DeRadicalisation
in Europe and Beyond: Detect, Resolve, Reintegrate

Trends of Radicalisation

Italy/3.2 Research Report

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List of Abbreviations

BAS – Befreiungsausschuss Südtirol

CPI – CasaPound Italia

NBR – Nuove Brigate Rosse

SVP – Südtiroler Volkspartei

About the Project

D.Rad is a comparative study of radicalisation and polarisation in Europe and beyond. It aims to identify the actors, networks, and wider social contexts driving radicalisation, particularly among young people in urban and peri-urban areas. D.Rad conceptualises this through the I-GAP spectrum (injustice-grievance-alienation-polarisation) with the goal of moving towards measurable evaluations of de-radicalisation programmes. Our intention is to identify the building blocks of radicalisation, which include a sense of being victimised; a sense of being thwarted or lacking agency in established legal and political structures; and coming under the influence of "us vs them" identity formulations.

D.Rad benefits from an exceptional breadth of backgrounds. The project spans national contexts including the UK, France, Italy, Germany, Poland, Hungary, Finland, Slovenia, Bosnia, Serbia, Kosovo, Israel, Iraq, Jordan, Turkey, Georgia, Austria, and several minority nationalisms. It bridges academic disciplines ranging from political science and cultural studies to social psychology and artificial intelligence. Dissemination methods include D.Rad labs, D.Rad hubs, policy papers, academic workshops, visual outputs and digital galleries. As such, D.Rad establishes a rigorous foundation to test practical interventions geared to prevention, inclusion and de-radicalisation.

With the possibility of capturing the trajectories of seventeen nations and several minority nations, the project will provide a unique evidence base for the comparative analysis of law and policy as nation states adapt to new security challenges. The process of mapping these varieties and their link to national contexts will be crucial in uncovering strengths and weaknesses in existing interventions. Furthermore, D.Rad accounts for the problem that processes of radicalisation often occur in circumstances that escape the control and scrutiny of traditional national frameworks of justice. The participation of AI professionals in modelling, analysing and devising solutions to online radicalisation will be central to the project's aims.

Executive Summary

This report presents and analyses four hotspots of radicalisation in Italy in order to shed light on the micro, meso and macro factors that enable radicalisation and extreme violence to take place, and to examine the motivations of individual perpetrators. To ensure a comprehensive overview on the Italian case, we have chosen to focus on a set of hotspots that exemplify radicalisation into the four main radical milieus in Italy (right-wing; left-wing; Islamist and ethno-nationalist/separatist). The four hotspots cover a broad period of time, with the historical case study of the 1961 Feuernacht/Notte dei fuochi (Night of Fire) in South Tyrol (ethno-separatist hotspot); the 2002 assassination of government consultant Professor Marco Biagi (left-wing hotspot); the 2011 xenophobic rampage by Gianluca Casseri (right-wing hotspot) and the so-called 'Inzago cluster', a network of radicalisation surrounding Maria Giulia Sergio uncovered in 2014 (Islamist hotspot). They also capture the diverging contexts and motivations of individuals who may engage in different types of violence.

Analysis of Gianluca Casseri's xenophobic rampage in 2011 sheds light on the factors motivating and enabling violent extremist attacks by individuals only partially embedded in the right-wing milieu. In Casseri's case, it emerges that mental health conditions and social isolation, combined with longstanding xenophobic and racist convictions, were crucial to informing the vague grievances which fed Casseri's sense of injustice and ultimately motivated his violent act.

Instead, the killing of the consultant to the labour ministry Professor Marco Biagi by the NBR in 2002 maps a different path to violent radicalisation. In this case, Nadia Desdemona Lioce's writings and declarations suggest that the injustices and grievances derived from extreme left-wing ideological convictions were crucial in determining the alienation of the perpetrator (through her underground life) and of the NBR (as the self-proclaimed avantgarde of the proletarian revolution), as well as in identifying the victim as a symbol of the bourgeois state.

The analysis of the Sergio-Kobuzi case exemplifies how the conundrum of experiences of injustices and grievances, family ties and foreign networks facilitates a sudden conversion to a radical, extremist, and violent Jihadi ideology. Unlike in other contexts, in the case of Maria Giulia 'Fatima' Sergio and her family, mosque communities and group dynamics did not play a significant role. Rather, a mixture of serious grievances, some of a socio-political, religious and economic nature, coupled with perceived experiences of systemic injustices and discriminated related to intolerance and high levels of Islamophobia in politics and society and skilful online indoctrination, were factors triggering the radicalisation process of a whole family.

Finally, the analysis of the 1961 Feuernacht has highlights how the transnational dynamics of border regions can amplify grievances experienced at individual level in

a context of social and linguistic divisions. Such polarised environment fosters the development of parallel and conflicting narratives that persist long after violence has been defused. The fact that Sepp Kerschbaumer had always despised the use of violence towards people has somewhat legitimised the use of ‘his’ symbolic violence. To this day, the debate surrounding the role of the armed struggle in the path towards territorial autonomy is still very active and very far from being settled.

Introduction

This report presents four hotspots that shed light on different pathways to violent radicalisation in Italy, with a view to underscoring the micro, meso and macro factors that enabled radicalisation and extreme violence to take place, and to the motivations of individual perpetrators. To ensure a comprehensive overview on the Italian case, we have chosen to focus on hotspots that exemplify radicalisation into the four main radical milieus in Italy: right-wing; left-wing; Jihadist and ethno-nationalist/separatist. Focus on such a broad breadth of orientations enables us to map comprehensively the most radical ideological positions on the Italian scene and to identify the multiple fault lines of polarisation.

Our hotspots also cover a broad period, with the historical case study of the 1961 Feuernacht/Notte dei fuochi (Night of Fire) in South Tyrol (ethno-separatist hotspot); the 2002 assassination of government consultant Professor Marco Biagi (left-wing hotspot); the 2011 xenophobic rampage by Gianluca Casseri (right-wing hotspot) and the so-called 'Inzago cluster', a network of radicalisation surrounding Maria Giulia Sergio uncovered in 2014 (Islamist hotspot). This choice enables us to consider radicalisation as a longitudinal phenomenon in the context of half a century of Italian history.

Finally, our hotspots encompass both events planned and executed by organised extremist groups (left-wing hotspot and ethno-separatist hotspot) and actions carried out by sympathisers or individuals only loosely affiliated with existing organisations (right-wing hotspot and Islamist hotspot). As such, the report enables us to consider diverging pathways to radicalisation and violence, as well as the diverging motivations of individuals who may engage in different types of violence.

The report is organised in six sections. The first and second sections provide an overview of the chosen hotspots and information on the research methods. The third section presents the micro, meso and macro factors which determined each of the four hotspots. The fourth section presents the facilitating factors that enabled the (violent) actions to occur. The fifth section briefly summarises the most relevant motivations of the four perpetrators as conceptualised through the IGAP spectrum (injustice, grievance, alienation, polarisation). Further information on the motivational factors for our four perpetrators (Gialuca Casseri; Nadia Desdemona Lioce; Maria Giulia Sergio; and Sepp Kerschbaumer) is available through the online IGAP Coding. First, we will briefly introduce the four hotspots and their context.

We selected Gianluca Casseri's xenophobic rampage in Florence as the right-wing hotspot. In December 2011, Casseri shot two groups of Senegalese street vendors before taking his own life. His action exemplifies the contemporary growth of xenophobic and racist violence in Italy. As the report will show, the hotspot needs to be framed in the context of three systemic factors: Italians' public perceptions of immigration as a major threat and challenge for the state and his citizens; a securitisation of the media and politicians' discourses on migration, and their over exposure on the mainstream channels; and the availability of a highly polarised social media landscape, which acts as an 'echo chamber' for extremist perspectives (Castelli Gattinara, O' Connor & Lindekilde, 2018; Memoli, 2019).

When turning to the left-wing hotspot, we selected the assassination of Professor Marco Biagi by the Brigate Rosse – Partito Comunista Combattente (Nuove Brigate Rosse – New Red

Brigades, NBR), that took place in Bologna in 2002. This hotspot represents an attempt to gain increasing visibility and credibility by a radicalising actor in the context of Italy's highly contested socio-economic reforms of the early 2000s, which promoted economic liberalisation and increased flexibility in the Italian labour market.

Fortunately, Italy did not yet suffer any major jihadist attacks. However, as exemplified by the case of Maria Giulia Sergio, the rise of ISIS and the domestic surge of the far right and their anti-Muslim, anti-immigration rhetoric jeopardises societal cohesion and creates a fertile ground for individuals who experience marginalisation and discrimination to be open to jihadist propaganda. A growth of loose network sympathisers relying on family and friends' relationships as well as online-indoctrination facilitates radicalisation as exemplified by Maria Giulia Sergio, a convert, who eventually converted and recruited her whole Catholic born family to the ideology of the Islamic State (Boncio, 2020). Like Sergio, a growing number of radicalised holds Italian citizenship which challenges the counter-terrorism strategy of the country that relies to large extend on the deportation of foreign suspects.

With regard to ethno-nationalism/separatist extremism in Italy, the historical dimension acquires an important weight, as exemplified by the South Tyrolean case. In this Alpine region between Italy and Austria inhabited by German and Ladin-speaking populations, unresolved grievances stemmed from boundary changes, policies of forced assimilation, international disputes, developed into a context of polarisation, where "us vs them" narratives reinforced by systemic divisions escalated into a conflict between organised separatist groups and Italian institutions in the late 1950s and 1960s with few reverberations until the end of the 1980s. The violent actions targeted Italian institutions, monuments, infrastructures and police forces, and were perpetrated in most part by the separatist organisations of BAS (Befreiungsausschuss Südtirol – South Tyrolean Liberation Committee) and Ein Tirol. Although separatist violence has long been defused and does not constitute a foreseeable threat in the medium- to long-term, the events of those years have still a strong polarising effect on South Tyrolean society and a divisive issue in the relation between this autonomous province and the Italian state.

Overview of the chosen hotspots

This country report aims to identify and analyse broader trends of radicalisation through the analysis of exemplary hotspots. For the purpose of this report, we selected four hotspots of radicalisation in Italy, defined as (1) *premeditated* and (2) potentially *scalable acts* of (3) *extremist violence* within (4) *a larger series or pattern of similar acts* that are committed by radicalised individuals (5) clearly *linked to or influenced by* a radicalised group, network or organisation. The report will consider them in turn to shed light on a variety of different forms of radicalisation in contemporary Italy.

Right-wing hotspot

On 13th of December 2011, 50-year-old accountant Gianluca Casseri drove to a market in Florence and shot a group of Senegalese street vendors before driving to a second market and shooting another group of African street vendors. Chased by the police, Casseri killed himself. His rampage resulted in two dead (40-year-old Samb Modou and 54-year-old Diop Mor) and three wounded (The Guardian, 2011; BBC, 2011; Cammelli, 2017; Castelli Gattinara,

O'Connor & Lindekilde, 2018.). Initially appearing as a lone-wolf act, subsequent investigations demonstrated that Casseri was a sympathiser of the right-wing movement Casa Pound Italia (CPI), and this partial embeddedness provided him with crucial validation for his beliefs and feelings (La Repubblica, 2011a). As such, Casseri's xenophobic rampage exemplifies a growing trend of violent hate crimes, which have doubled between 2015 and 2019 (OSCE, 2020).

Left-wing hotspot

In the evening of the 19th of March 2002, Professor Marco Biagi was shot and killed in front of his home in Bologna. Biagi was a consultant to the Labour Ministry and one of the authors of a recent White Paper on labour market reform (Eurofound, 2002). The assassination was claimed by the Brigate Rosse-Partito Comunista Combattente (also known as the Nuove Brigate Rosse - New Red Brigades, NBR), as part of their strategy to 'attack and dismember the anti-proletarian and counter-revolutionary project of economic and trade union reform' (La Repubblica, 2002a). This act followed a pattern of assassination of prominent labour experts, including the killing of Massimo D'Antona three years before (Eurofound, 2002), and the same perpetrators (including the NBR leader Nadia Desdemona Lioce) were found responsible for planning and executing the two attacks (Corriere Della Sera, 2003). This hotspot is useful in shedding light on the motivations and modus operandi of left-wing radical organisations and individuals in Italy, where the left-wing milieu still accounts for the majority of terrorist attacks (Europol 2019)

Jihadist hotspot

Italy did not yet suffer jihadist attacks with fatal casualties, but several Italian nationals, citizens with migration background and converts engaged in militant activities (Gaudino, 2018). The most prominent story in this regard concerns the 'Inzago cluster' surrounding Maria Giulia Sergio, an Italian convert, who radicalised online and left with her Albanian husband for Syria to join ISIS in 2014, where she received training on firearms and expressed her desire to die as a martyr (Marone, 2017). Sergio managed to convert and recruit her whole family which was arrested and convicted to lengthy prison stays in 2015, when trying to reach the caliphate. In 2019, a court denied an early prison release of Sergio's sister based on her persistent indoctrination and lack of collaboration (Corriere della Sera, 2019). The example of the Inzago Cluster provides insights into Italian hotspots in which the web, social media platforms and prisons represent fertile ground for radicalisation (Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, 2018, p. 39).

Separatist hotspot

With regard to separatism in South Tyrol, the following analysis deals with the most significant – though not bloodiest – action perpetrated by South Tyrolean separatists: the 1961 *Feuernacht/Notte dei fuochi* (Night of Fire). On the night of June 12, 1961, the BAS, led by Sepp Kerschbaumer, blew up 37 electricity pylons with the aim of cutting off the power supply of the industrial zone of Bolzano (capital city of South Tyrol) and, above all, to publicise the South Tyrolean struggle for independence. Such event has been often labelled as a turning point in the history of the region because of its catalyst effect for the autonomy process but

also for the escalation of violence. Indeed, although there had been some minor events prior to the establishment of the BAS in 1956, the Feuernacht was a breaking point between an 'idealistic' phase, in which, according to Kerschbaumer, demonstrative actions had to be directed only against symbols and not against people, and a more violent and 'radicalised' phase in which South Tyrolean separatists started to develop linkages with Austrian and German neo-Nazi groups (Commissione Parlamentare d'inchiesta sul terrorismo e sulle cause della mancata individuazione dei responsabili delle stragi, 1992; Romeo, 2003). Fortunately, the violent conflict has been now defused and South Tyrol is widely considered a successful laboratory of local autonomy and power-sharing. However, the *Feuernacht* and its aftermath are still echoing in the socio-political debate of the region.

Method and reasons for choice

The analysis in this report progresses in four stages. First, we highlight the relevance of the chosen hotspots in the Italian context. Second, through secondary research, we map the radicalising actors and drivers that are most intimately linked to the four hotspots. Third, we compile a list of the factors enabling or facilitating these four events. Finally, through in-depth research we identify the motivational causes for the perpetrators of the four violent actions examined (Gialuca Casseri; Nadia Desdemona Lioce; Maria Giulia Sergio; and Sepp Kerschbaumer) and place them on the I-GAP spectrum through a process of qualitative coding. This enables us to formulate the analysis summarised in this report.

Our choice of hotspots aims to shed light on the broadest possible spectrum of radicalisation phenomena in the Italian context and, through the diversity of our four events and of their perpetrators, to capture the variety of radicalisation trends in the country. These hotspots are central to the history of four types of radicalisation in Italy: right-wing; left-wing; Islamist and ethno-separatist.

Right-wing hotspot

The actions of Gianluca Casseri who, in a racially-motivated attack, shot and killed two Senegalese market traders in Florence in December 2011, wounding another three street vendors (Castelli Gattinara, O'Connor & Lindekilde, 2018), exemplifies the exponential growth of racially- and xenophobically motivated violent crimes in the last decades in Italy (Italian Coalition for Civil Liberties and Rights, 2018; OSCE, 2020). Casseri's action is emblematic of an emerging trend of 'lone wolf' attacks by individuals partially embedded in Italy's extreme right-wing organisations (including Casa Pound Italia) and inspired by Italy's right-wing milieu (Castelli Gattinara, O'Connor & Lindekilde, 2018). As such, it provides powerful insights to interpret subsequent violent actions (including the 2018 Macerata shooting) and identify individuals at risk of radicalisation.

Left-wing hotspot

The killing of the consultant to the labour ministry Professor Marco Biagi by the NBR in 2002 exemplifies in three respects extreme left-wing political violence in Italy (CNN.com, 2002). First, it reflects the extreme left's opposition to reforms of the labour market, in line with their aim to 'identify and target the political, economic or military staff of the project of State

restructuring and its expressions' (Maroni, 2020). Second, the attack was the fruit of meticulous planning by the NBR, shedding light on their organisational structure and modus operandi. Finally, the assassination exemplifies the failure of the Italian state to protect its consultants, as Biagi's bodyguard was revoked a few months previously (La Repubblica, 2015). The attack was planned and executed by a team of six NBR members: Nadia Desdemona Lioce, Diana Blefari Melazzi, Cinzia Banelli, Roberto Morandi, Simone Boccaccini and Mario Galesi (Mappedimemoria.it, 2017). In this report, we focus on the figure of Lioce because of her prominence in the NBR's leadership but also of her role in identifying the victim, planning the attack and executing it (Corriere della Sera, 2003). In contrast to the right-wing hotspot, this event illustrates the dynamics of violent radicalisation and action through a highly hierarchical terrorist organisation.

Jihadist hotspot

The 'Inzago Cluster' surrounding Maria Giulia Fatima Sergio is emblematic of Italy's fluent and unstructured Jihadist landscape in which recent radicalisation largely operates outside established mosques. The case exemplifies its reliance on the web and social media platforms as a main operational hub encouraging radicalisation processes, contact between members and offering 'citizenship' of a virtual Caliphate (Vidino, 2014; Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, 2019). A growth of loose network sympathisers relying on family and friends' relationships facilitates radicalisation as shown by Maria Giulia, a convert, who eventually converted and recruited her whole Catholic born family (Boncio, 2020). Like Sergio, a growing number of radicalised holds Italian citizenship which challenges the counter-terrorism strategy of the country that relies to large extend on the deportation of foreign suspects. Thus, as exemplified by Sergio's sister, since 9/11 Italian prisons provide fertile ground for radicalisation and terrorist activities not least due to unsuitable preventive measures as well as a lack of counter-radicalisation measures (Cinelli, 2018).

Separatist hotspot

The analysis of the 1961 Feuernacht highlights the connection between past events and traditions with current ethnic, social and political divides. As mentioned above, this event has a cultural and socio-political weight that transcends its relative restricted historical setting and contributes to shape the South Tyrolean 'separatist symbolism'. In fact, Kerschbaumer and the BAS carefully chose the date in which to organise and carry out their plan. Alongside with organisational reasons – as later analysed, the Feuernacht was both a religious and an ethno-political event celebrated since 1796, when South Tyrol was on the verge of being invaded by the Napoleonic troops: concerned about the imminent danger, the deeply religious population decided to pray and entrust themselves to the 'Sacred Heart of Jesus'. Each year the local population commemorates such vow by lighting fires on mountainsides that can be seen at distance from the valleys and thus the largest cities, Since the 1961 attack by the BAS, however, the night of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is often also exploited by separatist movements, which use the fires to compose huge slogans praising the reunification of the historical Tyrol (Il Dolomiti, 2020). In fact, the separatist symbolism connected with the Feuernacht has also transcended the specific cultural-religious event since 'fire slogans' have been used also on other occasions to protest against the Italian authorities (Alto Adige, 2020).

Furthermore, almost each year Sepp Kerschbaumer and the Feuernacht are commemorated in different events by separatist associations such as the Südtiroler Schützenbund and the Südtiroler Heimatbund (UnserTirol.com, 2020). Indeed, the political debate on the violent years of the separatist struggle still polarises and divides a society embedded in ethnicised politics. For instance, the use of violence and its alleged pivotal role in the path towards territorial autonomy is still a matter of public discussion in which Sepp Kerschbaumer and BAS' militants are viewed either as terrorist or as freedom fighters.

Micro, meso and macro factors

This section aims to describe the factors driving and supporting right-wing; left-wing; Islamist; and ethno-separatist radicalisation, respectively, encompassing micro-, meso and macro factors that contributed to the four hotspots.

Right-wing hotspot

Micro level

Following the 2011 attack, newspapers described Gianluca Casseri as "hiding a double life" (Il Sole 24 Ore, 2011). Indeed, the perpetrator's background was rather ordinary: son of a building contractor, he grew up in the village of Cireglio, in Tuscany (Longo, 2011). He worked as an accountant "the very symbol of normality" (Il Sole 24 Ore, 2011). When the media interviewed his acquaintances, they described him as a loner, a very private individual, "someone a little bit weird" (Castelli Gattinara, O'Connor & Lindekilde, 2018) who struggled to build relationships with people, especially women. He did not hide his extreme right-wing allegiances, and his friends recalled that "*around a year before the attack, Casseri picked him up in his car, dressed in the typical black shirt of the Fascist movement and drove around blaring songs of the Salo Republic while shouting 'Viva il Duce'*" (Castelli Gattinara, O'Connor & Lindekilde, 2018).

Following his death, it emerged that in 2008 Casseri was diagnosed with depression and that he had diabetes, which reportedly "caused his sudden shifts of mood" (Yahoo News, 2011; il Reporter, 2011; Castelli Gattinara, O'Connor & Lindekilde, 2018). These conditions had reportedly deteriorated sharply following the death of his father and of a close friend, and after his mother developed Alzheimer's disease a couple of years earlier (Castelli Gattinara, O'Connor & Lindekilde, 2018).

In contrast to his isolated social life, Casseri cultivated a rich intellectual life online through participation in neo-fascist, esoteric, fantasy and Celtic circles (La Nazione, 2011). He was an active member of the cultural centre 'La Runa' (Yahoo News, 2011), and founded the magazine 'La Soglia', where he published essays on a variety of topics such as 'Dracula, Wotan's Warrior' (Casseri, 2005a). In 2011 he also started contributing to Casa Pound Italia's website 'Ideodromo' with five essays on a variety of topics, including pieces challenging the legitimacy of the Italian Republic ('Reflections on a Sentence') and exploring right-wing thinkers (such as 'Adriano Romualdi at the roots of Europe') (Casseri, 2011a; Casseri, 2011b; Vanity Fair, 2011). His writings often contain extremist and xenophobic undertones, which he did not hide to his acquaintances. As an acquaintance recalled after the attack, '*sometimes*

he talked about people with black skin: it was part of his ideals to be against the blacks more than other ethnicities' (Castelli Gattinara, O'Connor & Lindekilde, 2018).

He also published a pamphlet denying the Holocaust, titled 'The Protocols of the Wise Man of Alexandria' and an esoteric novel titled 'The Key of Chaos' (Longo, 2011). There is some evidence that Casseri believed that his novel had been plagiarised by the famous writer Umberto Eco (in his Prague Cemetery) and by Marek Halter (in his Le Kabbaliste de Prague). As he put it in his online writings: 'While I was finishing these writings, I came to know that in France, in October 2010, was published the novel *Le Kabbaliste de Prague* by Marek Halter, set in the Bohemian capital at the end of the XVI century. With this one it makes three!' (Carancini, 2012). The perception of being a victim of plagiarism further strained his mental health (Carancini, 2012).

Meso level

Castelli Gattinara et al. convincingly argue that 'Casseri is a clear example of an autonomous lone actor who radicalised in a collective environment but proceeded to conduct an attack of his own design and execution' (Castelli Gattinara, O'Connor & Lindekilde, 2018). Investigations following his death underscored that Casseri's radicalisation occurred within right-wing circles, particularly through activities organised by Casa Pound Italia (CPI) (Il Fatto Quotidiano, 2011; La Nazione, 2011). CPI ostensibly focuses on cultural, educational and social activities for the benefit of the Italian population, including occupations of social housing and food banks (Sesana, 2019). On the one hand, its hostility to immigration is expressed through peaceful demonstrations against refugee centres and resisting amendments to citizenship laws which would allow easier access to citizenship to individuals born in Italy. On the other hand, CPI and its sympathisers also engage in violent political demonstrations, riots and racially motivated violent attacks (Cammelli, 2018; Cammelli, 2017; Castelli Gattinara & Froio, 2014). Despite the existence of a number of extreme right-wing organisations, CPI's 'third millennium fascists' increasingly dominate Italy's extreme right-wing sphere (Cammelli, 2018).

Casseri's brother reported that he "*hung out with members of the "CasaPound" organisation in Pistoia"* (Castelli Gattinara, O'Connor & Lindekilde, 2018). Reportedly, Casseri presented his novel 'The Key of Chaos' at a CPI event, regularly took part in CPI demonstrations and leafleting activities, and was photographed several times with the CPI flag. It also emerged that in the previous two years Casseri had attended numerous gatherings and 'dinners' with right-wing extremists in Prato and Pistoia (Corriere Fiorentino, 2011), following which he was stopped and searched by the police. He also gained a criminal record because of violent resistance to the police during some right-wing demonstrations (La Nazione, 2011; Longo, 2011).

However, following Casseri's racially motivated rampage in 2011, CPI distanced itself from Casseri (Cammelli, 2017). CPI's website was amended to clearly state that 'Xenophobia is not contemplated in the DNA of Casapound' (MappeSer, 2011). A dedicated page on the CPI website 'Ideodromo' was deleted, alongside with Casseri's recent writings (Vanity Fair, 2011, Longo, 2011). The CPI's spokesperson declared to the media that 'Casseri was not a militant of our association. He sometimes attended the Pistoia office and we have no reasons to hide it' and that "Gianluca Casseri was a sympathiser of Casa Pound Italia, as many hundreds of

people in Tuscany and thousands throughout Italy, to whom, as it happens for every movement and association, we do not ask a mental health certificate" (Il Fatto Quotidiano, 2011).

Indeed, Castelli Gattinara, O' Connor & Lindekilde (2018) argue that Casseri's 'psychological difficulties', identifying him 'as a potential danger' led the movement to deny him full membership. However, they also persuasively demonstrate that this partial embeddedness in CPI, exemplified by Casseri's consistent participation to CPI's actions and events without being fully integrated as a member of the movement, provided an important "'echo chamber' amplifying the public validation of his beliefs, without however exerting the degree of social control that vertically structured far-right movements normally exert in the Italian context" (Castelli Gattinara, O'Connor & Lindekilde, 2018).

Macro level

Three macro-level factors are helpful to frame Gianluca Casseri's xenophobic violence: public perceptions of immigration; media and politicians' discourses on migrants; and the availability of social media, which acts as an 'echo chamber' for extremist perspectives (Castelli Gattinara, O' Connor & Lindekilde, 2018; Memoli, 2019).

There is extensive evidence that Italians perceive immigration as a major challenge for the state and as a source of insecurity and fear for its citizens. Italians systematically overestimate the proportion of immigrants in Italy. A 2014 survey shows that 69% of Italians overestimated the proportion of immigrants in the country, with almost a quarter of Italians believing that at least half of residents of Italy are immigrants (in fact, figures amounted to about 7% of the population). Moreover, in 2014 almost 70% of respondents saw immigration as costly, and subsequent survey confirm a widespread hostility to immigration (StranieriinItalia, 2014; RivistaStudio, 2017). As a result of the perceived link between immigration and terrorism,[1] and of the conviction that immigrants steal Italians' jobs (Affari Internazionali, 2020), a considerable proportion of Italians identify immigration as the foremost priority for the government,[2] and deprecate the government's handling of migration policies.[3]

Existing studies also suggest that the media overemphasises the migratory problem as threatening the identity and welfare of Italians, with immigrants identified as the main 'other' in Italian media narratives (Pollice & Miggiano, 2020), and the state frequently blamed for failing to protect the Italian population (Giglietto et al., 2019). This 'over-exposition' of the migratory phenomenon (Pollice & Miggiano, 2020) mirrors the increasingly virulent anti-immigrant rhetoric of several mainstream political parties of the centre-right, such as Lega and Fratelli d'Italia.

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[1] 55% of respondents agreed that there is a link between immigration and terrorism in 2017, and in 2019 this proportion declined to 45% (IAI, 2019).

[2] In 2017, 51% of respondents identified immigration control as the primary interest of Italy, a proportion which subsequently declined to 30% in 2019 (IAI, 2020; IAI, 2019).

[3] In 2020, the government's handling of immigration was the most criticised aspect of government policy (IAI, 2020).

Finally, the highly polarised Italian social media landscape provides important 'echo chambers' which amplify and validate extremist narratives and beliefs. Most relevant for the case of Casseri, they disseminate and validate the theory of the Great Replacement, holding that extra-European immigration will lead to the disappearance of (white) Europeans and to the suppression of their cultures and identities (Bowles, 2019; Cosentino, 2020; Feola, 2020). After his death, it emerged that Casseri was active on several extreme right-wing chats and websites (Fanpage.it, 2011a). On the same websites, and on several Facebook pages, Casseri was celebrated as a 'hero' in the aftermath of the attack (Fanpage.it, 2011b; Vanity Fair, 2011), an individual reacting to a situation born out of 'the exasperation of those who created this multi-ethnic society, which is a time bomb ready to explode, because history teaches us that many ethnic groups cannot coexist together' (Fanpage.it, 2011b). His supporters commented the significance of his action as 'We started the march for Aryan Europe' (Yahoo News, 2011) and 'He was braver than most to do what we should all do en masse' (Poletti, 2011).

Left-wing hotspot

Micro level

Nadia Desdemona Lioce is originally from Apulia but moved to Pisa to study Philosophy at University in 1979. Other university students who knew her at the time described her as 'lively', 'striking' and a 'dreamer' (La Repubblica, 2003a). In Pisa, she engaged in increasingly extreme political actions as a member of numerous left-wing organisations, alongside her partner, Luigi Fuccini (La Provincia, 2003; Panorama, 2017; La Repubblica, 2003b). In 1995, Fuccini was arrested and accused of holding weapons and planning a robbery, he declared himself a member of the Nuclei Comunisti Combattenti (Communist Fighting Centres) and a political prisoner. At the same time, Lioce disappeared into 'clandestinity', living underground for the following eight years (La Repubblica, 2004; Panorama, 2017). During her clandestinity, she emerged as one of the main forces behind the construction of the NBR, from the ashes of the Brigate Rosse, and as one of its foremost ideological and operational leaders (Angeli, Cavallaro & Conte, 2015; Vita, 2009). Her leadership, in cooperation with her new partner Mario Galesi, was described as 'adventurist and militarist' in its focus on mounting a military challenge to the Italian state (Longo, 2017). The most high-profile actions in this direct challenge to the state were the assassinations of government consultants Massimo d'Antona (in 1999) and Marco Biagi (in 2002).

Lioce was arrested in 2003, after a gunfight which killed her partner, Mario Galesi, and policeman Emanuele Petri. Material in her possession during the arrest (including her tablets and documents) and further material found in her apartment, allowed the Italian security forces to map in detail the structure and ideologies of the NBR, arrest the majority of their affiliates and bring a halt to their activities. Upon her arrest, and in subsequent trials, Lioce declared herself to be a political prisoner (Angeli, Cavallaro & Conte, 2015). Lioce was condemned to life sentences for the assassinations of labour consultants Massimo d'Antona (1999) and Marco Biagi (2002), and for the homicide of policeman Emanuele Petri (2003). Lioce consistently challenged the legitimacy of judicial proceedings and trials. For example, during the trial for the assassination of Marco Biagi, she declared that "*we do not recognise the courts' legitimacy to judge us, as they are the intermediaries of the State, and we revoke the defence*

lawyers' mandates, and we warn them not to represent us (Lioce, 2005a).She argued that her presence in court was only aiming at "*reiterat[ing] my militancy in the Red Brigades*" (Lioce, 2005b; Mappedimemoria, 2017; BBC, 2004).Even in jail, Lioce engaged in a number of protests against her strict imprisonment, which were attributed to her 'revolutionary nature' by the prison guards (Ilsussidiario.net, 2017). She is described as an 'irreducible', a militant so convinced of her choices that is unreformable and impossible to de-radicalise (Bianconi, 2013).

Meso level

The NBR are the organisation responsible for the most high-profile terrorist attacks in Italy since 2001. As its leader, Lioce describes the organisation as 'the revolutionary avantgarde' and as 'the avantgarde and representative' of the proletariat (Lioce, 2005a). Indeed, the NBR emerged as a 'fusion' of smaller organisations in the 1990s (Fusani, 2003) and defined itself in continuity with the Marxist-leninist terrorist group 'Red Brigades' (1970-1988) in at least three respects (Bartali, 2007; Della Porta, 1990; Fasanella & Franceschini, 2004).

First, continuity was exemplified by links between New and Old Brigatists as expressed through reciprocal public support (La Repubblica, 2002b) and overlapping membership of the two organisations (most famously, Luigi Fallico) (La Repubblica, 2011b). To contextualise Lioce's role in the organisation, and her thriving in this extremist group, it is perhaps notable that the Red Brigades and their successor NBR 'are perhaps the movement with the most female leadership in Italian politics' (Gazzetta.it, 2007).

Second, the NBR was also committed to similar objectives to 'combat the State of the imperialists and "exercising its role of revolutionary leadership in unifying the political with the military, presents itself as a proletarian authority juxtaposed to the authority of the bourgeois state" (Lioce, 2005a). In so doing, the NBR's strategic resolution postulated that the organisation would 'identify and target the political, economic or military staff of imperialism and of its structures; identify and target the political, economic or military staff of the project of State restructuring and its expressions' (Maroni, 2020). In other words, the targeting of prominent political and economic personalities that characterised the actions of their predecessors also informed the operational choices of the NBR.

Third, the organisational structure of the NBR also mirrored closely that of the former Red Brigades in encompassing a number of semi-independent paramilitary groups coordinated by a 'directorate' composed of Nadia Desdemona Lioce, Mario Galesi and Roberto Morandi. It is notable that, despite their official dismantling in 2003, following the arrests or death of their most prominent members, the Italian security forces estimate that up to ten NBR members remain underground and rely on a wider network of sympathisers.

Macro level

The NBR's assassination of Marco Biagi needs to be framed in the context of Italy's socio-economic reforms of the early 2000s (Maroni, 2020). Underpinned by 'EU-related policy considerations' (OECD, 2009), these initiatives aimed to redress the considerable gap between unemployment and labour productivity rates in Italy and in its EU partners by tackling three structural 'weaknesses': low female participation in the labour market; low youth employment; and disparity between the North and South of Italy. Thus, reforms devised in the

early 2000s aimed to foster economic liberalisation and increase flexibility in the Italian labour market so as to allow easier entry and exit from the labour market for youth and women (Fana, Guarascio & Cirillo, 2015). In 'removing market rigidities', however, the proposed reforms aimed to erode the strength of trade unions, limit social benefits, lower minimum wages, remove firing restrictions and restrict employment protection (Cirillo, Fana & Guarascio, 2016).

The NBR viewed these reforms as a further step in 'processes of impoverishment, social backsliding and exploitation of the proletariat' (Lioce, 2005a). This view was not too distant from those of workers and trade unions. Indeed, OECD recognises that labour reforms in the early 2000s 'followed a long confrontation between the government and the unions'. Emblematic of these confrontations were debates over the introduction to limits on Article 18 of the Workers' Statute, which previously severely limited the possibility for employers to fire their employees. These debates resulted in strong rhetorical clashes between trade unions and the government, and a split between the three major trade unions. In 2002, these clashes culminated in a number of mass demonstrations, including the largest trade union demonstration of Italian history in March 2002 (La Repubblica, 2002), and the first general strike in 20 years in April 2002 (La Repubblica, 2001a; La Repubblica, 2001b; La Repubblica, 2003c). Biagi was identified as one of the main inspirer and ideologue for labour market reforms, allegedly leading extremist fringes of trade unions and political parties to foster what a collaborator defined a 'hate climate' around him (Angeli, Cavallaro & Conte, 2015). In particular, the White Paper, published in October 2001, was identified as the ideological underpinning for the controversial labour market reforms. This White Paper was eventually mentioned by the NBR as a motivating factor for Biagi's assassination (Lioce, 2005c).[4] In the context of high socio-political polarisation over the labour market reforms, Biagi emerged as a symbol of the liberalising and privatising state and, as Lioce summarised during the trial for Biagi's assassination,

Our organisation attacked the project of socio-economic remodelling and political and institutional reform of the state… targeting Marco Biagi, consultant of the Berlusconi executive and of the EU Commission headed by Romano Prodi, and individual who, for his role in producing the White Book, for his institutional roles in the EU, and for his well established relationships with both social, political and institutional groupings, ensured to the imperialist bourgeoisie and to the state that the legal and political formulation of the body of labour reforms on which the whole project rested, would be organic to projects for federal reform of the state, would match the structural reform programmes promoted by European institutions, and would adhere to the neo-corporatist principles that informed them (Lioce, 2005c).

[4] The White paper would subsequently form the basis for a comprehensive reform of the Italian labour market as embedded in Law 14 of February 2003 commonly known as 'Biagi law' (Menicucci, 2014).

Jihadist hotspot

Micro level

The analysis of the personal background, motivation and triggering factors for the radicalisation of Maria Giulia 'Fatima' Sergio exemplifies the growing, active role of female jihadists in indoctrinating and recruiting others for the cause of ISIS, in this case a whole family. Individual grievances, everyday polarisation, the internet, family ties, and foreign recruiting networks served as catalysts for Fatima to endorse extremist ideology and legitimise violent actions:

Maria Giulia Sergio was born in 1987 in Torre del Greco, near Naples, to a Catholic family (father Sergio Sergio (20.06.1954), mother Assunta Buonfiglio (17.02.1955) and their eldest daughter, Marianna (10.05.1984)). Facing economic difficulties, the family moved to Inzago, a town in the Lombardy Region located between Milan and Bergamo. Maria Giulia studied biotechnology at the University of Milan but did not graduate (Marone & Vidino, 2018). For not having to rely on the family's poor economic situation, Fatima worked at a call centre and in bars.

In 2007, despite her family disapproval, she converted to Islam, took on a new name, Fatima as Zahra, and exchanged her usual mini skirt with trousers, long blouses and scarves (Assumma, 2013). She descripted her conversion with this quote: "*It is not a conversion, rather a reversion. I found my way back*" (Assumma, 2013), and began to attend Islamic communities in the hinterland of Milan (Cecinini, 2017). Additionally, the internet enabled a swift conversion experience, as Fatima followed the online videos of Yusuf Estes, a convert and controversial preacher from Texas (Marone, 2016a). Two years later, her family followed the self-chosen path of Fatima and converted as well. Her father grew a long beard and the women of the family including Fatima, started to first wear the hijab and later on even a niqab (Bertolesi, 20169. In 2009, she married a Moroccan pizza maker in Inzago in a white niqab as her wedding gown, but pushed for divorce in 2011, because of her husband being religiously too moderate (Angenzia Italia, 2016).

Although she attended a few mosques quite regularly, they did not play a significant role in Fatima's' radicalisation process. Rather her sudden conversion to a radical version of Islam was facilitated by a woman of Syrian-Canadian origin, Bushra Haik (30.07.1985). Haik indoctrinated Fatima, her sister Marianna and other women via the internet (Marone, 2016b). Soon, Fatima gave public interviews, appeared in TV talk shows to fiercely debate with right-wing politicians and spread her radical, extremist ideas including incitement of hatred towards her home country on Facebook (Groppi, 2020; The Independent, 2015).

In 2011, she became known to authorities as she presented a petition for permitting the wearing of the niqab in workplaces (Bertolesi, 2016). She was subject to all forms of discriminations, from being refused entrance in a supermarket and a bus to being fired from her job. At the same time however, she might have wanted even to seek confrontation, aware of her appearance and lifestyle being met with suspicion and sometimes hostility (Marone, 2016b; Assumma, 2013).

The self-proclamation of the Islamic caliphate in 2014 marked a crucial breakthrough in her radicalisation process as Fatima embarked on the idea to perform the "journey" (*Hijra*) to the caliphate (Marone, 2016b; Corriere della Sera, 2015). She quickly associated herself with a perceived global ummah that seeks revenge against the Western world of globalisation and secularism that keeps disappointing, discriminating and confusing her (Marone, 2016a). However, for that purpose she preferred a marriage with a jihadist, a fighter who shared her radical conception of faith. In her imagination, only such kind of marriage would allow her to become part of ISIS and immediately reach paradise (Bertolesi, 2016).

In a marriage of convenience arranged by a mutual Albanian acquaintance, Fatima married Aldo 'Said' Kobuzi, to become a jihadist's wife in September 2014 in Treviglio's Islamic center (Bertolesi, 2016). Just four days after their wedding they left Italy to join Kobuzi's mother, Donika, in Turkey. The three of them set of to join ISIS in Syria (Giacalone, 2015a; Tribunale di Milano, 2016). Fatima and Aldo settled down in the Governorate of Aleppo, where members of the Kobuzi family together with other Albanian jihadists already resided. They were reunited with Aldo's sister, Serjola (born in 1996), who joined ISIS in 2013 together with her husband and their child. Fatima soon took up firearms training, as she expressed her wish to take part in fighting and to even die as a martyr. Besides, she immersed herself in Islamic and Arabic studies and proudly elaborated on doctrinal questions. Such sort of knowledge can be an important factor of social recognition and legitimacy for IS women (Marone, 2016b).

From within the caliphate, the then 28-year-old Fatima supported ISIS as recruiter and continuously urged her family to leave Italy, the "land of misbelievers" to join her in the caliphate. Phone-taped conversations show that she used a harsh and threatening tone, recalling her family that "hijra" (migration) is mandatory. The only valid alternative according to her understanding would be to fight the "kuffar" (unbelievers) back home. Moreover, she made her whole family attend online-lessons by Bushra Haik to inhale extremist propaganda (Giacalone, 2015a; Tribunale di Milano, 2016).

Consequently, Fatima pressured her family to adhere to strict interpretations of Islam, and even kill infidels in the name of jihad (Groppi, 2020). As a strong minded, self-confident, even aggressive personality who, alike most Italian foreign fighters did not suffer conditions of harsh poverty or social exclusion, Fatima not only wanted to be in charge of everything and helped to indoctrinate other women via the Internet. She was willing to exploit the emotional ties in her family to promote the jihadist cause while at the same time subjugating herself to conservative gender roles. She maintained that women should recognise the superiority of men, and even demanded in an intercepted Skype conversation, that her father has to impose his will on her hesitant mother by saying: "*you are in charge (...) you decide, you are the man of the house and then grab mum by her hair and come here [to Syria] and make Hijra! She doesn't need to have any opinion about it*" (Marone, 2016a).

By using a carrot and stick approach, she was able to recruit her whole family (Marone, 2016b). Having experienced discrimination in Italy herself and being aware of the financial background of her family, she felt more powerful than her beloved ones in Italy. Thus, she tried to persuade them to join her by using all sorts of persuasion tricks ranging from material rewards like a house with a garden to explaining that it was Allah's will (Biondani, 2015). Fatima even convinced her father Sergio, to quit his job, sell their house and furniture, withdraw all his money and join his daughter in the caliphate. She would organise the trip

herself through mujahideens, as she had all necessary contacts (Giacalone, 2015a; Tribunale di Milano, 2016). For the likelihood of her family not being able to reach the territories controlled by ISIS, Fatima destined them to perform "jihad in Italy" (Ansa, 2017). Fatima's older, divorced sister Marianna was showing sympathies for the cause of ISIS for a while and apparently even hoped to find a new husband in Syria. Thus, Marianna was easily persuaded to join her sister in the caliphate. Her parents in contrast, did not display sincere and deep-rooted radical beliefs and were more sceptical and hesitant. In the end, however, they were convinced by the promise of a better social position in the caliphate (Marone, 2017).

In July 2015, Sergio's father, mother and sister as well as two Albanian relatives of Aldo Kobuzi (his uncle Baki Coku and his aunt Arta, alias Anila, Kacabuni) were arrested by Italian police on charges of travel for the purposes of international terrorism and criminal association, when they were finally preparing to leave for Syria. Moreover, five arrest warrants were also issued for Fatima and Aldo themselves as well as for Aldo's sister Serjola and their mother Donika and for Bushra Haik, the Italian-born online-recruiter (Giacalone, 2015a; Tribunale di Milano, 2016; Marone, 2017).

A few days after the arrest of her family, Fatima gave a striking skype interview to an Italian newspaper in which she showed self-confidence and a deep level of indoctrination. She glorified ISIS as a "*perfect stated based on Sharia law*", denied accusations of human rights violations and defended corporal punishments and beheadings (Marone, 2016b). Using a typical us vs them rhetoric, she stated that "*the people beheaded are thieves and hypocrites spying from inside IS. They send information to the unbelievers, who then attack us*" and "*those people who dare to say that the jihad does not exist and to doubt why I came here doing the hijra (...) they should be beheaded (...) Muslims live with al kafirun, but you are kidding, in Islam this is haram. It is not possible to work for al kafirun, I mean under the sharia law, not under democracy and you even work for them*!" (Corriere della Sera, 2015).

The arrest had a severe impact on Fatima's family; her mother died in house arrest in 2015. In late December 2016, a court in Milan convicted in absentia Maria Giulia 'Fatima' Sergio, to nine years in prison for international terrorism. Aldo Kobuzi was sentenced to 10 years as part of the same ruling. The Canadian national Bushra Haik to nine years in prison for recruiting and indoctrinating Sergio, and Sergio's father, Sergio Sergio to four years in prison for the crime of organising terrorist travel. This in-absentia conviction was the first by an Italian court under Italy's 2015 counterterrorism law of foreign terrorist fighters in an overseas combat zone (United States Department of State, 2017). Marianna Sergio, Fatima's sister, was sentenced to 5 years and 4 months; in 2019, a regional court denied an early prison release of Marianna based on her persistent indoctrination and lack of collaboration (Corriere della Sera, 2019). Following the death of his wife, Assunta Buonfiglio in 2015, Sergio Sergio, a fragile person, aware of having been manipulated by his daughter, turned his previous submission into anger and shame wishing to return to Roman Catholicism (Marone, 2016a).

Meso level

Unlike other countries, in the Italian context, mosque communities, group dynamics and peer pressure did not play a significant role as Italy's still rather small home-grown jihadist landscape is fragmented and dispersed. Hence, conversion and radicalisation processes are based on different individual pathways and facilitated by the internet, family ties and personal

relationships (Marone, 2016a). The Sergio-Kobuzi case exemplifies the conundrum of internet recruiters and family ties that facilitate a sudden conversion to a radical, extremist and violent jihadi ideology.

For what concerns Fatima, radical sermons of internet preachers at the beginning of her conversion and in particular the skilful, deep-seated indoctrination by Bushra Haik are emblematic for the internet as hotspot of radicalisation. Female foreign fighters reportedly are in charge of online platforms and radicalisation of their close family and friends (Counter Extremism Project, 2020). Haik, born into a Syrian family with Canadian passports in 1985 in Bologna, left Italy for Riyadh (Saudi Arabia) in 2012 to marry an imam. She managed a variety of internet forums and online communities and held lessons on Quran, Quran recitation, Arabic, Tafsir and Aqidah through Skype. She had a large number of online followers with the Skype account Bushra_1 and was well-known inside the Muslim community in northern Italy. Haik's, continuous appraisal of the righteousness of the Islamic State, its effective actions against Western targets and against religious minorities, her justification for the killing of "*unbelievers*" including women and children, fell on fertile ground. The Sergio sisters quickly adopted an extremist radical version of Islam (Giacalone, 2015b). According to the Milanese court verdict, Haik skilfully encouraged and even prepared women to travel to and join ISIS. She turned them into recruiters themselves, as exemplified not only by Fatima but also her sister, Marianna Sergio. Marianna participated in Haik's Skype groups, defended the actions of ISIS and even exclaimed: "*ISIS [...] said that it will arrive in Italy, too, understood?*" (Marone, 2016a). After the departure of Fatima to Syria, Marianna became a "point of reference in the activity of proselytism for other women" (Il Giorno, 2016).

Pre-existing personal relationships or family ties, foreign recruitment networks operating within Italy and contacts abroad prove to be crucial for advancing all sorts of jihadist causes. Fatima aimed to find a suitable jihadi fighter whom she could marry before migrating to Syria. She did not want to find herself in a situation in which she would not have any influence on and be forced to marry a total stranger in Syria (Marone, 2016b). In fact, in late summer 2014, she attended the Islamic book fair of Salafist extraction at the mosque in San Paolo d'Argon, where she met Lubjana Gjecaj. This young Albanian woman told her of an Albanian man named Aldo 'Said' Kobuzi, who belonged to a family of fighters with an interest in finding a wife to emigrate to Syria to participate in the cause of ISIS (Bertolesi, 2016). Aldo 'Said' Kobuzi, born in 1991 in north-western Albania worked as a mechanic and only moved to Italy for the purpose of his wedding with Fatima (Marone, 2017). After their marriage, Aldo Kabuzi and Fatima Sergio were facilitated by a sophisticated Albanian network led by the radical imam Bujar Hysa with links to the Kobuzi family. This connection enabled the couple to rely on important contacts and links to ISIS in Turkey and Albania such as to a well-known ISIS recruiter and coordinator of foreign fights, Ahmed Abu Alharith. For financial and organisational help, the couple got in touch with Genci Balla, head of the Albanian recruiting network. The contact was facilitated by Aldo Kobuzi's brother-in-law, Mariglen Dervishllari (Giacalone, 2015a; Tribunale di Milano, 2016).

Macro level

Italy did not yet suffer any major jihadist attacks and has not experienced a surge in Islamic radicalisation as other European countries. With the rise of the Islamic State however, Italy

became a target of potential terrorist attacks and apocalyptic propaganda directed against the Holy See and the city of Rome as major symbols of Christianity and Western civilisation (Vidino, 2018; Gaudino, 2018). Thus, across the political spectrum, there is a strong opposition to Islamist extremism and Jihadist violence, with right-wing parties often blending opposition to Jihadist violence with their disapproval of immigration.[5] This has indeed an impact on public perception as negative attitudes towards migrants, minorities and Islam are a common feature. A majority of Italians considers refugees originating from countries such as Iraq or Syria as denoting a major security threat and almost 60 percent worry that refugees will increase domestic terrorism (Gattinara, 2017). The expulsion of aspiring jihadis with first-generation immigration background, the seizure of assets, mobility and occupational restrictions in particular, have been the cornerstone of Italy's effective counter-terrorism strategy (Groppi, 2017). Yet, several Italian citizens and converts such as the cluster surrounding Maria Giulia Sergio, engaged in militant activities and contributed to recruit foreign fighters to join ISIS. Consequently, these actions pose a challenge to said terrorism strategy (Guadino, 2018). The still low level of radicalisation inside Italy's Muslim community however and a rather small number of foreign fighters joining ISIS can be linked to little resentment of the countries colonial history, less anger over Italy's foreign policy and involvement in the international coalition against ISIS (Beccaro & Bonino, 2019; Groppi, 2017). Italy's jihadist scene therefore remains rather unsophisticated and lacking structure, with an over-representation of converts in comparison to their share among the wider Islamic community (Groppi, 2020; Gaudino, 2018; Marone, 2016a). Yet, according to a survey dating back to 2017, slightly more than 10% of the Italian population perceive Islamic terrorism as the most dangerous threat to the country (ISPI, 2017) and almost 55% expressed an unfavourable attitude towards Muslims in 2019 (Pew Research, 2019). As a result of the strong growth of irregular migration flows from Libya by boat and sporadic terrorist attacks carried out by Jihadists across Europe, fear of terrorism is overlapping with anxieties towards immigration and Islam among the population (Marone, 2016a). . This reflects the current state of integration of the 4.8% of Muslims in Italian society, which fluctuates between rejection and silent acceptance in society. The Islamic Community of Italy is still lacking a formal legal recognition (Pin, 2020). Survey data dating back to 2014 suggest that 63% of Italians overestimate the number of Muslims and oppose their presence in their country; while in 2018, 31% of Italians supported a total ban on religious clothing, including the hijab for Muslim women (Pew Research, 2018a), 53% even agreed with the statement of Islam "is fundamentally incompatible with [Italy's] culture and values" (Pin, 2020; Pew Research, 2018b). These persistent anti-Islamic prejudices had an impact on the radicalisation process of Maria Giulia 'Fatima' Sergio. She felt to be a victim of islamophobia and believed that she was victimised only because of being a Muslim woman strictly observing Islamic rules. As a consequence, she felt frustration, resentment and anger (Marone, 2016a). Thus, the idea of a global Ummah that provides citizenship and the feeling of acceptance as promoted by ISIS in contrast to the Italian society that had been so harsh with her was appealing to her as she stated: "*we don't want to be friends of the unbelievers ... we don't*

[5] For example, the right wing's coalition's programme for the 2018 election lists 'prevention of terrorism' immediately above 'restoring of control over borders' and 'end to [migratory] landings'. Liberi e Uguali also framed terrorism alongside migration as a crucial global challenge on the international arena. (Dipartimento per gli affari interni e territoriali, 2018).

need anything of what they do, this is what you have to understand as reasoning, do you understand? as reasoning, that is to say that the time when the Muslim is in the land of unbelief is over, that was the time of ignorance, that was the time of the Muslim unbelief, that was the time of ignorance, now there is kahlifa" (Tribunale di Milano, 2016; Biondani, 2015).

Separatist hotspot

Micro level

Although the Feuernacht was a collective action which involved hundreds of people in its organisation (Romeo, 2005, p. 162), the analysis of the personal background of BAS' leader Sepp Kerschbaumer can help understand how individual grievances and everyday polarisation may serve as catalyst factors for the legitimisation of violent attacks.

Sepp Kerschbaumer was born in 1913 in Frangart, a small village near Bolzano/Bozen (the biggest city in South Tyrol), then part of the Austria-Hungary Empire. His father, a merchant, was killed during WWI on the 'Dolomitic Front' between Austria and Italy. He was called to join the Italian Army in 1933. However, in 1934 he was confined with other 50 South Tyroleans in Potenza because of their participation in an unauthorised political event. The following year he was pardoned by Mussolini and could therefore come back to South Tyrol, where he took over the family business and subsequently got married. In 1939 Italy and Germany concluded the so-called 'Option/Opzioni' agreement: ethnic Germans of the region were given the possibility to emigrate to the German Reich and settle there or to remain in Fascist Italy and be subject to a process of repressive Italianisation. Most of South Tyroleans chose to emigrate, while only one third, eventually returned. Although Kerschbaumer initially campaigned for the Option and supported the German occupation of Northern Italy joining the Wehmacht in Bozen/Bolzano, he later grew dissatisfied with the Reich and Nazism (Drechsler, 1965; Fontana & Mayr, 2000; Grote, 2008; Peterlini, 2005).

After the end of WWII, his interest in politics grew considerably. He joined the Südtiroler Volkspartei (SVP – South Tyrolean People's Party), the main political force representing the German-speaking population, and later became head of the local council in Frangart. Towards the mid-1950s, he became growingly disappointed by what he considered a renunciatory approach of the SVP leadership, who, in his opinion, "defused the public frustration rather than harnessing it as a mandate to adopt a much harder line when dealing with Italy" (Grote, 2012, p. 93).

In 1956 he founded the BAS to raise awareness of the South Tyrolean question through demonstrative acts. It is important to highlight that Kerschbaumer had always a very clear idea of what 'demonstrative actions' had to be, that is, purely symbolic attacks on objects/symbols of the Italian state while strictly avoiding endangering human lives (Steurer, 2011; Gehler, 2006). However, it has also been pointed out that such a view of the early BAS as a group of friendly patriots, whose activities could and can evoke only approval, admiration and empathy, a narrative endorsed also by the modern separatist discourse, evaluates the problem of the use of violence "exclusively from a point of view of ethics of attitude and also not from one of ethics of responsibility" (Steurer, 2013).

In 1957, Kerschbaumer was arrested for having displayed a Tyrolean flag. Although he was offered the possibility of paying a fine, he chose to be sentenced to ten days in prison, where he carried out a hunger strike. The same year, during an SVP political rally, he and other militants circulated one of the first BAS leafleats: *"We want to remain German and refuse to be the slaves of another race which occupied our land through fraud and betrayal and for the last 40 years has exploited us with a colonial system worse than the methods once used in Africa"* (Baumgartner, Mayr & Mumelter, 1992). From there one, the BAS started to attack Italian monuments. Only five days after the SVP political rally, they blew up the Ettore Tolomei's tomb, the so-called "architect of South Tyrol's Italianisation" (Grote, 2012, p. 95).

In the years leading to the 1961 Feuernacht, Kerschbaumer's view of a struggle without human casualties, arguably moved by his deep religiousness, was increasingly contested by other members of the BAS both in South Tyrol by Georg Klotz and in North Tyrol/Austria by Wolfgang Pfaundler, who "believed that the BAS should be prepared to use violence against human as well as strategic targets" (Grote, 2012, p. 100).

Tragically, the explosions of the 1961 Feuernacht indeed claimed a human life, namely that of a roadworker who tried to defuse one of the explosives. With such event, the BAS and Kerschbaumer lost their innocence. The Italian state deployed in South Tyrol a huge amount of police and military forces, while hundreds of people were arrested. Two of them died in custody, allegedly due to tortures by members of the Carabinieri (Italian gendarmerie), although these were later acquitted in a controversial process (Romeo, 2011, p. 129).

Between 1963 and 1964, ninety-four BAS activists, among whom was Kerschbaumer, were trialed in Milan and most of them were sentenced to several years of prison (Grote, 2012, p. 105). Kerschbaumer died in jail in 1964 due to a heart attack.

As a last note, it is still debated whether Kerschbaumer was in favour of a territorial autonomy of South Tyrol inside the Italian state, as expressed in his trial likely for legal reasons, or for secession or a return to the Austrian state, although it has been argued that he and other members of the BAS were always aware of the 'real possibilities' available to them and that the main aim of the group, at least in this initial phase, was that of stopping the Italianisation of the region (Grote, 2012, p. 106; Steurer, 2011).

Meso level

As discussed in the previous section, the South Tyrolean BAS had already showed internal divides before the 1961 Feuernacht. Indeed, the composition of the organisation was extremely varied. Most of them were ordinary people as Kerschbaumer, but there were also war veterans of WWII who fought in the Wehrmacht. Internal ideological divides were also fostered by the structure of the organisation, in which autonomous cells operated under the command of a group leader (Fasser, 2009).

After the first attacks in 1957, Kerschbaumer and the BAS found sympathisers in North Tyrol (Austria) mainly from the circle of the *Bergisel-Bund, Schutzverband für Südtirol* (Mount Isel League for the Protection of South Tyrol), an irredentist political association that was founded in 1954 to support the re-annexation of South Tyrol to Austria. The social composition of such group significantly varied from that of the peasant/proletarian South Tyrolean BAS and was composed mainly by middle-class, urban, intellectual educated bourgeoisie (freelancers, civil

servants, intellectuals from writers and musicians to members of the university): “the social democratic component was completely absent, the spectrum ranged from a pan-Tirolian Austria patriotism to liberal German nationalism and explicit right-wing extremism” (Steurer, 2011). Kerschbaumer was against the ideologization of the conflict by this group of extremist intellectuals and considered the struggle only “a crucial form of self-defence” (Grote, 2012, p. 96). However, it should be stressed that the connection between right-wing extremism and the BAS in the South Tyrolean scene was not absent, although under Kerschbaumer’s leadership it remained less visible. Specifically, the main supporter of the BAS in South Tyrol were mainly former members of the SVP but also members of the *Südtiroler Schützenbund* – a current trend, who in those days still proudly displayed the military decorations they had received during WWII.

Transnational support from Austria increased with the founding of a BAS unit in Innsbruck by Wolfgang Pfaundler, who started organising “military training and the transportation of explosives and guns for the South Tyrol fighters” (Grote, 2012, p. 95). Furthermore, financial support for BAS’ actions was provided also by leading Austrian figures such as newspapers tycoon Fritz Molden. Historical documents seem also to indicate that the violent struggle planned by the BAS was backed by Austrian authorities, among whom Tyrolean Councilor Rupert Zechtl and allegedly even the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs and then Chancellor Bruno Kreisky (Commissione parlamentare d'inchiesta sul terrorismo e sulle cause della mancata individuazione dei responsabili delle stragi, 1992, p. 79).

After the Milan trails and the death of Kerschbaumer, the radical wing led by Georg Klotz took the lead of the organisation and initiate the most violent phase of the separatist struggle (EURAC, 2021), condemned by both Italian and Austrian authorities (Grote, 2012). Indeed, the 1961 Feuernacht demonstrated a general opposition to violence also by the local South Tyrolean population: while its most immediate goal was that of paralysing the “Italian” industrial zone of Bolzano/Bozen by cutting it off from electricity, the BAS hoped for a spontaneous uprising of the South Tyrolean population, who instead remained passive (EURAC, 2021).

Macro level

Up until 1919 the whole region was under direct Austro-Hungarian rule and comprised the modern Italian provinces of South Tyrol and Trentino, and the Austrian Länder of Tyrol and Vorarlberg. However, following the Peace Treaty of Saint Germain, Italian-speaking Trentino and German-speaking South Tyrol were incorporated into the Italian state. During the years of Mussolini, the Italian government “passed executive decrees and legislation that subjected the inhabitants of South Tyrol to forced Italianisation, that repressed the presence and influence of German-speakers in all spheres of cultural, economic and political life, and that forbade schools, trade unions, political parties and names in the German language” (Woelk, 2007; Andeva, 2013). As already seen, following the annexation of Austria to the German Reich, South Tyrolean were offered “the option of German citizenship with the obligation to emigrate and resettle in the German Reich or to accept the Italian policy of assimilation” (Woelk, 2007; Andeva, 2013). Although “over 80 per cent of the group, some 200,000, voted to leave”, “because of the course of the war only about 75,000 actually did so, and many returned, clandestinely” (Alcock, 2001).

After the end of WWI, South Tyroleans demanded to be re-annexed to Austria. In one of the most important political rallies of the period, more than 22 thousand people gathered in Castle Sigmundskron (near Bolzano) with the motto “Los von Rom!” (Away from Rome). Notwithstanding the widespread separatist sentiment, Austria and Italy, under international pressure from the Allies, entered into bilateral talks to negotiate the autonomy of South Tyrol inside the Italian State. The resulting agreement, named De Gasperi-Gruber Agreement from the name of the two foreign ministers, was signed in Paris in 1946 and granted equality of rights to Italian- and German-speakers, as well as “the exercise of an autonomous legislative and executive regional power”. However, Italy initially violated the spirit of the Agreement by creating a wider region with Trentino (where Italian-speakers were the majority) and thus outnumbering the German-speaking community. Furthermore, the Italian government also persisted in industrialising the province – as done during the Fascist period, causing a continuous influx of Italian immigrants. Another crucial political rally was organised again in Castle Sigmundskron by the SVP but the motto was changed in “Los von Trient” (away from Trento – the capital city of nearby Trentino), a significant change in policy from separatism to autonomy that, as discussed above, alienated the most radical groups (Romeo, 2003).

After Austria unsuccessfully filed legal proceedings against Italy under the European Convention of Human Rights and brought the case in front of the UN General Assembly (Medda-Windischer, 2008), Italy eventually adopted a compromise in 1969, called 'Package of measures in favour of the population of South Tyrol', effectively implementing South Tyrolean autonomy as established in the Paris Agreement. However, the Feuernacht and the bloodiest attacks of the 1960s had already left their mark on a polarised and alienated population.

Facilitating factors

This section of the report identifies specific elements in the political and socio-cultural environment of the perpetrators that enabled or facilitated the four violent acts considered.

Right-wing hotspot

In his xenophobic rampage, Gianluca Casseri did not have any accomplices, received no guidelines, and apparently did not share his plans with any of his acquaintances (Castelli Gattinara, O’Connor & Lindekilde, 2018). However, two factors can be identified as facilitating the violent attack. First, in 2010 he was granted a license to possess firearms, which allowed him to purchase his Smith & Wesson 357 Magnum (Il Reporter, 2011; Longo, 2011). He reportedly fabricated munitions himself in his family home in Cireglio (Il Report, 2011). Second, six months before the attack, Casseri moved out of his family home and into an apartment in Florence, where he lived alone (Longo, 2011; Il Report, 2011). On the one hand, this move compounded his social isolation to the point that after the attack, the police could only identify two Facebook friends and acquaintances of Casseri Corriere Fiorentino, 2011). On the other hand, it enabled Casseri to meticulously plan his rampage, including emptying out his apartment and clearing all records from his laptops (Il Reporter, 2011).

Left-wing hotspot

The assassination of Marco Biagi was meticulously planned (Menicucci, 2014) and expertly executed by a team of six perpetrators: Nadia Desdemona Lioce, Diana Blefari Melazzi, Cinzia Banelli, Roberto Morandi, Simone Boccaccini and Mario Galesi (Mappedimemoria, 2017). Two factors facilitated the assassination.

First, one of the participants to the attack reflected that 'killing Biagi was easy, he did not have any bodyguards' (Menicucci, 2014). Indeed, despite several death threats (McGovern, 2010) and Biagi's request to provide him with bodyguards, his wife Marina observed that the State 'abandoned him' (Angeli, Cavallaro & Conte, 2015). Beyond the lack of security detail, this reflection captures the increasing isolation of Biagi, who, despite being at the centre of increasingly polarised debates on labour reform, had been recently accused of being ''a nuisance' only interested in having his consultancy extended' by then minister Scajola (Mappedimemoria, 2017).

Second, Biagi followed a predictable routine on his way back from the University of Modena, which included taking public transport (which provide an easy cover for attackers) and cycling back to his home through narrow and badly lit streets (McGovern, 2010). This enabled the NBR to plan the attack and even carry out a 'dress rehearsal' the previous week (Menicucci, 2014).

Jihadist hotspot

As elaborated above, Italy did not yet suffer jihadist attacks with fatal casualties, this is not least due to the effective counter-terrorism strategy based on the expulsion of aspiring jihadists with first-generation immigration background, the seizure of assets, mobility and occupational restrictions (Groppi, 2017). Yet, several Italian citizens and converts such as the cluster surrounding Maria Giulia 'Fatima' Sergio challenge said terrorism strategy (Gaudino, 2018). However, security forces successfully prevented the family of Fatima from joining her daughter in the Syria and intercepted conversations with Fatima used in the court trial, the first of its kind under Italy's new terror law, depicted insights from life within the caliphate and hint on Fatima's radicalisation path and motivation factors for joining the IS. Among these factors are persistent anti-Muslim prejudices, a high level of Islamophobia, discriminatory incidents but also the web, social media platforms and foreign recruiting networks as hotspots of radicalisation.

Separatist hotspot

As mentioned above, the reason behind the choice of the 1961 Feuernacht as the perfect moment to perpetrate a huge attack against the Italian power lines in Bolzano was not only symbolical. In fact, as this was the night when fires are traditionally lit in the mountains, the numerous groups that had to set charges on pylons and other targets could get confused in the hustle and bustle of preparations.

Furthermore, the change from small attacks to symbols, such as the mentioned mining of Tolomei's grave, towards 'a big blow' such as the 1961 Feuernacht was accelerated by the

effective investigations of the Italian Carabinieri who were closing the circle around the BAS and its Austrian sponsors. The motto of the BAS therefore became “Now or never!” (Steurer, 2011).

Motivational factors (I-GAP Coding)

This section identifies and codes the perpetrators’ feelings and perceptions of motivations leading to the four hotspots. For this purpose, we examine perceptions of *injustice*, which lead to *grievance*, *alienation* and *polarisation* (I-GAP), and finally culminate in the violent act. Each of these four components are quantified on a scale of 1-5. This section of the report provides a discursive overview, but detailed coding is available in the Online Annexes.

Right-wing hotspot

Injustice

The motivation for Gianluca Casseri’s violent attack stemmed primarily from feelings of injustice rooted in racist ideologies. His act, rooted in his ‘fixation for black people’ (ilReporter, 2011) amounted to ‘hunting Africans’ (MappeSer, 2011). Casseri’s rampage can be interpreted in the light of an essay published on the CPI website ‘Ideodromo’ only months before the attack. Here Casseri denounces the degradation of European civilisation, on the ‘miserable condition of Europe’ and reiterates each individual’s responsibility for defending ‘the European man’ from the ‘forces of chaos pushing from the ‘external country’. In his writings, Casseri affirms that ‘even if the battle is desperate, we do not have to abandon the field: the forces of chaos should not sing victory’ (Casseri, 2011). He further described people living in this ‘miserable condition’ as ‘living dead’ and suggested that ‘the only truly living people on the face of the Earth – however paradoxical it may seem – will be the vampires, the wandering dead, as well as the heroes fallen in battle and gathered in the Walhöll’ (Casseri, 2005a). This statement may provide a clue as to Casseri’s violent rampage and to his decision to commit suicide during the action, perhaps to join the ranks of these fallen heroes.

Grievance

Casseri’s grievances against non-white immigrants were as virulent as unspecified. He reportedly had a ‘fixation with black people’ (Il Reporter, 2011), as recalled by an acquaintance:

Sometimes he talked about people with black skin: it was part of his ideals to be against the blacks more than other ethnicities. I remember that once, several years ago, we stopped with the car at a traffic light. I remember that he went out of the car, he stole the bucket of a Maghrebi guy who stood there, poured it on the floor and ran away (Castelli Gattinara, O’Connor & Lindekilde, 2018).

Alienation

Casseri’s grievances were exacerbated by his near-complete alienation from his socio-political surroundings. On the one hand, in an autobiographical sketch, he presented his alienation as an autonomous choice:

Born in Ciriego (PT) in 1961, while man goes into space and the sky is eclipsed by the major eclipse of the Twentieth Century. At the age of twelve, struck by his encounter with H.P. Lovercraft, he alienates himself permanently from the ordered cosmos that surrounds us (La Nazione, 2011).

On the other hand, there is evidence of attempts to become formally part of CPI. This attempt failed as, despite assiduous frequentation of demonstrations and public events, CPI never fully embraced him as a full member of the group (Castelli Gattinara, O'Connor & Lindekilde, 2018). Informally, however, Casseri socialised with right-wing extremists well known to the Italian security services (Corriere Fiorentino, 2011). He was also active on extreme right-wing chats and websites (Fanpage.it, 2011). As Castelli Gattinara, O'Connor & Lindekilde (2018) explain, these groups acted as 'echo chambers' which validated and legitimised Casseri's beliefs.

Polarisation

Casseri's worldview was highly polarised, not only against non-white immigrants, but also against 'bourgeois, priests, liberals and leftists' (Casseri, 2005b). The whole Italian republic was perceived and denounced as illegitimate, as 'occupied by the Anglo-Americans and completely subject to their authority' following the end of the Fascist Republic of Salo', described by Casseri 'the only independent government in Italy' (Casseri, 2011). Even a wider Europe is described as facing a crisis of identity as a consequence of it 'syncretistic mess' and presented as 'Europe that, deprived of its authentic roots, has lost its way'. His grievances had no clear referent, due to his idea of an unchangeable global order based on:

Factions… shared out the world among themselves – i.e., the politicians (moderates or progressives), the churches (orthodox or heretical), the drug dealers (legal or illegal), all joined in an unlikely alliance (Casseri, 2005b).

I-GAP coding

In sum, the IGAP coding for Gianluca Casseri underscores the importance of perceived injustices and grievances in motivating individuals to commit a violent attack. In Casseri's case, these injustices and grievances were not experienced personally, but rather stemmed from extreme right-wing ideology, racist convictions and a frustration related to aspirations for global justice. Casseri's sensation of total and comprehensive alienation from his social surroundings left him without any referent point except for the extreme right-wing milieu, where he sought validation for his intellectual and ideological abilities but failed to gain social acceptance and inclusion. In this context, it can be argued that his perception of an extremely polarised socio-political sphere, characterised by an alliance of malevolent elites and a wider population of 'wandering dead', contributed to his determination to muster the courage to put into practice what the broader extreme right-wing milieu preached.

Left-wing hotspot

Injustice

According to Lioce, the assassination of Professor Marco Biagi 'was certainly not carried out for personal reasons' (Lioce, 2005a), but rather responded to strong ideological motivations

which also underpinned the broader activities of the NBR. On the basis of Lioce's testimonies, the primary motivation for the attack can be identified in the sense of deepening injustice perpetrated by the 'bourgeois state' against 'the proletariat' and embodied in

Increasing levels of exploitation, erosion of wages, unemployment, insecurity in working and living conditions… and culling of the historical achievements of the workers' movement, which [acted] as social safety nets (Lioce, 2005a).

Grievance

On the one hand, Lioce's ideological stance reflects closely the Marxist orientation of the NBR. On the other hand, it expresses an urgency to act to halt or reverse accelerating processes of impoverishment of the Italian working class, as potentially exemplified by the labour reforms of the early 2000s.

In the context of this increasingly urgent struggle, Lioce presented the NBR as the avantgarde of the proletarian revolution, and the organisation

able to destroy the forms of domination of the imperialist bourgeoisie and to conquer political power by transforming the class conflict into a class war (Lioce, 2005a).

Thus, far from being an isolated attack, Biagi's assassination (alongside d'Antona's killing three years earlier) was presented as a step in a broader class war. Whilst Lioce did not see these actions as solving the problems of the working classes, she presented them as necessary to

Recover the revolutionary initiative in a context of dispersion and exclusion of the subjectivity of the revolutionary class (Lioce, 2005a).

In other words, beyond mounting a challenge to the Italian state, these high-profile assassinations aimed to give the NBR the upper hand and increasing visibility in the political and paramilitary struggle against Italian economic and social reforms.

Moreover, according to Lioce's testimonies, this class war was waged within the Italian state by the NBR but had a broader global dimension of anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggle. In the global context, the NBR saw themselves as allied with the Iraqi resistance to the US occupation, the perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks and the Palestinian and Lebanese resistance to Israeli occupation (Lioce, 2005a). Alongside these groups, the NBR contributed to challenge the global imperialistic and capitalistic project led by the USA. According to Lioce, therefore, the grievances underpinning the NBR's actions spread broader than the Italian context. However, the responsibility for these injustices was located firmly in the bourgeois state and his representatives, including the person of Marco Biagi 'because of his jobs, his activities and his political connections' (Lioce, 2005c).

Alienation

Lioce's testimonies reflect the NBR's alienation from the broader political spectrum. On the one hand, this alienation may be seen as a result of the years of clandestinity and underground activity. On the other hand, Lioce reflected that the NBR were operating in 'a general political phase of counter-revolutionary nature' (Lioce, 2005a).

Polarisation

The alienation of the movement stemmed from the perceived broader socio-economic and political polarisation between the NBR, which 'as proletarian authority challenges the authority of the Burgeois state' and the bourgeois state and its political representatives, including the 'institutional opposition' (Lioce, 2005a). In other words, despite expressing the urgency of actions to protect the working class from detrimental socio-economic reforms, Lioce did not identify any institutional or legal socio-political actor that may help the NBR to represent and bring forward these grievances vis a vis the government. The 'othering' of all other political, economic and social forces is apparent both in the document claiming responsibility for Biagi's assassination (Chirumbolo & Areni, 2004) and in Lioce's testimonies during the trial, which also denounce

Trade union leaders and the institutional opposition to which the propaganda campaigns against the revolutionaries have provided political cover in order to actively prevent, counter and neutralise the growth of the revolutionary class (Lioce, 2005a).

In this context, according to Lioce, the assassination of Marco Biagi was effective in demonstrating 'the maturity of the revolutionary process in our country' but also the state's 'fundamental deficiency that cannot be bridged by the general support of an institutional opposition' (Lioce, 2005a).

I-GAP coding

Similarly, to Casseri's case, in the case of Nadia Desdemona Lioce, a strong sense of injustice was central to the decision to organise and take part in the assassination of Marco Biagi. The generalised sense of injustice and grievances against the burgeois state, expressed on behalf of an alleged proletarian class, is directly informed by Lioce's Marxist ideology and is based on a rigid ideological position. However, the identification of Biagi as the target reflected a tense social climate in the early 2000s, attributed to the government's labour reforms which Biagi had advised. Lioce's testimonies express her alienation from the bourgeois state and political class, but deep embeddedness in the NBR, perceived as the rightful avantgarde of the class war and as the legitimate political representatives of the proletariat. In this fully polarised worldview, Lioce saw all political parties as complicit with the bourgeois state, and as acting to the detriment of the proletariat, forcing the NBR to engage in high-profile actions to create momentum around a revolutionary struggle against capitalism in Italy and globally.

Jihadist hotspot

Injustice

A mixture of serious grievances, some of socio-political and religious nature, coupled with perceived experiences of injustices and discrimination related to intolerance and persistent anti-Islamic prejudices within Italian politics and society were central for Fatima and her family to engage in a radical version of Islam. Fatima felt to be a victim of islamophobia and believed that she was victimised only because of being a Muslim woman strictly observing Islamic rules. She thus felt frustration, resentment, and anger (Marone, 2016a). In search for a place to be accepted as devout, pure Muslim who follows an all-encompassing, rigid interpretation of her

faith, the idea of a global Ummah providing citizenship and the feeling of acceptance as promoted by ISIS were particularly appealing to Fatima. As intercepted conversations show, in the eyes of Fatima, IS embodies the perfect society of the prophet and of the first four caliphs, a society where well-being, equality and prosperity rule (Tribunale di Milano, 2016). Thus, the IS embodied the answer to her disorientation. She immersed herself in Islamic and Arabic studies and proudly elaborated on doctrinal questions as such sort of knowledge is an important factor of social recognition and legitimacy for IS women (Marone, 2016b).

Grievance

The grievances experienced by Fatima Sergio, some of socio-political, religious, and even economic nature, are in her view related to the globalisation, the Western lifestyle, and dynamics of secularism that kept disappointing, discriminating, and confusing her (Marone, 2016a). As a sort of response to her experiences, Fatima might have wanted even to seek confrontation, aware of her appearance and lifestyle being met with suspicion and sometimes hostility (Marone, 2016b; Assumma, 2013). Thus, in 2011, before endorsing the ideology of IS, she presented a petition for permitting the wearing of the niqab in workplaces (Bertolesi, 2016) for what seems an effort to change socio-legal circumstances responsible for her discrimination and grievances. Furthermore, in the beginning of her path, she gave public interviews, appeared in TV talk shows to fiercely debate with right-wing politicians about the need for a pluralistic, open society and eventually spread her increasingly radical, extremist ideas including incitement of hatred towards her home country on Facebook (Groppi, 2020; The Independent, 2015). With her migration to the territories of IS, she not only glorified the Islamic caliphate as "*a perfect state*" but blamed those not living in accordance with God's laws for conflicting with human rights.

Alienation

Since her conversion in 2007 which she described as *"[…] a reversion. I found my way back*" (Assumma, 2013) Fatima gradually alienated herself not only from Western secular values and lifestyles, but also from moderate, mainstream Islam. The fact that she married in a white niqab and divorced her first husband because of him being religiously too moderate (Agenzia Italia, 2016) speaks for her voluntarily following a rigid, strict interpretation of Islam that was turned into radicalism by the skilful online indoctrination of Bushra Haik. Haik continuously glorified terrorist actions of IS against Western targets and religious minorities such as Shiites and other communities opposing IS propaganda. Moreover, Fatima wanted her family to adopt the same rigid interpretation of faith to be saved from hell for which she arranged them to follow Haik's online lessons (Tribunale di Milano, 2016). Consequently, as a strong minded, self-confident, even aggressive personality she wanted to be in charge of everything related to her worldview. Which is exemplified by the fact that upon Baghdadi's call on all Muslims to migrate to the IS, Fatima herself (which is quite uncommon for "IS brides"), chose to marry an aspiring Jihadist whom she met before her departure to Syria as not to be forced to marry a stranger within the Islamic caliphate itself (Marone, 2016a).

Polarisation

In the case of Fatima Sergio, Islamist rhetoric is used to legitimise in-group membership as such by drawing a line between true, righteous Muslims and the others, the "*al kafirun, the*

unbelievers". Fatima considered everything related to her family's life in Italy as opposed to their religious duties. As a consequence, she endorsed the obligation of Muslims and especially of her parents to migrate to the territories of IS, to "*destroy the unbelievers*", spoke about the presence of "*mujahidin (fighters) in Italy who have connections*", desired to "*die as a martyr*", and predicted the expansion of ISIS to Rome by saying: "*towards the end, Insha'Allah, we will go to Rome, too, as the Prophet said (…) in Rome there will be a great battle*" (Marone, 2016a). This binary worldview and the self-imposed distance from all those who do not conform to IS ideology results in perceived group threats, as exemplified in the following quote from Fatima: *"Those people who dare to say that the jihad does not exist and do doubt why I came here doing the hijra (...) should be beheaded (...) Muslims live with al kafirun, but you are kidding, in Islam this is haram. It is not possible to work for al kafirun, I mean under the sharia law, not under democracy and you even work for them*!" (Corriere della Sera, 2015). Deeply indoctrinated she glorified ISIS as a "*perfect stated based on Sharia law*", denied accusations of human rights violations and defended corporal punishments and beheadings (Marone, 2016b). Using a typical us vs them rhetoric, she defended actions of IS and stated that "*the people beheaded are thieves and hypocrites spying from inside IS. They send information to the unbelievers, who then attack us*" (Corriere della Sera 2015).

I-GAP coding

The IGAP-coding for Fatima Sergio highlights the importance of personal experiences of systemic socio-political injustices, discrimination and Islamophobia as motivational factors for radicalisation. Her grievances, some of socio-political, religious, and even economic nature, are generalised and directed against the Western lifestyle, and dynamics of secularism and globalisation that kept disappointing, discriminating, and confusing her. Thus, they are causal not only for her irreversible alienation from Western secular values and lifestyles as well as from moderate, mainstream Islam alike, but also for her openness towards the rigid, radical, and violent ideology of ISIS. Fatima's search for a place to be accepted as devout, pure Muslim made her particularly vulnerable and prone to the idea of a global Ummah providing citizenship and the feeling of acceptance as promoted by ISIS. Her highly polarised world view compelled her to not only uphold the rigid, cruel ideology of IS that stands in contrast to Italian and Western socio-political values but to promote and even call for its defence by all means including violence.

Separatist hotspot

Injustice

Injustice perceived as a systemic process of Italianisation of the Region was central to the foundation and action of the BAS and Kerschbaumer. Clearly injustice was embodied by the lack of recognition experienced by the South Tyrolean German-speaking minority, who also felt betrayed by the mis-implementation of the De Gasperi – Gruber Agreement. Indeed, separatists were motivated by the delusion of having been left in a State which had repressed any form of cultural diversity for decades and which was – to some extent – continuing with such policy. Another issue regarded representation, or better the threat to political representation of the German-speaking population who felt being outnumbered by a continuous influx of Italian immigrants, as well as by the creation of a wider region with

Trentino. Finally, although there were clearly imbalances in the ratio of German- and Italian-speakers in the economic sectors, exposing different linguistic groups to possible employment crises following delimited economic crises in specific sectors (Romeo, 2003, p. 18), redistribution was a secondary motive when compared to the more pressing issue of representation/self-determination or the implementation of minority rights.

Grievance

The grievances experienced by Kerschbaumer and the BAS were common to the whole German- (and Ladin-) speaking population and were of political, social, ethnic, linguistic and partially economic nature (for instance, the service sector was dominated by Italian speakers) (Romeo, 2003, p. 18). Grievances were not connected to a specific event but stemmed from complex and long-standing international dynamics. Thus, BAS' demands were clearly moved towards Italian authorities. Although militants were aware that separation would have been hard to achieve (Grote, 2012, p. 106; Steurer, 2011), their grievances could and have been resolved by the implementation of a real territorial autonomy.

Alienation

Alienation from the Italian State and its policies was a decades-long process which was clearly at the centre of BAS' motivations for a violent struggle. The industrialisation of the region, especially in Bolzano, and the general lack of bilingual services greatly contributed to this process (Romeo, 2007; Romeo, 2003). Although Kerschbaumer and other members of the BAS grew dissatisfied and alienated also from the attitude of the SVP, they found support in Austria from both private groups and public authorities. The 1961 Feurnacht aimed at shaking up the South Tyrolean population and the SVP so that the South Tyrolean struggle would become central in the local, national and international political arenas.

Polarisation

Polarisation was present at all levels: between Italy and Austria, between the Italian-speaking population and the German-speaking one, and also between the BAS and the SVP – although, at least initially, some members of the SVP see BAS' actions in good light. Nevertheless, at least during Kerschbaumer's leadership, BAS actions were meant to be symbolic and to re-stimulate talks for a new solution to the South Tyrol question, since SVP's pressure was not enough. Indeed, there was clearly a contrast between the BAS ideology and the policies of the Italian state, but the divide was less strong with the SVP (Kerschbaumer had been himself a member of the party) and absent with Austrian authorities. The BAS thought to be fully backed by the population in the 1961 action, as it received support in the previous years, especially for the smuggling of arms and explosives from Austria (Grote, 2012, p. 95). However, as previously seen, the reaction was underwhelming, while Austrian, Italian and local authorities condemned violence.

I-GAP coding

The feeling of a systemic injustice caused and reinforced by the Italian state was a central motivational factor in the 1961 Feuernacht and, in general, in Kerschbaumer's militancy. In particular, the mis-implementation of the De Gasperi-Gruber agreement coupled with the

continuous inflow of Italian workforce in specific sector reinforced long-standing grievances that were shared by the majority of the German-speaking population, as showed by the success of SVP's political initiatives. However, the political action of the SVP was not enough according to BAS' members, who therefore (at least initially and up until Kerschbaumer's death) resorted to violence as a last-remedy. Nevertheless, their actions and the subsequent escalation of violent attacks did not find the expected support by the South Tyrolean population, while the political process towards autonomy eventually managed to defuse violence.

Conclusions

This report has identified and highlighted broader trends of radicalisation through the analysis of four exemplary hotspots of radicalisation in Italy.

Analysis of Gianluca Casseri's violent attack sheds light on the factors motivating and enabling violent extremist attacks by individuals only partially embedded in the right-wing milieu (Castelli Gattinara, O'Connor & Lindekilde, 2018). In Casseri's case, it emerges that mental health conditions and social isolation, combined with longstanding xenophobic and racist convictions, were crucial to informing the vague grievances which fed Casseri's sense of injustice and ultimately motivated his racist rampage. Both his writings and existing secondary studies corroborate the importance of a wider right-wing milieau, consisting of global online networks as well as of the local network linked with CPI. Despite not being a formal member of any right-wing organisation, Casseri tapped into these networks (through presentations, writings, participation to demonstrations and participation in online chats), thereby receiving validation for his ideology and arguably for his violent intentions. Thus, this analysis may help explain the radicalisation process of other violent right-wing extremists, including Luca Traini who shot six migrants in Macerata in 2018 (The Guardian, 2018) and a right-wing Ultra who beat an asylum seeker to death in 2016 (La Repubblica, 2016).

For its part, analysis of the killing of the consultant to the labour ministry Professor Marco Biagi by the NBR in 2002 through the lenses of Nadia Desdemona Lioce's writings and declarations maps a different path to violent radicalisation. In this case, the injustices and grievances derived from extreme left-wing ideological convictions emerge as crucial in determining the alienation of the perpetrator (through her underground life) and of the NBR (as the self-proclaimed avantgarde of the proletarian revolution). Grievances derived from a Marxist interpretation of the Italian labour market reforms of the early 2000s, were also crucial in identifying the victim, portrayed as a symbol of the wider bourgeois state. As such, this section sheds light on more typical paths to political radicalisation in the Italian context, where 'lone wolf' actions find little resonance in a political milieu characterised by highly hierarchical albeit fragmented extremist political organisations (Castelli Gattinara, O'Connor & Lindekilde, 2018).

The analysis of the Sergio-Kobuzi case exemplifies how the conundrum of experiences of injustices and grievances, family ties and foreign networks facilitates a sudden conversion to a radical, extremist, and violent Jihadi ideology. Unlike in other contexts, in the case of Maria Giulia 'Fatima' Sergio and her family, mosque communities and group dynamics did not play a significant role. Rather, a mixture of serious grievances, some of a socio-political, religious and economic nature, coupled with perceived experiences of systemic injustices and

discriminated related to intolerance and high levels of Islamophobia in politics and society and skillful online indoctrination, were factors triggering the radicalisation process of a whole family. The idea of a global Ummah, that provides citizenship and a feeling of acceptance, appears to be in particular attractive for devout Muslims such as Maria Giulia 'Fatima' Sergio, who already feel alienated from Western secular values and moderate, mainstream Islam alike.

Finally, the analysis of the 1961 Feuernacht has highlighted how the transnational dynamics of border regions can amplify grievances experienced at individual level in a context of social and linguistic divisions. Such polarised environment foster the development of parallel and conflicting narratives that persist long after violence has been defused. The fact that Sepp Kerschbaumer had always despised the use of violence towards people has somewhat legitimised the use of 'his' symbolic violence. To this day, the debate surrounding the role of the armed struggle in the path towards territorial autonomy is still very active and very far from being settled. This is also due to the fact that some of Kerschbaumer's motivations can still be interiorised by some sectors of the South Tyrolean society. Although, Kerschbaumer was clearly motivated by years of struggle for recognition both as a private individual and as a public figure, he was also moved by the fear of losing his identity and that of South Tyrol due to the demographic changes triggered by migration. In a context where different strands of radicalisation have combined with each other, it may become easier to de-historicise prominent figures and crucial events to support the opposition to modern phenomena.

In sum, our choice to focus on four hotspots exemplifying the four main radical milieus in Italy (right-wing; left-wing; Islamist and ethno-nationalist/separatist) enabled us to map comprehensively diverging paths to violent radicalisation. Two motivational elements emerge as crucial across the four case studies.

First, perceived injustices emerge as a crucial motivating factor for all perpetrators examined here. In some cases, these are informed by rigid ideological positions, in others they emerge from individual experiences of discrimination and marginalisation.

Second, the existence of networks that provide a sense of community and vindication for their beliefs is crucial to the motivations of all perpetrators. These networks can take the form of formal political or paramilitary organisations or of loose and informal networks in which individuals become partially embedded and where they find 'echo chambers' for their beliefs and violent aspirations. In all cases, embeddedness in these networks corroborated the perpetrators' self-image as a fighting vanguard, and their idea that they were putting into practice what many more citizens deemed to be necessary and beneficial.

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Annex: I-GAP Coding

Right-wing hotspot

Injustice Coding

Q1. To what extent the hotspot is a response to injustice?	5
Comments to Q1	The act intended to 'put into action hateful ideology, such as racism' - radicalized by claims of injustice voiced by the group with which they identify or in opposition to the justice claims of rival groups.
Q2. To what extent was the actor motivated by a real or perceived systemic bias or prejudice which leads to consistently unfair treatment?	5
Comments to Q2	Injustice stemming from ongoing or repetitive instances of perceived wrongdoing.
Q3. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of redistribution?	4
Comments to Q3	Redistribution of resources away from white Europeans and to immigrants is a motive.
Q4. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of recognition?	1
Comments to Q4	Lack of symbolic recognition of neo-fascism; lack of intellectual recognition for himself.
Q5. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of representation?	2
Comments to Q5	Sense of injustice only partially rooted in lack of political representation for neo-fascists.

Grievance Coding

Q1. How specific is the experienced grievance?	1
Comments to Q1	Accusation framed in an abstract form of general discontent (racism)

Q2. How extensive and diverse is the list of grievances?	2
Comments to Q2	Racist, antisemitic and fascist
Q3. How personal is the grievance?	5
Comments to Q3	Frustration related to global injustice, no individual experiences
Q4. How formalized is the demand to address the grievance?	5
Comments to Q4	Anti-immigrant and racist feelings without clear referent
Q5. How realistic are the prospects to address the grievance?	5
Comments to Q5	Sense of grievance based in prejudice and bigotry

Alienation Coding

Q1. How specific and central is the sense of alienation?	1
Comments to Q1	General and imprecise sense of social alienation
Q2. How voluntary is the process of alienation?	1
Comments to Q2	The actors presented their alienation as resulting from an autonomous and (re)active decision but clear attempt to become part of CasaPound which nonetheless kept him at arms length
Q3. How complete is the alienation?	5
Comments to Q3	Sensation of total and comprehensive disengagement from the social surrounding- no social point of reference except for the radicalized group
Q4. How entrenched is the alienation?	4
Comments to Q4	An individual isolated from his family and wider community
Q5. How reversible is the sense of alienation?	5

Comments to Q5	Alienation perceived as an inescapable condition

Polarisation Coding

Q1. To what extent does the actor consider the political field to be polarized?	1
Comments to Q1	See themselves as acting as part of a socio-cultural group, and having the courage to actually do what the group thinks
Q2. How high is the perceived level of the polarization?	5
Comments to Q2	Irreconcilable their values or systems of belief to be with the other camp
Q3. To what extent do the actor's opinions radically contrast with the institutions (political, religious, cultural) and policies that are currently in place?	4
Comments to Q3	High perceived contrast between the actor and the establishment, but informal affiliation with casapound providing echo chamber
Q4. To what extent does the actor consider the political field to be polarized as compared with the social sphere?	
Comments to Q4	Not clear, no quotes
Q5. Did the actor consider their radical positions to have a clear outlet on the institutional, cultural, or political spectrum prior to the hotspot?	3
Comments to Q5	Neo-fascism formally prohibited by law to feature in a platform of a political party or to be voiced in the parliament but embedded in casa pound

Left-wing hotspot

Injustice Coding

Q1. To what extent the hotspot is a response to injustice?	1

Comments to Q1	the sense of injustice is central to the decision to participate in the attack
Q2. To what extent was the actor motivated by a real or perceived systemic bias or prejudice which leads to consistently unfair treatment?	4
Comments to Q2	the perceived injustice was produced by the bourgeois state
Q3. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of redistribution?	4
Comments to Q3	the injustice calls for resistance to detrimental conditions of the proletariat
Q4. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of recognition?	2
Comments to Q4	the hotspot aimed to reconstitute the BR-PCC as a recognised military and political actor in Italy
Q5. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of representation?	1
Comments to Q5	Lioce feels represented in the BR-PCC but not in existing political parties

Grievance Coding

Q1. How specific is the experienced grievance?	3
Comments to Q1	The bourgeoise state is crushing the interests of the proletariat
Q2. How extensive and diverse is the list of grievances?	5
Comments to Q2	Opposition to the imperialist and burgeois state, avantguarde of global resistance
Q3. How personal is the grievance?	5
Comments to Q3	not personal at all
Q4. How formalized is the demand to address the grievance?	5
Comments to Q4	resistance to the bourgeoise state does not appeal to particular actors to redress injustices and grievances

Q5. How realistic are the prospects to address the grievance?	5
Comments to Q5	the sense of grievance is based on rigid ideological positions

Alienation Coding

Q1. How specific and central is the sense of alienation?	5
Comments to Q1	Lioce only expresses her alienation against the bourgeois state and the political class
Q2. How voluntary is the process of alienation?	3
Comments to Q2	Lioce perceiving herself as the avantgarde of the revolution
Q3. How complete is the alienation?	3
Comments to Q3	alienation is towards the state and some political parties. They feel they represent the proletariat (as well as the BR-PCC).
Q4. How entrenched is the alienation?	5
Comments to Q4	the alienation is the result of long-term indoctrination and decades of clandestinitá
Q5. How reversible is the sense of alienation?	5
Comments to Q5	alienation presented as a privilege, as marking the avantgarde of the revolution

Polarisation Coding

Q1. To what extent does the actor consider the political field to be polarized?	1
Comments to Q1	Lioce sees the field as fully polarised between the bourgeois state and proletariat of which BR are the avantguarde
Q2. How high is the perceived level of the polarization?	5
Comments to Q2	The political group is fully polarised
Q3. To what extent do the actor's opinions radically contrast with the	5

institutions (political, religious, cultural) and policies that are currently in place?	
Comments to Q3	the actors' opinions contrast with all institutions
Q4. To what extent does the actor consider the political field to be polarized as compared with the social sphere?	1
Comments to Q4	politics no longer reflects the social divide, and the opposition is not acting in the interests of the proletariat
Q5. Did the actor consider their radical positions to have a clear outlet on the institutional, cultural, or political spectrum prior to the hotspot?	1
Comments to Q5	The actor could not be represented by existing political groups

Jihadist hotspot

Injustice Coding

Q1. To what extent the hotspot is a response to injustice?	1
Comments to Q1	Injustice is central
Q2. To what extent was the actor motivated by a real or perceived systemic bias or prejudice which leads to consistently unfair treatment?	5
Comments to Q2	Injustice is systemic
Q3. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of redistribution?	1
Comments to Q3	Redistribution is only a negligible motive
Q4. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of recognition?	3
Comments to Q4	Although recognition seemed not at the centre of her motivation, structural islamophobia may have contributed to her radicalisation path

Q5. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of representation?	5
Comments to Q5	Representation is an important issue considering that Fatima acknowledges ISIS as the true, perfect State guaranteeing the application of Sharia Law.

Grievance Coding

Q1. How specific is the experienced grievance?	3
Comments to Q1	Her initial complaints related to her being discriminated because of wearing the niqab were quite specific and outspoken. Yet her accusations from within the IS directed against the West and against "unbelievers" were of rather general nature.
Q2. How extensive and diverse is the list of grievances?	3
Comments to Q2	She experienced socio-political, religious, and partially economic grievances.
Q3. How personal is the grievance?	1
Comments to Q3	Fatima was refused entrance in a supermarket and a bus and fired from her job. Her family experienced economic grievances first-hand.
Q4. How formalized is the demand to address the grievance?	2
Comments to Q4	The petition for an allowance of the niqab at workplace was formalized and specific, yet all other demands (especially those voiced from within IS), were vague.
Q5. How realistic are the prospects to address the grievance?	3
Comments to Q5	Demands related to her family travelling to Syria and joining her within IS were somehow realistic and coherent, yet others voiced were more or less based on the ideology of IS thus bigotry.
Q1. How specific is the experienced grievance?	3

Alienation Coding

Q1. How specific and central is the sense of alienation?	5
Comments to Q1	The feeling of alienation not only from Western secular values but also from moderate, mainstream Islam and the re-orientation of Fatima towards the IS was the result of the skilful online-indoctrination by Bushra Haik who continuously glorified terrorist actions of IS against Western targets and religious minorities such as Shiites and other communities opposing IS propaganda.
Q2. How voluntary is the process of alienation?	1
Comments to Q2	Fatima voluntarily chose to follow the path of IS.
Q3. How complete is the alienation?	5
Comments to Q3	Fatima completely disengaged from her life in Italy.
Q4. How entrenched is the alienation?	5
Comments to Q4	The deep-seated indoctrination and radicalization of Fatima was the result of several years of indoctrinating online-lessons and Facebook posts.
Q5. How reversible is the sense of alienation?	5
Comments to Q5	The process of Fatima's alienation was irreversible; she was deeply indoctrinated and believed that the IS could provide for a righteous life and that migration to its territories is an obligation for believing Muslims.

Polarisation Coding

Q1. To what extent does the actor consider the political field to be polarized?	1
Comments to Q1	Fatima associated herself and acted in line with the ideology of IS not only by migrating

	to its territories, but also by recruiting others including her family for its cause.
Q2. How high is the perceived level of the polarization?	5
Comments to Q2	The worldview of Fatima as a muhajira (female emigrant) and female recruiter of IS stands diametral to those of the Italian and Western socio-political landscape.
Q3. To what extent do the actor's opinions radically contrast with the institutions (political, religious, cultural) and policies that are currently in place?	5
Comments to Q3	Fatima's aspirations to live in a perfect state governed by Sharia are denounced by Italian politics with the cause of IS being even feared by the public.
Q4. To what extent does the actor consider the political field to be polarized as compared with the social sphere?	
Comments to Q4	no indications on how Fatima perceived politics.
Q5. Did the actor consider their radical positions to have a clear outlet on the institutional, cultural, or political spectrum prior to the hotspot?	1
Comments to Q5	Causes pursued by Fatima and by IS in general are diametrical to those of Italy's state institutions, thus are legally prohibited in Italy.

Separatist hotspot

Injustice Coding

Q1. To what extent the hotspot is a response to injustice?	1
Comments to Q1	injustice is central
Q2. To what extent was the actor motivated by a real or perceived systemic bias or prejudice which leads to consistently unfair treatment?	5

Comments to Q2	injustice is systemic
Q3. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of redistribution?	3
Comments to Q3	redistribution is not a central motive although there were issues regarding the difference in workforce
Q4. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of recognition?	5
Comments to Q4	recognition is absolutely a central motive
Q5. To what extent the injustice is linked to issues of representation?	4
Comments to Q5	representation is central in the sense that the influx of Italians is perceived as decreasing representation

Grievance Coding

Q1. How specific is the experienced grievance?	3
Comments to Q1	complaints are specific in their demand for autonomy/separation but are not linked to a particular event but on complex and long-standing local and national policies/attitudes
Q2. How extensive and diverse is the list of grievances?	5
Comments to Q2	grievances are of political, economic, social, ethnic, linguistic nature
Q3. How personal is the grievance?	3
Comments to Q3	grievances are experienced by BAS members and Kerschbaumer but are absolutely common in the whole population
Q4. How formalized is the demand to address the grievance?	1
Comments to Q4	demands are clearly moved towards the Italian state
Q5. How realistic are the prospects to address the grievance?	2

Comments to Q5	separatist themselves said they were aware of their real possibilities (i.e. that re-unification with Austria was hard), nevertheless most of the grievances expressed have been resolved with the statute of autonomy so they were resolvable
Q1. How specific is the experienced grievance?	3

Alienation Coding

Q1. How specific and central is the sense of alienation?	5
Comments to Q1	process of italianisation
Q2. How voluntary is the process of alienation?	5
Comments to Q2	e.g. only 5% of German in the service sector
Q3. How complete is the alienation?	3
Comments to Q3	actors were alienated to some extent from the politics of the SVP but received support in Austria
Comments to Q3	
Q4. How entrenched is the alienation?	5
Comments to Q4	alienation was a decades-long process which began after WWI
Q5. How reversible is the sense of alienation?	1

Polarisation Coding

Q1. To what extent does the actor consider the political field to be polarized?	4
Comments to Q1	the action was thought to be backed by the population, though it was not really, and it was condemned by the SVP, however, the sentiment before and after was ambivalent and the BAS received often support by the population in smuggling weapons.
Q2. How high is the perceived level of the polarization?	4

Comments to Q2	the BAS was in its initial phases created to publicise the ST struggle and influence political action in Italy and Austria. So polarisation is present because Kerschbaumer thought that the SVP was doing nothing but he also relied in the resuming of talks in Austria and Italy
Q3. To what extent do the actor's opinions radically contrast with the institutions (political, religious, cultural) and policies that are currently in place?	3
Comments to Q3	there was contrast in Italy, but less in South Tyrol and collaboration in Austria
Q4. To what extent does the actor consider the political field to be polarized as compared with the social sphere?	4
Comments to Q4	politics reflect the social divide but there was the need to do something else on the symbolic level
Q5. Did the actor consider their radical positions to have a clear outlet on the institutional, cultural, or political spectrum prior to the hotspot?	5
Comments to Q5	kerschbaumer was a member of the SVP