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Dystopia of urban space; The metamorphosis of peripheral coastal territories in Southern Italy

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Abstract

If the inland areas of Italy suffer from abandonment, the inland areas of the Apulian coast present an even more complex phenomenon, in which tourism and uncontrolled settlement growth in recent decades have produced a real consumption of those territories' environmental, historical, and cultural resources. Now these settlements risk demographic collapse and abandonment due to the lack of an alternative and sustainable development path that convinces communities to bet on a new settlement model and new prospects for collective growth.

This is the context in which the municipal territory of Maruggio is situated today, which, in the most peripheral part of the coast of the province of Taranto, is now suffering the effects of a process of tourism transformation and seasonal housing that has consumed important values of the territory without favoring an effective transition towards more sustainable and resilient models of urbanity.

Against all this, research today leads us to rediscover the value of networks (environmental, human, social, cultural, physical, and economic) as a fundamental tool for the control and metamorphosis of contemporary settlement space and as a reference model for rethinking our inland areas and fragile territories, assaulted by the phenomena of degradation and housing abandonment.

Keywords: Coastal areas, internal settlements, urban design, territorial networks, urban integration