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Type of Document: Thesis (PhD)

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Institution: Università degli Studi di Salerno University of Salerno

Structure: Dipartimento di Ingegneria Civile Department of Civil Engineering

Two-year course and Phd: X ciclo – NS 2008-2011, Structural Engineering and Construction and Urban Renewal

Keywords: waterfront, Salerno, urban renewal

Date: 5 th June 2012

The sea sites: history and recovery intervention of the waterfronts. Salerno's case study in the European scenery

Abstract

The industrial crisis of the '80s led to the disposal of many industrial and port areas and to the subsequent abandonment of many seaboard areas.

The need for restoration and conversion of areas once denied or inaccessible for the presence of port facilities, has become more and more urgent for many towns, since any hope of industrial expansion got lost.

During the last decades, the question of the development and requalification of the waterfront had a key role in the processes of urban regeneration and it also promoted the opening of reflections and remarks about the entire city.

The waterfront is no longer a simple line of demarcation and has ceased to be a fitted walk, as it used to be in the nineteenth century. It is designed as a fulcrum around which the urban development rotates in search of new identities and alternative centralities. Sometimes it becomes a real "engine" able to trigger processes of renewal involving the whole urban context. These processes, apart from the physical re-development of the sites, promote regenerative activities in - economic, social, cultural, etcfields -.

This research work is part of a really topical debate proposing a reflection on the relationship between the city and the sea from ancient ages to modern ones.

The examination of general trends and the study of emblematic cases in Europe (Barcelona and Bilbao, in particular) and of our local reality (Salerno), converge in a detailed comparative and critical final analysis that attempts to bring the particular case of Salerno inside of a broader debate that goes beyond the limited local ambit and proposes a reflection about the current trends of waterfront regeneration.

Hence, the analyses and assessments proposed lead to the identification of the optimal guidelines and criteria from which derives the concise definition of those "keys" that can be considered, according to us, necessary and essential for a proper and sustainable planning approach for the recovery of urban areas close to the water.