

INDUSTRIAL TOURISM IN GALICIA. THE FORGOTTEN PAST

O TURISMO INDUSTRIAL NA GALIZA. UM PASSADO ESQUECIDO

EL TURISMO INDUSTRIAL EN GALICIA. UN PASADO OLVIDADO

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ABSTRACT

. Galicia had an incipient industrial development at the end of the 18th century. Initiatives such as those of the Catalan emigrants who modernized the fish salting industry contributed to these first steps. Another example is the attempt to create a steel industry by the Marquis of Sargadelos. Despite these efforts, Galicia remained on the fringes of the industrial transformation of Europe. However, it retained many small traditional industries linked to iron or leather tanning, among others. In this paper we want to highlight that the perception of a scarce industrial tradition is also manifested in a general lack of interest in the valorization of this industrial heritage. However, there are some worthwhile initiatives as well as a great potential from small facilities scattered throughout the territory and whose current tourist use is non-existent or unrepresentative in the whole of Galicia's offer. The enhancement of all this forgotten heritage represents not only an economic opportunity but also has an important cultural content that must be re-signified through education as an instrument to reinforce identities.

Key Words: Industrial Heritage. Tourism. Galicia. Education.

RESUMO

A Galiza conheceu um desenvolvimento industrial incipiente em finais do século XVIII. Iniciativas como as dos emigrantes catalães, que modernizaram a indústria da salga de peixe, contribuíram para o desenvolvimento destes primeiros passos. Outro exemplo pioneiro foi a tentativa de criação de uma indústria siderúrgica pelo Marquês de Sargadelos. Apesar destes esforços, a Galiza permaneceu à margem da transformação industrial da Europa. No entanto, conservou muitas pequenas indústrias tradicionais ligadas ao ferro ou ao curtimento de peles, entre outras. Neste artigo queremos destacar que a percepção de uma tradição industrial escassa se manifesta também num desinteresse geral pela valorização deste património industrial. No entanto, existem algumas iniciativas válidas, assim como um grande potencial de pequenas instalações dispersas pelo território e cujo uso turístico atual é inexistente ou pouco representativo no conjunto da oferta galega. A valorização de todo este património esquecido representa não só uma oportunidade económica, mas também um importante conteúdo cultural que deve ser ressignificado através da educação como instrumento de reforço das identidades.

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Palavras chave: Património industrial, Turismo, Galiza, Educação.

RESUMEN

Galicia conoció un incipiente desarrollo industrial a finales del siglo XVIII. Al desarrollo de estos primeros pasos contribuyeron iniciativas como las de los emigrantes catalanes que modernizaron la industria de la salazón de pescado. Otro ejemplo pionero fue el intento de crear una industria siderúrgica por parte del Marqués de Sargadelos. A pesar de estos esfuerzos, Galicia permaneció al margen de la transformación industrial de Europa. Sin embargo, conservó muchas pequeñas industrias tradicionales vinculadas al hierro o al curtido de pieles, entre otras. En este trabajo queremos destacar que la percepción de una escasa tradición industrial se manifiesta también en un desinterés general por la valorización de este patrimonio industrial. Sin embargo, existen algunas iniciativas que merecen la pena, así como un gran potencial de pequeñas instalaciones dispersas por el territorio y cuyo uso turístico actual es inexistente o poco representativo en el conjunto de la oferta gallega. La puesta en valor de todo este patrimonio olvidado representa no sólo una oportunidad económica, sino que también tiene un importante contenido cultural que debe ser resignificado a través de la educación como instrumento para reforzar identidades.

Palabras Clave: Patrimonio Industrial. Turismo. Galicia. Educación.

INTRODUCTION. GALICIA'S INDUSTRIAL PAST

Until well into the 20th century, Galicia (NW Spain) was a fundamentally rural territory, and even today it still retains a real and perceptive image, closely linked to agriculture, fishing and forestry. The more than 30,000 population settlements existing in almost 30,000 square kilometers give us an idea of how its inhabitants were distributed throughout a very dispersed territory in which the singular elements that stand out are a wide and rugged coastline (some 1,500 km, or 2,500 if we also consider the islands, almost 20% of the total of Spain, including the Canary and Balearic Islands), very rich in fish and seafood; a land ownership dominated by small farms very fragmented in plots, with dairy farming and some quality products such as wine standing out; and a powerful forestry sector in which the communal forests stand out, almost 3,000, which are collectively owned by all the inhabitants of a village or parish.

On this territorial and socio-economic basis, often described as backward, Galicia developed throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. It is important to highlight the geographical isolation by land from the rest of Spain due to a powerful mountainous massif which, although not very high, constitutes a barrier that has historically hindered

relations between Galicia and other Spanish territories. However, these difficulties have been compensated by a wide sea front that has allowed fluid relations with other maritime areas. In addition, connections with Portugal are physically easier from the south, which has also helped to maintain constant flows with the neighbouring country.

The late industrial development of Galicia throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, or even earlier, was basically related to its natural resources, such as fishing, mining or the agro-livestock and forestry sector: fish canning, mineral extraction, wine making, leather tanning or wood processing are some of the activities that were most important at the beginning of Galicia's industrialisation process.

Iron manufacturing reached a certain importance in Galicia over several centuries, at least from the 16th century until its disappearance at the end of the 19th century (Balboa de Paz 2014). Many of these facilities were favoured by the presence of iron and the abundance of wood, as well as important nearby customers, such as the military arsenal of Ferrol (Carmona 1993). However, on other occasions the ore was imported from the Basque Country by sea transport, favouring the location of these industries on the northern coast of Galicia. The long tradition of ironworks led to several modernising proposals to create iron and steelworks (CARMONA, 1993), of which only one went ahead, the one promoted by the Marquis of Sargadelos at the end of the 18th century, which was to focus its production mainly on military purposes related to the proximity of Ferrol, an important urban centre linked to the navy. According to Carmona (1993), the Sargadelos iron and steel furnace became the most important in Spain. The protests of the peasants against the excessive use of wood as charcoal, the violent death of the founder of the steelworks and other subsequent political and economic events led to the definitive closure of the facilities in 1875, after some 80 years of activity.

Numerous small installations remain from the important iron industry in Galicia, some of which have been recovered as heritage sites. The remains of the Marquis of Sargadelos' iron and steel works were declared a Historic-Artistic Site in 1972 and are now a museum exhibition centre. Another of the Marquis' initiatives was the ceramics factory that opened in 1804, and which is still active today, being the most recognisable and valued brand of fine china in Galicia, with a tourist project that includes a visit to the factory, which is also linked to the work of some of Galicia's most celebrated artists.

In general, mining was (and still is) a very important activity in Galicia, with remains dating from Roman domination, such as Montefurado, to others from the 20th

century. It is worth remembering the importance of wolfram (tungsten), a material in great demand during the Second World War, which generated a boom in several areas of Galicia, with mines directly managed by the Germans and which sometimes included entire villages, some of which were recovered for residential use, such as Fontao, although others, such as Valborraz, are in complete abandonment. The Geological and Mining Institute of Spain published a brief map of Galicia's mining heritage³ showing 35 resources, which are only a small part of the total.

Another sector of the Galician economy that had a brilliant industrial past was that of canned fish and, later, canned seafood. Galicia's great fishing wealth and the salting industry grew significantly with the arrival, from the second half of the 18th century onwards, of numerous Catalan families who settled all along the Galician coastline, but especially in the Arousa and Vigo estuaries. The modernisation of fishing and fish preservation methods gave a great boost to this industry, which multiplied to such an extent that it is estimated that there were as many as 70 factories in the Arousa estuary alone. The evolution from salting to canning was surrounded by difficulties in the supply of materials such as oil or tin, which, with some exceptions, delayed the start of the canning boom until the 1880s (CARMONA, 1985). In any case, the boom experienced meant that at the beginning of the 20th century there were more than 100 factories, which numbered more than 150 in the 1960s (ANFACO, 2014) spread throughout the Galician coastline, especially in the Arousa and Vigo estuaries. Along with them, other industries linked to fishing, such as shipyards, also began to set up in coastal areas.

In addition to the historical importance of the fish and iron industries, Galicia had a moderate industrial development in many other sectors. These included ceramics, from the tradition of tile manufacturers to the production of household items in artisan workshops or in more mechanised factories. In short, and even though Galicia was not a territory with strong and early industrialisation, the fact is that it has a whole series of unique elements that can serve as a basis for the development of an interesting tourist offer based on this industrial past. Unfortunately, having assumed that this is a rural area characterised by historical backwardness, the tourism policies of the public administrations have marginalised this industrial heritage which has been largely destroyed, decharacterised or abandoned, although with some interesting exceptions.

³ https://info.igme.es/cartografiadigital/datos/tematicos/pdfs/Montaje_patrimonio_minero_galicia.pdf

The aim of this text is to demonstrate the invisibility of a large part of Galicia's industrial past. At the same time, we want to show that the existence of historic industrial buildings or complexes does not necessarily mean that there are tourist resources or products. Their recognition as heritage should be a first step, but without a coherent and contextualised approach, all we will be doing is present a collection of more or less interesting pieces that have little to do with the history of Galicia and its position in the world. The focus we want to give to this research has to do with the educational values that tourism should have, including in this term the internal visitors, the Galician population itself, often hooked on those clichés on which the identity of a people is built.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRIAL TOURISM

The rapid growth of tourism and its constant search for new raw materials to transform into resources and products to satisfy an increasingly complex clientele has led to the incorporation of almost all kinds of tangible and intangible elements into tourism. So-called dark tourism is an example of how mournful places and events are commercialised to be the object of the tourist gaze. The deindustrialisation of the Global North, which began in the 1970s but accelerated in the following decades, marked the end of an industrial period and the landscapes associated with it. The same had happened two centuries earlier when the industrial revolution forced the closure of many facilities that had been used for the artisanal production of goods for human use. The nostalgia for a past that is leaving numerous traces is an opportunity to explore new heritage proposals and open new windows to do business.

Many of these old pre-industrial facilities have disappeared or were abandoned. The industrial revolution, often associated with ideas related to progress or technology, but also with pollution or architectural utilitarianism, brought new factories before giving way to a post-industrial era with a profound transformation of urban landscapes in which the factory no longer had a place, it was a thing of the past. The privileged location of some industries on the seafront favoured a rapid replacement by other uses of a more residential or recreational nature. But other locations close to the raw materials, often in inaccessible places, also played in favour, in this case, of abandonment.

In the context of the change of economic paradigm in the post-industrial period, tourism acquired an unusual prominence. In countries such as Spain, with a tradition of

tourism focused on sun and beach, a segment in which it was and is the world leader, there was no need to reformulate tourism policy, beyond the necessary adjustments to adapt it to the times. It was only from the 1990s onwards that there were more serious approaches to the advisability of diversifying the offer, including areas such as rural and urban and motivations such as nature and culture. The industrial sector and its tangible and intangible heritage were far removed from tourism growth, at least in Spain.

From an academic point of view, little attention was paid to the industry as an object of the tourist gaze. Edwards and Llurdés (1996) said that it was a field of study with little research and that the aspects of interest had to do with archaeology, conservation and nostalgia. Much later work on industrial tourism focused on its heritage values. Montenegro, Marques and Sousa (2023) highlight this heritage perspective, but they miss research from the point of view of the company, i.e. how tourism can contribute to the sustainability and competitiveness of the company through what they call living industrial tourism.

The debate on what is or is not industrial tourism is interesting because of the nuances that some authors introduce. In contrast to the more widespread concept of industrial tourism, some speak of industrial heritage tourism and others introduce the concept of post-industrial tourism in such a way that “industrial tourism relates to tourist activity that takes place in production facilities that are still active, for educational and cognitive reasons, while post-industrial tourism concerns travel to decommissioned plants and former industrial regions.” (SZROMEK, HERMAN and NARAMSKI, 2021, pp. 2-3). In Spain, authors such as Rodríguez Zulaica (2017) try to conceptually fix a definition for this tourist typology by analysing the nuances between the Anglo-Saxon, French and Spanish bibliography.

The recognition of the heritage values of the industrial past was a complex and lengthy process. Edwards and Llurdés (1996 p. 343) stated that “It is certainly unlikely that such former industrial plants will ever acquire the “romantic” or aesthetic connotations of other elements on which there is more consensus, such as cathedrals.” These two authors defend the aesthetics of de-industrialisation and crisis scenarios, claiming that less famous heritage of the working classes. Moreover, the recognition of “the social role of heritage not only as the vehicle of identity but increasingly in terms of its economic development component” (IFKO, 2017) represents an opportunity to be embraced.

The debate around the concept of heritage is complex. The most general definition, from UNESCO, states that “Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations.”⁴ From this point on, it is possible to enter into multiple discussions. We will only briefly mention two of the arguments that enrich and make this definition more complex. Firstly, what Logan and Reeves (2009) call *difficult heritage* to refer to places that “bring shame upon us now for the cruelty and ultimate futility of the events that occurred within them and the ideologies they represented.” (p. 1). This would not exactly be the case with the industrial past, but it can be related through the difficulty that sometimes exists in recognising what is or is not heritage. Secondly, we want to refer to the concept of the Authorized Heritage Discourse developed by Laurajane Smith (2006) to indicate the existence (or imposition) of a discourse that legitimises what is or is not heritage. Therefore, what is or is not heritage does not result from a neutral idea and its meaning changes over time. Industrial heritage is a good example.

The first initiatives in support of industrial heritage emerged in the United Kingdom between the late 1950s and the 1960s. It seems a logical association if we consider that Great Britain was the cradle of the industrial revolution and where the oldest installations are located. The first steps in that country were to protect the so-called industrial monuments (RODRÍGUEZ-ZULAICA, 2017). Between the late 1950s and 1960s, the first museum complex dedicated to the industrial past emerged in Ironbridge⁵. Since then, new initiatives have appeared throughout Europe and the United States, mainly around the most important sites of the industrial revolution. Germany is an interesting example of a combination of significant industrial development and a crisis in this sector of the economy that worsened from the 1970s onwards. The preservation of industrial memory gives rise, in Germany, to numerous initiatives that change the negative perception that even the local community itself had of industrial landscapes, buildings or artefacts (GALLEGOS VALIÑA, 2011). Xie (2006) in his study focused on the town of Toledo (Ohio), in the US rustbelt, states that the central problem in developing industrial tourism is the local community's lack of awareness of the importance and significance of this heritage.

⁴ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/about/>

⁵ <https://www.ironbridge.org.uk/about-us/timeline/>

But, as we have said, the UK was a pioneer, from the late 1950s, both in the recognition and protection of its industrial heritage and in the international impulse. Falconer (2006) analyses Britain's role in this whole process based on industrial archaeology, stating that "It has its origins in a "grass roots" movement, it was embraced by government agencies quite early.... Since 1973, Britain has also championed the subject internationally" (p. 1).

UNESCO's growing recognition of this kind of heritage was decisive. In fact, although UNESCO, ICOMOS or the IUCN have long been warning about the risks that extractive mining and oil and gas exploitation have on heritage⁶, the fact is that the dangers associated with this cultural heritage do not affect what is already considered as industrial, or post-industrial, heritage.

Although there is a general framework in which we can include the trend towards heritage protection, such as the Venice Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (1964) or the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), it was not until 1973 that TICCIH (The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage) was created, an international organisation whose main focus is on industrial heritage. TICCIH works closely with UNESCO and ICOMOS. The Nizhny Tagil Charter (2003) promoted by TICCIH and adopted by ICOMOS (2011) is an important document that commits to the conservation of industrial heritage.

The role of TICCIH has been very important for the recognition of industrial heritage and as an affiliated association of ICOMOS it has been instrumental in understanding the whole process of enhancing the value of industrial heritage. The undervaluation of this industrial heritage in the list of World Heritage properties was one of the issues of concern in this TICCIH-ICOMOS collaboration. Unsuccessful attempts, such as that of New Lanark in Scotland, in 1986, and others that followed, highlighted the problems that prevented formal recognition (HUGHES, 2017) and which, thanks in large part to the work carried out in this TICCIH-ICOMOS cooperation, were overcome, even though this under-representation still persists.

In this context, UNESCO has also played an important role in recognising the value of industrial heritage. In 1978, it included the Wieliczka salt mines in Poland on the

⁶ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/extractive-industries/>

World Heritage List. Since then, and despite the difficulties, the number of properties inscribed has increased steadily and has also fuelled the debate on what is or is not heritage. Industry and the landscapes created by it are often undervalued because of the significant alteration they cause to nature. However, it is an evolving concept and, in this sense, relatively contemporary buildings of industrial use are acquiring heritage value supported by a growing interest in protection by international bodies, such as the Council of Europe (PICKARD, 2017).

The Council of Europe plays an important role in the protection and promotion of industrial heritage (PICKARD, 2017). Although as early as 1979 it made a recommendation on industrial archaeology in which it referred to the need to carry out an inventory and classification of industrial heritage, it is, above all, from the mid-1980s onwards that it has shown more interest in the protection and recognition of industrial heritage. In addition to the recommendations that affect the industrial past, which include cities, landscapes or facilities, promoting their protection, the most interesting practical initiative is undoubtedly that of cultural routes, highlighting the European Route of Industrial Heritage, certified in 2019 and in which 27 European countries are involved.

Finally, and in line with previous international organisations, UNWTO has also paid some attention to industrial heritage. Thus, for example, in 2008, The International Documentation and Research Centre on Industrial Heritage for Tourism was founded in the Polish city of Zabrze thanks to an agreement in which the UNWTO took part (MANKA-SZULIK et al., 2017).

INDUSTRIAL TOURISM IN SPAIN AND GALICIA

In the case of Spain, due to both the delay in industrialisation and its lower weight in the economy, as well as the existence of a consolidated sun and beach tourism, industrial tourism was not the object of attention at least until the 1990s and, for that matter, with very limited interest (CAÑIZARES, BENITO and PASCUAL, 2019). In 1997 Llurdés stated that the development of industrial tourism in Spain was very scarce and only cited 3 examples, the oldest of which was the Rio Tinto Mining Park inaugurated in 1992. UNESCO recognised some sites of industrial origin as World Heritage Sites, such as the Roman gold mines of the Médulas site (1997), or, much more contemporary, the Vizcaya Bridge (2006) or the mercury mines of Almadén (2012). In addition, the

Tentative List includes several proposals with a clear industrial content, such as the European Paper Mills, or the Mining Historical Heritage, which includes 17 mines in different regions of Spain.

Despite these initiatives, the supply of industrial tourism in Spain remains very weak and occasional in nature. Spanish tourism diversification away from a dominant sun and beach model is still relatively weak. According to Tourspain data, 55.6% of German, 62.6% of British and 39.6% of French tourists (these three countries account for almost 50% of all non-resident tourists) come to Spain attracted by sun and beach; although in the case of Galicia, 41.4% of all foreign tourists in 2024 came for cultural reasons.

In the study on cultural tourism in Spain carried out by the Ministry of Culture⁷, it is not possible to identify the practice of visiting industrial heritage. According to this report “18.4% of all trips made in 2023 for leisure, recreation or holidays by residents in Spain were initiated mainly for cultural reasons, reaching 22.6% in the case of international tourist arrivals” (p. 1). When it comes to specifying more about motivations, some things such as shopping, gastronomy, health, sports... appear, but no reference is ever made to industrial heritage.

However, Spain's incipient interest in industrial heritage can be seen in the drafting of a National Plan for Industrial Heritage in 2000, updated in 2011⁸ and approved by the Historical Heritage Council. This is an interesting document that highlights all the problems related to industrial heritage, from the most basic, such as the lack of inventories, to the mention of the main risks, among which we highlight “The weak social and institutional perception of the values and significance of industrial heritage” or “The deficiencies in protection and conservation, in the absence of regulatory and legal figures, and also the occupation of former factory enclaves for real estate uses and reuses that led to notable disappearances of elements of industrial heritage” (p. 15).

There is a monitoring commission for the National Plan for Industrial Heritage⁹ in which the different autonomous communities participate, as well as representatives of the Ministry of Culture and the Spanish Cultural Heritage Institute, among others. The drafting of reports, coordination between administrations and the proposal of actions are

⁷ <https://www.cultura.gob.es/eu/dam/jcr:463043db-a54c-4d36-8cc4-90a04d512691/estadistica-de-turismo-cultural-2023.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.cultura.gob.es/planes-nacionales/dam/jcr:88a504bd-a083-4bb4-8292-5a2012274a8c/04-maquetado-patrimonio-industrial.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.cultura.gob.es/planes-nacionales/planes-nacionales/patrimonio-industrial/comision-seguimiento.html>

some of the functions assigned to this commission. Cañizares, Benito and Pascual (2019) also cite the various specialized conferences on tourism/industrial heritage in Spain and some associations that focus their work on the industry as a cultural and tourist resource, such as the Spanish Industrial Tourism Network.

For its part, the Association of Industrial Tourism Operators (AOTI)¹⁰ offers unique experiences and has a virtual library and a Guide to Industrial Tourism in Spain, published in 2021¹¹. Other initiatives worth mentioning include the existence of information about industrial tourism on the Spain Tourism portal¹², or a small guide to industrial tourism published by SEPI (State Society of Industrial Participations), titled *The main jewels of industrial tourism*¹³. The enhancement of pieces of industrial heritage and the creation of tourist products has led to the emergence of operators, specialized or not, that offer industrial tourism experiences. Examples of initiatives include the Industrial Heritage portal¹⁴ linked to the Autonomous University of Madrid, which aims to learn how to value the industrial heritage of Madrid.

Regarding the Autonomous Communities, some like Asturias or Andalusia, among others, have developed proposals and created associations that work in the field of heritage and industrial tourism (CAÑIZARES, BENITO and PASCUAL, 2019). We highlight Catalonia, which since 2006 has had a network of industrial tourism¹⁵ that brings together a significant number of localities for the promotion and development of industrial tourism. For its part, Galicia has also carried out small initiatives. The public tourism company of Galicia provides information on its website about industrial tourism experiences. Meanwhile, the industrial tourism guide of AOTI includes 14 proposals in Galicia ranging from the Estrella Galicia beer museum in A Coruña, to the shipbuilding route in Ferrol or some fish canning factory or mines.

Finally, the inventory of the Monitoring Commission of the National Plan for Industrial Heritage includes 120 heritage elements in Galicia, of which six are assets of cultural interest and the rest are cataloged assets. In most cases, they are real estate, ranging from factories (canned goods, tanneries...) to train stations, shops, or mills,

¹⁰ <https://www.aoti.es/>

¹¹ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DHLfBtFREOVcJvh7IH3X5zcnGap4YQs1/view>

¹² <https://www.spain.info/en/discover-spain/industrial-tourism-in-spain/>

¹³ https://www.sepi.es/sites/default/files/2017-12/en_clave_sepi_20.pdf

¹⁴ <https://www.portalpain.com/>

¹⁵ <https://www.xatic.cat/c>

among others. We only found 2 monuments, 1 historical complex, 1 archaeological zone, and 3 places of ethnological value.

Although it is a broad inventory, at least in the case of Galicia, it has many shortcomings as it only includes catalogued assets and often, they are difficult to fit into the concept of industrial heritage since they may currently have residential or commercial uses that show no trace of their industrial past. Other ethnographic sets or pieces, such as mills or forges, appear only in an anecdotal way. In any case, this inventory is a list of singular elements of heritage, but they are by no means all tourist resources in the strict sense of the word.

The aforementioned inventory helps us to realize the existing potential, the rich raw material that exists to create tourism products. In addition to these, there are some of a lesser heritage nature but of great interest for the markets, such as the Estrella Galicia brewery museum, or other lesser-known elements that represent an opportunity to generate tourism, knowledge and identity. In fact, of the three examples that we are going to describe briefly, only one would be found in what is the most traditional offer of industrial tourism in Galicia, the canning factories.

There are other studies at more local scales, or inventories carried out by municipalities or cultural associations that more broadly encompass all the potential of the industrial past, such as that of Berea and García Movilla (1993) on Vigo. Also, for the same city, Varela Conde (2022) in her research on the architectural heritage of canning, locates 23 factories in that city, of which only 4 maintain their original use, 12 have disappeared, and the rest have been functionally transformed. In another territorial context, that of the province of Pontevedra, Sobrino Fagilde (2008) conducts a study on industrial architecture in which she inventories nearly 400 pieces that reflect only those buildings and industrial complexes of quality that, although mostly of local interest, there are others “that transcend our borders speaking of vanguards and modernity” (p. 6). The author of this study regrets not only the disappearance of many of them, but also the fact that they have been “absorbed by the urban without prior reflection or, even worse, with a misguided respect that leads to preserving a memory of what they were by leaving a chimney or an oven.” (p. 6).

The development of industrial tourism must be based on the recognition, protection and appreciation of the heritage linked to this type of tourism. However, as late as 2009, Alonso Pereira (2009) said that the situation in Galicia was embryonic due to the

lack of knowledge, even ignorance, of the history of Galician industrialisation. Despite everything, Alonso Pereira (2009) outlines some interesting initiatives that were being carried out and which include Galician universities, associations and public institutions. Unfortunately, after many years, we are still in a rather precarious situation. However, there are some associations that are doing good work from the base, such as Patrimonio Galego or Buxa (Galician Association of Industrial Heritage), which serves to raise awareness among public administrations about the importance of recognising and enhancing this cultural heritage as a tool to reinforce the identity of a territory and its inhabitants, in addition to other cultural and economic aspects.

In short, although there is no specific industrial tourism policy in Galicia at the tourism level, there are tools and materials to develop it. Considering heritage as one of the essential raw materials for the creation of tourism products, the Galician Heritage Law of 2016 recognises the relevance of industrial heritage and dedicates a chapter and three articles to it. This legal norm speaks of assets that are exponents of the social, technical and economic history of Galicia, if they are prior to 1936, although, further on, it is indicated that they may also be assets from after that date if so determined from a detailed study.

CASE STUDY

As we have said, we are going to briefly look at three examples of Galicia's industrial past, all of them relatively close to the city of Santiago de Compostela and the most touristic areas of the Rías Baixas. These are three different proposals that are beginning to be offered by a small tourism company¹⁶ that works primarily with new experiences.

*Pazo*¹⁷ *de Faramello*. This 18th century baroque country house, of industrial origin, built by Bartolomé Piombino, is located 12 kilometres from Santiago de Compostela and following the pilgrimage route of the Portuguese Way to Santiago. Since 1763 it has been owned by the Rivero de Aguilar Family and nowadays they offer guided tours, one of the most visited manor houses in Galicia; its old stables have been

¹⁶ <https://www.latexosdeturismo.com/>

¹⁷ Pazo is the galician name used for the residences of the nobility in Galicia, primarily rural. They could be identified with the English Manor Houses.

transformed into halls to host events. It was an old Royal Factory (1710-1910) founded by the Genoese Marquis of Piombino who created the first paper mill or paper factory built in Galicia. This factory was made up of 10 constructions: a mill, manufacturing buildings, housing for officials, warehouses and the residence of the Marquis of Piombino (management and living area) erected on the site of a 16th century house. The complex was completed with a stone dam, mill wheels and flour mills on the river course. It employed 10 men and 9 women and produced first, second and third quality paper, brown paper and paper for wrapping tobacco (LARA, 2013).

According to Izquierdo Eyre (2022), at the beginning of the 20th century, with the introduction of wood pulp, this paper mill was closed. It was then that the owner at that time carried out one of the main reforms on the Pazo do Faramello, dismantling the buildings, reusing the remains or filling in the roofs to create the French Baroque Garden. He also redesigned the walkways on both sides of the river, planting new species of trees. What can be seen today. From a social point of view, this noble building was open to the town, and, in fact, it hardly has a wall surrounding the land. As one of the current owners, Gonzalo Rivero de Aguilar, tells us, on Sundays it used to welcome working people in its chapel to hear mass, functioning as a parish church (Ribasar, Rois) and then bake bread in its mills and spend the rest of the day with the family celebrating the Sunday festivities in the Pazo do Faramello. This manor house has been the inspiration for writers who talk about it in their works: Rosalía de Castro, Camilo José Cela or Emilia Pardo Bazán.

Despite this industrial past, being part of the group of constructions known as *Pazos*, it is very difficult to link it to industrial production. In fact, the *pazos* in Galicia have become a very important tourist resource related to quality accommodation, the organisation of events, visits to their gardens and even wine tourism. It is true that during the daily visits (twice a day) there is a tour through some elements that were once part of the factory, nowadays integrated into the gardens, such as the mill. However, the real reputation of this *pazo* is in its gardens, especially for the blossoming of some of its trees, which have led it to be paired with the sakura spectacle in Japan.

Route of the Baixo Ulla tile-makers and ceramics and Celta Ceramics of Pontecesures. The craft of making roof tiles from clay has a long tradition in Galicia, with working groups that travelled all over Galicia and other peninsular territories to carry out this work. Some of them were active until well past the middle of the 20th century. In some cases, they were very important in the construction of large buildings, as was the

case of the military Arsenal of Ferrol (VEREA CASTELO, 2008). Many of these workers came from the south of Galicia and the manufacture of roof tiles was an important complement to their agricultural activity. The figures of these workers is highlighted every year in a festival that pays tribute to this profession that has left an abundant legacy throughout Galicia.

Unfortunately, much of this legacy has either disappeared or is in a very bad state of neglect. The Hispania Nostra Association, a member of Europa Nostra, has inventoried only 8 elements of industrial architecture in Galicia, 4 of which are tile factories. Except for two of these tile kilns, all the other elements are on the red list, although the state of conservation of those included on the green list leaves much to be desired. In any case, these were very abundant constructions. A more complete regional inventory, that of the lower valley of the river Ulla¹⁸, lists 33 elements in the category of industrial architecture. Of these, 16 elements (48%) have been identified as tile factories and if we add other related pieces, such as pottery factories or clay mines, the figure rises to over 75%, which is evidence of the importance of clay and the manufacture of related pieces in certain areas of Galicia.

This second proposal includes some of the elements related to ceramics and clay in this region of the lower valley of the river Ulla. This is a walking route of about 25 km in the Ulla Estuary. During the itinerary we can visit old pottery workshops, as well as handmade tile kilns, clay extraction barriers, or brick and tile factories. Although part of this heritage is abandoned or very transformed, there are interesting initiatives, such as the project of conservation and enhancement of the Celta Ceramics of Pontecesures with which they intend to create a point of interpretation and cultural dynamization pole in this village, as reported by the mayoress of Pontecesures. Also, the abandonment of the clay deposits led to their transformation into coastal lagoons, giving rise to new ecosystems of great environmental importance and turning them into new nature tourism resources inspired by their industrial past (FERNÁNDEZ PALICIO, 2010).

The importance of the clay industry in this area, which gives access to the Arousa estuary, not only left numerous material traces, but also has a significant symbolic value. In this sense, between 1925 and 1926 two factories were inaugurated: Cerámica Artística

¹⁸ <https://www.obaixoulla.gal/index.php/>

Gallega and Cerámica Celta. This second factory bought the first one, and in its workshops worked renowned artists such as Francisco Asorey, who inspired pieces that were sold as souvenirs in countries with a strong Galician emigration such as Cuba or Argentina, or other artists such as Castelao, Maside, Sobrino or Torres, among others.

The importance of women's work in the Galician industry, beyond canning, has yet to be studied. In this example, that of Cerámica Celta, the information about the contribution of women workers is scarce. Only one painter linked to both factories is mentioned: Oria Moreno was the best-known painter. She was trusted by both owners and was responsible for safeguarding the moulds and figures during the transfer from one factory to the other. In addition to the quality of her technique, she made some designs for Cerámica Celta and is the author of the mural poster announcing the 1st Automobile Fair in Pontecesures in 1925, as documented by Piñeiro Ares (1978).

This proposed route has great potential as it is located very close to the city of Santiago and in one of the most tourist-intensive areas of Galicia, linked above all to the sun and beach offer. However, the poor state of conservation of many elements of industrial architecture is a problem that needs to be solved.

*The Route and the Interpretation Centre of the Canned Fish in Illa de Arousa*¹⁹. If the tile factories represent a very little identified and valued industrial heritage in Galicia, the canning sector is, perhaps, the best known of Galicia's industrial past. Although many canning and salting factories have disappeared or changed their use, the fact is that some buildings are still standing today and there is social recognition of the importance that the sea was, and still is, as a source of wealth for the people who live along the Galician coastline.

At the beginning of the 18th century, the so-called *Catalan fomenters* (businessmen from Catalonia) arrived in Galicia looking for new places as an alternative to the sardine crisis that the Mediterranean was suffering, and with them came new systems for fishing and preserving sardines. The canning factories were at their peak from the beginning of the 19th century until the middle of the 20th century. One of the places with the highest concentration of this new industry was the Illa de Arousa, a small island of 7 square kilometres with a population of around 5,000 inhabitants, which since the mid-1980s has been linked to the mainland by a 2 km bridge that has profoundly transformed its

¹⁹ Documentation and research carried out in 2022 during the creation of the route by Latexos de Turismo with the company XOIA (AR/VR).

economy, which ceased to be almost exclusively seafaring and now alternates with tourism. Between the 30s and 50s of the 20th century was when most factories were active in the municipality of our proposal.

As Fernández Casal (2010) tells us, the Goday family was one of these sagas of *Catalan fomenters* settled in the Arousa estuary. Juan Goday Gual, established the first sardine salting warehouse in Illa de Arousa (1843) and the first canning industry (1879), today converted into the Canning Interpretation Centre of Illa de Arousa, which houses a permanent exhibition of old photos of the daily work in the factory. Goday created the first factory specialising in canning sardines in Nantes-type oil. The Goday factory entered the international market, and its products won prizes at numerous international exhibitions: London in 1883, Antwerp in 1885, Paris in 1889 and 1900 and Barcelona in 1888. It remained in operation until 1961.

This place is the starting point of an augmented reality route that covers the area of the Illa de Arousa where the old factories were located. The second point is known as the Pier of Pau, the point where the sardine boats used to arrive to disembark. Another important point of the itinerary is known as the narrow part of the island (to the north), where today there are some modernist buildings, a symbol of what life was like for these developers at the beginning of the 19th century on Illa de Arousa. Today these buildings house municipal activities, as well as their gardens.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite some interesting initiatives, and with some exceptions, Spain has not put much effort into the creation of a tourist product and offer linked to industrial heritage; much of this heritage has not even been recognised as such and is often abandoned or has been destroyed. This is equally true in Galicia, a territory which, moreover, assumes the image of a past fundamentally associated with work in the countryside and the sea. The lack of awareness of the potential of industrial architecture or landscapes is evident not only in the lack of public policies but also in the abandonment and destruction of pieces of unique historical value. It is true that, in many cases, we are not referring to great architectural pieces, but to functional ones that serve to explain and understand the past of a people. The non-existence of an archive that brings together the documentation of small Galician companies is yet another example of the lack of interest in preserving the

memory of a past, sometimes recent, that helped to shape a territory and the people who inhabit it.

The lack of historical company archives is a major handicap for a proper documentation of the industrial past, not only of large corporations but above all small and medium-sized companies. Novelle López (2012) points out that “Company archives are very difficult to preserve...(and) destruction is much more important than preservation.” (p.4). This author states that there is no legislation to encourage the safekeeping of these archives which, in the case of historical ones, are of a family nature and, consequently, their preservation and/or deposit in a public archive depended on the family itself. It is also true that many were small businesses with very basic management and, probably, without the capacity to generate documentation that could be useful for their study. Verea Castelo (2008; 2012; 2020) has several investigations on the tile-making craft in Galicia and in all of them she highlights the difficulties of access to sources.

In the case of Galicia, the limited importance given to the industrial past and the low value usually given to the architecture linked to industrial and artisanal production leads to a poor recognition of its heritage value. There are very few exceptions, which are limited to the Sargadelos ceramics factory and some museums, such as the brewery or the canning ones, among others. In general, we can classify the state of industrial heritage in Galicia as follows:

- Living and recognisable heritage. These are industrial sites, whether they are still working or not, which have been enhanced and are generally offered as tourist resources. They are promoted due to their industrial relevance and the existence of strong and committed companies or institutions. This is the case of Sargadelos ceramics, the Brewery Museum, the various museums that revolve around canning and the sea or the Shipbuilding Museum.

- Recognised historical heritage but with little tourist development. These are usually municipal, private or mixed initiatives, often promoted by rural areas, which try to create a tourist offer based on their rich heritage, but which have a limited scope. This segment includes small museums such as chocolate or mining museums, or unique and restored pieces of industrial or pre-industrial architecture, such as tanneries, mills, blacksmiths or old mining installations.

- Industrial architecture preserved through functional change. Some of the most emblematic buildings of Galicia's industrial past have been transformed to accommodate other uses. This is the case of the Portas sugar factory, now a cultural space; the Fontao mining settlement, now a residential area; the tobacco factory in A Coruña, converted into a courthouse; or the future that awaits the Compañía Viguesa de Panificación, which after many years of abandonment looks set to finally be transformed into a centre for culture, leisure and economic revitalisation of Vigo; as well as the old Arms factory in A Coruña, which hopes to become the City of Information and Communication Technologies. But the great change of use was that of the old salting and canning factories which, due to their privileged location by the sea, have been in great demand for residential or hotel use.
- Abandoned or destroyed heritage. Unfortunately, this is the most abundant category and covers all types of buildings. In addition to the aforementioned weaving mills, there are mills, canneries, sawmills, mines and tanning factories, as well as many others that are sometimes magnificent examples of industrial architecture, such as the Massó factory in Cangas, the industrial complex of La Artística or La Metalúrgica, both in Vigo.

In short, the development of industrial tourism means enhancing the value of the buildings, facilities and landscapes associated with an activity that serves to explain and understand a large part of what Galicia was and what it is, as well as its relations with other territories. The raw material in the form of tangible and intangible resources exists; the tools to promote this policy also exist; and the interest on the part of institutions and public bodies and private associations is clear thanks to numerous initiatives. However, the path towards the recognition of industrial heritage must be coherent and contextualised and cannot be limited to being a simple collection of pieces disconnected from their social, territorial, cultural and economic reality. What is more, there is still much unrecognised and abandoned industrial heritage today, in some cases becoming an urban planning problem and an object of debate among specialists on the most appropriate types of intervention (CAÑIZARES, BENITO and PASCUAL, 2019). The prestigious intellectual Sir Neil Cossons, linked to museology and the enhancement of industrial

heritage, defined “industrial heritage as the most complex heritage category” (IFKO, 2017).

We said at the beginning of this text that the focus of this research is on the educational value of industrial heritage for understanding the history of Galicia and its position in the world. Unfortunately, it is not only the invisibilisation that a large part of our industrial past still suffers, but also the fact that there is no coherence when it comes to recovering it, nor when it is exposed to the scrutiny of local populations or visitors. It is not just a question of having inventories, creating museums or recovering buildings or facilities for different uses. All this may be all very well and even necessary, but as long as there is no narrative that harmonises Galicia's industrial history with that of Europe and places our industrial development in the territorial, economic and socio-cultural complex in which Galicia is integrated, it will be difficult to move towards a model in which the educational value of heritage serves to better understand our history and to explain it to those who visit it. In this same sense, Edwards and Llurdés (1996) express themselves when, when speaking of industrial tourism, they say that we should not only analyse the isolated elements, such as monuments, but also "the context of the scenery that surrounds them (the monuments) ... scenery is the mirror of society" (p. 358). Similarly, Szromek, Herman and Naramski (2021) state that the interest of post-industrial tourism lies in the fact that it not only affects the visitor but also the local communities, as these artefacts, buildings or landscapes "are the traces of human history that document the technological and technical progress...(and) still constitute a large portion of regional identity" (p. 2). The case of France is interesting since, as Rodríguez Zulaica (2017, p. 314) points out, "industrial tourism in France is almost synonymous with ecomuseum" and is therefore a space that relates to its environment and the identity of a territory and its inhabitants. In short, industrial, like the rest of the heritage, as Ifko (2017) pointed out, can be a vehicle for reinforcing the identity of a territory and its inhabitants, as well as an opportunity for economic development.

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