

Landscapes of Gallipoli

The Roman architecture office COdESIGN is since 14 years working on several projects in the south-eastern city Gallipoli in Salento, in order to revive the city and realize a more comfortable life for the citizens. This article describes some of the projects in detail. **VON ANNA CORNARO**

Gallipoli is a city of 21.000 inhabitants, situated in the region Puglia, in the south-east of Italy, facing the Ionian Sea. In the past, the city had a great importance in the production of olive oil for lamps. This product was exported

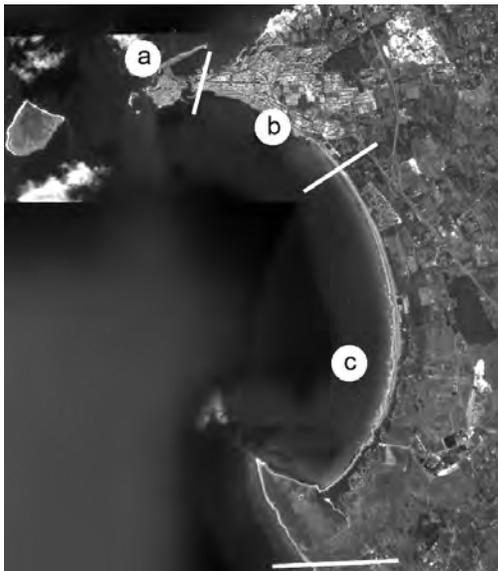


Figure 1: Satellite view of Gallipoli: a) fortified island – old city
b) urban waterfront – new city
c) natural seaside – southern outskirts

all over Europe by ship. Presently Gallipoli is one of the main touristic places in the south part of Puglia (called Salento), its white beaches and turquoise sea-water attract thousands of tourists mainly in summer. The landscape of Gallipoli has a unique composition (see Figure 1):

a) an ancient citadel, with dense urbanization of three-storey buildings, located on a small fortified island, surrounded by fishing docks and linked to the continent only by a thin bridge – the old town (see Figure 2).

b) a modern urban waterfront along a wide street, with four-storey buildings on one side and rocky shores on the other (the new part of the city).

c) a natural seaside, part of the Natural Regional Park „Isola di Sant'Andrea Punta Pizzo“, with a unique mix of agricultural patterns, woodlands of Aleppo pine, coastal sand dunes and rough inlets (out of the city).

During these last fourteen years

COdESIGN had the opportunity to study each of those landscapes and the different relations between inner land and waterfront.

For the citadel, COdESIGN is/ was working on three different projects:

- The renovation of an ancient public building (the old market) connecting the main piazza of the citadel (piazza Imbriani) to the fishing dock at a lower level (see Figure 3)¹.
- The renovation of an old ramp linking the ring promenade along the city walls to the historical beach of the citadel (project under construction, see Figure 3 and 4)².
- The proposal of new open-air stairs expanding the citadel ring promenade to the rocks down the sea, using an existing concrete barrier situated out of the bulwarks.

For the urban waterfront, COdESIGN carried out a research project for creating a more comfortable approach to the sea (see Figure 5); for the natural seaside COdESIGN entered a design competition for arranging and highlighting all the different beauties of this landscape³ (see Figure 6).

Citadel historical landscape

The citadel is a fortified rock about nine meters higher than the sea level, completely surrounded by water; nowadays it appears as a round-shaped island only linked to the continent by a bridge (construction 1603–1607) (RAVENNA

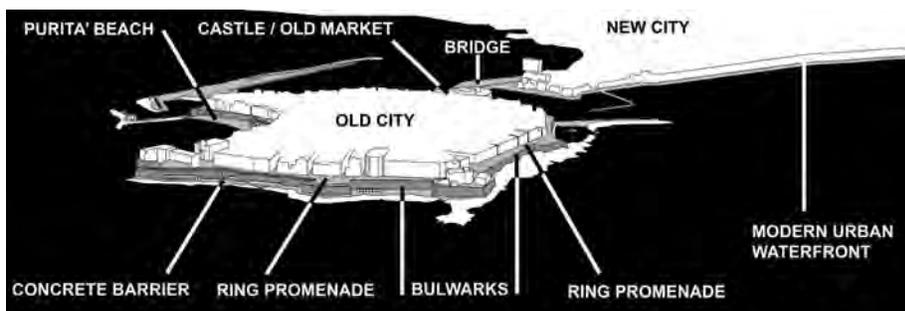


Figure 2: West aerial view of Gallipoli old city

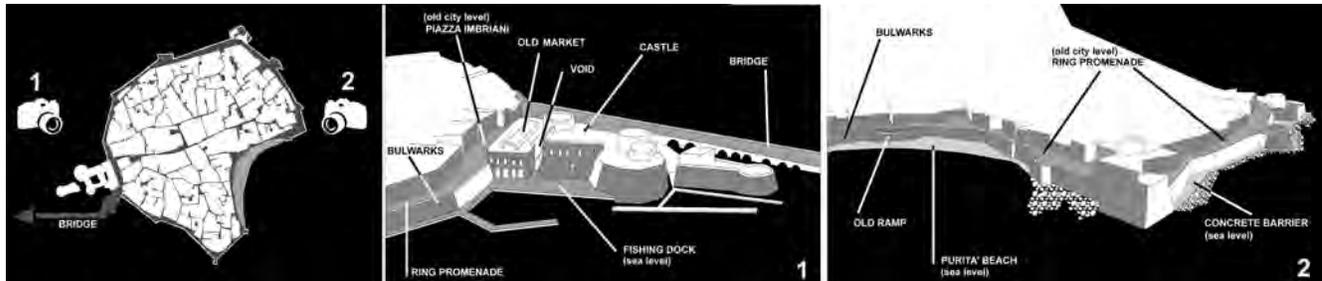


Figure 3: Gallipoli old city, Locations of COdESIGN projects. 1) Old market, and void between castle and market 2) Purità beach with the old ramp; concrete barrier down the sea



Figure 4: Gallipoli old city, The renewed "Purità ramp. Under the new wooden ramp several facilities are hidden; the arcades along the fortification will host an exhibition space



Figure 5: Gallipoli new city, project for the urban waterfront. The round wooden platforms offer a smooth surface to lay down; the 3D elements on them host different facilities



Figure 6: Gallipoli southern coast, project for the natural seaside. On the left the pedestrian route replacing the coastal driveway, on the right a "dock on landscape" linking the agricultural inner land to the coast

1836: 44). The buildings inside the bulwark are dense and continuous patterns of solid volumes (Figure 3), cut by thin and tortuous streets with an orientation able to protect the houses from the hard wind of the sea. Presently the inhabitants of the citadel are about 2000–2500; this number increases in summer, when many small hotels and bed and breakfasts host tourists and daily visitors arrive

(Purità beach, see Figure 3) was abandoned. It had a long tradition for sunbathing since the XIX century to the 60's of the XX century. In the past wooden cabins on stilts called *cambarini*⁴ had been built every summer in the seashore; they were used by rich families to enjoy the sea in a secluded spot. There were temporary complicated wooden stairs too, linking the ring-promenade (see Figure 3) at

one side, provided new spaces for leisure and cultural events inside the market (cafeterias, shops of handicrafts, exhibition hall), on the other side it resolved the relationship between the main piazza and the fishing dock at sea level. In fact after several reviews⁵ of the project (requested by citizens, City and Office of Historical Architecture) the real core of the project became a dynamic and multi-level

COdESIGN during these years had the opportunity to know in depth the landscapes of Gallipoli and its people and to participate in some important slow changes to improve the urban and rural environment of Gallipoli.

from nearby areas. In summer 2011 a lot of small souvenir-shops and restaurants opened and resident's life became more complicate and chaotic.

When we approached this place for the first time the island appeared poor of public spaces. The main Piazza was left to private actions (occupied by "wild" car parking on one side, by untidy tables of restaurant and cafeterias on the other side). The old market, facing the main piazza Imbriani (Figure 3), was almost abandoned too. Its first floor (at piazza level) was occupied by some spontaneous commercial activities and the lower level (facing a fishing dock) was used as a storage facility by citizens (mainly fisherman), since its construction in 1881 (Figure 3).

Also the only beach of the citadel

citadel level to the beach and to the *cambarini* deck at lower levels. The round promenade between the buildings and the bulwark ring was a very narrow street, not comfortable for pedestrians (despite of the interdiction to cars in summer).

COdESIGN has since 1997 been involved in a long design process regarding the citadel. The aims were, to create a more comfortable place for citizens, to build new facilities for improving the touristic flux and to create a more comfortable pedestrian path. As a strategy we chose to introduce new links between the citadel level and the beach-sea-dock level (see Figure 3). In a first time the intervention only consisted of the refurbishment of the old disused market, with the idea of introducing new functions.

Our COdESIGN project, on

path of zig-zag wooden stairs floating in the void (see Figure 3) between the market and the west front of the castle (see figure 7). Thanks to this element, the "ground-floor" (the former market at citadel level) is now linked to the "sea-floor" (former storage at fishing-dock level)⁶.

Starting from this first project (completed in 2010), the City just recently decided to create a system of links and multilevel footway from the citadel level to the sea level, as suggested by COdESIGN. This research transformed the "solo project" of the market in the first hub of a new linking system, connecting the urban landscape of the citadel to the natural landscape of the sea.

The second "knot" (see Figure 4), currently under construction, is

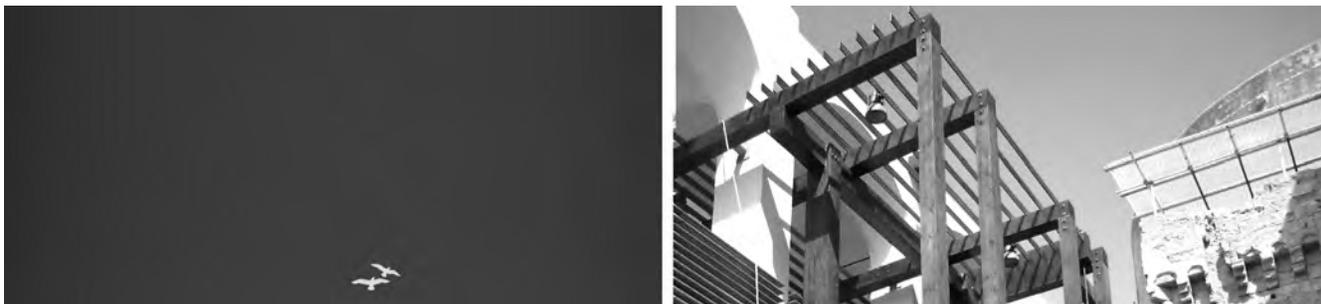


Figure 7: Gallipoli old city. Refurbishment of the old market. View of the void between market and castle hosting zig-zag stairs for the connection of the ground-city level to the sea-dock level.

the renewal of the access ramp to Purità beach (Figure 3). It includes a new wooden path of the ramp for handicap accessibility, the re-use of some arches along the city-wall as exhibition and event spaces at beach level, the creation of some facilities for the use of the beach under the wooden floor of the ramp (showers, storage and new public bathrooms).

The City is giving relevance to this operation and spreading a lot of information through institutional websites and social networks in order to inform inhabitants about this project as the Purità beach (used for sunbathing for two centuries), is considered as a precious common treasure to defend.

The demolition of some recent parts along the city wall facing the beach ended before summer 2011 under the control of the

cing the sea, but on this side there are no facilities for using the rocky shore during summer neither location for activities all year long. This place, despite being used mainly for car-parking, is attended only at summer night by small temporary/movable restaurants and small amusement parks. So the place, mainly a desert during the day, became noisy and chaotic during the summer nights.

The aim of the project was to create smooth wooden decks for sunbathing in summer, completed by ramps and stairs for reaching the sea-water; they are right for staying, socializing and playing open air activities in other seasons too. The idea is to locate round wooden platforms over the rough surface of the rocks, linked one each other by the existing pedestrian path (see Figure 5). Thanks to the different

Aleppo pine wood forward.

This part has a very fascinating inner land, a patchwork of woods, agricultural pattern and marshy land, with a unique flora and fauna. Unfortunately the sandy coastline is separated from its inner landscape by the main road to south. In summer this road becomes a long hot strip of boiling car parks, used by thousands of people reaching the beaches.

The main problems to solve in this area are the separations of landscapes due to the main road (aligned to the coastline), the lack of parking in summer and the absolute absence of visitors (citizens and tourists) in winter opposite to the chaos of people during the summer season.

CODESIGN's first idea for the design competition was the elimination of the main road to

As a strategy to create a more comfortable living environment for citizens in the old town (the citadel) of Gallipoli we decided to introduce new links between the nine meters elevated citadel level with the beach-sea level.

Office of Historical Architecture. In autumn 2011 the phase of construction started. In August and September 2011, people could re-access the beach thanks to the cleaning-work of a no-profit organization (created together by resident and tourists). In fact not now neither in the future any private company could reach money from the management of this public beach.

Urban waterfront landscape

The modern urban waterfront (new city) consist of a wide street (see Figure 1 and 5), on one side facing four stories blocks on the other limited by a rocky shore few meters higher than the sea level. Some years ago the City renewed the pavement of this long waterfront, creating some belvedere fa-

sizes of the platforms and to their rounded shape they can work in every part of the waterfront, even sinuous. They offer to people a smoother surface to lie down or walking then the sharp rocks. Each of the flat platforms has some 3D elements on it, they can host different facilities in different seasons (small markets, concerts, skateboard playgrounds, performances of street artists) so to use them all year long (see Figure 5).

Natural seaside landscape

The natural seaside is located south of the urban waterfront (out of the new city). Starting from north, proceeding to south it becomes more and more wild, at the beginning shows straight sandy beaches with beautiful dunes at the back, and rocky inlets bordered by

south, using instead existing streets (perpendicular to the coastline) to reach the beaches.

The other main aims were to create a series of parking lots far from the beaches and pleasant walkway from inner land parking lots to the coastline. To give appeal to these routes not only in summer, but in winter too, we enriched them with open air and cultural activities. These "docks on landscape" are wooden footpaths, transforming the bored walkway from parking lots to beaches in a lively pedestrian strip, interesting for visitors all year long (Figure 6). The docks are also the hub of the public transport to connect the city to the seaside. Temporary pavilions can be built on these structures, they can host different activities related to the landscape

crossed by. For this reason each of the dock has a different theme: The natural dock link an inner *Pinus alephensis* wood to the coastal marshland, it hosts a small museum about wild local flora and fauna, an information point about the regional park "Isola di Sant' Andrea Punta Pizzo" and some classrooms for environmental education. The agricultural dock cross ploughed fields; its facilities are some vegetable gardens for students and elderly, classroom for teaching local agriculture, greenhouses, holding typical seeds and

a small vegetable market. The handicraft dock is located nearby some farms, stone storages, sand dunes and stones quarries. The facilities are a small market of handicraft, a small museum of tools and an open air space for training student in building the typical stone walls. The quarries will become a huge open air museum of stone sculpture and architecture.

Our project for the natural seaside is one of the three selected by the jurors in a design competition.

It is a huge and very long-term aim and we don't know, if the City

will like to use some of our ideas to improve the area in the future. COdESIGN over these years had the opportunity to get well acquainted with the landscapes of Gallipoli and its people and to participate in some important slow changes to improve the urban and rural environment of Gallipoli. This gives us satisfaction and enthusiasm to wait for the future developments of the competition. ☉

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www.comune.gallipoli.le.it

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References

- 1 In 1997 the City organized the Design Competition "Refurbishment of the Gallipoli market building and of the surrounding areas", inviting 8 teams; COdESIGN team in partnership with Professor Giancarlo Rosa won the competition.
- 2 The City of Gallipoli commissioned this project to COdESIGN in 2009.
- 3 In 2009-2010 COdESIGN participated to the design competition "Renew of the south-seaside of Gallipoli" with the project "Docks on Landscape". It is one of the three offices selected by the jurors at the end of the second phase.
- 4 "Cambarini" is a dialectal word. The Italian word is "camerini".
- 5 The Design Competition for the renovation of the market dated 1997, the first review occurred in 2004, the last-one 2007. Construction period from 2007-2010.
- 6 The COdESIGN project transformed both (the ground and the underground floor) in two concourses with shops, cafeterias and exhibition spaces.

Ravenna, B. 1836. Memorie storiche della città di Gallipoli. Napoli: Raffaella Miranda.

content & keywords

G*allipoli is a city situated in the region Puglia, in the south-east of Italy, facing the Ionian Sea. Its territory is a unique combination of different landscapes each of them with a specific and different relation between sea and coast. The described projects, located in the old town, in the new town and in the southern natural seaside, introduce new links between ground and water and create new balance between people and landscape. Gallipoli, citadel, bulwarks, walkway, refurbishment*