eyesores: An Anthropology of Undesired Buildings* (Berghahn Books, 2009).

¹⁸ Gheorghe Leahu, "Luări de Cuvînt La Plenara U.A. Calitateta Locuinței [Speaking at the UA Plenum. The Housing Quality] - Arh. Gheorghe Leahu, the 'Proiect-București' Design Institute," *Arhitectura* 2, no. 195 (1982): 23.

¹⁹ Leahu, 23.

²⁰ Krisztina Fehérváry, *Politics in Color and Concrete: Socialist Materialities and the Middle Class in Hungary* (Indiana University Press, 2013), https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=JUtkAAAAQBAJ&rdid=book-JUtkAAAAQBAJ&rdot=1&source=gbs_vpt_read.

²¹ Dana Vais, "Type Projects as Tools: Housing Type Design in Communist Romania," *Architectural Histories* 8, no. 1 (August 25, 2020): 1, <https://doi.org/10.5334/ah.321>.

²² "Decret Nr 78 Din 5 Aprilie 1952 Pentru Normarea, Repartizarea Și Folosirea Suprafeței Locative Și Reglementarea Raporturilor Dintre Proprietari Și Chiriași" (1953), <http://www.lege-online.ro/lr-DECRET-78%20-1952-%2820001%29-%284%29.html>.

²³ Juliana Maxim, *The Socialist Life of Modern Architecture: Bucharest, 1949-1964* (Routledge, 2018), 6.

²⁴ Maxim, 24.

²⁵ Georgeta Bucheru, "Aspecte sociologice in abordarea diferentiata a temelor de locuinte [Sociological Aspects of Differential Approach of Housing Themes]," *Arhitectura*, 1969; M. Macavescu, "Adaptabilitatea Funcționalității Apartamentelor La Diversitatea Modurilor de Locuire [Functional Adaptability of Apartments to the Ways of Dwelling Diversity]" (București, 1981), IPCT Archive; Dorel Abraham, "Cercetări Sociologice Privind Calitatea Locuinței [Sociological Studies Regarding the Quality of the Housing Unit]," *Arhitectura* 2, no. 195 (1982): 19; Dumitru Sandu, "Consecințe ale calității locuinței asupra stării de sănătate a populației [Consequences of Housing Quality Over the State of Health of the Population]," in *Cercetări pluridisciplinare de ordin sociologic, arhitectural și urbanistic, privind locuirea în raport cu funcționalitatea apartamentelor și dotarilor socio-culturale aferente, executate după proiecte tip, inclusiv propuneri de îmbunătățirea acestora [Multidisciplinary Studies - Sociological, Architectural and Urban- Regarding Housing, Specifically the Functionality of Apartments and Socio-Cultural Facilities Developed as Standardized Projects, Including Proposal for Their Improvements] Contract no. 7041. Phase "Study" Volume I* (Bucharest: IPCT-The Research Laboratory of Sociological Studies, 1985); Cezarina Nicolau et al., "Opinii ale specialiștilor în legătură cu propunerile de îmbunătățire a condițiilor de locuit, prezentate în sintezele 1, 3, 4, 5 [Opinions of Specialists Regarding Living Conditions, Presented in the Synthesis # 1,3,4, and 5]," in *Cercetări pluridisciplinare de ordin sociologic, arhitectural și urbanistic, privind locuirea în raport cu funcționalitatea apartamentelor și dotarilor socio-culturale aferente, executate după proiecte tip, inclusiv propuneri de îmbunătățirea acestora [Multidisciplinary Studies -Sociological, Architectural and Urban- Regarding Housing, Specifically the Functionality of Apartments and Socio-Cultural Facilities Developed as Standardized Projects, Including Proposal for Their Improvements] Contract no. 7041. Phase "Synthesis Report"* (Bucharest: IPCT-The Research

Laboratory of Sociological Studies, 1985); M. Macavescu, "Locuinta Adaptabila Din Punct de Vedere Social," *Arhitectura* 1, no. 212 (1985).

²⁶ Late socialism refers to the period between 1970 and 1989. Based on the data accumulated so far, the construction of enclosed balconies started tentatively in late 1960, but developed more fully after the introduction of the new housing tenure (personal property) law and the new form of homeownership promulgated by it #4/1973.

²⁷ Andrei Terian, "Romania Inghesuita [Cramped Romania]," *Ziarul de Duminica*, 2006, <http://www.zf.ro/ziarul-de-duminica/romania-inghesuita-2881285/>.

²⁸ Mihail Caffé and Alexandra Florian, "Performanțele Locuinței Contemporane [Achievements of the Contemporary Dwelling]," in *Locuința Contemporană: Probleme Si Puncte de Vedere*, ed. Mihail Caffé (Editura Tehnică, 1987), 98; Gheorghe Sebestyén, "Notă: Confortul - Indicator al Eficienței Activității de Gospodărire Și Dezvoltare a Orașului [Note: The Comfort - Indicator of Efficiency in a City's Management and Development]," in *Locuința Contemporană: Probleme Și Puncte de Vedere [The Contemporary Dwelling: Problems and Perspectives]* (București: Editura tehnică, 1987), 236–37. We must understand their analysis in the context of architectural practice resulting from an indirect, and for the most part abstract, understanding of the inhabitants' requirements. The architectural design of the socialist years developed without direct client-architect relationships, a practice contradicting the way the profession had evolved historically.

²⁹ Caffé and Florian, "Performanțele Locuinței Contemporane [Achievements of the Contemporary Dwelling]," 98.

³⁰ Sebestyén considers the optimization of comfort from several points of view: (1) efficiency in movement—choosing the shortest distance between points A and B; (2) interior environment—the average temperature of the space should accommodate the human body's average temperature or the those of the individuals grouped within the space that accommodates them (the higher the number of people, the higher the temperature of the space); (3) interdependent factors like environmental temperature, which is closely connected to air movement and humidity; and finally, (4) that comfort also involves other factors that cannot be averaged, like the height of the people in the space, and the nature of inter-familial connections—the same apartment may be comfortable for one family based on its composition, and uncomfortable for another family of different composition. Sebestyén, "Notă: Confortul - Indicator al Eficienței Activității de Gospodărire Și Dezvoltare a Orașului [Note: The Comfort - Indicator of Efficiency in a City's Management and Development]," 236.

³¹ Sebestyén, 237.

³² Gheorghe Sebestyén, Mihail Caffé, and Alexandra Florian, "Elemente de sociologie în problema locuințelor [Sociological Aspects of the Housing Problem]," *Revista de filozofie* 11, no. 5 (1964): 619. This article marked one of the first attempts in the architecture-related literature to identify and explain the socio-economic relationships involved in housing design, urban development, and architecture through an articulation of the main qualitative and quantitative factors that underlay the housing program overall. The three architects published the article in the Romanian journal [Romanian title?] *Philosophical Review*. The significance of this article is multi-

faceted. It represents one of the earliest attempts by Romanian architects to engage in multidisciplinary: they identify, albeit with heavy Marxist overtones, the conflation of architecture with social factors. The article discusses in detail economic efficiency in housing design and also considers the developmental family cycle and the gender dynamics of the domestic realm and their design implications.

³³ Sebestyén, Caffé, and Florian?

³⁴ Ignace Șerban, *Locuința Urbană. Realizări Din Capitală 1959-1961* [*The Urban Dwelling. Accomplishments in the Capital 1959-1961*] (București: Editura Tehnică, 1962), 2.

³⁵ Șerban, 2.

³⁶ What seems both essential and somehow surprising coming from Șerban Ignace, and particularly within the architecture discourse of the time (the 1960s), is the fact that he takes the housing units of the time as objects that people do not make by themselves nor keep throughout their lives. They typically change houses one or two times in their lifetime. Furthermore, this is due to two types of motive: (1) the family grows or shrinks in terms of the number of its members; or (2) the dwelling does not respond to the growing needs of its inhabitants, or it cannot be adapted to modern technology. Because of this, designers should study and design apartments allowing for future adaptations and transformations so that they can be adjusted to the inhabitants' needs and according to their everyday domestic expectations. Șerban, 2.

³⁷ This notion was conceptualized in the work of Romeo Rău and Dan Mihaș, *Unități Urbanistice Complexe* [*Complex Urban Units*] (București: Editura Tehnică, 1969). It is essential to distinguish between the problem of housing understood at the urban level and at the level of an isolated object. Here the authors are trying to connect the two scales and emphasize the importance of understanding the housing 'problem.'

³⁸ There are exemplary exceptions, as the housing ensemble of Piața Palatului R.P.R. Șerban gives several examples of groups of apartment buildings that were already constructed at the time or were in the process of being built. The housing group from the Piața Palatului R.P.R., the Circ housing group, The Piața Gara de Nord housing group, and the housing developments along large motorways, Balta Alba and Drumul Taberei (in the case of Bucharest) are discussed in Șerban, *Locuința Urbană. Realizări Din Capitală 1959-1961* [*The Urban Dwelling. Accomplishments in the Capital 1959-1961*], 2.

³⁹ Dorel Abraham, "Perspectiva Sociologică de Cercetare a Problematicii Locuirii [A Sociological Research Perspective of the Housing Issue]," in *Locuința Contemporană: Probleme Și Puncte de Vedere* [*The Contemporary Dwelling: Problems and Perspectives*], ed. Mihail Caffé (București: Editura Tehnică, 1987), 91.

⁴⁰ "The everyday dualism of catabolism and anabolism, meaning the alternation, for 24 hours in a man's life, of fatigue and the rest." The anabolic functions must be satisfied through thermal comfort, sound and visual comfort, physical and nervous comfort, thermic insulation, and natural light. The authors use the concept of *locuibilitate* (habitability). "Habitability, besides those issues already mentioned, contains the problem of sanitation (*salubritate*), the degree of utility, and the security of the housing unit." Ion Mircea Enescu and Gheorghe Ilie, *Probleme ale arhitecturii*

contemporane [Problems of the Contemporary Architecture] (București: Editura Tehnica, 1982), 57.

⁴¹ In the context of the capitalist modernity, for Maldonado, “in its most hidden recess, comfort is a scheme for social control.” Recognizing the importance of the idea of comfort as such, Maldonado holds back from entirely repudiating it “in the global sense.” Tomás Maldonado, “The Idea of Comfort,” trans. John Cullars, *Design Issues* 8, no. 1 (1991): 35, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1511452>.

⁴² Maldonado, 35 (author’s emphasis).

⁴³ Maldonado, 35.

⁴⁴ Maldonado, 36.

⁴⁵ Gheorghe Sebestyén, “Gádoros Lajos - Amenajarea Și Dimensionarea Locuinței [Space Planning and Dimensioning of the Dwelling],” *Arhitectura R.P.R.* 8, no. 42, (1957): 52. This argument is also very much in line with Karel Tiege’s militant writings on the minimum dwelling, which integrates the lessons of early modernists who promoted an *existentz minimum*.

⁴⁶ Sebestyén, 52.

⁴⁷ Sebestyén, 52.

⁴⁸ A case in point was one of the early collaborations between architects and engineers, resulting in the book *Probleme tehnico-economice în construcția de locuințe* [*Technical and Economic Problems in Housing Construction*]. This book, which was the result of the collaboration of the engineers Lucian Roșianu, Gheorghe Gheorghe, Mandy Weintraub, and Moses Drimer, and the architect Dumitru Vernescu, was published in 1960. The book critically analyzes means and ways for improving the techno-economical indices in housing construction. It looks at the relationships between the factors related to design (architectural and engineering) and execution, while identifying the principal factors resulting from these two processes, which were directly influencing the cost of housing construction. Lucian Roșianu et al., *Probleme Tehnico-Economice În Construcția de Locuințe: Proiectare Și Execuție* [*Technical and Economic Problems in Housing Construction: Design and Execution*] (București: Editura Tehnică, 1960).

⁴⁹ Svetlana Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia* (Harvard University Press, 1994); Victor Buchli, *An Archeology of Socialism* (Berg, 2000); David Crowley and Susan Emily Reid, *Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc* (Berg, 2002); Susan E. Reid, “The Khrushchev Kitchen: Domesticating the Scientific-Technological Revolution,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 40, no. 2 (April 1, 2005): 289–316, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022009405051554>; Paul Betts, *The Authority of Everyday Objects: A Cultural History of West German Industrial Design* (University of California Press, 2004); Paul Betts, *Within Walls: Private Life in the German Democratic Republic* (Oxford University Press, 2010); Mark B. Smith, *Property of Communists: The Urban Housing Program from Stalin to Khrushchev* (Northern Illinois University Press, 2010); Steven E. Harris, *Communism on Tomorrow Street: Mass Housing and Everyday Life after Stalin* (Woodrow Wilson Center Press / Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013); Greg Castillo, *Cold War on the Home Front: The Soft Power of Midcentury Design* (U of Minnesota Press, 2010).

⁵⁰ Péter Apor, "The Joy of Everyday Life: Microhistory and the History of Everyday Life in the Socialist Dictatorships," in *East Central Europe*, ed. Paulmann, vol. 34–35, 2007, 185.

⁵¹ Apor, "The Joy of Everyday Life: Microhistory and the History of Everyday Life in the Socialist Dictatorships."

⁵² Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton University Press, 2006), 29.

⁵³ A. Yurchak, "Soviet Hegemony of Form: Everything Was Forever, until It Was No More," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45, no. 3 (2003): 480–510; See also Victoria E. Bonnell and Thomas B. Gold, *The New Entrepreneurs of Europe and Asia: Patterns of Business Development in Russia, Eastern Europe, and China* (M.E. Sharpe, 2002).

⁵⁴ Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, until It Was No More*.

⁵⁵ Dennis Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate: Coercion and Dissent in Romania, 1965–1989* (M.E. Sharpe, 1995).

⁵⁶ Juliana Maxim, "Mass Housing and Collective Experience: On the Notion of Microrraion in Romania in the 1950s and 1960s.," *Journal of Architecture* 14, no. 1 (2009); Adrian Neculau et al., *Viața cotidiană în comunism [Everydaylife in Communism]* (Polirom, 2004); Juliana Maxim, "Developing Socialism: The Photographic Condition of Architecture in Romania, 1958–1970," *Visual Resources* 27, no. 2 (2011): 154–71, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01973762.2011.568178>.

⁵⁷ *Arhitectura* magazine evolved as a medium of analysis and debate in several phases throughout its existence. The Society of Architects, based in Bucharest, published the first issue in 1906. Representing the "official" point of view of its parent organization, *Arhitectura* maintained its pre-war format until 1944. After 1952, the magazine became explicitly socialist, and took a new title: *Arhitectura R.P.R.* The editorial group maintained this title until 1965, when they changed it back to its original 1906 version, *Arhitectura*. Ana Maria Zahariade, "Testing the Physiognomy of the Arhitectura Magazine (1952–1989)," *SITA Studii de Istoria Și Teoria Arhitecturii* 1 (2013): 161.

⁵⁸ This statement is from Ivan Szelenyi's commentary on the work presented in the special issue of the International Journal of Urban and Regional Research (IJURR) on East European cities, published in 1987, which included five papers on urban development in three socialist countries (Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland) by Maria Ciechocinska, Jens Dangschat, Jozef Hegedus, Jiri Musil, and Ivan Tosics. Szelenyi here attributes to Ivan Tosics a remark calling the housing program of 70s the "golden age of public housing." Ivan Szelenyi, "Housing Inequalities and Occupational Segregation in State Socialist Cities: Commentary to the Special Issue of IJURR on East European Cities," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 11, no. 1 (March 1, 1987): 3, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.1987.tb00031.x>.

⁵⁹ Miruna P. Stroe, "Locuirea - între proiect și decizie politică România 1954–1966 [Housing - Between Project and Political Decision Romania 1954–1966]" (Dissertation, București, UAUIM - Universitatea de Arhitectură și Urbanism "Ion Mincu," 2012), 232.

⁶⁰ Abraham, “Perspectiva Sociologică de Cercetare a Problematicii Locuirii [A Sociological Research Perspective of the Housing Issue].”

⁶¹ Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s* (Oxford University Press, 1999).

⁶² Doru Cosma, *Dreptul de folosință asupra locuințelor [Housing Use Rights]* (București: Editura Tehnică, 1963); Doru Cosma, “Efectele convenției civile de schimb de locuințe,” *Revista Română de Drept*, no. 1 (1972): 52–60; Doru Cosma, *Regimul juridic al locuințelor proprietate personală [The Legal Regime of Personal Property Housing Units]* (București: Editura Științifică, 1974); Doru Cosma, “Opțiunea soților pentru una dintre cele două locuințe pe care le dețin,” *Revista Română de Drept*, 1970.

⁶³ Aurel Baltazar and Șerban Beligradeanu, “Acțiunile pe care le poate promova în justiție asociația locatarilor,” *Revista Română de Drept*, 1973; Șerban Beligradeanu, *Asociația Locatarilor Și Cheltuielile Comune de Folosință, Întreținere Și Reparații* (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1979); Șerban Beligradeanu, “Efectuarea reparațiilor la clădirile parțial proprietate de stat și parțial proprietate a persoanelor fizice,” *Revista Română de Drept*, 1967; “Efectuarea reparațiilor la clădirile parțial proprietate de stat și parțial proprietate ale persoanelor fizice,” *Revista Română de Drept*, no. 6 (1967): 84–94; “Principiile noii legislații locative,” *Revista Română de Drept*, 1968; “Regimul juridic al locuințelor folosite ca accesoriu al raportului de muncă,” *Revista Română de Drept*, 1971; “Stabilirea și plata chiriei pentru locuințe,” *Revista Română de Drept*, no. 10 (1969): 15–25.

⁶⁴ As it happened, only four villages were completely demolished, as Ceaușescu was overwhelmed with criticism from within the country as well as outside it.

⁶⁵ This term was used with quotation marks by the sociologist Dorel Abraham, writing in the late 80s. Abraham, “Perspectiva Sociologică de Cercetare a Problematicii Locuirii [A Sociological Research Perspective of the Housing Issue].”

⁶⁶ Stroe, “Modificarea Apartamentelor - Originea Unei Practici [The Modification of Apartments - The Origin of a Practice].”

⁶⁷ The International Union of Architects (Uniunea Internațională a Arhitecților – UIA) Seminary for Human Habitation in October 28, 1971 was set to achieve a dialogue between specialists from several European countries on the state of housing programs in Europe, and implicitly in Romania. In the same period, the political role of architects was called into question as architecture’s democratic dimension seemed to redeem its ‘scientific’ character through interdisciplinary research.

¹ John Michael Montias, “Unbalanced Growth in Rumania,” *The American Economic Review* 53, no. 2 (1963): 563–66.

² The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA or COMECON) was set up in Moscow in January 1949. Its founding members were the USSR, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Romania. Albania and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) joined later, in February 1949 and September 1950, respectively. CMEA was an international economic organization that “aimed to promote the ‘socialist economic integration’ of its members.” COMECON was involved in planning, trade, industrial innovation, and cooperation in agricultural production,

energy policy coordination, environmental protection, and finally, the conception and operation of a common interest socialist enterprise. John Michael Montias, *Economic Development in Communist Rumania* (M.I.T. Press, 1967); See also J. J. Brine, *COMECON: The Rise and Fall of an International Socialist Organization* (Transaction Publishers, 1992), xi. The literature on Eastern European economics uses interchangeably the acronyms CMEA and COMECON when referring to this organization.

³ Dumitru Sandu, *Atlasul social al Romaniei: proiecte si date 1991-1992 [The Romanian Social Atlas: Projects and Data 1991-1992]* (București: IPCT SA - Centrul de Sociologie Urbană și Regională (CURS), 1992), ?

⁴ Augustin Stoica, "Communism as a Project for Modernization: The Romanian Case," *Polish Sociological Review*, no. 120 (January 1, 1997): 313–31.

⁵ Dorel Abraham, "Trends in the Social and Economic Development of Romanian Cities," *Netherlands Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* 7, no. 4 (1992): 340.

⁶ Note that the article was published in 1992.

⁷ Abraham, "Trends in the Social and Economic Development of Romanian Cities," 1992; George Walter Hoffman, *Regional Development Strategy in Southeast Europe: A Comparative Analysis of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, and Yugoslavia* (Praeger, 1972), 48 Table 1. As the geographer George Walter Hoffman has shown, and contrary to the perceptions of some Romanian authors, Romania was not the only agrarian driven economy in the region. In his comparative study of the five "Southeast countries," Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Yugoslavia, and Greece, he shows that in the early 20s and after the Great War, the economies of all these countries were predominantly agrarian. The same is true for the interwar period: in 1938, the percentage of the population dependent on agriculture as its main source of livelihood was 72% in Bulgaria, 46.4% in Greece, 68.4% in Romania, and 70% in Yugoslavia. Table 1 shows no data for Albania.

⁸ Hoffman, *Regional Development Strategy in Southeast Europe*; David Turnock, *An Economic Geography of Romania* (Bell, 1974).

⁹ Abraham, "Trends in the Social and Economic Development of Romanian Cities," 1992, 335; Hoffman, *Regional Development Strategy in Southeast Europe*, 4; D. Chirot, "Social Change in Communist Romania," *Soc. F.* 57 (1978): 457.

¹⁰ Abraham, "Trends in the Social and Economic Development of Romanian Cities," 1992, 335 Sociologist Dorel Abraham borrows the term "second serfdom" from Daniel Chirot.

¹¹ Abraham, 335–38.

¹² Dumitru Sandu, "Migrația Și Dinamica Structurii Sociale [Migration and the Dynamic of Social Structure]," in *Structura Sociala a Romaniei Socialiste. Studii [The Social Structure of Socialist Romania. Studies]* (Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1989), 189.

¹³ Dumitru Sandu, *Fluxurile de Migrație În România [Migration Flows in Romania]* (București: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1984), page??

¹⁴ Sandu, 29. In rural-to-rural mobility, horizontal mobility is the main component in the assessed movement. In this case, the nature of the group remains the same.

¹⁵ Sandu, 32.

¹⁶ Dumitru Sandu, *Fluxurile de Migrație În România [Migration Flows in Romania]* (București: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1984), 32 (italics in original).

¹⁷ Paul-Henry Chombart de Lauwe, "Famille et Habitation. Sciences Humaines et Conception de l'habitation," *Paris, CNRS* (2, 1959).

¹⁸ Sandu, *Fluxurile de Migrație În România [Migration Flows in Romania]*, 32.

¹⁹ Sandu, 32.

²⁰ (see footnote) Sandu, 32; Here the author is referring to the work of William Isaac Thomas, Florian Znaniecki, and Eli Zaretsky, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America: A Classic Work in Immigration History* (University of Illinois Press, 1996) [first published in 1958].

²¹ Dorel Abraham, "Trends in the Social and Economic Development of Romanian Cities," *Netherlands Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* 7, no. 4 (1992): 339.

²² Lucian Roșianu et al., *Probleme Tehnico-Economice În Construcția de Locuințe: Proiectare Și Execuție [Technical and Economic Problems in Housing Construction: Design and Execution]* (București: Editura Tehnică, 1960), 6. Data cited from Breviar statistic al Republicii Populare Romania, DCS, 1960.

²³ While massive investments were absorbed by the industry and its transportation needs in this period, other "low-priority sectors" were underfunded: "Only about 10 percent of state investments in fixed capital went to agriculture, which was, of course, concentrated on state farms. Housing was also neglected. In cities, where virtually all new housing was built directly by the state or with state credits, the expanding population had, for the most part, to be crowded into lodgings built before or during the war." John Michael Montias, "Unbalanced Growth in Rumania," *The American Economic Review* 53, no. 2 (1963): 566.

²⁴ For example, according to several of my respondents, in the early 60s, when they moved to Cluj-Napoca, they were still living with their parents or in cohabitation with other families, sharing one apartment.

²⁵ Montias, "Unbalanced Growth in Rumania"; Karel Holbik, "An Economic 'Miracle' Through Investment Priorities? The Case of Rumania," *Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv* 94 (1965): 307–36; John Michael Montias, *Economic Development in Communist Rumania* (M.I.T. Press, 1967); Michael Shafir, *Romania, Politics, Economics, and Society: Political Stagnation and Simulated Change* (L. Rienner Publishers, 1985).

²⁶ Karel Holbik (1920-2006) was a noted economist and a long-time member of the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences in the US. He arrived in the United States in 1948 with a JD degree from Charles University in Prague, to seek a master of business administration degree. He received his MBA in 1950 at the University of Detroit. He decided to remain in the United States and earned a doctoral degree in economics at the University of Wisconsin (1955), where he also taught. His subsequent teaching included Lafayette College in Easton, PA, Boston University (1958 to 1986), and Harvard Extension School (1973 to 1998). For four years, he was the chief of a development finance section at the United Nations in New York.

- ²⁷ According to Hirschman, “Development is a chain of disequilibria that must be kept alive rather than eliminate the disequilibrium of which profits and losses are symptoms in a competitive economy. If AN economy is to keep moving ahead, the task of development policy is to maintain, tension, disproportions and disequilibria.” Albert O. Hirschman, *The Strategy of Economic Development* (Yale University Press, 1961).
- ²⁸ Karel Holbik, “An Economic ‘Miracle’ Through Investment Priorities? The Case of Rumania,” *Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv* 94 (1965): 334.
- ²⁹ Montias, *Economic Development in Communist Rumania*.
- ³⁰ Holbik, “An Economic ‘Miracle’ Through Investment Priorities?,” 1965, 307.
- ³¹ Holbik, 308.
- ³² Montias, “Unbalanced Growth in Rumania,” 566.
- ³³ See Gheorghe Sebestyén, “Gânduri Despre Tipizare [Thoughts on Standardization],” *Arhitectura* 3, no. 214 (1985): 43.
- ³⁴ No Author, “Consfătuirea secției 'Arhitectura' AST,” *Arhitectura* 2–3 (1950): 20.
- ³⁵ Nicolaie Bădescu, “Împotriva cosmopolitanismului și arhitecturii burgheze imperialiste [Against Cosmopolitanism of the Bourgeois and Imperialist Architecture],” *Arhitectura* 2–3 (1950): 6.
- ³⁶ Bădescu, 6.
- ³⁷ Mircea Bejan, Ioana Bălan, and Bejan Barbu, “Standardizarea Românească La 20 de Ani. Asociația de Standardizare Din România -ASRO” (AGIR, 2019).
- ³⁸ Roșianu et al., *Probleme Tehnico-Economice În Construcția de Locuințe: Proiectare Și Execuție [Technical and Economic Problems in Housing Construction: Design and Execution]*, 6. Data cited from Breviar statistic al Republicii Populare Romania, DCS, 1960.
- ³⁹ Dumitru Vernescu, “Influența Soluției Urbanistice Asupra Costului Locuinței [The Influence of the Urban Design Solution Over the Dwelling’s Cost],” in *Probleme Tehnico-Economice În Construcția de Locuințe: Proiectare Și Execuție [Technical and Economic Problems in Housing Construction: Design and Execution]*, 1960, 289.
- ⁴⁰ Vernescu brought up the example of Budapest, in the People’s Republic of Hungary, where almost 2,000 apartments (over 40 apartment buildings) had an average living area of 36 square meters, while in seven quarters [*cvartale*], with over 9,000 apartments, the average was 27 square meters. Vernescu, 289.
- ⁴¹ Mihail Caffé, “Contribuțiuni la stabilirea unei teme generale a locuinței urbane in R.P.R pe 1960-1965 [Contributions to the Development of an Urban Housing Program in the People’s Republic of Romania, 1960-1965]” (Dissertation, București, UAUIM - Universitatea de Arhitectură și Urbanism “Ion Mincu,” 1960).
- ⁴² Caffé, 139.
- ⁴³ The modernist advancements of the 30s in Germany came handy, in a socialist country where architectural design transitioned from the anti-cosmopolitanism⁴³ of the early socialist realism to the Western modernism of *existentzminimum*, so much despised in the early 50s by the architectural elite of the time.
- ⁴⁴ Ana-Maria Zahariade, *Arhitectura în proiectul comunist : România 1944-1989 [Architecture in the Communist Project : Romania 1944-1989]* (București: Simetria, 2011); Miruna P. Stroe, “Locuirea - între proiect și decizie politică România 1954-

1966 [Housing - Between Project and Political Decision Romania 1954-1966]" (Dissertation, București, UAUIM - Universitatea de Arhitectură și Urbanism "Ion Mincu," 2012).

⁴⁵ Gheorghe Dorin Rosenberg, "Ziduri exterioare. Condițiile igienice și proprietățile termotehnice [Exterior Walls. Conditions of Hygiene and Thermo-technical Properties]," *Arhitectura RPR* 2, no. 2 (1951): 17–21. See this article published in *Arhitectura RPR* in 1951 for a discussion on how Rosenberg perceived the human body in relationship to the interior environment from the perspective of hygiene and the thermal properties of exterior walls at a time when the construction system of choice was masonry construction.

⁴⁶ Tatiana Slama-Cazacu, "Instituția colocatarilor [The Institution of Coinhabitants]," in *Viața cotidiană în comunism [Everydaylife in Communism]* (Iași: Editura Polirom, 2004).

⁴⁷ See Sebestyén, "Gânduri Despre Tipizare [Thoughts on Standardization]," 43.

⁴⁸ In the case of construction materials transportation in the early 80s, for one-third of the total amount of transports throughout the country, the means of transportation (train, auto, water) was for housing development. See Gheorghe Sebestyén, "Condiționări tehnice, economice și sociale rezultând din amploarea problemei locuinței [Technical, Economical and Social Conditions Resulted from the Complexity of the Housing Problem]" in *Locuința contemporană: probleme și puncte de vedere [The Contemporary Dwelling: Problems and Perspectives]*

⁴⁹ Mark B. Smith, *Property of Communists: The Urban Housing Program from Stalin to Khrushchev* (Northern Illinois University Press, 2010).

⁵⁰ Harold Joseph Berman, "Soviet Property in Law and in Plan: With Special Reference to Municipal Land and Housing," *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, 1948, 324. See also Walton Hamilton and Irene Till, *Property*, VI ENC. Coc. Sci. 528 (last sentence of the article).

⁵¹ Except for rural property, where the government allowed each family to keep the property upon which the house was built and the land around it.

⁵² Personal property has been defined as property that "provides citizens with the possibility of satisfying their various material and spiritual needs. All, or almost all, of the objects which surround us at home (clothing, furniture, a television, radio, refrigerator, or a bicycle, and much more), and for some the house itself constitute personal property (...) The right to personal property is the right of a citizen, granted under force of law, to possess, use, and dispose of property with the aim of satisfying personal needs." Personal property was said to be "designated for the satisfaction of the personal requirements of citizens," and it could belong to citizens regardless of their "dispositive capacity" and health. Oleg Nikolaevich Sadikov, *Soviet Civil Law* (Armonk, New York, London, England: M.E. Sharpe, 1988). Personal property in the Soviet state was defined differently than it is in English. Webster's New World College Dictionary defines it as any property that is not real property and is movable or not attached to the land.

⁵³ H. Kimura, "Personal Property in the Soviet Union, with Particular Emphasis on the Khrushchev Era: An Ideological, Political and Economic Dilemma (II)," *スラヴ研究 (Slavic Studies)* 14 (1970): 63–119.

⁵⁴ Berman, *Soviet Property in Law and in Plan*; Peter B. Maggs, "The Security of Individually-Owned Property under Soviet Law," *Duke Law Journal* 1961, no. 4 (October 1, 1961): 525–37, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1371108>; Samuel Kucharov, "Property in the Soviet Union," *The American Journal of Comparative Law* 11, no. 3 (July 1, 1962): 376–92, <https://doi.org/10.2307/838588>; Sadikov, *Soviet Civil Law*; William B. Simons and Ferdinand Joseph Maria Feldbrugge, *Private and Civil Law in the Russian Federation: Essays in Honor of F.J.M. Feldbrugge* (BRILL, 2009).

⁵⁵ Concerning *socialist property*, Berman states: "Article 6 of the Soviet Constitution [from 1936] declares that: "The land, its natural deposits, waters, forests, mills, factories, mines, rail, water and air transport, banks, post, telegraph and telephones, large state-organized agricultural enterprises (state farms, machine and tractor stations, and the like) as well as municipal enterprises and the bulk of the dwelling houses in the cities and industrial localities comprise state ownership, that is, belonging to the whole people." "The effect of this nationalization of land and the means of production was to remove from private commerce that property in which the whole people were thought to have a vital interest. Only by collective action, through the organs of state, could such property be purchased or sold or otherwise transferred; and only its administration, not its ownership, can be thereby affected." Berman, *Soviet Property in Law and in Plan*, 330.

⁵⁶ Sadikov, *Soviet Civil Law*, 143. This volume is an unabridged translation of the textbook "Soviet Civil Law," initially published in 1983 under the auspices of the USSR Ministry of Justice. Edited by Professor O.N. Sadikov (head of the Civil Law Department of the All-Union Research Institute of Soviet Legislation), the work includes nine Soviet legal scholars' contributions. The volume, introduced by W. B. Simons, an American consultant on Soviet Law, reproduces a Russian original, dated 1983.

⁵⁷ George M. Armstrong, *The Soviet Law of Property: The Right to Control Property and the Construction of Communism* (BRILL, 1983).

⁵⁸ Professor George M. Armstrong was a research fellow, lawyer, and law faculty at the LSU Law Center from 1984 until 1991. Professor Armstrong earned his MA at the University of Sussex in 1975 and at Princeton, where he received his second masters in 1977. He pursued law studies at the University of Pennsylvania from where he graduated, Order of the Coif, in 1981. "In Memoriam: George M. Armstrong, Jr.," *Louisiana Law Review* 51, no. 3 (January 1991).

⁵⁹ Armstrong, *The Soviet Law of Property*, 63.

⁶⁰ Dieter Pfaff, *Das sozialistische Eigentum in der Sowjetunion* (Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1965); Cited in P. Betts, "Private Property and Public Culture: A Forgotten Chapter of East European Communist Life," *Histoire@Politique*, no. 1 (2009): 156.

⁶¹ Hiroshi Kimura, *Personal Property in the Soviet Union, with Particular Emphasis on the Khrushchev Era: An Ideological, Political and Economic Dilemma* (Columbia university., 1968); Smith, *Property of Communists*; Betts, "Private Property and Public Culture"; P. Charles Hachten, *Property Relations and the Economic Organization of Soviet Russia: 1941-1948* (University of Chicago, Dept. of History, 2005); Gordon L. Clark, "Rights, Property, and Community," *Economic Geography* 58, no. 2 (April 1,

1982): 120–38, <https://doi.org/10.2307/143792>; Mikhail Isaakovich Braginskiĭ, William Elliott Butler, and Avgust Afanas'evich Rubanov, *The Law on Ownership in the USSR* (Interlist, 1991).

⁶² Dumitru Lupulescu, *Construirea Și Cumpărarea de Locuințe Proprietate Personală Cu Sprijinul Statului [Construction and Acquisition of Personal Property Apartments With the Help From the State]* (București: Editura științifică și enciclopedică, 1975).

⁶³ I. Flavian and O. Aschenasy, *Regimul Închirierilor de Locuințe in R.P.R. [Housing Rent Regimes in the P.R.R.]* (București, 1953).

⁶⁴ “Decretul Nr. 78/1952 Pentru Normarea, Repartizarea Și Folosirea Suprafeței Locative Și Reglementarea Raporturilor Dintre Proprietari Și Chiriași [The Decree No. 78 for Norms, Distribution, and the Use of Living Area and the Regulation of the Relationships Between Owners and Tenants],” Pub. L. No. 78 (1952), 78.

⁶⁵ Shafir, *Romania, Politics, Economics, and Society*; J. Naor, “Towards A Socialist Marketing Concept: The Case of Romania,” *The Journal of Marketing*, 1986, 28–39; Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania* (University of California Press, 1995).

⁶⁶ Montias, *Economic Development in Communist Rumania*; M. R. Jackson, “Industrialization, Trade, and Mobilization in Romania's Drive for Economic Independence,” in *East European Economies Post-Helsinki. A Compendium of Papers Submitted to the Joint Economic Committee.*, Washington, DC: Congress of the United States, 1977, 886–940.

⁶⁷ Jack Bielasiak, “Workers and Mass Participation in ‘Socialist Democracy,’” *Blue-Collar Workers in Eastern Europe*, 1981, 92.

⁶⁸ Romanian readers know Michael Shafir as the author of *Romania, Politics, Economics and Society*, one of the few books (outside of Romania) that tackle Romanian politics and economics during communism. His book stands along with the contribution of John Michael Montias, *Economic Development in Communist Romania* on the same topic, as a continuation of the earliest text on political economy, Stephan-Fisher Galati's *Romania*, published by the Mid-European Studies Center of the Free Europe Committee, in 1957. Shafir was born in Romania, and at the time of his book's publication, was Lecturer in Political Science at Tel-Aviv University. He was secretary of the Israeli Association of Slavic and East European Studies and a member of the editorial board of *Communist Affairs*. Today Michael Shafir is Professor Emeritus at the Department of History and Philosophy at Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

⁶⁹ Shafir, *Romania, Politics, Economics, and Society*, 94.

⁷⁰ Miruna P. Stroe, *Locuirea Între Proiect Și Decizie Politică. România 1954-1966 [Housing Between Project and Political Decision. Romania 1954-1966]* (București: Simetria, 2015), See.

⁷¹ CEC stands for Casa de Economii și Consemnațiuni [The Savings and Consignments House] and was and still is a state-owned Romanian banking institution first founded in 1864, and nationalized in the Communist era.

⁷² It was the legislative body, the single party (Communist Party) led, whose legislative activity was conducted during the Romanian People's Republic (1948-1966) and the Socialist Republic of Romania (1966-1989).

⁷³ Lupulescu, *Construirea Și Cumpărarea de Locuințe Proprietate Personală Cu Sprijinul Statului [Construction and Acquisition of Personal Property Apartments With the Help From the State]*, 7.

⁷⁴ Lupulescu, 7.

⁷⁵ Dumitru Lupulescu was born in Romania in 1933. Professor Lupulescu completed his law degree in the School of law of the University of Lomonosov in Moscow, from where he graduated in 1958. He received his doctoral degree in 1965 from the University of Bucharest, School of Law. He became an assistant and later tenured professor at the University of Bucharest from 1965 onwards. Starting with 1976 Professor Lupulescu practice law with the BCAJ Nr. 1 Bucharest. He published extensively during the socialist period. Also known for his earlier work, Dumitru Lupulescu, *Dreptul de proprietate personala [The Right to Personal Property]* (București: Editura Științifică, 1967); “Particularitati privind exercitarea dreptului de proprietate personala in legatura cu casa de locuit,” *Revista Română de Drept*, 1969; The above cited work titled *Construirea Și Cumpărarea de Locuințe Proprietate Personală Cu Sprijinul Statului [Construction and Acquisition of Personal Property Apartments With the Help From the State]*; and his work on housing exchanges titled *Schimbul de Locuințe [Housing Units Exchanges]* (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1978).

⁷⁶ Lupulescu, *Construirea Și Cumpărarea de Locuințe Proprietate Personală Cu Sprijinul Statului [Construction and Acquisition of Personal Property Apartments With the Help From the State]*, 11.

⁷⁷ Lupulescu, 13.

⁷⁸ Stroe, *Locuirea Între Proiect Și Decizie Politică. România 1954-1966 [Housing Between Project and Political Decision. Romania 1954-1966]*.

⁷⁹ Cited in Stroe. See also the Romanian National Archive, file number 177/1966, the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, the structural part of the Main Office (*Cancelarie*). See annex number 20 at the end of Stroe’s dissertation.

⁸⁰ In his dissertation, architect Mihail Caffé proposed different apartment layouts, which resemble many of the units proposed above through the Decision 26/1966. See Caffé, “Contribuțiuni la stabilirea unei teme generale a locuinței urbane in R.P.R pe 1960-1965 [Contributions to the Development of an Urban Housing Program in the People’s Republic of Romania, 1960-1965].”

⁸¹ ANIC, “Propuneri Privind Dezvoltarea Construcției de Locuințe, Îmbunătățirea Administrării Și Întreținerii Fondului Locativ Și Noul Regim al Chiriilor În Republica Socialistă România [Proposals Regarding Housing Construction Development, Administration and Maintenance Improvement and the New Rent Regime in the Socialist Republic of Romania]” (1967), f.6, Fond CC al PCR, Secția Economică, Dosar 66/1967.

⁸² “Therefore, if between 1951-1960 housing units built by the population represented half of the total of new urban housing units, between 1961-1966 the proportion was reduced to 1/5 out of the total housing units newly produced. As the volume of housing construction dampened, in the period 1961-1966 salaries grew with 90%, while the C.E.C. savings of the urban population at the end of 1966 was 8.7 billion of

lei, compared with less than a billion lei at the beginning of 1960. The population is using that money to buy other products.” ANIC, f.10.

⁸³ ANIC, f. 42 Anexa Nr. 1.

⁸⁴ ANIC, f.10.

⁸⁵ ANIC, f.7-8.

⁸⁶ ANIC, f.12.

⁸⁷ ANIC, f.12-13.

⁸⁸ CSCAS, “Propuneri privind construcția de locuințe în mediul urban,” July 21, 1968, Fond CC al PCR, File 126, ANIC.

⁸⁹ ANIC, “Propuneri Privind Dezvoltarea Construcției de Locuințe, Îmbunătățirea Administrării Și Întreținerii Fondului Locativ Și Noul Regim al Chiriilor În Republica Socialistă România [Proposals Regarding Housing Construction Development, Administration and Maintenance Improvement and the New Rent Regime in the Socialist Republic of Romania],” f.61.

⁹⁰ ANIC, 56.

⁹¹ The authors of the proposal advised that in spite of the urgency of building such an extended housing project, the temporary character of the proposed housing units was out of the question. Therefore, all categories of proposed units would have the same lasting character as today’s buildings. That meant, the authors maintain, that designers must pay attention to functional solutions and technical equipment in order to avoid obsolesce in a short period of time compared to the buildings’ natural longevity. ANIC, f.56-57.

⁹² ANIC, “Protocol Nr. 29 al ședinței Comitetului Executiv al C.C. al P.C.R. din ziua de 23 iulie 1968 [Protocol No. 29 - Minutes of the Executive Committee of CC of RCP for July 23, 1968]” (July 23, 1968), f7, Fond CC al PCR, Secția Cămară, Dosar 126/1968. The CC members and the county Party representatives participating in the July 23, 1968 meeting were: Nicolae Ceaușescu, Gheorghe Apostol, Emil Bodnăraș, Chivu Stoica, Trofin Virgil, Ilie Verdeț, Maxim Berghianu, Florin Dănălache, Constantin Drăgan, Gheorghe Rădulescu, Vasile Vilcu, Iosif Banc, Petre Blajovici, Dumitru Coliu, Mihai Gere, Petre Lupu, Manea Mănescu, Dumitru Popa, Gheorghe Stoica, Vasile Pătilineț, Homoștean George, Haș Teodor, Duminică Petre, Pană Gheorghe, Făsui Ilie, Ghinea Gheorghe, Kiraly Carol, Braniș Ladislau, Moga Ioachim, Marin Vasile, Drăgoescu Constantin, Vereș Nicolae, Balalia Dumitru, Uglar Iosif, Gavrilăscu Nicolae, Bobu Emil, Dănică Petre, Gheorghe Călin, Sion Bujor, Nicolae Guină, Nicolae Iani, Mihai Marinescu, architect Nicolae Bădescu, Simion Buchici, Bozdog Nicolae, Negre Porfir, Ionescu Petre.

⁹³ ANIC, f.7.

⁹⁴ ANIC, “Propuneri Privind Dezvoltarea Construcției de Locuințe, Îmbunătățirea Administrării Și Întreținerii Fondului Locativ Și Noul Regim al Chiriilor În Republica Socialistă România [Proposals Regarding Housing Construction Development, Administration and Maintenance Improvement and the New Rent Regime in the Socialist Republic of Romania],” f.57.

⁹⁵ ANIC, f.57.

⁹⁶ ANIC, “Protocol Nr. 29 al ședinței Comitetului Executiv al C.C. al P.C.R. din ziua de 23 iulie 1968 [Protocol No. 29 - Minutes of the Executive Committee of CC of RCP for July 23, 1968],” f.17.

⁹⁷ ANIC, f.18.

⁹⁸ Abraham, “Trends in the Social and Economic Development of Romanian Cities,” 1992.

⁹⁹ An outcome often found in many countries (European or otherwise) at this historical conjuncture. There is little work done to show the extent to which the poverty pockets of liminal spaces in post-WWII Romania existed in large- and medium-sized cities. One can hardly fail to notice the anti-Communist wrath which is present when such premises are advanced. In her dissertation, the architectural historian Juliana Maxim showed how some of the early marginal social neighborhoods (the author uses as example the Ferentari neighborhood in Bucharest) were built as an answer to such derelict and substandard settlements. See Juliana Maxim, “The New, the Old, the Modern: Architecture and Its Representation in Socialist Romania, 1955-1965” (Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Department of Architecture, 2006).

¹⁰⁰ For example Bucharest, Constanta, Iasi, Timisoara, Brasov or Cluj-Napoca.

¹⁰¹ See John W. Cole, “Familial Dynamics in a Romanian Worker Village,” *Dialectical Anthropology* 1 (1976): 251–66.

¹⁰² Simona Stănculescu et al., “Posibilități de Realizare a Locuințelor Cu Structuri Care Să Permită Flexibilitatea Partiurilor [Possibilities for Building Housing Units with Structures That Would Allow Flexible Space Planning],” *Arhitectura* 2, no. 195 (1982): 17.

¹⁰³ Dumitru Sandu, “Dinamica socială a locuirii urbane [The Social Dynamic of Urban Housing],” *Viitorul Social*, no. 5–6 (1989): 432.

¹⁰⁴ A couple with one child could very well manage living in a one-bedroom unit until the child required his/her own space.

¹⁰⁵ Dorel Abraham, “Cercetări Sociologice Privind Calitatea Locuinței [Sociological Studies Regarding the Quality of the Housing Unit],” *Arhitectura* 2, no. 195, (1982): 19.

¹⁰⁶ Dorel Abraham, “Perspectiva Sociologică de Cercetare a Problematicii Locuirii [A Sociological Research Perspective of the Housing Issue],” in *Locuința Contemporană: Probleme Și Puncte de Vedere [The Contemporary Dwelling: Problems and Perspectives]*, ed. Mihail Caffé (București: Editura Tehnica, 1987), 75–97.

¹⁰⁷ Montgomery, 265.

¹⁰⁸ Cătălin Zamfir et al. explain the five historical phases of Romanian sociology after WWII as follows: (1) 1944-1948: the establishment of the sociological community and institutional system, following Gusti’s sociological program; (2) 1948-1961: a period of largely underground sociology; (3) 1962-1977: the practice of sociology as recognized by the Communist party; (4) 1978-1989: the exclusion of sociology; and (5) 1990-2008: the re-launching of sociology. Cătălin Zamfir et al., eds., *Sociologia românească: 1900-2010: o istorie socială* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Școala Ardeleană : Eikon, 2015).

¹⁰⁹ See Zamfir et al., 65 (my translation).

¹¹⁰ Thirty-three sociologists and social scientists died during the war and after the Communist government's instauration. Zamfir et al., 66.

¹¹¹ The sociologist H. H. Stahl was a long-time promoter of interdisciplinary studies, following the school of sociology associated with Dimitrie Gusti. Gusti is often considered the most important Romanian sociologist in the first half of the twentieth century, and the creator of modern Romanian sociology. Gusti worked within the Romanian Academy from 1918, at the birth of modern Romania, while between 1925 and 1948 he directed monographic research on the Romanian village. Dimitrie Gusti (1880–1955) was a Romanian sociologist, ethnologist, historian, and voluntarist philosopher; a professor at the Universities of Iași and Bucharest, he served as Romania's Minister of Education in 1932–1933. Gusti was elected a member of the Romanian Academy in 1919, and was its President between 1944 and 1946. He was the main contributor to the creation of a new Romanian school of sociology. Henri H. Stahl was one of Dimitrie Gusti's most preeminent students, along with Anton Golopenția, and Traian Herseni. These four pillars of the Romanian school of sociology in Bucharest represented what Dumitru Sandu calls the "polycentric school" of sociology in Bucharest. The Gustian research method was comprised of vast interdisciplinary research projects using "mixed teams," in a multidisciplinary approach to the subject of the village. In analyzing the Romanian village, Gusti introduced the law of "the social unit," according to which social reality is the product of various factors, including not only economic, political, and juridical, but also spiritual and historical, psychological, and biological ones. With his innovative methods, Gust elevated Romanian sociology to international prestige and the nation's most important science. Gusti promoted a research approach that was predominantly descriptive and empirical, which being rooted in a solid theoretical conceptualization. See Dumitru Sandu, "Policentrismul Școlii Sociologice de La București: Calea Metodologică La Henri H. Stahl" (sasunibuc.ro, No date), http://sas.unibuc.ro/uploads_ro/1149/Policentrismul-2.pdf; Cătălin Zamfir, "Ce a Lăsat Dimitrie Gusti Sociologiei Postbelice?," *Sociologie Românească* 3, no. 2 (June 21, 2005): 11–14.

¹¹² The career of Miron Constantinescu was full of ups and downs. As an essential member of the Communist *nomenklatura*, Constantinescu's career wavered between being a Party *apparatchik* and an intellectual. A very ambitious Party activist in the early years of his active life, the highlight of his early political career was his being named as President of the State Planning Committee. Unfortunately, his clash with Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej made for a quick fall from grace in 1957. His political career faltering, Constantinescu fell back into his oldest intellectual pursuits, sociology and history. Miron Constantinescu's role in the restoration of sociology as a discipline during Communism is also undeniable. Like Stahl, Constantinescu was also one of Gusti's students, though not as prolific as the others. In 1965 Constantinescu became Vice-minister for State Education, having been the object of an "intellectual" rehabilitation. In 1969 he was re-elected to the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, maintaining this position until the end of his life. Like his mentor Stahl, Constantinescu was a dissident Marxist, but was disinclined, perhaps

temperamentally, to abandon the official ideology in the manner of some intellectuals elsewhere in the Communist world, such as Yugoslavia's Milovan Djilas. See Ștefan Bosomitu, *Miron Constantinescu. O Biografie [Miron Constantinescu. A Biography]* (Humanitas SA, 2015), 9, 304–5, 268.

¹¹³ Miruna P. Stroe, *Locuirea Între Proiect Și Decizie Politică. România 1954-1966 [Housing Between Project and Political Decision. Romania 1954-1966]* (București: Simetria, 2015).

¹¹⁴ Max Lupan, "O anchetă privind condițiile de folosire a locuinței urbane [An Investigation Regarding the Use of the Urban Dwelling]" 3 (1967): 20–31; Georgeta Bucheru, "Aspecte sociologice în abordarea diferențiată a temelor de locuințe [Sociological Aspects of Differential Approach of Housing Themes]," *Arhitectura*, 1969.

¹¹⁵ Miruna P. Stroe, "Locuirea - între proiect și decizie politică România 1954-1966 [Housing - Between Project and Political Decision Romania 1954-1966]" (Dissertation, București, UAUIM - Universitatea de Arhitectură și Urbanism "Ion Mincu," 2012), 232.

¹¹⁶ Stroe, 232

¹¹⁷ Abraham, 84.

¹¹⁸ Dorel Abraham, "Cercetări pluridisciplinare privind performanța locuințelor executate după proiecte tip [Multidisciplinary Research Regarding the Performance of Housing Buildings Constructed Based on Standardized Projects]" (1985), IPCT Archive; Victoria Bărbuță, "Studiul relației între modul de locuire și comportarea în exploatare a clădirilor de locuit experimentale, rezultate după proiecte tip [The Study of the Relationship Between the Way of Dwelling and Postoccupancy Behavior of Experimental Buildings, Constructed Based on Standardized Projects]" (București, 1986), IPCT Archive.

¹¹⁹ Victoria Bărbuță, "Cercetări Privind Costurile Economice Și Sociale Rezultate Din Înbunătățirile Aduse de Locatari Pentru Adaptările Apartamentelor Nou Construite La Modulile de Locuire [Research Studies Regarding the Socio - Economic Costs Resulted From Residents' Adaptations of New Apartments to Ways of Dwelling]" (București, 1983), IPCT Archive; M. Macavescu, "Adaptabilitatea Funcționalității Apartamentelor La Diversitatea Modulilor de Locuire [Functional Adaptability of Apartments to the Ways of Dwelling Diversity]" (București, 1981), IPCT Archive; M. Macavescu, "Locuinta Adaptabilă Din Punct de Vedere Social," *Arhitectura* 1, no. 212 (1985).

¹²⁰ Dorel Abraham, "Cercetări pe bază de prognoză privind aspirațiile de locuire ale populației și căile de dezvoltare a locuinței, în perspectivă [Research Based on Prognosis Regarding Population's Housing Aspirations and Ways of the Housing Unit Development in the Future]" (1983), IPCT Archive.

¹²¹ "Proiect nr. 7041. Cercetări pluridisciplinare de ordin sociologic, arhitectural și urbanistic, privind locuirea în raport cu funcționalitatea apartamentelor și dotarilor socio-culturale aferente, executate după proiecte tip, inclusiv propuneri de îmbunătățirea acestora [Multidisciplinary Studies -Sociological, Architectural and Urban- Regarding Housing, Specifically the Functionality of Apartments and Socio-Cultural Facilities Developed as Standardized Projects, Including Proposal for Their

Improvements] Contract no. 7041. Phase ‘Study’ Volume I” (1985), Dumitru Sandu Personal Archive.

¹²² Gabriela Mihalache, “Implicațiile sociale ale modurilor de proiectare, execuție și utilizare a spațiilor comune din clădiri de locuit și vecinătăți [Social Implications of Design, Execution and Use of Common Areas From Housing Buildings and Neighborhoods]” (1986), IPCT Archive.

¹²³ Abraham, “Perspectiva Sociologică de Cercetare a Problematicii Locuirii [A Sociological Research Perspective of the Housing Issue].”

¹²⁴ Abraham, “Perspectiva Sociologică de Cercetare a Problematicii Locuirii [A Sociological Research Perspective of the Housing Issue],” 75.

¹²⁵ Ioan Augustin, *Power, Play, and National Identity : Politics of Modernization in Central and East-European Architecture : The Romanian File* (Bucharest: The Romanian Cultural Foundation Pub. House, 1999).

¹²⁶ Ion Mircea Enescu, *Arhitect sub comunism [Architect Under Communism]* (Bucuresti: Paideia, 2006); Gheorghe Leahu, *București: arhitectură și culoare* (Editura Sport-Turism, 1989).

¹²⁷ P. Lizon, “East Central Europe: The Unhappy Heritage of Communist Mass Housing,” *Journal of Architectural Education*, 1996, 104–114; M. Raluca, “Understanding the Urban Past: The Transformation of Bucharest in the Late Socialist Period,” *Testimonies of the City: Identity, Community and Change in a Contemporary Urban World*, 2007, 159; Gyöngyi Pásztor and László Péter, “Romanian Housing Problems: Past and Present,” *Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai-Sociologia*, no. 1 (2009): 79–100.

¹²⁸ Virgil Ioanid, “Elemente metodologice pentru elaborarea prognozelor teritoriale [Methodological Elements for Territorial Prognosis Development],” *Viitorul social* 1, no. 4 (1972): 1154.

¹²⁹ Ioanid, 1155.

¹³⁰ Gheorghe Sebestyén, “Contribuții la metodologia de analiză a eficienței ansamblurilor de locuit [Contributions to an Analysis Methodology of the Housing Ensembles Efficiency]” (Dissertation, UAUIM - Universitatea de Arhitectura și Urbanism “Ion Mincu,” 1972), 63.

¹³¹ Sebestyén, 63.

¹³² Ioanid, “Elemente metodologice pentru elaborarea prognozelor teritoriale [Methodological Elements for Territorial Prognosis Development],” 1155.

¹³³ Dumitru Sandu, “Prognoza locuirii urbane în țara noastră,” *Viitorul Social*, no. 5 (1985): 421.

¹³⁴ Sandu, 421.

¹³⁵ Sandu, 422–23.

¹³⁶ Sandu, 423.

¹³⁷ See also Dorel Abraham “*The Suburb: Rural Transition to Urban Condition (with references to the capital’s subordinate localities)*” in “*Revue Roumaine des Sciences Sociales. Serie de Sociologie*” 20 (1976), p.131-137

¹³⁸ The work produced by its researchers was the result of the demands of their parent institutional organization, the Central Institute of Research, Construction Design, and

Directives (Institutul Central de Cercetare, Proiectare, Directivare în Construcții – ICCPDC), which was created in the same year, 1976.

¹³⁹ The Laboratory's research agenda was centered on the sociology of housing, and was highly influenced by the interdisciplinary research trajectory established in the early 70s in French sociology, particularly in the research of sociologist Chombart de Law and the sociology of housing research produced by the members of CIB-69. CIB was the acronym of the abbreviated French (former) name: "Conseil International du Bâtiment" (International Council for Building). In 1998, the abbreviation was kept, but the full name changed to the International Council for Research and Innovation in Building and Construction. CIB was established in 1953 as an association whose objectives were to stimulate and facilitate international cooperation and information exchange between governmental research institutes in the building and construction sector, emphasizing those institutions engaged in technical fields of research. CIB has since developed into a worldwide network of over 5,000 experts from about 500 member organizations, with a research, university, industry, or government background, who are collectively active in all aspects of research and innovation for building and construction.

¹⁴⁰ The Laboratory developed themes for projects following the institutional demands of the ICCPDC and IPCT, and the Laboratory also proposed research projects in accordance with their findings. The choice of themes was carefully crafted in architects' meetings with engineers and sociologists, according to the needs of the parent institution, and the demands of that moment. Team coordinators led each research project based on a theme, and the time frame for research projects varied from several months to five years.

Mihail Caffé, *Locuința contemporană: probleme și puncte de vedere [The Contemporary Dwelling: Problems and Perspectives]* (București: Editura tehnică, 1987).

¹⁴¹ The book gathered together authors working with different aspects of housing: the architects Mihail Caffé, Gheorghe Sebestyén, Alexandra Florian, Peter Derer, Cosma Jurov, the sociologist Dorel Abraham, and the engineer Florin Dabija. Each of these specialists approached the housing issue from different disciplinary standpoints, including: social and economic, technical (construction systems), and architectural design of the dwelling's interior (space planning, functional and aesthetic attributes).

¹⁴² Cluj, Iași, Timișoara, Brașov, Constanța, Tg. Mureș, Arad, Miercurea-Ciuc, Galați, Craiova, Piatra Neamț, Oradea, Sf. Gheorghe, Buzău, Bacău, Ploiești, Zimnicea, as it was the case for some communes. Abraham, "Perspectiva Sociologică de Cercetare a Problematicii Locuirii [A Sociological Research Perspective of the Housing Issue]," 84.

¹⁴³ Cezarina Nicolau, "Cercetări privind implicațiile economico-sociale ale costurilor rezultate din adaptarea apartamentelor nou construite la modurile de locuire [Research Regarding the Socio-Economic Implications of Expenses Resulted From Adaptations of New Housing Units to Ways of Dwelling]" (1986), IPCT Archive.

¹⁴⁴ Abraham, "Cercetări pe bază de prognoză privind aspirațiile de locuire ale populației și căile de dezvoltare a locuinței, în perspectivă [Research Based on

Prognosis Regarding Population's Housing Aspirations and Ways of the Housing Unit Development in the Future].”

¹⁴⁵ Mihalache, “Implicațiile sociale ale modurilor de proiectare, execuție și utilizare a spațiilor comune din clădiri de locuit și vecinătăți [Social Implications of Design, Execution and Use of Common Areas From Housing Buildings and Neighborhoods]”; Bărbuță, “Studiul relației între modul de locuire și comportarea în exploatare a clădirilor de locuit experimentale, rezultate după proiecte tip [The Study of the Relationship Between the Way of Dwelling and Postoccupancy Behavior of Experimental Buildings, Constructed Based on Standardized Projects].”

¹⁴⁶ Marilena Lunca, “Proiect nr. 7041. Locuința în perspectiva populației care face schimb de locuințe [Housing in the View of the Population That Exchanges Apartments],” in *Cercetări pluridisciplinare de ordin sociologic, arhitectural și urbanistic, privind locuirea în raport cu funcționalitatea apartamentelor și dotarilor socio-culturale aferente, executate după proiecte tip, inclusiv propuneri de îmbunătățirea acestora [Multidisciplinary Studies -Sociological, Architectural, and Urban- Regarding Housing, Specifically the Functionality of Apartments and Socio-Cultural Facilities Developed as Standardized Projects, Including Proposal for Their Improvements] Contract no. 7041. Phase "Synthesis Report," Dumitru Sandu Personal Archive (Bucharest: IPCT-The Research Laboratory of Sociological Studies, 1985); Dumitru Sandu, ed., “Principalele constatari ale cercetărilor sociologice asupra condițiilor de locuit ale populației [Main Findings of Sociological Research Over Housing Conditions of the Population],” in *Cercetări pluridisciplinare de ordin sociologic, arhitectural și urbanistic, privind locuirea în raport cu funcționalitatea apartamentelor și dotarilor socio-culturale aferente, executate după proiecte tip, inclusiv propuneri de îmbunătățirea acestora [Multidisciplinary Studies -Sociological, Architectural and Urban- Regarding Housing, Specifically the Functionality of Apartments and Socio-Cultural Facilities Developed as Standardized Projects, Including Proposal for Their Improvements] Contract no. 7041. Phase "Synthesis Report"* (Bucharest: IPCT-The Research Laboratory of Sociological Studies, 1985); Dumitru Sandu, Mircea Kivu, and Marilena Lunca, “Proiect nr. 7041. Synthesis #2. Caracteristici ale locuințelor din perspectiva unor categorii de utilizatori potențiali [Characteristics of Housing Units from the Perspective of Certain Potential Users],” in *Cercetări pluridisciplinare de ordin sociologic, arhitectural și urbanistic, privind locuirea în raport cu funcționalitatea apartamentelor și dotarilor socio-culturale aferente, executate după proiecte tip, inclusiv propuneri de îmbunătățirea acestora [Multidisciplinary Studies -Sociological, Architectural and Urban- Regarding Housing, Specifically the Functionality of Apartments and Socio-Cultural Facilities Developed as Standardized Projects, Including Proposal for Their Improvements] Contract no. 7041. Phase "Synthesis Report," Dumitru Sandu Personal Archive (Bucharest: IPCT-The Research Laboratory of Sociological Studies, 1985), 1–10; Marilena Lunca, “Proiect Nr. 7041. Schimbul de Locuințe [The Exchange of Apartments],” in *Temă de Proiectare Nr. 7041. Cercetări Pluridisciplinare de Ordin Sociologic, Arhitectural Și Urbanistic, Privind Locuirea În Raport Cu Funcționalitatea Apartamentelor Și Dotarilor Socio-Culturale Aferente, Executate După Proiecte Tip, Inclusiv Propuneri de Îmbunătățirea Acestora [Project 7041.***

Multidisciplinary Studies -Sociological, Architectural and Urban- Regarding Housing, Specifically the Functionality of Apartments and Socio-Cultural Facilities Developed as Standardized Projects, Including Proposal for Their Improvements] Contract No. 7041. Phase "Study" Volume I, Dumitru Sandu Personal Archive (București: IPCT-The Sociological Research Laboratory, 1985), 65–89.

¹⁴⁷ Abraham, "Perspectiva Sociologică de Cercetare a Problematicii Locuirii [A Sociological Research Perspective of the Housing Issue]," 85.

¹⁴⁸ Abraham, 85.

¹⁴⁹ Dumitru Sandu and Cezarina Nicolau, "Proiect nr. 7041. Synthesis #3. Influența condițiilor de locuire asupra stării de sănătate a populației [The Influence of Housing Conditions Over Population's Health]," in *Cercetări pluridisciplinare de ordin sociologic, arhitectural și urbanistic, privind locuirea în raport cu funcționalitatea apartamentelor și dotarilor socio-culturale aferente, executate după proiecte tip, inclusiv propuneri de îmbunătățirea acestora [Multidisciplinary Studies -Sociological, Architectural and Urban- Regarding Housing, Specifically the Functionality of Apartments and Socio-Cultural Facilities Developed as Standardized Projects, Including Proposal for Their Improvements] Contract no. 7041. Phase "Synthesis Report"* (Bucharest: IPCT-The Research Laboratory of Sociological Studies, 1985).

¹⁵⁰ Abraham, "Perspectiva Sociologică de Cercetare a Problematicii Locuirii [A Sociological Research Perspective of the Housing Issue]," 81.

¹⁵¹ Editorial, "Locuința Sau Despre Urbanism În Arhitectură [The Dwelling or About Urbanism in Architecture]," *Arhitectura* 1, no. 134 (1972): 2.

¹⁵² Editorial, 3.

¹⁵³ Adrian Lupescu, "Locuința În România: Realizări Și Perspective [The Dwelling in Romania: Accomplishments and Perspectives]," *Arhitectura* 1, no. 134 (1972): 5.

¹⁵⁴ See Decretul nr. 453/1969 privind organizarea și funcționarea Comitetului de Stat pentru Economia și Administrația Locală*).

¹⁵⁵ Lupescu, "Locuința În România: Realizări Și Perspective [The Dwelling in Romania: Accomplishments and Perspectives]," 5.

¹⁵⁶ Aurelian Trișcu, "O Dezbateră Internațională Asupra Problemei Locuirii [An International Debate Over the Housing Problem]," *Arhitectura* 1, no. 134 (1972): 36–38.

¹⁵⁷ "Legea Nr. 10 Din 9 Mai 1968 Privind Administrarea Fondului Locativ Si Reglementarea Raporturilor Dintre Proprietari Si Chiriaș. [The Housing Law No. 10 from May 9, 1968 Regarding the Administration of the Housing Stock and Regulation of the Relationship between Tenants and Proprietor]," Pub. L. No. 10 (1968), <http://lege5.ro/Gratuit/g43tmnbw/legea-nr-10-1968-privind-administrarea-fondului-locativ-si-reglementarea-raporturilor-dintre-proprietari-si-chiriasi>.

¹⁵⁸ Abraham, "Perspectiva Sociologică de Cercetare a Problematicii Locuirii [A Sociological Research Perspective of the Housing Issue]," 87.

¹⁵⁹ Henri H. Stahl, "Premise Sociologice Ale Urbanismului Românesc [Sociological Premises of the Romanian Urban Planning]," *Arhitectura* 1, no. 134 (1972): 89.

¹⁶⁰ The research was part of the larger project developed between 1981 and 1985 under the leadership of Dumitru Sandu and represents a portion of the Soc Lab Project #7041 titled *Cercetări pluridisciplinare de ordin sociologic, arhitectural și urbanistic, privind*

locuirea în raport cu funcționalitatea apartamentelor și dotarilor socio-culturale aferente, executate după proiecte tip, inclusiv propuneri de îmbunătățirea acestora [Multidisciplinary Studies - Sociological, Architectural and Urban- Regarding Housing, Specifically the Functionality of Apartments and Socio-Cultural Facilities Developed as Standardized Projects, Including Proposal for Their Improvements] Contract no. 7041. Phase "Synthesis Report." The study aimed to understand the characteristics of the housing unit (mostly apartments) through the eyes of the inhabitants. Behavioral studies of people in different social categories represented one of the main sources for information considered useful for housing design and directives.

¹⁶¹ Mircea Kivu, "Locuința în perspectiva populației care obține locuințe din fondul de stat [Housing in the View of People Who Receive Apartments from State Housing Stock]," in *Cercetări pluridisciplinare de ordin sociologic, arhitectural și urbanistic, privind locuirea în raport cu funcționalitatea apartamentelor și dotarilor socio-culturale aferente, executate după proiecte tip, inclusiv propuneri de îmbunătățirea acestora* [Multidisciplinary Studies -Sociological, Architectural and Urban-Regarding Housing, Specifically the Functionality of Apartments and Socio-Cultural Facilities Developed as Standardized Projects, Including Proposal for Their Improvements] Contract no. 7041. Phase "Synthesis Report" (Bucharest: IPCT-The Research Laboratory of Sociological Studies, 1985); Lunca, "Proiect nr. 7041. Locuința în perspectiva populației care face schimb de locuințe [Housing in the View of the Population That Exchanges Apartments]."

¹⁶² Gheorghe Sebestyén, "Ce se înțelege prin locuințe flexibile și cum le proiectăm," *Arhitectura* 1, no. 224 (1987): 34–35; "E.S.F. - Elemente Spațiale Pentru Clădiri Cu Partiu Flexibil [Spatial Elements for Buildings with Flexible Space Planning]," *Arhitectura* 5–6 (n.d.): 73–79; Stănculescu et al., "Posibilități de Realizare a Locuințelor Cu Structuri Care Să Permită Flexibilitatea Partiurilor [Possibilities for Building Housing Units with Structures That Would Allow Flexible Space Planning]"; Alexandru Florian et al., "Preocupări și Realizări în Domeniul Proiectării Clădirilor de Locuit," *Arhitectura* 2, no. 213 (1985); Constantin Jugurică, "Unele Considerațiuni Privind Problemele Construcției de Locuințe În Municipiul București [Some Considerations Regarding Dwelling Construction in Bucharest]," *Arhitectura* 2, no. 195 (1982): 20; Abraham, "Cercetări Sociologice Privind Calitatea Locuinței [Sociological Studies Regarding the Quality of the Housing Unit]"; A. V., "Să Discutăm Despre Posibilitatea de a Alege [Let Us Talk About the Possibility to Choose]," *Arhitectura* 5–6 (n.d.): 103–4.

¹⁶³ Sandu, "Dinamica socială a locuirii urbane [The Social Dynamic of Urban Housing]," 433.

¹⁶⁴ Sandu, 433.

¹⁶⁵ Lunca, "Proiect nr. 7041. Locuința în perspectiva populației care face schimb de locuințe [Housing in the View of the Population That Exchanges Apartments]," 1.

¹⁶⁶ The ground floor and the last story level were generally rejected because there was no thermal insulation in the basement (in the case of the ground floor) and often water leakages on the flat roofs above the apartments situated at the top level (in addition to the poor thermal insulation).

¹⁶⁷ Granted, as researchers clarified, that the difference was also reflected in the nature of the group under study. Sandu, Kivu, and Lunca, “Proiect nr. 7041. Synthesis #2. Caracteristici ale locuințelor din perspectiva unor categorii de utilizatori potențiali [Characteristics of Housing Units from the Perspective of Certain Potential Users],” 8.

¹⁶⁸ Sandu, Kivu, and Lunca, 10.

¹⁶⁹ It might be also explained by the energy crisis, which made it very difficult and expensive to maintain comfortable temperature levels in three-bedroom apartments compared to one-bedroom apartments.

¹⁷⁰ Sandu, Kivu, and Lunca, “Proiect nr. 7041. Synthesis #2. Caracteristici ale locuințelor din perspectiva unor categorii de utilizatori potențiali [Characteristics of Housing Units from the Perspective of Certain Potential Users],” 10.

¹⁷¹ Sandu, Kivu, and Lunca, 27.

¹⁷² This applies in large cities and especially Bucharest.

¹⁷³ The researchers concluded that housing units from MI better satisfied their residents than the units from MII. The main criteria for exchange included the features of: zoning, apartment layout, distance from the workplace, and room sizes. Another controversial feature, which comes out quite often in the sociological reports, was the issue of *comandare* and *decomandare* (as mentioned before). This functional relationship was better resolved, in the opinion of many residents, through *decomandare*. Another source of dissatisfaction often encountered in the sociological studies was the poor quality of finishes (in 12 cases, out of which 9 were in MII), absence of a balcony or loggia, lack of a pantry, lack of supplemental bathroom (in 7 cases), small auxiliary rooms (in 6 cases), or a loosely-defined lack of ‘inferior comfort’ (in 5 cases, all related to the MII). In 4 cases, the residents complained about the heating system (in 3 cases, this was communal central heating, and in 1 case a wood stove). On a smaller scale (for the sample research), there were 2 cases complaining of a northerly orientation and one case complaining of distance from family members. Sandu, Kivu, and Lunca, “Proiect nr. 7041. Synthesis #2. Caracteristici ale locuințelor din perspectiva unor categorii de utilizatori potențiali [Characteristics of Housing Units from the Perspective of Certain Potential Users],” 27.

¹⁷⁴ Dumitru Lupulescu, *Schimbul de locuințe* (București: Editura științifică și enciclopedică, 1978).

¹⁷⁵ Lupulescu, 6.

¹⁷⁶ Lupulescu, 6 See also Supreme Court Decision no.232/1974.

¹⁷⁷ Maria I. Eremia and Petre Anca, “Schimbul de locuințe,” *Revista Română de Drept*, no. 4 (1970).

¹⁷⁸ Lupulescu, *Schimbul de locuințe*, 8 See also the decision of the Supreme Court no.506/1974.

¹⁷⁹ Lupulescu, 14.

¹⁸⁰ The procedures consisted in three stages: (1) the submission of application paperwork, including a standard form, to the state institutions in charge of the housing units to be exchanged; (2) the period necessary for the institution to check the validity of the request and its legal bases, and to obtain the approval of both sides of the exchange and their respective institutions as administrators of housing units and their rental contracts; and (3) the actual approval of the housing exchange. Lupulescu, 47.

¹⁸¹ The standard form shows the identity of the contract holder (the main tenant), the number of family members, the address, details regarding their housing unit, the number of rooms, and other details. On the form the co-exchangers had to state if the housing unit was accessory to a work contract and if there were any previous litigations in process. Lupulescu, 49.

¹⁸² This synthesis was a part of the larger project developed between 1981 and 1985 under the leadership of Dumitru Sandu and represents a portion of the SocLab Project #7040 titled *Cercetări pluridisciplinare de ordin sociologic, arhitectural și urbanistic, privind locuirea în raport cu funcționalitatea apartamentelor și dotarilor socio-culturale aferente, executate după proiecte tip, inclusiv propuneri de îmbunătățirea acestora* [Multidisciplinary Studies - Sociological, Architectural and Urban- Regarding Housing, Specifically the Functionality of Apartments and Socio-Cultural Facilities Developed as Standardized Projects, Including Proposal for Their Improvements] Contract no. 7041. Phase "Synthesis Report." The study aimed to understand the characteristics of the housing units (mostly apartments) through the eyes of the inhabitants. Behavioral studies of people in different social categories represented one of the main sources for information useful for housing design and directives.

¹⁸³ Sandu, Kivu, and Lunca, "Proiect nr. 7041. Synthesis #2. Caracteristici ale locuințelor din perspectiva unor categorii de utilizatori potențiali [Characteristics of Housing Units from the Perspective of Certain Potential Users]," 1.

¹⁸⁴ Sandu, Kivu, and Lunca, 1.

¹⁸⁵ Dumitru Sandu, Mircea Kivu, and Marilena Lunca, "Proiect nr. 7041. Synthesis #2. Caracteristici ale locuințelor din perspectiva unor categorii de utilizatori potențiali [Characteristics of Housing Units from the Perspective of Certain Potential Users]," in *Cercetări pluridisciplinare de ordin sociologic, arhitectural și urbanistic, privind locuirea în raport cu funcționalitatea apartamentelor și dotarilor socio-culturale aferente, executate după proiecte tip, inclusiv propuneri de îmbunătățirea acestora* [Multidisciplinary Studies -Sociological, Architectural and Urban- Regarding Housing, Specifically the Functionality of Apartments and Socio-Cultural Facilities Developed as Standardized Projects, Including Proposal for Their Improvements] Contract no. 7041. Phase "Synthesis Report," Dumitru Sandu Personal Archive (Bucharest: IPCT-The Research Laboratory of Sociological Studies, 1985), 3–4.

¹⁸⁶ Sandu, Kivu, and Lunca, 5–6.

¹⁸⁷ Other important characteristics in the supply and demand of apartments under exchange, were: (1) their spatial planning, (2) their comfort type (whether comfort type I or II predominated) and the level of the apartment, (3) decomandated apartments were preferred, (4) they were situated mainly on levels 2, 3 or 4 (the ground floor was not necessarily preferred, since it was usually very cold during the winter, being situated over the ground/basement without proper thermal insulation), while inferior comfort levels III and IV were avoided. Sandu, Kivu, and Lunca, 7.

¹⁸⁸ Sandu, Kivu, and Lunca, 8.

¹⁸⁹ Sandu, Kivu, and Lunca, 10.

¹⁹⁰ Lunca, "Proiect Nr. 7041. Schimbul de Locuințe [The Exchange of Apartments]," 65.

¹⁹¹ Nowadays the design of housing is more often connected with the evolution of family household as the main factor in the changes in housing needs. The continual adaptation of housing units to these needs was considered a kind of movement inside a given system. If we presuppose that the volume and structure of the housing stock (state housing stock in this case) remained the same, for an unchanged volume of the population, the adaptation process did not change, but continued in the direction given by the housing requirements. This way of seeing the evolution of adaptation in the housing unit-resident relationship brought with it a series of problems the solutions to which were never complete, and they were responsible for “system optimization.” Lunca, 66.

[?]; (1) The total volume of housing units exchanges for 1975, 1978, 1981 and 1985 in Bucharest with the purpose of the dynamics that I have described, taking 1975 as the “control year”; (2) Information regarding procedures residents must follow (institutions, documents, steps to take in the procedure) and conditions and legal procedures that grant and validate the exchange; (3) the causes that favored taking this decision and some of the motives behind it. Instruments for data collection: the model of data inventory of announcements in the news paper *România Liberă* (for the years mentioned above), taking one week for each month; the information gathered consisted in (1) area offered/requested; (2) number of rooms in an apartment offered/requested; (3) story offered/requested; (4) heating system; (5) other aspects (e.g. decomandation, garage, etc.) (6) urgency. In addition a survey was in place. The survey was given to people in the midst of the legal process and completion of a housing exchange. The exchange process took place within the ICRA¹⁹² from Bucharest (in this case) for at least one sector of the city (the Bucharest city has and had 6 sectors). The survey contained

(1) identification data on the main residents (age, profession, place of work, size of the family, average family income and (2) data about the housing unit to be exchanged offered/required (area, story, number of rooms, heating system, cohabitation, size in square meters, auxiliary areas, the state of the apartment; (3) the main reason for the exchange (and other reasons as well, if they existed). Lunca, 67.

¹⁹³ Lunca, 75.

¹⁹⁴ The greatest number of exchanges were for one- and two-bedroom apartments, meaning 55% of the total of exchanges). In terms of the size of the apartments, the supply and demand was equal, 35% out of the total of exchanges, meaning that the person who was seeking to change apartments would exchange theirs for one of the same size. The same went for exchanges for those who were seeking a bigger apartment than the one they were leaving, 34% out of the total exchanges. It is however of a particular interest that, even slightly less in percentage, 31% were seeking a smaller apartment than the one they were leaving. These percentages are surprisingly high. Out of the total of 16 changes possible, the most desired were “towards two-bedroom apartments,” followed by “from one one-bedroom apartment” to another. The demand for one- and two-bedroom apartments was higher than the supply for studios and smaller than that for three-bedroom apartments. Lunca, 69–70.

¹⁹⁵ Abraham, “Perspectiva Sociologică de Cercetare a Problematicii Locuirii [A Sociological Research Perspective of the Housing Issue],” 89.

¹⁹⁶ Stoica, "Communism as a Project for Modernization"; Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons: A Political History of Romanian Communism* (University of California Press, 2003); V. Tismaneanu, *Fantasies of Salvation: Democracy, Nationalism, and Myth in Post-Communist Europe* (Princeton University Press, 2009); Dorel Abraham, "Trends in the Social and Economic Development of Romanian Cities," *Netherlands Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* 7, no. 4 (1992): 335; Pierre Clermont, *Le communisme à contre-modernité* (Presses universitaires de Vincennes, 1993); Peter Beilharz, "Modernity and Communism: Zygmunt Bauman and the Other Totalitarianism," *Thesis Eleven* 70, no. 1 (August 1, 2002): 88–99, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0725513602070001008>; Tilman Schiel, "Modernity, Ambivalence and the Gardening State," *Thesis Eleven* 83, no. 1 (November 1, 2005): 78–89, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0725513605057138>; Nita Mathur, "Peter Beilharz, Socialism and Modernity," *International Sociology* 27, no. 2 (March 1, 2012): 262–64, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0268580911428018>; Kazimierz Z. Poznanski, "The Crisis of Modernity: Capitalism and Communism Reexamined," *East European Politics & Societies* 14, no. 3 (September 1, 2000): 676–92, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325400014003008>; Achim Siegel, *The Totalitarian Paradigm After the End of Communism: Towards a Theoretical Reassessment* (Rodopi, 1998).

¹⁹⁷ Jóhann P. Árnason, "Communism and Modernity," *Daedalus* 129, no. 1 (January 1, 2000): 61.

¹⁹⁸ Árnason, 61.

¹⁹⁹ The authors use the term *proletarianization* with a derogatory meaning; hence the use of quotation marks. However, the way in which they are employing the word is, to some extent, accurate. The English word 'proletariat', a borrowing from the French *prolétariat*, means the condition of being proletarian, or of a proletarian class (used as such in 1832). In politics, a proletarian is a wage earner within a collective labor environment, and who has no capital and depends for his subsistence on his daily labor. As I will show in this study, the majority of the people living in block of flats owned (or in the process of owing) their apartments. Most of the rural migrants, occupying state built apartments, owned property in rural areas, becoming what sociologists of the time called "dual propertied workers."

²⁰⁰ In 2006 the Romanian writer Ruxandra Cesereanu published, along with some of her students, *Cramped Romania: Boxes of Matches, Jars, and Preserves: Stances of Ghettoization in Communism and Post-Communism*. In the post-Communist transitional period, Cesereanu became a well-known figure as an astute writer on the Communist Gulag in Romania, specifically the political incarceration of intellectuals by the Communist Party. A talented poet and fiction writer, Cesereanu is Professor at the Cluj School of Journalism, where she and several of her students published *Cramped Romania* as a reaction to how the socialist neighborhood of standardized apartment building was, allegedly, turning into a ghettoized building environment. Florin-Stefan Morar, at the time of his writing the text above was an undergraduate in the School of Journalism and Letters at Babes Bolyai University, studying under the mentorship of Cesereanu, in the department of Comparative Literature. Ruxandra Cesereanu and Florin-Ștefan Morar, *România înghesuită: cutii de chibrituri, borcane,*

conserve ; (ipostaze ale ghetozării în comunism și postcomunism) [*Cramped Romania: Boxes of Matches, Jars, and Preserves: Stances of Ghettoization in Communism and Postcommunism*] (Cluj-Napoca: Limes, 2006), 8–9 (my translation).

²⁰¹ The book *Crammed Romania* was an experimental piece of writing, which Ruxandra Cesereanu and her students published in 2006. I mention this text because it epitomizes a generalized attitude of opposition to the ‘remains’ of the socialist neighborhood. I take the book as a portrayal of the attitude and thinking of a group of Journalism students who were grew up in the socialist block of flats. The authors published the text with a low-circulation publishing house, and it does not comply with accepted forms of scholarly production. The authors wrote the texts using a colloquial and informal tone (and style), expressing their thoughts and feelings freely.

²⁰² The vernacular in architecture is normally concerned with domestic and functional rather than monumental buildings.

(http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/vernacular).

²⁰³ See Florin Poenaru, *On the Socialist Balcony: State, Citizens, and Ideology in a Romanian Neighborhood* (VDM Verlag Dr. Müller, 2008).

²⁰⁴ Morar uses the word *mahalas*, to mean of *slum*. In the Romanian dictionary (DEX – Dicționarul Explicativ al Limbii Române), the word *mahala* denotes a street or an old neighborhood, usually within a city’s peripheral location.

²⁰⁵ Maxim, “The New, the Old, the Modern: Architecture and Its Representation in Socialist Romania, 1955-1965,” 27.

²⁰⁶ “Vernacularization, n.,” in *OED Online* (Oxford University Press), accessed January 17, 2017, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/222612>.

²⁰⁷ “Vernacularization | Define Vernacularization at Dictionary.Com,” accessed January 17, 2017, <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/vernacularization>.

²⁰⁸ Christian Lee Novetzke, *The Quotidian Revolution: Vernacularization, Religion, and the Premodern Public Sphere in India* (Columbia University Press, 2016), https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=z9kbDQAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PR7&dq=vernacularization&ots=kGEdehIt2H&sig=-qcFhdAbpRaOZdHqd_XOfVdqSSI; E. Annamalai, “1. Death by Other Means: Neo-Vernacularization of South Asian Languages,” 2014, <http://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/handle/10125/4599>; Francesc J. Gomez, *Knowledge and Vernacular Languages in the Era of Lull and Eiximenis. ICREA Studies on Vernacularization* (CONSEJO SUPERIOR DE INVESTIGACIONES CIENTIFICAS VITRUVIO 8, 28006 MADRID, SPAIN, 2014); Nkonko M. Kamwangamalu, “Vernacularization, Globalization, and Language Economics in Non-English-Speaking Countries in Africa,” *Language Problems & Language Planning* 34, no. 1 (2010): 1–23.

²⁰⁹ Harpreet Singh, “Religious Identity and the Vernacularization of Literary Cultures of the Pañjāb, 1500-1700” (2013), <https://dash.harvard.edu/handle/1/10364612>.

²¹⁰ Peggy Levitt et al., “Doing Vernacularization: The Encounter between Global and Local Ideas about Women’s Rights in Peru,” *Feminist Strategies in International Governance*. London: Routledge, 2013, 127–142; Anthony Cooper, Chris Perkins, and Chris Rumford, “The Vernacularization of Borders,” *Placing the Border in Everyday Life*, 2014, 15; Lucia Michelutti, “The Vernacularization of Democracy: Political Participation and Popular Politics in North India,” *Journal of the Royal*

Anthropological Institute 13, no. 3 (2007): 639–656; Vaidehi Ramanathan, “The Vernacularization of English: Crossing Global Currents to Re-Dress West-Based TESOL,” *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies* 3, no. 2–3 (2006): 131–146.

²¹¹ Paul Oliver, *Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World: Theories and Principles* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), xxiii.

²¹² Oliver, xxii.

²¹³ Fehérváry, *Politics in Color and Concrete*.

²¹⁴ I use the term *informal* as an idiom that cannot stand on its own, separated from what the status quo deems the ‘formal’. I see this study as following an attempt to transgress such perceptions: inhabitants’ spatial agency as situated only within the informal or the second economy. In the case of a block of flats, the standardized design of apartments was the embodiment of the quasi-official architectural language of modernism, as applied at the time.

²¹⁵ Oliver, *Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World*, ii.

²¹⁶ Dell Upton, “The Tradition of Change,” *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review* 5, no. 1 (1993): 11.

²¹⁷ Ananya Roy and Nezar Al Sayyad, *Urban Informality: Transnational Perspectives from the Middle East, Latin America, and South Asia* (Lexington Books, 2004).

²¹⁸ Anya Roy at INFUR - with Kim Dovey & Crystal Legacy, 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tn0RrDi_7tU.

²¹⁹ Zoltan Thurman, “Balconul Și Logia În Construcțiile Noi de Locuit [The Balcony and the Loggia in the New Housing Buildings],” *Arhitectura* 2, no. 195 (1982): 24.

²²⁰ Thurman, 24.

²²¹ Thurman, 24 Cited from Flacăra magazine, 1982.

²²² Thurman, 24.

²²³ Thurman, 24.

²²⁴ <https://elenaagachi.wordpress.com/2009/07/30/prispa/>

²²⁵ Images source: <https://elenaagachi.wordpress.com/2009/07/30/prispa/>

²²⁶ Images source: <https://elenaagachi.wordpress.com/2009/07/30/prispa/>

²²⁷ Thurman, “Balconul Și Logia În Construcțiile Noi de Locuit [The Balcony and the Loggia in the New Housing Buildings],” 24.

²²⁸ David Crawley and Susan Emily Reid, eds., *Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc* (Berg, 2002).

²²⁹ Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, until It Was No More*, 128.

²³⁰ Yurchak, 132.

²³¹ Yurchak, 132.

²³² Grigore Ionescu, *Arhitectura în România perioada anilor 1944-1969 [Architecture in Romania, 1944-1969]* (București: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1969).

²³³ Arendt, 27.

²³⁴ Arendt, 31.

²³⁵ Arendt, 38–46.

²³⁶ Furthermore, this was certainly the case since many in the new generation of architects did indeed end up inhabiting the “proletarian apartments”.

²³⁷ Aurelian Trișcu, "O Dezbatere Internațională Asupra Problemei Locuirii [An International Debate Over the Housing Problem]," *Arhitectura* 1, no. 134 (1972): 36–38.

²³⁸ Gheorghe Popescu-Negreanu, "Noi Studii de Secțiuni Tip În Blocuri [New Studies of Standard Apartment Layouts for Blocks of Flats]," *Arhitectura R.P.R.* 6 (1956): 8.

²³⁹ Moreover, this was to be realized by investigations (census data, surveys) on the situation and the occupation of housing stock for each city and town using the ICRA network, design institutes, and Peoples' Councils in different Romanian cities. The sociological research called for the grounding and adaptation of some organizational measures, to ensure a stronger connection between designers and future users. It involved the promotion and integration of all of those architectural solutions meant to ensure the physical comfort of the housing unit, even under the conditions of the energy crisis. It meant a high level of thermal insulation, a reduction in building height for housing buildings, and better consideration of the orientation of the apartments with respect to the sun. It also involved a differentiation of solutions, by degrees, of the hygrothermal insulation of apartments based on their position within the building and of the building within the natural and urban context. "Proiect nr. 7041. Raport de sinteză. Cercetări pluridisciplinare de ordin sociologic, arhitectural și urbanistic, privind locuirea în raport cu funcționalitatea apartamentelor și dotarilor socio-culturale aferente, executate după proiecte tip, inclusiv propuneri de îmbunătățirea acestora [Multidisciplinary Studies -Sociological, Architectural and Urban- Regarding Housing, Specifically the Functionality of Apartments and Socio-Cultural Facilities Developed as Standardized Projects, Including Proposal for Their Improvements] Contract no. 7041. Phase 'Synthesis Report'" (1985), Dumitru Sandu Personal Archive.

²⁴⁰ In this case, and for the purpose of enhancing comfort, the sociologists insisted on "knowing for how many without knowing for whom, from the point of view of the socio-demographic structure of families and the requirements and aspirations of living; this situation holds especially for economic requirements, regarding urban spaces, circulation, and public equipment." Abraham, "Perspectiva Sociologică de Cercetare a Problematicii Locuirii [A Sociological Research Perspective of the Housing Issue]," 86.

²⁴¹ Mihail Caffé et al., "Luări de Cuvînt La Plenara U.A. Calitateta Locuinței [Speaking at the U.A. Plenum. The Housing Quality]," *Arhitectura* 2, no. 195 (1982): 33.

²⁴² Andreas H. Leskovsek, "US-Romanian Trade: Foreign Debt, Trade Barriers, and Future Problems and Prospects," *Law & Pol'y Int'l Bus.* 21 (1989): 71.

²⁴³ Seymour Rubin, "Most-Favored-Nation Treatment and the Multilateral Trade Negotiations: A Quiet Revolution Symposium - Trade With Developing Countries: Prospects and Problems," *International Trade Law Journal* 6, no. 2 (1981 1980): 221.

²⁴⁴ Andreas H. Leskovsek, "US-Romanian Trade: Foreign Debt, Trade Barriers, and Future Problems and Prospects," *Law & Pol'y Int'l Bus.* 21 (1989): 71; See also Linda S. Droker and John A. Martens, "East-West Trade: The Prospects to 1985 : Studies" (US Government Printing Office, 1982), Pennsylvania State University Document Collection.

²⁴⁵ Leskovsek, "US-Romanian Trade," 73.

-
- ²⁴⁶ John Michael Montias, *Economic Development in Communist Rumania* (MIT Press, 1967).
- ²⁴⁷ Paul Streeten, "Unbalanced Growth," *Oxford Economic Papers* 11, no. 2 (1959): 167–90; Montias, "Unbalanced Growth in Rumania."
- ²⁴⁸ Montias, "Unbalanced Growth in Rumania"; Montias, *Economic Development in Communist Rumania*.
- ²⁴⁹ Leskovsek, "US-Romanian Trade," 74.
- ²⁵⁰ Leskovsek, 74.
- ²⁵¹ Leskovsek, 75.
- ²⁵² Dumitru Sandu, "Dinamica socială a locuirii urbane [The Social Dynamic of Urban Housing]," *Viitorul Social*, no. 5–6 (1989): 433.
- ²⁵³ Sandu, 433.
- ²⁵⁴ See also Poenaru, *On the Socialist Balcony*.
- ²⁵⁵ ANIC, "Stenograma Ședinței Comitetului Central al Partidului Comunist Român Din Zilele de 28 Februarie-2 Martie 1973 [The Minutes of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party Plenary from February, 28 to March, 2nd 1973]" (February 28th, 1973), 20, Fond CC al PCR, Secția Cămară, Dosar 31/1973, ANIC.
- ²⁵⁶ ANIC, 20.
- ²⁵⁷ ANIC, 20.
- ²⁵⁸ Privitera, "Balconies in Traditional Urban Architecture through Typology and Solar Radiation," 669.
- ²⁵⁹ Privitera, 669.
- ²⁶⁰ Privitera, 670; See also Gianfranco Caniggia and Gian Luigi Maffei, *Lettura dell'edilizia di base* (Alinea Editrice, 2008).
- ²⁶¹ Paolo Privitera, "La acción del poder público sobre el privado: La normativa sobre saledizos y balcones en la ciudad de Valencia en el Siglo de las Luces [The action of the Public Power over the Private: the Rules on Cantilevering of Features and Balconies in the City of Valencia (1238-1796)," *POTESTAS. Estudios del Mundo Clásico e Historia del Arte* 14, no. 14 (June 28, 2019): 86.
- ²⁶² Florin Poenaru, "On Balcony: State/Citizens Intersection in a Socialist Romanian Block of Flats" (Master Thesis, Budapest, Central European University Department of Sociology and Socio-Anthropology, 2007), 74, www.etd.ceu.hu/2007/poenaru_florin.pdf.
- ²⁶³ See <http://m.turnucustiri.ro/stiri-locale/7633-inventivitate-teleormaneana-geamuri-de-autobuz-la-balcon-foto> and <https://cafeauata.wordpress.com/2011/08/19/cinci-zile-de-fericire/>
- ²⁶⁴ Bogdan Iancu, "The Golden Age of Termopane. The Social Life of Post-Socialist Windows," *Martor. Revue d'Anthropologie Du Musée Du Paysan Roumain*, no. 16 (2011): 19–34.
- ²⁶⁵ Poenaru, "On Balcony: State/Citizens Intersection in a Socialist Romanian Block of Flats."
- ²⁶⁶ Poenaru, 47–48.
- ²⁶⁷ Mircea Ramba et al., "Calitatea construcțiilor de locuințe și direcțiile de îmbunătățire a acestora [The Quality of the Housing Constructions and the Directions for Their

Improvement],” Îmbunătățirea calității clădirilor de locuit (Cluj-Napoca: CNIT Consiliul Național al Inginerilor și Tehnicienilor - Secția Construcții, iunie 1981), 4.

²⁶⁸ Ramba et al., 5.

²⁶⁹ A concrete frame structure is a construction system that uses a combination of beam, column, and slab to resist the lateral and gravity loads. These structures are usually used to prevent large-scale shifting of elements [?] due to the applied loading.

²⁷⁰ Ramba et al., “Calitatea construcțiilor de locuințe și direcțiile de îmbunătățire a acestora [The Quality of the Housing Constructions and the Directions for Their Improvement],” 4.

²⁷¹ Ramba et al., 4.

²⁷² Alexandra Florian et al., “Preocupari Si Realizari in Domeniul Proiectării Clădirilor de Locuit,” *Arhitectura* 2, no. 213 (1985): 18–19.

²⁷³ Florian et al., 18–19.

²⁷⁴ Ramba et al., “Calitatea construcțiilor de locuințe și direcțiile de îmbunătățire a acestora [The Quality of the Housing Constructions and the Directions for Their Improvement],” 7.

²⁷⁵ Ramba et al., 7.

²⁷⁶ Abraham, “Cercetări Sociologice Privind Calitatea Locuinței [Sociological Studies Regarding the Quality of the Housing Unit],” 19.

²⁷⁷ Abraham, 19.

²⁷⁸ Thurman, “Balconul Și Logia În Construcțiile Noi de Locuit [The Balcony and the Loggia in the New Housing Buildings],” 24.

²⁷⁹ Thurman, 24.

²⁸⁰ Thurman, 25.

²⁸¹ Thurman, 24.

²⁸² Caffé et al., “Luări de Cuvînt La Plenara U.A. Calitateta Locuinței [Speaking at the U.A. Plenum. The Housing Quality].”

²⁸³ Thurman, “Balconul Și Logia În Construcțiile Noi de Locuit [The Balcony and the Loggia in the New Housing Buildings],” 24.

²⁸⁴ Thurman, 25.

²⁸⁵ Leahu, “Luări de Cuvînt La Plenara U.A. Calitateta Locuinței [Speaking at the A.U. Plenum. The Housing Quality] - Arh. Gheorghe Leahu, the ‘Proiect-București’ Design Institute,” 33.

²⁸⁶ Dumitru Sandu, “Proiect Nr. 7056. Cercetări Interdisciplinare Privind Eficiența Socio-Economică a Realizării Și Utilizării Locuințelor Și Fondul Locativ În Contextul Proceselor de Dezvoltare În Profil Teritorial. a) Elaborarea Și Testarea Metodologiei de Cercetare Interdisciplinară; b) Ceretarea Eficienței Social Economice a Dezvoltării Și Utilizării Fondului Locativ; c) Studiu de Sinteză. Etapa I a. Studiu. Elaborarea Metodologiei de Cercetare. 31.05.1986 [Interdisciplinary Research Regarding the Socio-Economic Efficiency of Constructing and Using the Housing Units and the Housing Stock in the Context of Regional Development. a) Elaboration and Testing of the Interdisciplinary Research Methodology; b) Research of the Development and the Use of the Housing Socio-Economic Efficiency; c) Synthesis. Phase One. a. Study]” (București, 1986), IPCT Archive/Dumitru Sandu Personal Archive.

²⁸⁷ Răuță, *Negocierea Centrului Civic. Arhitecți și politicieni în România secolului XX* [Negotiating the Civic Center. Architects and Politicians in 20th Century Romania].

²⁸⁸ Cosma Jurov, *Centre civice: contribuții la definirea și conceperea unor tipuri de centre civice multifuncționale pentru viitoarele orașe mici* (București: Editura Tehnica, 1979); Jurov; Cosma Jurov, "Integrarea centrelor civice în structura localităților," *Arhitectura* 3, no. 184 (1980): 19–24.

²⁸⁹ Leahu, "Luări de Cuvânt La Plenara U.A. Calitateta Locuinței [Speaking at the A.U. Plenum. The Housing Quality] - Arh. Gheorghe Leahu, the 'Proiect-București' Design Institute," 33.

²⁹⁰ Abraham, "Perspectiva Sociologică de Cercetare a Problematicii Locuirii [A Sociological Research Perspective of the Housing Issue]," 87.

²⁹¹ Sandu, "Proiect Nr. 7056. Cercetări Interdisciplinare Privind Eficiența Socio-Economică a Realizării Și Utilizării Locuințelor Și Fondul Locativ În Contextul Proceselor de Dezvoltare În Profil Teritorial. a) Elaborarea Și Testarea Metodologiei de Cercetare Interdisciplinară; b) Cercetarea Eficienței Social Economice a Dezvoltării Și Utilizării Fondului Locativ; c) Studiu de Sinteză. Etapa I a. Studiu. Elaborarea Metodologiei de Cercetare. 31.05.1986 [Interdisciplinary Research Regarding the Socio-Economic Efficiency of Constructing and Using the Housing Units and the Housing Stock in the Context of Regional Development. a) Elaboration and Testing of the Interdisciplinary Research Methodology; b) Research of the Development and the Use of the Housing Socio-Economic Efficiency; c) Synthesis. Phase One. a. Study]."

²⁹² This statement is from Ivan Szelenyi's commentary on the work presented in the special issue *IJURR* on East European cities published in 1987, which included papers on urban development in three socialist countries (Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland) by Maria Ciechocinska, Jens Dangschat, Jozef Hegedus, Jiri Musil, and Ivan Tosics. Szelenyi mentions in this paper that Ivan Tosics referred to the housing program of the '70s as "the golden age of public housing." Szelenyi, "Housing Inequalities and Occupational Segregation in State Socialist Cities," 3.

²⁹³ Michał Murawski, "Actually-Existing Success: Economics, Aesthetics, and the Specificity of (Still-)Socialist Urbanism," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 60, no. 4 (October 2018): 907–37, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417518000336>.

²⁹⁴ For an incisive critique of the use in Eastern European and Soviet studies of the failure trope, see Murawski.

²⁹⁵ For a detailed analysis of the architecture profession transformation during communism see Alexandru Panaitescu and Rodica Panaitescu, *De la Casa Scânteii la Casa Poporului: patru decenii de arhitectură în București 1945-1989* (Simetria, 2012).

²⁹⁶ Ost, *The Defeat of Solidarity*.

²⁹⁷ Stoica, "Communism as a Project for Modernization," 329.

²⁹⁸ Murawski, "Actually-Existing Success."

²⁹⁹ Stroe, "Modificarea Apartamentelor - Originea Unei Practici [The Modification of Apartments - The Origin of a Practice]."

³⁰⁰ Leahu, "Luări de Cuvânt La Plenara U.A. Calitateta Locuinței [Speaking at the A.U. Plenum. The Housing Quality] - Arh. Gheorghe Leahu, the 'Proiect-București' Design Institute"; Poenaru, *On the Socialist Balcony*.

³⁰¹ Sandu, *Fluxurile de Migrație În România [Migration Flows in Romania]*.

³⁰² Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, until It Was No More*; Poenaru, “On Balcony: State/Citizens Intersection in a Socialist Romanian Block of Flats.”

³⁰³ This proposition has so far been advanced by Florin Poenaru, “Contesting Illusions: History and Intellectual Class Struggle in Post-Communist Romania” (Dissertation, Budapest, Hungary, Central European University, 2013), https://www.academia.edu/4769835/Thesis_poenaru.

Bibliography

Aanya Roy at INFUR - with Kim Dovey & Crystal Legacy, 2019.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tn0RrDi_7tU.

Abraham, Dorel. "Cercetări Sociologice Privind Calitatea Locuinței [Sociological Studies Regarding the Quality of the Housing Unit]." *Arhitectura* 2, no. 195 (1982): 19.

———. "Perspectiva Sociologică de Cercetare a Problematicii Locuirii [A Sociological Research Perspective of the Housing Issue]." In *Locuința Contemporană: Probleme Și Puncte de Vedere [The Contemporary Dwelling: Problems and Perspectives]*, edited by Mihail Caffé, 75–97. București: Editura Tehnica, 1987.

———. "Trends in the Social and Economic Development of Romanian Cities." *Netherlands Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* 7, no. 4 (1992): 335–41.

———. "Trends in the Social and Economic Development of Romanian Cities." *Netherlands Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* 7, no. 4 (1992): 335.

ANIC. "Propuneri Privind Dezvoltarea Construcției de Locuințe, Îmbunătățirea Administrării Și Întreținerii Fondului Locativ Și Noul Regim al Chiriilor În Republica Socialistă România [Proposals Regarding Housing Construction Development, Administration and Maintenance Improvement and the New Rent Regime in the Socialist Republic of Romania]," 1967. Fond CC al PCR, Secția Economică, Dosar 66/1967.

———. "Protocol Nr. 29 al ședinței Comitetului Executiv al C.C. al P.C.R. din ziua de 23 iulie 1968 [Protocol No. 29 - Minutes of the Executive Committee of CC of RCP for July 23, 1968]," July 23, 1968. Fond CC al PCR, Secția Cancelarie, Dosar 126/1968.

———. "Stenograma Ședinței Comitetului Central al Partidului Comunist Român Din Zilele de 28 Februarie-2 Martie 1973 [The Minutes of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party Plenary from February, 28 to March, 2nd 1973]," February 28, 1973. Fond CC al PCR, Secția Cancelarie, Dosar 31/1973.

Annamalai, E. "1. Death by Other Means: Neo-Vernacularization of South Asian Languages," 2014. <http://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/handle/10125/4599>.

- Apor, Péter. "The Joy of Everyday Life: Microhistory and the History of Everyday Life in the Socialist Dictatorships." In *East Central Europe*, edited by Paulmann, 34–35:185–218, 2007.
- adevarul.ro. "Apoteoza Lui Ceaușescu – 21 August 1968 [Ceaușescu's Apotheosis - August 21, 1968]," 1356635255. https://adevarul.ro/cultura/istorie/apoteoza-ceausescu-21-august-1968-1_50dc9b51596d72009141826b/index.html.
- Arendt, Hannah. *The Human Condition*. University of Chicago Press, 1998.
- Armstrong, George M. *The Soviet Law of Property: The Right to Control Property and the Construction of Communism*. BRILL, 1983.
- Árnason, Jóhann P. "Communism and Modernity." *Daedalus* 129, no. 1 (January 1, 2000): 61–90.
- Bădescu, Nicolaie. "Împotriva cosmopolitanismului și arhitecturii burgheze imperialiste [Against Cosmopolitanism of the Bourgeois and Imperialist Architecture]." *Arhitectura* 2–3 (1950): 5–17.
- Baltazar, Aurel, and Șerban Beligradeanu. "Acțiunile pe care le poate promova în justiție asociația locatarilor." *Revista Română de Drept*, 1973.
- Beilharz, Peter. "Modernity and Communism: Zygmunt Bauman and the Other Totalitarianism." *Thesis Eleven* 70, no. 1 (August 1, 2002): 88–99. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0725513602070001008>.
- Bejan, Mircea, Ioana Bălan, and Bejan Barbu. "Standardizarea Românească La 20 de Ani. Asociația de Standardizare Din România -ASRO." AGIR, 2019.
- Beligrădeanu, Șerban. *Asociația Locatarilor Și Cheltuielile Comune de Folosință, Întreținere Și Reparații*. București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1979.
- . "Efectuarea reparațiilor la clădirile parțial proprietate de stat și parțial proprietate a persoanelor fizice." *Revista Română de Drept*, 1967.
- . "Efectuarea reparațiilor la clădirile parțial proprietate de stat și parțial proprietate ale persoanelor fizice." *Revista Română de Drept*, no. 6 (1967): 84–94.
- . "Principiile noii legislații locative." *Revista Română de Drept*, 1968.
- . "Regimul juridic al locuințelor folosite ca accesoriu al raportului de muncă." *Revista Română de Drept*, 1971.
- . "Stabilirea și plata chiriei pentru locuințe." *Revista Română de Drept*, no. 10 (1969): 15–25.

- Berman, Harold Joseph. *Soviet Property in Law and in Plan: With Special Reference to Municipal Land and Housing*. University of Pennsylvania Law Review, 1948.
- Betea, Lavinia, ed. *21 August 1968. Apoteoza lui Ceaușescu*. Iași: Polirom, 2009.
- Betts, P. "Private Property and Public Culture: A Forgotten Chapter of East European Communist Life." *Histoire@ Politique*, no. 1 (2009): 2–2.
- Betts, Paul. *The Authority of Everyday Objects: A Cultural History of West German Industrial Design*. University of California Press, 2004.
- . *Within Walls: Private Life in the German Democratic Republic*. Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Bielasiak, Jack. "Workers and Mass Participation in 'Socialist Democracy.'" *Blue-Collar Workers in Eastern Europe*, 1981, 88–107.
- Bockrath, Joseph T. "In Memoriam: George M. Armstrong, Jr." *Louisiana Law Review* 51, no. 3 (January 1991).
- Bonnell, Victoria E., and Thomas B. Gold. *The New Entrepreneurs of Europe and Asia: Patterns of Business Development in Russia, Eastern Europe, and China*. M.E. Sharpe, 2002.
- Bosomitu, Ștefan. *Miron Constantinescu. O Biografie [Miron Constantinescu. A Biography]*. Humanitas SA, 2015.
- Boym, Svetlana. *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia*. Harvard University Press, 1994.
- Braginskiĭ, Mikhail Isaakovich, William Elliott Butler, and Avgust Afanas'evich Rubanov. *The Law on Ownership in the USSR*. Interlist, 1991.
- Brine, J. J. *COMECON: The Rise and Fall of an International Socialist Organization*. Transaction Publishers, 1992.
- Bucheru, Georgeta. "Aspecte sociologice in abordarea diferentiata a temelor de locuinte [Sociological Aspects of Differential Approach of Housing Themes]." *Arhitectura*, 1969.
- Buchli, Victor. *An Archeology of Socialism*. Berg, 2000.
- Caffé, Mihail. "Contribuțiuni la stabilirea unei teme generale a locuinței urbane în R.P.R pe 1960-1965 [Contributions to the Development of an Urban Housing Program in the People's Republic of Romania, 1960-1965]." Dissertation, UAUIM - Universitatea de Arhitectură și Urbanism "Ion Mincu," 1960.

- Caffé, Mihail, Peter Derer, Cezar Niculiu, Gheorghe Sebestyén, Gheorghe Leahu, Pompiliu Alămorean, Corneliu Popa, et al. “Luări de Cuvînt La Plenara U.A. Calitateta Locuinței [Speaking at the U.A. Plenum. The Housing Quality].” *Arhitectura* 2, no. 195 (1982): 31–35.
- Caffé, Mihail, and Alexandra Florian. “Performanțele Locuinței Contemporane [Achievements of the Contemporary Dwelling].” In *Locuința Contemporană: Probleme Si Puncte de Vedere*, edited by Mihail Caffé, 98–202. Editura Tehnică, 1987.
- Caniggia, Gianfranco, and Gian Luigi Maffei. *Lettura dell’edilizia di base*. Alinea Editrice, 2008.
- Castillo, Greg. *Cold War on the Home Front: The Soft Power of Midcentury Design*. U of Minnesota Press, 2010.
- Cesereanu, Ruxandra, and Florin-Ștefan Morar. *România înghesuită: cutii de chibrituri, borcane, conserve ; (ipostaze ale ghetozării în comunism și postcomunism) [Cramped Romania: Boxes of Matches, Jars, and Preserves: Stances of Ghettoization in Communism and Postcommunism]*. Cluj-Napoca: Limes, 2006.
- Chirot, D. “Social Change in Communist Romania.” *Soc. F.* 57 (1978): 457.
- Chombart de Lauwe, Paul-Henry. “Famille et Habitation. Sciences Humaines et Conception de l’habitation.” *Paris, CNRS* (2, 1959).
- CIA, Central Intelligence Agency. “A Look Back ... The Prague Spring & the Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia — Central Intelligence Agency.” Accessed June 11, 2020. <https://www.cia.gov/news-information/featured-story-archive/2008-featured-story-archive/a-look-back-the-prague-spring-the-soviet.html#top>.
- CIA Intelligence Memorandum. “Military Intervention in Czechoslovakia.” CIA, August 20, 1968.
- Clark, Gordon L. “Rights, Property, and Community.” *Economic Geography* 58, no. 2 (April 1, 1982): 120–38. <https://doi.org/10.2307/143792>.
- Clermont, Pierre. *Le communisme à contre-modernité*. Presses universitaires de Vincennes, 1993.
- Cole, John W. “Familial Dynamics in a Romanian Worker Village.” *Dialectical Anthropology* 1 (1976): 251–66.
- Cooper, Anthony, Chris Perkins, and Chris Rumford. “The Vernacularization of Borders.” *Placing the Border in Everyday Life*, 2014, 15.

- Cosma, Doru. *Dreptul de folosință asupra locuințelor [Housing Use Rights]*. București: Editura Tehnică, 1963.
- . “Efectele convenției civile de schimb de locuințe.” *Revista Română de Drept*, no. 1 (1972): 52–60.
- . “Opțiunea soților pentru una dintre cele două locuințe pe care le dețin.” *Revista Română de Drept*, 1970.
- . *Regimul juridic al locuințelor proprietate personală [The Legal Regime of Personal Property Housing Units]*. București: Editura Științifică, 1974.
- Crawley, David, and Susan Emily Reid, eds. *Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc*. Berg, 2002.
- Crowley, David, and Susan Emily Reid. *Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc*. Berg, 2002.
- CSCAS. “Propuneri privind construcția de locuințe în mediul urban,” July 21, 1968. Fond CC al PCR, File 126. ANIC.
- Decret nr 78 din 5 aprilie 1952 pentru normarea, repartizarea și folosirea suprafeței locative și reglementarea raporturilor dintre proprietari și chiriași (1953). <http://www.lege-online.ro/lr-DECRET-78%20-1952-%2820001%29-%284%29.html>.
- Decretul nr. 78/1952 pentru normarea, repartizarea și folosirea suprafeței locative și reglementarea raporturilor dintre proprietari și chiriași [The Decree No. 78 for Norms, Distribution, and the Use of Living Area and the Regulation of the Relationships Between Owners and Tenants], Pub. L. No. 78 (1952).
- Deletant, Dennis. *Ceaușescu and the Securitate: Coercion and Dissent in Romania, 1965-1989*. M.E. Sharpe, 1995.
- Droker, Linda S., and John A. Martens. “East-West Trade: The Prospects to 1985 : Studies.” U.S. Government Printing Office, 1982. Pennsylvania State University Document Collection.
- Enescu, Ion Mircea, and Gheorghe Ilie. *Probleme ale arhitecturii contemporane [Problems of the Contemporary Architecture]*. București: Editura Tehnica, 1982.
- Fehérváry, Krisztina. *Politics in Color and Concrete: Socialist Materialities and the Middle Class in Hungary*. Indiana University Press, 2013. https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=JUtkAAAAQBAJ&rdid=book-JUtkAAAAQBAJ&rdot=1&source=gbv_vpt_read.

- Fitzpatrick, Sheila. *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s*. Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Flavian, I., and O. Aschenasy. *Regimul Închirierilor de Locuințe in R.P.R. [Housing Rent Regimes in the P.R.R.]*. București, 1953.
- Florian, Alexandra, Ion Enescu, Gabriel Costachescu, Moses Drimer, Rodica Turicu, Calin Negoescu, Antonia Maluda, et al. "Preocupari Si Realizari in Domeniul Proiectării Cladirilor de Locuit." *Arhitectura* 2, no. 213 (1985).
- Gomez, Francesc J. *Knowledge and Vernacular Languages in the Era of Lull and Eiximenis. ICREA Studies on Vernacularization*. CONSEJO SUPERIOR DE INVESTIGACIONES CIENTIFICAS VITRUVIO 8, 28006 MADRID, SPAIN, 2014.
- Hachten, P. Charles. *Property Relations and the Economic Organization of Soviet Russia: 1941-1948*. University of Chicago, Dept. of History, 2005.
- Harris, Steven E. *Communism on Tomorrow Street: Mass Housing and Everyday Life after Stalin*. Woodrow Wilson Center Press / Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013.
- Hirschman, Albert O. *The Strategy of Economic Development*. Yale University Press, 1961.
- Hoffman, George Walter. *Regional Development Strategy in Southeast Europe: A Comparative Analysis of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, and Yugoslavia*. Praeger, 1972.
- Holbik, Karel. "An Economic 'Miracle' Through Investment Priorities? The Case of Rumania." *Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv* 94 (1965): 307–36.
- . "An Economic 'Miracle' Through Investment Priorities? The Case of Rumania." *Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv* 94 (1965): 307–36.
- Hoorn, Mélanie van der. *Indispensable Eyesores: An Anthropology of Undesired Buildings*. Berghahn Books, 2009.
- Iancu, Bogdan. "The Golden Age of Termopane. The Social Life of Post-Socialist Windows." *Martor. Revue d'Anthropologie Du Musée Du Paysan Roumain*, no. 16 (2011): 19–34.
- Jackson, M. R. "Industrialization, Trade, and Mobilization in Romania's Drive for Economic Independence." In *East European Economies Post-Helsinki. A Compendium of Papers Submitted to the Joint Economic Committee.*, Washington, DC: Congress of the United States, 886–940, 1977.

- Jurov, Cosma. *Centre civice: contributii la definirea si conceperea unor tipuri de centre civice multifunctionale pentru viitoarele orase mici*. București: Editura Tehnica, 1979.
- . “Integrarea centrelor civice in structura localitatilor.” *Arhitectura* 3, no. 184 (1980): 19–24.
- Kamwangamalu, Nkonko M. “Vernacularization, Globalization, and Language Economics in Non-English-Speaking Countries in Africa.” *Language Problems & Language Planning* 34, no. 1 (2010): 1–23.
- Kimura, H. “Personal Property in the Soviet Union, with Particular Emphasis on the Khrushchev Era: An Ideological, Political and Economic Dilemma (II).” *スラヴ研究 (Slavic Studies)* 14 (1970): 63–119.
- Kimura, Hiroshi. *Personal Property in the Soviet Union, with Particular Emphasis on the Khrushchev Era: An Ideological, Political and Economic Dilemma*. Columbia university., 1968.
- Kucherov, Samuel. “Property in the Soviet Union.” *The American Journal of Comparative Law* 11, no. 3 (July 1, 1962): 376–92.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/838588>.
- Leahu, Gheorghe. “Luări de Cuvînt La Plenara U.A. Calitateta Locuinței [Speaking at the A.U. Plenum. The Housing Quality] - Arh. Gheorghe Leahu, the ‘Proiect-București’ Design Institute.” *Arhitectura* 2, no. 195 (1982): 33–34.
- Leskovsek, Andreas H. “US-Romanian Trade: Foreign Debt, Trade Barriers, and Future Problems and Prospects.” *Law & Pol’y Int’l Bus.* 21 (1989): 71.
- Levitt, Peggy, SALLY ENGLE Merry, Rosa Alayza, and Mercedes Crisóstomo Meza. “Doing Vernacularization: The Encounter between Global and Local Ideas about Women’s Rights in Peru’.” *Feminist Strategies in International Governance*. London: Routledge, 2013, 127–142.
- Lupulescu, D. “Particularitati privind exercitarea dreptului de proprietate personala in legatura cu casa de locuit.” *Revista Română de Drept*, 1969.
- Lupulescu, Dumitru. *Construirea Și Cumpărarea de Locuințe Proprietate Personală Cu Sprijinul Statului [Construction and Acquisition of Personal Property Apartments With the Help From the State]*. București: Editura științifică și enciclopedică, 1975.
- . *Dreptul de proprietate personala [The Right to Personal Property]*. București: Editura Științifică, 1967.
- . *Schimbul de Locuințe [Housing Units Exchanges]*. București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1978.

- Macavescu, M. "Adaptabilitatea Funcționalității Apartamentelor La Diversitatea Modurilor de Locuire [Functional Adaptability of Apartments to the Ways of Dwelling Diversity]." București, 1981. IPCT Archive.
- . "Locuinta Adaptabila Din Punct de Vedere Social." *Arhitectura* 1, no. 212 (1985).
- Maggs, Peter B. "The Security of Individually-Owned Property under Soviet Law." *Duke Law Journal* 1961, no. 4 (October 1, 1961): 525–37. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1371108>.
- Maldonado, Tomás. "The Idea of Comfort." Translated by John Cullars. *Design Issues* 8, no. 1 (1991): 35–43. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1511452>.
- Mathur, Nita. "Peter Beilharz, Socialism and Modernity." *International Sociology* 27, no. 2 (March 1, 2012): 262–64. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0268580911428018>.
- Maxim, Juliana. "Developing Socialism: The Photographic Condition of Architecture in Romania, 1958–1970." *Visual Resources* 27, no. 2 (2011): 154–71. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01973762.2011.568178>.
- . "Mass Housing and Collective Experience: On the Notion of Microrraion in Romania in the 1950s and 1960s." *Journal of Architecture* 14, no. 1 (2009).
- . "The New, the Old, the Modern: Architecture and Its Representation in Socialist Romania, 1955-1965." Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Department of Architecture, 2006.
- . *The Socialist Life of Modern Architecture: Bucharest, 1949-1964*. Routledge, 2018.
- Michelutti, Lucia. "The Vernacularization of Democracy: Political Participation and Popular Politics in North India." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 13, no. 3 (2007): 639–656.
- Montias, John Michael. *Economic Development in Communist Rumania*. M.I.T. Press, 1967.
- . "Unbalanced Growth in Rumania." *The American Economic Review* 53, no. 2 (1963): 562–71.
- Murawski, Michał. "Actually-Existing Success: Economics, Aesthetics, and the Specificity of (Still-)Socialist Urbanism." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 60, no. 4 (October 2018): 907–37. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417518000336>.
- Naor, J. "Towards A Socialist Marketing Concept: The Case of Romania." *The Journal of Marketing*, 1986, 28–39.

- Neculau, Adrian, Alexandru-Florian Platon, Andrei Cosmovici, Radu Clit, Aurora Liiceanu, Gilles Ferréol, Tatiana Slama-Cazacu, et al. *Viața cotidiană în comunism [Everydaylife in Communism]*. Polirom, 2004.
- Nicolau, Cezarina, Voichița Stahl, Gabriela Mihalache, and Dorina Turcu. "Opinii ale specialiștilor în legătură cu propunerile de îmbunătățire a condițiilor de locuit, prezentate în sintezele 1, 3, 4, 5 [Opinions of Specialists Regarding Living Conditions, Presented in the Synthesis # 1,3,4, and 5]." In *Cercetări pluridisciplinare de ordin sociologic, arhitectural și urbanistic, privind locuirea în raport cu funcționalitatea apartamentelor și dotarilor socio-culturale aferente, executate după proiecte tip, inclusiv propuneri de îmbunătățirea acestora [Multidisciplinary Studies -Sociological, Architectural and Urban- Regarding Housing, Specifically the Functionality of Apartments and Socio-Cultural Facilities Developed as Standardized Projects, Including Proposal for Their Improvements]* Contract no. 7041. Phase "Synthesis Report." Bucharest: IPCT-The Research Laboratory of Sociological Studies, 1985.
- No Author. "Consfătuirea secției 'Arhitectura' A.S.T." *Arhitectura* 2–3 (1950): 20.
- Novetzke, Christian Lee. *The Quotidian Revolution: Vernacularization, Religion, and the Premodern Public Sphere in India*. Columbia University Press, 2016.
https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=z9kbDQAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PR7&dq=vernacularization&ots=kGEdeHIt2H&sig=-qcFhdAbpRaOZdHqd_XOfVdqSSI.
- Oliver, Paul. *Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World: Theories and Principles*. Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Ost, David. *The Defeat of Solidarity: Anger and Politics in Postcommunist Europe*. Cornell University Press, 2005.
- Panaiteescu, Alexandru, and Rodica Panaiteescu. *De la Casa Scânteii la Casa Poporului: patru decenii de arhitectură în București 1945-1989*. Simetria, 2012.
- Pfaff, Dieter. *Das sozialistische Eigentum in der Sowjetunion*. Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1965.
- Poenaru, Florin. "Contesting Illusions: History and Intellectual Class Struggle in Post-Communist Romania." Dissertation, Central European University, 2013.
https://www.academia.edu/4769835/Thesis_poenaru.
- . "On Balcony: State/Citizens Intersection in a Socialist Romanian Block of Flats." Master Thesis, Central European University Department of Sociology and Socio-Anthropology, 2007. www.etd.ceu.hu/2007/poenaru_florin.pdf.

- . *On the Socialist Balcony: State, Citizens and Ideology in a Romanian Neighborhood*. VDM Verlag Dr. Müller, 2008.
- Popescu-Negreanu, Gheorghe. “Noi Studii de Secțiuni Tip În Blocuri [New Studies of Standard Apartment Layouts for Blocks of Flats].” *Arhitectura RPR* 6 (1956): 8–15.
- Poznanski, Kazimierz Z. “The Crisis of Modernity: Capitalism and Communism Reexamined.” *East European Politics & Societies* 14, no. 3 (September 1, 2000): 676–92. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325400014003008>.
- Privitera, P. “Balconies in Traditional Urban Architecture through Typology and Solar Radiation.” In *Vernacular and Earthen Architecture: Conservation and Sustainability*, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1201/9781315267739-110>.
- Privitera, Paolo. “La acción del poder público sobre el privado: La normativa sobre saledizos y balcones en la ciudad de Valencia en el Siglo de las Luces [The action of the Public Power over the Private: the Rules on Cantilevering of Features and Balconies in the City of Valencia (1238-1796).” *POTESTAS. Estudios del Mundo Clásico e Historia del Arte* 14, no. 14 (June 28, 2019): 85–104.
- “Proiect nr. 7041. Raport de sinteză. Cercetări pluridisciplinare de ordin sociologic, arhitectural și urbanistic, privind locuirea în raport cu funcționalitatea apartamentelor și dotarilor socio-culturale aferente, executate după proiecte tip, inclusiv propuneri de îmbunătățirea acestora [Multidisciplinary Studies - Sociological, Architectural and Urban- Regarding Housing, Specifically the Functionality of Apartments and Socio-Cultural Facilities Developed as Standardized Projects, Including Proposal for Their Improvements] Contract no. 7041. Phase ‘Synthesis Report,’” 1985. Dumitru Sandu Personal Archive.
- Ramanathan, Vaidehi. “The Vernacularization of English: Crossing Global Currents to Re-Dress West-Based TESOL.” *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies* 3, no. 2–3 (2006): 131–146.
- Ramba, Mircea, Mircea Suman, Constantin Savescu, and Mircea Neicu. “Calitatea construcțiilor de locuințe și direcțiile de îmbunătățire a acestora [The Quality of the Housing Constructions and the Directions for Their Improvement].” Îmbunătățirea calității clădirilor de locuit. Cluj-Napoca: CNIT Consiliul Național al Inginerilor și Tehnicienilor - Secția Construcții, iunie 1981.
- Răuță, Alex. *Negocierea Centrului Civic. Arhitecți și politicieni în România secolului XX [Negotiating the Civic Center. Architects and Politicians in 20th Century Romania]*. București: Editura Universitară “Ion Mincu,” 2013.
- Reid, Susan E. “The Khrushchev Kitchen: Domesticating the Scientific-Technological Revolution.” *Journal of Contemporary History* 40, no. 2 (April 1, 2005): 289–316. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022009405051554>.

- Rosenberg, Gheorghe Dorin. "Ziduri exterioare. Condițiile igienice și proprietățile termotehnice [Exterior Walls. Conditions of Hygiene and Thermo-technical Properties]." *Arhitectura RPR* 2, no. 2 (1951): 17–21.
- Roșianu, Lucian, Dumitru Vernescu, Moses Drimer, Gheorghe Gheorghe, and Mandy Weintraub. *Probleme Tehnico-Economice În Construcția de Locuințe: Proiectare Și Execuție [Technical and Economic Problems in Housing Construction: Design and Execution]*. București: Editura Tehnică, 1960.
- Roy, Ananya, and Nezar Al Sayyad. *Urban Informality: Transnational Perspectives from the Middle East, Latin America, and South Asia*. Lexington Books, 2004.
- Rubin, Seymour. "Most-Favored-Nation Treatment and the Multilateral Trade Negotiations: A Quiet Revolution Symposium - Trade With Developing Countries: Prospects and Problems." *International Trade Law Journal* 6, no. 2 (1981 1980): 221–41.
- Sadikov, Oleg Nikolaevich. *Soviet Civil Law*. Armonk, New York, London, England: M.E. Sharpe, 1988.
- Sandu, Dumitru. *Atlasul social al Romaniei: proiecte si date 1991-1992 [The Romanian Social Atlas: Projects and Data 1991-1992]*. București: IPCT S.A. - Centrul de Sociologie Urbană și Regională (CURS), 1992.
- . "Consecințe ale calității locuinței asupra stării de sănătate a populației [Consequences of Housing Quality Over the State of Health of the Population]." In *Cercetări pluridisciplinare de ordin sociologic, arhitectural și urbanistic, privind locuirea în raport cu funcționalitatea apartamentelor și dotarilor socio-culturale aferente, executate după proiecte tip, inclusiv propuneri de îmbunătățirea acestora [Multidisciplinary Studies -Sociological, Architectural and Urban- Regarding Housing, Specifically the Functionality of Apartments and Socio-Cultural Facilities Developed as Standardized Projects, Including Proposal for Their Improvements]* Contract no. 7041. Phase "Study" Volume I. Bucharest: IPCT-The Research Laboratory of Sociological Studies, 1985.
- . "Dinamica socială a locuirii urbane [The Social Dynamic of Urban Housing]." *Viitorul Social*, no. 5–6 (1989): 425–33.
- . *Fluxurile de Migrație În România [Migration Flows in Romania]*. București: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1984.
- . "Migrația Și Dinamica Structurii Sociale [Migration and the Dynamic of Social Structure]." In *Structura Socială a Romaniei Socialiste. Studii [The Social Structure of Socialist Romania. Studies]*, 189–215. Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1989.

- . “Policentrismul Școlii Sociologice de La București: Calea Metodologică La Henri H. Stahl.” sasunibuc.ro, No date.
http://sas.unibuc.ro/uploads_ro/1149/Policentrismul-2.pdf.
- . “Proiect Nr. 7056. Cercetări Interdisciplinare Privind Eficiența Socio-Economică a Realizării Și Utilizării Locuințelor Și Fondul Locativ În Contextul Proceselor de Dezvoltare În Profil Teritorial. a) Elaborarea Și Testarea Metodologiei de Cercetare Interdisciplinară; b) Cercetarea Eficienței Social Economice a Dezvoltării Și Utilizării Fondului Locativ; c) Studiu de Sinteză. Etapa I a. Studiu. Elaborarea Metodologiei de Cercetare. 31.05.1986 [Interdisciplinary Research Regarding the Socio-Economic Efficiency of Constructing and Using the Housing Units and the Housing Stock in the Context of Regional Development. a) Elaboration and Testing of the Interdisciplinary Research Methodology; b) Research of the Development and the Use of the Housing Socio-Economic Efficiency; c) Synthesis. Phase One. a. Study].” București, 1986. IPCT Archive/Dumitru Sandu Personal Archive.
- Sandu, Dumitru, Mircea Kivu, and Marilena Lunca. “Proiect nr. 7041. Synthesis #2. Caracteristici ale locuințelor din perspectiva unor categorii de utilizatori potențiali [Characteristics of Housing Units from the Perspective of Certain Potential Users].” In *Cercetări pluridisciplinare de ordin sociologic, arhitectural și urbanistic, privind locuirea în raport cu funcționalitatea apartamentelor și dotarilor socio-culturale aferente, executate după proiecte tip, inclusiv propuneri de îmbunătățirea acestora [Multidisciplinary Studies - Sociological, Architectural and Urban- Regarding Housing, Specifically the Functionality of Apartments and Socio-Cultural Facilities Developed as Standardized Projects, Including Proposal for Their Improvements]* Contract no. 7041. Phase “Synthesis Report,” Dumitru Sandu Personal Archive., 1–10. Bucharest: IPCT-The Research Laboratory of Sociological Studies, 1985.
- Schiel, Tilman. “Modernity, Ambivalence and the Gardening State.” *Thesis Eleven* 83, no. 1 (November 1, 2005): 78–89. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0725513605057138>.
- Sebestyén, Gheorghe. “Gáboros Lajos - Amenajarea Și Dimensionarea Locuinței [Space Planning and Dimensioning of the Dwelling].” *Arhitectura RPR* 8, no. 42 (1957): 52.
- . “Gânduri Despre Tipizare [Thoughts on Standardization].” *Arhitectura* 3, no. 214 (1985): 43.
- . “Notă: Confortul - Indicator al Eficienței Activității de Gospodărire Și Dezvoltare a Orașului [Note: The Comfort - Indicator of Efficiency in a City’s Management and Development].” In *Locuința Contemporană: Probleme Și Puncte de Vedere [The Contemporary Dwelling: Problems and Perspectives]*, 236–37. București: Editura tehnică, 1987.

- Sebestyén, Gheorghe, Mihail Caffé, and Alexandra Florian. "Elemente de sociologie în problema locuințelor [Sociological Aspects of the Housing Problem]." *Revista de filozofie* 11, no. 5 (1964): 617–28.
- Șerban, Ignace. *Locuința Urbană. Realizări Din Capitală 1959-1961 [The Urban Dwelling. Accomplishments in the Capital 1959-1961]*. București: Editura Tehnică, 1962.
- Shafir, Michael. *Romania, Politics, Economics, and Society: Political Stagnation and Simulated Change*. L. Rienner Publishers, 1985.
- Siegel, Achim. *The Totalitarian Paradigm After the End of Communism: Towards a Theoretical Reassessment*. Rodopi, 1998.
- Simons, William B., and Ferdinand Joseph Maria Feldbrugge. *Private and Civil Law in the Russian Federation: Essays in Honor of F.J.M. Feldbrugge*. BRILL, 2009.
- Singh, Harpreet. "Religious Identity and the Vernacularization of Literary Cultures of the Pañjāb, 1500-1700," 2013. <https://dash.harvard.edu/handle/1/10364612>.
- Slama-Cazacu, Tatiana. "Instituția colocatarilor [The Institution of Coinhabitants]." In *Viața cotidiană în comunism [Everydaylife in Communism]*. Iași: Editura Polirom, 2004.
- Smith, Mark B. *Property of Communists: The Urban Housing Program from Stalin to Khrushchev*. Northern Illinois University Press, 2010.
- Stoica, Augustin. "Communism as a Project for Modernization: The Romanian Case." *Polish Sociological Review*, no. 120 (January 1, 1997): 313–31.
- Streeten, Paul. "Unbalanced Growth." *Oxford Economic Papers* 11, no. 2 (1959): 167–90.
- Stroe, Miruna P. "Locuirea - între proiect și decizie politică România 1954-1966 [Housing - Between Project and Political Decision Romania 1954-1966]." Dissertation, UAUIM - Universitatea de Arhitectură și Urbanism "Ion Mincu," 2012.
- . *Locuirea Între Proiect Și Decizie Politică. România 1954-1966 [Housing Between Project and Political Decision. Romania 1954-1966]*. București: Simetria, 2015.
- . "Modificarea Apartamentelor - Originea Unei Practici [The Modification of Apartments - The Origin of a Practice]." *Dilema Veche*, 2012. <http://dilemaveche.ro/sectiune/tema-saptamanii/articol/modificarea-apartamentelor-originea-unei-practici>.

- Szelenyi, Ivan. "Housing Inequalities and Occupational Segregation in State Socialist Cities: Commentary to the Special Issue of IJURR on East European Cities." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 11, no. 1 (March 1, 1987): 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.1987.tb00031.x>.
- Terian, Andrei. "Romania Inghesuita [Cramped Romania]." *Ziarul de Duminica*, 2006. <http://www.zf.ro/ziarul-de-duminica/romania-inghesuita-2881285/>.
- Thomas, William Isaac, Florian Znaniecki, and Eli Zaretsky. *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America: A Classic Work in Immigration History*. University of Illinois Press, 1996.
- Thurman, Zoltan. "Balconul Și Logia În Construcțiile Noi de Locuit [The Balcony and the Loggia in the New Housing Buildings]." *Arhitectura* 2, no. 195 (1982): 25.
- Tismaneanu, V. *Fantasies of Salvation: Democracy, Nationalism, and Myth in Post-Communist Europe*. Princeton University Press, 2009.
- Tismaneanu, Vladimir. *Stalinism for All Seasons: A Political History of Romanian Communism*. University of California Press, 2003.
- Tismăneanu, Vladimir, and Bogdan Iacob. "Betrayed Promises: Nicolae Ceaușescu, the Romanian Communist Party, and the Crisis of 1968." In *Promises of 1968*, edited by Vladimir Tismăneanu, NED-New edition, 1., 257–84. Crisis, Illusion and Utopia. Central European University Press, 2011. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7829/j.ctt1281xt.17>.
- Trișcu, Aurelian. "O Dezbateră Internațională Asupra Problemei Locuirii [An International Debate Over the Housing Problem]." *Arhitectura* 1, no. 134 (1972): 36–38.
- Turnock, David. *An Economic Geography of Romania*. Bell, 1974.
- Upton, Dell. "The Tradition of Change." *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review* 5, no. 1 (1993): 9–15.
- Vais, Dana. "Type Projects as Tools: Housing Type Design in Communist Romania." *Architectural Histories* 8, no. 1 (August 25, 2020): 10. <https://doi.org/10.5334/ah.321>.
- Verdery, Katherine. *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania*. University of California Press, 1995.
- "Vernacularization | Define Vernacularization at Dictionary.Com." Accessed January 17, 2017. <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/vernacularization>.
- "Vernacularization, n." In *OED Online*. Oxford University Press. Accessed January 17, 2017. <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/222612>.

- Vernescu, Dumitru. "Influența Soluției Urbanistice Asupra Costului Locuinței [The Influence of the Urban Design Solution Over the Dwelling's Cost]." In *Probleme Tehnico-Economice În Construcția de Locuințe: Proiectare Și Execuție [Technical and Economic Problems in Housing Construction: Design and Execution]*, 288–324, 1960.
- Yurchak, A. "Soviet Hegemony of Form: Everything Was Forever, until It Was No More." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45, no. 3 (2003): 480–510.
- Yurchak, Alexei. *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation*. Princeton University Press, 2006.
- Zahariade, Ana Maria. *Arhitectura în proiectul comunist : România 1944-1989 [Architecture in the Communist Project : Romania 1944-1989]*. București: Simetria, 2011.
- . "Testing the Physiognomy of the Arhitectura Magazine (1952-1989)." *SITA Studii de Istoria Și Teoria Arhitecturii* 1 (2013): 161–83.
- Zahariade, Ana-Maria. *Arhitectura în proiectul comunist : România 1944-1989 [Architecture in the Communist Project : Romania 1944-1989]*. București: Simetria, 2011.
- Zamfir, Cătălin. "Ce a Lăsat Dimitrie Gusti Sociologiei Postbelice?" *Sociologie Românească* 3, no. 2 (June 21, 2005): 11–14.