WORKSHOP 1 "Re-imagining Production Spaces: Industrial Spaces in Historical Cities"

THE ROLE OF HISTORICAL INDUSTRY IN THE REVITALISATION OF THE HYBRID CITY

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Since the last third of the 20th century the global economy has been in a state of major flux with exceptional consequences for many cities traditionally characterised by their mining or industrial activities. One of the most discernible effects of this change was the emergence of brownfield sites, that is abandoned industrial sites. Brownfields come in many forms and can be classified depending on:

- Implementation scales
- Production sectors
- Industrial chronologies
- Geographical locations
- Socio-economic problems
- Demographic status
- Infrastructure provisions

In addition, it is important to remember that these industrial spaces have been internationally considered as heritage assets since the emergence of industrial archaeology in the 1960s. This fact has transformed these post-industrial spaces into areas of heritage interest with legal protection and has given them a new status as active territorial assets.

These industrial areas are characterised by the stigma of technological obsolescence and economic decline resulting from the cessation of mining, industrial, crafts and commercial activity. They are now experiencing significant difficulties which put at risk their sustainable maintenance, whether in terms of heritage, the environment, social, economic or territorial factors or a combination of any of these.

The initial diagnosis would be characterised by the following variables:

- Current condition
    - Abandoned or underused industrial sites
    - Sites with contaminated soil, buildings or groundwater.
    - Urban development which is marginal, illegal or lacking a comprehensive project.
    - Gradual plundering of the heritage at the site.
    - Decreasing value of these industrial sites because of their degradation.
    - Speculation leading to privatisation.
- Impact
    - Groundwater pollution.
    - Contaminated soil and facilities.
    - Loss of territorial wealth.
    - Deterioration of the public, urban or rural potential of these areas.
    - Destruction of cultural landscapes.
    - Reduced biodiversity and a deterioration in the human-nature equation.
    - Loss of jobs.

- Loss of economic incentives.
- Tendency to physical and social isolation.

This situation reveals the need for comprehensive adaptation projects for new uses to allow the preservation of industrial heritage, environmental regeneration, social cohesion, the revitalisation of economic activities, job creation and planning in the territory affected.

De-industrialisation has a direct impact on the use of former productive spaces which are normally reclassified by being brought back onto the property market for residential, commercial or administrative purposes. However, this problem needs to be set into the context of cultural heritage. These former companies have buildings, facilities, machinery, archives and trades that are part and parcel of the broad concept of what we call the "work culture" and are significant historical records that should be preserved since they represent the historical legacy of industrial heritage.

Modern culture has already accepted that records from the world of work can become historical heritage. Spain's and Europe's main cities are therefore promoting increasing numbers of initiatives aimed at restoring old factories, warehouses, electricity plants and railway stations to provide society with valuable new uses. These "industrial objects", which have, until now, been abandoned, obsolete and devalued, have thus made a strong comeback on the new urban landscape.

The modern 21st-century city, demanded by citizens, has benefited from this new approach since it allows new public spaces to be opened up where there were once only decaying ruins, which were appreciated by industrial heritage experts alone. Opening the past to the public involves examining society's democratic convictions because it highlights the whole historical process of which industry is a part. Historically, it has been a key component of cities, especially from modern times until today.

Former industrial spaces need to be considered with an eye to renewal so that these important examples of European industrialisation are prevented from disappearing. Cities need to set out urban policies that combine different functions such as housing, industry, leisure and culture. This is a time of recession and reassessing social policies and is ideally suited to maintaining the productive activities of industrial spaces in crisis through a new urban-planning culture which is able to develop a comprehensive concept of cities from two complementary standpoints: preserving listed historical industrial buildings to guarantee the survival of their heritage values and offering these spaces to non-polluting companies in new technologies, creativity, research and with new models of socially responsible co-operative work.

All this can be implemented with a new methodology that conceives the intervention project as an opportunity aiming to generate a bold framework for management and architecture and one which is sensitive to pre-existing historical elements, while at the same time promoting the generation of new heritage through current architectural intervention.

Industrial heritage is not a list of decontextualised and obsolete objects. In their truest calling, they are a resource for development and there is no better use for these objects than for them to continue being what they have always been, work places.

Historical factories in the inherited city are a material record with a significant interpretive, not just descriptive, ability, which can reconcile the preservation of these industrial assets with new uses so that their creative potential can emerge.

The sustainable city is one which manages to plan for the future by combining inherited heritage, in this case the industrial, with new urban-planning projects which meet criteria for efficiency so that heritage can become a part of the environment, as a tool for cohesion for the territory and a factor for growth.

QUESTIONS

1. Briefly describe a local example to which the diagnosis referred to in this introduction can be applied.

- Name
- Location
- Chronology
- Economic sector
- Merits
- Problems
- Current condition
- Revitalisation plans

2. Identify the local, regional, or national legislative framework relating to the protection of historical industrial spaces.

- Cultural legislation
- Urban-planning legislation
- Environmental legislation

3. Indicate the most important actions that B-Team can set out to influence the preservation and revitalisation of historical industrial spaces in urban areas.