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Regarding the City Development as a  
Polarizing Center**

**Claudia Anamaria Chifor  
PhD Student  
Technical University of Cluj-Napoca  
Romania**

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Athens Institute for Education and Research  
8 Valaoritou Street, Kolonaki, 10671 Athens, Greece  
Tel: + 30 210 3634210 Fax: + 30 210 3634209 Email: info@atiner.gr URL:  
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## **Turda. Particularities and Potential Regarding the City Development as a Polarizing Center**

**Claudia Anamaria Chifor**  
**PhD Student**  
**Technical University of Cluj-Napoca**  
**Romania**

### **Abstract**

The subject of this research paper is part of a larger research work that proposes the analysis of the development potential of the city of Turda and supports the idea of the shaping of a polarizing center. The proper research follows the three directions considered to be relevant: the potential of the urban historical heritage as a cultural tourism target, the balneary potential as an economic resource and the potential for conversion of the industrial platform. The present paper aims to outline the most relevant aspects of the development levels mentioned above.

The aim of this research has as a starting point the assumption that the potential of the city is determined by continuous development and interconnectivity on all three directions. The development potential of a city depends on its economic growth, the historical and social layers that have overlapped, the cultural and historical baggage that led to the development of the settlement, and, last but not least, the nature of the geographical site and its surroundings. Here we do not discuss the reinvention of the city but its recovery and revitalization in some ways not yet taken into account in its development projects and urban strategies. Today this tendency to reinvent the eastern European cities on all levels for economic development and human settlements equability exists. Turda city has a strong historical imprint regarding the Dacian and Roman epoch, the early and later medieval time and also the interwar and socialist period, characterized by a spectacular growth of the industry platforms and starts to develop in recent times, some balneary tourism activities. Considering all these, the urban strategies should integrate the previously mentioned directions of development and target them towards the same goal - the affirmation of a polarizing center area.

**Keywords:** Economic resources, historical heritage, place identity, polarizing center, urban particularities

## Introduction and Recent Research

Turda is a historical city also known as Potaissa<sup>1</sup>, dating from antiquity, having its beginnings in the Pre-Roman period, as attested in various toponymies, including Dierna<sup>2</sup>. The settlement that formed the city suffered various transformations in the course of history, but the elements that had a continuous role in its development are: the strategic position in the territory, the exploitation of salt as a permanent factor of economic growth and the role of the cultural pole regarding the neighboring settlements.<sup>3</sup>

The growth potential of Turda city should be focused on its specific urban features, regarding the historical evolution of the settlement and the tendencies of this process over time, within the context of direct and mutual influences of the surrounding settlements. Therefore, three main potentials of development are proposed to be considered: the potential of the urban historical heritage as a cultural tourism target, the balneary potential as an economic resource and the potential for conversion of the industrial platform (Figure 1).

What prompted us to start this research was the lack of recent specialized studies on the architecture and urban structure of Turda, the lack of coherence that we found in the city's development strategies<sup>4</sup> that elaborated so far and the risk of developing abnormalities in the structure of the historic urban assembly, in which the historical value continues to not be a priority.

**Figure 1.** (a)Turda; (b) The Historical Center-The Urban Assembly Old Turda./Credits: Authors, Original Map Data from URL1.



<sup>1</sup> The etymological studies show us that Potaissa is a name of Dacian origins. The name comes from Patronissa, mentioned in Ptolemy's Geography. Ptolemy has mentioned the settlement as one of the greatest of Roman Dacia.

<sup>2</sup> The name of the settlement was given by the milestone pillar from Aiton, discovered in the eighteenth century by M.P. Szathmari. The name indicates a distance of a thousand steps between Aiton and Potaissa municipalities.

<sup>3</sup>Gergely, Eugen. *Turda. Istorie și Contemporaneitate*. (Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință Press, 2005).

<sup>4</sup>Regional development concepts: *CON-TURDA 2011-2016* and *CON-TURDA 2014-2020*; two successive development strategies in which overlap the terms of validity and applicability, without including a complex thinking on the future development of the city.

Under these circumstances, Turda, is a city that has a strong historical Dacian-Romanic imprint, an industry that was once prosperous under socialism and a touristic potential in the balneary field, has to consider these facts into a strategy which would integrate all three directions of development and to target them towards the same goal, the affirmation of a polarizing center.

### **A Short Definition of the Concept POLARIZING CENTER**

One of the main concepts approached in this paper is the one of the polarizing center, which is discussed from a generally accepted perspective, as well as from the author's personal vision.

The French economist François Perroux was the first to introduce and use the concept of the growth pole in his research, but in a non-spatial form and sense<sup>5</sup>. The growth poles theory supports the idea that economic growth is not uniform; it focuses around some key features being directly influenced by them. Economic development is affected by the intensity of the growth poles, which are variable and heterogeneous in time.<sup>6</sup> Perroux defined growth centers in 1955, supporting the idea that “growth does not appear everywhere at once; it manifests in points or poles of growth with variable intensities”<sup>7</sup>. In the following years, his research has focused towards defining the growth pole as an “assembly of motoric units that exercise training effects on other assemblies defined in the economical and geographical space”<sup>8</sup>. This theory was very new at the time and very briefly theorized in the specialty literature, but continued to have an important influence regarding the theorizing of growth poles in other fields, such as urban and regional planning. Therefore, the one who introduced the term polarization with the meaning of spatial approach was the economist Jacques Boudeville, specialized in spatial economy<sup>9</sup>. It is known that urban policies and spatial planning are based on two basic concepts, namely: development pole and polarized space. Therefore, the concept of polarization defines the result of interaction between a center called the pole, which concentrates human activities, and its area of influence.<sup>10</sup>

Based on the facts presented above and following a personal review, it is proposed that the polarizing center to be defined as that quality of the city to impose itself through the available resources and monopolize them, in order to generate the motoric sources for the city to develop, as the ones mentioned by Perroux. This capacity to impose itself in the territory shall be discussed further

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<sup>5</sup>Perroux, François. “L'effet de domination et les relations économiques.” *Économie appliquée* 40, no. 2 (1949): 271-290.

<sup>6</sup>Cristea, Marius. “Aplicații ale teoriilor și conceptului de pol de creștere în România.” (PhD Thesis, Babeș-Bolyai University, 2013).

<sup>7</sup>Perroux, François. “Note sur la notion de pole de croissance.” *Economie appliquée* 8, no. 1-2 (1955): 307-320; author's translation.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Boudeville, Jacques. *Aménagement du territoire et polarisation*. (Paris: Génin Press, 1972).

<sup>10</sup>Cristea, Marius. “Aplicații ale teoriilor și conceptului de pol de creștere în România.” (PhD Thesis, Babeș-Bolyai University, 2013).

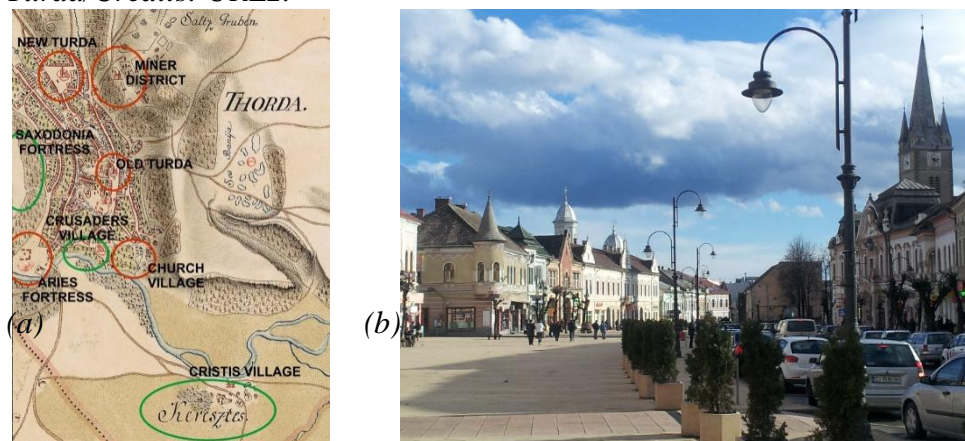
under three directions of development. The idea of providing development guidelines emerges from the presence of three factors -economical, industrial and cultural- with a dominant role in the development of the settlement in the past, present and with potential in the future, allows us to outline a future strategy based on these ideas.

### Local Identity in the Light of Urban Potentiality

The identity of Turda city has been discussed several times in the specialty literature, such as archeological and historical studies. Here we aim to highlight, in a particular way, the city's potential regarding the major elements of identity that marked its development, decay and reinvention, mainly those elements that give the city's specificity.

The entire urban structure of the city is very diverse, but well-shaped and functional. The city territory is organized in quarters and neighborhood centers, which gained a strong and specific identity in almost every historical period (Figure 2). In summary, the city urban shape was formed by merging several fortresses and villages<sup>11</sup> through gradual unification, both territorially and economically. Regarding the morphological evolution of the historical center, the urban structure presents Saxon features of configuration. The idea that the city was founded by Saxons, brought to work in the salt mine, is mentioned in few historical studies and monographs<sup>12</sup>.

**Figure 2.** (a) *Morphological Scheme of Neighborhoods/Credits: Authors. Original Map Data from Josephine Map;* (b) *The Historical Center-Old Turda/Credits: URL2.*



<sup>11</sup>As shown in Figure 3, there were two main urban settlements that succeeded: Old Turda and New Turda, and three saxon settlements which allegedly led to the founding of the city: Saxodonia Citadel, Crusaders Village and Cristis Village; moreover, the historical studies mention also: Arieș Citadel and Miners Neighbourhood.

<sup>12</sup>Those who recall the presence of the saxons in the territory are the following: Murășanu, Teodor. *Călăuza Turzii*. (Turda: Iossif Fussy Publishing and Printing House, 1923). Suciu, Petre. *Județul Turda-schiță monografică*. (Turda: Despărțământul "Astra" și Camera Agricolă Press, 1929). Deac, Dana. *Turda. Orașul care nu vrea să moară*. (Turda: JAC Press, 2003).

Moreover, the importance of the central neighborhood, Old Turda, which totally overlaps the Roman archeological site, may be mentioned. In this central area, most of the buildings having patrimonial value are located, but most of them are poorly maintained. Another area with a strong and specific identity is the industrial quarter in the south of the city, being a visual landmark and also being kept in the collective memory of the community. Another neighborhood, with specific landscape and specific geographic features, is the one located near the salt mine, called the Salt Baths quarter.

These three different city areas, each one having its own identity, perfectly match the already mentioned directions of development, which will be discussed in the following lines.

### **The Potential of the Urban Historical Heritage as Cultural Tourism Target**

This chapter aims to present the first polarizing concept which comprises an analysis of the potential of the historical heritage and culture. It is proposed to consider all the archaeological layers of an urban planning perspective, and therefore to delineate the urban aspects that have generated the unique shape of the historical structure – the elongated central square.

The orientation of the urban structure was generated by all the pre-Roman settlements and by the Roman predetermined urban planning. All these settlements have approximately overlapped around the location of today's historical center. Therefore, due to the partial overlaying of the Dacian, Roman and Medieval layers, the archaeologists did not managed to establish the exact shape of the Dacian fortress and the Roman civilian settlement. The outcome of the archeological research in the central area of the city is very limited so far, and, as a result of this research, it has been proposed as an area which may correspond with the initial nucleus of the Dacian fortress. The civilian nucleus of the Dacian seating has suffered multiple territorial transformations, all of these evolving in the proximity of the Arieş River. It is important to note here the strategic importance of this river which has been the urban catalyst of the ancient epoch.<sup>13</sup>

There are many elements of Roman urbanism which emerge in the city's structure, but the most important ones are considered the Roman fort<sup>14</sup> and the Roman imperial road<sup>15</sup>. The fort was part of the roman military urban strategy, while the imperial road was part both of the roman military and civilian urbanism.

The most important archeological monument of the city is considered to be the Roman fort, situated on Viilor-Cetății Hill, in the north-western part of the city. Parts of it walls have survived until the Middle Ages, but were gradually

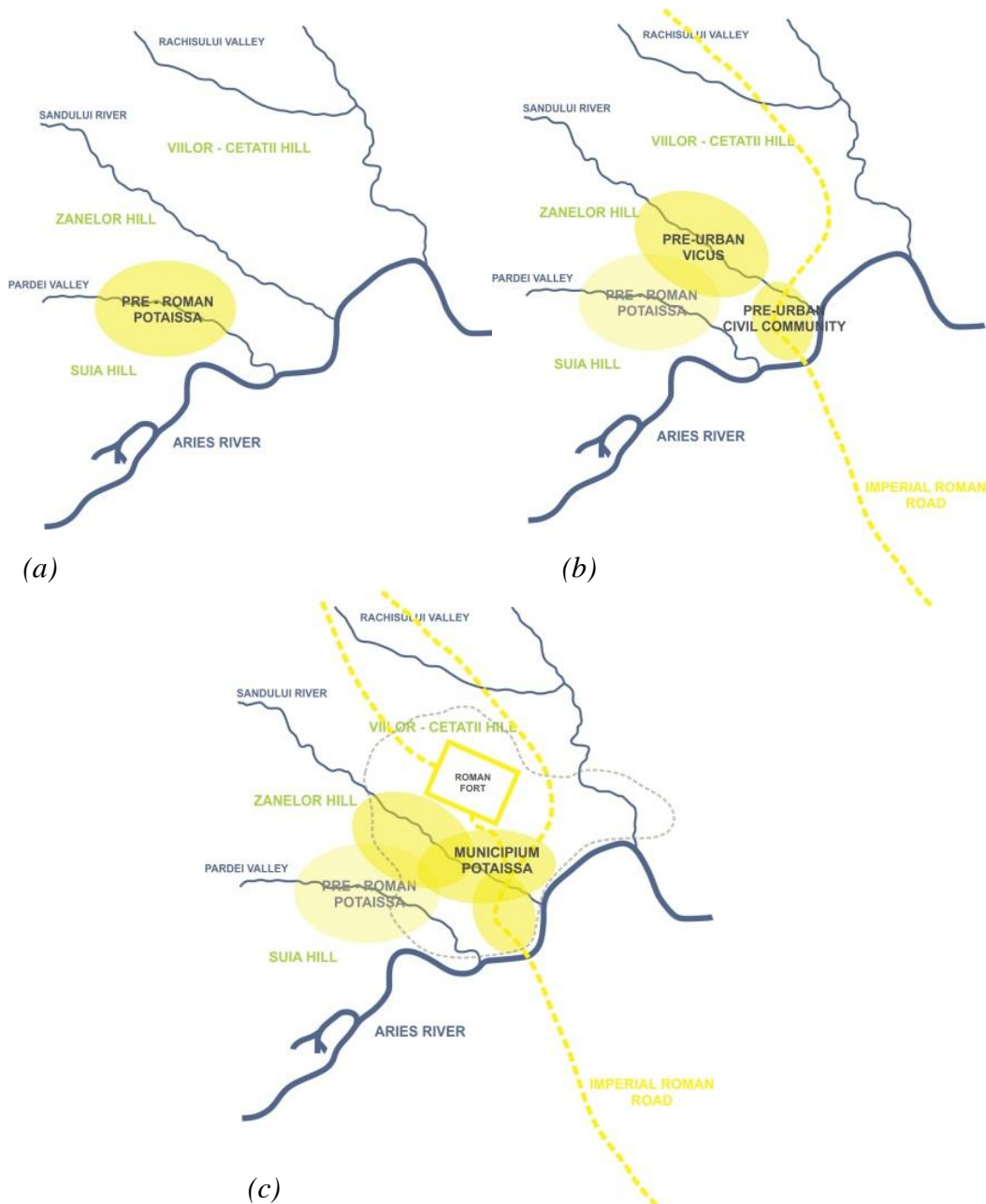
<sup>13</sup>Bărbulescu, Mihai. *Potaissa-Studiu Monografic*. (Turda: Museum of History, 1994), 13-31.

<sup>14</sup>Legio Quinta Macedonica Camp, the biggest legion camp in Transylvania.

<sup>15</sup>The route of the roman imperial road Apulum-Breda-Salinae-Potaissa-Clus has been certified since antiquity on the map Tabula Peutingeriana. The map indicates the main roman settlements, among which is mentioned the toponym Potaissa.

dismantled until the 19<sup>th</sup> century; the molding stone of its walls was used to build the foundations of several buildings in the city center. The roman civilian settlement near the fort has grown over time due to the wealth of salt and stone in its surroundings, due to the easy access to the gold field in the upstream of the Arieș River.<sup>16</sup>

**Figure 3.** (a)Pre-Roman Potaissa; (b)Potaissa in the First Half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century AD; (c)Potaissa in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century AD/Credits: Authors, Original Drawings from Bărbulescu, Mihai. *Potaissa-Studiu Monografic*. (Turda: Museum of History, 1994), 28-30 and 42.

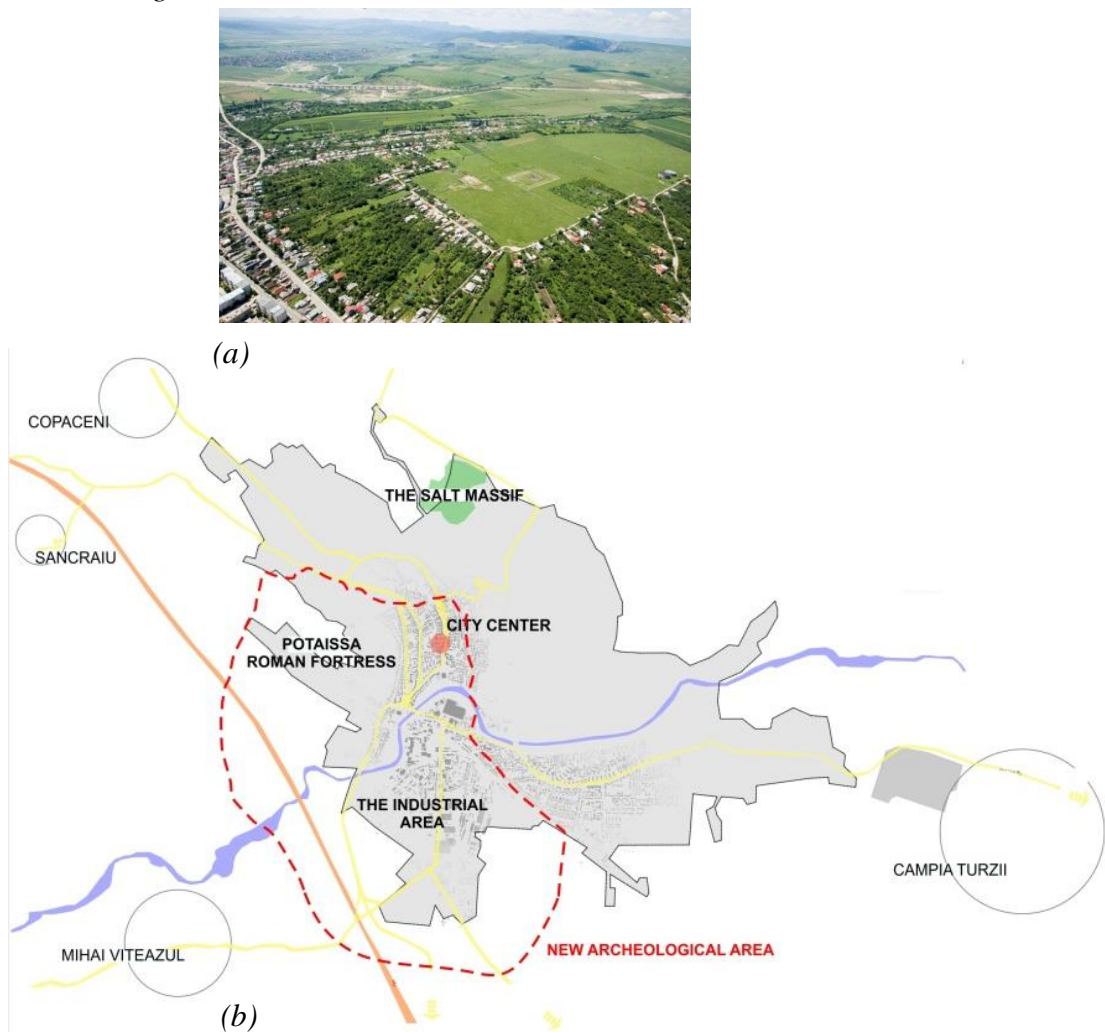


<sup>16</sup>Bărbulescu, Mihai. *Potaissa-Studiu Monografic*. (Turda: Museum of History, 1994), 93-104.



The development was advantaged by the intense traffic on the imperial road, in the direction of Apulum-Napoca. The Roman archeological field covers an area of nearly 12 km<sup>2</sup> (Figure 4), where the archeological material is abundant and parts of this extended field overlap with the historic center.<sup>17</sup> For a long time, in the archeology field, there was confusion regarding the exact location of the settlements Potaissa and Salinae<sup>18</sup>. It was believed that Potaissa was located on the territory of Cluj, under the ancient name of Napoca, and over the Turda territory was the Salinae settlement. These data were incorrect and the confusion was caused by the accelerated economically and territorially development of Potaissa.

**Figure 4.** (a)The Roman Fort-Turda/Credits: URL3; (b)New Areas of Archaeological Potential/Credits:Authors.



Therefore, the economic position of the city in the territory, which was determined by the orientation towards the two cities of particular importance, Apulum/Alba-Iulia and Napoca/Cluj-Napoca, and their crossing by the Roman

<sup>17</sup>Branga, Nicolae. *Urbanismul Daciei Romane*. (Timișoara: Facla Press, 1980), 8-25.

<sup>18</sup>Salinae was a quarter near Old Turda, mostly populated by workers at the mine salt.

imperial road, should not be neglected. A particular urbanistic aspect which is related to the Roman imperial road is that this road represented *cardo maximus* for the roman civil settlement, and the Arieș River represented *decumano maximus*.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, the civilian settlement was segmented by this river, thus the heart of the settlement was being represented by the only bridge in the area that crossed it. Regarding the imperial Roman road the archaeological research was limited, due to the dense medieval tissue, and its exact position through the city is not known, but archaeologists have assumed its possible route.

The Roman city has developed very quickly during roman occupation, knowing several stages. It had the status of *vicus*, *municipium* and later, *colonia*. There was an important link between the Roman civilian and military life, and during the collapse of the urban Roman system, the economy of the settlement also collapsed for an extended period.<sup>20</sup>

The late medieval layer overlapped over the Roman civilian settlement. In the early medieval period, the Roman civilian seating was occupied and parasitized by the random changes in the urban structure. The Roman fort was dismantled, the stones were used to build a number of representative buildings and a fortification called the city wall<sup>21</sup>, from where we can establish the city limits and its size. Other urban layers have overlapped in later periods creating a diverse and complex identity vein, turning the settlement into an archaeological site of all historical periods, in a place meant for political history<sup>22</sup>.

The medieval period was late in Transylvania, and it was late in the case of Turda too. Through this period there have been various physical transformations on a morphological level. The town was formed from the merging of multiple villages, settlements and fortifications. The chaining of fortifications and later the fortified churches along the Racilor stream -the stream that crosses the historical center and the vicinity of the central area- recall the privileges that the city had by adopting the religious freedom for all believers, granted for the first time in the world.<sup>23</sup>

An important role in the formation of local identity was played by the populations that have settled here. It is important to mention the Saxons, the Szeklers and the Hungarians, who were repeatedly colonized, and formed fortresses and neighborhoods that has resulted in increasing the economics of the entire settlements. There is also a study of the researcher Niedermayer, according to whom the city core would have Saxon origins, supported by elements of morphology which compose the central square. Generally, Saxon

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<sup>19</sup>Bărbulescu, Mihai. *Din istoria militară a Daciei Romane. Legiunea V Macedonica și castrul de la Potaissa*. (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia Press, 1987), 34-54.

<sup>20</sup>Branga, Nicolae. *Urbanismul Daciei Romane*. (Timișoara: Facla Press, 1980).

<sup>21</sup>The medieval fortress wall that surrounded Old Turda and the Reformed Church, made after the great tartar invasion in 1241.

<sup>22</sup>The religious diversity it is perhaps the most significant of these, Turda being the first city where religious freedom was granted by the Edict of Turda, thus becoming an important religious center, a place of cohabitation of multiple confessions – decree issued in 1568 by the Transylvanian Diet attained in Turda.

<sup>23</sup>Gergely, Eugen. *Turda. Istorie și Contemporaneitate*. (Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință Press, 2005), 39-49.

cities have a predetermined plan, an elongated central square which enables the development of trade fairs.<sup>24</sup> These three elements are also found in the Turda city structure and in the structure of other Saxon cities. This theory, however, has not been demonstrated by historical or archeological discoveries, therefore it is not consecrated, and it is highly debated among urban planners.

Between the periods of postmodernism the cultural and recreational function acquires great importance, especially when the importance of small towns in the territorial development strategies comes into question. This serves both to economic development and tourism, to the assertion of a local specialized tourism and to the local identity by preserving the cultural heritage.<sup>25</sup>

Therefore, due to the high density of architectural monuments in the historical assembly of Turda city, to the areas with cultural importance and the presence of an early cultural tourism, the city has a great potential to discuss and exploit it in the near future.

### **The Balneary Potential as an Economic and Symbolic Resource**

The city has several strong points that, if properly harnessed, could be considered as important assets in the further economic and social development of the city. Therefore, this chapter aims to highlight the balneary and recreational potential by reevaluating the local importance of the salted mine and the salted lakes. This problem could be comprised in a larger context, the one in which a new development axis, oriented in the direction of the salt vein existing in Transylvanian Plateau, would be discussed.<sup>26</sup>

The settlement has always acted like a link between neighboring systems and this was an important feature that dates from antiquity. It is also important to note here that the location and the role of the city in the North-Western administrative region of the country; aims to transform the urban centers of Transylvania into areas of influence, and regional and cross-regional points of interests.<sup>27</sup> Also, the geographical location of the city on an ancient imperial road was determined by the presence of salt deposits, which were exploited since Roman times. Therefore, the economic and trade relations have strengthened, for long periods of time, the intense bounds with the two neighboring towns, Alba-Iulia and Cluj-Napoca, which were attested since the time of the Roman occupation.

The city was dependent on its own activity, therefore, the most important industrial activities were the ones from the salt mine exploitation which begun in a very early period and contributed in a prosperous way to the establishment

<sup>24</sup>Niedermayer, Paul. "Turda. Dezvoltarea urbanistică a unui centru minier până în secolul al XIV-lea." *Acta Musei Napocensis*, no. 14 (1977): 315-336.

<sup>25</sup>European Observation for Territorial Development and Cohesion-ESPON, Transnational Project Groups, 2006.

<sup>26</sup>Cocean, Radu, Moisescu Ovidiu-Ioan and Toader Valentin. *Economie și planificare strategică în turism*. (Cluj-Napoca: Risoprint Press, 2014).

<sup>27</sup>After Ministerul dezvoltării regionale și administrației publice. *Planul de dezvoltare regională a Regiunii Nord-Vest 2014-2020*. Transilvania de Nord, (2013): 114.

of the city as a self-sustained one.<sup>28</sup> The existence and the abundance of the salt as an industrial element, and not least the proximity of the aquatic element, the Aries River, drew up, overtime, a number of clear development directions of the settlement. This mining activity has attracted many of the neighboring populations, which generated a series of conflicts, finally leading to economic decline.

The balneary tourism represents a major sector within the tourism industry in Romania, due to its specific peculiarities.<sup>29</sup> This tourism, as Dr. Suy Ebrard<sup>30</sup> says, not only has the medical prophylactic meanings of recovery and functional rehabilitation, but also a major economic potential. In the case of Romania this is perhaps the most important economic sector. The economic aspect is highlighted by the specific activity of tourism and, at a much less quantifiable level, as a generator and developer of local economy.<sup>31</sup> Regarding the city of Turda, among the objects proposed by the local administration, the environmental heritage, through tourism developing projects, referred to as protected areas “Nature 2000”: Turda Gorges, Old Salt Mine, Trascăului Mountains and Turda Gorges extensions and the salt lakes, is brought into focus. The city of Turda, being a highly urbanized area, contrasts with the natural areas of great interest in the neighborhood.<sup>32</sup>

Along with the promotion of the mine became sought the spa park situated in the vicinity. This park comprises the salt mine area and the antroposalted lakes. The tourism profile of the Salted Valley has been enhanced by the recovery of two of the salted lakes and by the more intense politics of flora preservation, fencing the whole ensemble and creating pedestrian routes. By this project an area of approximately 12 ha has been rehabilitated. In the last decade the Salina has become an important regional tourist attraction being highly searched both for recreational purposes and for treating certain diseases.<sup>33</sup>

Another element of perspective in this area is generated by human potential. The balneary structure allows the organization of a local educational system in this field (Figures 5 and 6). Both the renovation of the Salt Mine and its promotion at an international level led to an increased number of tourists visiting the city, generating the need to offer other complementary touristic activities. The idea that the city could accommodate a small university extension was born in 2011, at the First National Speleotherapy Conference was held in Turda. Thus, was born the idea of establishing the first institution

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<sup>28</sup>Mera, Ovidiu and Mera Dan-Tiberiu. *Salina veche Turda*. (Turda, 2010).

<sup>29</sup>Țeposu, Emil and Pușcariu Valeriu. *România balneară și turistică*. (Bucharest: Cartea Românească Press, 1933).

<sup>30</sup>President of the *International Federation of Termalism and Climatology-FITEC*.

<sup>31</sup>The Balneary Tourism Cluster in Central Region-Proposal, Cluster Association of Romania; [www.turismuldesănătate.ro](http://www.turismuldesănătate.ro), accessed in September 2014.

<sup>32</sup>Primăria Municipiului Turda. *CON-TURDA. Concept de dezvoltare la nivel regional 2011-2016*. (Turda, 2011).

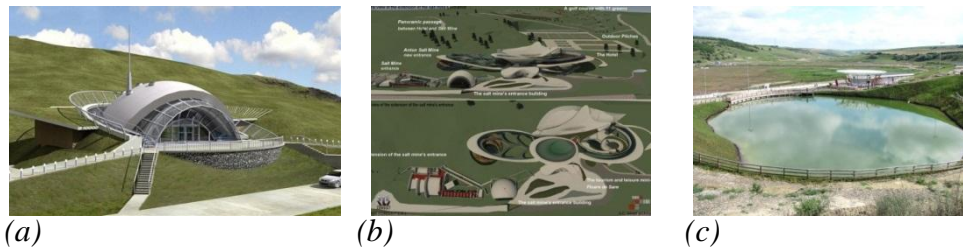
Primăria Municipiului Turda, *CON-TURDA. Concept de dezvoltare la nivel regional 2014-2020*. (Turda, 2014).

<sup>33</sup>Mera, Ovidiu and Mera Dan-Tiberiu. *Salina veche Turda*. (Turda, 2010).

of its kind in the country. The basis of this idea was the desire to promote the balneary potential of the entire western Transilvanian region.<sup>34</sup>

The balneary potential revaluation can be achieved, today, only through the concept of sustainable development. The first important aspect, in terms of sustainable development, is the environmental protection; in the present case, an important step would be to recover and preserve one of the salted lakes, the mine already being the subject of an intense process of rehabilitation and promotion. A better understanding of the benefits achieved from health and leisure tourism can lead us to establish new directions for targeting towards untapped destinations. In this situation, recreational tourism can be considered both strength and a weakness, the increasing demand of visiting the mine often involving a demand for complementary tourist trails.

**Figure 5.** (a)Salt Mine-Entrance from the Salted Lakes/Credits: URL4; (b)The Entire Project of the Balneary Resort/Credits: URL5; (c)Balneotherapeutic Lakes near the Salt Mine/Credits: URL6.



**Figure 6.** (a)(b)(c) The Interior of the Salt Mine/Credits:URL7.



The tourism potential of the city of Turda, as we defined it above, is both natural and anthropogenic. The natural potential comprises the Balneary Park in the city and the proximity of natural areas constituted by the salted lakes. By contrast, the anthropic potential is diverse and consistent, the only weak point being its poor promotion.<sup>35</sup>

We talked, so far, about the touristic heritage of the city, about its cultural potential and about its balneary one. It remains for us to talk further about the possibilities of recovery and conversion of the industrial site and buildings.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Mera, Ovidiu and Mera Dan-Tiberiu. *Salina veche Turda*. (Turda, 2010).

## The Potential for Conversion of the Industrial Platform

Turda city has created and displayed in the last century a predominantly industrial image. This reflects negatively today in the structure and architecture of the city, giving the people passing through the pericentral area an unpleasant feeling of disorganization.

Since its beginnings as a settlement, the entire area of the city benefited from the valuable resources, subjects of commercial exchanges, later subjects of industrial activities. Therefore, the section *“Local Identity in the Light of Urban Potentiality”* aims to analyze the results of the industrial phenomenon, under socialism, translated into the urban structure. By looking at the map of Turda, we can recognize without difficulty the hierarchy of the urban spaces, which are very well defined and delineated. The city seems to be almost a collage of various dominant functions, as a result of national and international economic variations.

Consequently, to consider the potential of Turda city as a polarizing center, the large industrial platform cannot be neglected, nor the minimum intentions to revitalize it over time.<sup>36</sup> We are dealing with many urban layers both different as concept and implications in the urban structure. There are three important historical periods that have left their imprints on the built environment: the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the inter-war period (when the city’s development had a big impulse due to external relations) and the socialist period<sup>37</sup>.

The buildings from the beginning of the industrial phenomenon, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which preceded manufactories, were built in strategic locations in the city and generated urban landmarks (Figure 7). Although few of such buildings have left, the location of those already missing due to the unfavorable urban conjuncture remained in the memory of the inhabitants. Among the buildings that have remained, the most imposing is the building of the Mendel Brewery.<sup>38</sup> Its location marks the boundary between “town” and “industry”. Today it is intended to transform it into a cultural center. Currently, the brewery is classified as a historical monument. The first step in revitalizing the brewery was already taken by elaborating the projects for transforming it into a cultural center; in the present the city does not have a building with a primary use as a cultural center. Moreover, the building has a good strategic position in terms of pedestrian traffic. It is close to the central park and to the promenade of the historical center. Regarding its connection with the Arieș River it can be observed that there are no other buildings in the entire city that could receive immediate vicinity of public functions. Thus, the idea of reviving the face of the river makes sense, considering that since the industrial period, the potential of the river as a promenade was completely neglected.

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<sup>36</sup>Primăria Municipiului Turda. *Planul Urbanistic general al Municipiului Turda*. (Cluj-Napoca, 1999).

<sup>37</sup>The socialist industrial period was between the years 1949-1989.

<sup>38</sup>Gergely, Eugen. *Turda. Istorie și Contemporaneitate*. (Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință Press, 2005).

**Figure 7.** (a)(b)*Mendel Brewery/Credits: (a)URL8 (b)URL9; (c)Pottery Factory/Credits: URL9.*



Another precise example is the Pottery Factory. Its location is pericentral, in a less-favored area in terms of pedestrian traffic. Moreover, this industry that has generated a good economic situation for the city at the beginning of the twentieth century is nowadays a brownfield. Nonetheless, there is a project called CeRaMiCA<sup>39</sup>, part of a European development strategy that aims to recover and revive the almost lost tradition of Turda's pottery manufacture.

Although, the great challenge in terms of urban development is the southern industrial platform, and its relation with the proximity river. Since 1949, the city was forced to adapt to the intensive industrial activities<sup>40</sup>; districts I, II and III were built in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as workers dormitories. So, the major changes that have occurred in the city's urban structure consisted in the construction of the industrial district in the south and the residential area in the south-east. Basically, the only development on the south of the industrial railroad is the industrial platform.

<sup>39</sup>Ceramics and CRafts Industries Increased Cooperation, according to the official website: <http://www.ceramicaproject.eu/>.

<sup>40</sup>Chindriș, Camelia-Maria. "Industria în bazinul inferior al Arieșului. Impactul social și teritorial." (PhD Thesis, Babeș-Bolyai University, 2010).

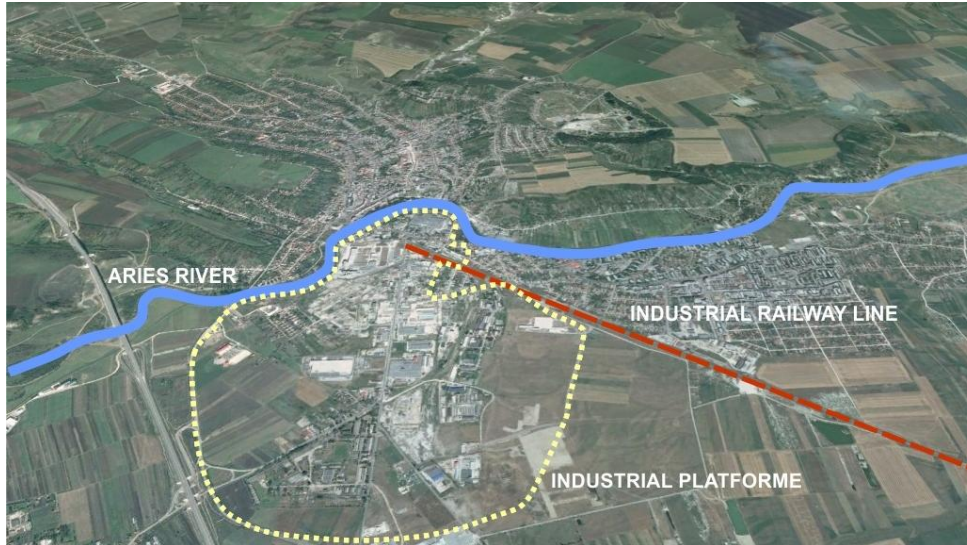
**Figure 8.** (a) Overview of the Industrial District in 1960/Credits: URL10; (b) The Industrial Site Today/Credits: URL1; (c) Arieș River/Credits: URL6.



(a)



(c)



(b)

This development has helped the city to extend in a very short time by almost a quarter of its original area. The city reached a culmination in terms of its national economic importance, but also knew a sudden and irreversible decline after 1989, the year when the Romanian communism fell. The greening of the former industrial site is slow and it slowed down any attempt of urban activity in the area.<sup>41</sup> There is also the problem of the overlapping of the Roman archaeological study area with this industrial area. Traces of the imperial Roman road, whose exact position could not be determined accurately because of the difficulty of access to the archeological areas, can be observed there (Figure 8).<sup>42</sup>

The south area is the only one that allows a significant expansion of the city. The geographical conditions also reinforce this. The historical center, the Old Turda, is bordered by hills. The western hill is marked by the presence of the archeological roman site and the eastern hill is marked by the presence of the salt mine and the salted lakes.

<sup>41</sup>Chindriș, Camelia-Maria. “Industria în bazinul inferior al Arieșului. Impactul social și teritorial.” (PhD Thesis, Babeș-Bolyai University, 2010).

<sup>42</sup>Gergely, Eugen. *Turda. Istorie și Contemporaneitate*. (Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință Press, 2005), 26-38.



At least, a partial reconverting of the industrial platform could give rise to new spaces of identity, either by valorizing some archeological sites, either by greening some spaces and transforming them into public promenades along the river.

## Conclusions

The process of urban planning in the case of Turda city, as in other Transylvanian cities, should represent a balance between the major elements that define it: culture and industry.

In this case, the cultural character imposes itself by the several historical layers, represented by the Roman urban traces, the medieval urban cores and the 19<sup>th</sup> century urbanism and architecture. In addition, the salt mining has proven to be the engine that led to the development of the settlement and also a support for the development and expansion of new neighborhoods, and, not least, for the tourism activities nowadays. Another industrial activity that supported the city's economy was the fabrication of some original ceramic collections, realized in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The cities, both in Western and Eastern Europe, have used their local cultural identity in order to achieve economic objectives, urban revitalization and to create their own identities. Historical and cultural diversity is always an important factor that increases the potential of revitalization and the promotion of a city, especially in the case of a small one, like Turda.

The diversity aspect has become increasingly important in the process of urban planning, on all levels: social, urban, economical, industrial, etc. It creates a cohesion substrate. The urban unit arises from the subordination of parties, which in turn requires variety. For generating the urban unity in the case of Turda, it is necessary to have some specific activities, to achieve what any urban planner seeks today: variety and harmony. The regaining of local identity can be achieved, primarily, through the promotion of the cultural potential and by promoting education with direct and unique applicability in the area. In conclusion, these three development guidelines should be taken into consideration in the development strategies in order to turn the city into a polarizing center.

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