



3.1 Along the boardwalk at Pierhead on the Victoria and Alfred waterfront in Cape Town.

of areas assigning them conspicuous importance, as is often intended, through the re-launch of the waterfront, thus redefining the role and image of the entire city (from this point of view, the experience of Barcelona during the 1990s is of great importance and can be seen as exemplary).

Lastly, with the "recovery" projects for individual buildings or groups of structures, intervention on the waterfront has taken on further importance: that of the choice and introduction of new activities in abandoned or depressed zones, through the restructuring and restoration of buildings, often of great historic and architectural importance, which are significant examples of industrial archaeology. From this viewpoint, the context of the waterfront has, for many countries and cities, acted as a remarkable laboratory for intervention in existing areas, presenting projects that cover the full range of recovery possibilities: namely, moving from strict respect for the building (both in terms of the exterior appearance as well as the substantial conservation of the distribution of internal space) to more radical and consistent operations on the complex structure.

Industrial areas, and port zones on the "historic" waterfront, are the terrain, though not exclusively, for the application of the important and unusual urban renewal which characterizes the post-industrial city at the end of the twentieth century. The objective is often very ambitious as it aims not only to re-acquire strategically placed obsolete or abandoned zones but also to define a new "urban quality," to propose new "additions" that can offer higher living standards and which have the difficult and definitive function of helping re-launch the image and the role of the city on both a national and international scale.

In Europe in particular, where the process of industrialization and consolidation of port structures commenced earlier than elsewhere, it is already possible to identify many examples of this strategy, which saw the waterfront as a leading force in the future of the development of the city: in the United Kingdom (Liverpool, Glasgow, Cardiff), in France (Le Havre, Dunkerque, St Nazaire), in Germany (Hamburg, Bremen, Kiel), in Spain (Valencia, Malaga, Cadiz), in Italy (Genoa, Venice, Naples, Trieste) – to cite