

ANDREA BAGNATO

Terra Infecta: Disease and the Italian Landscape

A compelling narrative examination of the ways disease has shaped urban planning in Italy, through historical examples from cholera to Covid-19 in Venice, Naples, Matera, and Lombardy

Architect Andrea Bagnato draws on first-hand experiences, medical records, literature, and ethnographies to tell an engaging new story

Part of Sightlines, a new series of collectable essay books looking at architecture from distinct points of view

In *Terra Infecta*, Andrea Bagnato tells an unfamiliar history about a well-known place. Since the early days of tourism, the cities and landscapes of Italy have been bywords for beauty and grandeur. But, at home and abroad, the same places have also been haunted by associations with recurring epidemics and unhealthy ways of life, often more to do with politics than conditions on the ground.

In this gripping narrative study, Bagnato shows how the modern quest for sanitation shaped Italy's urban and rural landscapes, propelling major transformations from the draining of the wetlands around Venice, to demolitions and replanning in Naples, to the expulsion of the inhabitants of ancient Matera. He argues that current north-south inequalities are founded on spurious medical narratives, and focuses on the real impact on the people caught in their ministrations.

Ranging from Italian unification to the aftershocks of Covid-19, and drawing on architectural records, medical history, and the author's own travels, this vivid book reveals the lived realities of grand schemes, traces of vanished communities, and forgotten histories of collective organisation and resistance.

'This is architectural investigation at its very best. Andrea Bagnato deconstructs and reconstructs Italian history – from the scale of landscape and epidemics to that of the body – not as a nation-building process but as an internal process of settler colonialism.' Eyal Weizman

ANDREA BAGNATO (b. 1986, Milan) is an architect and writer. He has taught urban history at the Architectural Association in London and Piet Zwart Institute in Rotterdam and curated exhibitions at La Casa Encendida in Madrid and MAAT in Lisbon. His previous books include the two-volume *Rights of Future Generations* (2022) and *A Moving Border: Alpine Cartographies of Climate Change* (2019).



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