

Lighthouses and coastal structures.  
New recovery and restoration paths of the coastal  
heritage  
ANTONIETTA IVONA<sup>23</sup>

Geographical space should be understood as a progressive and conscious construction - both from an individual and a collective point of view - in which the geographical elements and the relationships between the elements themselves are placed. If from the second post-war period and for the following twenty years the coastal space has maintained a minimal break with the man-made spaces, starting from the 1970s the rapid industrial development has increasingly occupied the coasts. Coastal areas are currently areas of considerable interest in the contemporary urban condition both for the variety of environmental, historical and cultural landscapes they include, but also for their character of transition and interface between the hinterland, coast and sea. "These territories, often associated with dynamics linked to leisure and tourism activities, showcase spaces that are out of the ordinary, themed environments in which landscapes are produced, marketed and consumed but at the same time show a propensity to assume a plurality of meanings and become attractive areas of social interaction and collective interest, as they are characterized by relevant environmental and cultural qualities and are often external to the dynamics and criticalities of the compact city "

---

<sup>23</sup> University of Bari (Italy).

(Lutzoni, Nudda in Pittaluga, 2018, p. 150). But tourism is not the only activity that has shaped the Italian and not only Italian coastal strip, while remaining the most evident in its effects on the territories. Over time, the overlap of the different activities, more attentive to economic benefits than ecological values, has designed a complex system of occupation of this delicate space according to whether the purpose was the occupation of the coast or the coastal sea. The ties, interests, conflicts that are determined in the maritime-coastal region (and which are projected into wider spaces than those actually covered by its constituent elements), make it impossible to define its pre-established amplitude.

Historically, the coastal regions have played the role of cultural transmission areas, where people, goods and goods and ideas from abroad mix with local and traditional ones. Today, cultural heritage plays a central role in the narratives of coastal regions and in their reorganization as places and / or containers of historical, cultural, social and economic safeguards. According to Gillis (2012) under the gaze of the tourist, coasts are considered places where human life was simple and picturesque, transforming them into heritage and generating new forms of income.

Heritage can be defined as the set of tangible and intangible assets in which a group, company or nation assumes as a legacy of its past, to be preserved in the present also for the benefit of past generations. "Heritage is not given and definable a priori, nor unique in terms of value hierarchies: what is considered heritage by one generation may not be considered as such by another generation, only to be re-evaluated by the next. In fact, the inheritance we are talking about makes sense only if the inheritor reinterprets, inscribes that inheritance in his own present" (Frediani in Timothy, Boyd, 2007, p. XX). It is also important to question the meaning of the collective heritage or the set of values, symbols and territorial signs in which a

community recognizes itself and through which it transmits its identity.

Among the most evident coastal territorial signs are the lighthouses. The research aims to analyze the conversion of lighthouses and coastal structures in Italy, comparing it to some initiatives similar to the European scale (specifically the case of Spain and Portugal). Even the lighthouses like the other cultural resources are finally considered as an expression of that system of signs that links the territorial components.

### **Fig. 1 – The Lighthouse of Vieste – Apulia**

*Source: [www.marinamilitare.it](http://www.marinamilitare.it)*



### **References**

Ivona, A. (2016). Fari dismessi. Dall'abbandono alla rigenerazione. *Annali del Turismo*, V, 93-110.

Timothy, D.J., Boyd, S. W. (2007). *Heritage e Turismo*, Milano: Ulrico Hoepli Editore.

Pittaluga, P. (eds) (2018). *Insedimenti turistici costieri e sostenibilità: Progetti di rigenerazione*. Milano: FrancoAngeli.

Gillis, J.R. (2012). *The Human Shore: Seacoasts in History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Sorna K., Pieters M., Van Balen, K. (2015). Coastal Cultural Heritage: A Resource to Be Included in Integrated Coastal Zone Management. *Ocean & Coastal Management*, 118, 110 - 128.