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COURSE OF ARCHITECTURE FOR THE SUSTAINABLE
PROJECT

Abstract

Adriatica. The city of hotels

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by

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This research was born after the earthquakes that shook the centre of Italy during the second half of 2016. Attention was given especially to the exodus of displaced people towards the adriatic coast, hosted by hundreds of hotels.

We wondered which were the shape and the substance of a territory that could suddenly host thousands of people, during the winter season, when hotels are closed and most of the territory is underused. The aim of the research is to try to imagine an alternative use for these structures, taking the opportunity given by the big amount of available housing space.

Surveys and staying in the territory on the coast between Ancona and Pescara were decisive for the development of the work. What emerged was not the image of a unique and continuous metropolis able to evolve thanks to infrastructure and productive development provided by the studies at the end of nineteenth century. The image was that of a fragmentation due to a lot of small cities squashed to the coast. As their genesis and expansion were independent, their relationship as well seems to be accidental, not able to generate a unique and continuous territory, a whole – whether if we call it “metropolis”, “city” or in other ways. As a matter of fact, urban fringes tied together thanks to big campings and residences, inactive and impermeable during all the seasons except from summer.

The only character that shows continuity is the seaside tourism. Hotels, residences, rent-house, second homes, campings riddle the cities, and the heritage of vacation is everywhere. Then, it was very important to retrace the history of the tourist industry in these areas, especially the urban transformation that it generated, trying to understand what is happening today to the hotel heritage and how the workers are dealing with the changes of tourism. Transformations in communication technologies made some undiscovered scenarios possible and moved the attention of the tourist to new types of housing spaces (such as Airbnb). Thanks to a very detailed photographic description, that meant a slow and careful reading of the territory and a direct comprehension of it, authors were able to create a map of part of the hotels. Thanks to the direct observation, we saw a territory available to new housing practice.

In fact, some “unexpected incursions” – displaced people, migrants, non-tourists – modified in the inside the existing system, questioning it. Especially, we are talking about the system based on seasons, which is paralysed during winter and wakes up during summer. The observed incursions gave the idea of a future scenario in which the hoteliers and the cities work in the same direction.

The prerogative of the case study, in San Benedetto del Tronto, is that of giving the equipment and facilities to housing, temporary – tourists, displaced people, workers, students – or not – inhabitants.

The actual offer of hotels is standard, facilities are always the same in every hotel and they look back to the years of the organised seaside tourism. In the project we try to understand if the existing and old heritage of hotels can become an innovating engine in the territory. The scenario sees hotels becoming central points of the city life and reference point for many activities of the inhabitants, including health, well-being, culture, education, integration, loisir.

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