

M.A. History: Political Culture and National Identity

Thesis

Counter-Terrorism in Italy: Can it still be considered a success?



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On the cover: Agnese Moro (left), daughter of ex Prime Minister Aldo Moro with Adriana Faranda, a member of the *Brigate Rosse*, group that kidnapped and killed Moro’s father.

“Laying down arms, today as yesterday, those of lead we did at the time, now it is time to lay down the arms of language”¹

(Azzolini in *Il libro dell'incontro*)

Abstract

This paper will assess the alleged success of counter-terrorism during the *Anni di Piombo* in Italy by examining newly available sources with a novel approach. Memoirs recently published by victims of terrorism along with other interviews with victims as well as meetings between victims and ex-perpetrators will be examined through the lense of revictimization, a concept borrowed from criminology as well as conflict resolution, to assess if the Italian state can still be considered successful in its counter-terrorism efforts in light of these new sources and new understandings of what constitutes successful counterterrorism. The paper will outline how while pacification was attained many issues persist to this day: lack of justice and truth, victim politicization, and revictimization.



The most famous picture of the *Anni di Piombo*: A protester shoots towards police officers at a protest in 1977.

¹ Original: ‘Deporre le armi, oggi come allora, quelle di ferro, lo abbiamo fatto al tempo, ora è tempo di deporre le armi del linguaggio’

Introduction

On the 14th of January 2019 Cesare Battisti landed in Ciampino airport in Rome. The ex member of *Proletari Armati per il Comunismo* (PAC) was extradited to Italy from Brasil after nearly 40 years on the run. Italian Prime Minister Conte stated: “this is a great result that we owed to the Italian justice system and to the victims and their families” (La Repubblica 2019). Battisti’s case outlines many issues which decades after the end of political violence in Italy are still present. The PAC member was incarcerated for being part of the outlawed group in 1979 and escaped prison 2 years later. After which he fled abroad, first in France then Brazil where he lived until his extradition. Meanwhile in Italy Battisti was tried in absentia and found guilty of taking part in four murders. Not only was the trial held without the defendant, a practice which is illegal in many other countries, but the main witness, Pietro Mutti was found by a subsequent appeals court to be someone who “uses the weapon of falsehood in his favor...this is why his confessions cannot be considered spontaneous” (Adinolfi 2011). The defendant’s right to a fair trial, as well as the rights of victims to have truth ascertained appear not to have been respected. Until last March, when Battisti confessed to the murders in front of Milan’s chief prosecutor (Tondo 2019). Furthermore the case has been heavily politicized both in Italy and Brazil. It is no coincidence that extradition only happened with the rise to power of right wing populists like Bolsonaro and Salvini in their respective countries. The Italian Minister for the Interior met Battisti at the airport wearing a police vest and celebrating the capture of the ‘communist terrorist’ (La Repubblica 2019).

Absence of truth, unfulfilled expectations in legal proceedings and politicization are far from exclusive to Battisti’s case. As recently as June 2017 the last trial concerning the *Anni di Piombo*, (in English, years of lead) which indicates a period of violence by far-right and far-left non state actors in Italy commencing with the ‘Strage di Piazza Fontana’, also executed by Ordine Nuovo on the 12th of December 1969, in which 17 people were killed and 88 injured (Montanelli 1991, p. 5), came to an end, 43 years after the attack on Piazza della Loggia which killed 8 people and injured over 100. During these years 491 people were killed and over 1000 were injured in nearly 15000 acts of political violence (Fumian 2010, XV).

Even nearly half a century after the attack the absence of truth and ambiguity by certain state agencies, whose operatives have been found guilty of misleading investigations, marred the legal proceedings. The final verdict confirmed a life

sentence for two members of neo-fascist organization *Ordine Nuovo* (New Order), but also confirmed ‘incontrovertibly’ that efforts had been made by members of the Italian secret service to impede and undermine legal proceedings concerning the attack (Vigani 2017). Manlio Milani, president of the Victims Association concerning this attack ‘Casa della Memoria’, upon reading the verdict remarked that there is still a lack of and need for truth: “the commitment to seek those who for forty years have impeded our search for truth must continue”(Zenti 2017). It comes as no shock than that at this event, as in many others commemorating victims of the Anni di Piombo, the presence and speeches of state representatives were met with protest, whistling and jeering, as was the case with President Mattarella’s speech (Editorial 2018). Victims, and citizens alike hold the view that in many cases justice has not been served, the truth has not been ascertained by a culpable state, which is also viewed as having abandoned victims and their families in the aftermath of various attacks.

The *Anni di Piombo* have been studied thoroughly both domestically and internationally, by historians, sociologists, political scientists and criminologists alike. They have been the subject of documentaries as well as television and cinema fiction; the perpetrators have been interviewed for books and television and written memoirs of their own. However the victims and their associations have received little to no attention in academic debates on the subject. However, in recent years many of their memoirs have been published, providing scholars with a new body of primary sources to analyze in order to reassess the violence of those years, as well as the state’s response to it and to the subsequent demands of victims.

This paper aims to look at what these individuals can tell us about the end of the *Anni di Piombo*, about a process of reconciliation with the state, which 30 years after the end of violence in Italy is still necessary, as well as about the state’s behavior during and after these years. Their accidental politicization and their perspective on how the Italian state responded to the violence of those years and to their needs will also be analyzed, in order to assess if these novel contributions can help us reassess Italy’s success in countering political violence during the *Anni di Piombo*. Firstly the hypothesis and methodological approach will be outlined. Secondly the sources and current literature on the subject will be reviewed. The paper will continue by analyzing the perspective of victims and their associations on the end of violence, the role of the state in dealing with victims as well as perpetrators and their ‘accidental

activism'. In conclusion the findings will be summarized and their application both domestically and internationally will be assessed.

Hypothesis

“The government betrayed relatives and victims of terrorism. [I am] Ready to return the gold medal.”²

Roberto Della Rocca AVITER President

There appears to be a consensus in academic and policy-making circles, as will be evidenced in the literature review, that the Italian state's fight against political violence was successful: bombings, kidnappings and killings all but stopped in the second half of the eighties and most perpetrators faced criminal proceedings. However, effective counter-terrorism cannot be limited to ending violence, scholars have described the Italian state's behavior as 'opaque and twisted'(Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p. xii), furthermore while peace was achieved social reconciliation was never sought. While the radicalization and deradicalization of ex perpetrators has been studied both domestically and abroad the perspective of victims remains understudied, partly because only in the last 15 years have victims started publishing accounts of their experiences (Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p.116).

This paper aims to use these new sources to reassess the widely held belief, both in academic and policy making circles, that the Italian state was successful in countering political violence. The sources adopted will be the voices of victims and their associations. These will be assessed through the framework of revictimization, a phenomenon in which “victims feel victimized not only from the assault but also from their experiences of the criminal justice process” (Walklate & Clay-Warner 2017, p. 1) or in our case, by the Italian state in general. This framework will be deployed within the context of modern developments in the field of counter-terrorism, in line with current academic literature, in order to answer the question: can Italian counter-terrorism efforts still be considered a success?

It is important at this point to define what it means for the Italian state to be successful in its counter-terrorism efforts. The next section will outline how while bringing an end to violence is a crucial component for a successful counter-terrorism strategy, due to post 9/11 developments in the field of terrorism studies, other issues also need to be

² Original: “Il Governo ha tradito parenti e vittime del terrorismo. Pronto a riconsegnare la medaglia d'oro.”

addressed. Therefore, for the purpose of this paper we define as successful a counterterrorism strategy that not only ends violence, but also includes the legal pursuit of perpetrators, as well as the protection of victims and their rights.

Methodology & Sources

The paper will take the qualitative approach of a single case study, specifically what Lijphart (1971) has called a Theory-infirming Case Study. This method is “a test of the proposition, which may turn out to be confirmed or infirmed by it” (Lijphart 1971, p. 692). Specifically the paper will assess the proposition that the Italian state has been successful in its fight against the political violence of the *anni di piombo*. While the subject has been studied extensively both domestically and internationally as will be evidenced in the literature review, the novelty of this paper is twofold: firstly the sources, which have only become available recently, and secondly the use of victimology and restorative justice in the Italian context.

In the academic literature on terrorism the views of policy makers and even former combatants have been studied in depth, while those of victims as well as the activities of their association have been neglected (Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p. xiii). While the first book published by a victim dates back to 1979 (Sossi) the vast majority of victim memoirs were published in the last 15 years. These newly available primary sources will be used to reassess Italy’s success in fighting political violence. The paper will need to rely mostly on these memoirs as the fact that they have only been published recently and in Italian means that very few secondary sources are available. The vast majority of these sources are only available in Italian and have been purchased in Italy by the mother tongue author; quotes from these sources will be translated by the author for the purpose of this paper. Other important primary sources will consist of interviews with victims collected in *Sedie Vuote* (Conci et Al. 2008) as well as some conducted by Anna Cento Bull (2013), as well as transcripts of meetings between victims and ex perpetrators, collected in *Il libro dell’incontro* (Bertagna et Al. 2015). The meetings recorded in *Il libro dell’incontro* are an example of the adoption of insights from victimology and restorative justice in the context of the *Anni di Piombo* and for the purpose of post-conflict reconciliation.

Because these memoirs were only published recently there are very few secondary sources to incorporate which have analyzed these sources. Furthermore the author will need to keep the limitations of such personal primary sources in mind; personal

documents such as these memoirs tend to be biased (Lucas 1981, p. 227). Veccia, author of an important book on the use of primary sources, outlines how precisely because these memoirs intrinsically carry a point of view they are not neutral or objective, however “when assembled, analyzed, and researched, they can provide personal insights, human drama, and deep historical understandings” (2004, p. 3). These strengths and weaknesses must be kept in mind while analyzing these sources. Having outlined and assessed the sources adopted the next paragraph will outline the framework adopted for this study.

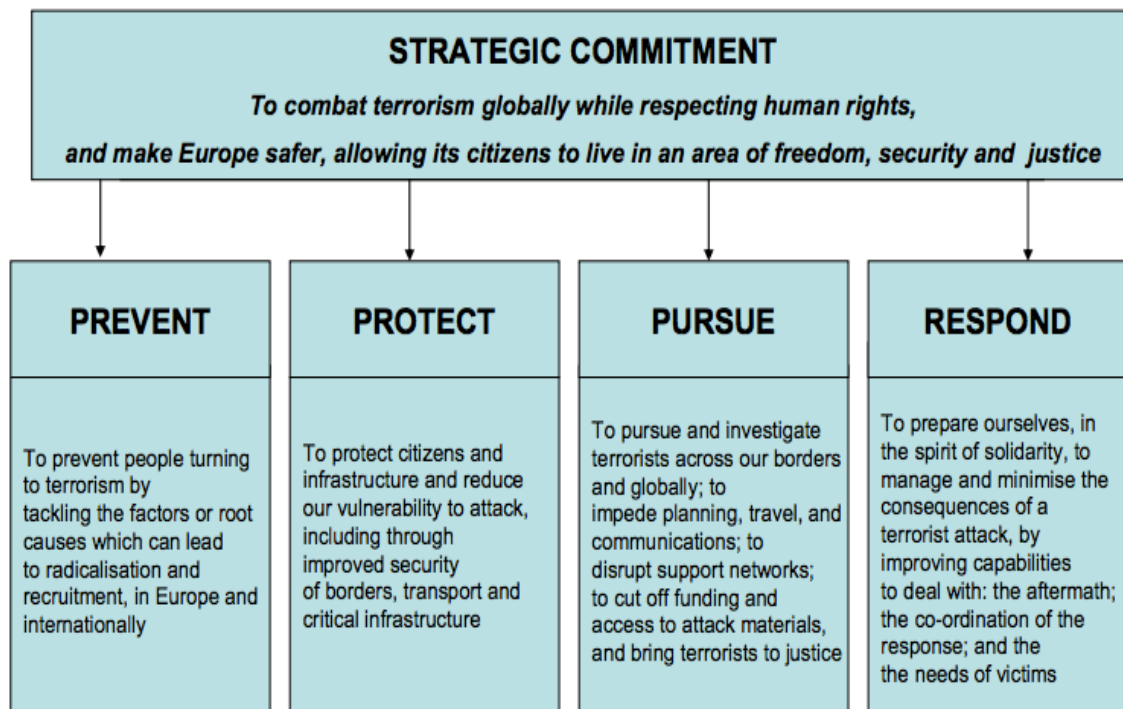
Press releases and statements by Victim associations such as AVITER, Associazione Memoria, as well as the associations for specific bombings, mainly Brescia and Bologna will also prove useful for the purpose of this paper. Furthermore Fasanella & Grippo (2006) and Conci, Grigolli & Mosna (2008) published collections of interviews with victims, some interviews are also collected in Cento Bull & Cooke (2013); while *Il Libro dell’Incontro* (2015) illustrates a unique attempt at restorative justice through meetings between former combatants and victims. The recentness of these publications means that very few secondary sources on the subject are available apart from Cento Bull & Cooke’s *Ending Terrorism in Italy* (2013). According to Hoffman & Kasupski only in recent years the victims and their associations have begun to be heard in counterterrorism policy circles (Hoffmann & Kasupski 2007, p. iii).

Since 9/11 there has been an evolution both in the legal and in the institutional frameworks for counter-terrorism (Johnstone 2011, p. 81). This evolution in the understanding of what counter-terrorism is will be crucial for the purposes of this paper. Counter-terrorism’s aim is no longer merely understood as a mix of security measures deployed by military and/or police aimed at ending acts of terror.

The European Union’s counter-terrorism strategy, adopted by the Council of the European Union in 2005 illustrates this evolution and broadening of the definition of counter-terrorism. The strategy is based on four pillars:

1. Prevent
2. Protect
3. Pursue
4. Respond

(Council of the European Union 2005)



Source: Council of European Union (2005). EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Included in the EU’s strategy are wider issues than the mere ending of violence, such as prevention of radicalization, pursuing and investigating ‘terrorists’ within the judicial system, as well as “improving capabilities to deal with the aftermath, the coordination of the response, and victims' needs” (Council of EU 2005). The document further states that “solidarity, assistance and compensation of the victims of terrorism and their families constitutes an integral part of the response to terrorism at a national and European level. Member states should ensure that appropriate compensation is available to victims.” (Council of EU 2005b, p. 15).

Another example of this evolution can be found in the UK’s Strategy for Countering Terrorism, updated in the summer of 2018 also references improving “support arrangements for victims of terrorism to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated response” (CONTEST 2018, p. 11). The success of Italian counter-terrorism has not yet been tested against this novel, broader definition; such an examination will be the purpose of this paper.

This analysis will be conducted by assessing the aforementioned victim memoirs by borrowing from criminology and conflict resolution the concept of revictimization, in order to assess how the state dealt with the aftermath and the needs of victims in line

with the EU's fourth pillar of counter-terrorism. Revictimization happens after the end of the conflict, when victims of ethnic, religious or political violence also suffer from at least one of the following:

1. Denial of the status of victim
2. Unfulfilled expectations in dealing with official agencies
3. Unwanted effects of victim-centered initiatives
4. Social stigmatization and exclusion

(Huyse 2003, p. 61)

Some practical examples can include difficulty in obtaining information from authorities, inadequate or humiliating treatment as well as cooption of the victim for political gains (*ibid*). To one former president of the Lombard section of AVITER the mere need to create a victims association implies revictimization because if “the state had shown an attitude of benevolence and special attention to those of its citizens who have been victims of a cowardly attack there would be no need for said associations” (Interview in Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p. 161).

Having outlined the sources and framework the next section will provide an in depth review of the literature on the field of ‘terrorism studies’ as well as on ‘terrorism’ in Italy, restorative justice, and revictimization.

Literature Review

"Increasingly, questions are being raised about the problem of the definition of a terrorist. Let us be wise and focused about this: terrorism is terrorism... What looks, smells and kills like terrorism is terrorism."

(Sir Jeremy Greenstock in Schmid 2004, p. 375)

The field of terrorism studies is one that has grown significantly in recent years, however it is also a field that presents many shortcomings both ontological and epistemological in nature. The tautological quote at the beginning of this section perfectly summarizes the ontological issues within the field: firstly, the field lacks an accepted definition of what constitutes 'terrorism' (Jackson et al. 2007, p. 4), famously Schmidt and Jongman found over 100 definitions (1988. pp. 5). Secondly, the term is loaded and descriptive usually adopted to entail moral condemnation (Zulaika & Douglass, 1996, pp. 149-150), according to some even more so since 9-11 (Jackson et al. 2007, p. 4).

Epistemologically both methods and sources have been problematized. The field presents an "over-reliance on secondary information and general failure to undertake primary research" (*ibid*). This is both due to the intrinsically difficult nature of speaking to 'terrorists' and due to the aforementioned moral condemnation, exemplified by Jones & Smith who hold that efforts to understand what causes terrorism confer it empathy and legitimacy (2007, p. 185). Methodologically the field has been criticized for its pro-state bias and problem-solving nature (Silke 2004, p. 58), as well as ignoring historical context and decontextualizing current events (Jackson et al. 2007, p. 5). Silke found that among 490 articles on the subject of 'terrorism' published between 1990 and 1999 477 focused on contemporary terrorism (2004, p. 209).

This paper will address these criticisms in multiple ways. Firstly a definition of the term will not be attempted, as it could be the subject of an equally long paper on its own. Furthermore the term will only be used to described acts and strategies, when referring to actors the paper will refer to ex-combatants to avoid the aforementioned moral condemnation. Secondly, the Italian case presents a plethora of primary sources, since the end of the *Anni di Piombo* both former combatants and victims have written memoirs, most of which have been consulted in the original Italian by the mothertongue author. Thirdly, the paper will assess a case that is not contemporary to address the critique of ahistoricity in the field.

Cento Bull & Cooke have outlined three phases during the *Anni di Piombo* (2013). A first phase, which saw the aforementioned bombing of Piazza Fontana, as well as other attacks such as the bombing of the *questura* in Milan which killed 4 people and the *Strage del Petano*, in which 3 *Carabinieri* lost their life. Both attacks were orchestrated by far right groups (Cento Bull & Cooke, p.4). At the same time acts of political violence began to be committed by newly founded groups on the left as well, the *Brigate Rosse* (BR) carried out their first kidnapping in 1972 (Cento Bull & Cooke, p. 6) and carried out other attacks both on property and individuals, the first deaths at the hands of the BR occurred in June 1974 in an attack on the far right *Movimento Sociale Italiano* (MSI) headquarters in Padova (ibid) where two people were shot. Two months later the leaders of the BR were arrested, marking the end of this first phase (Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p. 9).

The second phase saw an escalation of violence with the killing of *La Stampa* journalist Carlo Casalegno, judge Francesco Coco, and most famously the kidnapping and killing of Italian Prime Minister Aldo Moro (ibid). The death of Moro marked a new phase which saw the murder of judge Emilio Alessandrini by *Prima Linea* (PL) as well as killings carried out in Milan by *Proletari Armati Per il Comunismo* (PAC) (Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p.12) This third phase was also marked by individual and group disengagement, with PL's *Documento dei 51* being considered "the first document of political disengagement in Italy" (Catanzaro & Manconi 1995, p. 281).

Similarly we note two phases in counter-terrorism measures adopted by the Italian state. In a first phase the state aimed at fighting 'terrorism' through infiltration and repression. The first agency aimed at contrasting 'terrorism' was set up in 1974 and "the practice of security forces infiltrating terrorist groups was adopted in order to obtain a complete picture of subversive underground activities" (Tappero Merlo & Marchisio 2006, p. 103). In 1975 police powers were increased through the *Legge Reale* which allowed for longer detention time of individuals who had not been charged with a crime, search without warrant in some cases and increased the cases in which use of firearms by police forces was permitted (Tappero Merlo & Marchisio 2006, p. 103; Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p. 32).

After the Moro kidnapping we witness a second phase in which more wide-ranging legislation was passed, aimed at fostering disengagement, starting with the *Legge Cossiga*, which along with harsher sentences for 'terrorism' related offences also "introduced incentives for those who dissociated themselves...or who assisted the

judicial authorities” (Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p. 33). Italy continued to try and foster disengagement by providing reductions in sentences both to those who collaborated with authorities and those who merely renounced the armed struggle with special legislation in 1982 and 1987, laws which hundreds of people availed themselves of (Satta 2016, p. 644). While it is unclear if these laws intrinsically helped bring an end to political violence in Italy or not, it is certain that they aided in speeding up the disengagement process by “breaking the associative pact” (della Porta 2009, p. 69) between individuals engaged in political violence as well as giving them the possibility of returning to a ‘normal’ life after serving their reduced sentences.

It is generally understood that the Italian state has been quite successful in ending the *anni di piombo* and the political violence of those years. Many books have been written both by academics as well as former combatants and the subject can be studied in depth even without knowledge of the Italian language. Secondary sources on the Italian case are also not lacking, Cento Bull & Cooke claim it is one of the “most studied cases in the scholarly literature thanks both to the novelty of the Italian state’s response...and to the availability of individual testimonies by former terrorists” (2013, p.17). The state’s response was not only new, it is generally considered to be an example of a strategy that “policy makers in other nations confronted by terrorist threats might well study with benefit” (Weinberg & Eubank 1987, p. 131). This view is echoed by many others, among which the most influential scholars on the subject (della Porta 1992) (della Porta 2009) (Crenshaw 1991) (Jamieson 1989) (Stortoni-Wortmann 2000).

Specifically the laws meant to encourage *pentitismo* and *dissociazione* (repentance and disengagement) “helped, more than anything else, to halt the terrorist activity of the red brigades” (Ganor 2005, p. 187), a view also held by Silke (2011), Salvini (1983) Clutterbuck (1990), Tappero Merlo & Marchisio (2006) and Magstadt (2003) with Satta going as far as calling these laws “an immediate success” (2016, p. 642). In short, these laws provided reduced sentences both for those who provided information useful to the authorities in contrasting political violence (*pentiti*) as well as for those who merely disengaged from the armed struggle (*dissociati*). By the end of the *Anni di piombo* 389 people had availed themselves of these sentence reductions (della Porta 2009, p. 70).

However, the victims associations on the other hand objected to these laws and appealed to the senate to vote against them (Satta 2016, p. 647). Until recently this

perspective has been lacking, one which has problematized the light sentences handed down to individuals guilty of violent crimes, the perspective of victims of the political violence of those years (Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p. 101). As outlined previously the last 15 years have seen the publications of many victim memoirs, either published by direct victims or by their relatives, which will prove invaluable primary sources for this paper. The first memoir published was that of judge Mario Sossi (1979), the second was only published 10 years later with the publication of Lenci's *Colpo alla nuca* (1988). After that many memoirs by former combatants were published in the nineties (Cento Bul & Cooke 2013, p. 163), while most memoirs by victims were published in the last 15 years. Most importantly Calabresi's *Spingendo la notte piu in là* (2007), and Benedetta Tobagi's *Come mi batte forte il cuore* (2009).

As noted in the previous paragraph most victims and their associations were opposed to those laws, considered by most scholars and political operatives to have brought an end to 'terrorism' in Italy. To understand this objection three concepts are crucial: revictimization, reconciliation, and restorative justice. In Italy, conciliation (or pacification?) and retributive justice took precedence over the former two which contributed many cases to revictimization.

Reconciliation has been described as "both a goal and a process" (Bloomfield 2003, p. 12); here the procedural aspect will be the main focus. The first step in this process must be what Renner and Spencer call conciliation, or "ending violence and reaching at least a primary settlement...between antagonistic societal groups" (2011, p.9) a process, which, as has been outlined before, was achieved successfully in Italy (Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p. 101).

Bloomfield describes reconciliation as "an over-arching process, which includes the search for truth, justice, forgiveness, healing and so on. At its simplest, it means finding a way to live alongside former enemies" (2003, p. 12). While others have questioned the centrality of forgiveness (Maregere 2009, p.42) (Braithwaite 2002, p. 571) the search for truth, justice and peaceful coexistence are key concepts. While there are different ways of understanding this process the focus on victims of the paper entails a focus on restorative justice, which has been referred to as a "victim-oriented process" (Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p. 105).

Retributive justice focuses on punishment of perpetrators (Leidner et al. 2012, p. 182). It is a perpetrator-oriented process involving the perpetrators and the criminal justice system, one which may "frustrate the victim and even lead to re-victimization"

(Huysse 2003, p. 111). Conversely restorative justice has been described as “a process whereby all parties with a stake in a particular offence come together to resolve collectively how to deal with the aftermath of the offence and its implications for the future” (Marshall 1996, p. 37). Restorative justice “works with the full participation of the victim and of the relevant communities in discussing the facts, identifying the causes of misconduct and the defining sanctions. The ultimate aim is to restore relations as far as possible, both between victim and offender and within the broader community to which they belong” (Huysse 2003, p. 111).

This process can take many forms, such as victim-offender mediation, a meeting between a victim and an offender with a mediator, family group conferences, usually adopted in cases of juvenile violence and victim-offender encounters, which involve surrogate offenders and victims, the purposes are healing and conciliation, rather than punishment (Van Camp & Wemmers 2013, p. 118). The extent of involvement of victims and perpetrators can vary to a degree. In South-Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission, usually taken as the prime example of this kind of process, the involvement entailed a mere sharing of experiences while in other experiences victims can be involved in decisions on the destiny of the offender (Gavrielides 2013, p. xii). Italy has in fact attempted to involve victims in the decision process over releasing past offenders, an attempt viewed mostly negatively by victims which even lead to revictimization in some cases.

Revictimization is a term with multiple meanings, it can indicate the reoccurrence of a criminal incident to the same person or group over time (Robinson 1998, p. 78) as well as a phenomenon in which “victims feel victimized not only from the assault but also from their experiences of the criminal justice process” (Walklate & Clay-Warner 2017, p. 1). The term is mostly adopted in the fields of criminology, victimology and psychology. The term has been adapted to the study of reconciliation by Huysse (2003).

While it is clear the concept of revictimization as elaborated by Huysse, and outlined in the previous chapter, can be adopted in the Italian case, reconciliation and restorative justice are concepts usually deployed in the context of civil wars, conflicts in which two opposing factions are fighting each other in an intrastate conflict, such as South-Africa or Northern Ireland. While Italy had right wing and left wing actors practicing political violence they rarely fought each other, their most violent actions were usually directed at third parties, such as businessmen or state representatives, or

even civilians, as was the case in Bologna. Therefore it would be misleading to speak of a civil war in Italy, the parties who might enter a process of reconciliation are not two opposing groups of perpetrators but perpetrators on the one side and victims on the other.

Some have argued, both academics and victims, that along with perpetrators and victims, the state also needs to engage in a process of reconciliation and truth telling for its opaque behavior in these years (Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p. 104). But can we speak of reconciliation in cases like Italian one where we lack opposing factions to be reconciled but have a more clear view of perpetrators and victims?

In cases where some actors are considered ‘terrorists’ reconciliation is seldom held as an option (Renner & Spencer 2011, p. 1), however Renner & Spencer’s book outlines how this process is possible and examines case studies in which this approach has been adopted, with varying degrees of success (*ibid.*). In fact a process of restorative justice may even be easier to achieve and more beneficial in conflicts in which victims and perpetrators are clear, which Leidner calls non-protracted conflicts (Leidner et al. 2013, p. 190). In these cases a restorative justice approach can benefit both victims and perpetrators: victims achieve empowerment through participation and compensation, which may be symbolic or material; while perpetrators can achieve acceptance and forgiveness (*ibid.*). In addition the mere act of participating in a restorative justice process can have a positive effect (Rugge and Scott 2009), in fact victims are overall satisfied with restorative practices (Sherman & Strang 2007).

One of the main challenges to successful reconciliation is posed by historical narratives. Narratives of conflict tend to accentuate one group’s “morality and justness of goals while delegitimizing the opponent” (Bilali & Mahmoud 2017, p. 77). In Italy former combatants tend to view the *Anni di Piombo* as a ‘low intensity civil war’, this view serves as a justification for violence by non-state actors as a part of a wider conflict, on the other hand most victims view those years as a case of unilateral violence perpetrated by extremists (Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p. 103) thus delegitimizing their struggle. When the memories of groups clash with one another we speak of ‘divided memory’ (Foot 2010). The issue of truth is central to reconciliation (Hamber 1998) (Ignatieff 1998) (Naqvi 2006); so much so that Bloomfield defines reconciliation as “a process through which a society moves from a divided past to a shared future” (Bloomfield 2003, p. 12).

After having introduced the subject, outlined a hypothesis, sources and methodology, and reviewed the literature on terrorism, the *Anni di Piombo*, reconciliation and restorative justice, the paper will now assess the success of the Italian state in fighting ‘terrorism’ by examining the memoirs of victims and statements by their associations to assess whether victims in Italy have experienced one or more of the previously outlined four categories of revictimization.

From the Victim’s Perspective: Truth, Justice and Revictimization

“ If there were truth and justice the victims would not need to form an association, for the victims it is a defeat to have to form an association”

(Paolo Dendena in Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p. 161).

Dendena, who lost his father in the bombing of Piazza Fontana, considered by some the attack that marked the beginning of the *Anni di Piombo*, here outlines an issue echoed by many other victims: that the victims were not aided after the attacks by the state that was supposed to defend them, and even worse in some cases those within state agencies hindered investigations and may have been complicit in the bombings. It is important however to note that while victims speak of similar issues in dealing with the aftermath of an attack as well as in dealing with the state there are points of disagreement on important facets as well.

As outlined in the methodology, this chapter will take into account the evolution of our understanding of what is contained in an effective counter-terrorism policy, as concretely manifested in the EU’s own counter-terrorism strategy and test if the Italian state’s counter-terrorism policies can still be considered successful in its efforts during the *Anni di Piombo* by applying the concept of revictimization to the Italian case.

Revictimization, as outlined in the chapter on methodology and sources, occurs when one of the following is present:

1. Denial of the status of victim
2. Unfulfilled expectations in dealing with official agencies
3. Unwanted effects of victim-centered initiatives
4. Social stigmatization and exclusion

(Huyse 2003, p. 61).

The next chapters will look at all four of these conditions individually to assess if they are present in the Italian case by analyzing memoirs of victims, statements made by their associations and interviews they have given.

Denial of the status of victim

The quote by Paolo Dendena at the beginning of this chapter outlines exactly how revictimization and denial of status of victim are closely connected. The mere need to create associations to demand rights, truth, justice and compensation constituted revictimization by the Italian state, had it done its duty of ensuring “solidarity, assistance and compensation” which constitute “an integral part of the response to terrorism” (Council of EU 2005b, p.15) there would, as Dendena outlined, be no need for said associations. It took the Italian state 38 years from the bombing of Piazza Fontana to institute a “Day of Memory for the victims of terrorism and massacres of such origin” (Law 56 2007).

The first recognition of the status of victims and of related compensation came with Law 466 (1980). However this law only recognized as worthy of compensation those members of the state, such as magistrates or police officers who deceased or were injured in the line of duty, and not civilians, however these were not classed as victims of terrorism but victims of duty. Civilian direct victims had to wait ten years until the approval of Law 302 (1990), while the recognition of the status of victims to family members of those injured or deceased in an attack only came 14 years later with Law 206 (2004). This was the first law specifically targeted at victims of terrorism, the previous ones gave concessions within the broader context of laws on victims of organized crime or those fallen in the line of duty. In 1986 at the conference ‘The fight against terrorism: the reasons and rights of victims’ organized by the Turin based AVITER the lack of rights and recognition as victims was outlined by Giuseppe Cerchio, vicepresident of the Regional Council of Piemonte:

“The situation...paints a picture of non-fulfillment, with a considerable delay mostly on the part of the State, of the necessary provisions aimed at defining in all its forms the juridical position of the victim of insurgency. Such as the right to claim incapacity benefits for facts pertaining to armed insurgency; in a similar way to disabled war veterans or invalids unable to work. In fact victims that have not deceased, having no other classification have no rights, not even akin to those

victims of road accidents who at least can avail themselves of a national insurance fund.” (AVITER 1986)

The quote above describes the lack of recognition by the state and the consequent lack of rights that goes with it. Nearly two decades after the beginning of the *Anni di Piombo* the status of victim and relative compensation were recognized by the state, and even there only to its functionaries, thus denying this status to civilian casualties. The lack of recognition of the status of victims was lamented at the same conference by then president of AVITER Maurizio Puddu, who had been shot repeatedly in the legs by members of the BR in July of 1977. The victim stated:

“Of the state we ask an act of compensation from the state. The state gave nothing to many of us. It did not fulfill its moral obligations. The state is lacking insofar as it has not reconciled itself with its victims. We ask for no assistance. We demand the judicial recognition of the victims of armed insurgency.” (Puddu in AVITER 1986, p. 80)

That recognition for many only came in 2004. Benedetta Tobagi, daughter of journalist Walter Tobagi who was killed in 1980 by the *Brigata XVIII Marzo* commented that after the silence “there had been two fundamental institutional changes: the law of 2004 for the protection of the victims of terrorism which recognizes the status of victim and the right to some compensations, and the law which institutes the day of memory for victims of terrorism and massacres” (Conci, Grigolli & Mosna 2008, p. 77).

Even today AVITER has noted that while on paper the rights and protections to victims and their families are present in practice the implementation of benefits has been slow and in some cases lacking completely (AVITER 2018).

This section has outlined how the Italian state has in fact denied for a long time the status of victims to many, along with the compensation and benefits that would come only in 2004 for many. Victims had to campaign and request judicial recognition for many years, at first attaining it only for those who deceased in the line of duty, then for citizens and their close relatives many years later and after the reiterated requests of the victims and their associations.

Many victims have expressed feelings of isolation and abandonment by the state, however this will be analyzed in the section on social stigmatization and exclusion. This lack of recognition is not only a crystal clear example of denial of status of

victims, but it also constitutes an example of the second of Huyse's four categories of revictimization: The legitimate expectations of victims in dealing with state agencies were unfulfilled.

Unfulfilled expectations in dealing with official agencies

“We [the relatives of the victims] believed in justice, all of us believed that truth and justice would be secured...but as the years went by we realized that unfortunately this was not the case and the state was acting against us”

(Carlo Arnoldi, President of the *Associazione Familiari delle vittime della strage di Piazza Fontana* in Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p. 158)

Arnoldi, whose father was killed in the Bombing of Piazza Fontana in 1969, outlines feelings expressed by many victims in their dealing with judicial proceedings, political representatives and their search for truth. He outlines the shift from citizens confident that the state would deliver justice and truth to skeptics who have obtained neither. The previous section outlined how the lack of recognition of the status of victims of terrorism by the Italian state is a clear-cut example of the first category of revictimization: the denial of the status of victim. However this denial is also indicative of the second criteria for revictimization: unfulfilled expectations in dealing with state agencies. Victims expected and demanded recognition of their status and only obtained it many years later and thanks to the advocacy of their associations.

The many associations present in Italy are indicative of the types of political violence that was present during the *Anni di Piombo*. AVITER and the Associazione Memoria's members are mostly victims of specific armed attacks, such as killings, kneecappings and kidnappings; the former is mostly concerned with attaining and protecting rights for victims, such as the recognition of status of victimhood and annexed benefits outlined in the previous section, while the latter represents victims who worked for the state, i.e. police forces, judges etc. Victims of *stragi* (bombings) mostly aimed at civilians are represented by associations for specific attacks, the largest ones being *the Associazione familiari vittime della strage di Piazza Della Loggia*, *Associazione fra I familiari delle vittime della strage alla stazione di Bologna del 2 Agosto 1980*, and *Associazione vittime della strage di Piazza Fontana*.(Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p. 155)

While AVITER's first stated objective is the attainment and protection of rights for victims the other associations outline with their statutes just how the state has failed them: the associations are still present and continue their "request for truth and justice, because too often we have had neither" (Associazione Memoria)³. The statute of the Bologna association as well as the website of the Brescia association also both make reference to a need to attain truth and justice (Cento Bull 6 Cooke 2013, p. 157). Victims expected two things after attacks: a fair trial, and the possibility to know the truth about these acts of violence, this section will outline how these expectations were not met.

Sergio Lenci was an architect shot by members of *Prima Linea* in May 1980, who survived the attack and lived with a bullet in his head until he passed away in 2001 (Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p. 162). His book *Colpo alla nuca* (1988) is one of the first victim memoirs published along with Mario Sossi's, and outlines his disappointment in dealing with political and judicial institutions. Lenci's book has multiple chapters dedicated to his trial, many elements of which are problematic to him. Mainly, the decision to not enter as evidence pages from a book he worked on concerning prison reform found in a home of members belonging to *Prima Linea* in the investigation (Lenci 1988, p. 73). On this matter Lenci writes:

"Why completely neglect any consideration on the unreliability of the investigation if not for a desire, a deliberate policy to close, minimize even at the cost of covering up gaps, reticence, omission of documents this time not attributable to terrorists but to magistrates, high officials of the *Carabinieri* or *Digos* officials?... It seemed convenient to all political parties to overcome the events connected to terrorism without examining their history" (1988, p. 82-83)⁴.

³ Original: C'è la richiesta di verità e di giustizia, perché troppo spesso non abbiamo avuto né l'una né l'altra.

⁴ Original: Perché trascurare completamente ogni considerazione sull'inattendibilità dell'istruttoria se non per un desiderio, una deliberata politica di chiudere, di minimizzare anche a costo di coprire ulteriormente lacune, reticenze, omissioni di atti di ufficio: questa volta non ascrivibili ai terroristi ma ad alcuni magistrati, ad alti ufficiali dei carabinieri, a ufficiali della Digos?...A tutti i politici sembrava far comodo superare le vicende connesse al terrorismo senza approfondirne la storia.

Lenci at an AVITER Conference will also state that “the trial had the appearance of a formal act, inattentive and superficial” (AVITER 1986, p. 52)⁵. To Lenci this was part of a strategy to “reabsorb within society the armed insurgents, through amnesties, pardons, dissociation and depenalization” (1988, p. 63)⁶. In general Lenci perceives his trial as unfair and unwilling, along with political institutions to ascertain the truth. Lenci is not the only one who laments lenient sentences and requests for amnesties and pardons. Antonio Iosa, who was kneecapped by members of the *Colonna Walter Alasia* a splinter group of the BR holds that “amnesty, intended as a erasure of the crime, is an offence to victims and to Italian citizens” (In AVITER 1986, p. 68)⁷. Silvia Giralucci, daughter of the first victim of the BR, Graziano Giralucci, a member of the far right *Movimento Sociale Italiano*, outlines her disappointed expectations in President Cossiga, who proposed to pardon Curcio, head of the BR while the trial was still ongoing. She writes:

“Two different trials had already found him guilty of the murder of my father. I was shocked. I felt I needed to do something, so I returned to Italy, grabbed my typewriter and wrote. Naively I thought I could have a dialogue with Cossiga, he never replied” (Giralucci in *Sedie Vuote* 2008, p. 99)⁸.

Giralucci expresses shock when her expectation, that the trial for those who killed her father continue without political interference was not met, referring to Cossiga’s proposal to pardon her father’s assassin. Giralucci is also shocked at the request for a pardon for an individual still undergoing trial who had been found guilty by two preceeding trials, these feelings of isolation and of more attention given by the media and political class to perpetrators than victims will be analyzed in the next section.

Another victim to lament lenient sentences and shortcomings in legal proceedings is Benedetta Tobagi, daughter of Walter Tobagi, *Corriere della Sera* journalist killed in 1980 by the members of the left wing *Brigata XXVIII Marzo*:

⁵ Original: Il processo che mi riguardava aveva l'aspetto di un atto formale, superficiale e disattento.

⁶ Original: riassorbire nella società degli extraparlamentari armati attraverso amnistie, condoni, dissociazioni, depenalizzazione.

⁷ Original: L'amnistia, intesa come cancellazione del reato, è un'offesa alle vittime e ai cittadini italiani.

⁸ Original: ‘due gradi di giudizio l’avevano già ritenuto responsabile dell’omicidio di mio papa. Ero sconvolta. Sentivo che dovevo fare qualcosa. Così sono tornata in Italia, ho preso la macchina da scrivere e ho scritto. Ingenuamente ero convinta di poter avere un dialogo con Cossiga. Non mi ha mai risposto’

“The application of the law on *pentiti* gives the impression that the informant is rewarded even if he is an assassin... If he also obtains the maximum benefits despite incongruences in his claims the pill is even harder to swallow... the point is not only that the assassin is free, but also the feeling that the investigation was not done in an adequate and complete way” (Tobagi in *Sedie Vuote* 2008, p. 64)⁹.

In her book she claims another event that scarred her was “seeing the assassin of my father come out of jail in my first year of primary school” (209, p. 238)¹⁰. It is not merely the short sentence that Tobagi outlines as troubling but again like for Lenci she perceives an unwillingness to ascertain the truth in judicial proceedings while Giralucci sees the trial concerning her father’s murdered as marred by unjust political interference.

To Adolfo Ceretti, a criminologist who has mediated the meetings between victims and terrorists transcribed in *Il libro dell’incontro* (2015) this absence of truth and justice are the crux of revictimization:

“Immense tears in their [of the victims] lives are generated...even years or decades after the events in question is most of all the sense of profound injustice arising either from forms of denied justice or from the impossibility to obtain, for various reasons a clear verdict or truth within a definitive sentence” (Ceretti 2015, p. 391)¹¹.

These sentences were not only perceived as lenient by the victims, but more importantly they were seen as only uncovering partial truths. Again according to victims interviewed by Ceretti:

“among the reasons for a sense of denied justice by the victims of political violence there is the selectivity of a judicial process which in the case of the

⁹ L’applicazione della legge sui pentiti dà l’impressione che il collaboratore di giustizia, anche se è un assassino venga premiato...se poi il pentito ottiene il massimo dei benefici previsti nonostante ci siano delle incongruenze in ciò che dice l’amarezza è ancora più forte...il punto non è soltanto che l’assassino è in libertà ma anche la sensazione che l’inchiesta non sia stata fatta in modo adeguato e completo

¹⁰ Original: Ho visto l’assassino di mio padre uscire di prigione quando ero in prima elementare.

¹¹ Original: A generare immani lacerazioni nelle loro vite...anche a distanza di anni o di decenni dai fatti è soprattutto il senso di ingiustizia che deriva o da forme di dinegata giustizia o dall’impossibilità di vedere acclarata una definitiva verità/condanna processuale all’interno di una sentenza definitiva.

stagione dell'eversione [season of insurgency] has ignored the complicity of parts of the state and the role of political parties” (2015, p. 59)¹².

Many have echoed these words, particularly in the case of bombing attacks while some perpetrators have been found guilty there is a sense that those behind the attacks have not been found and, at times, even protected by members of the state. Vittorio Bosio, who lost his sister, niece and nephew in the *Strage di Bologna* in 1980 has claimed that:

“the fact that those behind the attack, have not been found, and that even 30 years later who willed and organized the attack is still unclear is a large boulder that weighs on all of us” (in *Sedie Vuote* 2008, p. 280)¹³.

Similar claims were made at the latest commemoration of the bombing of Bologna train station by the president of the victims association:

“Even for the *strage di Bologna* the organizers of terror, who willed and designed that tragic script, had activated decoys and misled investigators to reach the same [as in other bombing attacks] conclusion: nobody guilty” (Bolognesi 2018).

The accusation of interference with judicial proceedings by members of the state is not a baseless one promoted by some victims. Multiple members of the Italian police and secret service have been found guilty of misleading investigations in a number of bombings, as a part of a larger strategy to blame these attacks on left wing groups and thus curb the support for them as well as for the Italian Communist Party (L'Espresso 2018) (AVITER 1986, p. 87-88).

Concern over truth concealment and interference with investigations are expressed by victims of other bombings as well; Paolo Silva, who lost his father in the bombing of Piazza Fontana has commented on shortcomings by the state:

“The state is in debt as it has never attempted to shed light upon what happened. Especially in the case of the piazza Fontana bombing there opened

¹² Original: Tra le ragioni del senso di dinegata giustizia percepito dalle vittime della lotta armata vi è la selettività di un iter di criminalizzazione che nel caso della stagione dell'eversione ha sostanzialmente tagliato fuori le complicità di apparati dello stato e il ruolo dei partiti politici.

¹³ Original: Il fatto che i mandanti non siano stati individuate e che non sia chiaro a quasi 30 anni di distanza chi abbia effettivamente mosso le fila e volute la strage è un grande macigno che pesa su tutti noi.

up this huge fracture in Italian democracy, because a democratic state, once it had ascertained the facts-and the state knew the facts- should have said what it knew.” (Cento bull & Cooke 2013, p. 188).

Manlio Milani, who lost his wife in the bombing of Piazza della Loggia in 1974 and is currently president of the association for that attack, is also among those who told of his experience with parts of the state which not only were not interested in finding the truth but actively worked to interfere with it.

“The investigator in 1974 on the Brescia bombing was then Captain [of the Carabinieri] Delfino. In 2008 the judge undertaking preliminary investigations on the attack granted the request of the public prosecution to reopen the investigation. Six people were indicted: Neofascists like Maggi and Zorzi, people connected to the secret service like Tramonte or working undercover like Maifredi; Pino Rauti and ex General of the Carabinieri Delfino... Delfino conducted the first investigations on the bombings, 34 years later we find him not as an investigator but as an investigated party.” (Milani in *Sedie Vuote* 2008, p. 126)¹⁴.

The person charged with investigating the attack, finds himself accused 34 years later of taking part in its execution. This is not the only event outlined by Milani that is indicative of how some state agencies were hindering investigations. In his interview in *Sedie Vuote* he tells of Gianni Guido who, having shared a cell with Ermanno Buzzi, who was convicted for his role in the attack in the first trial, wanted to be interrogated by judges working on the case. Guido had escaped incarceration in Italy and fled to Argentina where he had been recognized and arrested. After setting a date to interrogate him the judges received notice of a postponement of the meeting. Before this second appointment Guido evaded once again. The judges discovered that the request to move the interrogation was made by the foreign office on behalf of the Brescia judges, who had no knowledge of this request (2008, p. 130). Again we see members of the state acting against the interest of the investigation.

¹⁴ Original: ‘chi indigo nel 1974 sulla strage di brescia fu l’allora capitano Delfino. Nel 2008 il giudice unico delle indagini preliminari ha accolto la richiesta della procura di riaprire il processo. Sei sono le persone rinviate a giudizio: Neofascisti come Maggi e Zorzi, uominin legati ai servizi come Tramonte o infiltrate come Maifredi; Pino Rauti e l’ex Generale dei Carabinieri ...Delfino condusse le prime indagini sulla strage, 34 anni dopo lo ritroviamo non piu come indagatore ma come indagato’

Cento Bull & Cooke describe many victims as ‘accidental activists’, these are individuals whose activism was “born of the immediate experience of social injustice, rather than as a consequence of a pre-existing ideological belief” (2013, p. 166). Individuals like Silvia Giralucci, Manlio Milani and Benedetta Tobagi found themselves active in the search for truth and justice because they experienced a state unable to deliver either.

Victims expected trials to uncover truths, provide sentences proportionate to the crimes committed and most importantly they expected the state, in all its parts to be on their side. While a case can be made for the merits of light sentences as concessions in exchange for ending violence this section has outlined how the legitimate expectations of truth and of the state to act in the interest of attaining that truth have not been met in fact at times parts of the state worked actively to hinder this process.

Unwanted Effects of Victim Centered Initiatives

It should be clear at this point that the Italian state did not aid victims of political violence after attacks, victims lamented slow and superficial trials and investigation with little interest in truth recovery. The rights and recognition the victims attained were achieved through the activism of their associations. However in some cases, initiatives aimed at including the victim in judicial or commemorative acts by state and non-state actors can negatively affect victims, as “re-victimization can even arise in institutions that are developed to serve the interests of victims” (Huyse 2003, p. 61)

One element of judicial proceedings which was heavily criticized by many victims is outlined perfectly by Giovanni Ricci, son of Domenico Ricci a member of Aldo Moro’s security detail who was killed in his kidnapping, in *Sedie Vuote*:

“Last year [2007] a Digos inspector from Rome called me: “Mr. Ricci I am calling on behalf of the parole officer to verbalize your declaration for the release of Barbara Balzerani, I need a letter or fax from you in which you declare if you forgive or not...The law requires for her release a statement by those she has damaged...I must warn you however that your declaration is not binding as the parole officer will make the decision”...I sent a fax stating “no,

I don't forgive."...the choice of the justice system cannot be tied to the opinion of family members [of the victim]" (2008, p. 164)¹⁵.

Ricci here condemns an initiative which was intended to include the victims in the judicial process: in order to provide an early release from incarceration to those convicted for acts of political violence the parole officer is required to ask the opinion of those affected by the attack, though their opinion is non binding. Another victim of the same attack as Domenico Ricci, the daughter of Aldo Moro has made similar comments on the initiative:

"In the case of a judge who has to grant legal benefits to an ex-terrorist asks the family members of victims if they can forgive him. What does my forgiveness have to do with his judicial proceedings?...I don't think it's correct to unload this responsibility on the families of victims, making unhealed wounds bleed again." (Agnese Moro in *Sedie Vuote* 2008, p. 210)¹⁶.

The daughter of the most famous victim of the *Anni di Piombo* here goes further than Ricci, outlining a direct link between this initiative and revictimization. Her thoughts are echoed by the son of another illustrious victim. Mario Calabresi's father was a police officer, charged with investigating the attacks on Piazza Fontana in 1969. He was killed in 1972 By members of *Lotta Continua* as he was deemed responsible for the death of Giuseppe Pinelli, an anarchist who died in mysterious circumstances under police custody while being questioned for the bombing of Piazza Fontana. Luigi Calabresi's son Mario has also commented negatively on what he sees as a deflection of responsibility by authorities:

¹⁵ Original: L'anno scorso [2007] mi telefona un ispettore della Digos di Roma e mi dice: "Guardi signor Ricci, la chiamo da parte del giudice di sorveglianza di Roma con l'incarico di verbalizzare la sua dichiarazione per il rilascio di Barbara Balzerani, mi servirebbe una sua lettera o un suo fax in cui lei dichiara se perdona o meno... La legge prevede per la sua liberazione una dichiarazione delle vittime a cui ha recato danno...la devo però avvertire che il suo parere non è vincolante perche a decidere è il giudice di sorveglianza." Gli ho mandato un fax dicendo "no, non perdono" ...la scelta della giustizia non può essere vincolata al parere dei familiari.

¹⁶ Original: Nel caso in cui un giudice che deve concedere un beneficio di legge a un ex terrorista chiede ai familiari se sono disposti a perdonarlo. Che cosa c'entra il mio perdono con la sua vicenda giudiziaria?... Non penso sia corretto scaricare sui familiari delle vittime questa responsabilità, facendo sanguinare di nuovo ferite mai rimarginate

“At home we were always bothered when we were asked to confirm or deny an early release or a pardon, because we refute this medieval idea that the relatives of a victim decide the fate of those responsible...justice is the responsibility of the state, not of families” (Calabresi 2007, p. 106)¹⁷.

While Ricci outlined the uselessness of asking a victim of a non-binding opinion, Agnese Moro and Calabresi seem more troubled by the idea of involving victims in a matter that should be solely under the jurisdiction of the state. Sabina Rossa, whose father was killed by the *Brigate Rosse* also commented negatively on this initiative which “seems to be an invasion of penal law in such a delicate field that is the relationship between victim and perpetrator” (Rossa in *Sedie Vuote* 2008, p. 309). Another to echo Calabresi’s rejection of a medieval conception of justice is Giovanni Bachelet, whose father was also killed by members of the *Brigate Rosse*:

“That in the year 2000 the suffering of a man can be inspired by the prehistoric principle of an eye for an eye is truly repugnant. And in this sense, the involvement of the victim in the decision of parole or conclusion of incarceration seems like the residue of a caveman justice” (Bachelet in *Sedie Vuote* 2008, p. 248)¹⁸.

The victims above have lamented two traits in this policy: that involving the victims in this type of decision is barbaric and symptomatic of a vindictive understanding of justice; and secondly that the mere asking this of victims makes “unhealed wounds bleed again” (Moro in *Sedie Vuote* 2008, p. 210). In all the memoirs and press releases consulted the author could not find victims with a positive view of this practice.

Other initiatives by non-state actors have also had unwanted effects. Revictimization can also occur when “victims’ agony is used and/or abused for political means” (Huysse 2003, p. 61). This also has been lamented by some victims and can be classified as an unwanted effect of victim centered initiatives. The *Rogo di Primavalle*

¹⁷ Original: A casa abbiamo sempre provato fastidio quando ci veniva chiesto di dare o meno il via libera a una scarcerazione o a una grazia, perché rifiutiamo questa idea medievale che i parenti di una vittima decidano la sorte di chi è ritenuto responsabile...La giustizia compete allo stato non alle famiglie.

¹⁸ Original: che nel 2000 la sofferenza di un uomo possa ispirarsi al principio preistorico dell’occhio per occhio mi pare proprio ripugnante. E in questo senso il coinvolgimento della vittima nella decisione di semilibertà o la conclusione definitiva della pena mi sembra il residuo di una giustizia cavernicola.

was one of the most visibly disturbing acts of political violence of those years. Members of *Potere Operaio* burned the house of local *Movimento Sociale Italiano* (MSI) secretary Mario Mattei, in the attack his sons Virgilio and Stefano died in the fire. Their brother Giampaolo survived and in interview with Anna Cento Bull has recalled “the condition of total isolation the family found itself in after the attack, with sympathy shown only by the Neo-fascist party (albeit short lasting) and the repeated attempts to harness the memory of his two brothers for sectarian ends” (Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p. 182). This was blatant at the last commemoration ceremony when ex-mayor of Rome Gianni Alemanno, who was also a member of MSI arrived to lay a wreath in the name of the city of Rome and the Region of Lazio accompanied by Luigi Ciavardini, who has been guilty of executing the *Strage di Bologna*. Giampaolo Mattei abandoned the ceremony and declared himself “offended by what happened and to see that Rome and the region of Lazio laid the wreath not with the *Fratelli Mattei* victim association but with these characters” (Mattei in *La Repubblica* 2018)¹⁹. Mattei set up the association precisely to “avoid any political exploitation of his family’s tragedy” (Cento Bul & Cooke 2013, p. 184), a politicization which clearly still occurs. On the matter Mattei also stated:

“It is not possible that to remember two young people it becomes necessary to arm a whole neighborhood with jeeps, patrol wagons, helicopters and the rest... This led me to take certain steps so that these people would no longer turn up. On the one hand I am sorry because it is always an honor when Stefano and Virgilio are remembered, on the other hand I am pleased because I no longer see an armed neighborhood, stones being thrown, explosive devices, extremist political symbols of both left and right in an act of remembrance, as my family have never been extremist, hence the Celtic cross and the swastika do not belong to us” (Interview in Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p. 184).

Silvia Giralucci, whose father was also killed by left wing activists, also lamented that “her pain was being exploited” (in *Sedie Vuote* 2008, p. 101) and that she was “often

¹⁹ Original: offeso per quanto accaduto e per aver visto che roma capitale e la regione lazio hanno depresso la corona non con l'associazione fratelli mattei ma con questi 'personaggi.

bothered in seeing a group of people at the commemoration ceremonies saying: ‘Mazzola and Giraucchi: Present!’” (Sedie Vuote 2008, p. 102)²⁰

This section has outlined how even in the cases of initiatives aimed at including or commemorating victims have resulted in revictimization. Victims have felt this in two ways. Firstly, initiatives by the state, such as the request of a non-binding opinion on the release of those who had attacked them or their loved ones have been described as barbaric, symptomatic of an eye for an eye type of justice, and as a process that reopens unhealed wounds. Secondly, memorial services not necessarily organized by the state have been used for political purposes, an aspect that has been condemned particularly in relation to the politicization of remembrance ceremonies by the far right. The next section will outline feelings of social stigmatization and exclusion perceived by victims of political violence in Italy.

Social Stigmatization and Exclusion

Feelings of isolation, stigmatization and abandonment from the rest of society have been reported frequently by victims of political violence. These phenomena have manifested themselves in multiple ways which can be collected into two categories. Firstly, victims have spoken of feelings of abandonment and isolation which manifested themselves, among other ways, in the ignoring of their requests to be recognized as victims and to achieve truth and justice, as outlined above. Victims felt isolated by the state, as well as society at large. Secondly, many victims have lamented the greater attention given to ex perpetrators by the media and political class than to the victims. This section will analyze both these cases.

In some cases, the victims have been not only isolated but also stigmatized. Even in the case of the most illustrious victim, Aldo Moro, his daughter Agnese has reported reprimand by the leaders of *Democrazia Cristiana* (DC):

“The stances we took, the public appeal to the leaders of the DC, were undermined by the climate of the time, we were criminalized, they said they

²⁰ The calling of the names of victims followed by the word ‘present’ is a typical mode of commemoration of far right groups in Italy.

understood our pain but we needed to behave better.” (Moro in *Sedie Vuote* 2008, p. 217)²¹.

This kind of stigmatization has happened not only at the hands of the state but, particularly in the case of right wing victims, at the hands of members of the general public in occasion of commemoration ceremonies. Silvia Giralucci has outlined in an interview the connection between these acts and revictimization:

“Three years ago, in 2005, the night preceding the anniversary [of the attack] the center of Padova was graffitied with tens of writings such as ‘killing a fascist is not a crime’ ...it was like being hit a second time” (Giralucci in *Sedie Vuote* 2008, p. 92)²².

Similar writings represented themselves at anniversaries in 2014, when on the street of the attack the writing “No remembrance for the fascists of yesterday, no peace for those of today” (2014)²³ appeared as well as in 2015 when the commemorative plaque was graffitied with the hammer and sickle (2015).

The features most commonly outlined by victims in the aftermath of an attack are silence and isolation felt in relation to the state, and society at large. Lenci, who survived the attack on him, and the son of Aldo Moro’s bodyguard Giovanni Ricci give us a timeline of this progressive isolation:

“National solidarity is a postal kind of solidarity, you receive many telegrams, then silence and isolation” (Lenci in AVITER 1986, p. 50)²⁴

“The first months you feel everybody close by, because there is an intention to comprehend and understand, then a constant distancing begins until that perfect oblivion is reached, as if the state were telling you: ‘try not to have too much contact with me’ (Ricci in *Sedie Vuote* 2008, p. 152)²⁵.

²¹ Original: Le nostre prese di posizione, l’appello pubblico ai dirigenti della DC, sono state vanificate dal clima di allora, ci hanno criminalizzato dicendo che capivano il nostro dolore ma che dovevamo comportarci meglio.

²² Original: Tre anni fa, nel 2005, la notte precedente l’anniversario il centro di Padova è stato imbrattato con decine di scritte come “uccidere un fascista non è reato”... è come se fossi stata colpita una seconda volta.

²³ Original: Nessun ricordo per i fascisti di ieri, nessuna pace per quelli di oggi.

²⁴ Original: la solidarietà nazionale è una solidarietà postale; si ricevono molti telegrammi e basta, dopo di questo c’è silenzio e isolamento.

²⁵ Original: I primi mesi senti tutti vicino, perché c’è la volontà di comprenderti e di capire, poi inizia una sorta di allontanamento costante fino a quando non si raggiunge quell’oblio che è perfetto: quasi come se lo stato dicesse: “cerca di non avere troppi contatti con me”.

Feelings of isolation are expressed by victims regardless of the type of the attack, even in the case of the attack on Bologna train station Lia Serravalli commented that “in all these years the state has been completely absent, I lived my tragedy in total solitude” (in Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p. 170). Lenci has elaborated on why silence has surrounded the victims, according to him this stemmed from a “desire on the part of ordinary people and political institutions to achieve some form of closure concerning terrorism, which contributed to a deepening sense of isolation and marginalization” (In Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p.163). Giorgio Bazzega, son of a police officer killed by left wing combatants, has echoed this claim:

“Me and my mother were in a state of total abandonment, apart from my father’s ex colleagues, not police in general, his colleagues. We have been kept in the shadows because we were the proof of the low points reached by the state from the right and from the left.” (in Il Libro dell’ Incontro 2015, p. 56)²⁶

Lenci and Bazzega express the opinion that their isolation was due to society’s will to forget these years of violence and the role of the state within them.

Another way in which isolation materialized itself for victims can be found in their perception that more attention was given to ex perpetrators than to them. Many victims have held that from the political class, to the media, to the general public there has been more interest in the opinions and reintegration into society of former combatants than of those they have harmed. This in turn has contributed to their isolation and silence.

Antonio Iosa, who was kneecapped by members of the BR has spoken of “news organizations and parts of the state that privilege the ‘protagonism of terrorists’” (AVITER 1986, p. 68)²⁷. In his speech at the AVITER conference he also compared the different attitudes of the “*supergarantisti* who privilege only the rights of inmates

²⁶ Original: Io e mia mamma eravamo nell’abbandono totale, tranne che per gli ex colleghi, non per la polizia in generale , per gli ex colleghi di mio papa. Noi siamo stati tenuti in un cono d’ombra perche eravamo la prova delle bassezze da destra e da sinistra che sono state fatte da parte dello stato.

²⁷ Original: Organi d’informazione e dello stato che privilegiano il “protagonismo dei terroristi”

and not those of victims who suffer morally and physically” (*ibid*, p. 69)²⁸. He similarly compares “terrorists who roam Italy to give speeches and continue to pontificate on everything and victims who at the contrary are consigned to silence and never made the news” (*ibid*, p. 70)²⁹. Giovanni Ricci also made this comparison pointing also to a causal relation between the silence of victims and their isolation:

“There have been difficult moments in which we had the impression that there was more attention towards those who chose to kill than towards the victims, maybe also for this reason for many years we remained silent” (in *Sedie Vuote* 2008, p. 162)³⁰.

The website of the *Associazione Memoria* outlines the feelings of many victims on the matter:

“Humanitarian associations, cooperatives, Members of Parliament, journalists, church representatives, intellectuals and artists: all concerned to help those who on the basis of their ideals and convictions decided that it was possible to kill with impunity. Not one of them dreamt of coming to see how we lived, to assess the moral and material needs of those who had been brutally wounded in the flesh by the terrorists or brutally deprived of affective support... This above all made us feel even more victimized. Our individual perception of being victims was reflected in the perception coming to us from the outside: we were to be hidden from view, not to be listened to, and even, very often, humiliated” (in Cento Bull & Cooke 2013, p. 157).

While lenient sentences and reintegration programs have worked in Italy and elsewhere to end campaigns of political violence, this ‘soft approach’ has led to a perception among victims that more care and attention was placed towards those who committed acts of violence than towards those who suffered them. Not only at the

²⁸ The word *Garantista* cannot be translated, it indicates a supporter of the rights of the accused. Original: supergarantisti che privilegiano solo i diritti dei carcerati e non quelli delle vittime che soffrono moralmente e fisicamente.

²⁹ Original: terroristi che continuano a pontificare su tutto... scorazzavano per l'Italia o per l'Europa a tenere conferenze e comizi. Le vittime che sono rimaste storpie, sciancate, invalide... non hanno mai fatto notizia... sono relegate nel silenzio.

³⁰ Original: ci sono stati momenti difficili in cui abbiamo avuto l'impressione che ci fosse maggiore attenzione verso coloro che avevano scelto di uccidere piuttosto che le vittime, forse anche per questo per tanti anni siamo stati in silenzio

hands of the state, but also due to a larger interest in the media and general public listening to and reading those who took part in the armed struggle than those who suffered because of it. Furthermore many victims have reported a sense of isolation after the attack, both from society at large and from a state keen to sweep acts of violence, committed by state as well as non-state actors, under the rug.

Analysis

The previous sections have outlined how victims of political violence during the *Anni di Piombo* have felt abandoned, ignored and mistreated both by the state and its representatives and by society at large, at times they felt their grief was being exploited for political gains while their requests for truth and justice were being ignored. However, the paper has heavily relied on their memoirs and interviews, primary sources that are intrinsically biased, some questions remain unanswered: does the perception of these victims of having suffered every one of Huyse's categories of revictimization match reality? And what does this imply for the alleged success of Italian counter-terrorism?

The first of Huyse's categories, denial of the status of victim is clearly present in Italy, the *Anni di Piombo* ended in the late eighties and although, as evidenced in the section on this topic victims had demanded recognition of their status since then the first law that recognized both direct casualties and their families as victims was only passed in 2004, while a day of commemoration for all victims was only instituted in 2007. It is unquestionable that while victims and their families have benefits and an official status today were denied recognition and the consequent rights we for decades; therefore their perception of suffering Huyse's first category of revictimization matches reality.

The case of unfulfilled expectations, the second category of revictimization, is a little more complicated; as it must be assessed what expectations that the victims had are legitimate to be expected in that situation. However even in this case, some of the grievances are clearly legitimate. Firstly the expectation to attain legal status and annexed compensation is legitimate and this should have been done sooner as outlined above. Secondly, it also seems clear that the victims, or any citizen for that matter can legitimately expect representatives of the state to actively interfere with judicial proceedings and mislead investigators, something that particularly victims of bombings have commented on and which has been proven in recent trials. Thirdly,

many have lamented the light sentences given to perpetrators of political violence. It is harder to claim here that these are legitimate expectations, both because victims might be inclined to prefer harsher sentences, and because, as evidenced in the literature review these light sentences were instrumental in ending violence in Italy. It is clear that certain legitimate expectations that victims had over rights and the search for truth within the justice system were not met.

There is also evidence for Huysse's third category of revictimization: the unwanted effects of victim centered initiatives. Victims, as well as others have criticized the policy, outlined in the section on this subject, to ask victims for a non-binding statement on the early release of perpetrators. As has been evidenced above the victims have called this policy medieval, barbaric, prehistoric, and a deflection of responsibility by the state. It seems that this policy, while well intended only resulted in making "unhealed wounds bleed again" (A. Moro in *Sedie Vuote* 2008, p. 210). The section on this topic also outlined how victims felt revictimized by the politicization of their grief, usually in the form of a politicization of events meant to commemorate the victims. While this surely constitutes a form of revictimization it cannot be attributed to the state, therefore does not help us reassess the efficacy of Italy's counter-terrorism policies.

The last category of revictimization, concerning social isolation and exclusion, presents similar issues. While not recognizing the status of victims, as well as ignoring the requests for such status as well as those for truth and justice, as outlined above, surely contributed to feelings of isolation, other factors reported by victims can hardly be blamed on the Italian state. Many lamented the greater attention given to perpetrators than victims, particularly in the media, as well as the possibility perpetrators have had to write memoirs and give speeches; however these affairs cannot and should not be regulated by a democratic state. Similarly, while it is understandable that victims feel lenient sentences and laws on dissociation meant that certain individuals did not serve a sentence proportional to their crimes it is undeniable that these laws were instrumental in ending the violence and a successful part of Italy's counter-terrorism efforts. It seems that while this category of revictimization is also present little of it can be attributed to the state.

This chapter has outlined how in every one of Huysse's categories revictimization is both perceived by the victims and in fact present in the Italian case, but what does this

mean for the main inquiry of this paper? Can Italian counter-terrorism during and in the aftermath of the *Anni di Piombo* still be considered successful?

If we take the four pillars of the EU's counter-terrorism policy, prevent, protect pursue and respond we can attempt a novel assessment based on the findings that have emerged in this paper. As many victims have remarked, and has been ascertained by court proceedings, the Italian state failed to pursue and investigate perpetrators of political violence. Specifically the role of some within parts of the state in the bombing campaigns remains unclear. These truths need to be ascertained for real pacification to occur and are owed both to the victims and Italian citizens at large. It has also been amply demonstrated that the Italian state failed to respond to the needs of victims. Victims were denied legal status for decades, their requests for truth and justice in many cases ignored and even policies aimed at aiding them, such as requesting a non-binding opinion on the release of perpetrators, were seen as forms of revictimization by many. Furthermore no support was given to victims after attacks which lead to feelings of isolation and exclusion.

Conclusion

December 12th 2019 marked the 50th anniversary of the '*Strage di Piazza Fontana*', considered by most to be mark the beginning of the *Anni di Piombo*. The president of the Republic Sergio Mattarella remarked at the memorial ceremony that after half a century the Italian State is still indebted to the victims of these years and to their relatives; a debt of truth and justice (Comune di Milano 2019).

This paper has examined the *Anni di Piombo* in Italy from a novel perspective: memoirs written in recent years by victims and statements made by their associations have been used as sources to assess how political violence ended in Italy and how the Italian state responded to it. There is a consensus in the literature that Italy has been successful in bringing an end to politically motivated acts of violence in those years through policies aimed at incentivizing repentance and disengagement through lenient sentences. The essay has attempted to problematize this claim by incorporating recent literature which expands what it means for a counter-terrorism campaign to be successful. Literature from victimology as well as conflict and reconciliation studies were also included to answer the question: Were Italy's counter-terrorism policies really successful?

The paper has outlined how a successful counter-terrorism strategy must include the protection of victims and their rights and attempted to assess if these individuals and their rights were protected through the concept of revictimization. The thesis has attempted to assess Italy's counter-terrorism policies by asking if and how revictimization is present in the Italian case.

The memoirs and statements by victims and their associations have been analyzed through the four ways in which Revictimization can present itself according to Huyse: denial of the status of victim, unfulfilled expectations in dealing with official agencies, unwanted effects of victim-centered initiatives, and social stigmatization and exclusion (Huyse 2003, p. 61).

In this thesis it has been evidenced that in Italy the “solidarity, assistance and compensation” which constitute “an integral part of the response to terrorism” (Council of EU 2005b, p.15) were not afforded to victims until 1990 and to their relatives until 2004. Victims had to form associations and demand these rights through them for years before attaining them. Secondly, the paper outlined how victims felt, and still feel that their expectations had and have not been met by official agencies. Mainly the victims and their associations have outlined how their expectations to attain truth and justice from investigations and judicial proceedings have not been met. In some cases they have reported a lack of willingness to prosecute the guilty and seek truth in particular in the case of bombings, in others, members of the state were found to be involved in the attacks, or acting to hinder the investigations, as in the case of Carabinieri Captain Delfino outlined by the president of the association for the attack in Brescia, Manlio Milani.

Thirdly, the paper has outlined how at times, initiatives promoted by state and non-state actors have also resulted in revictimization. Multiple victims have outlined feeling revictimized by the state's policy of requesting a non-binding opinion from victims on the release of those who harmed them. It has been shown that victims perceive this policy as barbaric and a way of unloading “this responsibility on the families of victims, making unhealed wounds bleed again.” (Agnese Moro in *Sedie Vuote* 2008, p. 210). Other victims, particularly those on the right of the political spectrum have also lamented the politicization of commemoration ceremonies. They have felt revictimized by the use of occasions of remembrance for political gains.

Lastly it has been shown how victims have outlined feelings of isolation, social stigmatization and exclusion in two ways: they have reported isolation and social

stigmatization at the hands of a state that ignored their requests for rights, truth and justice and due to a civil society eager to forget its bloody past. Furthermore they have lamented a greater attention given to perpetrators than victims, by the state, the media and society at large.

The paper has shown how Italian victims have reported experiencing every category of revictimization. While the Italian state attained pacification it did so at the cost of truth and justice. Particularly in the case of victims of bombing campaigns requests for truth and justice continue as very few of those involved have been brought to court. It can therefore be concluded that while the Italian state was successful at ending violence it has failed victims as well as society at large in shedding light on the involvement of parts of the state in hindering investigations as well as connivances between parts of the armed forces and far right groups. The Italian state is directly responsible for many forms of revictimization, as well as failing to protect its citizens and pursue perpetrators. If victim protection is to be considered a part of a successful counter-terrorism campaign as outlined in the literature review then in this the Italian state seems to have failed.

Of the issues outlined by victims some are more easily dealt with than others. While many have lamented the ‘higher degree of attention given to those who chose to kill’ (Ricci in *Sedie Vuote* 2008, p. 162) the solution cannot be for a state to dictate who can and cannot be interviewed, or write a memoir. However other aspects of revictimization seem more tractable. Counseling services and general psychological support for victims could help reduce the sense of isolation reported by victims. Those who participated in the meetings transcribed in ‘Il libro dell’incontro’(2015) have also exalted the effects of meetings between victims and offenders, mediated by a third party. Most importantly, however, there needs to be a process of truth telling and truth recovery. At least 19 politically motivated murders of those years remain unresolved (Il Giornale 2010), multiple trials on the bombing of the Italicus train in 1974 have still found no guilty parties, while investigations into bombings of Brescia and Bologna have only resulted in guilty verdicts for some of those who executed the attacks. In trials concerning these attacks the state has often blocked investigations invoking ‘*segreto di stato*’ (state secret). Both victims, and citizens in general have a right to know the truth about the attacks of those years and the involvement of parts of the state in enacting or concealing them. It is also important to start this process as soon as possible, as Sabina Rossa outlined: “It is necessary to open a public debate to

arrive at the missing truths we don't have. Or at least to try to do so, before all witnesses to the facts have deceased. These moments are precious and important" (in Sedie Vuote 2008, p. 312)³¹. It is essential that the Italian state as well as academics embark on a process of truth-seeking, while those who have witnessed these years are still alive. Only through such a process can Italy address the issues of revictimization presented above.

While this subject has been studied extensively and internationally, and the approach of testing a theory against a single case study is not particularly new, the novelty and points of interest for this paper lie in its sources as well as in the adopted framework. As outlined previously, the vast majority of memoirs of victims of the *Anni di Piombo* has only been released in the last decade, and received very little attention. Along with Cento Bull & Cooke's book (2013) this thesis appears to be one of the very few pieces of work analyzing victims of political violence in Italy, their memoirs, and their associations. Furthermore, the use of revictimization, a framework borrowed from criminology, deployed in light of new understandings within the field of terrorism studies of what constitutes a successful counter-terrorism campaign, is also a novel feature of this essay, though the idea had been explored in much less depth by Cento Bull & Cooke (2013). This also opens avenues for further research on political violence and state responses to it. For example, comparative studies of victim memoirs from different countries, such as Italy and the Republic of Ireland or Spain, might shed light on which policies exacerbated or mitigated feelings of revictimization, similarly these memoirs might prove to be good source material to assess the efficacy of victim-offender mediation, as one of the main sources used, *Il Libro dell'Incontro*, is an example of this, in the context of social reconciliation, a process which has been studied mostly in the context of post-Apartheid South-Africa.

³¹ Original: Occorrerebbe davvero aprire un dibattito pubblico per arrivare a quelle verità mancanti che non abbiamo. O per lo meno provarci, prima che siano morti tutti i testimoni. Quindi credo che questi momenti siano preziosi e importanti.

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