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Volume 1, Issue 1, 2014

Subset Humanities 1



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Photo of the cover: mosaic floor from the Villa Romana del Casale (Sicily), with the group of young women wearing costumes remarkably similar to modern bikinis.

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Editorial Note

I have the pleasure to publish the first issue of the GeoProgress Journal; a new scientific initiative offering to researchers an opportunity to publish the findings of their analyses and reflections, engage with a wider audience, discuss and validate their results with other scholars.

The Geoprogress Journal has an international dimension and it is posted online with free access, coherently with the non-profit nature of the association to which the Journal belongs (Geoprogress onlus).

The journal covers research in the area of Development Studies and Local Planning. It applies geographic methods to solve problems concerning several elements of the terrestrial system (or geosystem), which can be divided into four subsystems (physical, socio-economic, ideological-cultural and political-institutional) corresponding to the journal subsets.

Priority will be given to problems and policies of specific interest for the Geoprogress association which affect the local and the global scale and include: the cultural and socio-economic life, ecosystems, landscape and art-historical heritage, methods of territory governance, the progress of democracy in its various conceptions and of each nation's sovereignty. Moreover, priority will be given to research providing for suggestions and policy recommendations contributing to the gradual overcoming of internal and international conflicts and of all forms of discrimination, exploitation and social injustice.

This first issue publishes papers evaluated during a call for paper restricted to Italian scholars, whose works are generally unknown to the international audience for language reasons. The papers mostly deal with tourism resources, with a special emphasis to thermal places, linking natural landscapes of the past, the features of the settlement model, and the cultural heritage.

The next calls are open and will be disseminated to worldwide scholars to fully reflect the international nature of the Journal and to widen the scientific debate.

Every issue will be identified with an evocative image. Looking for an image for this issue, thermal baths and Sicily reminded me of the expansion of the spa under the Roman Empire and particularly the spa in the Villa Romana del Casale (Piazza Armerina, at the center of the Island). It is a great cultural heritage of humanity protected by UNESCO, especially for its outstanding mosaic floors, such as represented by the cover image.

Emer. Prof. Francesco Adamo, Editor in Chief

**GEOGRAPHY AND PLACE-NAMES.
ECHOES OF THE TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURAL WORLD IN THE
PLACEN NAME OF TUSCANY**

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Abstract

One century ago, geography studied the place-name especially to find its own terminology. Today, the geographical approach in the toponymic study is especially useful for awakening the sense of belonging to place. An interesting example of the contribution that the place names can offer to study the local identity is represented by the names related to the traditional rural world. The place names of areas such as Tuscany are expressive indicators of local identity.

1. Introduction

The application of geographical studies to place names, despite its many interesting aspects – it suffices to consider their reflections on the landscape in toponomastics or in the contribution that toponyms can make in reconstructing environmental features of the past, for example the extension of wooded areas or the layout of ancient trails and roads, to mention but two - has never been particularly exploited in Italian geography. Nevertheless, a good number of excellent studies have been carried out, such as G. Ricchieri's and O. Marinelli's in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and those directed by O. Baldacci and A. Sestini in the second half of the twentieth.

It should be noted that early twentieth century studies of Italian geography were dictated mainly by the need to define a strictly scientific approach to geographical studies by providing it with a suitable vocabulary. As a result, research into dialectal geographical terms have made significant headway (see bibliography) with the investigations of Baldacci's students in the 1970s, which explored these terms as they exist in various Italian regions. Sestini then promoted a series of projects on particular types of geographic phenomena and on the entire toponymic corpus of a single area in order to investigate the relationship between its geographical landscape and its place names.

In Tuscany - inspired by the effacement of micro place names due to the waning of the traditional economy - researches have tended to focus on the criteria for defining geographical indicators in the collection of place names and on the criteria for revising place names in large-scale cartography.

At the end of the 1990's, more or less contemporarily with the breakdown of micro toponyms, place names gained full entitlement as a part of Italy's cultural heritage, as they bear upon both the many traditional aspects of territorial organization and the perception that centuries of generations have had of their living environment. These considerations are clearly manifest in the areas of ancient settlement typical of Italy. The drafting of criteria for the collection and recovery operations which have been conducted in several parts of the Italian territory (for example in the province of Trento) are a demonstration of this.

A personal memory. In the early 1980's it took considerable effort for me to reconstruct the toponomastic mesh of a small Apennine valley whose settlement consisted mainly of scattered houses, but nowadays almost all the houses bear signs with their own names.

It should be noted that large-scale maps have been a key document for identifying and collecting names relevant to various categories of geographic interest. I refer in particular to IGM maps on a scale of 1:25000, a document which even today is irreplaceable, albeit not without errors. In the past, research was slow and difficult, but today's modern technologies have made it possible to speed up the collection and construction of themes. But the researcher's care and attention are irreplaceable. Forty years ago it took me two years to collect the place names linked to the natural vegetation in Tuscany, while last year it took only fifteen days for a student, Federica Frondizi, to achieve the same results of forty years ago.

Notwithstanding the researcher's commitment and the gis technologies that make it possible to set DB and construct thematic maps with ease, I repeat that these devices cannot replace the scientific expertise needed not only to read and interpret a theme but also to realize its very construction.

Geotoponomastic studies can now receive a fresh impulse from the affirmation of certain principles, such as assigning primary importance to a territory's historical memory as a fundamental component of development based on sustainability. A territory's historical memory is believed capable of promoting mechanisms of awareness and self-recognition in the local population, thus enhancing the ability to interpret the traces left by centuries of generations. And what component of historical memory is more effective than place names in representing the human perception of a living environment by the populations that have succeeded one another down through the ages?

An interesting example of the contribution that the place names can offer to the study of 'local identity is represented by the names related to the traditional rural world.

The place names in ancient settlement areas like ours, in fact, are the result of a centuries-old perception of their living environment by the different waves of settlers in a given territory. For example, today's Tuscany has some pre-Indo-European names and many Etruscan, Latin, Neo-Latin, and Germanic names.

In addition to landscape, the toponymic corpus of areas inhabited since ancient times is also a palimpsest of signs and meanings, not just as the result of different languages but also that of the large number of conceptual categories of which that

corpus is an expression. The names applied to the most varied geographical referents, such as watercourses, forms of soil and settlements may refer in fact to the most diverse objects and phenomena. For example, the names of settlements, to cite an object that par excellence possesses a proper denomination, may be suggested by vegetation (Casa Faeto), hydrography (Riomaggiore), forms of soil (Montenero), family names, and so on.

Secondly, in Tuscany, primary activities have played an important role in the construction of place names, not only because agricultural activities are the organizational basis of rural areas, but also because the sharecropping system, which began in the fourteenth century, favored a wide distribution of the population and thus the formation of a large number of place names.

It is worth noting that today, after the almost complete disappearance of traditional agricultural methods, there is a general belief that the historical memory of rural areas plays a significant role in the definition of milieu, thus facilitating the processes of self-recognition by local populations.

For all of these reasons, as part of a series of researches dedicated to the cultural heritage of the rural world and to the role of historical memory in the processes of local development, a few years ago Monica Meini and I undertook to compile the traditional agricultural terminology of Tuscany, with specific reference to terminology that in our opinion was likely to have generated place names.

Starting with a basic list of terms about the organization and arrangement of soils and crops, contained in Cassi's and Maruccini's repertory of 'Geographical Indicators' for Toponymic Indexing (1998), which comprised more than a hundred language and dialectal agricultural terms related to the territory of Italy, a great number of sources were detected.

First of all, E. Sereni's *Storia del paesaggio agrario italiano*, Eugenio Canevazzi's *Dizionario di agricoltura* (1889), and Paul Scheuermeier's *Atlante lessicale toscano, Il lavoro dei contadini* (1980); then the repertories of Gerhard Rolfs, Pietro Fanfani's *Vocabolario dell'uso toscano* (Firenze: G. Barbera, 1863), Giuseppe Rigutini's *Giunte ed osservazioni al Vocabolario toscano* (1864), Idelfonso Nieri's *Vocabolario lucchese* (1901), Ubaldo Cagliariitano's *Vocabolario senese* (1975), Giuseppe Fatini's *Vocabolario amiatino* (Barbera, 1953), Giuseppe Malagoli's *Vocabolario pisano* (1839), Ottaviano Targioni Tozzetti's *Relazioni*, up to the *Cultura contadina in Toscana*, edited by Renato Stopani.

By limiting the choice to the terms likely to have toponomastic links, we collected over 3000 lemmas, which, in collaboration with Valeria Santini, were submitted for verification in the toponomastic database (1:25000 maps) of the Military Geographic Institute, for the purpose of identifying the place names referable to them.

Despite the wide range of the terminologies we collected, representing only a part of existing corpus, and despite the fact that the mass of toponyms refers to geographic features of the rural world, the toponymic data were relatively modest, except for certain types of designations, such as those deriving from terms related to cultivated vegetation and forestry.

Faced with the many toponyms linked to the cultivation of olives and vines (along with their variant and derived forms), to mention but two especially important cultivated plants of the Tuscan environment, and the remarkable group of names related to forestry (ronco, ranco, debbio, rassiccia, etc.), i.e. the set of terms related to agriculture, such as tools or household goods used by farmers, or to farming

methods, etc., did not produce significant results in terms of numbers, especially when compared with the number of toponyms produced from other conceptual matrices, such as natural vegetation, forms of soil, and settlements.

Indubitably, many of these terms – it is sufficient to recall the 36 items related to the yoke, as well as those related to parts of the yoke, as gathered by Stopani - could hardly have a toponymic bearing, since the coining of a place name follows a logic that requires a certain 'density' of the word matrix in terms of 'visual imprint' or at least the capacity to characterize the object to be named. It is evident that the presence of arboreal vegetation, a characteristic shape of the soil, an architectural element, or a person's name can easily suggest a place name, while an herb, a specialized tool or a specific function such as a technique of grafting, are unlikely to function as conceptual matrices. No wonder then that, except for a small number of lemmas, such as those relating to reservoirs for "collecting water after their deviation from the river bed through artificial channels," such as *conserva*, *bottaccio*, *margone*, *gora*, most have produced only a few place names (e.g., *presura*, *cigliere*, *archetta*, *arcile*, *magolo*, *tramezzo*).

There remains, however, the fact that - even though the 36 terms relating to the yoke or to different kinds of rakes, to cite but one instance, did not contribute to place names - the terminological and toponymic corpus related to traditional agricultural activities is a significant component of cultural identity, especially in times like the present, when, in addition to the waning of the traditional agricultural economy, the local populations are only in part autochthonous. Therefore, the historical memory of rural areas can act as an inter- and intra-generational bond and stimulate processes of awareness which, through an improved perception of their territories, can contribute to mechanisms of autonomous development. And if the direct descendants of the native population have the primary responsibility for conserving the historical memory of rural areas, knowledge of their traditions can be useful also for the 'new' populations of our territories.

SPORT AND TOURISM FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The paper aims to analyse the relationship between sport and tourism. Starting from the literature on sport tourism and tourism sport, we examine the impact of a sporting event in terms of tourist flow in relation to the provision of sporting facilities in the Italian regions. The sport tourism, as argued by Charles Pigeassou, constitutes in fact an original product, taking into account both relations between tourism and sport, but also a real osmosis of sport activities with the touristic ones.

Mega events, like the Olympics, or local events as city marathons exert an increasingly significant role in positioning the resort in the tourist market, improving image, local amenities and infrastructure in general.

Sports tourism could be a driving force for local development, community cohesiveness, economics benefits, social incentives, positioning the localities in the touristic market, improving their image.

1. Introduction

The issue of tourism development, related with sport events, is an aspect of growing relevance for its impact in terms of economic regeneration, but also for its impact on the quality of life. Extraordinary and global mega-events, such as the Olympic Games, or local events such as city marathons are achieving a growing importance in positioning the localities in the touristic market, improving their image, endowments and territorial infrastructures in general. In particular, considering sports mega-events, cities like Barcelona grew their touristic attractiveness thanks to the Summer Olympics in 1992; also the case of Turin 2006 seems interesting from this point of view (Dansero, Puttilli, 2009).

The observation of a touristic flow related to sport events generated in the Eighties researches on the relationship between tourism and sport, bringing to the creation of a stream of literature referred to as “sport-tourism” or “tourism-sport” – definition appeared in Europe and in the United States in order to characterize a set of activities originated by the synergies between tourism and sport. The sport tourism, as argued by Charles Pigeassou, constitutes in fact an original product, taking into account both relations between tourism and sport, but also a real osmosis of sport activities with the touristic ones (Piegeassou, 2003).

The sport tourism is generated where there is an endowment of infrastructures able to attract events, but also when large events stimulate the building of new infrastructures – besides leaving a heritage of assets that could contribute to the diffusion of sport activities among residents, improving their quality of life.

The aim of paper is to analyze the relationship between sport and tourism. The paper is organized as follows: the second chapter presents an overview of some studies on the subject. The paragraph 3 provides a monitoring of the situation of the sport facilities in Italy in relation to the increase in sport. The paragraph 4 is intended to emphasize the demand for sport and the paragraph 5 the positive role of sporting events favoring the recovery of existing structures and the creation of new facilities.

2. The relationship between sport and tourism

The relationship between sport, events and tourism received a growing attention from the international literature, from both the theoretical and methodological point of view, while in the Italian debate it has been discussed only recently. A surprising absence, if one considers the economic and cultural relevance of tourism and sport in the country.

Nevertheless, referring to research on the issue for a more detailed discussion of the scientific debate (Dansero, Pioletti, Puttilli, 2008), we will mention in this discussion some aspects that put in relationship the availability of facilities, the events, economic regeneration and quality of life.

The distinction in the literature between sport tourism and tourism sport is tackled by Sue Glyptis (1991), which focuses attention on the fact that the two phenomena, sport tourism and tourism sport, are treated by scholars separately as two different spheres of activity. The researcher seeks to identify the behavior of participants in sports activities and those of the tourists. His reading sees the link between sport and tourism in terms of governance, strategic planning, development opportunities and services, urban planning and promotion of a territory (Glyptis, 1991).

A study on the Italian context (CONI - CENSIS, 2008) presents the sports tourism as an extension of sport activities loisir. The sport tourism became an important means for the touristic development of territory.

Sports tourism can serve as a tool to improve relations and regional and local development. In this regard Chris Gratton offers a definition of economic regeneration as an effect of sport activities referring to a growth in local income and employment through a sport-related economic activity. This might include or not an improvement of local infrastructures for physical activity (sport, non sport, or both). The research by Gratton is referred to the framework of the Anglo-Saxon world. In the USA many cities made huge efforts to benefit to enhance the sports. Some strategies used to improve the touristic attractiveness are based on the presence or the creation of professional teams of football, baseball, ice hockey and basketball – which constitute, thanks to their popularity, a promotional window for the hosting area.

A second strategy of economic regeneration is directed to the improvement of existing facilities. In the period between 1987 and 2003, in the USA, 80% of

stadiums have been replaced or refurbished, despite the fact that the impact of these choices has been discussed from opposite sides. Some scholars, as Crompton in the late Seventies, argued that the advantages for a city are related to an improvement in the image of the community, with benefits on the perception of the city by its residents thanks to the fact to be in possession of a professional sport team (Crompton, 1979).

Sport events represent an important factor of touristic attractiveness, which interests several categories of participants (Deery, Jago, Fredline, 2004): sportsmen (the protagonists of the event) with their entourage (trainers, instructors, managers, etc.), the audience, the press, and the delegates of sports federations, technicians and so on. The events employ a growing number of people in their organization, management and in their marketing. Frequently, sport events raise a great attention and expectation, such as all the ritual activities attached to them. Events such as the Olympic Games include ceremonies and parties, and it is common to build a program of special events (for example cultural events) that are related to the sport event, in order to keep the audience and the media interested. These are all activities that enforce the role of the events as attractors of tourism flows.

Walo, Bull and Breen (1996) demonstrated that events such as the international University tournaments (Universiades) provide an excellent economic publicity for the community, thanks to the sales of food and beverages to the audience. The community participates to the event with the involvement of volunteers in its organization, and this provides economic benefits to restaurants and pubs.

The sport event frequently includes a set of public initiatives whose success depends on the involvement of the local community and the natural or built attractions that could appeal to the cultural interests of visitors. Other kind of sport initiatives, such as smaller events, requires little investment and use existing facilities and volunteer work for the management and control.

Any sport event generates a touristic flow of little or large dimension, that generates opportunities for cultural changes, revitalizes the local tradition, improves the quality of life and enforces the image of the community.

The organization of an event has, on the sociological point of view, the ability to build social cohesion strengthening the relationships in the community. The festival demonstrates in a symbolic way that a society believes in its existence and when a social group celebrates a specific event, it celebrates itself (Turner, 1982). Thus, festivals and special events strengthen the social and cultural identity building strong links between members of the community.

The growth of festivals and special events in numbers, diversity and popularity has been enormous in years (Grusoy, Kim, Uysal, 2004). Many communities developed or have been actively developing new festivals and events as leisure and cultural pursuits for residents, as well as for their economic and community development benefits. The development of new festivals and special events opens up a series of research questions regarding the social, environmental and cultural impacts of festivals and special events on local communities, the dynamics of local community-festival and special event organizers relations, the changing relations between key interest groups, and the scope of community involvement and so forth (Gursoy, Kim, Uysal, 2004).

Among the socio-economical factors pointed out as items of the impact of festivals and special events we could mention:

- cohesion of the community: income for local projects, improvements of the image of the community, building of the community pride, support for the preservation of local culture and internal cohesion;
- economic benefits: growth in employment opportunities, improvement of life standards, promotion of new opportunities among local actors;
- social costs: growth in traffic and congestion, pressure on local services, growth in the crime rate;
- social incentives: recreational opportunities, promotion of organizational and business opportunities, leisure activities intended to families, improvement of the image towards the outsiders, opportunities for the creation of relationships between residents and visitors, education for the population.

There are negative effects arising from the risk of increasing inequalities between the different strata of society or between different geographical areas of the city. This depends on several factors: the spatial concentration of the facilities and infrastructure in specific areas of the city; the increase of the public debt, which can impact heavily on future public investment in various services; the lack of consultation with local communities who are deprived of the ability to decide on issues relating to their future. In addition, the concentration of investments in degraded areas of the city can lead to a process of gentrification (Owen, 2001).

Sport events can be grouped according to various criteria, one being the time span as proposed by Crompton (Crompton, 1979). His model includes four kinds of events:

- Type A with irregular frequency: these are the most important events generating significant economic activity and interest of the media (such as Olympics, World Cups);
- Type B events with large numbers of viewers, generating significant economic activity, media interest and part of an annual series of national events such as Wimbledon;
- Type C irregular events with irregular participation of audience, with an uncertain level of economic activity (eg. Grand Prix athletics);
- Type D sporting events that generate a modest economic activity and are related to a stage of the annual competition (ex National Championships in many sports).

Donald Getz (2008) conducted various studies on sport events and differentiates between sport events (competition in which are involved pros or amateurs and the audience) and recreational events (festivals with several sports or games with a recreational purpose, usually intended for the young population). In the study of sport events, the author proposes to consider some antinomies¹:

- the separation between professionals and amateurs, for what concerns the participants;
- indoor or outdoor, as to the place where the event takes place;
- regular, irregular or scheduled (league matches or championships), occasional or unique frequency of the events;
- the local, regional or international scale;
- the presence of participants, of the audience or both.

¹ Antinomies should not be considered as self-excluding. Some events, in fact, might entail antinomies and different characteristics.

In a geographical perspective, we can refer to the concepts of space, place and environment used by Bale (1994) for the spatial analysis of sport events².

Among different kind of sport events, we should differentiate between mega-events and smaller events. Mega-events are interesting for their importance for sports and tourism and for their impact in terms of territorial transformations. The global competition between cities and territories for hosting mega-events testifies the role that they play as opportunities for territorial regeneration and improvement of the image of places, both factors that could be determinant for the success on the international tourism markets (Gibson, Willming, Holdnak, 2003). Nevertheless season competitions such as ice hockey, basketball, soccer and rugby – both in their master edition or for disabled persons (Higham, 1999), taking place in existing facilities and thus requiring little use of public funds, are more easily manageable in terms of crowds and traffic if compared to a mega-event – and reduce the season effects.

The international literature recognized the relationship between sport events and touristic development, an aspect that should be studied in Italy on both the theoretical and empirical level, while there is a growing territorial competition for hosting the largest sport events. In order to provide an adequate methodology, it should be useful to define the various territorial and spatial impacts of sport events: on one side building a map of the different kind of events and their potential spatial and touristic impact; secondly analyzing in detail some examples of the relevance of the sport event for the hosting territory. The following sections are intended to provide some insights on the issue, despite the fact that it deserves a more widespread and analytic discussion.

3. The state of sport facilities in Italy

The definition of sport in the “European sports chart” issued by the European Council is: sport “means all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organized participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels” (Pioletti, 2008, p. 150).

The sport activity is a voluntary and has the psychophysical equilibrium as its aim. The choice of performing is free, but each sport needs a defined adequate space, indoor or outdoor.

In the 1920s and 1930s stadiums have been built to affirm the role of sports through events, mainly in soccer or athletics. After Second World War a new concept of sport is progressively being diffused among all social classes and opens to various contributions. Sport events became not only a mean for diffusing the performance, but also opportunity to meet sportsmen from far areas of the country.

² Bale (1994) analyzes soccer and the sense of place generated by the stadium, a legitimated heir of the “agorà” or the “foro”, the place where the loyalty and the sense of belonging is materialized. Soccer fans see in the stadium the materialization of the “sense of place”. Thanks to the frequency of the sport matches, the name of the city in which events take place are diffused among millions of people in a country, providing a free promotion for places otherwise unknown and not involved in the largest touristic circuits. The success of a club attracts the interest by medias and works also as a powerful mean for collective identification with a place.

The circular nr. 1 of September 16th 1959 of the Ministry of Tourism and Arts, from which the National Olympic Committee depends, states the creation of a thousand million lire fund to provide funding for sport facilities “that constitute a coefficient for the growth of tourism”. The program involves swimming pools, tennis fields, cableways and ski lifts (Bonini, Verratti, 2008). It is the first attempt of doing a survey on the facilities endowment in Italy, a picture of the state of the art before the Olympic Games in Rome in 1960. Data collected are as a matter of fact rather generic, surveying 34.936 basic facilities. A new attempt is made in 1978: this survey points out a 23% growth in available facilities. Also in this case the information on the endowments is generic and only one year before the World Soccer Championship in Italy 1990 a survey of sports facilities is promoted by CONI, ISTAT and Istituto del Credito Sportivo (ICS).

In the half of Nineties, also according to updated laws, the discussion points out the need for updated information on the state of sport facilities in Italy, according to both active and non active facilities.

The first detailed survey on the endowments in Italy has been made in 2005 by the Consiglio Nazionale dell’Economia e del Lavoro (CNEL), in collaboration with representatives from the Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali, the CONI, and representatives from Regions, Districts and Communes. The survey is organized in three levels:

- 1) quantitative analysis of the facilities (data and indicators);
- 2) qualitative analysis of the facilities, with a survey involving the municipalities;
- 3) case studies of “good management practices”.

The data show the existence of 148.880 spaces devoted to sports as basic facilities, while 14.590 facilities (9,8%) are “non active”. In 1996 the spaces devoted to sports are 144.380, while in the 1989 Census they are 133.886 – with a 3,2% growth in 2003-1996 and a 7,7% growth in 1996-1989.

As to the qualitative comparative studies in the different areas of the country, the geographical areas considered are the territorial partitions (North-west, North-East, Center, South and Islands) and the municipalities according to population classes. The sources are: the national census on sport facilities in 1989 (updated in 1996 by Coni, Istat and ICS); regional census; surveys made by Districts and Communes and their associations such as UPI (Unione delle Province Italiane) and ANCI (Associazione Nazionale dei Comuni Italiani), ICS funding post-1996 and funding by Cassa Depositi e Prestiti.

According to data organized by regional territories and different kind of infrastructures, the number of facilities in 1996 was 144.280.

Areas devoted to sports belong to different typologies that could be simplified in:

- sport area (or primary system): a space conformed to allow the practice of one or more sports;
- sport facility: a collection of one or more areas of activity of the same type or different types of accessories they have in common spaces and / or ancillary services;
- sport complex: one or more sports facilities with shared components, accessories and service spaces;
- area of unconventional sport: a space or a place where there are mostly outdoor sports equipment, including non certified ones, anyway used as a place of sport.

As the authors of the survey declare, they did not take into account of unused areas, not working facilities and changes in land-use which occurred in some areas and facilities. In some regions the surveys are based on estimations and do not take account of the new facilities built after 1996. Data available thus offer an un-complete map, which should be updated at the level of provinces.

A 60% of facilities in Italy have been built before 1981, a 30% in the Eighties, 5% between 1991 and 1996 and 3,4% is esteemed after 1996. Among the most recent sport facilities, the football (five-a-side) fields in Northern Italy and swimming pools in the South (CNEL, 2005).

The interviews conducted by Istat on cultural consumption of the Italians allow to relate the costs for sporting events relation to the number of sporting facilities in the Italian regions. The available data are unfortunately few and reduced to a period of time ranging from 1989 to 2007. Revelations sporting facilities are referred to the research conducted by the Olympic Committee in 1989 and 1996 and the Report of the CNEL on the situation of the sports facilities in Italy to 2003 (CNEL, 2005). The costs for sporting events are the subject of multipurpose household survey investigations by Istat years 1987-1991 (Istat, 1989 and 1993) and on cultural statistics for the year 2007 (Istat, 2009). In the last Italian Statistical Yearbook from 2008 shows the number of tickets sold but not the expenses incurred by the Italian for sporting events (Istat, 2013).

Over the years, the number of sports facilities increasing from 59 743 in 1989 to 70 030 in 1996, to 200 944 in 2003. Some regions have seen a huge increase as the Piedmont went from 5,779 (1989) to 22 915 (2003) and Tuscany from 4,090 to 31 536 facilities. In contrast, the Valle d'Aosta has grown from 487 to 321 facilities. Regarding the costs, Campania region is revealed with greater spending on sporting events with € 258 755 523 (1991). The costs per resident ranging from 0.85 of Basilicata to 16.85 euros in Emilia Romagna. In 2007, the costs remain high with the maximum peak in Piedmont (€ 334.42 million), followed by Lombardy with 151.235.00 one.

3.1 The demand for sport

If in the Sixties and Seventies 80 per cent of individual time was devoted to work and 20 per cent to leisure, the 21st century starts with a 40% of time devoted to leisure – a 50 per cent in perspective. Running through the last sixty years of our life, according to the endowment of facilities, we could see that a first period until the Seventies was characterized by a policy oriented to public investments for soccer fields and stadiums. From the Seventies the model is towards an integration of sport with other leisure activities and mixing different disciplines. In order to see a change in the mentality, one need to wait for the Eighties, when multi-purpose facilities are planned, in which side by side the sports club, club houses and other typologies of facilities are diffused thanks to private contributors. At the beginning of the new century two models became popular: the “specialism” model, with franchising networks based on fitness and the “multi-sports container” with the presence of multi-sports containers and areas for restaurants and other activities. The two models share the size: the areas become even larger with huge investments involving private contributors. The new stadiums or the “sport cities”, large

architectonic structures, are built side by side with buildings intended for other commercial functions. They are not only spaces for physical activity, but spaces intended for an integrated consumption of free-time.

The demand for sports and physical activities goes beyond the traditional sectors, preferring the building an opening of private spaces for physical activities, especially in urban areas, intended for the fitness.

The physical activity contributes to an improvement of the quality of life and to provide the state of well-being that we could define "health". In the framework of sedentary and urban lifestyles, there is a need, even at the institutional level, to promote the environment as a place for sustainable activities in the natural environment, such as the case of parks, and the regeneration of urban areas as an integrated life environment for meeting, activity, and play for children and seniors (CNEL, 2005).

The interaction with the environment is not news in particular for those sports that need natural areas, but the approach is different towards non conventional spaces, which becomes less related to niche disciplines, frequently performed at professional level but intended for a diffused leisure behavior.

Users can now do activity at various levels: amateur, in which participation is individual and free, dilettante, with the attendance to organized classes, as pre-professional and professional activity to those belonging to sport associations and for particular kind of users. The amateur participation and the pre-professional and professional one include competitions and tournaments in which participants need to buy a ticket, thus allowing surveys on the number of participants.

4. Sports events and tourism

The relationship between sport events and tourism has been studied only recently in Italy, as demonstrated by studies on the topic (Montanari 2003; Dansero; Puttilli, 2009), but has produced a discussion on tourism policy. The preparation of a mega-event needs what Raffestin (1980) calls production of territory, leaving a heritage to the community in terms of a territorial capital (Dematteis, Governa, 2005) that could be promoted by a far-seeing tourism policy.

A sport event has undisputed benefits on the territory as it allows the regeneration of infrastructures and areas of the city otherwise declining; in small sized cities already perceived as touristic destinations based on specific specializations such as sports, the event could contribute to strengthen their international positioning.

A sports event could contribute to an improvement of the physical, relational and network territorial capital. The inheritance of an event, could contribute to stimulate tourism policy in a medium-long time span. These policies might be understood as a process of producing "a project territory" (Dansero, Mela, 2007), in which the needs of visitors and tourists coexist (Innocenti, 2007). The event, from an extraordinary factor, could become a tool for managing the ordinary needs of residents, also in its ability of attracting tourism flows.

The transformation of the city goes side by side with important innovations in the territorial and environmental transformations and in the elaboration of environmental plans (waste management, water), in the choices for innovative architectural solutions such as bio-architecture (Dansero, Putilli, 2009).

In 2009 has been presented the “1st Society and Sport Report”, by CONI and CENSIS. The report does not take into account the assessment of the expenditure in the sport sector and the lack of an updated survey of facilities (the last survey has been made in 2003). This prevents us from doing a social assessment of sport, of its impact in terms of attractiveness but also as a tool for improving the quality of life of residents. Nevertheless, the Report shows that if the average expenditure on tourism is 9000 billions, a significant share is due to sport tourism. In 2008, the Italian citizens spent 7,3 billions of euros in activities related to sport tourism, +16% on the amount and +18% on travels compared to 2007 (6,3 billions of euros in expenditure) (Econstat, 2009). The survey shows that sports entail more than 15% of the vacations of Italian citizens: it represents a growing sector according to travels for participating in sport activities (+76%) and according to the attendance to events (24%). The available figure is aggregated, while one of the few researches on the value of sport tourism in the Italian provinces has been done by a private consultant body, Econstat (www.econstat.it).

Sport tourism generates in Italy a market up to 7-8 billions of euros, +62,5% from 2003 (Censis-Coni, 2008). The interest is growing, with an economic impact of the events in the areas where competitions take place. According to data from ISNART (Istituto Nazionale Ricerche Turistiche), in 2007, 15,2% of Italian citizens performed sport activity while on vacation and 2,8% attended to sport events. An event such as the Rome Marathon had 14.500 participants in 2008 (8.800 Italians and 5.700 from 76 different countries). In the previous year participants have been 12.500, with a growth by 4.500 units from 2003 and with an income of 30 million euros, with 45 thousands sojourns spent in the city, 70 thousand public transportation tickets sold and the entrance tickets to the museums (Coni, Censis, 2009).

The data collection on the supply and demand of sport events in Italy was made by SIAE (Italian Society of Authors and Publishers), through a yearly survey in its peripheral offices. Data are referred to tickets sold for a set of sport events: first and second soccer league, international matches, the Lega Pro, other team sports (basketball, volley, rugby and baseball), individual sports (boxing, cycling, athletics, tennis, horsemanship, car, motorcycle and boat racing, bowling, go-kart rental, swimming, water polo, winter sports etc.). The available data include the number of events, the number of tickets sold, the box office, audience expenditure and the general revenues. We considered the expenditure of the audience, which includes box office and services such as reservation fees, food and beverage, wardrobe etc. Data for 2007 are not comparable in time series with those collected before 2000, as the collection procedures changed due to the abolition of the taxes on shows.

According to available data, 199.984 sport events and almost 28 million tickets have been sold during 2007. Data on a regional basis highlight the fact that almost 63% of the business volume (calculated by adding the audience's expenses to all other amounts earned by the organization like sponsorship proceedings, TV rights grants, and advertisement) refers to sport events that took place in northern regions,

almost 26% in the central regions and only about 12% in the southern ones. Regions from Northern Italy win about 57% and 53% respectively of events and tickets sold in Italy (Istat, 2009).

Football proves to be the sport with the largest activity and business volume in terms of events, sold tickets and audience's direct and indirect expense.

In order to have relevant information on the consumption of sport events, reference must be made to data from the nineties with different survey procedures. Data referring to expense for events in 1991 show the whole datum upon provincial basis while expenses for event in 1999 are shared out among inhabitants.

The tendency of single towns to draw sport competitions depends on structures available and quality of facilities as well as cultural supplies that allow participating to trips and so increasing the volume of tourism flows, not only with regard to incomers but most of all to presences. The ability of a resort to attract people is influenced by the importance of local federations and by the great tradition of sport in the city. Yearly events as Athletic Meeting- "Primo Nebiolo" that takes place in Turin at Parco Ruffini not only celebrate an International manager, but also are a showcase for new talents.

If we consider the cost of events on a provincial basis with respect to 1991 provinces that are not regional capitals like Bergamo and Verona highlight a great expense for sport events (more than 4 million Euros) while in Southern Italy and the isles only Bari (more than 10 million Euros) and Cagliari (more than 6 million Euros) present amounts of relevant interest. In 1999 the most remarkable cities with respect to inhabitants' expense for events are: Varese (31,33 Euros), Bergamo (36,62), Vicenza (44,03), Treviso (47,04), Udine (73,41), Parma (57,94), Salerno (53,12).

The field of sports offers a broad array of events: the classic World Alpine Ski Championship in January in Bormio (So), the Marathon Race in Siracusa or the XXth Winter Olympic Games in Torino in February 2006. But international marathons such as the one in Prato, golf contests and championships, the Italian Beach Rugby Championship in Montebelluna (Tv), the Bicinotturna in Prato, the Italian Triathlon Championship in Comacchio (Fe), the Trophy Equestrian Sport Città di Vicenza, the Ecomaratonna del Chianti in Castelnuovo Berardenga (Si), the "Rally delle Marche" or the "Torneo Open Integrale di Scacchi" in Terni in December are just few of the catalytic events of a tourism flow that are engaging from the point of view of sports, but also have positive financial results for the territory in terms of coming persons and presences.

Therefore, the difficult financial context did not affected travels (which have increased) - it has instead affected the choice of destination. The fall of travels abroad fosters destinations like Emilia Romagna (13,1%) or Trentino (12,6%), as well as Piemonte (4,8%) and Valle d'Aosta (4%). In Emilia Romagna the destination of greatest attraction is Riccione's Centro Natatorio Federale with a number of 100,000 presences (playing people and visitors) in 2008.

When considering sports, ski gathers 29% of travels, while swimming and all other water sports grew considerably (24%). Sports like football are dropping instead, as a result of the chance to comfortably watch matches at home.

The strongest point of the destinations lies in the first place in sport practice facilities, and then come the entertainment opportunities. On the contrary, one weakest point can be the lack of sport specialization like expenses to get to the places. The ability of a place to attract tourists depends on the capability to raise

interest also in the field of sports. Sport events for professionals or amateurs strengthen the interest on the hosting locality that can reutilize existing sport facilities or build new ones. After all, the sport event is a tool in a marketing strategy, as the case of Barcelona in the past and recently Turin has proved, but wrong planning estimations (like in Athens, where a baseball stadium was built in 2000 in spite of the fact that no one played baseball there) must be avoided.

According to Ejarque, events have a tourism value scale. Olympic games, football world cup and sailing competitions belong to the first level; athletics, golf and tennis belong to the second level; ski, swimming, sports played in teams like basket or baseball belong to the third level (Ejarque, 2003).

Interest for Master category tournaments in all sports has arisen in later years. Athletes or simple followers discover again as adults the desire to play sport and to be in competition with people their age. Golf, for instance, great interest has arisen in later years leading to the construction of new fields. In fact, about 25 million tourists every year discover the paths of golf, which is a huge step forward with respect to the 7,9 million travelers in 1989 (Censis-Coni, 2009).

Thanks to its own features, golf can join together many aspects: the practice of outdoor sport, outdoor or indoor, is at the same time geographically connoted because it needs spaces with particular features but is also a non-place due to compatibility between golf fields; it rouses the interest of the golf player to always try new fields according to a “cherry effect”. Having abandoned the image of a sport intended for few people but affordable has in later years fostered being introduced to golf playing in areas previously stranger to its world. As the President of Federazione Italiana Golf maintains, building a golf field in the level land of Gioia Tauro could have meant capability of attracting tourism, hence growth. Something different happened in Sciacca, where an 18-hole golf field was built in an area equipped with spa and archeological sites. So a sport has been promoted, and a tourism investment has been made that could allow Sciacca to enter a golf circuit to be planned in Italy, relocating the area in the picture of Italian tourism centers.

Golf produces surplus value, increasing quality of tourism supply and of income: tourists who play golf spend only 8% directly for their hobby (golf expenses, golf lessons) devoting 92% left of the expense to induced consumption (lodging, transport, food, entertainment, gadgets).

The sport event does not always need facilities, but can be realized using public ground as in the case of marathons like “Maratona degli Etruschi”, which takes place along 100 kilometres, and where 70% of the participants come from places other than Central Italy.

One last thought must be made upon the planning of sport tourism (that in Nicolò Costa’s opinion must start from a low point since, according to a post-modern view, prospective consumers have changed). The catchment area in fact consists of the International middle class, coming from advanced economy countries looking for an offer always more personalized.

Among the choices to be made is the planning of multifunction stadiums, connected with the cities, with a diversified offer aiming to rouse the need in the tourist who can choose but must also be guided when choosing.

5. Discussion and conclusion

The aim of paper has been analyze the relationship between sport and tourism. Even though available data do not allow putting structures available in relation with sport events and the sale of prospective tickets, it is out of any doubt that a sport event creates a flow generated by participants and viewers.

The phenomenon is still poorly studied and would deserve a deeper analysis on the basis of data on small scale that would allow to precisely knowing evolution of tourism with reference to the different geographic areas.

In the last years one form of special interest tourism which has garnered particular attention is travel related to sport or sport tourism. There is a distinction between individuals who travel to actively participate in a sport and those who travel to watch a sports event.

In Italy, the practice of physical activities it has become a fundamental requisite for a modern traveller. The BTS 2013, the 21th international sport active and wellness tourism exchange, in Montecatini Terme, supplies the numbers of sport tourism: 10 million of travels and more than 60 million overnight stays in Italian facilities. The turnover is estimated about euro 6.3 billion and euro 1.5 billion spent within Italy is on water sports like sailing, canoeing, diving; 1 Italian out of 4 plans his holidays considering sports in his decision (BTS, 2013).

Some considerations arise from what emerged: sport is a factor that can change the periodicity of tourism demand, improve and coordinate tourism flows by creating special paths, to plan structures in a given territory and accommodation facilities in its whole drawing new portions of sport tourists establishing or revitalizing the practice of any sport.

Event such as the World University Games or World Championships canoeing and water-shiing which will be held in Milan at Idroascalo between July and August 2015 as an opportunity to attract tourist flow and an exchange between different cultures (Pioletti, 2011).

Much of the exiting literature on event sport tourism has focused on mega or hallmark events but suggest that the small scale-sport events might result in more positive effects for host communities (Gibson et al., 2004).

The attraction of an event, besides from the interest it draw among the sport audience also depends on the ability of a city to offer a cultural, environment and wine and food supply that can be a surplus value for the sojourn.

Sport venues are the local territory resource, result of the transformation of city and territory and function as factors of modernization. The building of sport venues can also be seen as catalyst and accelerator of changes to create a new identity and to relocate a place at a national and international level. Any sport event generates a touristic flow of little or large dimension, that generates opportunities for cultural changes, revitalizes the local tradition, improves the quality of life and enforces the image of the community.

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THE ROLE OF MONUMENTAL TREES IN DEFINING LOCAL IDENTITY AND IN TOURISM. A CASE STUDY IN THE MARCHES REGION

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Abstract

The paper presents an explorative research about the relict Monumental Trees in the Marche region, with the aim to describe and give some interpretations about the problematic relationship between economic activities and the landscape. After the definition of Monumental Tree, we describe its multiple meanings, in religion, mystics, education, environment, and even in tourism. The paper gives the inventory of the resource in the Marche, and reports results of Key Informants' perceptions about the necessity to conserve Monumental Trees in the framework of the Regional Landscape and Environment Plan and the role of Monumental Trees in defining the local 'territorial identity'.

Trees are sanctuaries. Whoever knows how to speak to them, whoever knows how to listen to them, can learn the truth. They do not preach learning and precepts, they preach, undeterred by particulars, the ancient law of life.

Herman Hesse (1972, p.178)

1. Trees and Forests

Recently, people showed an increased sensitivity towards nature, giving greater consideration even to the 'physiognomic' characteristics of trees and forests. Trees and forests have, therefore, found major respect and a subsequent placing within the cultural heritage, especially when they are of particular aesthetic or historical and monumental interest. We can easily affirm that today the category of 'monumental' tree or forest is well accepted by common sense and public opinion. Nevertheless, the success of the protection of veteran trees has been fluctuating. In

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many cases people saved them, in some other old trees have been cut and forests cleared to make room to alternative, and more remunerative, uses of the land. Furthermore, researchers claimed for the bio-ecological importance of ancient and venerable vegetal formations and the necessity to preserve them for scientific purposes (see Lisa, 2011).

In Italy there are many centuries-old trees, located in historic gardens, parks and even in the open countryside (see OPHRYS, 2012, Capodarca, 1984, Alessandrini et al. 2005). They are a heritage of inestimable value, historical and cultural assets, and real natural monuments. The presence of a veteran and monumental tree is evidence of a long relationship between humans and places full of memories, events and emotions. The big and tall trees have not only a scenic and aesthetic value, but are also important for their historical aspects, local traditions and the maintenance of the ecological balance.

The 5% of the world's forests are located in the EU (European Union) Countries, where they have continuously expanded for over 60 years, contrary to what occurred in the less developed regions of the world. The EU forests and other wooded land cover, respectively, 155 million and 21 million hectares, being together more than the 42% of the EU land area. Nevertheless, there is no common forest policy and the formulation of forest policies is the competence of the Member States within a clearly defined framework of established ownership rights and with a long history of national and regional laws and regulations based on long term planning. Neither the Treaties for the EU made a provision for a common forest policy, but there are many EU measures supporting certain forest-related activities, and a EU Forestry Strategy has been adopted in 1998, forwarding overall principles for the application of sustainable forest management and the multifunctional role of forests (see EU, 2013).

The presence of forests and trees in urban and rural areas depends also on Agricultural Policy, Rural Development Policy and Urban Planning Policy, any of them related to local and regional intervention for the effective implementations.

The analysis of the regional Landscape and Environmental Regional Plan (LERP) of the Marches seems to be an interesting field for investigation due to the peculiar asymmetric distribution of forests, the relatively 'scarce' density in some provinces and the subsequent relative 'high density' of relict old trees in the whole territory.

After describing the importance of trees in mythology, religion and symbology, and briefly introducing the theme of local identities, the paper aims at investigating perception by local inhabitants (residents) about the assets and role of monumental trees in shaping the regional landscape and their contribution to the local territorial identity.

In order to answer to this main research question, we made a dozen of face-to-face interviews to key informants, both from public administrations and private entrepreneurs and residents.

2. Trees, myths, religions and symbols

Trees perform great utility for people, and are notable for their habits and habitats, size, or longevity. The diversity of forms and functions is a direct consequence of the complex and graceful organization of their growth in response to environmental and biological stimuli. They grow up in a myriad of striking forms, sizes, and habitats. Besides material functions for the everyday life, trees have a great significance in mythology, legends, symbolism and religion.

The association between trees and mythology works in a very profound way. Trees offer a sense of mystery, probably due to being the largest of plants (see Porteus, 2002), and the association with particular myths takes place not only on a species level but also in geographical terms or with individual trees. Both human 'scientific' curiosity and mythology deal with the capability to discover the secrets of real world and so trees offer humans a living reminder of happy or terrible events or even so marvelous as to be beyond human comprehension. The long life of trees allows humans to imagine they have been witnesses to ancestral happenings, then being sacred to religious rites.

Legends are a different phenomenon to Myths, these latter being less based on actual facts and merely stories of fiction. Nevertheless, they both don't concern with happenings beyond human comprehension, but in associating places and people with particular events or stories. The novel of Robin Hood is well known, yet the true identity of the man is lost in the mists of time but his relations with woods are well clear and told in several storytellings. In Italy, the famous chestnut of the Etna, called as 'of hundred horses', owes its name to the popular narration about the recovery of Princess Giovanna d'Aragona and her hundred escort horsemen suddenly threatened by a violent storm. The tree canopy was enough for covering a crowded troop of cavaliers. This tree is still rooted and visited by hundreds of tourist coming from several parts of the world.

Trees are symbol of boldness, being capable to live even in the most extreme conditions. A tree has three parts in terms of symbolism, roots, trunk and branches which have large meanings rooted in many cultures and popular traditions. Different cultures traditionally usually plant trees in honor of an important rite of passage such as a graduation, wedding, retirement, the birth of a child or in memory of relatives lost in wars. In recent times, trees have become a powerful symbol of capability of aging and reliability, being the logo of many businesses involved in long term investments or in life insurance.

The World Tree is a common suggestion to many communities and cultures (see Burkert, 1998). We can assume a simple resuming idea from the Encyclopedia Britannica that reports:

world tree, also called cosmic tree, centre of the world, a widespread motif in many myths and folktales among various preliterate peoples, especially in Asia, Australia, and North America, by which they understand the human and profane condition in relation to the divine and sacred realm. Two main forms are known and both employ the notion of the world tree as centre. In the one, the tree is the vertical centre binding together heaven and earth; in the other, the tree is the source of life at the horizontal centre of the earth. Adopting biblical terminology, the former may be called the tree of knowledge; the latter, the tree of life (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2003, p.757).

In ancient pagan religions some special trees were regarded as sacred, and became the focal point for worship. In Northern European cultures, the Druids did value the trees considerably and even planted trees to form groves in which they could worship, avoiding to celebrate religious rites inside a temple enclosed by walls and a roof. Their sacred tree was the oak, planted in stand to generally form a circle enclosure. Many early Christian churches took on this shape and the circle was even the basis for the orientation design of great Christian cathedrals (see Burckhardt, 2000).

The use of trees by Pagans was embraced by Christianity even in other ways, first of all in the sign of the cross, where Christ suffered and died, that was roughly hewn from a tree and often appears to grow organically from the ground (see Howard, 1996).

The prevalent union of the human figure and the tree appears a deliberate correlation with Christian symbolism where the tree can represent either life or death (Howard, 1996, p.84).

Even today, the symbolism of trees finds its way into human expression, especially in labeling person who have achieved great age and even great wisdom. As the numbers of older people in Europe continue to grow, maybe the symbolism of trees will find new resonance. Indeed the profile of trees amongst health care professionals is rising up the agenda as in the latest EU project ‘Action on Forestry – Human Health and Wellbeing’ (see COST, 2013).

3. Definition of Monumental Tree

In Europe many Countries have care about and made a census of monumental trees, whereas a common (and legal) definition is still lacking. In Italy, the very first act for protecting monumental trees has been adopted in 1939 (see GU, 1939), and the essential policy lines (see Lisa, 2011) are today absorbed in the Code of Cultural Heritage and Landscape (see GU, 2004), lastly modified in 2008 (see GU, 2008). For the first mentioned law, a monumental tree can easily be paired to a natural beauty, in itself to be protected by law, even if it is a more complex thing than an immobile good, as literally stated in the text of the law. In 2004, the Codice Urbani reorganized the State and Regional responsibilities about protection of landscape, devolving powers and planning decisions to local authorities, the Italian Regions, which indeed have the actual responsibility for the protection of monumental trees (see Regione Marche, 2005, GU, 2013).

The Landscape and Environment Regional Plan of the Marches (LERP) (Regione Marche, 1989) made monumental trees subject to restriction under the Art. n. 10:

[...] are part of the agricultural landscape, oak trees isolated or scattered groups in the country, tree-lined avenues or monumental oak, rows of poplars, elms, cypress and other species, hedges, forms of ancient cultivations in danger of extinction (such as tree-lined roads); isolated trees at crossroads, secular tall trees, of any species, the parks and gardens attached to houses, churches, castles and abbeys, even when of exotic species.

The Art. n. 13 defines the main objectives to be planned:

The main objectives of the Plan, with respect to botanical and vegetation assets, are:

- protection and conservation of rare species of flora, exclusively specific and threatened with extinction, including areas of particular biological interest and sheltered natural and plant associations.
- [...]

The protection of trees in the Marches is currently and specifically guaranteed by the R. L. (Regional Law) 23 February 2005 n. 6, namely the 'Regional Forest Law', which Chapter IV is entirely devoted to 'Protection of plant stands that are not included in forests and towns'. Previously the management of tall trees was provided by the R. L. n. 7/1985, namely 'Provisions for the protection of flora in the Marches'⁴, modified and integrated by the Regional Laws n. 8/87 and n. 9/01, and in its turn deriving from the preceding R. L. n. 6, 22 February 1973.

The Landscape and Environmental Regional Plan of the Marches (LERP) clearly claims that monumental trees are part of the regional identity, as we describe in the following.

4. Identity of the Marches in the Landscape and Environmental Regional Plan and the role of local communities

The Landscape and Environmental Regional Plan of the Marches poses as an axiom the existence of:

[...] a clearly recognized image of the Marches in Italy and anywhere else. It is that of densely cultivated hills, rich of trees, tree-lined roads, vines and lands cultivated with cereals. It has actually had origin through the urban mediation: any town, city or villages had, already in the late Middle Age, established its dominated territory, colonizing over centuries vast land areas, clearing the forests and cultivating fields, never disturbing the nature/cultivation equilibrium and intensively exploiting any cultivable squared inch (Regione Marche, 1989, p.72).

And about trees the plan says:

A fundamental component of the landscape are surely the plants, both as singular and as particular stands.

[...]

The components of the botanical landscape are several: from singular specific species to monumental trees of the same species, as in the case of century trees in areas with natural vegetation (forests, meadows, swamps, pastures); gardens and parks attached to villas, castles, churches and abbeys; then urban and agricultural green areas. In the Marches, each of these components has peculiar characteristics.'

[...]

Monumental trees. They are century trees of big dimension, varying for species, typical of the region (elms, oaks, turkey oak, beech, hornbeam, yew, silver fir);

[...]

They are point elements scattered in different territorial conditions that, considering the international definitions of protection of nature, should be considered as "natural monuments" (Regione Marche, 1989, p.75).

Still, the public 'smart' planner clearly claimed the importance and role of trees and their monumental items in the definition of the regional landscape identity. But

⁴ This law derived from the preceding R. L. n. 6, 22 February 1973 and has been lastly modified by regional laws n. 8/1987 and n. 9/2001.

the ‘smart’ planner had actually performed smart choices in his/her current time and could not have intuition of the new present shape of the world.

Today, the globalization of economy and culture puts in danger the affirmation of the identity of places and regions, also in view of regional competitive policies. The self-identification of local identity for development is far from its reality, in particular in case of peripheral regions, marked by dispersion of administrative power and fragmentation of sense of place (see Roca Z. and M. de N. Oliveira-Roca, 2007), as in the case of the Marches.

In this framework, the ‘territorial identity’ could actually be a misleading and inoperative concept. On the contrary, the concept can be implemented into a valuable category, to be studied empirically if previously defined as sets of spatial contents of natural and cultural landscape features combined with socio-economic activities, relationships and meanings within horizontal and vertical networks and systems, to be monitored as lifestyle features in a selected (*idem*).

The role of perception of local communities in defining the diversity of its own landscape is fundamental as well as historic and cultural features are essential for the respect and safeguarding of the identity of the population itself and for individual enrichment and that of society as a whole. This implies recognition of the rights and responsibilities of populations to play an active role in the processes of acquiring knowledge, taking decisions and managing the quality of the places where they live (see Cannizzaro S. and G. L. Corinto, 2012).

5. The census of Monumental Vegetational Formations (MVF) in the Marches

When the humans still did not significantly settled in the area, the Marches region was almost completely covered by forests. The ‘Piceni’ civilization, which developed in the southern part of the region between the 7th and 6th centuries BC, was predominantly agricultural with some clearing of the forests. In the period of the Lower Empire, with the creation of huge estates and the institution of serfdom, the agricultural population decreased a lot. During the following barbarian invasions in 500 AD (invaders being Heruli, Ostrogoths, Franks, Burgundians) agriculture was almost abandoned with the consequent recovery of natural forests. Starting from the 6th century there was a gradual recovery in rural and agricultural land-use purposes at the expense of the forest. The statutes of the Marches (see Carocci, 2003) of the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries posed the question of regional development and a more correct exploitation of the forest. That, however, did not prevent the gradual deforestation and the disappearance of the forest in a very few centuries.

Until the seventeenth century, the main cause was to be found in the grain trade, and then in the recovery of land for this crop more than the growth of the resident population. The intensification of activity of deforestation took place at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In this period the phenomenon was accelerated by the privatization of the commons and state property and the subsequent sale at public auction of the municipal assets. Moreover, the alienation of the ecclesiastical property occurred in the Napoleonic period increased the farming use of the land.

After the Unification of Italy, starting from the second half of 1800, the impoverishment of the heritage of tall trees in the hilly areas has been intensive,

especially with respect to the oak trees due to the needs of the Royal Navy and State Railways. In the period between 1880 and 1910 there was a further impoverishment of the tree heritage due to the further building construction of railways, using oak sleepers (see Zamagni, 1993, Regione Marche, 2009).

The evolution of forest area from 1847 to 2009 is exposed in table 1.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Ha</i>	<i>Source</i>
1847	132,325	Catasto Gregoriano
1877	111,510	Inchiesta Jacini
1910	99,916	-
1947	130.692	ISTAT
1974	154,715	ISTAT
2000	256,170	Forest Census
2009	300,000*	National Forest Inventory

Table 1: The Marches. Forest Area in different historical years

*Estimated data. Source: Regione Marche, 2009

We avoid to make any systematic comparison over time among different data in terms of percentage of forest area on total regional area. Many historical events occurred, often changing the regional boundaries, and even in very recent time the area of the region significantly changed⁵. Anyway we can say that the minimum percentage of the 10% occurred in 1910 and, presently, the total forestal area is increasing up to the “40%, considering the current total area of 969.349 hectares of the Marches.” (see Regione Marche, 2009).

Today, the geographical distribution of forests is strongly asymmetric, among both provinces and altimetric zones. In the coastal zones the density of forest in very often pair to 0%. The major forest covering is retrievable in the mountain area, located in the Apennine and pre-Apennine dorsal, while in the hilly areas the average density is lower than the 10%. The average covering area in the provinces of Ancona and Macerata is equal, respectively, equal to the 26% in the province Macerata the forest covering is discontinuous and scattered, whilst the maximum pertains to the province of Pesaro-Urbino, reaching near the 32%, followed by the province of Ascoli Piceno with the 27% (see Ipla, 2000) (fig. 1).

⁵ In 2009 seven municipalities obtained the passage from the Province of Pesaro-Urbino in the Marches to the Province of Rimini in the Emilia-Romagna Region.

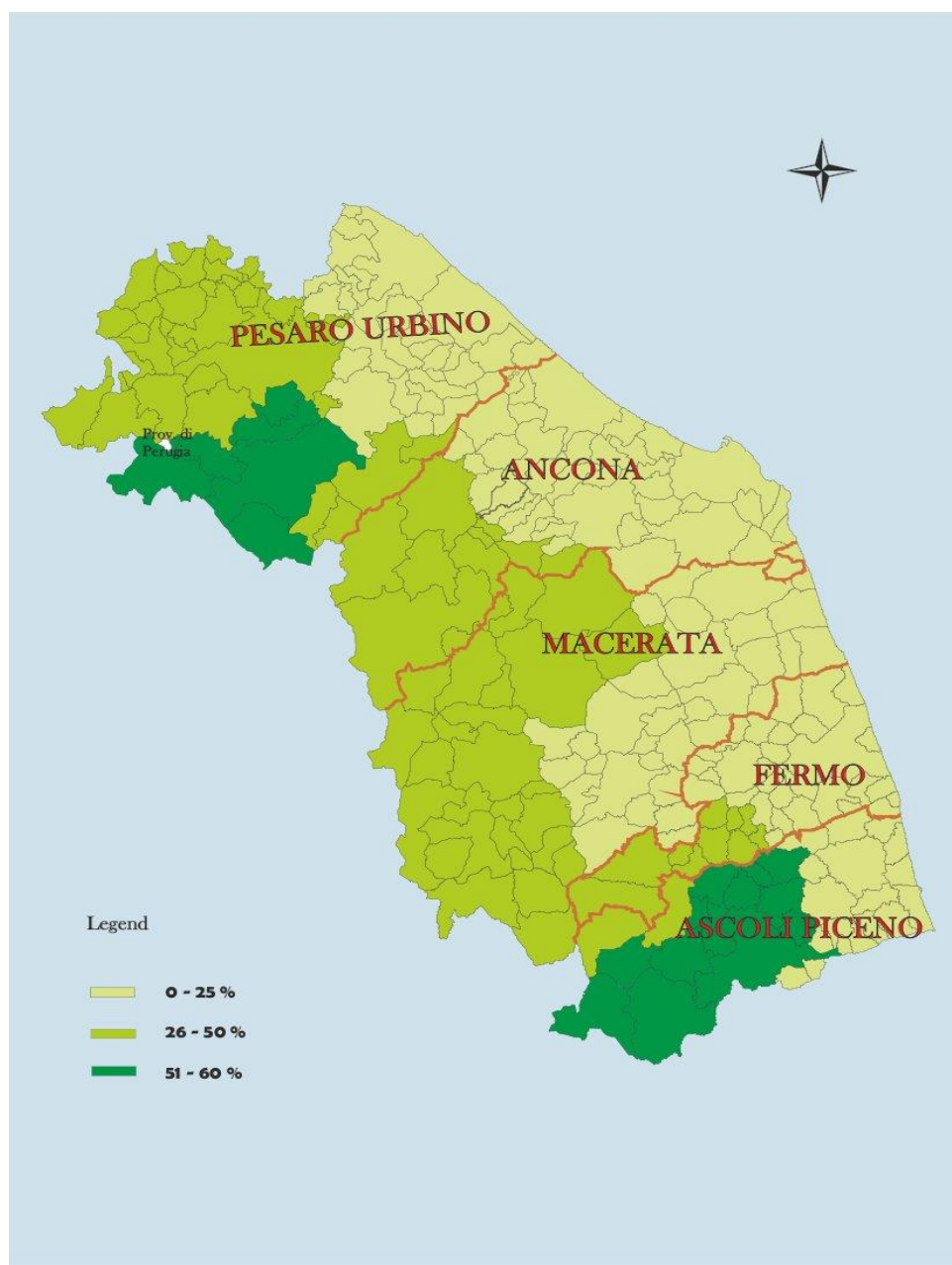


Figure 1: The Marches. Geographical Distribution of Forest Density

Source: Ipla, 2000. Our processing.

The Regional Forest Law of the Marche with the article 2/1 defines the meaning of Monumental Vegetational Formation:

trees of any species, tree-lines, groups and any other vegetal element or formation of particular historical-cultural interest, or having particular natural and landscape quality, which for their age and dimension can be considered rare examples of stateliness and longevity or giving a precise reference to events or memories which are important in a historical, cultural and local traditions' point of view.

A MVF can be an isolated tree or shrub, or an homogeneous stand of trees, a singular forest and a tree-line. This is the first law (see Regione Marche, 2005) in Italy that considers as ‘monumental’ not only isolated trees, but also groups and homogeneous formations of trees, pertaining to both autochthonous and exotic species. In this way the census (see Guidi, 2012), conducted by the Regional Forest Service starting by 2009, has considered not only the MVFs rooted in the countryside, to be considered as near natural, but also in the more anthropized urban landscape, including castles, villas, monasteries and cities.

<i>Province</i>	<i>n. MVFs</i>	<i>%</i>
Pesaro Urbino	110	28
Ancona	51	13
Macerata	122	31
Ascoli	58	58
Fermo	56	56
Totale	397	100

Table 2: The Marches. Number of MVFs per Province.

Source: Guidi, 2012.

The monumental trees root all over the regional area, but the main part of the total regional MVFs are located in the Province of Macerata, followed by the Province of Pesaro Urbino, Ascoli Piceno, Fermo and Ancona (tab. 2). The presence of the high number of monumental trees in the province of Macerata is an intriguing fact, being the inverse of the forest density. We can argue the massive clearing of forest has left isolated trees for farming purposes, shepherding and cattle breeding.

In 143 Municipalities (the 60% of the total 239 in the region) there is at least one MVF, and Pesaro is the first with 13 ones. In 79 Municipalities there are two MVF, and in the rest 64 at least one (fig. 2).

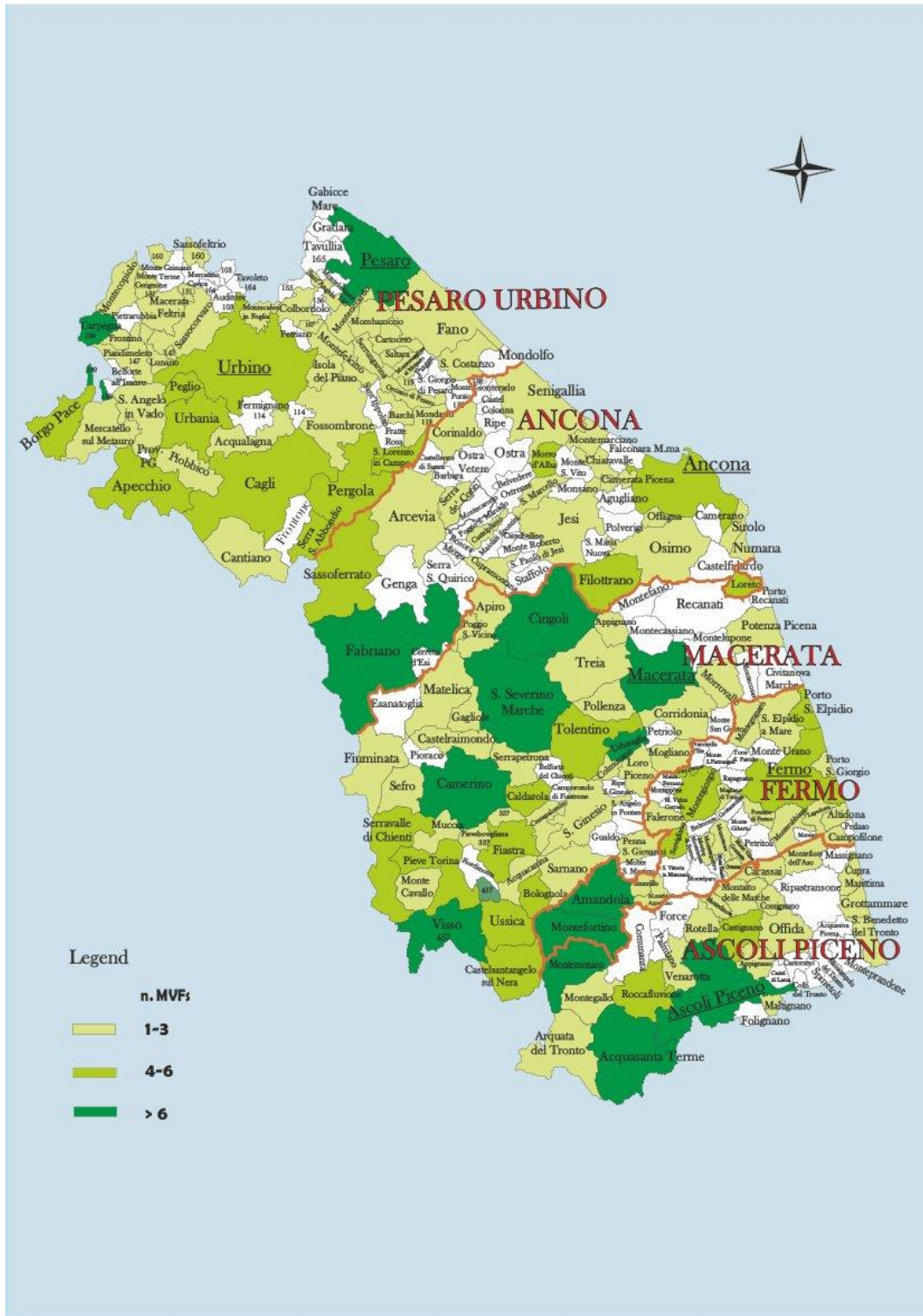


Figure 2: The Marche. Geographical Distribution of MVFs per Municipality

Source: Guidi, 2012, our processing.

6. Aim and methodology for the field research

The aim of the field research has been to understand the importance of monumental trees and monumental vegetal formations in the definition of the landscape identity in the Marche as perceived by residents. We have considered as ‘residents’ both inhabitants and entrepreneurs, mainly acting in the tourism sector, all of them living and working in the region, and specifically in the immediate proximity of a MVF or, at least, within the boundaries of the municipality where it roots.

The field survey followed the qualitative research ‘face-to-face’ interview method, after having selected key informants (see Fontana and Frey, 1994, Kvale, 1996). We chose this method because it can catch right and numerous informations with less time and costs, assuring in the same time high quality data collection due to the involvement of the interviewees (see Tremblay, 1955, Marshall, 1996, Berry, 1999).

The interview structure has been prepared in order to clear the main research issue, regarding ‘the role and assessment of monumental trees and MCFs both in the regional and local environment of the Marche.’ This main issue has been itemized in 3 research topics: (i) Knowledge and Awareness; (ii) Landscape Identity; (iii) Tourism Opportunity, and 3 related questions as follows:

- (1) Do the Marche’s Inhabitants Know Their Monument Trees’ Assessment and Role?
- (2) Do They Perceive Linkages Between Trees and Landscape Identity?
- (3) Are or Could Be Monumental Trees a Tourism Product?

In order to answer these main question and itemized topics, we have selected twelve key informants, interviewing them during a total of 12 hours, in the May-July 2013 period. We performed all the interviews following a semi-structured form, with the aim at collecting exhaustive information and an intense understanding of the interviewee’s point of view. Actually, each interview was an effective and productive ‘conversation’, interacting with the interviewee in order to learn about his/her experience, feelings and sentiment and the perception of the surrounding environment. Any interview has been previously prepared, contacting people by phone and/or mail, exposing the aim of the research and discussing during the face-to-face interview any uncertain aspect. All the reported data come from reliable involvement of the interviewees.

The list of interviewed persons, their activity, duty, municipality of residence and Province, are reported in table 3.

<i>N</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Duty</i>	<i>Municipality</i>	<i>Province</i>
1	Resident	B&B owner	Serra de’ Conti	Ancona
2	Resident	Housewife	Fabriano (AN)	Ancona
3	Resident	Housewife	Fabriano	Ancona
4	Resident	Housewife	Cingoli	Macerata
5	Resident	Teacher	Pioraco	Macerata
6	Resident	Retired teacher	Castel Raimondo	Macerata
7	Resident	Retired farmer	Montegiorgio	Fermo

8	Forest Service	Officer	Pesaro	Pesaro
9	Forest Service	Officer	Visso	Macerata
10	Entrepreneur	Restaurant owner	Corridonia	Macerata
11	Teacher	Archeoclub President	Treia	Macerata
12	Entrepreneur	Social Media Manager	San Benedetto del Tronto	Fermo

Table 3: List of Key Informants

7. Results

Results can be classified under the three issues above identified as (i) Knowledge and Awareness (first research question); (ii) Landscape Identity (second research question) and (iii) Tourism Opportunities (third research question).

For the first issue, there is no general awareness by the most part of inhabitants. Near all the interviewed residents answered they had never heard anything about the topic of ‘monumental trees’, both in the region and in their own municipality. Contrarily, there is a scattered but deep knowledge of the specific natural resource and understanding of the importance to preserve monumental trees, and more in general the natural heritage, within some local communities, as well as individual reliable knowledge and even personal direct involvement in particular cases.

The spread of ‘Knowledge and Awareness’ in local communities depends upon:

- diffusion of legends about wizards and witches of the past and ancient myths (mainly reported by oral tradition) or anecdotal storytellings about historical facts linked to a monumental tree;
- the effective productive and environmental functions of trees in agricultural technology and farm organization.

In the municipality of Ascoli Piceno there is a well known plane tree called the ‘Plane of Piccioni’ located in a very visible location, along the roman route “Salaria”. Its fame is due to the story of the brigand Giovanni Piccioni who fought against the unity of Italy supporting the Vatican State during the second half of the Eighteenth Century. (Key Informant n. 8); (fig. 3).



Figure 3: The 'Piccioni Plane' in Ascoli Piceno

Monumental trees are surely not known by 'normal' people. The issue is well known by some 'fan' of environment or curiosities, regarding very particular trees reported in legends and oral storytellings about historical facts. (Key Informant n. 12).

Here, in my municipality there is a very important beech forest of Montecanfaieto. It is well known and people come to have relax time during the week-ends and in the summer. There is also a very well known yew tree in the monastery of Fonte Avellana. This tree should be the oldest one in the region. It is located out the monastery and I don't really know if it has a religious meaning and attractiveness, but I suppose it hasn't. Anyway, it is magnificent and important for many persons. (Key Informant n. 6).

In the very centre of my city, Corridonia, on the top of the hill, there was a tall and broad elm tree. It was the "emblem" of our city and still is in the official municipal flag. The ancient name of our village was 'Montolmo', that literarily means the mount of the elm. That was the place for the cattle market, where breeders sold and bought livestock, benefiting of the large canopy of the tree during the full sun. People tell the elm rooted since the Middle Age. It has survived until few decades ago. Today we have forgotten the story and this is a pity, because without knowing our "roots" we cannot promote our territory. (Key Informant 10).

The productive functions of monumental trees are presently obsolete. In the past these 'practical' or productive functions were part of the current organization of farming. Isolated trees supplied shadow for the relaxation of shepherds and sheep and, in the case of oaks, lot of acorns for the feeding of porks. This was essential for the household food consumption, because pork was, and still is, a basic food for all the residents in the Marche, both in rural and urban settlements. We could even say that pork should be considered as an actual 'typical animal' for the Marche,

due to the traditional economic importance in the rural households' balance and in the current agroindustrial sector.

Some tree species were cultivated by selecting very peculiar productive attitudes, such in the case of 'gentle grafted helm', that produces protein rich leaves, important for feeding labor cattle. Elms are today endangered by extinction, and 'selected' individuals are currently very rare.

Isolated oaks were called 'Merigge'⁶, indicating the opportunity for shepherds to sleep under their canopies after having meal at twelve o'clock. (Key Informant n. 6); (fig. 4).



Figure 4: 'Merigge', isolated oaks in Regional Natural Reserve of Monte San Vicino and Monte Canfaieto, Sanseverino Marche (MC)

Some monumental trees are located in villas of noble landowners and are often exotic species and always a distinctive social mark. Nowadays we spend happily our own money to prevent their death. But we will welcome a future public help. (Key Informant n. 11).

About the issue of 'Landscape Identity' we can resume a diffused awareness that the landscape of the Marche has an anthropic origin, in particular that it is an actual farming landscape. Over centuries trees have been cleared to have more farmland areas to be cultivated with cereals, for trading purposes. The resulting shape is a very smoothed landscape, generally figured as soft hills with a big tree on the top. This most typical tree is the oak (*Quercus pubescens*) to be considered the actual 'regional identity' tree. Near all the respondents agreed on this topic.

⁶ Dialectical for 'meriggio', meaning the relaxation time in the afternoon.

The current logo of the Region⁷ doesn't identifies the whole spirit of the Marches. But it will impossible to consider an alternative 'sign', as the oak as an official flag, even if it is broadly identified as a regional mark by people. (Key Informant n. 12).

About the 'Tourism Opportunity' linked to the monumental trees heritage, we can say that, notwithstanding the recent and very exhaustive inventory of the Monumental Trees made by the Forest Service and the Region, no private initiative have been run to supply a dedicated itinerary or some initiative linked to trees as a 'tourist product'. Only sporadic initiative from individuals with some success have been carried out. We can mentioned the 'Garibaldi Itinerary' and the 'San Francesco footway', indicated in particular by informant n. 8.

There are big potentialities but not in the sense of a large tourism supply, but in the direction of exploiting niche market and experience tourism. The man part of the key informants declared that the political and promotional initiative of the Region is scarcely coherent over time. In fact, the Region too frequently changes strategic guide lines of intervention and acts splitting the financial budget in dispersed initiatives, not supporting the same strategic vision over years. There is a broad perception about clientelism, patronage and discontinuity in territorial relationships between the Region and the singular Provinces.

I myself have tried to propose some theme itineraries using the nexus and linkages between monumental trees and cultural and historic heritage. I had a great success! but only within my personal acquaintances. Many friends of mine, from abroad the Marches, have organized itineraries about Giuseppe Garibaldi and Saint Francesco in the territory of our region. But none of the local tourism entrepreneurs understood and caught the economic opportunity, imitating or repeating the foreigners' experiences. (Key informant n. 8).

I manage a small tourism business and I am a curious man. I knew that a very old oak is rooted in my Municipality. And I would like to offer this opportunity to my guests. We have lot of cultural attractions around our home and I think that also the big trees should be a 'curiosity', not so narrow as apparently it is. I have asked my neighbors something about that, but none told me anything. I localized it by myself, not far from my bed and breakfast business. Now I am proud for this. (Key informant n. 1); (fig. 5)

⁷ The regional logo depicts the initial letter of Marches, the 'M', that includes a stylized woodpecker bird (Picus sp.)



Figure 5: Monumental oak in Serra de' Conti (AN). Courtesy of Key Informant n. 1

8. Discussion and conclusions

The research performed in the Marche region enlightened some meaningful findings about the perception by local communities about the worth of natural heritage, starting from the role and importance to know and preserve monumental trees. The free participation by a dozen of interviewed key informants allows us to consider results as reliable and useful for further researches and for policy making recommendations. In particular, results have been discussed with the key informant n. 8, a chief expert of the Forest National Service, acting in the regional boundaries and having also a national perspective.

Notwithstanding a recent and broad research on the topic, promoted officially by the Region and performed by the regional office of the National Forest Service, the knowledge of monumental trees is still sporadic and scattered, fortunately very deep in some 'curious' people. Anyway, the very idea that monumental trees should be a tourism product, marketable by several (or few but not isolated) local entrepreneurs and tourist operators, is far from reality. The research demonstrated that only sporadic initiative has been undertaken, mainly by non resident entrepreneurs and scarcely perceived as feasible by local tourist operators.

On the contrary, some local issues are to be well emphasized, even because will enlightened some future research topics. For example, the perception of the oak as a very typical tree is largely diffused as well as the awareness of its role as landmark, figuring the shape of the regional landscape. Thus, even though the 'monumental' trees are not part of the 'collective imaginary', the perception of 'normal' trees in the formation of the landscape identity is a very clear topic and

freely declared by all the respondents. Normal and monumental trees are surely landmarks for the local communities and their importance depends on cultural and socio-economic issues. We have to emphasize also the finding regarding the relationships between 'private' and 'public' sensitivities as perception of local communities very often diverges from public choices.

The public institutions have a recent and a deep sensitivity about the care of trees and forests, necessitating a public intervention for a preservation imposed by law. Common people, being landowners, inhabitants, farmers or even private tourism entrepreneurs, due to oral storytelling or sharing of legends and myths, feel the 'historical and cultural breath' of trees, which preservation still depends on their effectiveness and practical functions. As a matter of fact, the presence of monumental trees depends on the economic functions they supplied to local communities over centuries. The presence of monumental trees in private real estates is to be linked to the function of being a sign of social distinction, remembering financial power and wealth.

The findings of the research derive from a regional survey and should be compared to other regional researches, both in Italy and abroad, to have a broader framework of the research issue. Nevertheless their importance can be considered in a larger meaning because the detected inhabitants' perception of the specific topic strongly confirms some preceding research findings, as well as a largely shared social opinion about the lacking of knowledge of natural and cultural heritage in the Marche and more in general of the awareness of tourism potentialities of the region. Without self consciousness of local assets there cannot be any stronger tourism promotion. Moreover, the absence of a continuous, still tiring and paved of many difficulties, exchange of ideas between residents and policy makers will stop any initiative.

It is true that the Marche Region is the very first regional administration that adopted a specific law for the protection of monumental trees. The law is to be considered effective and updated, with a modern vision for the protection of natural resources. In fact it takes into account not only isolated trees, but also groups of trees, stands, tree-lines and any other important vegetal formation, including exotic species, mainly located in villas, castles or monasteries. Indeed, after the regional initiative, during 2013 the Italian State adopted a national law for the protection of monumental tree with the same policy lines. Regions that will carry out an inventory of the resource can surely conserve and manage veteran trees in many strategic directions, including research aims and productive initiative, through the definition of a clearer image of the territorial identity that is useful for the entire society and its economy.

Many private entrepreneurs claim for a more strategic vision for the public intervention in the tourism sector as well for the conservation, managing and planning of natural resources. The findings of this research can support the future orientation of public choices in improving the nexus between natural and cultural resources and tourism. On the other hand, researchers can help public bodies in transfer the results of sectorial analyses in political choices and territorial and geographical studies could be deepened and implemented in order to help private companies and policy makers in increasing social awareness. We like to stress once again the importance of the community's perception in defining the regional and local identity as well as the landscape policy, even considering specific issues such as the monumental and veteran trees. The European Landscape Convention

actually claimed for a more democratic participation in defining the landscape features to be protected by national and regional laws. Also the social awareness of monumental trees should help public bodies to choose the most effective policies by means of an actual democratic, and thus more effective, process.

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GEOGRAPHICAL ASPECTS AND DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTH TOURISM IN PORTUGAL

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Abstract

The present article aims to analyse spa tourism in Portugal from the standpoint of its geographical and historical evolution from its origin (Roman age) to the present day. The analysis identified five stages of development. The most recent one, comprising the present day, is characterized by the expansion of both the quality and the quantity of the service offered, to the extent of creating a conceptual shift from *spa tourism* to *health tourism*.

1. Introduction

Lusitanian hydrotherapy has very ancient origins, like in many other countries of Western and Mediterranean Europe. The proof for this is found in many archaeological findings dating back to the Roman domination (completed around the I c. B.C), which were mainly found in areas close to springs renown for their therapeutic qualities. Evidently, on the basis of empirical understandings deriving from direct observations, the use of said healing remedy lasted more or less until the XVII century. From then on, medical experimentation based on rigorous scientific principles started dominating in an irreversible manner. Indeed mineral waters ceased having a magical or holy halo and they acquired the status of actual remedies to heal the body according to their chemical composition. It is renown how during the Roman Age, bathing in thermal waters was a daily habit, which besides a hygienic and therapeutic purpose, also entailed other aims such as that of conviviality, of encounters and of pleasure.

Therefore there were:

...bagnos de água minero-medicinais; e muitos outros banhos nos balneários urbanos, públicos e privados, alimentados em água comun por grandes aquedutos e com estruturas complexas, envolvendo sistemas de aquecimento, salas a diferente temperaturas, vestiários, áreas de repouso, outras de conversação⁹ (Cavaco, 2008b, 41).

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⁹ Translation : “baths in thermal and healing waters; many baths in public and private, urban bathing resorts, using the water from the city thanks to large and complex aqueducts, developing a heating system with rooms of different temperatures, changing rooms, resting areas and other spaces for conversation”.

Hence, bathing in the spa became a common habit in the whole Empire, which explains the capillary presence of spa facilities in all significant urban areas. After the fall of the Western Roman Empire, the habit of using thermal baths continued especially around hot springs, even if the modalities were now completely different from the previous phase. The habit was carried on in Lusitania, to the point that the Portuguese term of Medieval origin *caldas*¹⁰ is still used to define a hot water spring used for therapeutic purposes (and it is often used as a toponym, i.e. *Caldas da Rainha*) whereas the term *fontes* indicates a cold water spring Cavaco (2008b) highlights how only at a later stage, by the end of the XIX century, the term *termas* was introduced in scientific literature in addition to the term *caldas*, clearly referring to the role it had during the Roman era.

Located on the furthest Western strip of the Iberian Peninsula, Portugal is a country very rich of waters. Indeed around 400 springs were found to have mineral qualities¹¹, but only 48 resulted as being used for bottled water or for bathing purposes. According to the data provided by the Associação das Termas de Portugal (2012), there are 38 active thermal resorts, 11 of which are managed directly from local bodies (Câmara Municipal e Junta de Freguesia), 3 are managed by public bodies (1 directly by the Ministério da Saude and 2 by INATEL¹²), while the remaining ones were granted in concession to private companies.

Due to geo-morphological reasons, the majority of thermal springs are found in the area north of the course of river Tago (the country's Centre-North), whereas there are only three active resorts in the areas south of the river: Nisa and Cabeço de Vide in the Alentejo Region, and the Monchique spas in the far south of the Algarve Region. Moreover, there are two active resorts in the insular areas: the Furnas Spa in the island of São Miguel, the Carapacho Spa in the island of Corvo, both islands are part of the archipelagos of the Azores (Map 1).

In principle, when looking at a map, the majority of active thermal resorts can be found to the East of the Atlantic axis Lisbon-Porto. These areas are internal and thus inaccessible, scarcely populated and distant from main lines of transport, but offering very impressive landscapes.

Currently, in order to compare the actual value of the national spa industry with that of other countries, both the World Federation of Hydrotherapy and Climatotherapy (FEMTEC)¹³ and the UNWTO suggest using two indexes for *thermal* density, to be calculated separately. The first index is given by the ratio

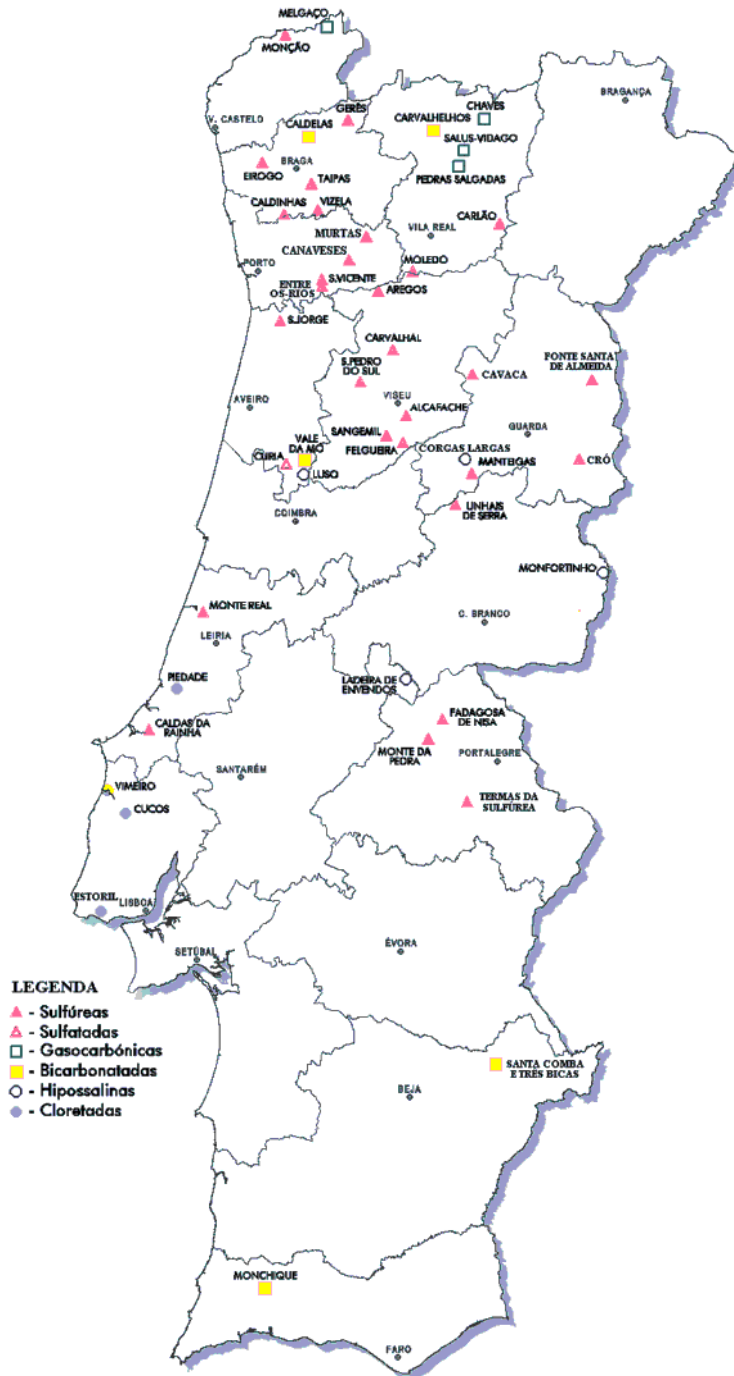
¹⁰ From Latin *caldus*, vulgar form of *calidus* derived from the verb *calēre*, «being hot».

¹¹ In 2005 the Direção Geral de Geologia e Energia published in the *Boletim das Minas* (vol. 40, n. 1) a ranking of mineral waters according to their chemical composition. There are six different types of waters: hyposaline waters, sulfur waters, carbonated waters, bicarbonated waters, chlorinated waters and finally sulphate waters.

¹² Founded in 1935 as Fundação Nacional para Alegria no Trabalho (FNAT), today INATEL (Instituto Nacional para o Aproveitamento dos Tempos Livres dos Trabalhadores) is a foundation directly controlled by the Ministério da Solidariedade e Segurança Social with purpose of promoting recreational activities and social tourism (including elderly tourism). Currently it owns a number of Hotels and campsites and includes around 250 thousand associates. (www.inatel.pt).

¹³ The umbrella organization for spa industries in 44 different countries. www.femteconline.com

between the number of all active thermal facilities in a country and the resident population (per million of people).



Map 1 – Localization of spa resorts in Portugal.

(Source: Ministério do Ambiente, Ordenamento do Território e Energia . LNEG - Laboratório Nacional Energia e Geologia)

The second index is instead calculated as a ratio between the number of thermal facilities and the overall surface of the country in Km² (Sousa 2008). Both values resulting from the two indexes place Portugal at the top of the rankings, which goes to show how the spa industry and health tourism represent a strategic component of

the overall national tourism offer.¹⁴ Indeed, together with other reasons explained further on in this paper and similarly to other European countries, hydrotherapy and thalassotherapy, represented the first form of organized tourism in the modern sense of the word (Simões, 2005).

Nonetheless, schematically it is possible to distinguish five development stages of Lusitanian hydrotherapy, from independence onwards¹⁵:

- 1) Rediscovery of the healing properties of thermal waters;
- 2) Valorisation of hydrotherapy on the basis of scientific progress;
- 3) Development and apogee of Lusitanian hydrotherapy;
- 4) Decline of hydrotherapy;
- 5) Rise of *Turismo da Saúde e Bem Estar*

2. Lusitanian hydrotherapy stages of development

The fall of the Western Roman Empire that was caused by the invasions of people from Germanic descent, on one level caused the decline of the political unity of Western Europe as well as of life style that until that point had dominated the world; on another level these people that:

penetrated the Empire as winners, nonetheless submitted to the Church, an authority that did not distinguish between Germanic and Roman. Indeed their Christian faith was certainly one of the main reasons for their immediate closeness to the people of conquered countries. (Pirenne, 1996, p. 36).

Christianity was one of the earliest forms of contact and of unity between those people of different origins and traditions that had settled in the land of the former empire. Certainly this was the main reason for the rapid success of Christian precepts, to the extent of deeply influencing the behaviours and the organization of the societies of the time. Indeed all new teachings condemned those behaviours that did not conform to the new morals, including some typical habits and customs of the Roman era, which were considered particularly promiscuous and thus strenuously opposed. Hydrotherapy was labelled as an “infamous” practice (Vigarello, 1988 p.35)¹⁶ because it was associated with “luxo e prazer ... (e por isso foi) recusada pela moral cristã”¹⁷ (Cavaco, 2008a p. 98). However, despite the bans enforced by the clergy and the dangers of travelling to the springs, which as previously said were located in areas far away from inhabited centres, the practice

¹⁴ A studied produced by the Instituto de Turismo de Portugal (2006) identified 10 strategic axis for the Lusitanian tourist offer: sun and sea, nautical tourism, nature tourism, business tourism, sport tourism (golf), food and wine, health and wellbeing tourism, cultural and landscape tourism, residential tourism within resorts (climatic tourism for the elderly), city breaks.

¹⁵ The latter was formed between 1147 and 1249 after conquering the Algarve, the last region to be annexed to the new state. It was a liberation war fought on two fronts: South against the moors (*a Reconquista*) and North East against the Kingdom of Leon, to which it originally depended as a vassalstate. (Oliveria Marques, 1996).

¹⁶ The author argues that said aversion of the Church for hydrotherapy has a clear and precise origin in a letter by San Geronimo (Epist. 45,5) where spas are described as a threat to chastity.

¹⁷ Translation: “Luxury and pleasure... (and for this) rejected by Christian morality”

of bathing in thermal waters was not abandoned. Notwithstanding within the specific context of the Iberian Peninsula, it is important to consider the influence determined by the Arabic culture and by its customs, which to a certain degree were absorbed by local populations as a result of the long period of domination¹⁸. Said customs included the practice of bathing in hot water, which is still so important that the *hammam*:

... is an essential facility of the Islamic city, being an annex of the mosque. The importance of the hammam certainly derives from the religious precept and by the fact that managing the bath was also a significant source of income” (Galliano, 2009, p.22).

In some circumstances, as for example in the Caldas de Alafões, the Arabs built an actual hammam on the ruins of a previous thermal facility dating back to the Roman era. After the *Reconquista* the Portuguese ruler Dom Afonso Henriques adapted the structure to his bathing purposes, building a new swimming-pool and some rooms for both the rich and the poor of the reign (Cavaco, 2008a).

The Caldas de Alafões stand as a clear example of the historical stratification of thermal resorts; their use is consistent, what changes are the meanings and the concepts connected to the practice. This proves that since the outset of the new independent kingdom, in medieval times, hydrotherapy was supported by sovereigns for its renowned healing qualities (as well as entailing a function of *self*-promotion for the monarch). The practice was also maintained by later sovereigns as proved by the numerous constructions and refurbishment works on old resorts documented almost all around the country, entrusting their management to the different religious orders in the territory¹⁹.

The following stage stands out for the emerging of the first scientific studies on the therapeutic qualities of waters (these also mainly funded by monarchs) from 1696, when the first work on the healing powers of the waters of Alafões was published by doctor António Pires da Silva. Another study of great interest is dated 1726 when the *Aquilégio Medicinal* was published by Francisco da Fonseca Henriques, who was also court-doctor for King João V. This treaty presents at least two interesting information concerning that historical time: the inventory of the thermal springs used for therapeutic purposes (29 of them, virtually all in the North-East of the country), the local habit of bathing in waters to celebrate the Patron Saint and the perception of healing as a gift granted by the intercession of

¹⁸ The Arabic nomination in Lusitanian territory began in 711 and ended in 1250, with the liberation of the Algarve (Olivera Marques, 1986).

¹⁹ Every monarch or relative of the court had a personal favorite spa resort, which s/he would promote with his/her presence and financially support all maintenance and expansion works. It is worth mentioning the refurbishment work carried out by princess Mafalda (daughter of king D. Sancho I) at Caldas de Aregos (XII sec.), or the works conducted by D. João II in 1495 in the Caldas de Monchique. His wife D. Leonora de Lancastre, herself supported in 1488 the building of a hospital closet o the springs of Caldas da Rainha, (also the origin of the toponym), to the point that after a few century these became “termas por excelência da corte e da aristocrazia” (Azevedo, 1995, p.29).

God, which is something that is still believed in some rural areas of the country.

The third stage is that of the apogee of Lusitanian hydrotherapy:

A viragem do século XIX para o século XX marca o início das época de ouro das termas portuguesas²⁰ (Azevedo, 1995 p. 58).

Cavaco (2008b) notes that in this phase, despite the progress of medicine and the availability of more or less efficient medicines, hydrotherapy was still held in the highest consideration. The same author also asserts that the reasons for this success are linked mainly to two factors: the spreading of romantic and naturalistic values among the wealthier classes who sought pleasurable stays in delightful and rural localities, away from urban centres and the spending power of said classes that allowed for the development of a trend of “tourism” and entertainment that could also be combined with therapeutic needs²¹.

This was the time when some thermal resorts became particularly famous, especially for their proximity to the railway system. Namely these resorts were Vidago, Pedras Salgadas, Luso, Cúria, Monte Real all of which gradually became luxury hotel infrastructures (Grand Hotel) Casino, Cafés, as well as lush thermal resorts where to take walks, listen to music and spend pleasant group stays:

... casinos, parques românticos, decorações de arte nova, arquitecturas de sonho²² (Azevedo, 1995, p.19).

Indeed, in the preface written by Júlio César Machado for the 1875 publication of *Banhos de Caldas e Águas Minerais* by the writer and journalist Ramalho Ortigão (1836-1915) it is possible to read: “As termas conciliavam tudo: mudança de ares, exercício ameno, banhos, copinhos, entratimento, *vita nuova*...”²³. Many authors of that time described detailed accounts of those pleasurable stays. For the purpose of this article it can be interesting to recall Maria Rattazzi’s work (1833-1902) *Portugal de ralance* (1879)²⁴. The author, who was born in Ireland from Letizia Bonaparte (Napoleon’s niece) and Sir Thomas Wyse (British MP), remarried Urbano Rattazzi, two times Prime Minister for Vittorio Emanuele II. She was a very well-read woman who belonged to a restricted European aristocracy, who travelled extensively including to Portugal, which she claimed to know quite well. In her *Lettera vigesima quarta* she narrates her spa stay at *Caldas da Rainha*,

²⁰ Translation : “ the passage from XIX c. to the XX c. marks the golden age of Portuguese spas”.

²¹ The golden age of Lusitanian chrenotherapy also benefited from a rather favourable legislative status, especially from the second half of the century onwards. Said laws would regulate both the exploitation of mineral waters and of thermal springs. This provoked the building of new spa resorts and of accessory infrastructures.

²² Translation : “ casino,romantic parks, art-nouveau decorations,dreamy architecture”.

²³ Translation: “Spas appeased everything: change of scene, pleasant exercise, baths, drinks (Porto or other liquors, t.n.) entertainment and *new life*”.

²⁴ The first edition of the book was in Paris by A. Degorce-Cadot with the title “Le Portugal à vol d’oiseau”, provoking disdain and controversies throughout the whole of Portugal. Indeed the author described the country and its inhabitants under a rather mean light, sometimes falling into easy prejudices. Camilo Castelo Branco (1825-1890), one of the major writers of the time, in 1880 published a paper to respond to “A senhora Rattazzi”, further fuelling the diatribe.

describing both the place and the aristocrat frequenters, providing an original insight into late XIX c. Lusitanian hydrotherapy.

This stage of expansion lasted more or less until the 1940s, a little longer in comparison to the rest of Europe. The reasons for this longer duration are mainly of a political nature; the country was indeed completely excluded from the second world conflict and thus it provided asylum to all those who, with conspicuous monetary means, wanted to run away from the violence of the war. Precisely at this time, the most renowned spa resorts as well as luxury hotels in the largest cities provided the widest offer of high-range hotel stays. However as opposed to the city hotels, spa resorts in the countryside could also offer greater calm and discretion, which was the necessary condition for all those on the hide. Hence, due to these *atypical tourists*, the golden age of Lusitanian hydrotherapy lasted a while longer (Cavaco, 2008b).

The 1960s stand as the decade of international development of tourism in Portugal, thanks to the famous 3S (Sand, Sun, Sex,) making the fame of completely new seaside resorts along the beaches of the Algarve and allowing the rediscovery of already famous seaside resorts: namely the ones along the Costa do Estoril and the Island of Madeira (De Iulio, 2010). Spa resorts on the contrary, began a moment of sad decline just as in the rest of Europe²⁵.

There are at least two main recognizable causes for this decline:

- 1) The spreading of new aesthetic and taste parameters suggested by mass-media, which managed to make summer vacation coincide with seaside stays;
- 2) The progresses made by medicine and pharmacology making hydrotherapy not anymore a vital treatment for specific diseases.

Despite the support from the national health service (more incisive since the creation of the democratic state and the participation to the EU), until the last decades of the past century, Lusitanian spas were considered places of stay only for the elderly and retired on a reduced budget, especially female customers from the surrounding areas who would mostly commute to the resort (Anuário das Termas de Portugal, 2007).

Ramos (2005) recalls how from that time onwards, the spa stay was perceived as something only linked to diseases, old age and loneliness. Therefore any potential marketing strategy for re-launch had to effectively remove iconic sadness. However in the meantime, since the early 1990s a new form of hydrotherapy tourism started emerging at global level. The trend was now more faceted and complex then before, as besides the healing aspect of waters, the industry started offering new services catering towards *wellness* and *remise en forme* (Rocca 2013), hence overcoming the traditional dichotomy between therapy and mental and

²⁵ Exactly at that time, the image of declining spa resorts, with a strong nostalgic aura, was used as the set for the film “*L’année Dernière à Marenbad*” by Alan Resnais, which won the Leone d’Oro at the Venice Biennale of 1961. The blind spa town, with its ruined and melancholic buildings provided an effective background to a sad and at time surreal story.

physical relaxation. This new phase labelled *Turismo da Saúde e Bem Estar* is defined as:

um conjunto de produtos, que sendo a saúde como motivação principal e os recursos naturais como suporte, tem por fim proporcionar a melhoria de um estado psicológico ou físico fora da residência habitual²⁶ (Cunha, 2006 p. 217).

There are a number of different reasons for the success of the new hydrotherapy experience, and these mainly relate to new ways of living and to the new values that are shaping contemporary society. Very briefly these reasons can be summarized as follows:

- the increasing uncertainty of life, leading people to seek forms of hedonism and personal pleasure as well as of new life experiences and an active and stimulating life from both a physical and an intellectual standpoint;
- the attempt to improve personal mental and physical wellbeing, to delay ageing through adequate physical activities, committing to cultural interests and enhancing social relations;
- the importance of appearance, physical shape and good aesthetical look for both personal relations in the private sphere and for professional purposes, where often a pleasant physical appearance determines professional success;
- the quest for a more direct contact with nature as a result of a frenetic and sedentary lifestyle, lived mainly in polluted urban environments: this condition determines the growing demand for natural foods, alternative medical treatments closer to nature such as crystalotherapy, aromatherapy, chromotherapy and consequently the rediscovery of the healing power of waters (that generally does not have any contraindications).

Attention should be paid to the fact that mental relaxation practices are also carried out in facilities that have nothing to do with hydrotherapy. Indeed, regardless of the properties and of the origin of the water used (sometimes the latter can even just be taken from the urban water supply, as was the case for ancient Roman spas) hydrotherapy techniques are matched with the new wellness industry technology, which in the majority of cases is inspired by ancient Oriental techniques. This premise implies that spa tourism is moving towards a new season which will have richer contents than the previous one.

Usually hydrotherapy is now carried out in facilities offering great comfort, generally built and decorated with natural materials, playing relaxing music and offering sophisticated games of light (Bastos, 2006). In different terms, it is possible to identify three macro-areas in the range of new services offered within spa resorts:

- medical area (i.e. post-surgery recovery, cosmetic medicine);
- therapeutic area (using waters to treat specific pathologies);
- wellness area and wellbeing (relaxation massages, *remise en forme*).

²⁶ Translation: “a package of products targeted for health and supported by natural products aiming to improve the physical and mental state, outside normal living conditions”.

In this sense there has been a shift from a simpler concept of *spa tourism* to a more vast and faceted concept of *health tourism*²⁷. Hence the only thing these two types of tourism have in common is the theme of relaxation and of wellbeing in relation to the use of water:

onde a água, pela sua relação natural com a essência do ser humano, continua ser um dos principais elementos, sem bem que utilizada de diferentes formas, com diferentes fins e a par de novas técnicas²⁸ (Gustavo, 2009 p. 197).

On the basis of this, Sousa (2008) sees it possible to differentiate the Lusitanian hydrotherapy offer in three groups (Tab. A):

- Group A: spa resorts providing a high level of comfort; catering for cosmetic and therapeutic/prevention treatments; offering a medium to high hotel stay; tourist packages to integrate the stay with other recreational and cultural activities, such as sport, food and wine, cultural or natural visits. These resorts are opened at least for 2/3 of the year.
- Group B: spa resorts catering for healing/preventive treatments but with a very high tourist component; offering a medium to low hotel stay and the tourist offer is not included in expanded tourist packages. These resorts are opened more than 6 months per year.
- Group C: spa resorts providing only healing/preventive treatments, with a poor medium to low hotel offer. There are no integrated tourist packages. These resorts are opened for less than 6 months per year.

All group A spa resorts (except Luso) offer integrated packages for stay and treatments, ranging from simple healing/preventive therapies to more complex wellness treatments. More specifically even if the resorts Gerês, Alcafache, and São Jorge do not have their own hotel offer, they nonetheless have agreements with other hotels in the area. Moreover all these resorts (even if not homogeneously) suggest, within their integrated offer, a number of other activities, such as theme walks in the surrounding area. These excursions can be to natural sites or to local cultural sites.

Within the group it is also possible to distinguish very appealing products, which in literature are often defined as «anchor products», around which the resort creates a unique spa offer. This is the case for some fashionable sport activities such as golf (Vidago, Curia, Vimerio), horse-riding (Vimeiro) or hunting (Monfortinho). Otherwise the offer may simply refer to natural aspects, such as a beach close-by or even just to the great comfort of the hotel. However, in general, these additional activities are not greatly developed yet and thus they are not very appealing for demanding customers expecting greater expertise and a service of the highest quality. All the spa resorts in this group are managed by private companies, except

²⁷ According to the data provided by the Associação das Termas de Portugal, in 2011 spa tourism (only the therapeutic one) stood for the 50% of the overall demand for the industry, however reporting a decline of -10% in comparison to the previous year. Health tourism inclusive of wellness treatments stood for 42% of the total, with a +36% increase from the previous year. From these simple data, even if somewhat partial, it is possible understanding how the future tendency for the health tourism segment will be of growth.

²⁸ Translation: “where water continues to be one of the main elements, for its relationship with the essence of the human being, even thug it is used in different forms, with different purposes and with new techniques”.

for the spas Carvalho and S.Jorge that are instead managed by a public body (Câmara Municipal).

SPA RESORT	DISTRICT	GROUP	OPENING MONTHS	TYPE OF TREATMENT	PRODUCTS	
					ANCHOR	ADDITIONAL
Melgaço	Viana do Castelo	C	6	CP		
Monção	Viana do Castelo	C	8	CP		P S
Caldelas	Braga	A	12	M	L	P S I
Eirogo	Braga	C	3	CP		
Gerês	Braga	A	6	M	L	P S I
Taipas	Braga	B	10	CP		P S
Vizela	Braga	A	12	M		P S I
Carlão	Vila Real	C	4	CP		
S.de Carvalhelhos	Vila Real	C	3	CP		
Chaves	Vila Real	B	11	M		
Moledo	Vila Real	C	5	CP		P
Vidago	Vila Real	A	6	M	L	P S I
C. da Saúde	Porto	A	12	M		P S I
Entre-os-Rios	Porto	B	6	M		P
C. de S. Jorge	Aveiro	A	11	M		P S I
Curia	Aveiro	A	12	M	G L	P S I
Luso	Aveiro	A	6	M	L	
Vale da Mó	Aveiro	C	5	CP		
Arêgos	Viseu	B	6	CP		P S I
Alcafache	Viseu	A	12	M		I
Carvalho	Viseu	A	9	M		P S I
Felgueira	Viseu	B	10	CP		
S. Pedro do Sul	Viseu	B	12	CP		S I
Sangemil	Viseu	C	9	CP		I
Manteigas	Guarda	B	9	M		S I
Almeida	Guarda	C	3	CP		
Cró	Guarda	C	3	CP		
Monfortinho	Castelo Branco	A	12	M	GL	P S I
Unhais da Serra	Castelo Branco	C	7	CP		P
Caldas da Rainha	Leiria	B	12	CP		P S
Monte Real	Leiria	A	12	M	L	P I
Vimeiro	Lisboa	A	6	CP	GEB	S I
Ladeira de Env.	Santarém	C	6	CP		I
Cabeço de Vide	Portalegre	C	9	CP		S I
Fadagosa de Nisa	Portalegre	C	7	CP		P S I
Monchique	Faro	A	12	M		P S I
Furnas	Açores	C	3	CP	B	S I
Carapacho	Açores	C	3		B	S I

Tab. A - Sectioning of spa resorts according to the offer of services and of additional products. (Legend: Treatments: CP curative - preventive, W wellbeing, M mixed; Anchor Products: G golf, E equestrian sport, B beach, H hunting, L luxury hotel; Additional Products: P natural park, S sport activities, I tourist itineraries)

Group B is made of 9 resorts including the 3 biggest resorts in the country in terms of number of services rendered: S. Pedro do Sul, Chaves and Felgueira. Within their offer they all include a hotel stay which is from a 3 star category or under (except for S. Pedro do Sul that is a 4 star hotel).

The group is made essentially by well developed spa resorts mainly targeted to offer a healing-preventive service, hence only a limited portion of the clients actually become tourists. Indeed additional activities are limited to small-scale entertainment shows within the resort, walking paths within the spa park or quick visits to surrounding sites of interests (mainly to castles, monasteries and religious sites). Management is private for Felgueira and Arêgos whereas it is public for the rest of the group. Specifically, INATEL manages Manteigas and Entre Rios, while the Caldas da Rainha are run directly by the State. The Câmara Municipal is responsible only for Caldas da Saúde, S. Pedro do Sul and Taipas.

Group C includes the majority of the country's spa resorts, and most of these do not include a hotel offer (either within the resort or through an agreement with hotels nearby) therefore customers are mostly from the local area with pronounced commuting features. The management of the resorts is predominantly public (10), and the remaining part is private.

3. Conclusions

Influential scholars agree on foreseeing a remarkable expansion of the health and wellbeing tourism industry in the few next years:

In the 21st century, wellness has become a global phenomenon. Many National Tourist Offices (NTOs) now produce dedicated health and wellness brochures. In response to increasing demand, traditional SPA towns around the world are upgrading or contracting modern SPA facilities. The growth of supply is expected to foster a continuing market expansion, to attract new types of customers and to diversify the products offered (Messerli e Oyama, 2004 p.6).

In Portugal, despite the huge potential for growth, especially in international markets, at the moment the industry is still mainly a national phenomenon. Indeed, virtually all customers are of Lusitanian origin (98% of the total, Instituto de Turismo de Portugal, 2006). Only a few resorts closer to the Spanish border show a presence of some clients coming from the neighbouring country. The reasons for this weakness are connected mainly to the reduced size of the majority of spa resorts (most of them are medium to small in size) and to the difficulty to create an integrated network with other tourist agents in the territory, in order to create competitive and original tourist offers for the global market. According to PENT (Plano Estratégico Nacional de Turismo approved by the Cabinet in 2007) said integration should be pursued by the Regional Tourism Plans (De Iulio, 2010). However the lack of available economic means in recent years due to the economic recession and the unclear definition of sectors of competence, so far allowed only a few regions with prior tourist development (for instance the Algarve) to successfully produce an integrated offer, whereas the rest have not gone beyond simply devising and promoting limited tourist itineraries.

In conclusion, Tab A. shows how the coordination and the integration of National tourist resources is mainly left in the hands of individual resort management, which is almost always private and in the majority of cases the spa is part of group A.

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THERMALISM IN THE PROVINCE OF MESSINA: CULTURAL TRADITION AND NEW STRATEGIES

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Abstract

Thermalism in Sicily dates back to very ancient times. Since the 1970s the thermal industry began to be regulated by health and sanitation laws. Only starting from the end of the 1990s thermalism was redefined according to a new model which was based also on the principle of “wellness”. In Sicily this new situation has not determined the development of a thermal tourism so that the *balnea* have remained marginal tourist resources of the territory. This work presents the case studies of Ali Terme and Terme Vigliatore, in the province of Messina.

1. Introduction

Thermal baths represent an important element of the huge cultural wealth of Sicily. Their use dates back to very ancient times, and archaeology testifies to their spread all over the territory starting from the classical period. The *thermae Himerenses* rose on the northern coast, the *thermae Xifoniae*, which were fed by the Santa Venera springs, on the eastern coast, and the *thermae Seluntinae* on the southern coast, near Sciacca. Over the centuries, the historical events concerning the Sicilian thermal baths, on the whole, have not been different from those concerning the thermal sites in the other Italian regions (see Rocca, 2009).

In Sicily, thermalism, which already existed during the Greek domination, spread widely, because of its salutary quality, during the Roman period. Water, the symbol of purity, would guarantee “a healthy spirit and body”. This would occur through the practice and the ritual of drinking and immersion. Immersions were based on strict rules, established by very accurate health and sanitation practices which were grounded in the alternation of cold baths and hot baths (see Bonica,

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2001). Sauna was a therapeutic practice highly popular for its decongestant action, also recommended for its ability to improve blood circulation.

During the Arab domination thermalism was given further impetus. Instead, with the return of the Christian religion, the thermal structures were dismissed, since they were regarded as “immoral places”, typical expressions of pagan culture (Battilani, 2001, pp. 61-65). In the eighteenth century scientific research newly promoted the importance of thermal baths thanks to their therapeutic value in the treatment of numerous diseases. This paved the way for a new phase of growth for thermalism, which led to the building of structures that became, above all in the nineteenth century, places where the local aristocracy would gather and engage in the so called “recreational thermalism”. In the Guida descrittiva e medica alle acque minerali e ai bagni d’Italia (see Schivardi, 1908) the thermal baths of Acireale, Sciacca, Termini Imerese, Termini-Castoreale and Lipari stand out as particularly active centres. By contrast, during the period between the two world wars, thermalism in Sicily would involve also the new emerging class: the bourgeoisie.

In Italy the normative regulation of the thermal industry started in 1919, with the Royal Decree nr. 1924, which concerns the opening of the thermal structures and the way to carry out the thermal operations. In 1927 the law on the use of waters was equated to that on the use of mines (Royal Decree nr. 1443 of 29 July 1927). Between the 1950s and the 1970s the so called “social thermalism” appeared and, at the same time, all the issues concerning the managing of the thermal baths as well as the institutional and healthcare aspects were regulated.

In 1950 the Sicilian government nationalized the thermal centres of Sciacca and Acireale, and renovated the equipment of the two structures.²⁹ Starting from the 1970s, following the law which established the NHS (National Healthcare System) and because of its therapeutic function, the thermal industry began to be regulated by health and sanitation laws. The therapeutic practice was extended to all citizens, and, thus, thermalism became a social issue, also thanks to the treatments being entirely paid for by the NHS and to the paid holidays assigned for this special type of cure.

Therefore “assisted thermalism” was born. A health and sanitation qualification was awarded to thermal baths. Then, the phenomenon acquired a more health-based character rather than one just aiming at recreation and wellbeing.

Thermalism grew until the beginning of the 1990s when restrictive measures delayed the development of the thermal industry, and, only in 1996, after its therapeutic validity had been newly emphasised, did the thermal baths become an alternative to traditional treatments as well as hospitalization. At the end of the 1990s thermalism was redefined according to a new model which was based not only on the principle of the “treatment of the disease”, but also on that of the “desire to be well”. Thus, a new idea of the phenomenon emerged, in which the wellbeing of the individual – in broad terms – played a significant role. The thermal offer widened, also to include wellness. So, together with the therapeutic aims, the regenerative qualities of the body and of the psyche were also favoured

²⁹ From 1954 until 2005 public thermalism in Sicily took place in Sciacca and Acireale, by means of the Autonomous Administrations of the Sicilian Government. Since 2006 the administrations have been sided by two public limited companies: “Terme di Sciacca SpA” and “Terme di Acireale SpA”.

(Bagnoli, 2006, pp. 72-74). The frantic rhythms of contemporary life and post-modern anxieties demanded new cures newly adapted to the individual.

Moreover, thermalism was by then placed in a wider perspective, which inseparably connected it to its surroundings. This is a new geographical concept involving the idea of an active territory, which offers itself with its milieu and becomes a guarantor of the inseparable connection between health, environment and culture.

It is, indeed, these latter aspects, precisely, this new concept of wellbeing “grounded” in the territory, that this work explores, by presenting the case studies of Alì Terme and Terme Vigliatore, which respectively lie on the Ionian coast and on the Tyrrhenian coast of the province of Messina.

2. Alì Terme

Alì Terme is a centre lying at the foothills of the Peloritani mountains, along Messina’s stretch of the Ionian coast, in a barycentric position between Messina and Taormina. Its notoriety dates back to ancient times, thanks to the presence of hydro-mineral springs, characterised by strong therapeutic qualities. However, in this case, the lack of archaeological evidence does not make it possible to retrace how the baths were used in the remote past. The thermal springs are to be found, above all, in the northern part of the territory of the district. They are currently used by three thermal centres: Marino Thermal Centre, Granata Cassibile Thermal Centre and, from 2009, Acqua Grazia Thermal Centre.

In the seventeenth century the Granata family started the work for the conveyance of the waters into basins carved out of the rock. It was only at the beginning of the nineteenth century that first the Granatas and then the Cassibiles designed and completed the establishment, thus making accessible those which were defined as “renowned iodo-hydrocarbon-sulphurous thermal baths” (Cavallaro, 1974, p. 38).

In the nineteenth century another thermal centre was built, that of the Marino family. They had the waters of the springs lying at the foothills of mount Malombri channelled. Today the Marinos are still the holders of the concession and the owners of the hotel premises which form part of the establishment: the Marino Thermal Centre Hotel. It is still a family-run business, although the idea of creating a public limited company is being taken into consideration. Since the beginning of the twenty-first century the Marino Thermal Centre Hotel has launched a project of enhancement of the structure, by expanding its health, tourist and recreational offers.

The waters, rich in sulphur, chrome, iodine and magnesium, are used in the treatment of skin diseases and of the locomotor system diseases, and also in the treatment of the respiratory system through the use of the aerosol. Mud is made to macerate for 5/6 months, so that it acquires the therapeutic qualities of water. After this period of maceration it is ready to be heated and applied to the bodies of the patients. Besides guaranteeing the assistance of medical specialists, the Marino Thermal Centre Hotel offers its guests aesthetic medicine treatments and anti-stress programmes (Bonica, 2001, p. 76).

The centre is open from May to November. The patients are normally elderly people, mainly from the province of Messina. Over the last few years, however,

demand from “younger” people, aged between 40 and 50, has increased. Following the shutdown of the thermal centre of Acireale, with which forms of collaboration had taken place in the past, the Marino Thermal Centre Hotel has experienced an increase in demand from clients from south-eastern Sicily. The thermal treatments – as in the other thermal centres taken into consideration by this study – entail treatment cycles of 12 days without interruption, below such a period of time it is not possible to benefit from the agreement with the NHS. In order to benefit from the agreement, a medical prescription with an indication of the diagnosis and of the cycles of treatments should be presented. It is possible to avail oneself of the agreement only once a year.

The districts of the territory organize a shuttle bus service for resident patients, above all for the oldest. The costs are at the expense of the Marino Thermal Centre. The structure collaborates with the Departments of Medicine and Pharmacy of the University of Messina which study the therapeutic proprieties of waters. Besides this, the research projects within the medical field, promoted by the Association Federterme, must also be mentioned. Over the last few years, the number of patients using the structure has increased, passing from 2,943 in 2001 to 3,816 in 2012.

However, following the cut in paid leave from work, which occurred at the beginning of the 1990s, the demand – in line with the negative national trend – experienced a huge contraction, thus suffering a loss of about four thousand patients. This made a redefinition of the offer necessary.

In the other historical thermal centre of Ali, the Granata Cassibile Thermal Centre, waters rich in iodine, which are especially effective in the treatment of rheumatic and gynaecologic diseases, are used. It is, also in this example, a NHS affiliated structure, which can be used from June to October, with mainly local clients. Until a few years ago, the company also ran a small hotel, which is now no longer in use. The impression is that the centre, the oldest in Ali, has lost its sheen over the last few year and that it is less dynamic than in the past.

Recently, in 2009, a third thermal structure was built, provided with state-of-the-art equipment and abreast of the times. It is the Acqua Grazia Thermal Centre Hotel, which offers its patients the opportunity of inhalatory therapies, tubotympanum insufflations and treatments for vasculopathies.

The structure, within which there is a wellness centre, appears dynamic, and it also offers a shuttle bus service with the same conditions as the Marino Thermal Centre. The guests, who, starting from 2012 can benefit from the agreement with the NHS, are increasing in number.

The three structures, that is, the “historical” Marino Thermal Centre, the Granata Cassibile Thermal Centre and the new Acqua Grazia Thermal Centre, which is provided with modern and state-of-the-art equipment and an excellent managerial organization, are all affiliated to Federterme, and represent a resource for the territory. In particular, the Acqua Grazia Thermal Centre and the Marino Thermal Centre have tried to diversify their offer, by directing it to wellness. The local government will have to be able to create a network in the next few years, by promoting the extra thermal resources existing in the territory and by connecting the *balnea* of Ali with the excellent tourist attractions of the area: Taormina, Giardini Naxos and the Alcantara.

3. Terme Vigliatore

In the town of Terme Vigliatore, which lies between the Tyrrhenian coast and the first elevations of the Nebrodi mountains, there is the thermal centre “Fonte di Venere”, whose waters are conveyed within the “Grand Hotel delle Terme” and are managed by the Parco Augusto company³⁰.

The main element characterising the waters is sulphur, which is used for many therapeutic purposes: as a constitutive element of the cell protoplasm, for its desensitizing effect recommended in the treatment of allergies, for its germicide and pesticide action, in the contractility of vessels, but, above all, in the antitoxic action of the liver. Available treatments range from mineral waters therapy to external applications or inhalation, which are especially suitable for respiratory system diseases. Mineral waters therapies, combined with mud therapy, are recommended for digestive and bile system problems.

Among the destructive acts carried out in this thermal area in the past, it is important to recall the example of the Ciappazzi spring, which was discovered in the nineteenth century, but disappeared because of overbuilding, a widespread phenomenon in this area as well as on most of the eastern Tyrrhenian coast of the province of Messina. Ciappazzi water was particularly recommended for its regulatory action of the digestive system, and it had diuretic as well as laxative qualities.

“Fonte di Venere” is a state-of-the-art facility, and is very well equipped. The company which runs it does not have any public financial support, but, here as well, an agreement with the NHS exists. For this reason, those patients who belong to the lower income brackets can benefit from state financial support. Among the four centres studied in this work, this is the one which has, on a yearly basis, the highest number of patients. Here as well, though, the guests are primarily locals, and the impact of foreign demand is weak.

The thermal centre is in operation all year long, but in the off season it is open only in the morning. The highest numbers of guests are concentrated, above all, between June and October. At the moment, neither Terme Vigliatore nor Alì Terme have a certification of thermal quality.

In order to increase demand, Parco Augusto has also started offering a shuttle bus service to the guests from the surrounding areas. The towns in the territory between Messina and Sant’Agata di Militello take care of the organization of this service.

In the territory of the town of Furnari a new thermal spring has recently been discovered: the San Filippo spring, certified by the Ministry of Health as medicinal water. However, it is not yet accessible.

Within the Plan for the Tourist Development of the “Thyrrenium Tyndaris – Parco dei Miti” District, a consortium which comprises twenty-eight municipalities³¹, the thermal centres seem to represent one of the strengths of the

³⁰ The Parco Augusto ltd, which took over a previous organization in 2007, is a private company that, besides the thermal centre “Fonte di Venere” runs the “Grand Hotel delle Terme” (4 stars), the “Terme Park Hotel” (3 stars) and the “Centro Benessere Maurice Messegue”, which was built in 2008.

³¹ Barcellona P.G., Basicò, Condò, Falcone, Gualtieri Sicaminò, Librizzi, Mazzarrà Sant’Andrea, Merì, Messina, Milazzo, Monforte San Giorgio, Montagnareale, Montalbano Elicona, Oliveri, Pace

territory. The sea, the thermal baths, the environment as well as the local culture characterise a unique landscape which takes in Capo d'Orlando, Gioiosa Marea, Tindari and Capo Milazzo. Nevertheless, to this day the thermal tourism industry appears marginal throughout the province and it should really be promoted in a more substantial manner³².

Finally, it is necessary to underline that Terme Vigliatore combines the modern thermalism of Parco Augusto with the archaeological ruins of the ancient baths (where it is possible to visit the *tepidarium*, the *calidarium* and the fine mosaics), seaside tourism, and the offer of typical products of the food and wine tourism industry. Within the context of the tourism initiatives, popular festivals and events such as "Notte Terme", with musical, theatrical and entertainment shows, attract visitors from the surrounding centres. The construction of an amphitheatre has made possible the creation of the "agosto termense": a series of events including shows in Sicilian dialect, which aim to rediscover and preserve old local traditions.

4. Final remarks on Sicilian thermalism

Despite its vast heritage, thermal demand in Sicily is about 2.2% of the national demand. There is no doubt that nowadays the thermal industry is marginal: the two major regional establishments, Sciacca and Acireale, both managed by the public administration, have shut down their structures, with few activities still running. All of this requires an accurate analysis of the industry and a new approach to thermalism, which should be seen not only as "cure", but, by interpreting it in modern terms, as a tourist and re-creational activity. This means that it should be able to give the opportunity to combine the use of thermal waters with recreational activities connected with the concept of wellbeing and with all the other cultural, landscape and tourist resources the territory can offer.

To this end, in 2003, eleven Sicilian towns³³ carried out a feasibility study for the creation of a "network of thermal baths", which only exists so far, however, on paper. The aim was to make the territory develop through negotiated planning, to be carried out by means of a confrontation between the local administrations and private citizens, in order to promote effective and innovative actions to give fresh impetus to thermal areas. This project was based on the idea that territorial integration could be carried out only through a synergy between managerial culture and environmental and urban planning policies, devised by both institutional and private representatives (see Regione Siciliana, 2005).

The observations on the tourism of the two thermal centres in the province of Messina, which are analysed in this study, might be applied to all of the Sicilian thermal sector. The whole industry is currently experiencing a phase of complex restructuring, characterised by considerable changes and by the evolution of the

del Mela, Patti, Castoreale, Rodi Milici, Rometta, San Piero Patti, San Pier Niceto, Santa Lucia del Mela, Saponara, Spadafora, Terme Vigliatore, Tripi, Valdina, Venetico.

³²With the purpose of promoting the thermal baths, the Parco Augusto company takes part in the annual "Thermalia" expo in Rimini. In 2011, precisely in order to support the balnea of Terme Vigliatore and Ali Terme, the Province of Messina also took part in the Rimini fair. The initiative, however, did not have a significant positive impact on the thermal industry.

³³Acireale, Ali Terme, Calatafimi Segesta, Castellammare del Golfo, Geraci Siculo, Montevago, Lipari, Sciacca (leader in the field), Sclafani Bagni, Terme Vigliatore, Termini Imerese.

concept of thermalism itself, which should be more and more seen as something between healthcare and tourism. There is also the fact that clients find it confusing to understand precisely the sense of spas and beauty farms. What is sure is that wellbeing, today, is not only a physical matter, but also a psychic and mental one. Thermal treatments – from this point of view – no longer concern only the individuals suffering from special pathologies, but they are aimed at a much wider group of users. Thus, while traditional thermalism seems to be doomed to marginality, the demand for wellbeing in broader terms is destined to grow in the near future.

A modern thermal offer must, then, take into account the new internal business strategies aiming at wellbeing in its broadest sense, with packages which include aesthetic treatments, fitness and alternative therapies, as well as wider territorial strategies, aiming to link the thermal baths to the typical resources of the places. Thus, on the one hand, there are cosmetics, fitness and massages; on the other hand, there are food and wine tourism, culture, rural tourism and recreational places, in order to attract younger clients from beyond the local territory (see Regione Siciliana, 2012). To this day, the efforts of the private professionals operating in this sector do not seem to be supported by an effective territorial policy – on the part of the institutions – capable of creating networks. The Acqua Grazia Thermal Centre, the Marino Thermal Centre and Parco Augusto, above all, stand out in the Sicilian context because they have been able to seize the opportunities offered by telecommunications and modern technologies, by creating Internet websites accompanied by images and information. These latter are essential today for any effective marketing policy. Nevertheless, thermal baths remain detached from the major tourist networks: Taormina and the Aeolian Islands.

The thermal centres of the province of Messina could be integrated into the all-inclusive tourist networks of the territory. The chemical analysis carried out by the University of Messina has confirmed, among other things, the retention, over time, of the therapeutic quality of the waters. The thermal sites could, thus, give their small contribution to the “creation” of the territory and to the solution of those many geographical “fractures” that this region still presents: between coastal stretches and the hinterland; between urban zones and rural spaces; between flat lands and mountain areas.

In conclusion, we have to say that the structures of Ali Terme and Terme Vigliatore cannot be compared, in terms of tourist attraction, with the baths of centres with great thermal vocation and tradition such as Salsomaggiore, Montecatini (in Italy) or Baden Baden, Karlovy Vary (abroad), situated in strong regions. In the province of Messina, up to now, thermalism has never represented a main factor of tourist attraction.

At present it is not conceivable a leading role of the two thermal centres of Terme Vigliatore and Ali Terme for the tourist development of the province of Messina. The former seems to be, in terms of accessibility, too far from the Aeolian archipelago, which, although it is a pre-eminent tourist system, appears separated from the Tyrrhenian coast and Milazzo, the only harbour of the district permanently connected to the islands (see Taviano, 1999). The possible tourist development of Terme Vigliatore is evidently related with the tourist expansion of the whole territory (comprising towns as Tindari, Capo d’Orlando, Gioiosa Marea,

Portorosa, San Marco d'Alunzio and, of course, Milazzo), which nowadays does not take the shape of a reticular structure.

Also Ali Terme, in the Ionian coast, although it is not far from Taormina, main tourist pole of the province of Messina and of Sicily as well, and from towns of particular cultural interest such as Giardini Naxos, Savoca, Fiumedinisi, because of the configuration of the territory, shows a weak interaction with the principal tourist attractions of the area. For this reason, at present, it is absolutely inconceivable that the thermal baths could represent the main component of local tourism. At the moment – and in the near future – the thermal industry could only function as a support of the principal tourist system of Taormina-Alcantara Valley (see Valle, 2012).

Although both, Ali Terme and Terme Vigliatore, are trying to emulate in their own smaller scale the good practices of advanced centres, combining treatments with wellness and leisure, the present economic recession does not allow those investments which could cause the growth of the Sicilian thermal structures and promote significantly the economic development of the territory.

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