

“L’Italia Turistica” in 1930’s: History of a Journey and Care Resort¹

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Abstract

The several cultural and landscape attractions of Italy have become part of the national Tourism Organization only in recent times, more precisely in 1921 with the foundation of National Authority of Tourist Industries (Ente Nazionale Industrie Turistiche - E.N.I.T.). For a better control of the entity of the traveller movements, E.N.I.T. organized the statistical reporting services that were designed to control and manage the tourist flow inlet and outlet. These inspections needed for the protection and development of the places of ‘journey and care resort’, managed by the Independent Organization. In 1931, Tagliacozzo (Abruzzo-Italy) received the title of ‘journey and care resort’ becoming part of the Tourist Organization of the past Kingdom of Italy, supervised by E.N.I.T. This work treats the Italian tourism of the 1930’ through the history of Tagliacozzo in that period and the analysis of “L’Italia turistica” by Giovanni Mariotti (1929).

Key Words: Tourism Italy 30’s, E.N.I.T., Independent Organization, Care and Tourism resort

1. Introduction

There’s a sheltered territory where the *événements*² of the daily routine, its citizens, as well as its memorable historical vicissitudes, were so noble, to be divinely sung³ and to contribute to the importance of the date September 9th1931. This place whose explanatory name is Tagliacozzo (*Talus Cotium*, cleft of the rock) to Abruzzo-Italy, is located on the route to a mountain, which on a September day notable for its typical air of transhumance, was declared a holiday resort, care and tourism through the (so much desired) authority decree n. 6789 of 1936. The accountant Domenico Amicucci reported the news in his *Relazione sull’attività Podestarile*.⁴ In his synthetic report he mentions names, activities, remarkable actions and problems to solve in detail within the balance sheet given to the Authority of the past royal government.

Thus we can read that money was spent on: many aqueducts, a sewer system, ovens destined incinerate rubbish, reforestation, restauration of Capoluogo’s cemetery, improvement of many inter-municipal streets and public lighting, tarring of internal roads, reconstruction of the Talia theatre and the Eastern Church, reconstruction the old slaughterhouse, establishment of a tennis and marina complex, and the reconstruction the town concert hall (an aspect which cheered the unemployed artisans). In addition, work was done on the house of balilla and to the *Fasces Lictorii*, necessary signs to the future contributive heritages.

¹ This essay is the result of an analytical, stylistic processing, and a bibliographic enrichment of reflections that have found their first expression in Montebelli, 2006. Reflections that have developed as a result of a search of archives and the collection of oral testimonies in the Abruzzo town of Tagliacozzo.

² As Eugenio Turri affirms, the landscape tells men’s history in two different ways: “First of all it talks about the *événements*, the minimal or memorable facts it was stage of: daily tales, expected and forgettable happenings, gestures of great relief, vital for the development of history. The other sort of landscape tale is about the course of its birth, its settlement through time, the history of sedimentations, from episode to episode, from generation to generation having been in contrast or inserted over the past heritages”, (Turri, 2000, p. 1).

³ “S’el s’aunasse ancor tutta la gente/ che già, in tutta la sua fortunate terra/ di Puglia, fu del suo sangue dolente/ per li Troiani e per la lunga guerra/ che de l’anella fé si alte spoglie,/ come Livio scrive, che non erra, / con quella che sentio di colpi doglie/per contrastare a Roberto Guiscardo;/ e l’altra il cui ossame ancor s’accoglie/a Ceperan, là dove fu bugiardo ciascun Pugliese, e là da Tagliacozzo,/dove senz’arme vinse il vecchio Alardo;/(...)”, (Alighieri, 2002, p. 447- 448).

⁴ Città di Tagliacozzo, 1936.

Accountant Domenico Amicucci notes: “The town is continually improving its tourism and hospitality aspect, thanks to the measures adopted by the Authority administration, resulting in a continuous increase in the number of visitors and tourists who come here”.⁵ In short, a true ferment with an open-air workshop for the renovation of a small town which could finally make use of funds to implement a series of useful facilities to further develop the area’s touristic nature, certainly, but also for its reconstruction after the terrible earthquake of 1915. Necessary work which on one hand helped to significantly improve the inhabitant’s lives, and on the other hand significantly helped to guarantee the title of “holiday resort and the hoped-for economic support from the competent institution. So it was that Tagliacozzo entered the tourist organization, at that time within the Kingdom of Italy (*Regno d’Italia*) and supervised by National Authority of Tourist Industries (Ente Nazionale Industrie Turistiche, E.N.I.T.), that had involved since the former year, 156 places.⁶

2. “*Italia Turistica*”⁷ in 30’s: the industry development of the foreigner

Many attractive cultural and panoramic Italian activities, known and celebrated since past years, have become part of the national tourist organization only in recent times. Until 1921, year of foundation of E.N.I.T., the promotion of tourism was in the hands of private organizations (not under the control of the national government). In addition, these groups were far more interested in an internal promotion than an external and foreign promotion, purposing for the most part different forms of trekking.

Protagonists of this phase of the pioneer tourist organization in Italy were the Italian Alpine Club⁸, The Italian Touring Club⁹, the Automobile Club,¹⁰ the Foreign Traveling Association as well as the Advertising Office of the Railways (a forerunner of E.N.I.T.’s work without its resources). In the first decade of the last century, tourism had already begun show its potential for development. For a variety of commercial and industrial activities tourism was to be considered a promising economic phenomenon, of such proportions as to move what was called “the foreigner industry” as it was defined. In those first decades of the twentieth century, hotel and transport activities were not the only ones to become fully involved in this foreigner industry. In addition to travel agencies¹¹, there were already large tourist companies¹², and a series of industries (from iron and steel to textile, from furniture to the flatware, from chemical to electric) producing materials that were needed for the construction, furnishing, and management of hotels. It’s enough to consider the installation and operational material necessary for the transport industry (railway, ships, and cars, airplanes) to have an idea of the great quantity of interests that were moved, at that time and today, due to the tourist movement.

⁵ *Ivi*, p. 19.

⁶ Here in National Authority of Tourist Industries (E.N.I.T., 1931), analyzing the foreigner’s movement in the care resort, that year.

⁷ This is the title of the book published by Giovanni Mariotti (1929), who was the president of the National Authority of Tourist industries. In the volume, the touristic evolution in Italy is fully described, such as its organization in the period from 1921, year of birth of the Authority, until 1929. The book is of such importance for the research, considering the uniqueness of this historic document and its meaning.

⁸ Club Alpino Italiano was founded in Turin-Italy in 1863; it’s considered the eldest tourist association, born to improve the access to the mountain areas and to promote its studies.

⁹ Touring Club Italiano, founded in 1894 in Milan-Italy; it’s certainly one of the most important Italian tourist association, and one of the most active in Europe.

¹⁰ Reale Automobile Club was born in 1920’s and was one of the most valuable associations for the importance of its mission that was the development of automotive in Italy. This association was able to organize association’s and authority’s actions, co-operating with central and local authorities to direct and control the route improvement.

¹¹ “Born to assist tourists, both for their information and to sell railway or naval tickets, to get an hotel and to completely organize *forfeit* travels. Such firms were normally united in great organizations placed all over the world, as the Thomas Cook & Sons of London, now representing for the foreigner industry not only a way of exploitation of the traffic and at the same time a real strength able to develop more and more tourism, to give more and more work, directed also to all the other firms belonging to the foreigner industry”, (Mariotti, 1929, p.38).

¹² “Recently born development organizations re-uniting several industrial activities, creating a perfect tourist qualification. Great societies such as Canadian Pacific Railway, with such a complex structure to allow them to grab the tourist through their agencies, making him travel on their boats and on their railways and maybe on their planes and to place them in their hotels”, (*Ivi*, p. 39).

In the light of this introduction, it should have been considered correct by the self-sufficient State that controlled from 1922 the future of the then Kingdom of Italy (*Regno d'Italia*): “Encouraging and promoting the foreigners’ movement in Italy meant to encourage and promote the National Agriculture from which rich tables request their best products, everything here, at home, without any contrast or trouble with customs, without any uncertainties or risks of long trips and the speculations of foreign markets”, (Mariotti, 1929, p.41).

Moreover the advantages that tourism industry assured to the industries, and not only¹³ had to be added to the State’s and authorities earnings, for the contribution of the revenue determined by the tourist flux¹⁴ both in fiscal incomes and in the expenditures made by foreigners in the country. Beginning in 1921, E.N.I.T. organized statistical services to track and register the extent of the movement of travelers. These statistical services were conceived for three primary purposes: 1) acknowledgement of the number of foreigners who entered Italy via marine and land borders; 2) acknowledgement of the number of Italians who travelled abroad annually; 3) establish the extent of the travel carried out (by both Italians and foreigners) took place in the Kingdom. First, special surveys were necessary, particularly regarding travel via sea; which was recorded via “Model 702” completed by the captain of steamers sailing over international waters; these models were delivered each time there was a disembarkation of foreign passengers.

This document was then delivered to the Royal Harbour Master’s Office, where the disembarkation was carried out. Through the examination of these documents (which arrived at E.N.I.T. via the Ministry of Communication) it was possible to calculate the number of foreign passengers who arrived in Italy via sea “distinguishing them by the steamer’s flag which transported them, for the class occupied on board, for its nationality and country of embarkation”, (Mariotti, 1929, p. 51). Instead, data regarding railway movements was obtained through a survey based on the number of train tickets sold abroad and at bordering stations for Italy. The problem regarding this survey was in the effective difficulty to establish how many travelers were Italians and how many foreigners. As to automobile traffic, E.N.I.T. was forced to resort to conjecture, based on the statistics of the temporary importation of cars: “Supposed that every car could house an average of three people, the total number of cars imported, multiplied for three and integrated; we must even consider the repeating passages of cars in public service, registered only at the first passage; this can represent with sufficient approximation the total movement of strangers who got in a car”, (Ivi, 1929, p. 51).

The second survey, parallel to the number of foreign nationals arriving in Italy, was concerned with the number of compatriots who left to go abroad. These findings on the movement of what is called “negative tourism,” were based on indirect elements as for the previous calculation of the foreigners’ movement. Only in 1928, with the establishment of a new kind of passport for Italians who were going abroad, and which contained some statistical coupons regarding foreign travel and reentry, given at the frontier, was there the possibility to have a clearer approximation of the expatriating movement, and the differentiation between work and business. The third statistical survey conducted by E.N.I.T. was focused on the movement of travelers in the Kingdom. This is the study which has the greatest impact on the present context. This survey attempted to report the number and the permanence of every traveler who lodged in a hotel or a boarding house. For this purpose, the study made use of a provision of the Public Safety Act that was required every hotel to report to the local authorities both the name and the personal details of every traveler, including the announcement of his/her departure. After such an operation, all the forms were sent to the local offices that filled the “C Model” (yellow), passing it to the royal prefecture, which in turn, filled in the “A Model” (white) sending it finally to the General Direction of E.N.I.T. for the consecutive examination and evaluation. We can read information regarding these statistics in the annual report on the activity of the organization, as well as those published on the various annual reports of Italian hotels.

¹³ “We have suggested that even agriculture was advantaged by the tourist movement. We can generally add breeding farm and eating industries as constitutional elements, with the agriculture. A great demand is asked to these productive structures by the foreigner industry”, (Ivi, p.40).

¹⁴ “According to Ferraris, the 20% of foreigners’ expenses becomes a direct or indirect contribution to the State’s, province’s and community’s cash: partly as a payment of services, the rest as a land tax, moving richness tax, bound and consummation duty, tax of journey, etc. In the postwar the direct contribution of foreigners was superior than the antebellum, because some taxes were created on the hotel’s accounts and the government gradually revoked them. The taxes on the hotel’s accounts reached 8% of their amounts, the supertax on the injured and war disabled and the tax destined to ENIT. The abolishment of these taxes had positive consequences on the foreigners’ movement and make flow the State’s earnings in other ways, after the suppression and its consequent loss”, (Ivi, p. 42).

As in the aforementioned *Yearly Report* of 1926, a new law is mentioned (under the heading of “Internal tourist organization” – 1st July 1926 n. 1380) relating to the adoption of “measures” for the safeguard and development of health resorts, holiday and tourism. From these shortly, Autonomous organization will be born in order to manage “journey and care resorts,” all which concerned the foreigner’s movement (propaganda, fun, etc.).

3. Since the foundation of E.N.I.T. establishment of the independent organization

In the first decades of the 20th century, the tourist organization was distinct in its important propulsive functions, tourism safeguard and industrial exploitation. It is clear that the latter function was provided by hotels, travel agencies, communication and transport firms. Instead, the propulsive work of safeguarding tourism was carried out by public organizations which were interested in propaganda and receptive coordination. The first organizations to carry out this task were the Pro Loco associations or beautification committees which coordinated the various private forces in individual locations in order to promote a common action of propaganda and improvement of the conditions of hospitality offered to foreigners.¹⁵ “In Italy, these local organizations, that we will refer to under the single name of “Pro Loco” initially met their financial needs through social quotes, and then with the assistance of public organizations. Subsequent to the law of 11th December 1910 n. 863 municipalities were authorized to apply the journey tax in the amount of £ 30 per season and per guest; in this way, they were able to provide for the activities of propaganda, improvement, ornamentation carried out by Pro Loco. But the work of local tourist associations could not be enough (even with the necessary financial base) because it did not go beyond local interests”.¹⁶

Beyond the limiting circumstances that these pro Loco association did not play a role in national interests, but in a local one, there was also a series of problems concerning tourist organizations more specifically. A true tourism policy was not present; in this way it was not possible to coordinate the individual initiatives and their propaganda. To rectify these problems the Royal State, through the law 610, on the 7th April 1921, created E.N.I.T. In this way, the Royal State attempted to both improve the conditions of the communication systems related to transport in general and using demographic statistics; on their basis all the measures useful to increase the touristic industry were created and presented to the Government. In this way they could develop (to the advantage of the receiving structures) the Pro Loco associations that reached the number of three hundred by 1925. These associations were not only the result of private efforts economically unsupported, but it’s right to remember that as promulgated in quoted law of 1910 on the journey tax, the proceeds of this tax were entered in the municipality balance sheet, but it was not then destined to works of improvement or propaganda to support the tourist services. For this reason, it is not surprising that one of the first problems that E.N.I.T. had to solve was the financial situation of Pro Loco associations that from which depended the entire receptive touristic organization. To this end, ENIT introduced the outline of a bill to the relevant ministry outlining a new and better functioning of the local authorities. This is the story of that decree:

“It’s worthy to remember that since 1921, (E.N.I.T.) was born few months before, had managed the question, even after the invitation of the Ministry of the Industry and the Commerce of that period, and its council decreed to create proposals of measures that soon took place in an outline of project of law, approved by the same council in the seat of 25th November 1921 (...). You can find in it the fundamental concepts soon recalled and adopted in the law of the 1st July 1926: 1) the acknowledgement of the character of care resort by the Home office; 2) the institution of local commissions to manage the incomes from the journey tax; 3) the application of the journey tax to the care resort’s visitors; 4) the distribution of the tax incomes only to improve the resorts; 5) the extension of the same dispositions to the touristic resorts”.¹⁷

The Royal Decree n. 765 of 15th April 1926, applied these principles, and was converted into law on the first of July of the same year. This decree, in fact, gave rise to a new local touristic organization; the activity was no longer entrusted solely to the Pro Loco associations, but newly born Independent Organizations, as established by the law, in each municipality, small village or suburb of it, acknowledged as a care, journey, tourist resort.

¹⁵ Widely explained by Giovanni Mariotti, the sector of action of these organizations was very large. It included a certain variety of aspects: organization, function and control of tourist service, public places and information; the control of the hotels, the improvement of infrastructures and the publicity of local qualities.

¹⁶ Mariotti, 1929, p. 95.

¹⁷ E.N.I.T., 1927, pp. 22 – 23.

Pro Loco associations were thus substituted by the Independent Organizations of the municipality of the care resort; they gave life to the National Consortium of Care Resorts, at the time an important national touristic organization. After the approval of its statute, that took place at Montecatini several weeks after the promulgation of the law of the 1st July 1926, the Consortium directed and coordinated the action of the various Independent Organizations. These were legally separated from the Municipality and had larger responsibilities than those offered by E.N.I.T. to the Pro Loco associations, which were kept alive by the proceeds that ensured the financial basis of the individual locations, such as: the care tax or journey tax; the special care contribution, due to those who practicing the commercial, industrial, professional activity took economic advantage from the existence of the care, touristic, journey resort; the contributions of those who got a benefit from the amusement or entertainment of the resort. Between the duties to accomplish, it was established the Independent Organizations had to cure the statistical data of the foreigners' movement; the hoteliers and the owner of guest houses had to declare their guest' departures and arrivals combining the two services. This rule made them independent. For such an aim, two models were created: 704/1a about the single arrivals and 704/1b to daily notify massive departures.

"Only the first part of the model 704/1a and a carbon paper copy of 704/1b must be sent to the Independent Organizations; model 704/1b are printed in 4 different colors corresponding to 4 different kinds of hotels, guest houses, apartments, etc. Every day the Independent Organizations will fill a model called 704/2, getting data about the declarations of arrivals and departures that they receive. Every Independent Organization will weekly send E.N.I.T. the filled models and E.N.I.T. will manage the examination work", (Mariotti, 1929, pp.56 – 57).

Now we'll see in which way these institutions changed the future of a district in Abruzzo.

4. The discovery of Abruzzo: Tagliacozzo and the vacation time.

At the beginning of the last century, tourism, a new and possible source of economic development, was so different in the structures and movements of the fascination to make desirable *abroad* even the delightful town of Tagliacozzo made of nice shapes and hyper-holy icons¹⁸, alluding to the geographical inhospitality of its precipitous peaks of Italy (Abruzzo Orography) known to scare every foreigner. The natural and extraordinary wall of the tree mountainous sections lengthways running the country and thus creating a suggestive sequence of valley and sudden peaks, clamped for centuries the country, as if it was a chest full of use and habits staying pure in time. The birth of the railway Rome – Pescara in 1873, the interregional motorway and the funicular (starting from Assergi, Aquila, until Campo Imperiale on Gran Sasso, the highest peak of Appennini, now made accessible) opened up that regional chest giving life for the most part to the country and pastoral realities.

Everything started to change for Abruzzo and Tagliacozzo that had the chance to exploit at their best their "bridge" position thanks to the works of infrastructure; it became nearer to Rome staying united to the rest of Abruzzo, officially becoming, by 1931 care, journey, tourism resort and getting in the touristic organization of the Reign, at the time supervised by E.N.I.T.. Everything started changing and if we want to go on with the inevitable comparison between isolated popular habits and new unstoppable movements that quaked Italy in 1920's and 1930's from an economic and social point of view.

An Italy that was living the censorship of a self-sufficient government that was promoting the national touristic development; on the other hand it was the beginning of an opening (extensively massive and constant) flux from international tourism, simplified both by the building of new receptive installments and new way of communication. Technology and his wonder contain the place inhospitality to make possible their unity with its new territory different in image and functions. This gave the chance to build over those natural imperfections, formerly so restrictive, transforming them in something of tourism charm, after these technological metamorphose.

¹⁸ Able to give "A total picturesque character for the surprises that his houses show, very similar to the cells of a prison, for the supreme and wonderful view it could offer." (Macdonell, 1991, p. 168).

Abruzzo's uplands were conquered in a short time: a part thanks to the coach running up cemented motorways; a part by the railway passing in a strategic path that avoided the earthly difficulties; a part by the funiculars¹⁹, dominating snowy peaks, now places of winter tourism²⁰ where "everything has been hardly desired, carefully executed once it was reached Italy's crest, without any waste of time, so joyful of the highest snows. Young courts will burn with the happy Ski discipline the running fast hours, the bright hours of youth", (Gadda, 2003, p. 130). Even where the peaks were not so steep and amazing a good touristic movement group was possibly born. It was made of people who left from Rome by train, coach or the richest by car, looking for healthier air. At that time, free time became a right given to workers and the technological opportunity through the movement was starting to be amplified by the consumer thought; in many ways the vacation place started living thus characterizing the first half of the 20th century. In the vacation place women and children were joined at the weekend by their fathers, they stayed even for months in villas, rented rooms, hotels. In that expanded time dedicated to the routine of live in foreigner's towns, Tagliacozzo got its touristic space. Just before 1931, Tagliacozzo was a vacation place; in fact in 1929 there were the deliberations about the rules of the application of the journey tax, evidently impeding the touristic flux.²¹The city was finally mentioned in 1930, one year before its officially becoming "care and journey resort:"

In the touristic brochure *Gli alberghi in Italia*²² where we can find in the dedicated part "Abruzzi and Molise" the prices of the only hotelier structure, the one of "Ciamei" in the famous copy of the driving guide in 1909, (Tortoreto, 1909) going on with its completely pioneering role in the sector of the touristic reception at Tagliacozzo. It was quoted also in the *Relazione sull'attività svolta nel 1930 dall' E.N.I.T.* in 1000 copies of publication of wall billboards useful for the foreigner's movement and its local traffic. When on 9th September 1931 Tagliacozzo became "journey resort" with its independent organization that was managing its business and incomes from propaganda and its entertainments for the foreigner's vacation day, its experience through the limited touristic reception was just considerable, as its infrastructural works realized to give Tagliacozzo the title established in the mentioned Decree 1926 n. 765.

This title, as soon as it was acquired, was put on risk by the decree of 10th march 1934, with which the local authority started a short correspondence quarrel with the competent organization. According to the law of 1926, the acknowledgement of care and journey resort was effective in case of possession of meeting places and after an accurate examination of the hotels, villas and boarding houses that didn't have to lack in bathroom fixtures (drainage systems, aqueduct, realized at Tagliacozzo at the end of the century). Besides these infrastructures, the resort had to realize an yearly income of L. 20.000 or the title could have been removed. So: "The home office and the finance minister, after the audition of the Commissioner of tourism and the central Council will classify in care resort and tourism resort of the known territories, within a year from the entering in force of the law.

¹⁹ "The funicular of Gran Sasso is directly managed by the district of L'Aquila, under the normal control of the technical supervision of the provincial Railway Circle. A massive reserve of fuel was transported to the upper station, to consent the functions of the generators even in the hardest days of storm or characterized by difficult communications. The installation cost a great deal of effort and passion, I'd say, but it was worthy to the direct vision of places and structures: people of Abruzzo are adverse to the rise and caravans and their donkeys knows the fact for sure. (...) Adding trolley line was necessary, putting it on wooden easels: the worst, as you can imagine, was the ropes training. Every speech is vain: it'd better to go up the mount of Italy and watch from its top the sea", (Gadda, 2003, p. 124).

²⁰ "Even if you have not reached the upper station of the funicular, your skis on your shoulders and your bag in your hands, you'll see the high storm run everywhere, raping the highest land, rising its hissing vortexes: and the wind will howl against the closed building. You'll find the hotel 100 meters from it (...). See, the architect Bonadé Bottino, (...) had diligently studied the case: here's the bar, just to start popping some grappa or other even more complicated spirits: here there is the circular dining room, with windows over the nights or over the brightness of quiet mornings. The imperial camp goes immensely down from here." (*Ivi*, p. 126).

²¹ In this way, the Municipal council of Tagliacozzo embodied in the figure of podestà about: "rules for the application of the journey tax, approved with Royal decree n. 1315 of the 20th of august 1921 (...), considering the social and ethical purposes that inspired the favorable commissions for large families, we ask for exemption of the journey tax all those who are in the conditions of art. 2 of the suggested Royal decree; 1) families who are in the condition of art. 2 of the Royal Decree n. 1312 of 14th June 1928 are exempted to pay the journey tax; 2) insert this disposition in the actual code for the application of the journey tax", (Registro delle deliberazioni del Consiglio Comunale di Tagliacozzo, 1929).

²² E.N.I.T. – Federazione Nazionale Fascista Alberghi e Turismo, 1930.

In the same period and through the same process it will be provided to the suspension of the acknowledgement of those resorts not responding to the necessities required by their role, and those that in the last 3-yearly period hadn't realized an average income of L. 20.000, nor those who failed in bathroom fixture and all of its requirements (...).²³

The administration Committee in June of the same year was reunited and through its president Lawyer Luigi Laurini asked a 5-yearly delay of the already given acknowledgement: "The town of Tagliacozzo must be acknowledged care resort while it has all the required qualifications (...), it couldn't show to have realized the average yearly income of L. 20.000, first because the resort couldn't work for a complete 3-yearly period (the acknowledgement happened in September 1931), second because the local authority imposed limited contribution and extensive penalties to favorite the development of vacation".²⁴

The danger was blocked considering the sending prospect accompanied by the request of delay of the acknowledgement that witnessed how: "The resort of Tagliacozzo started his season from the first fifteen days of June until October and in winter from December to March with 2500 people verified (as in the E.N.I.T. report) in over 40.000 days of presence." The document goes on with the list of available beds to host the touristic flux that according to an exaggerate account than the effective truth of the receptive ability of the municipality were collected in: a) hotel n. 50 b) in guesthouses n. 28 c) flats n.505 d) villas n.259".²⁵ There were different meeting places: Circle Unione, Theatre Talia, open Cinema, meeting room, projection room Balilla, tennis, sport camp, and 4 cafés. The independent municipality of Tagliacozzo is so well set, at least on the paper, to grant an income of L.30.000; in this way with such numbers: "It's easy to understand that the journey tax, with the special one for the care, will increase the amount of L. 30.000".

So, the balance sheet of the authority will be able to consent the assigned fulfillment."²⁶ Through the fall of the fascist government, war and after war, things inevitably changed except running to write essays for the abruzzese municipality to become "care and tourism resort", difficult and over-followed goal until in 1950, the municipal council demanded: "request of official acknowledgement from the Home office. Tagliacozzo, famous for its healthy climate, in a wonderful position and fertile mountains, with large pine forests bounding the town, with praised and perfect water, has got its touristic habit going back to many decades, (...)". The title of Care and Tourism resort was given to Tagliacozzo in 1956. Then, the regional law n.54 of the 26th June 1997, with the promulgation of a new establishment, collected the various care resorts independently operating for 40 years in a unique Regional Touristic promotion authority, coordinating various and dispersed Local Touristic information Offices and IAT (Touristic Reception Information). But these are other *événements*.

5. Conclusions

The landscape, as Eugenio Turri²⁷ teaches us, tells men's history in two different ways: first of all it talks about the *événements*, the forgettable facts of the routine, together with those that instead are memorable and sign the story of the community; on the other hand the long educational path, its changings, its settlement of the present. The two stories are completing each other with a theatrical piece *in fieri*: the landscape becomes a stage for the human *événements*, making them memorable and ready to be served, while these memories can give shape to scenes made of *iconemes* and *semiophores*,²⁸ according to a precise and changing territorial theology that follows the cultural identity and its present needs.

²³ Gazzetta Ufficiale del Regno d'Italia, 1934, p. 1267.

²⁴ Città di Tagliacozzo - Amministrazione Autonoma della Stazione di Soggiorno, 1934, p. 20.

²⁵ *Ivi*, p. 20.

²⁶ "(...) in the past it was earned in the percentage of 5% on the rents, now applied with personal earnings, from L. 15 to L.22, according to the list of occupied spaces, (...), (*Ivi*, p. 20).

²⁷ Turri, 2000, p. 4.

²⁸ The metaphor of the landscape as a theatre is here very effective, proposed by Eugenio Turri (1998), and the importance of the collective memory in the building of the mental image that every society creates of itself: "Continuing with its own identity through facts and generations, developing in this way the culture of memory" (Assmann, 1997, p. 17). There's a divided presence in the territory of iconemes, places full of cultural former references of the past, considered personal, (Turri, 1998, p. 22) and semiophores, those places that used to have a worth, are themes analyzed from the authoress in a former work, (Montebelli, Spagnoli, 2010).

So, the history of a territory is readable in his material landscape and its cultural sense is told out loud from events that signed the historic memory, definitely documented by dusty and yellowy papers from an archive. It's also told by intimate and fleeting memories of their depositaries, memories which strictly relate the individual to his territory. It often happens that this intimate life shines through the official documents, making a territorial tale full of humanity, forgetting the boring bureaucracy constrictions of memos and deliberations.

When this happens, the places are made alive through the passing life they motionlessly guard. In a file of the Archive of the Municipality of Tagliacozzo, from a note received and dated 30th July 1933 from "Hotel Venezia (Aquila) Tagliacozzo" we can learn of the organization of a dance party with orchestra, tennis completion, followed by an accurate price list. In another one, received on 28th September 1933 by the same hotel, the cost of tennis completion is documented through the voice of Avezzano's players, about Vermouth offered to them, about the three lost balls, about the dancing party, about the rent of the field for the tennis competition of 8th to 12th august, about the porters, about the three wine bottles – 2 drinks and 2 coffees offered to the musicians, for a total amount of L. 419, 50. Bills at this point archived, of course, but much worthier, considering the images they remind us of and their former worth.

There are this images presented by the archives we must add those reminded by some of Tagliacozzo's inhabitants,²⁹ the few directed witnesses still alive telling us of a town that got populated by vacationers; the most rich and trustful built in the famous Via delle Ville,³⁰ while others were staying in Palazzo Ducale, in the hotels and in the rented flats. From the memories it comes out a sense of time in which the vacation in this place at the root of a mountain, was animated by morning walks on Mount Padiglione until Fontespina and by summer evenings spent at Unione Circle, where a ballroom with a radio-gramophone was full of young people, university students, for the most part, while the ladies were playing rummy with French cards, downstairs. Since then, a long time passed, but the landscape of Tagliacozzo in its stability goes on telling about that strong and bureaucratic run to reach the title of "Care and Journey resort" (Tortoreto, 1909, p. 7) to the present; about the memory of music parties, about bicycle trips to get an ice-cream in Avezzano and about its piazza and its historical Bar, Ciamei, where mothers with huge hats and wearing white, were waiting for the return of their sons, distracted by the wind of whatever adventure.

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²⁹ Here we refer to all those welcoming and kind people listened during the various journeys in the Municipality of Tagliacozzo to collect oral witnesses and documentation from the archives.

³⁰ "(...) In fact, in the new part of the town the presence of numerous Villas owned by the roman citizens, built in the first twenties and thirties of these centuries are witnesses of the presence of vacationers of the high class and economic well-off conditions. Besides we don't have residential buildings anymore until recent years. This, because (...) the quality of the vacationer is changing; he can't afford the building of a Villa, but he definitely prefer renting a flat.

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