
To what extent does the waterfront renewal of Budapest fit into general trends?

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Abstract

(Starting with:)

Waterfront – in sense of locality – is not an ordinary fringe, nevertheless its visibility, its impact on the general view of the city makes it an important interface to dealing with. *(If in T.S. 5.12.)*

Waterfront is a well definable, easily recognizable type of derelict but reusable lands in the post-industrial city, as such, both shrinking and growing cities should pay attention on these specific zones. *(If in T.S. 5.13.)*

Waterfront is one of the urban spaces, that experienced the most spectacular transformation after the fall of Socialism. Nevertheless post-soviet and post-socialist urban geography has just discovered this topic. *(If in T.S. 5.17.)*

(Continuing with in each case:)

The literature of waterfront regeneration (or redevelopment), has a history for several decades, one can find dozens of studies on the initial points of the phenomenon (the large port cities of industrially developed countries). Nevertheless the cities of semi-periphery countries and periphery countries also started to discover their reusable waterfronts after 2000, and the number of publication in this topic has increased significantly during the last 10 years. The post-socialist coastal or riverfront cities, among them the Hungarian capital, belong also to this group. There are only a few (geographical) studies dealing with, or at least mentioning the waterfronts of Budapest, although the location of the city, the remarkable length of Danube-banks within its administrative borders makes worthy to pay more attention on this zones. Besides development policy documents and plans (the latest, but recently withdrawn one was the bid for the 2024 Summer Olympics!), deeper geographical analysis would be also necessary.

The paper attempts to interpret the transformation of industrial and other transitional type riverfronts of Budapest in the context of international waterfront regeneration trends. Firstly, it identifies the processes on the basis of the general port-city interface model (Hoyle 1988), inserts them into the schema of global diffusion of the phenomenon (Hoyle 2000) and investigates their position among the "generations of waterfronts" defined in the literature (Shaw 2001). Then it applies the cyclic model of dereliction and revitalization (Schubert 2011),

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and the categorizations along newly established functions (Mann 1988; Breen, Rigby 1996). The "bluefield" concept (Pinch, Munt 2002) as a possible key concept in waterfront revitalization is also involved. Finally, as both functional and morphological renewal of Budapest's riverfronts are not homogenous and consistent processes (similarly to the vast majority of waterfront cities of both core and periphery countries), the paper illustrates the actual conditions on a thematic map. The resources of this map are current and archive aerial photos and city maps, integrated and evaluated in GIS.

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