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Italian literary parks and their importance as forms of cultural entrepreneurship: case study of the Eugenio Montale Park in Milano

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Abstract

This paper focuses on literary theme parks and their role as an alternative form of tourism, with a particular contribution to sustainable tourism development. Literature-oriented theme parks are an original way to combine cultural heritage and tourist experience, attracting travellers interested in literature and authors. The case of Italy, a country that has succeeded in developing theme parks based on famous authors and literary works, is the subject of this study. The contribution to the economy through the enhancement of tourism and cultural activities is one of the issues that will be examined in the course of this study, as well as how the connection between literature and landscape offers, not only an enriched experience for visitors, but also important entrepreneurial cultural opportunities for the economic and social enhancement of local communities.

1. Introduction

Literary parks are business places where nature meets literature. These parks, dedicated to the life and work of great writers, allow visitors to have an experience that goes beyond reading. Their stories come alive in the very landscapes that inspired their creation, offering a deeper and more meaningful connection with literature. (Manola,2022)

Through the entrepreneurial organization and development of these literary parks, visitors have the opportunity to enjoy literature in a completely different and new way, while helping to promote cultural heritage and strengthen local communities.

2. Literary tourism

Tourism is a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by many different factors. One of the most important is the civilization and local culture of a destination, as these are the elements that make it unique and differentiate it from others. An interesting link between tourism culture and entrepreneurship is the literature created by local authors in each region.

Literature can offer an alternative form of tourism that promotes local development. Book lovers, often inspired by the events and places described in books, feel the desire to visit these places, to experience the atmosphere described in the pages and to identify with the characters. Moreover, many readers, either because of admiration for the author, or in order to better understand his/ her work, seek to visit the places where the author lived and created, so that they are able to experience his/ her inspiration (Manola,2020) (Manola, and Tsatambassoglou, 2021) (Manola and Gioka, 2021).

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This human need for emotional connection with the work and the creator leads to the birth of "emotional tourism". This is a new form of alternative tourism involving experiences of unique value that evoke emotion through landscapes, activities and changes in daily life. Emotional tourism is an evolution of experiential tourism and includes the subcategory of literary tourism, where the visitor seeks to experience the same emotions and feelings as those discovered in literary descriptions. (Manola, 2022) (Manola, 2019).

- As Robinson and Andersen (2021) state, literary tourism creates an "emotional engagement" between the reader and the place, fostering imagination and creativity, while each visitor can uniquely live the experience. Even if there is not always a direct connection between books and tourism, reading can act as a catalyst to start a journey.

Therefore, despite the subjectivity of the motivation that drives travelers, it is important that there is also an "objective authenticity" that applies to everyone.

Literary tourism, as an alternative form of tourism, goes beyond conventional site visits, offering tourists a deep, multi-layered experience. The main reason for choosing this form of tourism may be the emotional and intellectual connection to the landscapes described in literary works, creating a bond between the visitor and the author through the site. Furthermore, admirers of the author seek to better understand the author's way of thinking by discovering how he or she experienced everyday life in the places where he or she lived or was inspired by (Manola et al.,2020). (Manola, 2022). (Manola,2022a).

The experience of the literary tourist is enhanced through his/ her interaction with the place as well as his personal perceptions. Cultural entrepreneurship activities such as theme parks and museums enhance the development of literary tourism and create an integrated experience. These infrastructures offer visitors the opportunity to explore the literary world in depth and immerse themselves in the cultural heritage of the region, leading to significant tourism development and promotion of local culture. (Maniou, 2024b),(Mitoula, & Economou, 2014),(Mitoula, & Kaldis, 2018).

3. Literary parks

The creation of thematic literary parks is an innovative approach, offering a complete experience to the reader.

The idea of literary parks originated as an innovative form of cultural tourism, which connects readers with the works and authors through the natural places, where they lived and were inspired by. The creation of such parks aims to combine a love of literature with an experience of place, allowing visitors to tour sites associated with famous literary works or with the authors themselves.

Theme parks are defined as specially designed spaces that offer entertainment and experiences based on specific themes, such as historical events, cultural narratives, literary works or fantasy worlds. These parks offer visitors an interactive experience, often using technology, attractions, and activities that transport them to other worlds or times. (Abete, 1990).

Literary theme parks, contribute significantly to literary tourism, as they offer an immersive experience that brings the works and authors to life. Visitors can tour areas inspired by literary works or experience scenes from the books in a fully landscaped natural environment. This enhances the tourist's connection to the work, enabling them to experience and explore literature beyond the pages of the book (Elia, 2021).

A literary theme park can include entrepreneurial cultural activities that enhance visitor interest and contribute to the sustainable maintenance of the park.

'Recreation of locations' from the work: the park can include faithful representations of important locations mentioned in the literary works, such as the protagonist's home, the city or the fictional world where the plot takes place. These locations allow visitors to experience the place and setting of the book.

Interactive Activities: Literary theme parks often offer interactive activities that allow visitors to participate in the story or interact with the characters. Examples include participating in scenes from the book through role-playing, dramatic events or interactive games.

Collection of Objects and Exhibits: The park can host exhibits related to the author, such as personal items, first editions of books or artwork related to the literature. These exhibits serve as educational tools for visitors.

Educational Programs: A literary theme park can include seminars or creative writing workshops dedicated to the study and understanding of writing and the author's work, promoting literary education and creative expression.

Interactive Technologies: With the help of augmented reality (AR) or virtual reality (VR), visitors can explore digital representations of literary worlds, experiencing the story in a more dynamic and modern way.

4. Literary parks in Italy

Literary parks in Italy are an excellent form of cultural tourism, offering visitors the opportunity to explore areas that have inspired some of Italy's greatest writers and poets. These areas include itineraries that combine literature with local history, music and traditions, creating unique cultural experiences. These parks offer an alternative approach to tourism, enabling travelers to combine their love of literature with the discovery of Italy's natural landscapes and cultural heritage (Campanelli,2023) (Mura, 2024),(Panunzio et al,. 2001).

Italy's goal is to promote, both the author and the region, which he lived and created in, as stated by Stanislao de Marsanic, president of the Literary Parks Network in Italy. (Visit Italy)

The idea of Literary Parks in Italy was born in the late 1980s, when the Ippolito Nievo Foundation took on the task of preserving the castle of Colloredo di Montalbano, in the Friuli region. This castle was of particular importance, as it was there that the author Ippolito Nievo wrote his important work, Confessions of an Italian. (Manola, 2022c).

This concept began to develop as a strategic form of cultural tourism and entrepreneurship around the 2000s, with the support of the European Union. Literature parks gained solid ground as a means of preserving cultural and natural resources, attracting literature lovers and boosting the tourism economy of the region. Through these parks, visitors can connect with the places that inspired great writers, thus highlighting cultural heritage and promoting sustainable tourism development. (Visit Italy) (Manola, 2022b) (Manola, 2023a).
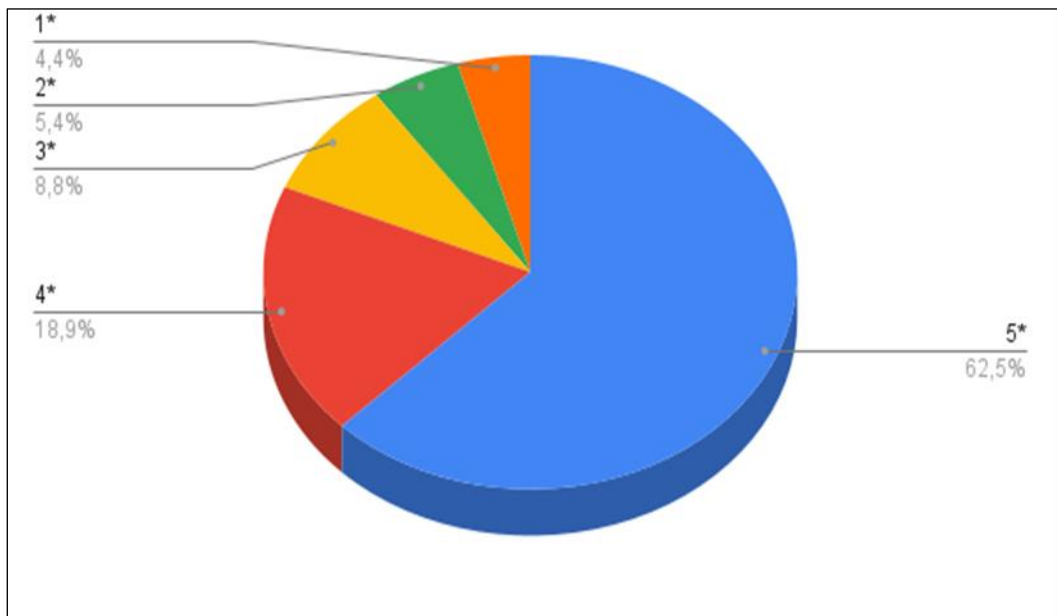

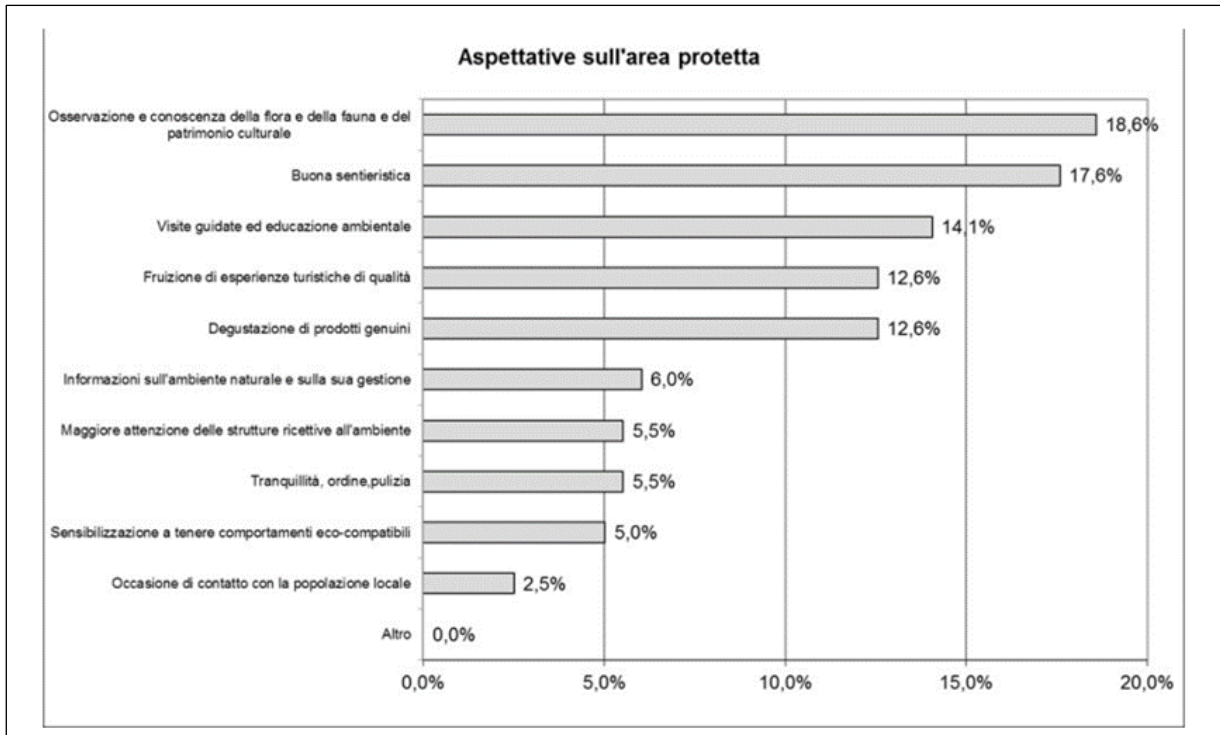**Figure 1** Scores from 2038 visit the years 2011-20

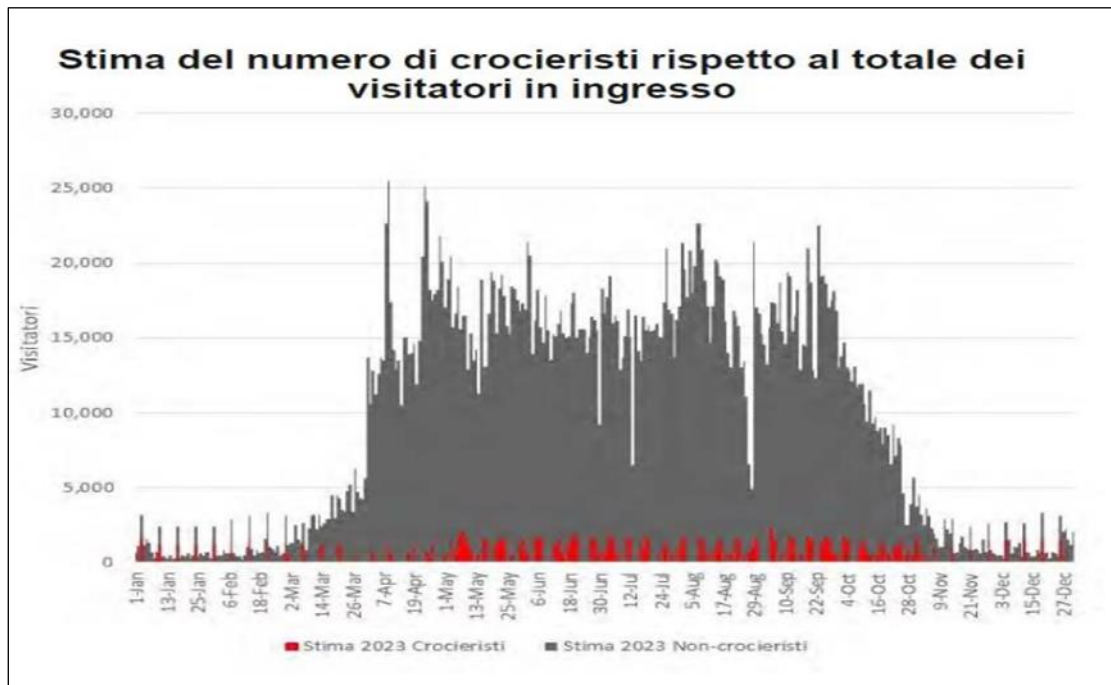**Figure 2** Expectations on the protected area

Figure 3 Estimate of the number of cruise passengers to the total number of incoming visitors

5. Eugenio Montale - cultural entrepreneurship

The Eugenio Montale Literary Park is located in the Cinque Terre region of Liguria, Italy, and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

It is dedicated to the Italian poet Eugenio Montale, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1975. It was inspired by Montale's love of nature and the landscapes of Liguria, which are often captured in his poetry. The sun, the rocks and

the Mediterranean vegetation were a source of inspiration for the poet, who spent many summers in this place. The park is a symbol of the poet's country house, which he called the "yellowish pagoda" or "house with two palm trees"; it still exists in good condition.

The Eugenio Montale Literary Park offers visitors a unique opportunity to follow the paths that inspired the famous poet. The main location is Monterosso al Mare, where Montale spent considerable time and which appears frequently in his poetry. Cultural itineraries and guided tours of landscapes and historical sites in the natural landscape of the Cinque Terre attract visitors, who can experience the images and emotions Montale felt in his poems.

The events and cultural activities that take place focus, not only on Montale's literature, but also on the protection and enhancement of the natural beauty of the area. In this context, the park serves as an excellent example of combining literature with ecotourism and sustainable development, offering visitors a rich and experiential experience. (Gentile & Brown, 2015).

The park was created on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the poet being awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature and was named after the poet because it was there, where he spent his summers and amidst the sun, craggy cliffs and Mediterranean vegetation that he drew inspiration for his poems. (Poetry Foundation)

FEE: It ranges from 5,72 Trekking 1 day Boy - up to 43,22 Trekking 3 days Family The Cinque Terre trekking card includes:

- Access to the Cinque Terre Park area
- Access to the poetic paths of the Eugenio Montale Literary Park and Cinque Terre,
- Guided tours according to the Park's schedule
- Free use of the toilets in the municipalities of Riomaggiore, Vernazza and Monterosso
- Possibility to participate in the workshops of the Park's Environmental Education Centre, according to the schedule
- Wi-Fi using the Park's Hot Spots
- Access at a reduced price to the Municipal Museums of La Spezia (Amedeo Lia, Castello San Giorgio, CAMeC, Sigillo, Palazzina delle Arti).

6. Proposals cultural entrepreneurship in Eugenio Montale park

- Based on the above example, it is clear that literary works are an alternative way of attracting visitors to a destination, offering a different dimension to the tourist experience. As a result, this has the effect of strengthening the local economy and in the overall development of the region. (Ludovici, 2021) (Lunedi, 2016).

- However, the development of this form of tourism can be expanded further, and become an even stronger pillar of cultural and economic development for the region. Therefore, it will be explained below how through the inclusion of new functions and activities in the Eugenio Montale Park, the visitor experience will be enhanced (Gogadis, 2012). (Moggia,2020)

- Montale Museum: a space dedicated to Montale's life and work, with manuscripts, books and photographs relating to him and his time. It could host temporary exhibitions and literary events, such as poetry readings and creative writing workshops.
- Literary festivals: Each year, the park could host the Eugenio Montale Poetry Festival, which would include events such as poetry readings, talks on literature, poetry workshops and concerts of poetry set to music. The festival will therefore attract poetry and culture lovers from all over the world.
- Guided tours and educational programs: Visitors will be able to participate in guided tours with guides, who will explain Montale's relationship with nature and local culture, as well as attend educational programs on Italian literature and symbolism in Montale's poems.
- Montale-inspired accommodation and food: Tourists who choose to stay in a palm tree cottage in the Cinque Terre region, similar to Montale's "yellow pagoda", will have the opportunity to live as the poet lived, feel the atmosphere that inspired him and enjoy the local food that he appreciated. This experience will strengthen their connection with Montale's work, making them feel, if only for a moment, that they are walking in his footsteps.

- These modes of cultural entrepreneurship create such an experience that is, not just a tour of history, but also a deep emotional connection with the life and work of Eugenio Montale. This approach leaves a lasting impression on visitors and, at the same time, enhances cultural tourism. The literary park, thus, preserves the memory of the great poet, but also contributes to the development of the local economy. Through an integrated strategy that combines literature and tourism, it benefits both visitors and local businesses and communities, creating new opportunities for growth and jobs. (Maniou, 2023b).

7. The Role of Internet and Digital Technologies in entrepreneurship training

Finally, we underline the importance of all digital technologies in education domain and for cultural entrepreneurship training and education. ICTs support education for everyone, give new methods for efficient teachers training, improve the knowledge retention, encourage collaboration, improve transparency, create learner-centered approaches, invent new teaching methods, and accelerate the knowledge acquisition. Moreover, provide new tools for knowledge representation and endorse the education activities and methods via virtualization, mobilization, artificial intelligence, and through new learning environments- worlds. More specifically in entrepreneurship training ICTs are very productive and successful, facilitate and improve the assessment, the intervention and the educational procedures via Mobiles which brings educational activities everywhere [25-26] and through various ICTs applications which are the core supporters of education [27]. The exploitation of AI, STEM & ROBOTICS raise educational procedures into new levels of adaptability, innovation and performance [28-29], while games transform education in a multisensory, very friendly and enjoyable interaction [30]. Additionally, the adoption, enhancement and combination of ICTs with theories and models of metacognition, mindfulness, meditation and emotional intelligence cultivation [31-37] brings the mental abilities to the core of the education procedures and policies, and accelerate and improve even more the educational practices and results, especially in business and new entrepreneurs training [38-44].

8. Conclusion

Literary parks are the bridge that connects literature with the landscape, offering visitors the opportunity to experience the stories and their authors in a real environment. These parks, where fantasy and story meet natural beauty, allow people to have a unique experience that brings them closer to the author's own creative process. Combining literature with entrepreneurship and tourism promotes cultural heritage and local development, boosting the economy and providing new job opportunities.

Literary parks in Italy, as innovative forms of cultural entrepreneurship, are both a tribute to the work of writers, and important tools for the social and economic well-being of local communities. The richness of the experience they offer makes these parks vital for the promotion of literary heritage, tourism development and cultural entrepreneurship.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

The Authors proclaim no conflict of interest.

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