

Vicende e prospettive della ferrovia Sulmona-L'Aquila di Ottavia Aristone

Abstract

This contribution will discuss the role played by the Sulmona-L'Aquila railway line, also in the light of upheaval caused by the recent earthquake.

The essay takes a look at the historical events surrounding the construction of the Adriatic-Tyrrhenian railway from the first plans to link the Adriatic coast to the capital of the young Kingdom of Italy via L'Aquila. The building took a fairly long time, and the plans, backed by local notables and administrators, both from L'Aquila and Umbria, suffered many delays, interruptions, rethinks, additions and new alternatives. With the 20.07.1879 law which placed the Rome-Sulmona railway link in Category I, things changed radically and the line was made to pass through the Marsica area, cutting the overall distance to 240km. In 1888, the Sulmona-Rome railway was inaugurated and also the new railway station in Sulmona, with its locomotive shed - a facility which makes it one of the most important depots in central Italy.

In parallel with the down-grading of the Sulmona-L'Aquila line, there was a modification of the hinterland, linked also with the decline in the transhumance economy. The permanent relocation of the flocks in the Tableland of Apulia and the countryside around Rome brought about the transformation of the sheep-tracks and woods into arable land.

The transformations of the area are hardly evident and are in any case explained by the changes carried out after Unification and in the following century on each of its parts. In the last decades however, houses have been built along the historical roadways and these new inhabited areas are crossed by the railway or flanked by it for long stretches.

The same sites have been chosen for the reorganization in the area of many of the non-residential urban functions (public and private) which have been relocated outside the town centre following the earthquake.