

Approaches to Revitalizing Industrial Heritage: Practice of Shenzhen & Hongkong By-city Biennale of Urbanism & Architecture, China

Abstract: With urban function transformation and industrial shift in recent years, a wide range of old factories in cities which have contributed a lot to national economy of China since 1949 are exposed to the pressure of demolition and alteration. However, the history of exploration and thrive has been written into the industrial landscape consisting of old factory plants and nearby infrastructures, which mirror a section of the social and economic conditions of the industrial era and are of heritage value. Thus in the regeneration of such areas, while revitalizing the old industrial space and benefiting the regional economy, what is equally, if not more, important is to preserve the collective memory and cultural identity. A widely approved approach nowadays is to adapt the old industrial infrastructure to new functions, mostly to creative cultural industry, which could be exemplified by the practice of the Shenzhen & Hongkong By-city Biennale of Urbanism & Architecture (UABB), China.

Based on the unprecedented drastic urbanization background of Shenzhen, 6 UABBs have been held since 2005, the venue of which were mostly in abandoned industrial plants. To meet its complex cultural functional requirements of exhibitions, conferences and education, UABB has successfully transformed the industrial remains into a cultural industrial park without losing the historical significance behind existing industrial landscape. This paper analyzed the transformation strategies and specific implementing measures, so as to explore some general approaches to transform the vulnerable industrial heritages to more vibrant urban areas.

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