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Rejuvenating the nation: health resorts, baths, and biopolitics in Fascist Italy

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ABSTRACT

During fascist rule in Italy (1922–1943), health resorts became key sites where urbanism, architecture, tourism, and biopolitics converged. This article examines how provincial spa towns such as Castrocaro Terme and Fratta Terme were transformed into ideological landscapes under the regime, blending public health, leisure, and regional development. Drawing on Foucault's concepts of heterotopia and biopolitics, this study situates fascist spa resorts within broader interwar trends of state-managed leisure and health. It argues that health resorts were not merely sites of therapeutic tourism but instruments of social engineering, an attempt to shape class relations, gender roles, and political identities. Through rationalist architecture, ritualised leisure, and symbolic design, these resorts were conceived to inculcate the fascist vision of national rejuvenation, disciplining bodies and, at the same time, promoting the regime's vision of *italianità*.

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Introduction

During the *Ventennio Fascista* – the twenty years of fascist rule in Italy from 1922 to 1943 – the regime sought to reimagine many aspects of daily life in ideological terms, using space, infrastructure, and the body as tools for national transformation.[1] Among the less-examined arenas of this intervention were spa resorts, i.e. hybrid spaces of leisure and discipline, in which curing architecture and propaganda converged.[2]

This article examines particularly two such sites: Castrocaro Terme and Fratta Terme, provincial spa towns in the Romagna region that were radically transformed under Fascism. Known locally for their thermal waters, both towns became showcases for the regime's programme of *necessità e grandezza*,[3] i.e. necessity and grandeur, combining social welfare with monumental aesthetics. Through state investment, rationalist design, and symbolism, these spas were turned into model environments: places where Italian citizens could bathe not only in mineral waters but immerse in *italianità*,[4] the distilled essence of fascist national identity.

This study approaches spa resorts as biopolitical and heterotopic spaces – physical and symbolic places on which regimes projected their ideals of educating the individual and regulating the social body. Drawing on Foucault's concept of heterotopia, it explores how these spas functioned as 'other spaces': simultaneously

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[1]On the cultural and political dynamics of the *Ventennio Fascista*, see Ruth Ben-Ghiat, *Fascist Modernities: Italy, 1922–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); Emilio Gentile, *The Sacralization of Politics in Fascist Italy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); and Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi, *Fascist Spectacle: The Aesthetics of Power in Mussolini's Italy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997). For studies of tourism and public space under Fascism, see Elisa Tizzoni, 'Les politiques touristiques du fascisme et les relations internationales de l'Italie, entre diplomatie publique et création d'une marque de destination-Italie', *Cahiers de la Méditerranée* 88 (2014): 85–98, and Victoria De Grazia, *The Culture of Consent: Mass Organization of Leisure in Fascist Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); on architecture and the spatial politics of Fascist Italy, see Kay Bea Jones and Stephanie Pilat, eds., *The Routledge Companion to Italian Fascist Architecture: Reception and Legacy* (London: Routledge, 2020).

[2]On the use of spa towns in fascist propaganda and tourism discourse, see Marco Carusone, 'Italia del Benessere, propaganda turistica e siti termali nella retorica fascista', in *La città, il viaggio, il turismo: Percezione, produzione e trasformazione*, ed. Gemma Belli, Francesca Capano, and Maria Ines Pascariello (Naples: Cirice, 2017), 1511. On gender and health resorts under fascism, see Gigliola Gori, *Italian Fascism and the Female Body: Sport, Submissive Women and Strong Mothers* (London: Routledge, 2004), especially the chapter 'Girls and Young Women at Health Resorts', 115–26.

[3]Borden Painter, 'Mussolini and Rome (673–697)', in *A Companion to the City of Rome*, ed. Claire Holleran and Amanda Claridge (John Wiley & Sons 2018).

[4]Richard Bosworth, *Italy and the Wider World: 1860–1960* (London: Routledge: 1996), 1–14.

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inside and outside everyday life, governed by special rules and ritualised routines.[5] The temporal rhythms of fascist tourism, initially outward-facing in the 1920s, then increasingly inward in the 1930s,[6] shaped the way spa resorts were developed and deployed; this study focuses primarily on the latter period, when domestic leisure and ideological consolidation became central.[7]

Exploring the transformation of Castrocaro and Fratta Terme under Fascism, this article aims to contribute to two areas of research. First, historians of spa culture have concentrated on the long nineteenth century, and few studies have addressed how authoritarian regimes in the twentieth century appropriated spas for ideological purposes. Second, this article builds on existing scholarship on fascist tourism, health policy, and architecture, suggesting that spa environments and, by extension, other health resorts, offer a valuable lens for further exploring the intersection of these domains in biopolitics and the spas' role in shaping a uniquely immersive form of social engineering. This study thus treats Castrocaro and Fratta Terme not merely as examples of fascist architectural transformation, but as analytical instruments that reveal how the regime's biopolitics operated through differentiated spatial strategies, i.e. elite body cultivation at Castrocaro versus working-class body discipline at Fratta.

Structured in three parts, this article first explores the local reconfiguration of Castrocaro and Fratta Terme through fascist architecture and planning; it then examines how these spas functioned as laboratories of biopolitics, focusing on class discipline, gender roles, and the regime's wider biopolitical strategies; finally, it situates them within the broader fascist project of remaking Romagna as a symbolic landscape, where spas, colonies, and pilgrimage sites were orchestrated into an ideological network projecting *italianità*.

Castrocaro and Fratta Terme: from provincial spas to fascist showcases

Castrocaro and Fratta Terme offer a revealing lens on the transformation of peripheral spa towns into orchestrated showcases of fascist modernity. Their evolution illustrates how architecture, planning, and aesthetics were mobilised to turn local and modest therapeutic resorts into sites of strategic development. The following subsections trace this shift – from their pre-fascist peripherality to the architectural interventions of the 1930s, and finally to the symbolic and artistic programmes that reinforced fascist values into these two spas.

Peripheral waters: spa culture before Fascism

By the early twentieth century, spa culture occupied a central role in European leisure, medicine, and sociability. Towns like Karlsbad (Karlovy Vary), Baden-Baden, Marienbad, and Vichy had become internationally renowned for their mineral waters, therapeutic regimens, and cosmopolitan prestige.[8] These spas were much more than sites of treatment: they functioned as stages for diplomatic encounters and bourgeois leisure, with elaborate urban planning displaying recognisable features such as grand hotels, concert halls, and promenades.[9]

Italy had not developed its spa industry as to the extent seen in other European countries, despite its longstanding thermal and seaside traditions, and Italian spas struggled to compete with the famous cosmopolitan resorts in the first decades of the twentieth century. Montecatini Terme in Tuscany was one of the few exceptions; during the nineteenth century, the Tuscan spa underwent significant development, acquiring a thermal park ('Pineta'), up-to-date thermal institutions ('Excelsior' and 'La Torretta'), and a Kursaal.[10] Since 2021, it has been recognised as one of the eleven 'great spa towns of Europe' by UNESCO, further highlighting its significance in the European history of spas.[11]

[5]Michel Foucault, 'Des espaces autres', *Architecture, Mouvement, Continuité*, no. 5 (1984): 46–9. Foucault defines heterotopias as places that exist outside of everyday norms, serving as 'other' spaces where societal conventions are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted.
[6]Tizzoni, 'Politiques touristiques du fascisme'.
[7]Gori, *Italian Fascism and the Female Body*.
[8]Since 2021, these resorts have been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List as part of the transnational site The Great Spa Towns of Europe. See https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1613/ (accessed May 23, 2023).
[9]For more information, see: Lise Grenier and Phillipe Duboy, 'Les villes de santé', in *Villes d'eaux en France*, ed. Lise Grenier (Paris: Editions Fernard Hazan, 1985), 12–51; David C. Large, *The Grand Spas of Central Europe: A History of Intrigue, Politics, Art and Healing* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2015) and Marina Soroka, *The Summer Capitals of Europe, 1814–1919* (London: Routledge, 2017).
[10]Carlo Cresti, *Montecatini. 1771–1940: nascita di una città termale* (Milan: Electa Editrice, 1983).
[11]See: 'The Great Spa Towns of Europe', UNESCO World Heritage Centre https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1613/ (accessed May 23, 2023).

By contrast, the modernisation projects in Acqui Terme, an important spa town in Piedmont, faltered at the turn of the twentieth century. As highlighted in Alessandro Martini's work, efforts were made in the early 1900s to raise the resort to the standards of leading Central European spas. Yet the commission established in the early 1900s for the development of the municipal baths lamented the outdated state of facilities and the lack of infrastructure tailored to spa tourism, particularly for entertainment, underlining the resort's backwardness compared to foreign spas.[12]

This uneven development left many Italian spa towns, including the modest resorts of Castrocaro and Fratta Terme in Romagna, on the margins of European tourism. Albeit being known since the nineteenth century for their thermal waters,[13] both remained minor players in the broader landscape of European spa culture. Nestled a few kilometres apart and in close proximity to Predappio, the birthplace of Benito Mussolini, the towns lacked the infrastructure, prestige, and cosmopolitan allure of leading resorts like Montecatini Terme or the great spa towns of Central Europe.

In their pre-fascist state, these spas possessed limited paraphernalia. Fratta Terme, where 'taking the waters' had begun in the eighteenth century thanks to its salt-bromine-iodine springs of seven different compositions, had no formal bathing facilities until the 1930s. The sources were enclosed in the nineteenth century, when a modest bottling industry was also established by a Forlì-based entrepreneur. Castrocaro Terme, by contrast, did possess an established thermal complex, the Bagni Conti, dating back to the nineteenth century. However, after 1918 the spa facilities had become outdated and underutilised, as publicly recognised both by the local municipality and the owners of the spa, the Conti family.[14] The former decided in 1923 to improve the accessibility of the resort and, concurrently, to sanitise the historic centre of the village. These undertakings were slowed down by the lack of financial means, and more critically, housing, preventing the envisioned removal of dilapidated houses, even if they were protruding into the main thoroughfare.

Aristide Conti, the owner of Castrocaro, commissioned new studies of the springs to demonstrate their therapeutic superiority over neighbouring sources.[15] To boost the development of the resort, Conti expanded the existing Spa Park to a perimeter of four kilometres, with long avenues leading to the local Montone River, and commissioned a new pump room, the Littoria Spring, in 1924. A tennis court and a sports hall were additional concessions to the twentieth century taste. Indeed, the park became a local attraction, whereas the spa hotel and some private villas renting out rooms for guests were left largely untouched. Although Conti's contacts with the Mussolini family helped to obtain tax concessions, the development of the park had exhausted his financial means. After Conti's death, his heirs created a joint stock company with one of the national insurances, but this company declared bankruptcy in the mid-1930s.[16]

This underdevelopment reflected the Italian state's limited pre-fascist engagement with tourism and public health. As Gigliola Gori has shown, before the 1920s, access to health resorts in Italy was limited, or only sporadically provided by charitable institutions, and largely disconnected from any cohesive national policy.[17] This lack of coordination was overturned under Fascism, as the regime undertook a comprehensive transformation of these spa towns through radical urban planning and renovation or erection of buildings. In 1936, the State acquired the Castrocaro thermal complex and created the 'Regie Terme di Castrocaro', heralding a new era in the development of the spa. As it should turn out, this shift suggests that Fascism's engagement with these spas was strategic, once the regime had realised their symbolic and propagandistic value. Their proximity to Mussolini's birthplace allowed to develop them into showcases of the regime's vision of health and modernity.

[12]Alessandro Martini, *The Baths of Acqui. City Planning and Architecture for Treatment and Leisure* (Turin, London, Venice, New York: Umberto Allemandi & C., 2009).
[13]Culture and Heritage – Castrocaro Terme e Terra del Sole (castrocarotermeterradelsole.travel) (accessed September 11, 2025).
[14]Micaela Antonucci, 'Architettura e regime: le opere realizzate dal Fascismo in Romagna', in *Architecture, Totalitarian Regimes and Memory of the 20th Century. Contributions to the Birth of a European Cultural Route*, ed. Claudia Castellucci et al. (Forlì: Casa Walden Editrice, 2023), 43–53.
[15]Fausto Sestini, *Saggi chimicoanalitici sull'acqua sulfurea di Castrocaro di proprietà del sig. Aristide Conti eseguiti da Fausto Sestini professore di chimica al R. Istituto Tecnico di Forlì* (Stabilimento tip. Di G. Angeletti, 1871).
[16]Ulisse Tramonti, 'Castrocaro e le sue terme', *La città progettata: Forlì, Predappio, Castrocaro. Urbanistica e architettura fra le due guerre*, ed. Ulisse Tramonti and L. Prati (Forlì: Comune di Forlì, 1999), 84, 89.
[17]Gori, *Italian Fascism and the Female Body*, 95–114.

Staging Fascism through architecture and urbanism

The transformation of Castrocaro Terme and Fratta Terme between 1934 and 1941 was not solely about health infrastructure – it was an architectural performance of power. In both towns, the fascist regime enacted its vision of *necessità e grandezza* by merging public health policy with aesthetic spectacle, producing spaces that embodied the regime's ideological ambitions.[18]

In Fratta Terme, the state's intervention was almost total. While the existence of Roman baths had long been known, excavations started only under the fascist regime in 1927, and the village rebaptised itself proudly as *fonti romane della Fratta* in 1931. In 1933, a *casa del fascio* was inaugurated after only three months of construction time. The two-story building with a central bell tower and a semi-circular balcony imitated the style of architect Cesare Bazzani, who was working on representative state projects in Forlì in the same year. In 1934, the *Fascist National Institute for Social Security* (INFPS) – the regime's central institution for welfare and labour policy – commissioned engineer Giambattista Giocoli to oversee the design and construction of a new Grand Hotel with integrated thermal baths in Fratta. The façade of the imposing building was shaped as a wide convex curve, divided by pairs of semi-columns, further lacking any decorative elements. The complex was already completed in 1935, combining therapeutic facilities with accommodation, situated within carefully designed green space. The integration of landscape and architecture reflected the regime's health-oriented narrative, namely natural harmony fused with technical modernity.[19]

In Castrocaro Terme, the intervention followed a different rhythm. Alongside the extension of the Bagni Conti, new facilities were built between 1936 and 1941 to create a modern thermal experience. These included the *Padiglione delle Feste,* a lavishly decorated Kursaal including a games room, a smoking room, a reading room, a billiard room and a bar. The architects Diego Corsani and Tito Chini combined art-deco and rationalist architectural elements. They were also responsible for the new representative Grand Hotel and Baths. One notable innovation was the delivery of mineral waters through a system of pipes directly into the private bathrooms of the Grand Hotel, a detail that signalled hygienic modern awareness on hygiene and luxury.[20]

In terms of urbanism, both towns were reconfigured around the fascist buildings. Each featured a new, centrally located *casa del fascio*, the local headquarters of the National Fascist Party.[21] These buildings were not just administrative centres; they were fascist icons, identifiable by their rationalist design, austere forms, prominent balconies, and central placement within the town.[22]

The amount of investment and restructuring also reflected the intended function of the spa in the greater ideological landscape of Fascist Italy. Castrocaro was intended to attract a wealthier, possibly international clientele, including members of the Italian diaspora abroad. In contrast, Fratta was aimed rather at providing the benefits of the corporate state to the working classes, even if shortly before her death, Italian Nobel prize winner Grazia Deledda seems to have sojourned at the newly opened Grand Hotel. Both places, however, were conceived and refurbished as model environments: totalising spaces in which health, architecture, and ideology merged.[23] The *Palazzo delle Terme* in Castrocaro reflected this fusion of function and symbolism. Its overall design formed the shape of an 'M', a spatial reference to Mussolini, expressing the regime's ideological ambitions through architectural form.

Aesthetic ideology: art, imagery, and symbolism in the fascist spas

While architecture provided the structural framework for fascist transformation in Castrocaro and Fratta Terme, artistic design and visual symbolism played a crucial role in embedding ideological meaning within these spaces. As Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi has demonstrated, Fascism's political project was inseparable from its aesthetic dimension: the regime sought not only to build, but to shape how individuals felt, moved,

[18]Francesco Cianfarani 'Fascist Legacy in the Built Environment', in *The Routledge Companion to Italian Fascist Architecture: Reception and Legacy*, ed. Kay Bea Jones and Stephanie Pilat (London: Routledge, 2020), 10–53; Tramonti and Prati, *La città progettata*, 303–17.
[19]Antonucci, 'Architecttura e regime', 43–53.
[20]Kaleva Emilia and C. W. Abbott, *ATRIUM Transnational Survey of Architectural Case Studies Included in the Project* (Forlì: Municipality of Forlì, 2012).
[21]https://www.atriumroute.eu/heritage/sites/bertinoro-and-fratta-terme/former-casa-del-fascio (accessed September 11, 2025).
[22]Terry Kirk, *The Architecture of Modern Italy. Volume 2: Visions of Utopia, 1900–Present* (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 2005), 95–102.
[23]Ulisse Tramonti, *Le radici del razionalismo in Romagna: itinerari nel comprensorio forlivese* (Forlì: Menabò, 2005).

and identified within the built environment.[24] Artistic interventions within the spas functioned as instruments of what might be called aesthetic discipline, i.e. structuring perception and emotional experience to align with the regime's ideals of order, vitality, and national renewal.

A central figure in this process was Tito Chini, an artist and designer who oversaw much of the decorative programme at Castrocaro Terme. Chini's work blended Art Deco with rationalist forms, producing an environment simultaneously modern, luxurious, and ideologically charged.[25] As documented by the ATRIUM project on totalitarian architecture, the decoration of Castrocaro was particularly rich.[26] The entrance of the spa building, accessed via a modernist portico, opened into a two-story foyer that Tito Chini designed in meticulous details, incorporating floor mosaics, skylights, balustrades, and sculpted doorframes (see figure 1). Metopes dedicated to healing waters adorned the thresholds, while two decorative wooden panels, possibly representing the Islands of the Blessed from Greek mythology, evoked a mythic vision of health and joy. In the *Padiglione delle Feste*, this symbolism was further amplified as the entrance hall, decorated with zodiac signs and a mosaic of sailing boats, opened into thematically decorated side rooms – reading, games, billiards, and a bar.

Fratta Terme employed similar visual strategies. The construction of the Grand Hotel incorporated rationalist and Roman-inspired forms, a design approach that architectural historian Micaela Antonucci has described as reflecting 'monumental architecture aligned with fascist rhetoric'.[27] Between 1927 and 1934, archaeological excavations in Fratta had unearthed Roman remains, and these discoveries were quickly integrated into the park. As in Castrocaro, visual elements in Fratta were not merely decorative but participated in a broader strategy of ideological alignment. By drawing on Roman symbols and integrating archaeological discoveries into the spa's aesthetics, the site was framed as part of a deliberately constructed historical continuum with the 'glorious past' of the Roman empire (*romanità*).[28]

Fascist health resorts: leisure, discipline, and biopolitics

As health resorts, Castrocaro and Fratta Terme became laboratories in which fascist policies of the body were put into practice. They were not only therapeutic destinations but also arenas where leisure, class discipline, and gender ideals intersected. Through initiatives such as *termalismo sociale*, subsidised spa sojourns for workers, and the ideological framing of male and female bodies, the regime sought to embed its vision of national regeneration into the everyday experience of visitors.

Health regimes and class control

The fascist regime understood health as a means of productivity, a component of national strength, and of social regulation. As part of a wider project of *bonifica*, health became central to the regime's therapeutic vision of modernity.[29] Disease, fatigue, and degeneration were not framed as individual afflictions but as symptoms of national decline to be treated through collective intervention. In this context, Castrocaro and Fratta Terme emerged as laboratories for shaping the ideal fascist subject, where bodily discipline, hygiene, and regeneration aligned with the regime's political and economic goals.

Their functions, however, diverged markedly. Fratta, developed and managed by the *Istituto nazionale fascista della previdenza sociale* (INFPS), was designed explicitly as a working-class destination. It became an important site for the programme of *termalismo sociale* (social thermalism), which offered free or heavily subsidised spa treatments to workers, particularly those in industrial sectors. Between 1928 and 1940, more than 29,000 Italians benefited from this national system of subsidised cures, suspended only with the

[24]Falasca-Zamponi, *Fascist Spectacle*, 15–41.
[25]https://www.atriumroute.eu/heritage/sites/castrocaro-terme-e-terra-del-sole/grand-hotel (accessed September 8, 2025).
[26]See https://atriumroute.eu (accessed September 8, 2025).
[27]Antonucci, 'Architecttura e regime', 43–53.
[28]See: Emilio Gentile, 'Fascism as Political Religion', *Journal of Contemporary History* 25, no. 2/3 (1990): 229–51; Andrea Giardina, 'The Fascist Myth of Romanity', *Estudos Avançados* 22, no. 62 (2008): 55–76, Laura Malvano Bechelloni, 'Le mythe de la romanité et la politique de l'image fasciste', *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire* 2, no. 78 (2003): 111–20, Jan Nélis, *Le mythe de la romanité et la religion politique du fascisme italien: nouvelles approches méthodologiques* (Gand: Academia Press, 2011), Jan Nelis, 'Constructing Fascist Identity: Benito Mussolini and the Myth of "Romanità"', *The Classical World* 100, no. 4 (2007): 391–415.
[29]Ben-Ghiat, *Fascist Modernities*, 5.

Figure 1. Tito Chini's decorative map of Romagna, inside the Padiglione delle Feste at Castrocaro Terme (1930s).
Source: Tito chini, padiglione delle feste di castrocaro, atrio circolare, mappe della romagna e della sua riviera (03 terra del sole e castrocaro), photo by Sailko, 2019. Licenced under CC BY 3.0.

outbreak of war.[30] These sojourns were not framed as leisure but as recovery, designed to prevent work-related illness, restore strength, and increase future productivity. It was thus a distinctly biopolitical model in which the health of individual bodies was managed and optimised in service of the regime and the nation.[31]

Comprehensive statistics remain fragmentary, particularly for Castrocaro, which catered largely to an elite clientele and lay outside the INFPS subsidy system. By contrast, Fratta figures prominently in available data. According to the quantitative study by Strangio and Teodori, based on INPS Servizio sanitario reports (1949, 1955), Fratta registered 18,711 subsidised spa stays between 1928 and 1954, accounting for over 5% of the national total and ranking among the top five spa resorts in Italy.[32] This prominence underscores Fratta's role as a working-class destination within the welfare apparatus, while Castrocaro operated more as a showcase of prestige and refinement. The contrast between their roles illustrates the regime's differentiated strategies of biopolitics and its broader approach to managing class conflict: by offering symbolic and material benefits such as subsidised spa stays, Fascism sought to mediate social tensions and foster social consensus.[33]

[30]Donatella Strangio and Marco Teodori, 'Le Terme di Viterbo: dal termalismo sociale ai progetti di rilancio nel segno del turismo del benessere', *Agua y Territorio*, no. 6 (2015): 84.
[31]On contemporary biopolitics see Edward Ross Dickinson, 'Biopolitics, Fascism, Democracy: Some Reflections on Our Discourse About "Modernity"', *Central European History* 37, no. 1 (2004): 1–48.
[32]Strangio and Teodori, 'Le Terme di Viterbo,' 87.
[33]In recent years, Italian historiography of fascism has undergone a significant shift, drawing on recent scholarship of Nazi Germany emphasising popular mobilisation and the modalities adopted by the fascist regimes to engage and co-opt the population in their ideological projects. This new perspective sheds light on how spa resorts under Fascist Italy functioned not only as places of retreat but also as crucial sites for encouraging popular consent and mobilising support for the regime. See: Roberta Pergher, 'The Ethics of Consent – Regime and People in the Historiographies of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany', *Contemporary European History* 24, no. 2 (2015): 309–15; Marco Bresciani, 'Between Nation and Empire: The Post-Habsburg Adriatic Question and the Fascist Idea of Europe, 1919–1922', in *Central and Eastern Europe After the First World War*, ed. Olschowski Burkhard, Piotr Juszkiewicz, and Jan Rydel (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022), 171–82. From the same author, see also: 'Fascism, Anti-Fascism and the Idea of Nation: Italian Historiography and Public Debate since the 1980s', *Contemporary European History* 30 (2021): 111–23.

Yet access to health also came with surveillance and discipline. The INFPS system regulated not solely spas' customers but also their behaviour within these structures. Visitors were expected to follow strict routines, attend scheduled treatments, and participate in leisure activities associated with fascist values. Hygiene and regeneration framed as duties to the state as much as personal benefit.[34] In this way, health resorts became a microcosm of the ideal fascist society: ordered, hierarchical, and productive. The tired worker, the working mother, the aging veteran, or the troublesome youth, as will be discussed further, could be 'restored' both physically and ideologically through their immersion in an environment where the architecture, the health and leisure routines, and the idealised nature converged to reinforce the aesthetics and values of Fascism.

This combination of welfare provision and behavioural discipline was not unique to Fascist Italy. Across interwar Europe, comparable initiatives sought to manage the health of workers as a matter of national strength.[35] In Nazi Germany, the *Kraft durch Freude* programme organised spa sojourns and seaside holidays as rewards for loyalty and productivity,[36] in France, the Front Populaire created the *Office du thermalisme et du tourisme populaire* to subsidise cures for less affluent citizens,[37] in Spain, the post-civil war regime established *bolsas de cura de aguas* for workers and veterans,[38] and in the Soviet Union, sanatoria stood at the core of efforts to forge a healthy, efficient proletariat.[39] These parallels highlight a broader biopolitical consensus that transcended ideological divides: the conviction that collective health could and should be engineered through carefully regulated environments of leisure and recuperation. What distinguished Italy was the way this logic became concentrated in sites like Castrocaro and Fratta, where contrasting models of elite display and mass welfare were staged side by side within the same provincial landscape.

Fertile women and obedient youth: gendered politics of health at Castrocaro, Fratta, and beyond

The fascist nation was imagined and constructed as a gendered body, with distinct biological and social roles assigned to men and women in the service of the state. Health resorts played a critical role in reinforcing these divisions, functioning as arenas for crafting the ideal male and female citizen.

This regime of symbolic aesthetics extended to wall paintings and interior panels, which reinforced social norms central to fascist ideology. Tellingly, one mural at Castrocaro depicts an idealised nuclear family: a seated mother holding an infant with a protective father standing behind; a visual narrative interweaving domestic harmony, reproductive health, and social order. Another painting presents a woman pouring water for a group of seated figures in a rural setting, celebrating an idealised rurality, the regenerative role of nature, and women as nurturers. The display of such artworks contributed to a broader visual pedagogy integrating health, gender, and rural identity into the spa's ideological environment. Within this framework, women's health policy was framed through the lens of motherhood and moral hygiene. Female characters and bodies in spa iconography were often depicted as serene mothers and nurturers. The Castrocaro Terme murals exemplify how traditional gender roles were aestheticized and naturalised.

This symbolic work was not confined to the interiors of the spa but extended into official communication and visual propaganda. Mussolini's visit to Castrocaro in June 1939 staged the thermal complex as a theatre of fascist vitality. Contemporary photographs showed Mussolini at the centre, flanked by dignitaries and a physician in a white coat, while smiling women and children looked on at the entrance of the thermal establishment.[40] The composition was hardly accidental: the presence of medical authority, female approval, and youthful health alongside the leader offered a visual condensation of the fascist promise of national

[34]Anna Lena Kocks, 'Organizing Leisure. Extension of Propaganda into New Realms by the Italian and British Fascist Movements', in *Fascism without Borders: Transnational Connections and Cooperation between Movements and Regimes in Europe from 1918 to 1945*, ed. Arnd Bauerkämper and Grzegorz Rossolinski-Liebe (New York, Oxford: Berghahn, 2017), 94–118.

[35]Jane M. Adams, 'Healthy Places and Healthy Regimens: British Spas 1918–50', in *Environment, Health and History*, ed. Virginia Berridge and Martin Gorsky (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 113–32; Christian Noack, 'Lenin's Decrees on Health Resorts and the Development of Soviet Spas', in *Socialism in One Room: Studies in Honor of Erik van Ree*, ed. Amieke Bouma and Michael Kemper (Amsterdam: Pegasus, 2022), 65–92.

[36]Shelley Baranowski, *Strength Through Joy: Consumerism and Mass Tourism in the Third Reich* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 155; Kirstin Semmens, *Seeing Hitler's Germany: Tourism in the Third Reich* (New York, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 16–41.

[37]Bertram M. Gordon, 'Reinvention of a Spa Town: The Unique Case of Vichy', *Journal of Tourism History* 4, no. 1 (2012): 48.

[38]Margarita Vilar Rodriguez and Elvira Lindoso Tato, 'De la belle époque a la nueva era del turismo termal: los balnearios en España desde una perspectiva histórica (1874–2016)', *Ayer*, no. 114 (2019): 23–64.

[39]Noack, 'Development of Soviet Spas', 65–92.

[40]Photograph of Benito Mussolini visiting the thermal resort of Castrocaro, 18 June 1939. See: Terme di Castrocaro, *Storia del centro termale*: https://www.termedicastrocaro.it/centro-termale-emilia-romagna-storia/ (accessed September 9, 2025).

regeneration. Castrocaro thus functioned not only as a place of cure but also as a symbolic set where gendered ideals of virility, motherhood, and childhood were enacted in public view.

Fratta, by contrast, was less concerned with symbolic representation than with practical welfare provision. As a working-class spa integrated into the *termalismo sociale* system, it offered subsidised stays for families in which women, especially mothers, were included as beneficiaries. Here the politics of gender were enacted not through monumental imagery but through paternalistic access to cures, positioning female health as a social investment tied to the productivity of the household and the fertility of the nation.

The regime's interest in women's health extended beyond cultural representation. It was part of what Maria Sophia Quine has called 'biological politics': a regime's wide initiative to increase both the quantity and quality of the Italian population.[41] Health resorts provided gendered medical services, including treatments for gynaecological ailments and fertility-related conditions, tying medical care directly to demographic goals. In 1936, the Salsomaggiore fertility centre near Parma opened under the management of INFPS, offering free fertility treatments, showcasing hence how health infrastructure was mobilised to serve the regime's racial and demographic agenda.[42] Castrocaro itself was renowned – and is still marketed today – for the fertility-enhancing properties of its waters, which were promoted as therapeutic for women.[43]

Youth policy was another pillar of fascist biopolitics. Children were not only seen as symbols of national renewal but as instrumental to the regime's ideological project. Through organisations like the Opera nazionale balilla (ONB) and the Gioventù italiana del littorio (GIL), boys and girls were subjected to parallel programmes of physical education, ideological instruction, and recreational discipline.[44] Spas and especially children's summer colonies functioned as extensions of this logic. Like health resorts for adults, colonies provided structured environments of cure, discipline, and regeneration, only here the focus was on moulding the next generation. As Garvin has shown, the Fascist regime did not invent these colonies: sanatoriums and seaside hospices for poor children, funded by private entities, had existed since the mid-nineteenth century. What Fascism did was to unify and expand these pre-existing structures, politicising them and turning them into instruments of '*fascistizzazione*'. They thus played a crucial role in the promotion of 'racial health and hygiene through exposure to the sun, the sea, and exercise' and served as 'architectural laboratories for building better Italians'.[45]

For boys, these programmes aimed explicitly to produce the *uomo nuovo* – the New Man – defined by strength, endurance, loyalty, and discipline, embodied by Mussolini himself. Health, sports, and militarised leisure programmes sought to mould male youth into future soldiers and workers, ready to serve the nation with both body and spirit.[46] Girls, by contrast, were targeted as 'future mothers of the nation'.[47] Scientific authorities were convinced that sport could contribute positively to girls' physical education, making them healthier and increasing their fertility.[48]

Children's colonies thus appear as a continuation of the biopolitical strategies enacted at Castrocaro and Fratta. If spas for adults sought to regenerate bodies for work and reproduction, colonies for children were designed to heal, discipline, and mould new Italians from an early age.[49] Together, these facilities aimed to produce gendered bodies aligned with the regime's goals and needs: fertile women, ideologically obedient youth, and physically fit soldiers and workers.

Orchestrating Romagna: spas, colonies, and fascist territorial planning

The biopolitical strategies enacted at Castrocaro and Fratta were not confined to these two towns. They formed part of a broader fascist project to remake Romagna into a landscape of health, discipline, and

[41]Maria Sophia Quine, 'Racial "Sterility" and "Hyperfecundity" in Fascist Italy. Biological Politics of Sex and Reproduction', *Fascism* 1, no 2 (2024): 92–144.
[42]Ibid., 136.
[43]https://irp.cdn-website.com/f6833128/files/uploaded/Fertilit%C3%A0±alle±Terme±di±Castrocaro.pdf (accessed September 11, 2025).
[44]Gori, *Italian Fascism and the Female Body*, 115–26.
[45]Diana Garvin, 'Colonie Architecture and Fascism's Cult of Youth', in *Interpreting Urban Spaces in Italian Cultures,* ed. Andrea Scapolo and Angela Porcarelli (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2023), 158.
[46]Tiziano Iannello, 'Lo sport nella formazione dell'uomo nuovo fascista' e delle mentalità di Guerra', *Bibliomanie. Letterature, storiografie, semiotiche* 52, no. 9 (2021): 1–18; Simon Martin, *Sport Italia: The Italian Love Affair with Sport* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011).
[47]Gori, *Italian Fascism and the Female Body*, 124.
[48]Antonella Mauri, 'Sane, robuste, feconde. L'educazione sportiva delle giovani fasciste', *Italies* 23 (2019): 81–102, Victoria De Grazia, *How Fascism Ruled Women: Italy, 1922–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).
[49]Roberta Mira, *Colonie per l'infanzia nel ventennio fascista: un progetto di pedagogia del regime* (Ravenna: Longo editore, 2019).

propaganda. In Mussolini's native region, spas, summer colonies, and symbolic sites such as Predappio were choreographed into a coherent territorial narrative. This regional design linked the regeneration of adult bodies in spa towns to the disciplining of youth in seaside colonies, embedding both within a geography that presented Romagna as the cradle of fascist renewal.

Territorial choreography: health, ideology, and fascist planning in Romagna

This fascist remaking of Romagna unfolded through a dense network of interventions that combined health resorts, youth colonies, infrastructure, and symbolic sites.[50] Spas such as Castrocaro and Fratta were linked to seaside colonies in Cesenatico and Riccione, while towns like Predappio and Forlimpopoli were reshaped through monumental building and infrastructural modernisation. Together, these nodes formed a territorial choreography stretching from the Apennines to the Adriatic (see figure 2).

Romagna itself provided a particularly fertile stage for this choreography. The region occupies the eastern portion of Emilia-Romagna. Its principal centres – Forlì, Cesena, Faenza, Ravenna, Rimini, and Imola – form a constellation of urban and semi-urban hubs connected by fertile plains and coastal routes. The combination of varied landscapes and natural resources – from mineral springs in the hills to the Adriatic coastline – together with its constellation of towns and resorts, made the region an ideal setting for the regime's choreography of health and propaganda.

Historically marked by political fragmentation and a reputation for rebelliousness, Romagna was recast under Fascism as a cradle of renewal – a reinterpretation inseparable from Mussolini's origins. Born in 1883 in Predappio, a small village in the province of Forlì, Mussolini had long cultivated a personal mythology rooted in rural strength, peasant virtue, and ties to the land. As Giovanna Bosi Maramotti has shown, Romagna was discursively constructed as Mussolini's mirror.[51] Early official biographies played a central role in shaping this narrative, promoting a rhetoric of origin in which the landscape itself moulded the character of its native son. In *L'uomo nuovo* (1923), Antonio Beltramelli wrote: 'Between a chosen soul and the land of its origin, a mysterious bond is established, like that between a mother and her child'.[52] Mussolini himself reinforced this symbolic geography in his 1934 autobiographical notes, recalling: 'Far more than people, it was things, the seasons, and the landscape that always influenced me'.[53]

Beginning in the late 1920s, the fascist regime launched a programme of spatial and infrastructural intervention in Romagna, closely tied to Mussolini's personal origins. The remaking of Predappio into a pilgrimage site was one of the earliest and most symbolic endeavours. The town was rebuilt anew, its new architectural identity dominated by rationalist buildings, wide boulevards, and monumental public works, additionally characterised by the presence of the *casa del fascio*, new housing blocks, and the burial site of Mussolini's family.

Predappio was thus never intended to be a touristic destination in the traditional sense.[54] Rather, it became a ritualised site of political pilgrimage, orchestrated by fascist organisations. Visitors – often youth, workers, or party members – followed a codified itinerary that included laying flowers at Mussolini's birthplace, visiting the family tombs, and walking through newly built symbolic spaces. The experience was supposed to be both emotional and theatrical, aiming at producing respect and loyalty to the 'Duce'. In Emilio Gentile's terms, Predappio became a 'sacred' place of Fascism.[55]

If Predappio embodied the mythic heart of this landscape, nearby Forlimpopoli represented its modernising face. The town was bound to Mussolini's personal life as the place where he had studied, and the regime sought to elevate it as a showcase of rationalist planning.[56] In 1935, the teacher training school Mussolini had once attended was reopened and expanded. Between 1934 and 1937, a new building for the *Opera nazionale balilla* (ONB) – the regime's youth organisation – was constructed following a design by Cesare

[50]Antonucci, 'Architettura e regime', 43–53, 75–81.
[51]Giovanna Bosi Maramotti, 'L'immagine della Romagna nelle biografie di Mussolini', *Studi Romagnoli* (1983): 585–96.
[52]Antonio Beltramelli, *L'uomo nuovo* (Mondadori, 1923), quoted in Maramotti, 'L'immagine della Romagna', 587.
[53]Benito Mussolini, *La mia vita* (Rissoli, 1983). Quoted by Maramotti 'L'immagine della Romagna', 591.
[54]Mario Proli, 'Predappio, il paese del duce', *E-Review* 7. doi:10.12977/ereview286.
[55]Gentile, 'Fascism as Political Religion', 229–51.
[56]Tramonti, *Razionalismo in Romagna*.

Figure 2. Map of key locations in Romagna referenced in the article, where: hexagons indicate thermal spa towns; triangles represent fascist myth-making and ideological sites; squares mark seaside resorts and youth colonies; and circles denote major regional cities. Base maps: © OpenStreetMap contributors, modified by the author. Adapted from Romagna geopolitica.png by User:Erinaceus, licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0.

Valle, a leading rationalist architect. The *Spinadello Aqueduct* pumping station, designed in the same rationalist style, brought clean water to Forlimpopoli and surrounding towns and offered a tangible symbol of modernity.[57]

Eastward, on the Adriatic coast, the fascist project of regional modernisation extended into the sphere of seaside tourism and youth training. In Cesenatico, the regime developed summer camps and youth colonies to host children – often from poor working-class families – for programmes in physical education, sun therapy, and ideological formation. By the eve of World War II, Cesenatico counted 73 such facilities, including the *Azienda generale italiana petroli* (AGIP) camp (1937–1938), a rationalist complex designed by Giuseppe Vaccaro, also known as 'la colonia Sandro Mussolini'.[58] As Alessandro Benetti and Marco Mulazzani suggested, these camps were both experimental in form and deeply ideological in function.[59] Perhaps the most iconic of these was *Le Navi*, in Riccione, whose buildings were designed in the shape of a ship: a modernist metaphor for direction and control.[60]

To connect these developments, the state invested in road and rail infrastructure and promotional materials. From inland spas to coastal camps, each site was designed not as an isolated initiative but as part of a wider territorial choreography. This choreography extended beyond health and discipline into the realm of identity-making, preparing the ground for what fascist rhetoric would describe as *un bagno d'italianità*, an immersion in 'Italian-ness'.[61]

'Un bagno d'italianità': domestic tourism, Italian diaspora, and identity

The fascist redevelopment of Romagna's health resorts and regional infrastructure was not merely a regional project. It was also an elaborate exercise in national image-making, aimed at producing and performing a specific idea of Italian identity – *italianità* – through immersive environments that projected a modern, unified, and revitalised Italy to both domestic and international audiences.

[57] https://www.atriumroute.eu/heritage/sites/forlimpopoli (accessed September 8, 2025).
[58] Pier Georgio Massaretti; 'La colonia "Sandro Mussolini" dell'A.G.I.P a Cesenatico', in *Architetture per le colonie di vacanza: Esperienze europee*, ed. Walter (Florence: Alinea, 2005), 87–90.
[59] Alessandro Benetti, 'Coastal Icons: Italian Holiday Camps, from Mussolini to Valtur', *Domus* 13 (2019). https://www.domusweb.it/en/architecture/2019/08/13/coastal-icons-italian-holiday-camps-from-mussolini-to-valtur.html (accessed May 23, 2023).
[60] Marco Mulazzani, 'Holiday Colonies for Italian Youth during Fascism', *docomomo* 60, no. 2 (2019): 17–23.
[61] Bosworth, *Italy and the Wider World*, 154–5.

While some interpretations, for instance in the ATRIUM project, suggest that resorts like Castrocaro were designed with an international clientele in mind,[62] there is little evidence that foreign tourists were the primary focus. The choice of modest, inland spa towns far from the grand European circuits, and their clear alignment with domestic ideological priorities, suggests that their main audience was domestic: Italian citizens, workers, youth, as well as the Italian diaspora visiting its home country. As historians have noted, Mussolini increasingly emphasised drawing 'foreigners of our own blood' to Italy in the 1930s, particularly in the lead-up to the Ethiopian campaign.[63] These were not international tourists in the traditional sense, but Italians abroad who could be reacquainted with their national roots through what fascist rhetoric described as '*un bagno d'italianità*' – a symbolic immersion in Italian identity.[64] This logic extended to children of Italian emigrants, who were explicitly targeted by the regime and invited to return to Italy for summer health programmes. As Gigliola Gori has shown, these children were placed in seaside and mountain resorts not only to improve their health, but with the underlying aim to steep them in fascist ideology so that they might one day 'help to teach the rest of the world to believe, to obey, to fight'.[65]

This projected *italianità* was not monolithic. It relied on a tension that the regime often celebrated, namely 'unity in diversity', a central idea in how the fascist empire imagined itself.[66] As explained by Micaela Antonucci and Sofia Nannini, fascist urban policy in Romagna also reflected a broader vision of Italy as a mosaic of regional identities, each reimagined to support the national myth.[67] In this sense, regionalism was not erased but re-scripted to reinforce Mussolini's vision of a unified Italy rooted in local authenticity and imperial grandeur. Romagna, with its Roman ruins, idealised rurality, and engineered modernity, became the perfect microcosm of this synthesis.

Italianità was deeply tied to the fascist myth of *romanità* – a constructed cultural identity that, as Laura Malvano Bechelloni argues, became a cornerstone of the *fabbrica del consenso fascista*.[68] The archaeological excavations in Fratta, the classical motifs in the spa décor, and the Roman-inspired architecture of youth colonies all participated in projecting a unifying vision in which modern Italians could recognise themselves as heirs to imperial Rome.[69]

Romagna can thus be understood as a carefully staged landscape of propaganda,[70] a region where fascist ideology materialised through architecture, infrastructure, and spatial planning. Spa and health resorts became important assets in this effort, embodying the regime's vision of renewal not only through aesthetics and symbolism but also through their function as biopolitical instruments of governance.[71] Castrocaro and Fratta crystallised this dual function: sites of health and leisure, but also laboratories of class discipline, gender politics, and ideological pedagogy. Their integration into a broader territorial choreography – stretching from Predappio to Cesenatico – shows how fascism used space itself as a medium of biopolitics. In Romagna, Mussolini's native land, the regime condensed its aspirations into a microcosm of fascist modernity, where ideas of *bonifica*, rejuvenation, and the myth of *italianità* were fused into one.

[62] https://www.atriumroute.eu/heritage/sites/castrocaro-terme-e-terra-del-sole/grand-hotel (accessed September 8, 2025).

[63] On similar strategies in the Dodecanese, see Luca Orlandi and Velike Ivkvska, 'Kallithea, Rhodes: A Summer Thermal Bath Resort at the Border of the Italian Fascist Empire and Its Reuse Today', in *The Routledge Companion to Italian Fascist Architecture: Reception and Legacy*, ed. Kay Bea Jones and Stephanie Pilat (London: Routledge, 2020), 190–201. The thermal complex at Kallithea, constructed between 1928 and 1929 under Governor Mario Lago, was part of a broader policy of Italianising aimed at presenting Rhodes as a site of Roman revival and Mediterranean renewal, targeted particularly at Italian settlers and elite vacationers.

[64] Bosworth, *Italy and the Wider World*, 154–5. For analogous dynamics in the French colonial context, see Eric T. Jennings, *Curing the Colonizers: Hydrotherapy, Climatology and French Colonial Spas* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 2, 24. Jennings shows how spas were mobilised as therapeutic and ideological sites under Vichy to combat perceived degeneration and deracination among French settlers.

[65] Gori, *Italian Fascism and the Female Body*.

[66] Antonino De Francesco, *The Antiquity of the Italian Nation: The Cultural Origins of a Political Myth in Modern Italy, 1796–1943* (Oxford University Press, 2013).

[67] Micaela Antonucci and Sofia Nannini, 'Architectural and Urban Transformations in Romagna During the Fascist Era between Tradition and Modernity. The Cases of Predappio, Forlì and Imola', in *Townscapes in Transition. Transformation and Reorganization of Italian Cities and Their Architecture in the Interwar Period*, ed. Carmen M. Enss and Luigi Monzo (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2019), 203–20.

[68] Bechelloni, 'Le mythe de la romanité', 111–20; Nélis, *Le mythe de la romanité*; Gentile, 'Fascism as Political Religion', 229–51; Giardina, 'The Fascist Myth of Romanity'.

[69] On this topic, see: Joshua Arthurs, *Excavating Modernity. The Roman Past in Fascist Italy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013) and Giardina Andrea and André Vauchez, *Il mito di Roma. Da Carlo Magno a Mussolini* (Rome: Editori Laterza, 2021).

[70] The concept was introduced in Antonio Nanni and Federico Bellentani, 'The Meaning Making of the Built Environment in the Fascist City: A Semiotic Approach', *Sign and Society* 6, no. 2 (2018): 379. Quoted by Antonucci and Nannini, 'Architectural and Urban Transformations in Romagna', 203.

[71] Griffin, Roger, *Modernism and Fascism. The Sense of a Beginning under Mussolini and Hitler* (New York, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

Conclusion

Following the fall of the fascist regime in 1943 and the disruptions of World War II, Italy's landscape of health resorts underwent a process of readaptation and transformation. While health resorts lost the clear ideological function that had defined fascist-era spas such as Castrocaro and Fratta Terme, the physical infrastructures remained largely intact and were gradually incorporated into the postwar public health system. During the 1950s and 1960s, the model of *termalismo sociale*, originally developed under the fascist regime, was reframed within a democratic welfare framework. With the founding of the *Servizio sanitario nazionale* (SSN) in 1978, thermal therapies were formally recognised as part of public healthcare and became accessible through state subsidies and medical prescriptions.[72]

From the 1980s onward, however, this integration began to shift in response to broader economic and cultural changes. The rising costs of public health provisions, coupled with changing attitudes toward medicine and self-care, led many spa towns to reposition themselves within the emerging wellness and leisure market. Castrocaro expanded its facilities in the 1970s and 1990s, including the creation of the 'Long Life Clinic', while Fratta Terme renovated its structures around a model of therapeutic relaxation. Nonetheless, the expected wellness tourism did not materialise in sufficient volumes, and the expensively refurbished 'Terme della Fratta' changed ownership several times before an inundation severely damaged the spa installations in 2023.

This functional shift has also coincided with a reconfiguration of historical memory. While the fascist origins of many spa complexes are architecturally visible and have been extensively renovated as in the case of Castrocaro in the last decennia, they are rarely addressed in touristic brochures. Promotional materials tend to emphasise natural resources, classical heritage, or modern amenities. This strategy stands in contrast to sites like Predappio, which remain focal points of explicit historical memory and political contestation,[73] or to the fate of many fascist-era youth colonies, which have largely been left to decay.[74] The differentiated preservation strategies for fascist-era health resorts underscores the complex afterlives of authoritarian architecture: while some sites are rebranded, others are ritualised, and others left abandoned.

This divergence reflects a broader ambiguity in Italy's engagement with the architectural legacy of Fascism. The postwar reception of fascist architecture has often emphasised its formal qualities while minimising or dissociating its political intentions.[75] The cases of Castrocaro and Fratta Terme illustrate how health resorts could serve as a lens through which to examine the 'afterlife' of fascist architecture.[76] They raise broader questions about how democratic societies deal with tangible legacies of authoritarianism, particularly in the context of space and infrastructures linked to health, leisure, and care. These sites invite reflection on how to engage with built environments shaped by a problematic past when in coexistence with other dynamics such as tourism and wellness marketing.[77]

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[72]Strangio and Teodori, 'Le Terme di Viterbo', 89–90.

[73]Mario Panico, 'Longing for the Dictator: The Case of Predappio', in *Spaces for Nostalgia. Difficult Memories and Material Consolations* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2024), 85–145.

[74]See Dan Dubowitz, *Fascismo abbandonato. Le colonie d'infanzia nell'Italia di Mussolini* (Manchester : Dewi Lewis Publishing, 2010).

[75]Francesco Cianfarani, 'The Fascist Legacy in the Built Environment' and Harald Bodenschatz, 'Urbanism, Architecture, and Dictatorship: Memory in Transition', in *Routledge Companion the Italian Fascist Architecture*, ed. Kay Bea Jones and Stephanie Pilat (London: Routledge, 2020); Harald Bodenschatz, Piero Sassi, and Max Welch Guerra, *Urbanism and Dictatorship. A European Perspective* (Berlin: Birkhäuser Berlin, 2015); Lucy M. Maulsby, 'Material legacies: Italian Modernism and the Postwar History of *case del fascio*', *Modern Italy* 24, no. 2 (2019): 159–77; Nick Carter and Simon Martin, 'The Management and Memory of Fascist Monumental Art in Postwar and Contemporary Italy: The Case of Luigi Montanarini's *Apotheosis of Fascism*', *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 22, no. 3 (2017): 338–64.

[76]The collocation was termed by Kay Bea Jones and Stephanie Pilat, 'Introduction: The Afterlives of Fascism', in *Routledge Companion the Italian Fascist Architecture* (London: Routledge, 2020), 1–9.

[77]See also Kelly Hignett's article 'In Sickness and in Health: 'Dissonant' History, Heritage, and Tourism in the Czech Spa Town of Jáchymov' in this volume.

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