

GONZALO ANDRÉS LÓPEZ

Departamento de Historia, Geografía y Comunicación. Universidad de Burgos

The Industrial Medium Size Cities in Spain. Historical Evolution, Urbanization Process and Urban Structure

I. APPROACH. A REFLECTION ON THE MEANING OF THE INDUSTRY IN THE URBAN HISTORY OF SPANISH MEDIUM-SIZE CITIES

Throughout history, the industry has played a leading role in the medium-size cities, as a driver of economic dynamics of change and strong social and spatial transformations. The importance of the industry in the configuration of this type of urban areas has been decisive. Therefore, it is interesting to order and model the meaning that this activity has had in each phase of the contemporary urbanization process.

This paper provides a reflection on how the economic activity spaces -industrial areas and industrial estates- have evolved in the growth of medium-sized cities. In particular, it analyzes how the historical evolution of the industrial implementations has taken place, from the first factories integrated in the city to the current peripheral location at industrial belts. The research considers what role the industry has played in each phase of urbanization, studying the evolution of the map/plan in these urban areas. The final objective focuses on understanding the meaning of industrial areas in the urban shape of medium-sized cities.

II. THE INDUSTRIAL AREAS IN THE COMPOSITION OF THE MEDIUM-SIZE CITIES: ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES, SHAPE AND URBAN STRUCTURE

The industrial areas have been consolidated as determinant spaces of the urban shape and, in addition,

in recent years they seem to be one of the most consolidated types of growth. The work analyzes the structure of several medium-sized cities and unveils that in all cases the industry shows a peripheral location with respect to the rest of the urban area. These are productive spaces with a high intensity of commuters, goods and flows of economic activity. This situation occurs in cities with different evolution and urbanization process.

On the one hand, some of the most significant models of inland medium-sized cities are presented, in which the industrial land are born as a consequence of the structure of the main communication axes. In these examples, the urbanization of industrial areas has taken place in several peripheral locations of the historic city (Vitoria, Burgos, Palencia, Logroño...).

On the other hand, the model of port or rail cities, in which industrial activity has been expanded from the initial focus of the port or station it is worth mentioning. Thus more linear structures have been formed, in which the industry is located in those axes or concentration areas (Avilés, Tarragona, Gijón, Cádiz...).

When we elucidate the results of the evolution of the industry in the maps of these cities, we can confirm that the factories areas have been one of the essential engines of growth. In fact, the industry largely explains the extension of urbanized space (which is multiplied by five in the last fifty years), the population growth (which doubles) and the multiplication of the number of dwellings (which are also multiplied by four in number in the same period).

III. URBAN EVOLUTION AND PRODUCTIVE SPACES IN THE INDUSTRIAL MEDIUM-SIZE CITIES: FROM THE FACTORIES TO THE INDUSTRIAL STATES; FROM THE CENTER TO THE PERIPHERIES

Based on the observation of how city's maps have changed during the urbanization process, the work proposes a model that reflects the evolution "prototype" of the industry in the Spanish medium-size cities. In particular, the urban evolution has been synthesized in four major stages and the meaning of the industrial spaces in each of them has been modeled. In each stage, different phases of urbanization have been studied by virtue of the historical sequence and the main milestones related to the industry. At the same time, it has been considered what has been the reality of the industrial process in each of these phases. In this way, a scheme has been prepared that summarizes the evolution and presents a general vision of the importance of industry in the urban history of medium-sized cities.

The first phase - before 1911 - studies the location of the first factories in the medium-size cities until the beginning of the 20th century. Except in some cities (Cartagena, Oviedo, Ferrol...) in which there are previous factories (naval factories, military-weapons, steel...), in most cases the industries do not appear until well into the nineteenth century. Until that moment, most productive activities were carried out in craft workshops, with hardly any mechanization. This stage defines a first change in the industrial location, for by means of energy, the steel industry, the shipyards, the metallurgy, the military factories, the paper industry or the first textile arise the first modern factories. Real industrial buildings are created "ad hoc" to develop modern and mechanized production processes.

The second phase (1911-1959) analyzes the process by which the planification of the industry areas began and the first ordered areas arose to house factories in the "Ensanches" of these cities. This process was developed in two parts. Initially, the factories were installed in the first growth areas among low-density neighborhoods (Working class houses-Garden cities), but only in some medium-sized cities (Elche, León, Vitoria,...) specific urban planning were approved to regulate this expansion. In most urban areas of this size (Burgos, Badajoz, Oviedo, Logroño...) the planned industrial areas were delayed until the second term and the "Ensanches" plans were not really approved until the 1940s.

The third phase (1959-1992) focuses mainly on the deep economic transformations that took place between

the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. This period had a strong spatial impact, as large industrial estates were urbanized. But there was also a huge social transformation, as the medium cities multiplied their population as a direct consequence of the need for workers for the new factories. This new population needed accommodation and there was also a great real estate growth. New urbanizations and neighborhoods were quickly created with thousands of new homes. As a result of this great expansion, currently 40% of the total built in these cities is due to the growth that took place in these two decades.

The last phase studies the changes in the model of industrial location since 1992. In these last decades the industry is being expelled from the urban space as cities grow and economic activity is moving towards the periphery of urban areas. This produces a double situation. On the one hand, old factories stop producing and disappear from the urban space, leaving empty lots that generate new uses in central areas. On the other hand, the new industries are located in the most remote and peripheral areas, producing an increasingly defined segregation of the industry with respect to the rest of urban spaces.

IV. CONCLUSION. THE GRADUAL DISSOLUTION OF THE INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES IN THE URBAN STRUCTURE OF THE SPANISH MEDIUM-SIZE CITIES

The industry has followed a process in which its way of integration into the urban layout has evolved. The patterns of industry-city interrelation have been clearly modified: from the traditional activity of the first manufacturing workshops, located in the inner city, to the current peripheral location of the factories. Each stage of extension of the urbanizing process has fixed its own industrial location arrangement. The location of the industry on the map has evolved as the city expands. The first industrial buildings coexisted with dwellings and other urban uses in the "Ensanche" period. The large factories of the 1960s and 1970s industrial states began to differentiate the industrial use. And, in recent decades, the industry has clearly distanced from the rest of the activities and uses present in the map of these cities.

But this gradual dissolution of industry with respect to other services cannot cause the decontextualization of what this human activity entails in the social and economic sphere. The separation between the industry and the urbanization process taking place in the Spanish medium-size cities invites to a wide reflection on the role

that spaces of economic activity in these urban structures will play in the near future. The functional disintegration of the productive activity does not necessarily have to be accompanied by the disappearance of the factories. Industries have played an important role in the urban

structure and can maintain urban uses that reinforce the integration between different activities in city. In other words, the criteria for the functional organization of economic activity in these cities cannot be directly related to the loss of a relevant industrial and cultural heritage.