

Title:

Emergence of the Policy Instruments: Shanghai Industrial Port Heritage in Revolution

Abstract:

Spatial and economic developments of port heritage have significant impacts on the built environment of port cities. To deal with the decline of the former industrial waterfronts, many cities have transformed former industrial sites along the waterfront into new public spaces for achieving a higher quality of life or have designated the areas to attract creative workforce and enterprise. The industrial ports regeneration or development may offer convenient, photogenic solutions to generate pretty perspectives, but rarely acknowledge how the formal planning imports influence long-term development. The transformation results often prove ineffective when faced with variation in systems of governance and management. With a focus on end-game scenarios, port industrial conservation and regeneration, in fact, does not emphasise suitable qualities, leading to generic, '1-size-fits-all' solutions. The transformation of industrial heritage is restricted by multiple factors such as land ownership, land institution, urban planning, and ect., which have a decisive impact on the protection and reuse of industrial heritage. Therefore, this article questions the site-blindness of port heritage conservation and to recognise the reality of changes in the practice of urban planning with a special look at the strategic, and policy instruments currents at play.

The questions will be dealt with based on the case of Shanghai. Strategically located on the Chinese coastal belt at the mouth of the Yangtze River, Shanghai rapidly became a centre of major economic exchange. In the early years, some of the regeneration projects in Shanghai were carried out with the express purpose of economic development, which may have resulted in the loss of heritage values of the former industrial port. More recently, however, we can observe a change of attitude toward industrial remains of the city ports, which have been seen as cultural assets to boost the city's competitiveness and image through waterfront regeneration. Many typical cases have been formed in the transformation of industrial heritage in Shanghai, such as M50, Red Town, and Shanghai Museum of Glass. Aside from the success or failure of these cases in terms of operation and construction quality, it is worth noting that the implementation characteristics of these cases often see highly differences. This means that the policy environment and tools have a significant influence on the outcomes. This paper aims to examine how the government has repurposed and used the obsolete and dilapidated buildings and sites as historical assets for waterfront regeneration and envisions the future of the River and the Creek from a macro perspective.