VALLEYS: LIMITS OR UNIFYING ELEMENTS OF TERRITORIES AND SOCIETIES?

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Abstract: Valleys may have an essential role in the organization of societies and in the rural and urban planning. They can represent limits or coordinating axis, creating territorial cohesions and/or disparities. These valleys are not that a simple support of the actions of societies, they represent an active actor, with whom societies have to communicate to set up a real harmony society - valley. In the context of the competitiveness of territories, any project of development of waterside areas has to take into account this waterfront. More, these projects are established by the acteurs, whom identity is more or less connected to these valleys, as a complex system. The European Union represents an actif actor in the creation of territorial cohesions. It interferes by european directives and it hemp the local initiatives by european funds.

Résumé: Vallées: limites ou éléments unificateurs des territoires et des sociétés? Les vallées jouent un rôle essentiel dans l'organisation des sociétés et dans l'aménagement du territoire. Elles peuvent représenter des limites, des barrières ou des axes coordinateur, en créant ainsi des cohésions ou/et des disparités territoriales. Ces vallées ne sont pas qu'un simple support des actions des populations, elles sont un acteur actif, avec lequel les sociétés devraient communiquer afin d'arriver à une vraie harmonie société-vallée. Ainsi, dans le contexte de la compétitivité des territoires, tout projet de développement devrait prendre en compte cette relation riveraine. En plus, ces projets sont réalisés par des acteurs ayant une identité plus ou moins liée aux vallées, en tant que système complexe. L’Union Européenne représente un acteur actif de la création des cohésions territoriales, en intervenant par les différentes directives européens et en supportant les initiatives locales par des fonds européens.

Keywords: Territorial cohesion, Bega-Timis and Loire valleys, Waterside identity, Territorial development
Mots-clés: cohésion territoriale, vallées de Timis-Bega et de la Loire, identité riveraine, développement territorial

INTRODUCTION: THE ROLE OF VALLEYS IN TERRITORIAL PLANNING

Rivers represent more that just a simple element of physical geography; they represent an element that marks urban and rural landscapes, an element that organizes the spaces, but also the societies on these territories.

The presence of valleys influences in a more or less evident way, as the case may be, the territorial development of the waterside zones. In what measure and how do they influence, these valleys, the socio-spatial organization and the territorial development? How can we characterize this relation which exists between societies and valleys? How do
Valleys contribute to the construction of communities and their activities? What marks do they leave, the rivers, on the environment, on the moldings of the landscapes, on the mentalities of societies and on the architectural heritage?

The image of valleys and human activity in these valleys, such as we know it today, represents the result of a long process, in which intervenes a whole series of sociodemographic, economic, cultural, political, strategic variables, in various spatial and temporal scales.

The valleys, these sensitive areas have been and they still are subject to changes, to major arrangements, in order to take advantage of benefits offered by these territories, but also to contribute to the competitiveness of these territories. These territories are sensitive areas, but about areas to project, which have a great development potential.

And in the new context, the competitiveness of territories, the territories should be organized to attract people and economic activities in order to present more potential than other territories. And valleys should be considered in these projects of development.

But the rivers are perceived and experienced by local residents (farmers, fishermen, sailors, residents, artisans) on one hand and by tourists, on the other hand. How does it influence the relationship society - rivers, this perception? What role has this perception in the evolution of cohesion and/or disparities created by the valleys?

This perception differs from one area to another and from one period to another. But, however, there are noticeable differences between social groups, between different age groups, but also according to the usual length of life in those areas marked by water. The farmers who lived all their lives on the boards of the Loire, perceive the Loire differently from the new residents, who left the urban middle in search of a better living environment, better land prices in the context of the phenomenon of urban sprawl.

The valleys play an important role in dynamics of societies and territorial development. They can lead (role of corridor), accelerate, brake (role of filter) or stop (role of barrier, limit) the socioeconomic activities and the local and regional development, in a context where we look for cohesions, by eliminating the disparities or by transforming them in an asset to the variety of the area.

Valleys represent complex systems, which the major elements are the flood risk, the vineyards and the agricultural crops, the axes of communication and the urbanization, without forgetting the man, as actor, situated in the center of this system, the man is the engine of the development and the future of valleys, in any climatic, economic or political context. The analysis of the complexity of these systems is combined in the current context with the research of a sustainable territorial development, of a territorial cohesion.

The territorial cohesion represents the intensification of the links between territories. It represents the very first step towards the recognition of a territorial community involving a vision of group. The territorial cohesion does not express a geographical unit, but a will to be together; it signs a shared membership. This territorial cohesion is translated by actions led and by common development projects.

Thus, the analyses of waterfront identity are important. The space exists and is shaped by the societies that live there and bring their contribution to the development of this area. These societies identify themselves more or less with the space where they live, according to their experience, but also to the socioeconomic and political context.
1. HOW TO COMBINE TERRITORIAL COHESIONS AND WATERFRONT IDENTITY?

Local residents identify themselves more or less with their living spaces, with these valleys that mark their existence. The cohesion is translated by actions led on the scale of pond-hillside, and not to a local scale. Can we really talk of a waterfront identity? How is it characterized, this identity? What are the limits and the assets of the waterfront solidarity?

The identity of Loire valley is complex; it is that of heterogeneous waterside populations in their relationship to the valley. "The jobs (businesses) of water" (fisherman, sailor, farmer) (Petit, 2003, p. 8) appropriated places, their living spaces and activities, by creating solidarities and so by strengthening their belonging among waterfront. But the new inhabitants, with what do they identify themselves?

I am going to begin with the example of the Loire valley and more exactly the area of the Val d'Authion. The identity of the inhabitants of the Loire valley (France) is translated by the notion of "ligérien" (of the Latin liger) which means "bound/connected to streams". But nowadays, this identification is more to the valley, as complex system, and not just to the streams.

In this context, we can ask ourselves if this identity connected to valleys can compete with the departmental, regional identity. Can valleys unify societies, by passing from a local scale to the scale of pond-hillside or sub-pond?

The Loire seems to be an example of waterfront identity, but in reality, on the ground, in spite of considerable efforts, there is no solidarity upstream-downstream. It is more about a simple hydrological solidarity than about real waterfront solidarity. The Loire actors try to set up joint actions and to create common management agencies to achieve a real cohesion.

Through the centuries the development planning of the agrarian landscapes of the Loire valley was entrusted to the workers of the land who had not perceive this space as a whole. Their vision limited itself to a restricted enough space, to their work and life spaces, and the measures which they envisaged also limited themselves to this territory.

But when it is about such complex area as valleys, the management has to involve a wider space, to find the best solutions for this element which does not take into account administrative limits, element which exceeds borders, which unites and separates people.

However, most of the initiatives and choices on the development observed in valleys belonged to people from the outside, mainly from the city. The initiative belonged to the city-dwellers, who had a wider vision, who envisaged the future of these sensitive areas which present a significant potential of development.

The Val d'Authion is an intellectual construction of the 1970s, initiated by Edgar Pissani1, with the help of hydrologists and engineers but without the consensus of the concerned waterside population. It was about a will of developing a horticultural activity in the Val d'Authion during 1970s to answer to an increasing request in decorative plants and allow the farmers' movement in the South of Angers, threatened by the extension of the city.

This political initiative, taken without the consultation of the population returned the most swampy sector of the Loire, in the most artificial and specialized sector, the plant pole of France, which play a very important role at the international level. This development
of the agricultural activity, as well as the new phenomenon of urban sprawl, facilitated an urbanization of the Val d’Authion, despite an ever-present risk.

But there is a strong fragmentation which can be actually read on the map of the links between local authorities, the limits of counties and associations of local authorities not corresponding to the limits of pond-hillside or sub-pond.

The cohesion, the solidarity supposes a real communication and a coordination of the actions, but above all a common framework of action. For example, in the Val d’Authion, we observe that town like Saumur, Allonnes and Beaufort-en-Vallée, are well separated; they belong to different associations of local authorities, each one with its own challenges, principles of action lines. There are only the common bodies of water management on the scale of sub-pond (eg Local Committee of the Water Authion) which were set up.

However, the valley can represent a limit, a border between two territories and the population; the societies identify themselves with regard to this limit, this spatial border. For example, the river of Mures (in the West of Romania) represents the limit separating two historic regions of Rumania, Banat and Crisana. But this river passes through important cities, such as the city of Arad, whose district called "Aradul Nou" is located in the South of the river of Mures, thus in Banat, while the other districts are in the North of Mures, thus in the historical region of Crisana. Thus, the ancient inhabitants identify themselves in relation to this localization, differences being observed at the level of the vocabulary, the accent and certain regionalisms being also different.

At the same time, it is important to note that the opinions of the inhabitants represent an inexhaustible material in the deepening of the relations between society and its environment, and also evaluation methods of reading and analysis of landscapes.

But these valleys are also characterized by the flood risk. This risk represents one of the factors taken into account in the town and country planning and in the organization of societies. The relationship between spatial planning, territorial development and people's safety is very important.

This risk of flood may also be creative of discontinuities between the different territories, by the advantages and the disadvantages offered by valleys. These valleys can attract and/or repel people, the economic and cultural activities. This is a complex process, which takes into account the identity and the complexity of every area, the complexity which includes a series of variables and operates.

Understanding the process of territorial development and urbanization of valleys, and also the new phenomenon that of the urban sprawl requires knowledge of the history of these valleys, of societies and activities developed there.

In the analysis of the discontinuities or the territorial cohesions due to the presence of valleys, the presentation of the human occupation in valleys is imperative. The human occupation is ancient both in France in the Loire valley, and in the Banat, in the valleys of Timis and Bega. Its explanation is in the attractiveness of these spaces marked by the existence of valleys. This attractiveness consists in a first stage in the soil fertility and the ease of waterway transport.

1 My analysis will focus more on the example of the Banat, but always referring to that of the Loire.
2. VALLEYS / THE PROFITABILITY OF THESE MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

The first inhabitants settled near valleys from the Neolithic period, but on higher heights, as for example in the Loire valley on hillocks and in the case of the city of Lugoj, the first human vestiges were discovered at the bottom of the hill of Vineyards.

In the case of the Loire, the river was not a communication line originally, but a limit around which the administrative and urban geography developed. Thus, we observe that there is no specific unity between the various cities situated along the Loire.

Through the centuries, both the Loire and the Bega represented important roads of communication and transport, thanks to their profitability (minimum cost, important capacity). It is about the transport of the goods, but also about the transport of persons. The possibility of selling far and expensive encouraged the improvement of both products, as for example, the quality of wines in Anjou (in Dubois-Richir, 2003, p. 78), and boats, in their speed and comfort.

In the Loire valley, the construction of big cities also depended on the transport of construction materials, by waterway. The vapor improved the transport of the travelers from 1820, because the traffic could be made in both directions in comparison with the previous period when only the descent was possible. These boats could welcome 100 to 250 passengers and their speed was from eight to eleven kilometers per hour and twice as fast on the descent. For example, in 1846, the Pointe (Bouchemaine, in Maine-et-Loire) - Paris, a distance of more than 300 km could be made in 21 hours by the boat while in diligence were needed three to four days. But, in front of the competition of the train, in 1866, the service of the travelers between Angers and Saumur (a distance of 50 km), assured by the boats of "the Union of the local residents of the Loire " and " Letters of the Loire " was deleted.

In Romania, starting from 1869, on the Bega channel is organized the people transport, the city of Timisoara being the first one in Rumania which used this mean of transport in common. Other cities as Galati, Braila, Giurgiu also used this mean of transport. The peak of the frequency is touched in 1944, 500 000 passengers per year. As regards the transport of the goods, the evolution of the navigation represented a key for the development of the region in the field of the industry.

But, how can we explain the stop of these navigation activities? The history has marked the territory! During more than 40 years, we observe a neglect of these activities and of the maintenance of the channel. In 1990, the elected officials open the discussions concerning a possible reopening of Bega, the works of unclogging of the channel having started in 2008.

In 2002, with the of the Dutch government, the Romanian technicians of the Banat, elaborated the first feasibility study, having for main aim the reopening of the traffic of persons and goods (600 000 tons a year) in the Romanian part of the canal. A similar study was also led in Serbia. In that case, we ask ourselves about the necessity of a common study of both parts, the need of cross-border management, a constantly cross-border working team being necessary.

We so observe that the major role of valleys is to fix the populations, to establish ports, which will allow then the development of the urbanization of valleys having multiple economic purposes. In this context and in that of sustainable development, it raises the
question of the necessity of opening the means of river transport, the establishment of a soft trasport in the respect of the environment.

3. THE COHESION AND THE DISPARITIES SHAPE RURAL/URBAN PLANNING AND THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF VALLEYS

As regards the urbanization of the Loire valley, Bernard Chevalier describes it as "a street of cities". The urban middle, such as we know it now, is the result of a process which lasted more than one thousand years. But sometimes, the valleys represent "waters of the discord" by the conflicts of interests which exist between the various users, but also by the rivalry upstream-downstream, very present in the case of the Val d'Authion and which takes an international aspect in the case of the system Timis Bega, between Romania and Serbia. In case of flood emergency, these countries blamed each other for not having properly maintained the valleys; a real upstream-downstream rivalry, at an international level, as it was the case in 2005, during the floods in Banat.

In Romania also, by analyzing the urbanization along rivers, we observe a very interesting process. The valleys played an important role in the separation of the cultures, of the mentalities and the different societies, through centuries.

Thus, we observe that the town of Lugoj developed at first, on the right bank of Timis, population being of Rumanian origin. Later, strating from the 1718, the Germans occupy the left bank. This split/cleavage can be read in the townscape, in the architecture today. We observe the existence of three distinctive parts: the new Lugoj, the German Lugoj and the Rumanian Lugoj. In the South of the valley of Timis, the territory of the city of Lugoj stretches out in the alluvial plain of Cernabora, the local tributary of Timis.

Both communities, Romanian and German have coexisted until 1795, when they unified, after the event from 1778, when the city of Lugoj becomes the administrative centre of the department of Caras, further to the integration of Banat in Hungary. We observe that the German population represents 21.3 % of the total of the city (tab. 1 and fig. 1). The construction of the Iron Bridge in 1901 represents the symbol of the unification of the two parts of the town, the German and the Romanian one.

Tab. 1 Comparison between Romanian Lugoj and German Lugoj in 1786

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Romanian Lugoj</th>
<th>German Lugoj</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of houses</td>
<td>1039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of families</td>
<td>1209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of inhabitants</td>
<td>5130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: www.primarialugoj.ro

2 « rue de villes »
3 « eaux de la discorde »
The German district developed independently of the city of Lugoj, as a rural community. When both parts unified, this event contributed to produce to the city of Lugoj its attribute of cultural capital of Banat.

Through this example, we observe how a valley can play the role of limit, social and cultural border at first to become later a space of exchange and links between local authorities.

The economic development began from the XVIII century, by the existence of "bresle"⁴, the first one being mentioned in 1817. These establishments appear in Banat approximately 400 years later than in Transylvania and do not present the characteristics of those of the Middle Ages. These corporations of Banat represent a real system of transition towards the industrial system such as we know today. Banat benefited from the mercantilist policy of the Habsbourgs during the XVIIIth century, the companies having for objective to assure the needs of the army and the use of the local resources to avoid the import of the other regions.

We notice the development of the textile small business crafts, but also the agriculture, an attention being given to the culture of cereal and vineyards and to the breeding of silk worms. The existence of these corporations in the first half of the XIXth century is explained by the necessity of satisfying the needs of the population, the factories not being sufficient. During the XIXth and the XXth, the textile industry develops, most of the companies having Hungarian or German names (Del Magyarorszag, Hohl und Rotsching, Barath, Szederschi, Schwertner, Hoffer, Ofeiffer).

This industrial foundation represented an asset for the development of this territory, by the attraction of the German investors in the 90s. Companies as World, Inter-Spitze, Autoliv, Hella, Lightling, Novar, Rieker represent only some examples.

The example of the city of Lugoj allows to observe and to analyze how a valley can represent a limit, a border between two communities, between two cultures, between

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⁴ Bresle = Guild; the sense of this notion in this context is of small craft(home-made), family business, its objective was not only the production, but also the training(formation), a kind of corporation.
two ethnic groups, to become later, further to a change of the historic context, a unifying element, a testimony of the multiculturalité and the cohesion.

Banat region represents also an example of cross-border management. After the last floods in the membership countries, the European Union interferes by the European Waterframe Directive (2000) and Floods Directive (2007) in the management of all aspects of water and valleys, so even in the cross-border management of valleys. This management is ancient in the Banat, between serbians, romanians and hungarians, but these new directives try to improve it, because, as an example, the official document of cross-border management of Bega et Timis between Romania and Serbia, dates from 1955!!!

But in 2008, Hungary, Romania and Serbia have established a joint team of intervention (210 experts) in case of flooding. This team began in March the training course in the Hungarian town Hodmezovasarhely. These experts will train in turn other volunteers in each state. One of the representatives to this training is a representative of the Interregion Danube-Cris-Mures-Tisa (DKMT) which highlights the importance of interregional and cross-border issue of flood management. The investigation began in april 2008, in Titel, with the stimulation of an emergency caused by flooding. The UE has allocated 600 000 euros to this project through the Interreg III/A.

**CONCLUSION: VALLEYS, CREATORS OF COHESIONS AND TERRITORIAL DISPARITIES**

Valleys become more than a simple element of physical geography; they become an essential element in the organization and in the socioeconomic and territorial development. Valleys represent carriers of values, identity, splits, cleavages, and the unity, at the same time.

The life gets organized at first on the edge of valleys to take advantage of assets offered by these ones. The progressive occupation of the valleys entailed important changes of river morphology. This interface water-society changed non-stop during the centuries, according to needs, to interests, political strategies, but also to climatic conditions and to the budget. And so explain the complexity of valleys and also the complexity of the waterfront identity.

The image of valleys was shaped by the natural phenomena, but even more by the political and strategic choices of local development. These choices express the interests of various actors, the interests which mark a split of the waterfront solidarity. Thus, we cannot speak about a real waterfront cohesion. Constant efforts are made to improve this situation.

Valleys play an essential role in the organization of societies; they can represent limits or coordinating axis. But these valleys are not that a simple support of the actions of societies, they represent an active actor, with whom societies have to communicate to set up a real harmony society - valley.

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