

INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE, ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION AND URBAN COMPACTNESS IN POBLENOU-22@BARCELONA. A NEW BARCELONA MODEL?

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I. INTRODUCTION

Poblenou's intense development has been a result of the urban project 22@Barcelona (2000) which revitalized urban morphology and the area's previous economic downturn during period 2000-2013. This article analyzes how the industrial heritage remaining in Poblenou becomes a competitive element of the so-called city of knowledge, where civil society forced the public sector to introduce policies to protect this heritage for the construction of the cultural city. The structural question is to analyze how the industrial heritage was produced, how it was consumed, and which agents were involved in both processes. In addition, the focus of the paper is to study how heritage becomes a basic element of the process of economic revitalization, of symbolic projection and of urban compactness in the urban project Poblenou-22@Barcelona. Economic cluster policy in the area represents an innovative strategy for the urban, economic and social transformation of the whole city of Barcelona.

II. THE INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE IN THE PROCESS OF URBAN REVITALIZATION AND THE SYMBOLIC CITY

Urban industrial heritage began to be considered as an asset to be protected in Britain in 1950. The protectionist movement introduced the need to conserve and protect heritage against changing economic activities in cities that had emerged from the Industrial Revolution. Different associations were born with the objective of preserving industrial heritage and providing an inventory database of it (Casanelles, 1988). In general, in Europe, the transition

from a manufacturing economy to a service economy between 1970 and 1980 was the beginning of the process where factories moved to the suburbs and the remaining industrial park in urban areas was becoming obsolete.

At the end of the Twentieth Century the discussion on the concept of industrial heritage acquired a great reputation internationally. This was possible firstly thanks to the existence of institutions dedicated to studying and protecting the industrial heritage, and secondly due to the awareness of civil society and its interest in historical values (Tatjer, 2008; Pardo, 2010). The study of industrial archeology and conservation, protection, dissemination and interpretation of industrial heritage at the international level is based on the work of The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage (TICCIH) (1978) which at the end of the 1980s became an advisor to The International Council for Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) of UNESCO. The latter constitutes the advisory body on issues for the selection of monuments, sites and landscapes.

The TICCIH's "The Nizhny Tagil Charter for the Industrial Heritage" (2003) includes industrial heritage as a value such as history, art, social history, architecture, and science. Although the definitions of these organizations are non-binding on states, they represent an important reference for addressing the treatment of industrial heritage.

Late in the Twentieth Century, industrial heritage was included in the management, planning and territorial development strategies of cities as resource, as collective memory and as identity of the place. Industrial heritage management has become an important factor in local development (Capel, 1996; Benito, 2002, 2010; Alvarez, 2010). In Europe, from the 1990s, industrial heritage was presented as a structural axis in the policies of urban and economic development of the city where the industrial elements were part of the strategies of the new city, although with changes in their functions. Some traditional industrial areas were transformed by converting the old industrial buildings into new corporate headquarters, housing, facilities and cultural centers. This transformation had a cumulative effect on the urban landscape while acting as an attraction of new businesses and tourism activities (Pareja et al., 2007; Musterd and Murie, 2010).

In policy development, the use of heritage were embodied in strategies to attract economic activities, to create symbolic images of the city which were determinants for attracting investors in a competitive global scenario (Pallares-Barbera, 2010; Balibrea, 2004; Ashworth and Voogd, 1990).

III. ORIGINS, URBAN REGULATIONS AND PROMOTION OF INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE IN THE POBLENOU-22@BARCELONA

Poblenou's factory buildings of the Nineteenth Century and Twentieth Century were the seeds of the industrial revolution in Barcelona. Scarcity of land inside Barcelona's medieval walls until the 1860s, forced industrial investment to look ahead to other nearby areas with favorable morphological characteristics. The concentration of the textile sector in Poblenou during the first half of the Twentieth Century and its subsequent decline left many unresolved spaces of abandoned buildings which in the 1960s and 1970s accommodated workshops, warehouses, garages, and transportation companies. Some other historic buildings became obsolete, leaving the industrial landscape in a state of abandonment in the period 1980-2000.

Back in 1979 there was the Regulation of the architectural, historic and artistic heritage of the City of Barcelona (*Ordenança sobre protecció del patrimoni arquitectònic, històric i artístic de la ciutat de Barcelona*) which regulated and protected a few of the past industrial architectural elements in Barcelona, including some of the Poblenou examples. Later, in 2000 the Modification of the General Metropolitan Plan for the renewal of the industrial zones of Poblenou - such as the activities district of 22@BCN (*Modificació del Pla General Metropolità per a la renovació de les zones industrials del Poblenou -Districte d'Activitats 22@BCN*) was the beginning of the 22@Barcelona project (Barcelona City Council, 2000a). Finally, also in 2000 the City Council approved the Special plan for the historical, architectural and artistic heritage of the City of Barcelona, with respect to Sant Martí district, which is a part of the industrial heritage of Poblenou (*Pla especial del patrimoni arquitectònic històric i artístic de la ciutat de Barcelona. Districte de Sant Martí. Patrimoni industrial del Poblenou* (PEPA)) which cataloged 36 heritage buildings and which was modified in 2006 to include 68 buildings. These latter two rulings contained the legal regime and the regulation of the protection for heritage buildings (Barcelona City Council, 2000b, 2006).

In 2010, the public institution 22 ARROBA BCN S.A.U. created the Guide to visit and discover the 22@Barcelona district (*Guía para Visitar y Descubrir el Distrito 22@Barcelona*), which included the promotion of the industrial heritage in the cultural offerings of the city.

IV. TRANSFORMING THE INDUSTRIAL PAST TO RESIDENTIAL USE. THE CASES OF PASSATGE DEL SUCRE, CAN GILI VELL, AND CAN GILI NOU

Between 2003 and 2005, 3 Urban Improvement Projects (*Planes de Mejora Urbana-PMU*) were approved by the Technical Commission of the City of Barcelona which allowed private housing developers to start building residential sites in what used to be 3 factories: Passatge del Sucre, Can Gili Vell and Can Gili Nou. This was an important fact given that the re-use of industrial buildings to housing was a pioneering effort in Barcelona. This industrial heritage rehabilitation modified the original factories in order to generate 139 lofts, 1 hotel and some offices.

It transpired that protecting heritage provided value-added for marketing purposes in home selling. Slogans such as “respecting the original architectural concept of industrial halls”, “paying attention to the original elements such as volume, facade, heights, large windows, and structural elements” were key phrases in promoting housing by private developers. The loft sale price was higher than for other traditional housing, being that loft prices were between 4,421 and 6,640 € / m², compared to 3,799 € / m², respectively.

V. INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE AS SYMBOL FOR TOURISM PROMOTION

In order to answer the question of how industrial heritage became a part of the supply side of cultural goods to be offered to visitors, two types of sources were used in this paper. First, we explored the Visitor and Discovery Guide for the 22@Barcelona District, in which the heritage itineraries were very much presented in detail; second, we researched 8 digital guidebooks (using Google search engine), contrasting two questions: (a) what information do guidebooks provide for the Poblenou area; (b) what information guidebooks provide in

relation to industrial heritage in Poblenou. The key words entered in Google were ‘*Guía de viaje turístico Barcelona*’ and ‘*Guía de viaje turístico Poblenou*’. From the guidebooks consulted, Poblenou was referenced in seven of them as a tourist place; four of them referred to beaches; in two of them, the Agbar Tower was presented as a special interest building. In one of them, Poblenou was advertised by its hotels and restaurants, and by the *Parc del Centre del Poblenou* as a special site to visit. Finally, industrial heritage was never presented as a part of the visitors’ attractions.

In order to understand visitors’ typology and the places visited by them, there was a survey conducted of 15 CEO hotels located in Poblenou (2012), in which we requested among other elements what type of visitors frequented their hotels, what information was offered by hotel clerks to prospective visitors about the area, and what were their findings on visitors’ opinions of the places visited. Survey results showed that most visitors were European (excluding Spaniards) (52%) and Spaniards (27%); 48% were working visitors and 45% were tourists. Finally, 66% of visitors were men. It turned out that most of the information provided by the hotel reception clerks was more focused on shopping and beaches than on heritage, cultural and public spaces in Poblenou-22@ Barcelona. When visitors asked for places to visit, the receptionists gave information related to shopping malls and beaches in 73% of total cases; information to entrepreneurial and innovative environment in Poblenou, 60%; to public spaces (excluding parks and beaches) 53%. Information on architecture and heritage, parks, and museums was given in 33%, 27% and 7% of cases, respectively. The survey revealed that visitors gave a generally positive opinion of the urban environment of Poblenou. Most of them valued aspects related to public transport (8.5 points over 10), amiability of citizens (8.3 over 10) and hotel facilities (8 over 10). Urban and architectural offerings and cultural and leisure features were rated 7 points over 10. Negative points were air pollution, noise and public safety.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

In former industrial cities, some local governments address policies for revitalizing industrial heritage buildings. This article analyzed how the industrial heritage was produced, how it was consumed, and which agents were involved in both processes. Furthermore, it studied how industrial heritage became an element for urban revitalization in Barcelona. The institution ARROBA 22 BCN, SAU (2000) managed and promoted industrial heritage. Urban regulations on heritage conservation in Poblenou-22@Barcelona, dated back to a City Hall ordinance in 1979. Later in 2000 there were two new urban plans and the last one was in 2006. Catalogued buildings were used for socio-cultural facilities (7a and 7b land-use classification), economic activities and housing (22@), and equipment to support business (7@).

Social claims to preserve patrimony had an important role during this period. The most emblematic result was to protect Can Ricart as a Site of National Cultural Interest (2008) (Dot et al., 2014; Marti, 2010; Casellas, 2007).

In this paper the functional transformation of three case studies were analyzed to understand use changes from industrial heritage to housing: Passatge del Sucre, Can Gili Nou and Can Gili Vell (2003-2005).

Industrial heritage is in a transition mode of becoming a visitors' attraction. It is poorly advertised in tourist guides and hotel information. Notwithstanding, there is a growing proportion of tourists in Poblenou (Clarós, 2012; Castán, 2013; Negro, 2014). For policymaker purposes, this diagnosis would be useful to implement their strategies on Poblenou-22@Barcelona. Poblenou-22@Barcelona and adjacent projects, such as *-Plaça de les Glòries* (2014), Design Hub Barcelona (2012), *l'Auditori* (1999) and the National Theatre (1997)- conform to a new Barcelona Center, known generally by Les Glòries, already designed by Ildefons Cerdà in his Enlargement of Barcelona Plan (1860) (Pallares-Barbera et al., 2011) and which was never accomplished until now.

These different but neighboring projects contributed to the urban compactness of previously separated economic spaces and gave continuity to Barcelona with such economic spaces that had been so deprived of twenty years ago. It remains for future research discussions of how the obtained synergies of this process configure a new way of thinking: a New Barcelona Model in which, with lighting and shadows, it postulates another original approach to urban compactness, to create new city centers embedded geographically, socially and culturally within the city.