

CONCEPT NOTE PROJECT TO BE SUBMITTED UNDER EUROPE FOR CITIZENS PROGRAMME

TITLE: CODNETTING EUROPE (to be discussed)

BACKGROUND:

In 1431, the Venetian merchant and nobleman Pietro Querini embarked from Crete with course for Flanders in Belgium. The ship was fully loaded with wine, spices and cypress wood. His journey would last from April 1431 until late autumn 1432, when 11 survivors from an original crew of 68 men returned to Venice after what must have been the journey of their lives.

The passage was affected by terrible misfortunes and accidents. When they finally approached the English Channel, they were lead out into the Atlantic Ocean west of Ireland by heavy storms. They lost the ship's rudder, and the sails were shattered by the strong wind. Right before Christmas the crew had to abandon the ship and embark the lifeboats. The two lifeboats soon lost sight of each other, but the biggest one, with 47 men on board remained afloat. Because of the bad weather, they had to throw much of their provisions over board, and most of the ship crew died of hunger, thirst, exhaustion and cold.

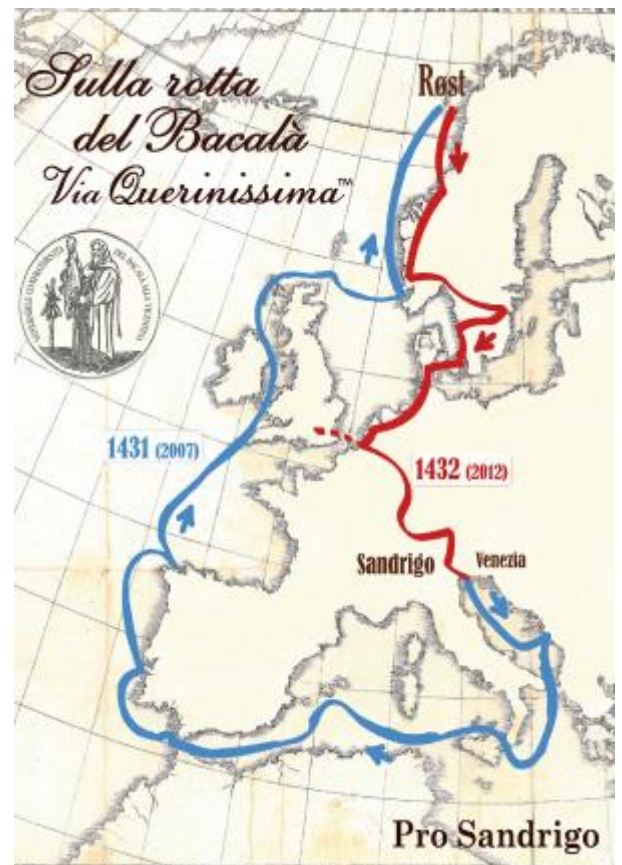
The 5th January 1432, after twenty days in the lifeboat, they finally landed on a desolate island on Røst 16 men had survived so far, and their joy was immense. They could see smoke from an island in the distance, but their lifeboat had gone leak, so they could not reach land. They were stranded at the island for 29 days, until they were saved by local fishermen. The Italians stayed on Røst from 3rd February until 14th May 1432. In this period they lived together with the inhabitants of Røst, and the two written stories from this stay, Querini's own and the crew's, give an unique insight into daily life in a fishing community in Northern Norway in the 15th Century.

Querini brought Norwegian stockfish with him back to Venice and Italy, marking the beginning of a warm relationship between Venice and Røst that would last for centuries.

This dramatic incident was the origin of trade between northern Norway and Italy, that made possible - among other beneficial outcomes - the combination of Norwegian stockfish and Italian cooking.

PROJECT IDEA

The idea is to set up a **network of municipalities and associations**, starting from the municipalities of Sandrigo (IT) and Røst (NO), working together on the common theme of the Via Querinissima in a long-term perspective. Considered the transnational approach of the project, the



Brussels Representation Offices of the Regions involved can play an active role in building the *consortium*, coordinating the partners and supporting the dissemination of the project results.

Participation in such a project should raise awareness on the richness of the cultural and culinary traditions in Europe. It should also promote mutual understanding and tolerance, thereby contributing to the development of a respectful, dynamic and multifaceted European identity. The idea is to create a European network that brings together all the Northern and Southern countries touched by Querini's route, thus encouraging mutual promotion of tangible and intangible heritage. History, culture, art and culinary traditions are put together in a project that integrates a range of activities that will target different selected groups of the civil society. As Querini's route included both EU and non-EU states and various Countries from Southern to Northern Europe were crossed, it is noteworthy that the project represents a great chance to bridge diversity along the European continent. It will be shown how culture, history and culinary traditions can build up a set of common values, shared experiences and best practices among different communities.

Querini's history teaches us values such as solidarity and intercultural learning that were experienced nearly six centuries ago but that already represents the core of our European identity. An insight into his travels is therefore an opportunity to ensure a better understanding of what makes us European citizens.

The main feature of this kind of project is the **active involvement of a large number of citizens**, especially the youngest generations. Considering that the project should **last** for a maximum of **2 years**, planning **at least 4 events** to be financed, we suggest to take into consideration the following **activities**:

- A **kick-off meeting** (the project must start **between 1-09-2015 and 31-12-2015**) in which all the partners involved will meet in order to better define the agenda and officially start the project (NO Budget – Skype conference).
- **Workshops in high-schools** (event 1): in order to guarantee a direct participation of the youngest part of the citizens, we should consider the opportunity to actively involve high-school students from catering colleges as our target group. The idea is to promote the culinary knowledge arising from all around Europe with regard to the stock-fish. Indeed, through the creation of a cookbook that collects the best cod-fish traditional receipts of each region involved (to be translated in English and in all the languages of the participating countries), the students will play a key participative role in the project. The workshops will represent an innovative approach in non-formal learning as students are directly involved in the learning process (participative approach) through the study of the traditional receipts and the preparation of the related dishes. The workshops will be organized in different areas, thus achieving (also) the local dimension of the project. The idea is to use culinary history to foster the dialogue between different cultures, thus promoting a common sense of European identity. As the cookbook will be translated in all the languages of the participating regions, it will contribute to mainstream the project results around EU. The final event (event 4) will represent the ideal occasion to present and promote the cookbook through the general public.
- **Two conferences** (event 2) will stimulate the debate on two complementary issues. The first conference will address the touristic and economic opportunities arising from the promotion of the Via Querinissima, the second one will deal with the cultural and historical heritage of the aforementioned route. Of course these events will represent an opportunity to raise awareness not

only about the history of Pietro Querini, but also about the values implied by his adventure: solidarity, mutual understanding and the change of the perception of immigrants through different historical periods. Local administrators from each of the town involved in the project are considered the ideal speakers to hold the conferences, yet an active participation from the civil society is to be expected in order for the conferences to better promote civic participation to the democratic life of EU. Therefore the conferences will bring together different stakeholders, such as policy makers, civil society organizations and the general public. The conferences will provide the opportunity to start an open discussion between citizens and policy makers, with the aim to provide inputs to the policy makers on the future initiatives and collaborations between municipalities and civic society organizations, thus allowing the citizens to provide inputs for the political agenda.

- **“Querini Opera” performance** (event 3, to be set in the city of Røst). The opera, written by the community of Røst, represents a valuable chance to further promote, through the means of arts, the values that emerge from Querini’s adventure. It is therefore expected that, through the opera, a deeper sense of common belonging will be transferred to participants. All the representatives of the regional and local authorities involved in the project will be invited to assist the Opera.
- **Final event** (event 4): it will be held during the *Sandriago Bacalà Fair* in September 2017 and it will aim to promote the project initiatives and to disseminate its results. In order to achieve that, the cookbook will be presented to the general public and it will be accompanied by a cooking show event where the receipts collected by the students during the workshops will be prepared by professional cooks coming from different Countries.

Dissemination activities: a proper dissemination is a crucial part in order to allow an effective transfer and exchange of the results foreseen by the project. To do so, the project should include a web site where all the activities related to the Via Querinissima network can be presented. The promotion of the cookbook represents another key activity: it shall be translated in English and in all the languages of the participating countries. Moreover, in order to reach the largest audience possible by different means of diffusion, social network promotion, as well as newsletters, brochures, flyers and the contacts of the Regional Representation Offices in Brussels will be considered too.

The project should serve as a basis for future initiatives and actions among the organizations involved on the issues addressed or possibly on further issues of common interest. In this sense we should consider activities as the submission of Via Querinissima as European Cultural Route to the Council of Europe, the participation in Expo Milan 2015 and the participation in ACQUAE 2015. This will also guarantee both a lasting effect of the funded activities and a maximization of the impact of the project.