

The Green Way of the Apulian Aqueduct.

A regional corridor for the enhancement of the environmental heritage and local culture

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Abstract

The research operates as part of the investigation that the interdisciplinary Laboratory of the Polytechnic of Bari, “Cultural Landscapes Analysis and Design”, has been conducting for several years in terms of the enhancement of the Cultural Landscapes. The method of Analysis & Design here applied, called Evolutive (Architectural) Design (EAD), operates within the creation of specific models for the architectonic and spatial simulation of the territory. It is meant to show how, after the identification of some typologies of resources belonging to a specific territorial area, their value can be enhanced, interconnecting already existing resources on various levels or creating new ones.

The object of the present study is the network of the Apulian Aqueduct. A water duct among the most ancient ones in Europe, it has so far enabled the transport of drinking water to almost the entire Apulian territory, contextually becoming a “path stitching” of numerous typologies of “cultural landscapes”. This, traversing the majority of the regional territory, has started to intersect, almost without realising, an extraordinary range of historic, environmental and landscape resources. The essay attempts to demonstrate how the “aqueduct route”, attracting, sometimes in a disorganised way, a wide range of more or less complex settling phenomena (from parts of rural settlements to entire urban structures) and crossing sensitive points of the territory for specific technical reasons, has become, in fact, an anthropic corridor of extraordinary historic, cultural and environmental

importance. Through the application of the EAD model, we intend to prove that the idea of a transformation of the “aqueduct route” into a cycling path, as proposed over the last years, is likely to be ineffective if the deep degree of connection with the various “cultural landscapes” which it traverses and contributes to define is not understood.

Keywords: cultural landscapes, Apulian aqueduct, Ecosystemic services, Green infrastructures, Evolutive (Architectural) Design)