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Abstract

**Kristall Village: adaptive reuse project for a former
distillery in Moscow, Russia**

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The history of Russian industry starts in the middle of XIX century with the emerge of some successful entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, before Soviet period Russia has always been a slowly developing country that followed European model. Due to its northern location, since the very beginning it was poorer than the countries of Western Europe. The difference between the lifestyle of aristocracy and the lowest classes was so dramatic, that finally it made possible the Revolution of 1917. Soviet period made possible the industrial revolution, the revolution that needed huge investments and concentration of all the human resources of the country; its negative side was the sacrifice that has been done to make this progress possible. Industrial buildings and sites are the witnesses of those processes, and it is important to preserve them in order to commemorate the history of a country. That is why the topic of reuse of industrial buildings is so important for today's Russia, and for the city of Moscow in particular, where many important plants and factories were concentrated.

Unfortunately, there are several difficulties. First is the lack of respect to the heritage in Russian mentality. Soviet government always wanted to rewrite history and to start from scratch; they demolished historical city centers, exploded churches and renamed streets. Probably this habit is still alive because even now historical buildings that remain both from pre-revolutionary and soviet periods are being demolished or changed dramatically. Another reason is the lack of experience. During Soviet Period there was no independent architecture and all buildings were standard, very few buildings were important enough for a special project. Only since 1991, after the fall of USSR, architects started to work independently. Their clients often had strange wishes, because finally after all these years of being all the same they could be different. As a result, the architectural interventions of 1990s looked fussy. In the past three decades the situation has improved because people started to travel and improved their tastes. Despite all the imperfections of economic and political situation, Russians now search for good quality things including architecture. For now, there have been several successful reuse interventions, but still a lot of ex-industrial areas are waiting for thier destiny.

The aim of this project is to try to apply Western reuse experience to a former distillery "Kristall" located in Moscow, which used to be the most important and famous distillery in Russia. Its history that starts from the end of XIX century and central location makes "Kristall" one of the most arguable ex-industrial sites in Moscow whose destiny is still not clear. "Kristall" could become a flagship for other reuse interventions in Russia. The work is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is dedicated to the history of Russian industry and industrial architecture. The second chapter discusses the reuse experience of industrial buildings on the West and in Russia. The third chapter is dedicated to Moscow context. The fourth is explaining the concept of the project that derives from historical Moscow – a mid-size merchant town. The fifth is describing the history of "Kristall" distillery, with a close attention to the existing buildings, and the proposal for its future conversion into a residential quartier that includes partial demolition and infilling the voids with new architecture.



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