

## Editorial

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With enormous sadness I am approaching this editorial both as son and as researcher in the field of road design and construction.

My Father,  
Professor Carlo Benedetto,  
Editor in Chief of *Advances in Transportation Studies*,  
Director of the Inter Universities Research Centre for Road Safety  
and Full Professor at the University of Roma Tre  
prematurely passed away and departed us  
in Rome on May 25<sup>th</sup> 2008.

His first pioneering researches were in the field of road materials and new technologies for road constructions. In the 70s he approached for the first time in Italy the problem of environmental impact of transportation infrastructures. In this field he played also a relevant role at the institutional level both in Italy as in the international scenario. More recently he has spent enormous efforts studying and investigating the road safety, under a very scientific perspective.

More than thirty years ago he reached important results in the field of soil stabilization with lime that have been cited for years and today yet. These results found applications in many cases, in a first time for road constructions and later they were applied also for railways building. In this last case the Italian High Speed Railway must be mentioned.

He contributed to optimize the most diffused tests for hot asphalt mixes, such as the Marshall test, developing experimental activities for many years in the laboratory of road at the University of Rome "La Sapienza" and in the last fifteen years at the laboratory University of Roma Tre. This laboratory was created and established by him and now it is an important lab where new equipment for testing road materials have been developed and licensed.

The researches and works of professor Carlo Benedetto in the field of environmental impact of transportation infrastructures have had a great relevance in the scientific community as well as for the institutional counterparts. He developed in Italy the first national regulations for the Environmental Impact Assessment in the 80s. He was coordinator of the EIA national Commissions for the civil engineering works. Today, after more than twenty years, his ideas and paradigms are considered valid and are frequently applied.

His main principle was that through the environmental assessment the quality of the project of a civil work could be improved. Following this principle he contributed to improve the standard of the most important civil works between the 80s and 90s. From the mentioned High Speed Railway to many motorways in Italy.

His last effort, after having worked for the infrastructure and for the environment, was for the protection of human life. His last researches have been developed in the field of road safety.

One time more in his professional life professor Carlo Benedetto has been exploring new frontier, investigating, for more than fifteen years, the theme of road safety.

Personally I remember when he had the intuition that road safety should have been considered as a topic really more complex rather than it was considered. He listed to me the amount of variables on which safety depends. It was a Christmas of many years ago.

In that occasion we discussed together on the possibility to use a neural network approach to understand how a set of possible causes generates an accident. From that discussion my father and professor De Blasiis started a very profitable research activity that is well presented in a paper published in 2004 on this Journal.

Professor Carlo Benedetto was one of the firsts at the end of the 80s proposing a multidisciplinary approach for the investigations in the field of road safety. He proposed to integrate different disciplines to improve the research and pressed psychologists, pavement engineers, mathematicians and statisticians, as well as transportation and electronic engineers to work together.



*Professor Carlo Benedetto at work*

He understood that in the last decades the prevalent mechanism of road accidents generation is correlated to driver behaviors under specific traffic or environmental situations. It seems obvious now to all the readers of *ATS* but when he proposed such an approach it was not easily accepted from many that considered the accident only as the extreme consequence of a kinetic or dynamic event or cascade of events.

In other words he experimented the difficulties to persuade who was convinced that accident is only generated if friction decreases and tire-pavement contact fails that the risk of accident is related to vehicles interferences, human factors, environmental aspects.

I had the privilege to start together with the first team of the University of Roma Tre the fantastic adventure to publish this international Journal under the supervision of the Editor in Chief Professor Carlo Benedetto.

In 2002 we shared with enthusiasm the project of an international Journal and we turned to reality the ideas for the future. In November 2003 we launched *Advances in Transportation Studies*, today known as *ATS* in many parts of the world, when we were only a few, humble, but with a common and pervasive aim: contributing to the dissemination of researches, results and applications in the field of transportation.

I have the certainty that, five years ago, nobody of us could have expected some good and encouraging results for *ATS*.

During five years, from 2003 to now, 140 papers have been published in the Journal. All these papers have been referred by the members of the Panel of Referee and by the member of the Editorial Board.

During five years about 30% of the papers submitted to the Journal for possible publication have been accepted in the original form, about 33% have been rejected after review and the last 37% have been accepted after revisions.

Authors from 30 different countries have been contributed to the *Journal*.

The community that has been contributing since 2003 to the *Journal* has developed in the years an important network of researchers that work in the field of road safety and design. The community, following the idea of Carlo Benedetto, collects researchers and scholars in different topics.

In 2007, one year ago and few months before his departure, he organized and chaired the International Conference on Road Safety and Simulation RSS2007. It was one of the most important event all over the world for road safety researchers in 2007.

After the Conference I received many letters of congratulations both for the scientific contents of the papers that have been presented, both for the organization. About 150 papers have been presented. More than 360 authors from over 40 different countries all over the world have been contributed.

About 500 people have visited during these days the Conference and 60 delegates from Italian and international press have been in Rome.



*Professor Carlo Benedetto, keynote speaker at the International Conference on Road Safety and Simulation, Rome 2007*

As expected the Italian Minister for Transportation has chaired twice the Conference, all the Opening Session long and the presentation of the new Italian Transportation Plan. The Deputy Minister of Saudi Arabia, the representative of Buenos Aires Susecretariat have been at the Conference as the CEO of Autostrade per l'Italia.

In my opinion what has been greatly strategic and relevant was the preliminary idea to match together different scholars from different disciplines. It has been widely appreciated that engineers, psychologists, human factors experts, computer scientists have been sitting at the same tables.

Now the international transportation community and *ATS* readers regret the premature pass-away of Professor Carlo Benedetto after a long and tough fight with his serious illness.

He has left his beloved wife, the families of his two sons and one daughter, and the mother. With them hundreds of students are sincerely and generously taking part to our sorrow and grief. Everybody who lived or worked with him remembers him as a dedicated professor, always available for his students, as a passionate transportation engineer, generous with University and Institutions, enthusiastic, full of energy until his very last hours of life and curious as a researcher has to be for every innovating aspect of the profession and life in general.

In the last year of his life he asked me to take the role of the Editor in Chief of the Journal *Advances in Transportation Studies*. Of course I was honored by such an invitation but at the same time I personally feared the deep significance of it. I played for time, I stall, but now I have to be the new Editor in Chief of a Journal that, thanks to my father, is well known and diffused in the international scientific community.

I worked hard for the Journal, from the first moment and I believed it could be an important reference for researchers coming from all part of the world. Now I hope to be up to the requested task, I will depend on all the persons that contributed and want to keep on contributing to the success of the Journal, from the Associate Editors to the members of the Editorial Board, from the Referees to my personal assistants.



*Professor Carlo Benedetto in his house in a typical Italian country side  
with some of his students 8 years ago*

Andrea Benedetto, Professor, University Roma Tre, Rome, Italy  
Editor in Chief *ATS*

