

The Adriatic sea: a Greek sea? Lessons I: Introduction.

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Erasmus Advanced Learning

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P. Cabanes, Greek Colonisation in the Adriatic



Good morning, friends of the class.

. Methodology: Reading literary sources and Human and Social Sciences.

How Greeks thought and understood what we call the Adriatic? Are we talking about the same things. Is the Adriatic only a sea or all the space (sea and land) from the north of the modern Italy to the Ionian sea?

Different approaches

- I. The Adriatic Sea name in Antiquity
- II. The Adriatic in Ancient « Myths »
- III. The Adriatic Sea: a Greek World

I. The Adriatic in Antiquity

1. The Ionian Gulf

- a. Ino's journey
- b. Heracles murders Epidamnus' son, Ionos

2. The Eridanous

- a. Apollo cries over Phaeton
- b. Apollo cries over Phaeton

3. The Adriatic

- a. Apollo, Phaeton and the vicinity between Eridanous and the Adriatic
- b. The Adriatic sea

1.a. Aischylus, *Prometheus*, 829-841:

- For when you reached the Molossian plains [830] and the sheer ridge that encircles Dodona, where lies the prophetic seat of Thesprotian Zeus and that marvel, passing all belief, the talking oaks, by which you clearly, and in no riddling terms, were saluted as the renowned [835] bride-to-be of Zeus (is any of this pleasing to you?) , then, stung by the gadfly, you rushed along the pathway by the shore to the great gulf of Rhea, from where you are tossed in backward-wandering course; and for all time to come a recess of the sea, [840] be well assured, shall bear the name Ionian, as a memorial of your crossing for all mankind.

1.b. Appian, *Bella Ciuilia*, 2, 39

[39] The consuls crossed safely to **Dyrrachium**, which some persons, by reason of the following error, consider the same as Epidamnus. **A barbarian king of the region, Epidamnus** by name, built a city on the sea-coast and named it after himself. Dyrrachus, the son of his daughter and of Neptune (as is supposed), added a dockyard to it which he named Dyrrachium. When the brothers of this Dyrrachus made war against him, Hercules, who was returning from **Erythea**, formed an alliance with him for a part of his territory; wherefore the Dyrrachians claim Hercules as their founder because he had a share of their land, not that they repudiate Dyrrachus, but because **they pride themselves on Hercules even more as a god**. In the battle which took place **it is said that Hercules killed Ionius, the son of Dyrrachus**, by mistake, and that after performing the funeral rites he threw the body into the sea in order that it might bear his name.

2.a. Pindar, *Pythian X*

- Neither by ship nor on foot could you find [30] the marvellous road to the meeting-place of the Hyperboreans— Once Perseus, the leader of his people, entered their homes and feasted among them, when he found them sacrificing glorious hecatombs of donkeys to the god. In the festivities of those people [35] and in their praises Apollo rejoices most, and he laughs when he sees the erect arrogance of the beasts. The Muse is not absent from their customs; all around swirl the dances of girls, the lyre«s loud chords and the cries of flutes. [40] They wreath their hair with golden laurel branches and revel joyfully. No sickness or ruinous old age is mixed into that sacred race; without toil or battles they live without fear of strict Nemesis. Breathing boldness of spirit [45]

2.b. Euripides, *Hippolytus*, 731-741

- **Chorus**

Would that I could flee to secret clefts in the high mountains, and that there a god might make of me a feathered bird amid the winged throngs! [735] Would that I might soar aloft over the surf of the **Adriatic** shore and the waters of the **Eridanus** where into the deep-blue swell the luckless [740] girls, **in grief for Phaethon**, drop the amber radiance of their tears.

3.a. Herodotus, IV

- 32. About a Hyperborean people the Scythians report nothing, nor do any of those who dwell in this region, unless it be the Issedonians: but in my opinion neither do these report anything; for if they did the Scythians also would report it, as they do about the one-eyed people. Hesiod however has spoken of Hyperboreans, and so also has Homer in the poem of the "Epigonoï," at least if Homer was really the composer of that Epic.

- 33. But much more about them is reported by the people of Delos than by any others. For these say that sacred offerings bound up in wheat straw are carried from the land of the Hyperboreans and come to the Scythians, and then from the Scythians the neighbouring nations in succession receive them and convey them Westwards, finally as far as the Adriatic: thence they are sent forward towards the South, and the people of Dodona receive them first of all the Hellenes, and from these they come down to the Malian gulf and are passed over to Eubœa, where city sends them on to city till they come to Carystos. After this Andros is left out, for the Carystians are those who bring them to Tenos, and the Tenians to Delos.

3.b.

- See, Euripides, *Hippolytus*, 733-741.

The errors of Io's ways.

- Ἰόνιος κεκλήσεται Aischylus, *Prometheus*, l. 840
- In Antiquity: Ionian Gulf = The Adriatic Sea
Ionian : from Io

Euripides, *Hippolytus*, l. 735-737

ἐπὶ πόντιον

κύμα τᾶς Ἀδριηνᾶς

ἀκτᾶς Ἡριδανοῦ θ' ὕδωρ

- Eridanus: the Po
- Vicinity: The Adriatic shore

The Adriatic name

- From the Fifth Century BC to the end of the First Century AD-beginning of the Second Century AD : Ionian Sea; Io/Ionios (Heracles)
- Fifth Century: Adriatic linked to the Po Delta (Eridanous)
- By the Fifth Century BC, Adria whose name is clearly linked to the Adriatic sea was not yet a Greek *polis* or a Greek *emporion*.

- In Antiquity the expression Ionian Sea englobes the modern Ionian Sea and also the Adriatic Sea while the Adriatic shore, if we follow the texts we have just studied, concerned mostly Adria and its region.
- Where were the precise limits between the Ionian Sea and the Adriatic Sea and when these limits were established?

The Adriatic sea: a Greek sea?
Lessons II: II. The Adriatic in Ancient
« Myths »

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II. The Adriatic in Ancient « Myths »

« La première: la forme grec (en dialectes: *grški, garški, garski*) recouvre toujours quelque chose de mystique, secret, caché, inconnu... Le grand inconnu c'est - bien entendu - le trésor caché. Chaque île et chaque agglomération insulaire possède son histoire du voilier qui arrive une nuit de pleine lune, de l'équipage qui creuse la terre, cherche et trouve le trésor caché, et repart à l'aube. Ce lieu, cette pointe, cette baie ou ce lopin de terre portent souvent comme déterminant l'adjectif grec, dans une des variantes tchakaviens. L'auteur a personnellement assisté, étant enfant, dans une pareille chasse au trésor sur l'île de son enfance (à Kornati) sur un endroit qui porte encore aujourd'hui le nom de *Grška gomila 'tumulus grec'*, alors qu'il est, selon toute vraisemblance, une *liburnska gomila 'tumulus libournien'*. »

V. Skracic, "Noms des peuples non crotates dans la toponymie adriatique", *Hieronymus I*, 2007, 177-184.

II. The Adriatic in Ancient « Myths »: departures, returns, implantation

1. The Epic Model

Odysseus' World and *Nostoi*: from the south to the north

2. The Greeks as bringers of peace

Cadmus and Harmony in the Adriatic shores

3. The Adriatic as passageway.

The Hyperboreans in the Adriatic

1. The Epic Model

Odysseus' World and returns

Iliad, II, 631-637:

- Αὐτὰρ Ὀδυσσεὺς ἦγε Κεφαλλῆνας μεγαθύμους,
- οἳ ῥ' Ἰθάκην εἶχον καὶ Νήριτον εἰνοσίφυλλον
- καὶ Κροκύλει' ἐνέμοντο καὶ Αἰγίλιπα τρηχεῖαν,
- οἳ τε Ζάκυνθον ἔχον ἠδ' οἳ Σάμον ἀμφενέμοντο,
- οἳ τ' ἠπειρον ἔχον ἠδ' ἀντιπέραι' ἐνέμοντο·
- τῶν μὲν Ὀδυσσεὺς ἦρχε Διὶ μῆτιν ἀτάλαντος·
- τῷ δ' ἅμα νῆες ἔποντο δυώδεκα μιλοπάρηοι.

- Ulysses led the brave Cephallenians, who held Ithaca, Neritum with its forests, Crocylea, rugged Aegilips, Samos and Zacynthus, with the mainland also that was over against the islands. These were led by Ulysses, peer of Zeus in counsel, and with him there came twelve ships.

Odyssey, 1, 245-248

ὄσσοι γὰρ νήσοισιν ἐπικρατέουσιν ἄριστοι,
Δουλιχίῳ τε Σάμῃ τε καὶ ὑλήεντι Ζακύνθῳ,
ἠδ' ὄσσοι κραναὴν Ἰθάκην κάτα κοιρανέουσι,
τόσσοι μητέρ' ἐμὴν μνῶνται, τρύχουσι δὲ οἶκον.

[245] For all the princes who hold sway over the
islands—*Dulichium and Same and wooded
Zacynthus—and those who lord it over rocky Ithaca*,
all these woo my mother and lay waste my house.
And she neither refuses the hateful marriage,

Odysseus' *nostos*

- Trojan War and Return:
- Corcyra: The Phaeacians' island
- Phaeacians: mariners, carriers

The *nostoi* of other Achaeans.

- Diomedes, Argian hero
- *Apoikistès*: Argyrippa, that is to say Arpi or Argos Hippium, near Foggia (Daunia)
- Diomedes' presence and cult in different Adriatic cities

Fragment de céramique avec grafitti, Ve siècle av. J.-C.



Voir L. Seselj, « Rt Ploca », *Anticki Grci na tlu Hrvatske*, Zagreb, 2010, 111.

Trojans' Nostoi

- Antenor (arbitrer between Trojans and Achaeans): a new Troy (northern part of the Adriatic Sea in the very heart of the Liburni)
- He founds Padova and is also present in Korcula where a cult in his honour is attested.

Other *nostoi*

- Heracles' return (see Appian's text lesson I).
- Epidamnus
- Ionios, Epidamnus' son and Dyrrachion

Nostoi

- The Argonauts' return after the theft of the Golden Fleece.

From the Danube, they came to the Adriatic: an impressive journey

Issa, Corcyra Melaina, Zadar, Corcyra

2. The Greeks as bringers of peace
Cadmus and Harmonia in the Adriatic shores

- Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica*, 3, 5, 3.
- But Cadmus and Harmonia quitted Thebes and went to the Encheleans. As the Encheleans were being attacked by the Illyrians, the god declared by an oracle that they would get the better of the Illyrians if they had Cadmus and Harmonia as their leaders. They believed him, and made them their leaders against the Illyrians, and got the better of them. And Cadmus reigned over the Illyrians, and a son Illyrius was born to him. But afterwards he was, along with Harmonia, turned into a serpent and sent away by Zeus to the Elysian Fields.

- Cadmus as an *apoikistès*.
- Budva (Bouthoe): Montenegro

3. The Adriatic as a passageway.

- Aischylus, *Prometheus*, 372
- In this, my child, your wish is better than gold. It surpasses great good fortune, even that of the supremely blessed; for it is easy to wish.
- The supremely blessed: The Hyperboreans
- Etymology: Hyper/Boreans, Beyond the North Wind (Boreas).

The blessed Hyperboreans

- Why are they blessed?
- Where do they live?

Pindar, *Pythian X*

- Neither by ship nor on foot could you find [30] the marvellous road to the meeting-place of the Hyperboreans— Once Perseus, the leader of his people, entered their homes and feasted among them, when he found them sacrificing glorious hecatombs of donkeys to the god. In the festivities of those people [35] and in their praises Apollo rejoices most, and he laughs when he sees the erect arrogance of the beasts. The Muse is not absent from their customs; all around swirl the dances of girls, the lyre«s loud chords and the cries of flutes. [40] They wreath their hair with golden laurel branches and revel joyfully. No sickness or ruinous old age is mixed into that sacred race; without toil or battles they live without fear of strict Nemesis. Breathing boldness of spirit [45]

Herodotus IV, 32-33 (The Hyperboreans and Delos; see lesson I)

- Relationship between Scythia and the Hyperboreans
- The Hyperboreans and the road to Delos
- The Hyperboreans and their offerings to Apollo

Herodotus and the Hyperboreans

The Hyperboreans' offerings to Apollo: what are they?

The relationship between Apollo's tears and the Hyperboreans offerings.

Apollonius of Rhodes, IV, 614.

But the Celts have attached this story to them, that these are the tears of Leto's son, Apollo, that are borne along by the eddies, the countless tears that he shed aforesaid when he came to the sacred race of the Hyperboreans and left shining heaven at the chiding of his father, being in wrath concerning his son whom divine Coronis bare in bright Lacereia at the mouth of Amyrus. And such is the story told among these men. But no desire for food or drink seized the heroes nor were their thoughts turned to joy. But they were sorely afflicted all day, heavy and faint at heart, with the noisome stench, hard to endure, which the streams of Eridanus sent forth from Phaethon still burning; and at night they heard the piercing lament of the daughters of Helios, wailing with shrill voice; and, as they lamented, their tears were borne on the water like drops of oil.

See also, Aischylus' and Euripides' texts (first lesson) and the relationship between Apollo and Phaeton

- Helios' son
- Phaeton and his father chariot
- Phaeton loses control of the reigns
- Phaeton struck by Zeus' thunderbolt
- His flaming body falls into the river Eridanus.
- Phaeton: a star among the Constellation of the Auriga
- Apollo's tears for Phaeton

Amber ?

- Amber and Apollo ; Amber and the Adriatic
- The road of the amber trade.

Importance of these « myths »:

- . The Adriatic as a space of mobility, trade and culture.
- . The Adriatic as space of encounters
- . The Adriatic as a good place to live.
- . The Adriatic as an open space: Achaeans, Trojans, Etruscans, Echeleans, Liburni, Molossi, living side by side (even though sometimes they fight one against another)

A Greek sea?

- Myths and foundations
- Familiarity or cooperation between Greeks and Local populations.
- Foreign heroes become almost Greek

- Space or control of space is power
- If you have it you rule
- If you do not have it you can make it yours by creating myths and imposing them on other people.

- The Greeks were in the Adriatic
- They did not rule all of this space
- But they encapsulated it, thanks to their myths.

The Adriatic sea: a Greek sea?
Lessons III: The Adriatic Sea: a Greek
World

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III. The Adriatic Sea: a Greek World

1. A passageway
2. Permanent implantations
3. A Greek World

Herodotus, 1, 163

These Phocaeans were the earliest of the Greeks to make long sea-voyages, and it was they who discovered the Adriatic Sea, and Tyrrhenia, and Iberia, and Tartessus, [2] not sailing in round freightships but in fifty-oared vessels. When they came to Tartessus they made friends with the king of the Tartessians, whose name was Arganthonius; he ruled Tartessus for eighty years and lived a hundred and twenty. [3] The Phocaeans won this man's friendship to such a degree that he invited them to leave Ionia and settle in his country wherever they liked; and then, when he could not persuade them to, and learned from them how the Median power was increasing, he gave them money to build a wall around their city. [4] He gave it generously: for the circuit of the wall is of not a few stades, and all this is made of great stones well fitted together.

1. A passageway

- A. Greek visits to the Adriatic shores before the Sixth Century B.C. (Archeological remains)
- B. The road to Sicily and Great Greece (Eighth Century BC)
- C. Greek *Emporia* or the Greek presence in the Adriatic *Emporia* (two examples: *Adria* and *Spina*)

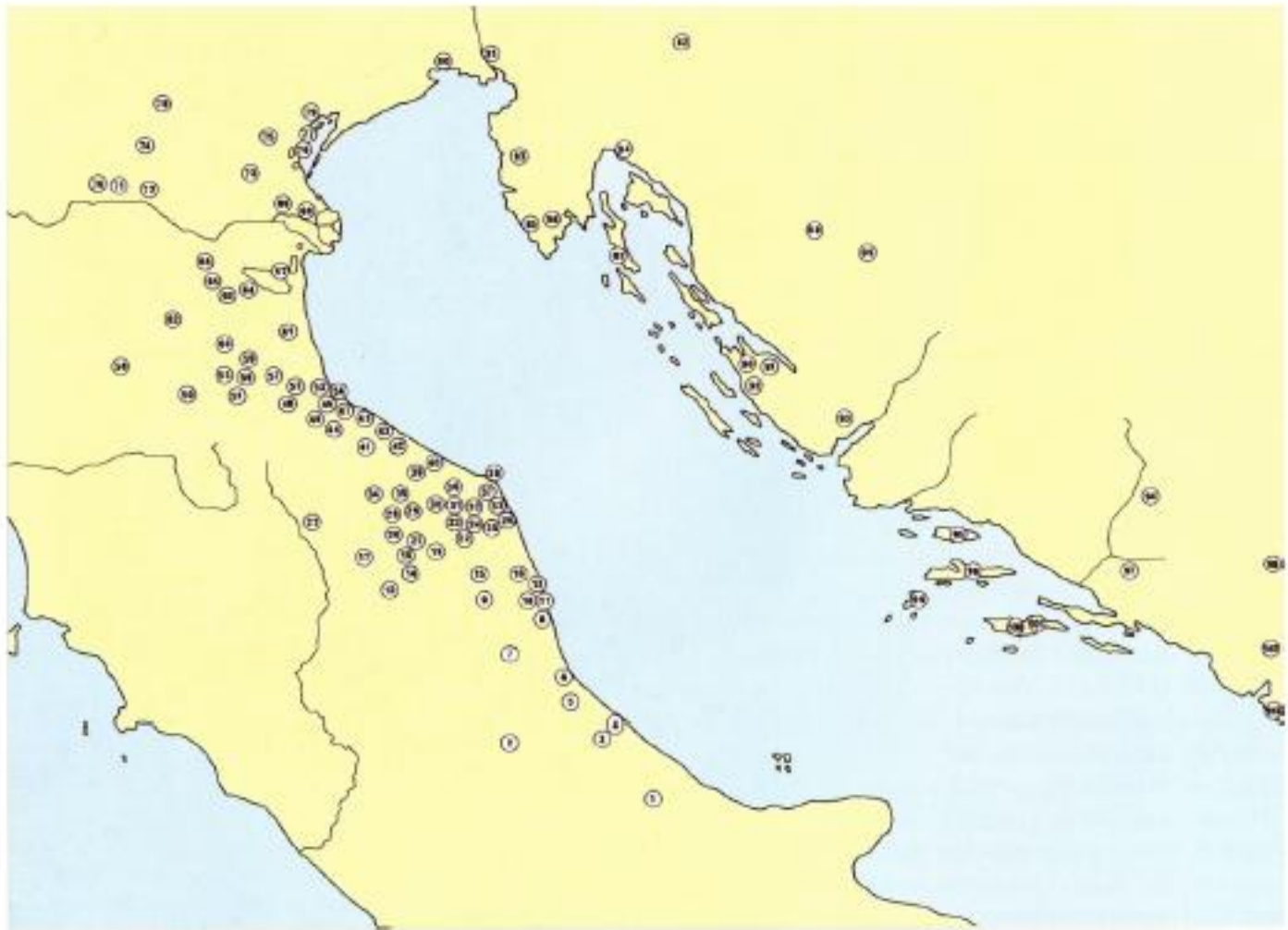


Fig. 9. Carta di distribuzione dei rinvenimenti di ceramica attica (da LUNI 2003)

2. Permanent implantations

- A. Chronological approach of the Adriatic foundations
- B. Participation of Ancient Greek cities in the foundations
- C. Particularities of the Adriatic foundations

A. Chronological approach of the Adriatic foundations

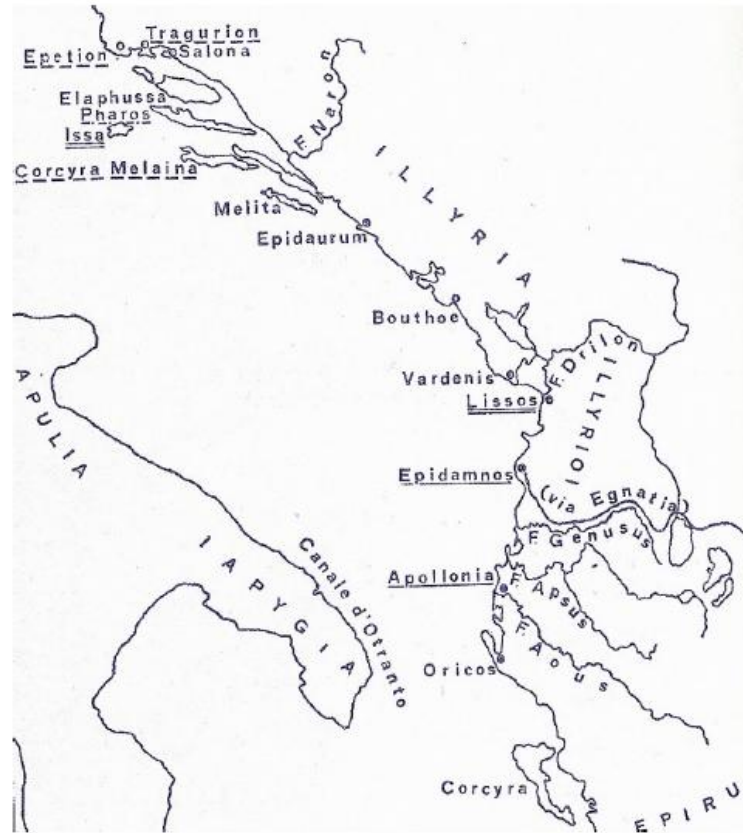


Fig. 3. Colonie greche nell' Adriatico meridionale (da BRACCESI 1977)

P. Cabanes, *Greek Colonisation in the Adriatic*



Three examples

- Corcyra
- Brentesion (Brindisi)
- Corcyra Melaina

B. Particularities of the Adriatic foundations

1. Traditional and less traditional foundations: the « archaic » model and the classical or pre-hellenistic model
2. Greek Cities and tyrants engaged in the Adriatic foundations
3. Relationship between the Greek and the local population.

B. Greek Cities and tyrants engaged in the Adriatic foundations

- Some examples of Greek cities engaged in the foundations

Eretrians and Corinthians Aeginetans

Cretans (Brentesion)

- Dionysus' I ambitions
- The Athenian dream in the Adriatic

C. Relationship between Greeks and between them and the local population.

- Two examples
- Corcyra and Epidamnus
- Apollonia and Tronion



Fig. 3. Colonie greche nell' Adriatico meridionale (da BRACCESI 1977)

3. A Greek World

- A. The Greek *nomima* in the Adriatic Greek Cities
- B. Religious practices in the Adriatic Greek towns
- C. The Adriatic cities in the Panhellenic sanctuaries

A. The Greek *nomima* in the Adriatic Greek Cities

- Citizenship, Institutions; laws and coins
- Two examples: Corcyra and Heracleia

B. Religious practices in the Adriatic Greek towns

- Cults
- Sanctuaries in the Adriatic Greek cities.
- Offerings to the God: a theatrical life in the Adriatic Greek cities?

Terracota, Fifth Century BC.



Voir B. Kirigin, « Palagruza, *Anticki Grci na tlu Hrvatske*, Zagreb, 2010, 107.

Voir B. Kirigin, « Issa », *Anticki Grci na tlu Hrvatske*, Zagreb, 2010, 123.



Masque tragique, Second or first
Century BC

C. The Adriatic cities in the Panhellenic sanctuaries

- Proxenies
- Participation in the international contests
- Monuments honoring the gods and celebrating the high deeds of an Adriatic Greek city (the case of Epidamnus and Apollonia)

Conclusions

- The Adriatic space as an open space or as a Greek Web
- Myths are used to enforce the Greek power in the Adriatic
- They are also used to enforce the Greek ancestry in this area and to underline their role in its history in an era dominated by Rome.

Conclusions

- The Adriatic space open new horizons for the Greeks.
- The Greek implantation in the Adriatic shores is real, even though the real location of some of the Greek *poleis* or harbours are still unknown.

Conclusions

- In the Adriatic shores the Greeks lived under the Greek *nomima*.
- The Adriatic space opens new roads, it increases different trades between Greeks and local or faraway populations.
- Its particular geography recalls somehow the Aegaeon one and could have nourished imperialistic ambitions.

Conclusions

- The Adriatic is an open space and claims for a better understanding.
- May this Erasmus Advanced Learning Project help us to improve our knowledge of Rab and, consequently, of the Adriatic space.

HVALA

Thank you very much

Grazie

Merci