

From Suppressed Memories to Civic Action: Participatory Mapping of Fascist Detention Spaces in the Context of Emerging Legislation

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1. *Research Background and Rationale*

For almost twenty years now, within the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy at Sapienza University of Rome – specifically in the research and teaching spaces that once housed the Geography Cabinet and later the Institute of Geography – a line of inquiry has been opened, explored, and progressively developed. This research strand investigates, experiments with, and produces results on semantic and situated memory in relation to geographical studies (Livingstone, 1995; 2003; Sereno, 2006; Vallerani, 2016).

Beginning with research practices tied to the processes of territorialization in urban contexts, based on methodological hybridizations with urban and oral history (Maggioli, Morri, 2009; Morri, Maggioli *et alii*, 2013), the first scientific publication on these topics dates back to 2005 (Capuzzo, Maggioli, Morri, 2005). That work opened the way to a further area of study and experimentation, focusing on the dissemination of knowledge and on updating – through a critical and metacognitive approach – the history of geography in Italy (understood as the evolution of research, teaching, and teacher-training practices in schools), through the recognition, recovery, valorization, and re-signification of geocartographic assets and research sites (De Filpo, 2018; Grippo, 2025; Leonardi, 2018; 2024; Leonardi, Ciaglia, 2024). This latter path also has a practical dimension, both with regard to experimenting with geotechnologies in

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phases of analysis and restitution (De Filpo, 2023; Morri, De Filpo, 2024) and to the establishment of a Museum of Geography, within a perspective of public engagement and in strong adherence to the idea of public geography as expressed in the Padua Manifesto (Morri, 2020; Varotto, Morri, 2020).

Along an ideal trajectory (and of ideals) extending from Lucio Gambi (Guermandi, Tonet, 2008) to Gabriele Zanetto (2001) – a trajectory that implies a definitive departure from an event-based geography toward a humanistic geography understood as civil and social (Campione, 2017) – it is considered important to document and submit for scientific debate projects that have remained submerged or unexpressed. These are projects suffocated by the liberal reconversion of the Italian university system, carried out through a political agenda shared across the parties that have governed the country since at least the first half of the 1990s.

The lack of both financial resources and political will to guarantee freedom of research with adequate ordinary funding, thus denying researchers the possibility of accessing minimum and equitable levels of resources and means of production, has often transformed managerial and administrative skills into markers of scientific merit. This process has cloaked, under the rhetoric of meritocratic selection, a rather “wild” form of capitalistic accumulation, clearly visible and easy to read, which particularly shapes the market of scientific publication venues according to an oligopolistic logic (for the most biased, composed of “Very Important Journals”). Combined with the reduction or absence of public funding, this dynamic deepens territorial gaps and inequalities (Celata, 2023).

At the scale of individual university, it is not uncommon for projects deemed excellent – or at least scientifically valid – by external referees, increasingly foreign, to remain unfunded either due to a lack of resources (incapacity) or because they are considered too “ambitious” in relation to the funds available. In both cases, the long-term absence of adequate core funding prevents scientifically valid projects from being carried forward, thus favoring contexts that are not more skilled in absolute terms, but rather better performing simply because they are “richer”. Projects that cannot rely on the necessary financial support, especially for the involvement of non-permanent staff, are thus left without follow-up. Research teams must instead focus on already established paths that are more aligned with funding guidelines shaped by the interests of public or private institutions, agencies, or companies (Morri, 2018).

This is the case of the project proposal *Memory Removed. Participatory and Active Citizenship Mapping Practices for the Recovery from below of a Contested Heritage: the Case Study of the Fascist Internment Camps*, conceived by Riccardo Morri and developed with Camilla Giantomasso during the drafting stage for the Sapienza University Call 2023. We decided to take it out of the folder of unfunded projects and share it once we realized that it – as we had imagined – foreshadowed current events, capturing emerging dynamics in public and scientific debate and responding to a growing civil and cultural need (Albanese, Ceci, 2022; Sinopoli,

Baldasso, 2024): for example, in December 2025, the assembly of the Municipality of Rome Capital approved by majority a motion to re-signify places and monuments bearing the marks of the fascist regime, with explanations accessible via QR code.

Primarily for this reason, the enthusiastic support of organizations external to the proponents' home university was sought and obtained. Beyond the support of the Italian Association of Geography Teachers-AIIG – which may seem “obvious”, yet fully aligned with the project's goals – other research centers and organizations were ready to be involved: the Cultural Welfare Center, the Roman Institute for the History of Italy from Fascism to the Resistance-IRSIFAR, the Italian Touring Club-TCI, and the Master's Degree Programs in Primary Education Sciences at the University of Turin and in Geography and Territorial Processes at the University of Bologna, represented respectively by their coordinators Cristiano Giorda and Elisa Magnani.

2. A New Regulatory Framework for Mapping and Recognizing Sites of Fascist-Era Segregation

Over the past two years, the institutional landscape governing the documentation, protection, and public transmission of memories related to Fascist detention sites in Italy has undergone a significant transformation. The unanimous approval of Draft Law 2313 establishing an official national map of sites of segregation operating between 1922 and 1945¹ – and, subsequently, of Law 46/2025 on educational “memory journeys” to Nazi concentration camps – marks a clear turning point in the country's memorial policies. For the first time, the Italian state formally acknowledges the need for a systematic, publicly accessible cartography of the principal locations where the Fascist regime implemented different forms of confinement: POW camps, primarily for captured enemy soldiers; civilian internment camps, targeting individuals considered dangerous for political, ethnic, or racial reasons; and concentration camps, in which detention often involved extreme and systematic practices of physical and psychological annihilation (Capogreco, 2004; 2021; Megargee, 2009; Minca, 2015; White, Megargee, 2018).

Although this may appear self-evident, the fact that these measures clearly distinguish the three forms of segregation is already a significant step forward. In Italian public discourse, these categories are frequently flattened or conflated-

¹ At present, there is no comprehensive or up-to-date estimate of the total number of Fascist-era segregation sites in Italy (1922-1945), which makes it difficult to reconstruct a complete “geography of segregation” for each region. Available studies indicate that these sites were distributed throughout the national territory, often located near cities or strategic areas, with higher concentrations in the North-East (Friuli, Venezia Giulia) and the South (Calabria, Campania). Among the most well-known are Ferramonti di Tarsia (CS), Gonars (UD), Renicci (AR), Campagna (SA), Fossoli (MO), and the Risiera di San Sabba (TS) (Capogreco, 2004; Di Sante, 2001).

ed, obscuring the complexity of Fascist repressive mechanisms, their historical evolution, and their uneven territorial impact (Focardi, 2020). This misrecognition is far from accidental. Indeed, it results from a prolonged process of erasure rooted in the immediate postwar period, when the urgent need to construct a new republican identity, the desire to break with the regime's responsibilities, and the pressures of economic reconstruction pushed these sites of trauma to the margins of institutional memory (Gribaudo, 2020). Over time, this led to widespread silencing, selective reinterpretations, and functional repurposing, which together contributed to concealing, downplaying, or neutralizing the Fascist legacy embedded in Italy's national historical narrative.

Within this context, the emerging regulatory framework presents an important opportunity not only to systematically reconstruct a controversial past, but also to initiate an official process of collective reckoning. As Adriano Proserpi (2021) points out, knowledge progresses only when we become aware of what has been forgotten. In the case of Fascist segregation sites, this entails examining the possible meanings of these sites of memory, exploring the malleability of their narratives and considering the interaction between contemporary concerns and historical sedimentations. It also requires scrutinizing the material and symbolic reconfigurations of these sites of trauma (Knowles, Cole, Giordano, 2014) and analyzing the often asymmetrical relationships between hegemonic narratives and marginal memories (Giantomasso, 2023; 2024; Smith, 2006), between institutional commemorations and spontaneous forms of remembrance (Arbore, Maggioli, Pozzi, 2023; Muzaini, Minca, 2018).

From this perspective, geographical knowledge and expertise assume an increasingly central role. While the institutional mapping mandated by the law represents an important first step, it also carries the risk – echoing insights from post- and decolonial scholarship (Borghi, 2020; Mignolo, Walsh, 2018) – of producing partial, merely descriptive representations that lack the relational and spatial depth inherent to lived memory. In contrast, a geographical lens allows these neglected sites to emerge as authentic memory landscapes, where historical dynamics, social representations, community practices, and identity processes intersect to reveal tensions, conflicts, and stratifications that illuminate the complex entanglements of past and present.

The project presented here is situated within this conceptual framework. It proposes a participatory mapping of these overlooked sites of segregation in Italy, with the dual aim of educating about the territory and educating through the territory (Giorda, Puttilli, 2011) via practices of active citizenship. More specifically, it seeks to cultivate broader awareness of these historical pasts and their associated memories, to valorize local lived experiences, and to engage with the landscape dimension as a shared and collectively meaningful resource (Castiglioni, 2022).

3. *Reworking Difficult and Contested Legacies: The Memory Removed Project between Theory and Research*

In recent decades, cultural geography and heritage studies have emphasized how sites marked by trauma and contested pasts function as crucial spaces for understanding the processes through which contemporary societies select and transmit memories, thereby shaping their own identities (Macdonald, 2013). Since the 1980s, scholars such as Pierre Nora (1984) and David Lowenthal (1985) – through the concept of *lieux de mémoire* and the analysis of the selective construction of the past, respectively – have demonstrated that public memory is not a neutral reflection of and on history but the outcome of deliberate operations that determine what is considered worthy of remembrance and what may be suppressed. From this perspective arises the widely debated distinction between “real history” and “invented heritage” (Hobsbawm, Ranger, 1983; Samuel, 1994), which has been central to theoretical debates on heritage, highlighting the difference between events as they actually occurred and those extracted, reshaped, or rewritten for nationalist purposes (Ashworth, Graham, Tunbridge, 2007; Giantomasso, 2022).

This tension becomes particularly evident when engaging with so-called contested pasts – those “pasts that do not pass,” in the words of Gian Enrico Rusconi (1987) – for which the absence of collective mourning gives rise to more or less conscious forms of suppression. As Anna Lisa Tota and Lia Luchetti (2018) observe, such “acceptance” is not synonymous with forgiveness or reconciliation, as it can only occur once the trauma has been acknowledged and named, the violence historicized, and the perspectives of the victims incorporated as an integral part of the public narrative. In the absence of these conditions, these pasts remain latent, subject to distorted or dystopian representations, and foster processes of de-territorialization (Raffestin, Butler, 2012; Turco, 2010).

From this perspective, Fascist concentration camps emerge as emblematic sites, material testimonies of a repressive past and authentic “territorialized memories” (Arbore, Maggioli, 2017) in which reinterpretations, omissions, and interpretive conflicts have accumulated over time. The concentration camp at the Risiera di San Sabba (fig. 1) provides a striking example, illustrating how tensions between past and present persist even when such traumatic sites have been musealized. Examining events on Liberation Day of 25 April 2003, geographers Martin Purvis and David Atkinson (2009) noted that alongside the official commemorations held annually at the Risiera, one of the symbolic sites of the Resistance in Venezia Giulia, a counter-commemoration took place in Basovizza, itself the site of one of the most dramatic episodes associated with the *foibe* massacres. The official celebration of the national anti-Fascist memory was thus challenged by an alternative memory – perceived as incompatible with the official narrative – focused on the trauma endured by Italians from Venezia Giulia and Dalmatia at the hands of partisan groups and Yugoslav intelligence services. This

episode clearly illustrates that the myth of the Resistance, a cornerstone of the postwar republican rebirth, never became a truly shared foundational myth (Mori, Migliorati, 2013). Rather, it has contributed to the emergence of fractures and memorial competitions over the last decades, revealing the enduring plurality and contestation of public memory in Italy (Quadraro, Tota, 2019).



Fig. 1 – The complex of buildings known as the Risiera di San Sabba in Trieste was initially, at the end of the nineteenth century, an industrial rice-processing facility; around 1940 it was converted into a military barracks and, subsequently, during the German occupation, it became a *Polizeihaftlager* (detention and police camp, one of the typical forms within the Nazi concentrationary system).

Source: photograph of the Risiera di San Sabba National Monument, available at <https://risierasansabba.it/> (last accessed 27 November 2025).

Despite the growing international interest in dark (Seitsonen, 2017; Thomas *et alii*, 2019), dissonant (Tunbridge, Ashworth, 1996), and difficult (Thomas, 2019) heritage, the heritagization of such sites in Italy remains fragmented and is often left to local initiatives, with little integration into a systematic territorial framework. Consequently, these pasts continue to receive limited attention and are documented in a piecemeal fashion due not only to the inherently contested nature of these memories but also to a lack of connection with the surrounding territory. This situation is further compounded by the precarious condition of many cultural sites associated with Fascist-era camps. Numerous sites do not maintain a website or social media presence – crucial tools in today’s digital context for ensuring visibility and accessibility (Lazzeroni, Albanese, 2023) – and are not recognised by the Ministry of Culture as official museum institutions. Particularly emblematic cases include the International Memory Museum of Ferramonti di Tarsia (CS), which lacks an official online portal, and the former concentration camps of Campagna (SA) and Renicci (AR), which still have no formal recognition.

Scholarly research on the topic has predominantly followed a historical-archival approach, with few structured examples of musealization and almost no geographical analyses of the spatial, symbolic, and social transformations that these sites have undergone during the war and since the postwar period. An exception could be made for the *Atlas of Fascist and Nazi Massacres in Italy*, one of the most significant initiatives for the historical-documentary census of violence between 1943 and 1945, which, however, did not include Fascist segregation camps. From a more explicitly geographical perspective, noteworthy contributions include the European ATRIUM project, aimed at problematizing the architectural legacies of twentieth-century totalitarianisms (Battilani, Bernini, Mariotti, 2018; Rabbiosi, 2019), and the studies by Claudio Minca and Paolo Giaccaria on the geographies of Nazism, later collected in the volume *Hitler’s Geographies: The Spatialities of the Third Reich* (2012). These works have significantly advanced the understanding of concentrationary apparatuses and policies of violence through a spatial lens, connecting territorial production, biopolitics, and the geographical imaginaries of power².

It is within this critical framework that *Memory Removed: Participatory and Active Citizenship Mapping Practices for the Recovery from below of a Contested Heritage – the Case Study of the Fascist Internment Camps* takes shape. The project seeks to inves-

² In the Italian context, equally significant are the *Associazione Paesaggi della Memoria*, the *Fondazione Ferramonti di Tarsia*, and the project *I Campi Fascisti-Dalle guerre in Africa alla Repubblica di Salò*, which, in terms of conception and philosophy, is comparable to other major European institutions such as the Mémoires Network, the *Dokumentationszentrum Topographie des Terrors*, and the organization Documenta-Center for Dealing with the Past. Also noteworthy is the Summer School *The Cultural Heritage and Memory of Totalitarianism*, hosted by the Department of Letters and Modern Cultures at Sapienza University of Rome, which focuses on the transnational legacies of early twentieth-century totalitarianisms and subsequent postcolonial dictatorships.

tigate the presence, transformation, and public memory of the principal Fascist segregation sites, regarded as emblematic cases of contested heritage, stratified and reshaped through omissions, reinterpretations, and conflicting narratives. More specifically, the project emphasizes the territorial dimension of memory and the potential of heritage – even when negative or dissonant – to serve as a framework for conscious processes of territorialization, developing from the observation that these sites of memory have yet to secure a clear place within national memorial policies and heritage practices.

In line with this objective, the project has been designed as a four-phase process, outlined below together with its planned schedule and obviously overlapping phases:

1. *Preliminary phase (six months)*. Dedicated to the collection of bibliographic, archival, photographic, and cartographic sources, complemented by field surveys and interviews with key witnesses. This phase aims to reconstruct the material and symbolic history of the sites, investigating the impact of repressive pasts on local identities.
2. *Development phase (one year)*. Focused on the creation of thematic maps and participatory GIS-based mapping, aimed at identifying processes of territorialization and constructing – with local communities – a permanent, dynamic, and updatable archive of past transformations.
3. *Implementation phase (two years)*. Centered on workshop activities with schools, local authorities, associations, and businesses, as well as the activation of memory pathways at individual sites of trauma. The goal is to recognize and critically engage with the territorial (dis)values, promoting shared and critically oriented educational practices.
4. *Dissemination phase (six months)*. Dedicated to organizing seminars, conferences, and public events, and publishing the results in the form of academic articles and an open-access volume, thereby ensuring broad, stable, and recognizable communication.

Methodologically, these four phases converge within a research framework that integrates heterogeneous sources – archival, oral, photographic, audiovisual, and cartographic – with quantitative and qualitative analytical approaches, including statistical analysis and geographic information systems, from action research to semi-structured interviews. Particular attention is given to participatory mapping, regarded as an indispensable tool not only for reconstructing the history and transformation of traumatic sites but also for examining contemporary dynamics of belonging and identity formation, demonstrating how maps can function as active instruments in practices of individual and collective recognition. Simultaneously, territorial education workshops seek to valorize knowledge of spatial “(dis)values” (Dematteis, 2004) as a fundamental cultural resource in democratic processes and in the cultivation of active, reflective citizenship capable of critical engagement across multiple scales, from the local to the global.

Overall, the project aims to integrate the “objective”, analytical reconstruction of events with subjective memories and the processes of re-signification that accompany them, grounded in the conviction that a genuinely shareable historical narrative can emerge only from the interplay of these dimensions. Participatory mapping and active citizenship practices thus operate as levers for addressing the fractures produced by divisive memory, contributing to the construction of a territorial identity founded not merely on knowledge but – above all – on the recognition of the sites, their histories, their wounds, and their future potential, within an expanded geo-historical perspective that is today more indispensable than ever.

4. From Oblivion to Re-territorialization: The Role of Geography in Memory and Citizenship

The historically contingent need to assert distance from a “unitary” conception of geography – an epistemological cage that long rendered the discipline a monolithic construct within which dominant powers inscribed their own totems, functional to the affirmation and preservation of a “geographically determined” status quo, while at the same time stimulating the need for metacognitive reflection – has, in recent years, fostered the strategic re-emergence of past patterns. As a result, anachronistic and uncritical adherence to a Manichean logic has resurfaced, seeking to reinstate the classic and constraining dichotomy of “good vs. bad” (Livingstone, 1992).

Although the symbolic “death of the fathers” was necessary, the delayed emancipation from this in some respects physiological Oedipal complex has led geography to relinquish some of its distinctive traits – not least its language of *geo-graphicality* – transforming its ontological status as a foundational form of knowledge into one of subalternity and marginality (Morri, 2025).

The power of geography should not be sought exclusively, and therefore reduced, to the partiality of representations. This power resides particularly in its political dimension, in its capacity to mediate, and thereby structure, the relationship between the visible and the invisible. This relationship can certainly be bent to the demands of control, serving disvaluing interests or even enabling the perpetration of crimes; yet, like the relationship between geography and power itself, it cannot be considered predetermined or fixed once and for all.

The nature and expression of this relationship (between power and geography) must be critically examined. At the same time, it is essential to act within a hermeneutic tension since it is this tension that allows us to escape the trap of oblivion in the educational contexts, as proceeding solely through repression, in the absence of valid alternatives, may appear to be the most effective way to stigmatize and neutralize the negative value from which certain places and “objects” have failed to emancipate themselves.

The category of “landscape of memory” responds precisely to this need, representing a genuine civil urgency (Morri, 2024). Landscape, as a geographical entity, expresses the evolving relationship between the visible and the invisible (Maggioli, 2011). When properly employed, this characteristic protects landscape from sterile musealization, which risks perpetuating or even reinforcing the meaning and disvalues (artistic, aesthetic, functional, or political) embedded in the ideology that produced them. Compared to Germany, Italy has often lacked, in most cases, a concerted effort to first contextualize and then re-signify these sites. A clear example of insufficient contextualization concerns concentration camps in Italy or specific instances of the regime’s rationalist architecture. An unfinished re-signification can be observed in the case of the Risiera di San Sabba in Trieste, the only extermination camp in Italy. By contrast, the Fossoli concentration camp in Carpi stands as a notable exception (Fig. 2, 3).



Fig. 2 – Front façade of the Fossoli concentration camp, Carpi.

Source: Photograph by Riccardo Morri, taken in 2018.

Within the classical framework of such processes, contextualization – and thus understanding how regimes utilized these sites – is essential for initiating and completing the de-territorialization phase. For instance, describing the Risiera di San Sabba as a “National Museum” inhibits such contextualization. Otherwise, this evidence, having ceased to function as meaningful places, ultimately, remains excluded from – or peripheral to – processes of recovery and valorization, and thus becomes detached or “external” to the common cultural heritage.

Although abandonment and oblivion may be necessary in the immediacy of historical contingency, the only effective guarantee that these abandoned symbols of totalitarian regimes do not become simulacra for perpetuating criminal ideologies is their inclusion in active processes of territorialization.

This approach enables the initiation of widespread knowledge – ranging from mapping these sites to uncovering and sharing their overt and hidden meanings – preparing for the re-territorialization phase, in which the re-signification of these places, and thus their heritage, results from the active participation of multiple territorial actors, both institutional and non-institutional.



Fig. 3 – Information panel on the history of the Fossoli concentration camp, located at the entrance of the site.

Source: Photograph by Riccardo Morri, taken in 2018.

Through a comparative and transcalar approach, it is worth proposing the city of Nuremberg, Germany, like a prime example of this process. Once a symbolic center of the Nazi Party, Nuremberg has become an emblem of what Germany, Europe, and humanity must never again become. Unlike Italy – where, throughout the twentieth century, efforts to contextualize and re-signify such sites remained fragmented – Germany, after an initial phase of repression and distancing, initiated in the late 1980s a progressive process of reappropriating spaces removed from collective memory because they represented blatant, monumental expressions of Nazi atrocities. These spaces were subsequently transformed into symbolic sites of remembrance, laying the groundwork for informed citizenship. This ongoing tension between conservation, recovery, and

re-territorialization (i.e. re-signification of territorial values) finds its most significant expression in the recovery of the Zeppelinfeld and the Reichsparteitagsgelände (the monumental gathering area of the National Socialist Party congresses) and in the creation of the Dokumentationszentrum Reichsparteitagsgelände, a museum dedicated to the history of Nazism, located in the north wing of the Congress Hall (an arena in the style of a Roman circus-amphitheater).



Fig. 4 – Grandstand of the Zeppelinfeld in Nuremberg.

Source: Photograph by Riccardo Morri, taken in 2019.

5. *Project Innovation and Expected Results*

As noted above, the core idea underpinning this proposal is to recover a controversial and long-neglected past through a wide array of sources and tools such as historical documents, statistical data, and cartographies, combined with representations of these events in the form of images (Rose, 2008; Withers, 2011), periodical press, movies, literary works, and self-representations of those subjected to Fascist repression. The project is thus inherently transdisciplinary, bringing together methodologies from geography, contemporary history, psychology, and pedagogy. Each discipline retains its own practices and perspectives while contributing to a shared objective, that is, the reconstruction and analysis of a representative – although necessarily partial – example of territorial “disvalue” and its potential reintegration into national memory.

Understanding such controversial pasts and their influence on territorial identities requires the convergence of multiple, diversified, and complementary

competences (Banini, Ilovan, 2021; Ilovan, Doroftei, 2017). Transdisciplinarity, however, is not the only innovative aspect of the project. A central feature is its *from below* approach, which prioritizes the memories and experiences of local communities often excluded from official narratives. As Smith (2006) and Muzaini and Minca (2018) note, recollections *from below* are inspired by personal, perceptive, and emotional experiences that frequently diverge from institutional representations. Such memories form part of the so-called *heritage from below* (Robertson, 2012), encompassing narratives and social practices recognized by communities but lacking visibility or formal acknowledgment. By integrating these perspectives, the project goes beyond post-structuralist deconstruction or cultural critique (Bhabha, 2001; Said, 2000), actively supporting communities in imagining and constructing new collective interpretations of the past (Tota, Luchetti, Hagen, 2018).

The project also seeks to make findings usable through “bottom-up” practices of geographical education on the territory and its history, leveraging geography’s representational power across diverse forms of storytelling (Banini, Capuzzo, 2022; Pollice, 2022). Educational applications include teacher training and school-based activities at all levels aimed at identifying and valorizing key territorial features, as well as tourism initiatives such as memory routes (Magnani, 2023; Nitasha, Martini, 2024). The project further promotes sustainable participatory interventions in close collaboration with local communities and stakeholders. Overall, these objectives address one of the main contemporary educational challenges, fostering active citizenship and encouraging individuals to care for and take responsibility for their living environment. The initiative embodies both theoretical and methodological innovation – and, above all, practical action – by transforming geography into a tool capable of equipping citizens with the competences necessary to address 21st-century human-environment challenges (Morri, 2020).

In this perspective, the project constitutes a first step towards a novel methodological approach that combines theoretical reflection on contested heritage (Liu, Dupre, Jin, 2020; Tunbridge, Ashworth, 1996) with concrete territorial actions that empower communities and make their historical memories both the outcome and the condition for participatory processes (Banini, Picone, 2018; Turco, 2010, 2025). A perspective *from below* ensures that the recognition and valorization of heritage emerge from local actors themselves, shaping shared and participatory interventions that are sensitive to lived experience. Applicable to diverse historical and territorial contexts and to pasts of varying degree of “difficulty,” this innovative approach remains a work in progress, open to future contributions from both academia and civil society, fully aligned with the objectives of the university’s third-mission engagement.

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From Suppressed Memories to Civic Action: Participatory Mapping of Fascist Detention Spaces in the Context of Emerging Legislation

This paper presents a project proposal focused on the study and valorization of Fascist-era segregation sites in Italy, following Draft Law 2313 and Law 46/2025, which establish official mapping and public memory journeys. In a context shaped by silences, removals, and selective reinterpretations, the *Memory Removed* project proposes participatory mapping of POW, internment, and concentration camps, integrating heterogeneous sources and interdisciplinary methods. The initiative specifically seeks to promote geographical education capable of transforming these traumatic sites into memory landscapes, where official and marginal narratives intersect, revealing tensions and historical stratifications. Through workshops, participatory GIS tools, and educational activities, the project aims to foster a critically informed, shared understanding of contested and dissonant heritage, encouraging collective recognition, active territorial engagement, and responsible citizenship.

Dalle memorie rimosse all'azione civica: mappatura partecipata dei luoghi di detenzione fascista nel contesto di una normativa emergente

Questo contributo presenta una proposta progettuale dedicata allo studio e alla valorizzazione dei luoghi di segregazione fascista in Italia, alla luce del Ddl 2313 e della Legge 46/2025, che introducono una mappatura ufficiale e promuovono percorsi di memoria pubblica. In un contesto segnato da rimozioni, silenzi e reinterpretazioni selettive, il progetto *Memory Removed* propone una mappatura partecipata dei campi di prigionia, internamento e concentramento, integrando fonti eterogenee e approcci interdisciplinari. L'iniziativa punta in particolare a sviluppare un'educazione geografica capace di trasformare questi siti del trauma in paesaggi della memoria, dove narrazioni ufficiali e memorie marginali si intrecciano, permettendo di comprendere le tensioni e le stratificazioni del passato. Attraverso workshop, strumenti GIS partecipativi e pratiche educative, il progetto mira a coltivare una comprensione critica e condivisa anche delle eredità dissonanti, stimolando processi di riconoscimento collettivo, territorializzazione attiva e cittadinanza responsabile.

Des mémoires supprimées à l'action civique : cartographie participative des lieux de détention fascistes dans le contexte d'une législation émergente

Cet article présente une proposition de projet visant l'étude et la valorisation des lieux de ségrégation fasciste en Italie, dans le cadre du projet de loi 2313 et de la Loi 46/2025, qui instaurent une cartographie officielle et des parcours de mémoire publics. Dans un contexte marqué par des silences, omissions et réinterprétations sélectives, le projet *Memory Removed* propose une cartographie participative des camps de prisonniers, d'internement et de concentration, intégrant sources variées et approches interdisciplinaires. L'initiative vise en particu-

lier à promouvoir une éducation géographique capable de transformer ces sites traumatiques en paysages de mémoire, où récits officiels et mémoires marginales se croisent, révélant tensions et stratifications historiques. À travers ateliers, outils SIG participatifs et activités éducatives, le projet cherche à développer une compréhension critique et partagée des patrimoines controversés et dissonants, favorisant reconnaissance collective, engagement territorial actif et citoyenneté responsable.