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Transport between Adriatic and Mediterranean Coasts: Historical and Motivational Analysis for Future Sustainable Development

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Abstract

The study departs reflecting on the objective diversity between the relationships of transport in the centre-north Europe and those in the centre-south, hereby calling particular attention to transport relationships between Adriatic coasts and this while examining the difficulties of integration of these last ones into a modern complex network system.

After analyzing the historical, technological and motivational conditions and their consequences the paper attempts to project several future scenarios, based on the considerations made, while emphasizing costs and benefits of the possible enterprises.

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1. Introduction

Every sea bears in itself a double conflicting feature, meaning that every sea is at the same time a physical separation between two coasts but also a possible conjunction between those same coasts. This certainly goes for the Adriatic sea where this property is emphasized by the particular contours of the coasts: the two sides join together almost in the lower centre of Europe, while the southern border, on the contrary, is almost in the centre of the Mediterranean, in an area that can be considered as the birthplace of three structurally historical maritime routes; towards America (to the west), towards Africa (to the south) and towards Asia (to the east). To be at the Adriatic Sea is therefore like being on a balcony not with a sight on other worlds, but with a sight that reveals routes to other worlds through the indications that the cultural and historical contexts have offered in time. This fascinating scene must dynamically be considered and, in order to understand the equilibriums and the present

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evolution (in particular of mobility and transport), it is necessary to deepen the cultural and historical aspects that have had a significant influence.

Having said this we clearly stated the objective of present paper. In paragraph two we will attempt to identify the differences between the relationships of transport in the centre-north Europe and those of the centre-south. It isn't until paragraph three that we will come to a description of the relationships of transport between the Adriatic coasts. Hereby we will first take a look at situations in the past. We will then pass on to the present situation and try to contribute to a greater understanding of cultural, psychological, economic and technological factors. Finally we will try to make some future predictions, pointing out possible scenarios, considering the current developments in the African setting, too.

Hereby we will also review the classics criteria of assessment of costs and benefits. The conclusive notes and the bibliographical references complete the paper.

2. Relationships of transport in the centre-north Europe and those of the centre-south.

The geography of Europe determines a structural difference between above mentioned transport relationships. While in the European centre-north countries it is nearly always possible to have bi-dimensional movements of 360 degrees from every point, with some limitation for the Baltic and British countries (the North Sea and Baltic Sea however are not very wide), for the countries of the centre-south on the other hand this is not possible. The three Iberian, Italian and Balkan peninsulas cannot easily communicate because of the presence of the seas between them (cfr. figure 1). And while the Iberian peninsula can easily have relationships with Africa and the Balkan with Eurasia, the Italian peninsula seems to be a southern appendix of Europe that is covered only if the destination of specific route lies on the peninsula itself, but it is not used as a transit country on the way to other destinations. One could argue that if Italy would not exist (cfr. figure 2), the Mediterranean Sea would have a better shape, with less impact on transport routes. In any case it would have been better to have more landing places spread out over the entire area and not only an enormous amount of landing places asymmetrically situated in the east.



Fig. 1: The transport relationships of the Europe centre-south

The shape of South Europe involves therefore these consequences:

- the west-east movements are less easy than in the centre-north Europe because of the necessity to use sea routes not still present in competitive way or to use very long land routes;
- the west-east sea movements are rather complicated because of the presence of the Italian peninsula that throws up a barrier and forces ships to make a detour.

So to radically change transport routes and to promote bi-dimensional movements at 360 degrees in the centre-south Europe it is indispensable:

- to upgrade the efficiency of Mediterranean ports (in particular those of the south);
- - to give economic development and stability to North Africa and Middle East;
- - to develop intermodal and logistics systems.

These measures should make transport in the Mediterranean more profitable.



Fig. 2: if Italy would not exist, the Mediterranean Sea would have a better shape, with less impact on transport routes

3. Transport relationships between the Adriatic coasts

In above described context the Adriatic sea represents an ulterior complication because it constitutes a small and inconvenient sea, isolating the south of Italy from the rest of Europe and therefore making it dependent on the development of the Subalpin regions. The situation would be different if the Adriatic sea would not exist and if Italy would be tied to the Balkan peninsula. Hereby the connection with the east would not only be a historical, cultural or economic choice but a physical given. In such case the transport relationships from Italy towards the east through Adriatic lands would have been natural, intense and would probably have changed the course of the history.

But people don't just passively undergo history, they are also able to sense and to pick the suggestions, the opportunities and the tendencies given by nature. They can undertake initiatives which anticipate the technological possibilities and the political will. In fact the past and the present are full of signs, facts and evidences that are a testimony of the desire to risk the connection between the Adriatic coasts.



Fig. 3: if the Adriatic Sea had not existed, the transport relationships from Italy towards the east through Adriatic lands would have been natural, intense and would probably have changed the course of the history

4. The Past: lessons from history

The history is witness of the fact that the crossing of the Adriatic Sea has always represented a strongly perceived requirement from the coastal people.

4.1. The prehistory and the Adriatic sea

In fact there are real signs that induce us to assume that this crossing has been attempt successfully even during the Prehistory, a time during which the marine transport means could not yet be considered sure and advanced. Neolithic sites with important elements of analogy are present from the Gargano to the Dalmatia in the ideal “Bridge of Islands” constituted by Tremiti, Palagruza, Susac, Lastovo and by the other Croatian islands near Dalmatian coast [1], [2], [3], [4].



Fig. 4: the “Bridge of Islands” in the Adriatic Sea

4.2. *The Europe*

Passing from the Prehistory to the History, in order to understand totally the sense of the crossing of the Adriatic Sea it is indispensable to mention the evolution of the concept of Europe.

The questions “What Europe is?” and “Where it begin and finish?” leaves us in embarrassment.

Perhaps Herodotus (484-425 B.C.) was the first to image it, when he wrote: “Persians consider Asia and the Barbarians which inhabit it as their ownership, but they consider the Greek world and the Europe as a separate world”: it’s true that many lands, today heart of Europe, were for him out of his field of vision.

The Hellenic states and the Roman Empire constitute the origin of the European continent, in virtue of the cultural and trade ties and of the common political system. The Mediterranean countries are the embryo of our continent that until then was the continent of the culture.

With the 7th century Islam advance the continent is cut in half and divided in: Asia, Africa and Europe.

Therefore about VIII century, after that the Southern shore of Mediterranean Sea had been cut off from the cultural continent, Christian Europe had a great northward expansion.

The continental “limes” disappear and it is opened towards a new historical space that embraces Gallia, Germany and Britain as a sheer earth-nucleus and that stretches towards Scandinavia in increasing way.

In this process new borders were defined and a new theological conception of the history guaranteed the continuity between last and new continent, so that Europe exactly became the same reign of Charlemagne.

After Charlemagne the concept of Europe remained only in the learned minds, while all people was afraid of a possible Turkish attack. A new self-identification will be tried only in XVIII century.

So in the Middle Ages the real role of Christianization was developed by crusades, expeditions towards many eastern countries of Mediterranean Sea to get rid The Holy Places of Palestine.

The synthesis was attempted by Federico II, Emperor of Germany, king of Sicily and king of Italy. In this historical context he was able to bring near very distant cultures, as those of Northern and Southern Europe and of the Christianic and Islamic World. He placed his seat in “Castel del Monte”, just in the Adriatic Puglia and he committed himself to build a strong State, able to let various cultures and religions coexist.

He made relationships with the sultan of Jerusalem in order to obtain the access to the Holy Christians places. Thanks to his diplomacy he realized the more modern state of that age, with a powerful Court made by sages of all religions and come from all countries.

When he departed his life, in 1250, the Adriatic Sea would be returned to divide Europe from the East, leaving to the modern man the present concept of Europe.

4.3. *The History and the Adriatic Sea*

Between the eighth and sixth century before Christ the Greeks reached Brindisi and Taranto by sea leading the luxuriant colonies of the Magna Grecia to flourish on the coasts of Southern Italy while reaching and spreading their empire to Sibari, Crotone and Siracusa. But the "indigenous" Daunians, Peucetians and Messapians they met there were also colonizers, migrants from the Balkans and Crete.

In the South of Apulia near Otranto, bits of the ancient Greek presence in the Salento still cling to the language, like the dregs of resinous wine in a cup. Just a few decades ago many people there still spoke Griko, a dialect partially traceable back to Doric Greek. In the funeral laments existing in the Griko-speaking town of Calimera, the dead wrestle directly with Thanatos in an underworld untouched by Christian saints. Much like the Pizzica, the time-honoured local dance of seduction and sexual possession, the Griko love songs are all about hot desire.

Already the Ancient Romans had the intuition of linking the extreme European West to the Far East. In 312 B.C. Appio Claudio decided to construct the Via Appia, the first great road of connection between Rome and the south of the Peninsula, initially down to Benevento and subsequently extending it to Brindisi [5], [6].

Literary testimonies concerning the road exist in Cicerone, Orazio and Strabone.

After the Conquest of Magna Grecia, express connections with the ports of the Adriatic south, a stepping stone towards Greece and the East, became essential. For this reason between 108 and 110 B.C. Traiano began the construction of an exceptional, consular, paved, public and state road. The road located east of the Via Appia winds down from Benevento to reach Egnatia and Brindisi, last ports of Adriatic Sea [7], [8], [9].

In the Middle Ages crossing the south of the Adriatic Sea was equivalent to abandoning Europe. It was possible only under the protection of the Maritime Republic of Venice, true ruler of these waters.

Four small Mycenaean pots founded in the Venice Lagoon are the real evidence that the Mycenaean People traveled in Adriatic sea and that the history of Venice was born two century before Fall of Roman Empire. The legendarian Antinoro was really arrived in these places and this angle of Adriatic Sea was able to connect itself with so far away people.

The Greeks came to Venice in order to acquire amber and metals brought by the Baltic people. In the Middle Ages the exchanges trades caught up a so high level that in 1204 Constantinople was conquered by the Venice people. During XIV century Venice ruled central and oriental Mediterranean Sea, her domination was extended from Bergamo to Dalmatia and along the west coast of Adriatic Sea too.

The historical figure of Saint Nicholas is another important link between Adriatic coasts. He was born in Patara and became the bishop of the Christian Church of Myra in Lylia. His reputation for generosity and compassion spread beyond the city and thus became legendary. At the end of the 11th century Italians from Bari stole the bones of St. Nicholas by breaking open his sarcophagus. Subsequently they built a famous pilgrimage church over his mortal remains in Bari, which are venerated by all the orient people.

Moreover, how it has been seen in the previous paragraph, between 1096 and 1272 the Crusades carried western European feudatories (supported by the catholic clergy, the middle-class and the military ranks) to lead many shipments to the countries bordering the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. The resulting conquest of the Mediterranean trade routes formerly controlled by Byzantium and the Arabic countries was a great relief for the hard-pressed cities of northern Italy (Venice, Genoa and Pisa) which consequently assumed a dominant role in commerce with the East [10].

Arriving finally in the twentieth century, Italy attempted to invade Albania and Greece by sea during the Second World War. The Adriatic Sea was the bystander of the dramatic consequences during the Italian attempt to cross again the Adriatic Sea (returning to base) with the opposition of the German military forces, who in the meantime became enemies of the Italians, just while the headquarters of the Allied Forces were placed in Brindisi.

More recently the war in Yugoslavia during the 1990s disabled the coastal east Adriatic transport corridor, leading to a remarkable increase in traffic along the Italian east coast and between Puglia, Albania and Greece. Thus the necessity of building up a corridor of transport (corridor 8) capable of combining the Adriatic Sea with the Black Sea and towards the great Asian markets became evident.

5. Towards the present: cultural motivations

Between 1200's and 1300's the ships ploughing the Adriatic Sea carried goods and also works of art and artists on one or the other side, going from the Venice lagoon until crossing all Mediterranean. In that way it was possible the growth and the evolution of the singular mix of artistic and cultural expressions that have moulded cities, monuments and works of art on both the Adriatic sides. After 1250 there were many artists of the great Byzantine tradition who influenced many Adriatic towns; it is demonstrated by the frescos of Serbian Monsters which were the most great cultural places for creative quality and originality and by the masterpieces that were developing in Bisanzio, Capital of eastern countries.

6. The present: psychological motivations

6.1. *The Metaphor of the Travel*

The travel of the Neolithic colonizer, as of the Roman people and of today's man, is tinged of a strong symbolism [11], [12], [13]. It is the same thing for the water ploughed by sailors for going towards...

We can't reconstruct what reasons pushed the primitives to go toward their goal, in endless places of infinite silences. Certainly we can't reconstruct it but it's true that we can image it! The man, yesterday as today, is attracted by goal. Every man has in himself the desire of the goal, but what the goal is? Perhaps to go beyond, towards a fuller desire of life able to increase the fulfilment of himself.

The desire is molten, but even is confused in the heart, it is innate whit the movement or better it's known as feeling to go towards... The same "to go towards" that has pushed all the heroes of the history (also unknown) and the myths that we would have intentional to be, and that in truth we would be... if only we had their courage.

Myths, legends connected to desires, travels, abandons, loves, memories, returns: Ulysses.

So we search in the pages of the Odyssey in order to tear the secret of its escape from his more beloved affections, from its truth and from his concreteness.

In him we find the desire of the unusual and of the magical, also trough the overcoming of more and more difficult tests to verify the duration of his tenacity and physical force.

Ulysses represents all that and Calypso, Circe, Nausica are nothing but a symbolic universe, a pure representation of the pure reality that being confronted by the other and by the diversity.

6.2. *The Metaphor of the Water*

The water recalls the first feeling in our mind, the beginning of the life: in a water drop the beginning, the first covering in the maternal uterus.

Its mean is powerful symbolic, the water is the point of the origin of life. It's pure, powerful, lively, it's present in all Grecian and Roman religions and in the Judaic religion it's the origin of all the things, like for Eraclito. The symbolic meaning is still obvious in the Bible, when the Red Sea water is divided and the Hebrew people get rid from the slavery, like in the episode of Jesus who succeeds to walk on waters. To join oriental religion to the western one is the lively water that gives a veil of continuity between greek-roman and Judaic religions.

Therefore the water has a new meant of salvation; this is true for the waters of Red Sea, tool of the liberation by Egyptian slavery, for the sources of Meriba; for the misterious waters of the Universal Deluge and of Giona, for the water of Giordan of John Baptist and Jesus.

Moreover the water is the return to the life after the rebirth of the spirit. It raises the heart with its transparence and lets the self-bareness.

The water is the mirror in which a man looks at himself and founds the more intimate depths, like for Narcissus, the more alarming myth of our culture [14], [15].

6.3. *The Migratory Flows*

After the two World Wars and the war of the 1990s considerable migratory flows arrived at the Adriatic Coasts to spreading towards Europe, with the hope of acceptance, freedom and physical health in their hearts.

For Europe immigration represents an important and difficult challenge with countless aspects that involve such issues as identity, employment, public order and the question of citizenship [16], [17].

Many surveys carried out in the last years show the European citizen as people living in fear of the migratory flows which they feel threaten their cultural identity. Another fear seems to be tied to the European space understood like borders and defence from the external world.

However these fears are attenuated in young people, who are educated and belong to socially elevated classes, as this group has a higher feeling of acceptance and considers the acknowledgment of academic degrees, the political identity and the right to vote as being correct.

Italy associates the highest levels of fear for immigration with a high level for the rights of citizenship, with a very high availability to face the problem in European key.

7. The present: economic motivations

In previous sections it was already mentioned that the possibility of transport at 360 degrees, in localities where it is possible, represents an important factor for the economic development and for a stable economy. Therefore it is obvious that the territories along the two shorelines of the Adriatic Sea would be considerably favoured if a dense net of transport facilities between all the coastal nodes was established. Such an infrastructural change could contribute considerably to the social and economic rebalancing of said areas, as at the moment they turn out to be at a disadvantage compared to the other European regions [18], [19], [20], [21].

8. The present: technological motivations

In order to put the conditions mentioned above into effect and for the Adriatic routes to become competitive, it is vital for the political decisions to favour the use of modern technologies. Accordingly it is indispensable to pursue the following objectives [22], [23], [24], [25].

- to favour shore by shore routes and medium length routes. In order to achieve this goal, it is necessary to specify a high number of ports on each shore and to equip them as intermodal nodes for the distribution of inner traffic, goods and passengers. In short this means that every node must be adequately equipped in all matters concerning the harbour, but above all they must be connected effectively to the railway, airport and highway services;
- to make the motorways of the Sea operating and thus covering the great distances within Europe as well as between Europe and Africa, Asia. That way it will be possible to lighten the environmental impact and to favour the sustainability of the transports caused by the enlargement of Europe and by internationalization;
- to produce an international logistics net in order to optimize the transports between the nodes, lower the costs and to compensate for modes of transport apparently less convenient.

9. The future: consequences of the present situation

The present scenario is extremely complex. However, for maximum Synthesis it is vital to keep in mind that the history and the cultural traditions of the people of the Adriatic coasts have nearly always highlighted the desire and the awareness of the opportunity offered by the connection between the two coasts, although never underestimating cultural, psychological and technological difficulties. The great question to resolve is therefore if the sea must represent a division or a formidable opportunity enabling the coastal regions to break down frontiers, today finally supported by the technological development and means of communication.

10. The future: modifications of the present scenario

Hence the Adriatic issue is essentially a political question: to leave the Adriatic Sea like a sea nearly useless and troublesome, only with the function to separate and safeguard south-western Europe from its south-eastern parts or, at the contrary, to weave a dense net of connections between the two coasts, taking into consideration that the latter alternative implies both the economic development of territories and of communications? In this context (besides creating the effective intermodal transport nodes, the motorways of the sea and a system of integrated international logistics) the realizations (cfr. Figure 6) of the Pan-European transport corridors (in particular corridor 8, but also the corridor along the east Adriatic coast [26], the connection between the last mentioned and corridor 5 as well as the Italian connections between the Tyrrhenian Sea and the Adriatic Sea) represent a decisive, organic and indispensable choice, backing up the political decision [27], [28], [29], [30].

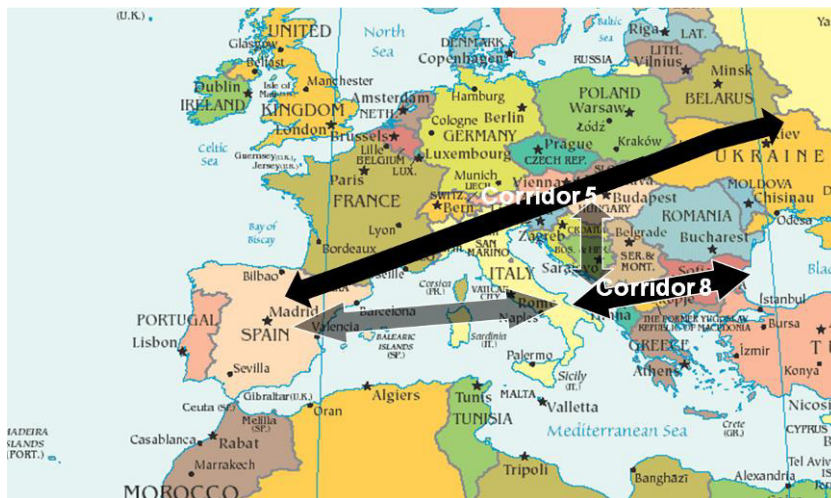


Fig. 6: Transport Corridors

11. The future: assessment of costs and benefits

It is obvious that such political choices imply large financial investments, for which an effective assessment is essential, also in order to evaluate possible investment alternatives [31], [32], [33], [34], [35]. However in this case simply the lessons from history and the situations described in the previous sections lead to the following considerations.

Both, the geographic location of the affected countries and the socio-economic condition of the involved populations, make it evident that new infrastructures would generate forms of “benefits”, “opportunities” and “equities” [36], [37], [38], which at the moment we cannot forecast at all. The reason for this unpredictability are deeply different traditions and values, which may lead to different evaluation criteria and weightage at a local, national and continental level. In this case the traditional BCA methods are not suitable and thus cannot be used; which leads us to the question of what new methodologies can we effectively apply?

None the less the main issue is to identify decision criteria not only able to make for the optimization of a closed system for which we chose the parameters of characterization and effectiveness, but also to predict the evolution of equilibriums in an open and dynamic system for which sub-criteria can change over time and space.

Summarizing the facts mentioned above leads to the conclusion that we have to face two problems which are partially connected in series.

- The first is the question of finding new evaluation criteria taking into account all factors (such as economy, equity, globalization, values, etc.) in a BCA of a transportation network.
- The second question asks for the criteria to be able to assess the dynamic equilibriums of effectiveness of a transportation network.

12. Conclusions

The great and difficult process of integration in Europe must take into account the necessity of the equilibrium between the north and the south as well as between the west and the east. Whereas the physical barriers existing within the European territory have been broken down, it is still vital to break down structural, cultural, psychological, economic and social obstacles caused by the extension of the European seas. The Adriatic Sea represents the most evident example for such an impediment, also because it does not only represent a separation between two parts of Europe, but moreover an obstacle for a possible development beyond the borders Europe and towards Asia and Africa. In fact corridor 8 and the connection between the two coasts of the Adriatic Sea, if the Messina bridge will be realized, could constitute the missing link for the connection between Africa, the Black Sea and Asia, especially after the political changes that have characterized the countries of North Africa in last years, anticipating a historic new future opening of the Mediterranean markets. Corridor 8 would bypass the Middle Eastern areas, favouring in a decisive and unforeseeable way the development and the connection between the nodes of a relations network which cannot allow the European border areas to be subordinated to the barycentric ones.



Fig. 7: new routes

Taking all these facts into consideration makes it necessary to regard the link between the two Adriatic coasts as a great opportunity for Europe, especially if considered concomitant with the new African scenarios. Both the historical and the technological background of the Adriatic make it possible today to form a close connection, fulfilling the desire of overcoming the Adriatic Sea, a desire that history proves to always have been present in the mind of the south-European people.

In fact the cultural speed, the continuous interactions with the neighbouring people, the fast transformation of the production processes lead to test new comparison of “ourselves“ with the diversity and with the traditions of the others people, without that these ones become frames of barrier, defence or reduction. The stereotype of the

prejudgment falls forehead to a net of interpersonal relations, forehead to others “Ego” aware to be the wealth of the human race, where the polarities of everyone become creative and interactive evolution in which everyone is accepted and satisfied. Everyone asks to face the world without masks, therefore Narcissus falls, everyone becomes the center while the circumference that embraces conscious and unconscious is the totality of “Ego”, who in the freedom becomes protagonist and constructor of a new and true way for the citizen of the Europe and of the world.

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