



The architectural and structural revitalization of an old cement plant in the south of Poland

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Abstract

This paper presents the history and two consecutive reconstruction programs of a large former cement plant for adaptive reuse. The cement plant was originally constructed in the beginning of the 20th century in Opole, Southern Poland. At the end of World War II the production facilities of the plant were completely devastated and the equipment was removed by the occupying Russian Red Army. In 1948 they were reconstructed for adaptive reuse as grain storage facilities. Following the reconstruction the buildings were again not used for many years. Post-war reconstruction works, carried out to meet the short-term needs, led to numerous damages and to the obliteration of the architectural features and a significant loss of structural integrity. Later on the buildings were purchased in a ruined state by a private investor, who gradually transformed them into a commercial exhibition centre, known as "domEXPO".

Keywords: cement plant, reconstructions, riveted steel structure, concrete mushroom structure.

1 Introduction

At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries Opole, currently located in the south of Poland, was under German rule. It was the centre of cement industry in Europe. Until the outbreak of World War II 9 cement plants operate had been operating in Opole. Currently in the city center one plant is still operating, while the buildings of the other plants are in various states of repair. Some of them are demolished; others are

decaying; only the Silesia cement plant was successfully adapted to the new function.

2 General characteristics

Revitalization of post-industrial structures is a complex task. It is hard to come up with an idea of an economically justified function which would preserve the existing material and cultural values and at the same time would allow to keep the largest possible part of the original structure.