

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

ILLUSTRATED CARTAGENA AND ITS PROJECTION IN THE 21ST CENTURY: A TOURIST PROPOSAL

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1. INTRODUCTION

We must first remember the geographical importance of the port of Cartagena, which has a magnificent natural cove whose qualities have been described since ancient times and throughout time. It had always been one of the safest ports in the Mediterranean and frequently used. Furthermore, its strategic position made it politically important, as it was Castile's natural outlet towards the Mediterranean since the reconquest.

Today, the important archaeological park that Cartagena has already has significant recognition, and the value of the legacy that Modernism left in its buildings and the Santa Lucía cemetery is also gradually growing. However, the entire transformation of the city from the 18th century onwards, when the construction of the Arsenal took place, is known to a lesser extent from the point of view of its historical, cultural, and tourist projection, or at least, it is not understood as a heritage complex that definitively marked the city.

After the War of Succession, Philip V's great objective was to build and maintain a fleet by the needs and circumstances of the Spanish monarchy. To this end, an ambitious renewal and modernization plan will be launched, the cornerstone of which will be the creation in 1726 (by R.O. of December 5) of the Maritime Departments of the North, Noon and I Raised, whose capitals would be El Ferrol, Cádiz, and Cartagena, respectively.

With the creation of the Levante Maritime Department, new functions appeared: port, military, commercial, and industrial, which has given rise to a naval heritage of great naval and technological relevance. Furthermore, the city that Cartagena became, after the construction of the Levante Naval Base, within the framework of the Bourbon reformist measures, has been described as an enlightened city of the western Mediterranean, a model of a port-military city in the that the works that would be launched were included in the creation of the Levante Naval Base.

However, the tourist approach to all this historical, architectural, maritime, and urban heritage, in short: heritage of great value and significance, still needs to be developed and requires a well-prepared and committed project by the cultural potential it has. You have to know this whole process in depth, and the legacy that the city has must be transmitted to

the visitor, the tourist... and to do this, you have to maintain the cultural heritage, restore it, and have a plan for dissemination and continuous enhancement.

2. AIM

The objective of this work is, therefore, to analyse the importance of all the infrastructure that turned Cartagena into an enlightened city with the Arsenal at the helm, their evolution in history, their evolution over the years, as well as their value, state of conservation and its tourist-heritage projection in the context of the 21st century. It is about highlighting that a city with a Naval Heritage like Cartagena must have adequate enhancement that translates into an attractive enclave from a tourist point of view, encompassing its historical values, heritage, and culture.

The Cádiz and Ferrol Arsenals have a Dock Museum and a Naval Construction Route, respectively, while in Cartagena, there are only a few guided tours of the Arsenal. Heritage of great value has already been lost. Therefore, we must commit to preserving what is preserved in what was the Levante Naval Base, when the three Maritime Departments were created in 1776, and the vanguard of the naval industry in the Western Mediterranean in the 19th century, with the construction of a pioneering horizontal dock: Santa Rosalía. The first iron floating dock in the world was assembled there in an arsenal, and today, the entire dock still performs the work for which it was carried out at the Navantia facilities.

At the end of the War of Succession, with the consolidation of the Bourbons on the throne of Spain, the objective of Philip V was to build and maintain a fleet according to the needs and circumstances of the Spanish monarchy. To this end, an ambitious renewal and modernization plan will be launched, the cornerstone of which will be the creation in 1726 (by R.O. of December 5) of the Maritime Departments of the North, Mediodía, and Levante, whose capitals would be El Ferrol, Cádiz, and Cartagena, respectively. Thus, Cartagena became a model of a port-military city, and the works that would be launched were included in the creation of the Levante Naval Base. The analysis of the city-Spanish Navy relationship is fascinating, in that kind of counterpoint that makes all the originality of Cartagena. Knowing this whole process and the cultural legacy that the city has from it must be transmitted to the visitor and the tourist... and to do so, it must be restored and have a plan for its dissemination and continuous enhancement.

3. METHODOLOGY

A detailed review of the construction of the Cartagena Arsenal has been carried out, highlighting the relevance of its different facilities, especially that of the careening dry docks, the first dry docks in the Mediterranean, and a great technical achievement at the time, as well as all the constructions and installations that were carried out in Cartagena as the capital of the Levante Naval Base: Royal Navy Hospital, Prisoners' Barracks, Artillery Park, Antiguones Barracks, Guardiamarinas Barracks, Carlos III Wall... Made by the most prestigious technicians of the time, with the most advanced technology and the best materials. Through knowledge of these buildings and buildings, we understand the importance that the city acquired and how its urban landscape has been marked since then.

This leads us to become aware of the functioning of the Cartagena-Arsenal binomial, which has marked the history of the city since the 18th century, and the need to know this reality in-depth and disseminate it through good promotion to the visitor, who has a cultural and historical level. It is a priority to give it value as it deserves and create forms of participation and enjoyment of the city's essential identity, the Levante Naval Base.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The historical framework of Cartagena, declared a Site of Historical-Artistic Interest by RD 3046/1980, reached a state of abandonment and deterioration in the 90s that required urgent measures to be taken. The actions that allowed this part of the illustrated city to be recovered and have a new use have been fundamental in its heritage and tourist revaluation. Much of the architectural legacy of the Cartagena of the Enlightenment preserved in the 21st century has been thanks to implementing a new functionality. In this case, its transfer to the Polytechnic University has made its rehabilitation and use for academic use possible.

This decision has made it possible to give life to some military buildings. However, we continue to witness a progressive loss of heritage that cries out for conservation and reconstruction interventions, which have yet to arrive and whose red list is increasing as the deterioration is reaching dangerous levels of definitive loss of assets.

The 21st-century city we have today still requires many actions that allow for a complete reconversion of its old town, making it attractive to citizens who live or wish to live there and seasonal or occasional visitors. Furthermore, the important Naval Heritage of Cartagena must be valued for its historical-technical-industrial relevance, which makes it enormously attractive for tourists increasingly eager to know all the aspects that converge in a city like this. This requires an adequate projection of the future, which shows its full potential as a modern and contemporary naval tourist city and has been a model of a port-military city. Many possibilities exist for a legacy like this to be known and visited. A challenge that still has a lot to do despite the progress made in recent decades.