At the present time, most cities are trying to take an international position and become global cities. On the other hand of our ever dual society, we find the cities that once were the symbol of the industrial society and nowadays lay abandoned and useless, suffering from serious problems of decay.

For these cities, good governance and good city planning are essential to survive and stop their decline. Nevertheless, the processes of urban decay have usually been dealt with an economic approach; the reversibility of urban decadence was linked to the restitution of economic value and lost status, not to the improvement of the quality of life or to the amelioration of urban or social conditions.

Business districts, shopping malls, amusement and theme parks have usually been the “solution” given by planners to revitalize industrial cities in decay. However, some successful experiences in Europe make us think that the regeneration of old industrial territories is connected with a good regional strategic plan, with the recuperation of lost industrial traces and with the participation of local agents in the process.

Nevertheless, the question posed by industrial cities in decay is wider, it refers to the urban model they would be able to follow and the possible futures these cities would be able to endure. Their ruins are an implicit critic to the prevailing urban model. How can the fourth most important city in United States in 1920s have become the poorest city in 2000? The question underneath is if continuous and unceasing growth is the only model for urban success. Or can the consequences of urban decay (urban voids, increase of open land...) be the source to a new urban model: better governed, better planned, more compact, more environmentally sustainable: more complex?

Decline – urban planning – industry – shrinking cities
URBAN PLANNING IN INDUSTRIAL CITIES: THE REVERSIBILITY OF DECAY

« After the labour of many industrial hands, after a time when the meaning of its monuments could be deciphered »

(MARK CRIBSON. Urban Memory. History and amnesia in the modern city)

At the present, most cities are trying to take an international position to become global cities. On the other hand of our ever dual society, we find cities that once were symbol of the industrial age and nowadays lay abandoned and useless. These cities are suffering from serious problems of decay linked to deindustrialization.

Some of them have managed to overcome their decline becoming global cities. New York, London, Paris or Chicago were the most important industrial cities in United States, England and France since the end of 19th century till the 2nd World War. They did suffer from severe processes of decline between 1950s and 1980s, but they were able to get over most of them. Their status and importance let them become the great cities they are today.

However, our research does not focus on these cities that have been able to take an important position at a global scale because of their influence or magnitude, but on the great amount of large and medium size cities that are currently in decline because of productive reorganizations, economic transformations or changing shifts. They are not capital cities nor have they become great business centers, so they have not been able to enter the global competition. They were linked to industry since their origin and when production ceased and plants began to move, these cities collapsed. Nowadays, they have become abandoned cities with uncertain futures.

First of all, urban decay calls into question the real meaning of urban success. These cities have evolved from great centers of production to ruin and destruction. Faced to the actual sinking city of Detroit, was it an urban success that of the beginning of the 20th century? Is it Detroit a successful city? It seems difficult to support it when we are looking at the poorest US city in 2000 (together with New Orleans). Detroit’s population has shrunk 44,4 percent since 1950 and only 56 percent of working population worked in the formal economy in 2000. A total 10 percent of city’s housing units were vacant that same year and in some downtown areas the total percent of vacant housing units reached 80 percent 1.

Nevertheless, at the beginning of the 20th century, Detroit was the most important center of automobile production in the world. It had become ‘the Motor City’. The most important automobile companies in United States, ‘the Big Three’ (General Motors, Ford and Chrysler) set their headquarters and principal plants in the city and Detroit was soon the third largest industrial city in United States after New York and Chicago. On the first half of 20th century Detroit’s population increased 647 percent. In 1900 the city’s population did not reached 300,000 inhabitants, but in 1950 it was of almost three million people and it had become the fourth US city by population rank.

Industrial cities in decay reflect the contradictory forces that govern our cities today: they show the subtle frontier between urban success and urban crisis. So, if we understand the success of a city in a wider context than that of economic development, we should ask ourselves: which are the decisive factors for a long – term and sustainable urban success? How can we deal with urban decline? Can urban planning lead the regeneration process?

Detroit’s model was that of a short – term achievement associated to unlimited growth. Automobile industry molded the city’s spatial development and the same process of industrial city construction was the source of its decay.

If we declare, together with Kevin Lynch that “a city in decay is one that bloomed in the past due to the development of single economic activity in which the city became specialized” \(^2\) it may be possible to understand that when this activity ceased or moved, the city could not adapt to the new set of circumstances. The foundations and the future of these industrial cities were finally called into question after a long process of abandonment (rejection to property rights and obligations) and subsequent decadence (decrease in urban life and economic value).

So that, urban decline can be understood as a lack of adaptation to new conditions. In industrial cities, decay is the consequence of the unfitness of old spatial structures to new modes of production. The urban model of the industrial city did not foresee any alteration of its initial conditions, so when the circumstances changed the city could only collapse.

Industrial cities were planned to produce the maximum industrial benefit in terms of profits and expenses: the spatial structure of the city was designed to optimize production. Nevertheless, the irreversible process of decay associated to growth was forgotten in their construction; not only with regard to land consumption and environmental deterioration but also that related to urban and social decline. The urban model was only tied to economic growth and production patterns. The city’s historic values, its memory layers and century’s of civilization were replaced by the

\(^2\) LYNCH (2005), p. 105
optimum urban model for mass production. When the economic paradigm changed, cities designed for centralized industrial labor began their decline.

Furthermore, experience shows that the more specialized and linked to a single activity, the more difficult is not only to retrieve the city’s economic base but also to revitalize its social and urban structures once the decadence has started.

The example of Philadelphia serves to illustrate the arguments above. During 19th century and the first decades of 20th century, Philadelphia represented prowess in production, the American apex of skill, versatility and diversity in manufacturing; it was called ‘the Workshop of the World’. This diversified productive network and the informal relations related to it were the source of a much more complex urban and social structure than Detroit’s one. The latter’s industrial tissue was only related to automobile and its components production; meanwhile, Philadelphia’s industrial base was much wider. In fact, 90 percent of 300 categories of industrial activity charted by US Census were present in the city at the end of 19th century: textiles, metals, chemistry and food industry were outstanding, as well as the machine and tools manufactures. Added to that diversity, the construction of the industrial city of Philadelphia was much slower than that of Detroit: it started at the beginning of the 19th century and it developed till 1950s; meanwhile, the first industrial poles in Detroit appeared in 1860s. Probably, that’s why the city adaptation to new modes of production could also be more gradual.

Confronted to the model of Detroit, in which a tiny number of great firms were the major employers and dominated the landscape as well as local economic and political life, Philadelphia (though it hosted some huge facilities) was an incubator for small companies linked to scientific innovation. This model would set the foundations for the construction of a more open city, better planned, better governed and less tied to a single activity. Philadelphia’s urban structure would be more fitted to adapt itself first to fordist transformations and then to the shifts associated to the postfordist paradigm, the decentralization of production and subsequent deindustrialization.

Both cities, Philadelphia and Detroit, reached its population summit in 1950 (2.071.605 inhabitants) but whereas Detroit grew 647 percent on the first half of 20th century, Philadelphia’s increased 160 percent its population. On the second half of the century, Detroit shrunk 44,4 percent in population while Philadelphia would decrease 23,5%.
Today, both cities are suffering from serious problems of decay tied to the lost of their industrial base. Nevertheless, whereas in Philadelphia we can find out the beginning of a process of regeneration (sometimes associated to gentrification), Detroit’s return to life seems far away.

So that, it seems possible to infer that a suitable urban planning and a diversified, flexible and heterogeneous industrial past can provide the industrial city a certain ability to adapt to a new environment and to let it be more prepared to confront decay.
In this respect, it seems important to set the issue of urban success in the context of city evolution. Whereas, the urban model linked to mass production and the spatial decisions that urban planning took would determine the sort of decay the city will suffer; the city model associated to urban success would also shape the fitness of urban structures to adapt and accept decline.

In consequence, opposite to a short-term urban success tied to immediate and unlimited economic growth, it seems important to claim a long-term urban success, based on a good governance, on the improvement of the residents and workers’ quality of life and on a wide range of possible futures for the industrial city.

It is essential that urban planning assumes decline as a stage on the urban evolution process, instead of trying to hide it or ignore it. It is necessary that we change the traditional way of perceiving decay as described by Kevin Lynch in 1990: “our attitude in front of decadence is to avoid it; to reverse the trend, to hide decline, to eliminate the losers, to heal it”³

In this complex context, urban planning and urban action are the fundamental tools to guarantee a long-term and sustainable urban success. Industrial cities in decline provide us both an opportunity and a challenge: planning the futures of a devastated city. Opposing to the prevailing model of unlimited economic growth in which not only social and environmental costs have been outsourced but also those linked to abandoned structures obsolescence, we are faced to the possibility of planning the city’s future in terms of quality: a development in density and complexity. We are faced to the challenge of planning a city that will keep a territorial balance and will recover the vacant places of industry. We are faced to the challenge of proving that even if today these cities seem wasteland, this is only a stage in the process of urban evolution. Now we can restore the city the value that decline took by force. Definitely, we are challenged to demonstrate the reversibility of decay.

However, before proceeding, it is necessary to pose two questions. First of all, we should ask if urban planning actual tools are adequate to face urban decay and secondly, which are the key aspects associated to an urban model that would let industrial cities to revitalize.

At the end of 1980s, Kevin Lynch, in his book Wasting Away. An Exploration of Waste: What It Is, How It Happens, Why We Fear It, How to Do It Well mentioned some procedures to “handle decay”⁴. He pointed out that “the lesson given by experience is that the region in decline should encourage new businesses instead of reinforcing the old decadent ones and it should welcome

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³ LYNCH (2005), p.15
⁴ Ibid, p. 176
local investment (...) The area in decadence could focus abandonment and conservation zones, so that services could be retired in a selective way and used areas would preserve their activity and maintenance standards. It can also set the rules to set aside unused structures and areas, including procedures for a spatial failure. It will capitalize some of the decadence advantages: a sense of history and community solidarity, a burden decrease, a slower rhythm and more generous services”

Some of these procedures, together with some more actual ones, have been employed in many of the regeneration plans for European industrial regions. The analysis of some of these examples will let us infer their common elements, so that we can set the foundations and deduce the basic tools to reverse urban decay.

Simultaneously, we could begin to understand why the scale of European industrial city plight has not apparently been as great as in United States cities.

The examples have been selected not only because of their regeneration plans success (in fact, in some cases this success has excessively erased the traces of industrial past) but also in terms of diversity, both of productive origin and of decline process magnitude. From industrial regions linked to a single activity that molded the whole territory as the Ruhr mining industry region in Germany and its regeneration plan IBA Emscher Park, to areas with a more diversified industrial base as Le Creusot – Montceau-les-Mines in France, a territory that was shaped by metal, mining and ceramics industry. From a region, that of Nantes and Saint Nazaire in France, shaped by water, its river structure and the industrial network linked to an important port, to the regeneration plan of Lille Metropolitan Area (France), a city willing to become a new centrality in Europe taking advantage of infrastructure improvement and of its strategic position between London and Paris. From a city molded by automobile industry in the first half of 20th century, as Turin (Italy), to the renewal plan for Renault plant obsolete site in Boulogne – Billancourt (France).

5 Ibid, p. 177 y ss
First of all, we must emphasize the crucial role of urban planning in all these processes. It has been the fundamental tool to deal with decay in industrial regions. Nevertheless, it seems obvious that faced to such a complex phenomenon, urban planning must go together with adequate urban and economic policies and also be helped by a propitious environment. In any case, it is coherent that faced to programs envisaging to keep a balance on sinking territories, urban planning will assume the leading role.

However, urban planning does not guarantee the success of the regeneration process. That’s why we should identify the common principles and the distinctive approach of the revitalization plans for these industrial regions in decay.

To begin with, we should emphasize the need of a Regional Plan that comprehends the whole deindustrialized territory. This plan sets the foundations for the revitalization process and constitutes the framework for smaller projects or specific plans.

These Regional Plans can deal with one of the most important and forgotten aspects of decay. As it has been underlined, in industrial cities, decay is the consequence of the old structures unfitness to new modes of production. The city, designed for a certain set of conditions, has not been able to adapt to new ones. Nevertheless, problems of decay are not only related to the built environment but to the whole territory that surrounds the city. As long as we understand, labor processes have a territorial component. This dimension is not only linked to ‘lean
production’ or to ‘postfordism’ but it is inherent to the production process since raw materials and places for their transformation rarely share the same place. In consequence, problems generated by the transformations of working processes and changing shifts could only be handled from a regional approach. That’s why Regional Plans have been the key tools to face decay in all the analyzed examples.

Nevertheless, these masterplans do not only cope with spatial aspects of the city but they are plans for a regional development and for a socioeconomic and territorial revitalization. Their purposes are usually associated to restore balance to a devastated and abandoned region, to recover industrial memory, to regain social cohesion and region’s economic base and to preserve and administer a deteriorated natural and cultural heritage.

In addition, all the examples share some common principles which seem to be the revitalization process’ foundations. First of all, we must emphasize the need of public control. Confronted to such a complex and large crisis, public authorities’ leadership is essential to preserve civil rights. At the same time, community involvement and participation are crucial for the revitalization process success. However, the regional development could not be possible without private investment; that’s why public – private partnerships have been critical in the analyzed processes.
The second important factor is time. One of the main characteristics of regeneration plans is that they are long processes (Euralille Plan began in 1990, Turin Masterplan in 1995, IBA Emscher Park Plan started in 1989 and Nantes in 1987); so that an appropriate schedule and a feasible program are essential. At the same time, large projects have been programmed to be developed in parts in all the analyzed cases. This has been crucial not only financially but also in terms of urban complexity and diversity of the actors involved. Euralille (Lille) and Spina Centrale Plan (Turin) are divided in three parts, Boulogne – Billancourt separates the Île Seguin project and the Rive de Billancourt one and great urban developments in Nantes and Saint Nazaire have also been separated (Île de Nantes, Madeleine – Champ de Mars, Pré Gauchet - Malakoff).

In most cases, the planned urban model is based on the construction of polycentric urban systems. They develop the potential of existing industrial villages, settlements or neighborhoods in decay or abandonment. This urban model of poles at different scales is complemented by social and economic policies to enhance social cohesion (professional training for unemployed industrial workers, amelioration of public transport, development of services to the population, increase of social housing…) and revitalize the region’s economy (through policies to encourage outside corporations to settle down and also through programs to support local initiatives and traditional activities linked to the region).
Finally, all the plans include programs to promote lost or forgotten industrial culture through the renovation and reuse of remarkable industrial buildings and elements. The aim is to retrieve the place and workers industrial memory, to recover the traces that have been hidden by decay and which will set the foundations for the city futures.

The Schéma de Cohérence Territoriale (SCOT) of Nantes and Lille regions, the IBA Emscher Park plan or the programs undertook by Communauté Urbaine of Le Creusot – Montceau-les-Mines have been (and will be in the future) the fundamental tools to face decline in these communities, they have been able to plan alternative futures for their regions, based on their own potential, taking advantages of synergies and creating a true, sustainable and long-term revitalization that will improve the quality of life and living standards of residents and workers.

As it has been mentioned, these Regional Plans are the framework for smaller projects or specific plans and studies. In most cases these projects are deal with the same issues.

The first key subject is public transport and infrastructures. In most examples there is an important attempt to improve and develop public transportation and to decrease the use of private car within the city. Public transport network is the element that structures and connects the intended regeneration plans and projects. These policies are linked both to the decision of
developing a less unsustainable urban model for these deteriorated regions and to the understanding that access to services and working places by public transport will enhance social cohesion. Finally, public transport systems are employed to connect degenerated neighborhoods or abandoned industrial areas to the rest of the city and let them become new centers.

In Turin an old railroad line crossed the city form north to south and divided it in two. The plan Spina Centrale planned to bury it underground and restore all this area to the city. It would be also the connection of several regeneration projects situated on old industrial sites (renovation and reuse of iron and steel plants of Cimimontubi and those of Michelin, Lingotto, Paracchi, Fiat Nole e Ingest). In Nantes, the construction of a new tramway system has been the procedure used to relate the revitalized center of the city to a renovated university campus and to working – class isolated and deteriorated neighborhoods. The plan IBA Emscher Park has recuperated the old railroad line that joined the mines of Emscher River, so that tourists can visit the old industrial sites recuperated as landscape parks and cultural centers.

In Nantes – Saint Nazaire region the improvement of the public transport network has been crucial to the development of a polycentric region. The amelioration of the existing railroad system has been the basis of SCOT plan. It is proposed to reopen the abandoned or closed railroad lines and improve the existing ones. This network will connect new poles of development and new villages and cities’ centers based on the renovation of the old train stations. The plan also foresees the development of a public transport system through the two rivers that cross the region, the Loire and the Erdre and the enhancement of a ‘city of proximity’ well connected through public transport.
Secondly, we can find proposals to recover industrial culture and working memory through the restoration and reuse of significant elements of industrial heritage. Usually, the major industrial sites and buildings (from an architectural, historic or urban point of view) are recuperated for tourism but, in most cases, the renovation is tied to new community services. In Le Creusot – Montceau-les-Mines region, the Château de la Verrerie (an 18th century glasswork factory) in Le Creusot has been recuperated to accommodate the Ecomusée and the old Saint-Claude mine shafts in Blanzy are now the Musée de la Mine (Mine Museum). The IBA Emscher Park Plan proposed the reuse of Zollverein mine (largest and most productive mine in the world on the first half of 20th century) as the Ruhr Museum in Essen and the construction of Inland Navigation Museum and the Floodgate Park project in Walltrop. In Nantes, the project Île de Nantes foresees the recuperation of the old shipyards as Center for Man and his Tools.
Nevertheless, most industrial sites and buildings are renovated for community use. We can recognize two kinds of projects: first of all, those linked to the restoration of important industrial buildings for public uses, as the Adult Professional Training School, for unemployed industrial workers in the former Vairet-Baudot ceramic factory in Ciry-le-Noble or the Maison des Jeunes (Youth Center) and the municipal greenhouses on some buildings of the late Château de la Verrerie (a glasswork factory) in Le Creusot. Secondly, large landscape projects have been developed on brownfields to retrieve the sites to the community through its reuse as parks or recreational areas. These projects have been an opportunity to link landscape architecture, environmental restoration of deteriorated or polluted industrial sites and increase of parks and open spaces in congested cities. Some of these examples are Emscher Park and Duisburg Nord Park in IBA Emscher Park Plan, Parco Dora in Turin, Parc de Billancourt in Boulogne – Billancourt, Jardin des Fonderies and Parc des Chantiers in Île de Nantes Plan or the Château de la Verrerie Park in Le Creusot.
In addition, these regions have been molded by its river structure. For a long time rivers were the means of transport for raw materials and products, today they usually present problems of pollution and degradation tied to heavy industry. So that, in most cases regeneration projects link river restoration, construction of water – treatment plants and recuperation of the riversides as open spaces for the citizens as in Emscher River in IBA Emscher Park Plan or the restoration of the riversides of Erdre River in Nantes.

The third kinds of projects set in the framework of analyzed Regional Plans are those connected to regional economic revitalization. All the plans try to create a new economic base as diversified as possible (after the experience of years of linkage to a single activity), sometimes associating new working places to the renovation of old industrial sites. In addition, this revitalization of the regional economy has been encouraged by policies directed to support local initiatives and recuperate traditional activities linked to this territories in decline. In Essen, some abandoned areas of the old Zollverein mine have been redeveloped through the ‘Citizen Park’ project, a plan to enhance traditional activities tied to craft building industry and in Ciry-le-Noble, the old Vairet-Baudot factory has been restored to accommodate craft workshops and a center to recover ceramics working process. Both examples associate recuperation and reuse of old industrial buildings to retraining programs for former industrial workers.

In some cases, cities have planned large service or tertiary poles, either as business centers like Cité des Affaires in Lille or as commercial and service centers like Centro Commerciale Doria on the former Michelin plant or Vitalipark (on Vitali factory) both in Turin.

Nantes – Saint Nazaire region and Communauté Urbaine Le Creusot – Montceau-les-Mines have developed programs to enhance scientific poles and accommodate new technologies corporations. In the first example it had been planned the construction of two technological and research poles located in Nantes and Saint Nazaire, the region’s largest cities. They will accommodate training centers, universities, research institutes and technologic and scientific industry. In Boulogne – Billancourt, the Île des Arts et des Sciences (Arts and Sciences Island) will be a new scientific, research and technologic innovation pole, while in Turin the project Environment Park (located on the former Teksid industrial plant) will develop a new technology park.

In IBA Emscher Park Plan, the initiative ‘working in the park’ plans the recuperation of former industrial sites and its renovation as new working centers. The projects associate environmental restoration of deteriorated mine industry sites to their redevelopment as technology parks, innovation and scientific poles and business incubators. That would be the example of the
Industrial Park created on the former Holland mine, Westpark on a steelwork in Bochum, the redevelopment of Arenberg mine in Bottrop as a company incubator, the commercial, industrial and landscape park on the former Erin mine in Castrop – Rauxel or the Eving tech center on Minister Stein mine in Dortmund.

At last, among the analyzed plans, housing developments are included to enhance new population to stay in the region. Usually, regional plans integrate redevelopment projects for working – class or deteriorated industrial neighborhoods and new mixed – use district projects planned on former industrial sites or brownfields. Regarding the first kind of projects, IBA Emscher Park Plan comprised a whole program that envisaged the renovation and reuse of old mine industry siedlung (late19th century and early 20th century garden cities), as Welheim mine Siedlung in Bottrop, CEAG Siedlung in Dortmund, Hugo mine Schüngelberg Siedlung in Gelsenkirchen or Teutoburgia mine Siedlung in Herne. The Communauté Urbaine of Le Creusot – Montceau-les-Mines region has also implemented a restoration program for their Cités (late19th century and early 20th century working – class garden cities), like those built by the company Forges, Mines et Fonderies du Creusot (Cité de la Combe des Mineurs) or Schneider company (Cité des Pompiers, Cité de Villedieu, Cité de Mouillelongue).

Industrial regions in decline have also had to face problems linked to 1960s social housing developments, which are in most cases degenerated or sometimes suffer from ghetto problems. In Boulogne – Billancourt Plan, a redevelopment project for the Pont de Sèvres district has been included in the Masterplan and in Nantes the new tramway system has been the way to connect isolated and deteriorated neighborhoods, as Dervallières, to the renovated city center Bellevue.
and Nantes Nord districts have been transformed into new centralities and joined by tramway to the city center.

Sometimes, it has been necessary to revitalize traditional districts of the city which are currently in decay, like Madeleine – Champ de Mars in Nantes, a project that shows how traditional urban tissues can adapt and accommodate new uses and activities. The renovation has been based on the new high-speed train (TGV) station, the integration of small service poles and the riversides landscape recuperation. The plan is an evidence that urban decline processes could be handled relating city memory and urban evolution.

Finally, these territories regeneration is clearly tied to the possibility of attracting new population, especially young people who can work in the region. This is the purpose of new district developments in Lille and Boulogne – Billancourt.

Most times, these projects have been located in former industrial sites, so that region’s industrial past and its possible futures are linked again. That is the case of Vitalipark in Turin, Île de Nantes (former Nantes shipyards) and Ville Port (Saint Nazaire’s port). All these plans try to restore lost industrial memory through the recuperation and reuse of former significant industrial sites included in redevelopment projects for the whole area.
They plan mixed-use districts with high social housing percentages as a method to avoid gentrification and enhance social cohesion. They also include tertiary and commercial poles integrated in the housing development, as well as recreational areas, parks and numerous services for the community.

Figure 12. Île de Nantes (Nantes). Redevelopment project

To sum up, it seems possible to conclude that there are certain common techniques that have been employed successfully to face urban decay. They would be:

1. Regional Plan. It comprehends the whole territory suffering from deindustrialization; it set the foundations for the revitalization programs and constitutes the framework for smaller projects, plans and studies.

2. Projects related to a certain aspect of the regeneration process that are comprised in the regional plan. Usually, they are linked to four subjects:

   - Transportation Plans. Not understood as infrastructure improvement programs, but as the structure of the new polycentric urban model. It connects regional centralities and the intended regeneration plans and projects on isolated and degenerated neighborhoods or abandoned industrial areas. Usually, they comprise the amelioration and reuse of abandoned networks (railroad, rivers…) and their incorporation to the public transport system. This decision lies both on the attempt of developing a less unsustainable urban model and to the understanding that access to services and working places by public transport will enhance social cohesion.

   - Industrial Culture and Working Memory Recuperation Programs. Linked to the restoration and reuse of major elements of industrial heritage. Usually, most significant industrial sites and buildings are recuperated for tourism, cultural uses and recreational areas but, in most cases, renovation is tied to new community services and parks. These programs are the base to encourage
cultural tourism in the region and improve social justice through the recuperation of regional industrial heritage for citizens.

- Regional Economic Revitalization Plans. They try to create a new regional economic base as diversified as possible, associating new working places to the renovation of old industrial sites. They are linked to three kind of developments: new activity poles (business centers, tertiary poles or most times technology parks, company incubators and research centers tied to new technologies), policies to encourage local initiatives and finally the recuperation of traditional activities linked to the territories in decline.

- Housing Development Plans. They comprise two kinds of projects: redevelopment projects for working – class or deteriorated industrial neighborhoods (through the restoration of working – class housing schemes linked to industrial sites, the revitalization of traditional districts or the redevelopment of degenerated social housing neighborhoods) and new mixed – use district projects planned on former industrial sites, integrating a great amount of services and recreational areas for the residents as a way enhance new population to stay in the region.

So that, it is possible to conclude that industrial – city decay is a reversible process. The apparent cities’ unfitness to adapt to new circumstances or paradigms can be reverted and urban planning is the basic instrument to cope with decline. It can also be confirmed, through experience, that urban planning has some basic techniques to confront deterioration. Nevertheless, it must be recalled that urban planning is always limited by administrative, political and social structures.

In fact, if we admit that the scale of United States industrial - city plight has been greater than in Europe, we would also understand that its causes are linked to its political system and to people’s ways of life and thinking6. Robert Beauregard has related the American cities decline to “ruptures of previous patterns of urbanization”7 and to the fact that after World War II “massive disinvestment from the industrial cities became a requirement for national growth”8. Kevin Lynch gave some major reasons for the greater intensity of decay in United States industrial cities: public intervention in Europe and capital and people mobility in United States9

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6 Robert A. Beauregard has carried out a thorough research on the links between United States industrial city decline, national identity and suburbanization process. BEAUREGARD (2006)
7 BEAUREGARD (2006), p. IX
8 Ibid, p. XI
9 LYNCH (2005), p. 104
Maybe it would possible to add two more causes to United States industrial – city decline. The first one is linked to the country’s administrative and political system, which makes more difficult urban planning at a regional scale. In some European countries (as Germany, France and Italy) regions have authority to intervene on city and territory.

As it has been confirmed, the Regional Plan is the basic instrument to confront urban decay because it can associate areas of increment to shrinking zones. It can relate metropolitan growth to city – center degeneration processes. Regional comprehensive plans are today the procedure to charge urban decay costs to the development model.

In brief, industrial cities revitalization has to do with redefining or reinventing the futures which these cities apparently lack. Regeneration is linked to a new urban model that would end the crisis. An urban model that comprise city and territory as a whole. An urban model which let destroyed cities become complex urban regions. An urban model that could restore Patrick Geddes’ Geographical Control notion\textsuperscript{10}. An urban model able to adapt to new sets of circumstances: a city and a region able to evolve.

The second motive to the greater scale of United States industrial – city decline is tied to the greater people mobility mentioned by Lynch. As it has been stated through European experiences, industrial – city revitalization must link the city futures to the city industrial past. The rapport between memory and evolution is the key to the whole regeneration process. Memory as the recollection of collective experience traces, so that the definition of the city as ‘post’ (postindustrial, postfordist, postmodern) could be avoided.

Recuperate the memory of the city is to retrieve its ability to recall its past, to affirm the multiple futures for industrial cities. Restore the memory of the city is to confirm the reversibility of decay.

\textsuperscript{10}GEDDES (1950), p.167. Geographical Control was related to city character and “determined the development of the city and its surroundings”
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