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**Memory, Perception, Reception: Following the
fate of the victims of Italy's *anni di piombo*
through the writing of their children.**

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Abstract

This thesis considers some of those who were killed in politically-motivated attacks, often referred to as ‘terrorism’, which took place during Italy’s *anni di piombo*. Six works written by victims’ children will be used as a lens through which to examine the collective memory and the victims’ place therein. In recent years, there has been a shift in the way that this period of Italian history - the *anni di piombo* - has been remembered. Where previously the perpetrators of the violence of those years dominated public discourse, in the last decade the principal narrative has become more victim-centred. The biographical works written by victims’ children have inevitably contributed to this change in the memory narrative. The techniques employed in their writing in order to change the existing public image of their fathers will be analysed in this thesis, along with certain themes that recur throughout the six works and broader victim-centred discussion of this period. Analysis begins with a thorough outline of the political and historical context of the *anni di piombo*, including case studies of two of the most famous victims of this period and a consideration of the written works of some of the former terrorists. Following this preliminary contextualisation, each of the six books and their authors will be studied in detail to provide a foundation for the analysis contained in the final three chapters. The themes examined in the second half of the thesis are second-generation writing, forgiveness and commemoration. Using these themes as a framework, a rigorous investigation of the place that the victims hold in collective memory; the role their children’s writing has played in shaping and maintaining their public image and the longer-term impact that these changes can be seen to have had within a broader societal and political perspective is undertaken. On the basis of this study, it is evident that the victims’ place in the collective memory of the *anni di piombo* has changed dramatically since that period of violence concluded. The victims’ children have been very significant in enacting this change and their writing has placed them in a position from which they can continue to exert influence and promote a victim-centred approach to history.

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Finally, and above all, I wish to thank my family. Their unfailing belief in me and in this project has been immensely important to me over the years. I could not have completed this thesis without my parents’ support and I dedicate it to them.

Author's Declaration

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

Emily Ryder

Introduction

Anni di piombo

This thesis aims to study the memory of a group of people killed in Italy's recent past and the broader, collective memory of the historical period during which they died. The focus will be the victims of the turbulent 1970s in Italy, a period that has come to be known as the *anni di piombo*, with reference to the bullets that represent the political violence of those years. This term was adopted from the Italian title of Margarethe von Trotta's 1981 film about German terrorism, *Die bleierne Zeit*.¹ As a lens through which to examine the victims of this period, we take six texts, written by the children of some of these victims about their murdered fathers. By publishing biographies from such a personal perspective on the history and memory of this period, the authors can be seen to add their voices to a public memory of these figures as, through their words, they attempt to influence the existing public image of their fathers. The six authors and their works are: Agnese Moro, *Un uomo così: Ricordando mio padre*²; Giovanni Fasanella and Sabina Rossa, *Guido Rossa, mio padre*³; Mario Calabresi, *Spingendo la notte più in là: Storia della mia famiglia e di altre vittime del terrorismo*⁴; Benedetta Tobagi, *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore: Storia di mio padre*⁵; Silvia Giralucci, *L'inferno sono gli altri*⁶ and Massimo Coco, *Ricordare stanca*⁷.

The term, *anni di piombo*, refers to approximately ten years of Italian history, from the late 1960s to the 1980s. During this time, Italy saw a large amount of violence, often politically motivated and now commonly described as

¹ Ruth Glynn, *Women, Terrorism, and Trauma in Italian Culture* (Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 232, note 6.

² Agnese Moro, *Un uomo così: Ricordando mio padre* (Milano: Rizzoli, 2003).

³ Giovanni Fasanella & Sabina Rossa, *Guido Rossa, mio padre* (Milano: BUR Futuropassato, 2006).

⁴ Mario Calabresi, *Spingendo la notte più in là: Storia della mia famiglia e di altre vittime del terrorismo* (Milano: Mondadori, 2007).

⁵ Benedetta Tobagi, *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore: Storia di mio padre* (Torino: Einaudi, 2009).

⁶ Silvia Giralucci, *L'inferno sono gli altri* (Milano: Mondadori, 2011).

⁷ Massimo Coco, *Ricordare stanca* (Milano: Sperling & Kupfer, 2012).

'terrorism'. Alison Jamieson records that between 1969 and 1987, 14,591 terrorist attacks took place in Italy, committed by both left- and right-wing perpetrators; 1,182 people were injured and 419 people died.⁸ This violence can be divided into two categories: that which was perpetrated by organised groups who held extreme left-wing political views, the most famous of whom are the *Brigate rosse* (Red Brigades), and *Prima Linea* (Front Line); there were also large-scale violent acts whose execution has been attributed to extreme right-wing groups; examples of these are the bombings of Bologna train station in August 1980 and the Banca Nazionale dell'Agricoltura in Piazza Fontana in Milan in December 1969. The extreme left-wing groups tended to target individuals whose views or actions the groups opposed while the acts perpetrated by right-wing groups were generally less selective in their targets and their aim was to cause a large amount of damage and to unsettle the political status quo. The right-wing perpetrated large-scale bombings are referred to as *stragi* and many of them remain unsolved to this day, often with no named perpetrators and little in the way of satisfying judicial conclusions.⁹

A third category of violence that occurred during this period is the frequent street battles between left- and right-wing militants, and between these militants and the police. The violence meted out resulted in large numbers of injuries and even deaths. These street battles led to parts of Italian cities such as Milan and Rome becoming known as 'red' or 'black' areas and territorial violence was widespread.¹⁰ This politically-motivated violence was most fierce during the second half of the 1970s and it took place alongside that which was perpetrated by the Red Brigades and *Prima Linea*; these smaller militant organisations providing those groups with ample recruiting grounds. The groups that took part in politically-motivated street battles were less rigidly organised than the larger groups. The radical, violent militants on the left called

⁸ Alison Jamieson, *The Heart Attacked: Terrorism and Conflict in the Italian State* (London and New York: Marion Boyars, 1989), pp. 19-20.

⁹ While *strage* translates literally into the English word, 'massacre', in this essay we will use the Italian word because it is often quite specifically used to refer to the acts of mass murder carried out during the *anni di piombo*. As such, it is a useful by-word to describe these events rather than the more generic 'massacres'.

¹⁰ Franco Ferraresi, *Minacce alla democrazia: La Destra radicale e la strategia della tensione in Italia nel dopoguerra* (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1995), p. 286.

themselves *autonomi*, reflecting their anarchist beliefs. They were far to the left of the policies and actions of the official representatives of the mainstream left in Italy, the Italian Communist Party (Partito comunista italiano, PCI), and their movement was driven by a desire to react against what they saw as the failings and shortcomings of the orthodox left-wing organisations.¹¹ The *autonomi* and the right-wing groups who they clashed with are not generally considered to be terrorists: the violence they perpetrated was relatively localised as they generally only fought amongst themselves or clashed with the police. They are included here because people who were members of these groups sometimes went on to become members of the groups who are thought of as ‘terrorists’.

The various components of the political violence that defined the *anni di piombo* have led some to describe Italy during those years as experiencing a ‘civil war’. While this hypothesis is disputed, it gives a clear indication of the pervasive feeling of unease and insecurity experienced by many Italians at the time and which has remained an element of the collective memory.¹² Many Italians seem to view this part of their history as unresolved: ‘una ferita non ancora rimarginata, un dolore collettivo che esplode in forma violenta e lacerante ogni volta che la discussione su quegli anni si riapre.’¹³ Ruth Glynn describes the way that Italians are affected by the memory of the *anni di piombo* as a kind of collective post-traumatic stress disorder experienced not only by those who were directly involved in terrorism, but all of society.¹⁴ The writer Daniele Biacchessi suggests that Italy’s failure to adequately comprehend and come to terms with the events of the *anni di piombo* continues to influence the country today: ‘il nostro è un paese in cui il passato non passa mai, e

¹¹ Paul Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy: Society and Politics 1943-1988* (London: Penguin, 1990), pp. 380-383.

¹² Anna Cento Bull, *Italian Neofascism: The Strategy of Tension and the Politics of Nonreconciliation* (New York & Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2007), pp. 8-10.

¹³ Raimondo Catanzaro & Luigi Manconi (eds.), *Storie di Lotta Armata* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1995), p. 7.

¹⁴ Ruth Glynn, ‘Through the Lens of Trauma: The Figure of the Female Terrorist in *Il Prigioniero* and *Buongiorno, Notte*’, in *Imagining Terrorism: The rhetoric and representation of political violence in Italy 1969-2009*, ed. by Pierpaolo Antonello & Alan O’Leary (London: Legenda, 2009), pp. 63-76 (pp. 63-64).

condiziona ancora oggi la politica e le sue Istituzioni'.¹⁵ Anna Cento Bull has pointed out that many countries that have experienced civil wars have benefited from a 'process of peace building and national reconciliation' and she questions whether Italy's problematic memory of this period may stem from the fact that such a process has never taken place there.¹⁶ Many of the authors who have written their fathers' stories - and many of the authors of victim-centred historical studies too - equate the continued absence of historical and judicial truths regarding many of the events of the *anni di piombo* and a perceived failure of democracy in Italy.

Since perceptions of democracy and its failure or success in Italy will be a central theme in this thesis, at this point it is worth briefly attempting to understand precisely how the term 'democracy' is understood and used by the authors. To give a basic definition, this term refers to a system of government wherein citizens are involved in making decisions that influence how their country is run, usually through a committee of elected representatives in, for instance, a parliament. In his definition, Norberto Bobbio stresses the importance of a set of rules that dictate how decisions are made in a democracy:

[A] 'democratic regime' is taken to mean first and foremost a set of procedural rules for arriving at collective decisions in a way which accommodates and facilitates the fullest possible participation of interested parties.¹⁷

Bobbio also discusses the problems of what he calls 'invisible power' within democracies: democracy, Bobbio writes, is founded on the premise that those in power conduct their activities in public, that they are visible.¹⁸ If citizens are to put their trust into a group of elected representatives, they must believe that those representatives will administer that power openly and justly and that their actions should reflect the will of the people. The corruption and careerism that Bobbio acknowledges are displayed by many Italian politicians seem to have

¹⁵ Daniele Biacchessi, *Il paese della vergogna* (Milano: Chiarelettere, 2007), p. 19.

¹⁶ Cento Bull, *Italian Neofascism*, p. 10.

¹⁷ Norberto Bobbio, trans. by Roger Griffin, *The Future of Democracy: A Defence of the Rules of the Game* (Cambridge: Polity press, 1987), p. 19.

¹⁸ Bobbio, trans. by Griffin, *The Future of Democracy*, p. 80.

naturally led to these questions regarding Italian democracy.¹⁹ Implicit in the suspicion surrounding those holding ‘invisible power’ is the idea that, since they are not visible, they are therefore not accountable for their actions or misdeeds and could, potentially, hide truths for their own benefit. As will be demonstrated, this notion of ‘invisible power’ might be applied to the treatment that the victims and their families have received from the Italian authorities over the years and thus the authors very consciously place their fathers on the side of democracy and democratic values. They focus on their fathers’ innocence, on the fact that they were targeted, with the exception of Graziano Giralucci, for attempting to oppose or combat political extremism by doing work considered in some way to have upheld Italy’s democratic values, such as writing newspaper articles denouncing terrorist violence or legislating against terrorism. By writing in this way and rendering their stories public, their books might be described as testimonies that decry the darker side of Italian society and bear witness to the hurt and injustice that has occurred.

Although Bobbio was writing in the 1980s and the violence of the *anni di piombo* occurred even further back in history, nonetheless, these concerns regarding democracy in Italy continue to this day. The link between truth and a democratic society in Italy was recently iterated by the President of the Chamber of Deputies, Laura Boldrini, in a speech commemorating the memory of another problematic and painful episode of Italian history, the *foibe* massacres. Large numbers of Italians living in Venezia-Giulia, Istria and Dalmatia were killed by Yugoslav Communist partisans in the final years of World War Two and in the period immediately following the end of the war and many of their bodies were dumped in sinkholes, *foibe*, in the region. The memory of these massacres, just like the memory of some of the *anni di piombo* violence, is problematic because the exact number and identity of the victims remains unknown and because the Italian government is believed to have attempted to cover up historical details for political reasons.²⁰ In her speech, Boldrini made an unequivocal connection between truth and democratic society: ‘un Paese che nasconde la verità non può mai essere un Paese libero e democratico’.²¹ Boldrini’s point, which transfers

¹⁹ Bobbio, trans. by Griffin, *The Future of Democracy*, p. 70.

²⁰ Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy*, pp. 103-104.

²¹ http://www.camera.it/leg17/1131?shadow_comunicatostampa=8828

comfortably to discussion of the *anni di piombo*, is as much to do with the government's role in helping truth to be uncovered as it is to do with democracy and freedom. In summary, the authors at the centre of this thesis believe that, by writing and publishing their versions of their fathers' stories, they put pressure on the Italian government to recognise these elements of history - the precise details of their fathers' murders, but also the political and historical factors that have contributed to the existing public image of them - and to open a frank discussion about them in society. By doing so, they claim to attempt to contribute to the democratisation of their country.

The term *anni di piombo* has been deemed to be reductive by some scholars as it can seem to distil the history of this decade into just one aspect; the violence that took place.²² What is more, when one speaks of the violence of the *anni di piombo*, one normally refers to that perpetrated by the two extreme political poles and the organised groups who represented them: for example, the Red Brigades and Prima Linea on the left and Ordine Nuovo - a neo-fascist group active in the Veneto region whose members were involved in carrying out the *stragi*, most notably, the bombing of the bank in Piazza Fontana - on the right. The victims of the lower-level street violence generally do not feature in discussions of the period, although there are exceptions.²³ Giovanni De Luna argues that a blanket use of the term *anni di piombo* is unhelpful as it encourages us to remember some victims more than others. Describing the way that many left-wing militants have no place in the collective memory of the 1970s, he writes:

Gli 'anni di piombo' sono calati sul loro ricordo come una pietra tombale. Tutto è stato appiattito su quella definizione, tutto è precipitato nel vortice del terrorismo.²⁴

²² Ilaria Vezzani, 'Gli anni Settanta e la "patologia della memoria"' in Maurizia Morini (ed.), *Figli delle vittime: Gli anni Settanta, le storie di famiglia* (Roma: Aliberti, 2012), pp. 15-44 (p.18).

²³ Andrea Hajek has written about the memory of Francesco Lo Russo, a student with left-wing beliefs who was killed by police during a demonstration in Bologna in 1977: Hajek, *Negotiating memories of protest in Western Europe: the case of Italy* (Basingstoke : Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Luca Telese has written about the right-wing victims of these violent clashes: Telese, *Cuori neri* (Milano: Sperling & Kupfer, 2010).

²⁴ Giovanni De Luna, *Le ragioni di un decennio: 1969-1979. Militanza, violenza, sconfitta, memoria* (Milano: Feltrinelli, 2009), pp. 7-8.

Despite the potentially reductive nature of this term, it will be used throughout this study to describe the period during which the victims who are the focus of our study were killed. 'Victims of the *anni di piombo*' is an appropriate phrase to describe those at the heart of our analysis because they were murdered by members of violent, extreme left-wing groups - 'terrorist' groups - who targeted each of them very deliberately because of their actions and opposing political views. It is important to recognise the debate at this point because the problems associated with differing levels of public memory of victims are nevertheless fundamental to our study. The term *anni di piombo* is only reductive if it is used to refer to the whole decade of the 1970s in Italy because, clearly, the violence described above only constitutes one aspect of that time.

While, as De Luna has pointed out, the term does not describe all of the people who were killed during those years and seems to skew the collective memory in favour of a few better-known victims, this selective mode of remembrance can be seen to occur in memory and commemoration generally. This thesis has written works at its core and their authors can be seen to add to the selective nature of the memory of the victims of those years. The victims at the centre of the works studied in this thesis are some of the best known of the people killed during this time and their children only increase their fame by writing about them, but this focus should not be seen as an attempt to favour the memory of certain victims or to disregard the memory of others. The question of a hierarchy of grief or memory is very interesting and will be discussed in this study and this would be a stimulating topic to develop further in future studies of this period and its victims.

It is with Glynn's assessment of the wider societal implications of the violence of the *anni di piombo* in mind that it has been decided to focus this study on books written by people directly affected by terrorism as a way to then examine the place of the victims in a collective memory. This selection of works offers us an insight into the complicated and conflicting memory-making processes that take place when writing about a recent period of history from a personal point of view: each of the authors wishes the particular image of their father portrayed in their writing to be absorbed into collective imagination. The addition of these often emotional and personal reflections to the corpus can largely be seen to render the history more nuanced and certainly more victim-centred. Giovanni De Luna has identified an increasing trend in Italian

historiography to focus on the victim and in his work, *La Repubblica del dolore*, he analyses the impact that this has had on our view of history today. De Luna posits that when one discusses victim-centred narratives of history, a certain tone is used to reflect this. As such, more importance is now given to the emotions - De Luna proposes hatred, revenge, forgiveness, pity and compassion as the foremost examples of the themes of this newly emotional discourse²⁵ - and to the role of victims' families in the making and shaping of a collective memory. This hypothesis about an increasingly victim-centred historiography is used as a foundation from which we will build our analysis. Within the six texts at the centre of our study, themes arise that illustrate De Luna's theory and this thesis will examine a selection of them to depict the image that is being created of these victims in collective memory.

Anna Cento Bull and Philip Cooke's recent study, *Ending Terrorism in Italy*, takes some of the works written by children of victims into consideration when addressing the legacy of terrorism in Italy.²⁶ However, their interest in these books forms only a small part of their broad study and this thesis provides a more in-depth analysis both of the works and of their significance within the collective memory. Ruth Glynn has also examined some of these works in an insightful article published in 2013 in which she charts the emergence of victim narratives within discussions of the *anni di piombo*.²⁷ This thesis adds to the existing literature because of its focus on specific aspects of these victim-centred, second generation-authored works. Through close textual analysis of the six books, both individually and as a corpus, a detailed picture emerges of the ways that, by writing, the authors can be seen to promote the memory of their deceased fathers within the public imagination. These works engage with and question the existing discourse regarding the victims' memory and our analysis allows an examination of the myriad uses that the authors make of their fathers' memories: this thesis highlights the ways that they manipulate and manage their public image through their writing. By adding their own voices to

²⁵ Giovanni De Luna, *La Repubblica del dolore: Le memorie di un'Italia divisa* (Milano: Feltrinelli, 2011), p. 16.

²⁶ Anna Cento Bull & Philip Cooke, *Ending Terrorism in Italy* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013).

²⁷ Ruth Glynn, 'The "turn to the victim" in Italian culture: victim-centred narratives of the *anni di piombo*', *Modern Italy*, 18:4 (2013), 373-390.

the discussion of the history and memory of the *anni di piombo*, these authors invite questions regarding intergenerational memory and responses to historic traumatic events. A consideration of these questions and themes informs and underlines the analysis contained within this thesis.

Collective memory

A collective memory is difficult to chart: by its nature it is malleable, particularly when the events remembered are within living memory and its promoters have a personal interest in putting across a specific version of events. Above all, it is rooted in the present and highly susceptible to reinterpretations based on current social and political factors.²⁸ Collective memory is generated from and contained within a wide variety of public spaces, including cinematic and televisual interpretations of past events, newspaper reports, public debates and scholastic texts. This study will examine how the authors' individual memories, shared through their written works and influenced by these factors, can be seen to contribute to a wider collective memory today. By focusing on these books, we only examine one aspect of this collective memory, but in doing so we can understand much about the collective memory of this period more generally. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to establish a working definition of a collective memory at this stage in our study. The concept of a collective memory was first suggested by Maurice Halbwachs, who proposed that such a form of memory is social.²⁹ In this sense, he recognised that individual memories morph when they are shared and grow into an idealised image, something Patrick H. Hutton has described as a 'composite memory'.³⁰ Jan Assmann expands on this, claiming that memory can be as malleable and as influenced by social context as personality, language and consciousness:

In the act of remembering we do not just descend into the depths of our own most intimate inner life, but we introduce an order and a structure

²⁸ Francesca Cappelletto, 'Long-Term Memory of Extreme Events: From Autobiography to History', *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 9: 2 (2003), 241-260 (p. 241).

²⁹ Maurice Halbwachs, *La mémoire collective* (Paris: Éditions Albin Michel, 1997), pp. 51-65.

³⁰ Patrick H. Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory* (Hanover & London: University Press of New England, 1993), p. 7.

into that internal life that are socially conditioned and that link us to the social world. Every act of consciousness is socially mediated; only in our dreams do we find that the social world relaxes its structuring grip on our inner life.³¹

Giovanni De Luna, writing about the construction of Italy's collective memory, underlines that we must disregard as well as retain elements of history:

Quando parliamo di memoria pubblica ci riferiamo a un 'patto' in cui ci si accorda su cosa trattenere e cosa lasciare cadere degli eventi del nostro passato. Su questi eventi si costruisce un albero genealogico di una nazione.³²

The inevitably selective nature of collective memory underlined here by De Luna is crucial to our study of the place in the collective memory that is being shaped by these writers for their fathers. By writing their fathers' stories and publishing them, the six authors whose works will be analysed in this thesis make two clear demands of their readers: firstly, to remember their fathers and secondly, to remember them as they are portrayed in these books, by them, their children.

A collective memory is therefore subjective, dependent, as Assmann and Cappelletto have written, on social and political context. It cannot be seen as one single 'memory', rather it depends on a number of different factors. When we write about the place of these victims within a collective national memory, often what is meant is closer to a notion of fame or recognition: for many of the families of those who were killed during these years, sharing their grief is an essential part of the mourning process. In this sense, without conducting extensive, cross-generational interviews, it would be difficult to chart the place of the victims in a collective memory because each victim's place could be seen to change, depending on who is being asked to 'remember'. For our study, the choice to focus on the written works of the children of these victims has meant that we can examine the ways that those closest to the victims have attempted to mould and influence the 'pact' referred to by De Luna. While we may not easily be able to plot the impact their attempts have had on a large scale, a number of developments in recent years suggest that now the families of certain

³¹ Jan Assmann, trans. by Rodney Livingstone, *Religion and Cultural Memory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), pp. 1-2.

³² De Luna, *La Repubblica del dolore*, p. 13.

victims can be seen to occupy a more prominent space in the public domain: they now have greater representation at formal public commemorative ceremonies, for example, and some recent films and books display a more sympathetic attitude to certain victims than had been shown previously. In this way, the increasing influence that victims' families now have is evidenced, where previously their opinions were largely side-lined.

Writing

Aspects of the history of this period have been documented in numerous cultural forms, not least in cinema and television, where the stories of the terrorists in particular have received quite a lot of attention. Renato De Maria's 2009 film, *La Prima Linea*, was based on Sergio Segio's memoir about his experience of being a prominent member of that organisation. The film starred Riccardo Scamarcio and Giovanna Mezzogiorno - two very popular actors - in the lead roles as Segio and his partner and fellow Prima Linea leader, Susanna Ronconi, and faced criticism for seeming to romanticise the violent actions of this group.³³ *La Prima Linea* was also subject to edits and changes as a result of input from the families of victims, underlining the point made above about their growing influence.³⁴ This is only one example of a film made recently that has taken these left-wing militants as its subject. Others include *La seconda volta* (Calopresti, 1995), *Buongiorno, notte* (Bellocchio, 2003) and *La meglio gioventù* (Giordana, 2003) and these representations of *anni di piombo* violence have also been the subject of numerous recent academic studies.³⁵ Additionally, it is worth mentioning that Silvia Giralucci was involved in a film production of her book about her father,

³³ Vera Schiavazzi, "Scamarcio non trasforma brigatisti in eroi", *La Repubblica* 13th March 2009.

³⁴ Benedetta Tobagi, 'Il cinema non ha risposte per noi figli delle vittime del terrorismo', *La Repubblica*, 13th November 2009. In this interview, Tobagi discusses certain changes that were made to the film at the behest of the victims' associations, as well as her own reasons for disliking it.

³⁵ Some notable examples include, Christian Uva, *Schermi di piombo. Il terrorismo nel cinema italiano* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2007); Alan O'Leary, *Tragedia all'italiana: Italian cinema and Italian terrorisms, 1970-2010* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2011); Ruth Glynn, Giancarlo Lombardi & Alan O'Leary (eds.), *Terrorism, Italian style: Representations of political violence in contemporary Italian cinema* (London: Institute of Germanic & Romance Studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London, 2012).

entitled, *Sfiorando il muro* (2012) and a film has also been made recounting Guido Rossa's story, *Guido che sfidò le Brigate Rosse* (2007).³⁶ On the whole, however, cinematic representations of *anni di piombo* violence tend to focus on the perpetrators, rather than the victims.

Before outlining the themes that unite the six works and around which this study is structured, we will first examine the reasons why written works, as opposed to the other cultural forms mentioned above, have been chosen for this analysis. Much of the critical theory that will be used in this thesis refers to survivors of trauma, particularly when discussing strategies for coping, relationships to memory and securing a place within a collective memory. It could be argued that what has happened to these authors cannot legitimately be considered trauma because it did not happen directly to them; their fathers were murdered and they were not harmed. However, we use this term because, nonetheless, the authors have been profoundly affected by their fathers' murders. Leigh Gilmore's definition of trauma hinges on its incommunicability:

Trauma, from the Greek meaning 'wound', refers to the self-altering, even self-shattering experience of violence, injury, and harm. Crucial to the experience of trauma are the multiple difficulties that arise in trying to articulate it. Indeed, the relation between trauma and representation, and especially language, is at the center of claims about trauma as a category.³⁷

While none of the authors at the core of this study has experienced physical violence, injury and harm - at least not within the context of the *anni di piombo* - their stories centre around the fact that they have suffered the psychological harm of having their fathers ripped from their lives, often when they were very young, under unjust and quite unusual circumstances. Adhering to Gilmore's definition, this has certainly altered them and they can be seen to have had difficulty expressing themselves regarding their fathers' deaths. These authors have written their fathers' stories only after many years had passed since their murders and they seem to have gained some courage from the other authors, since all six of these works were published in close succession.

³⁶ *Sfiorando il muro*, dir. by Silvia Giralucci & Luca Ricciardi (DocLab, 2012); *Guido che sfidò le Brigate Rosse*, dir. by Giuseppe Ferrara (EMME Cinematografica, 2007).

³⁷ Leigh Gilmore, *The Limits of Autobiography: Trauma and testimony* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001), p. 6.

Writing about their experience has given the authors an opportunity to reclaim their fathers' memory and to try to shape it in a way that they find more agreeable. Judith Harris sees that, for those wishing to recount trauma, 'Writing is more than a defense - an asylum or refuge into which one can withdraw - it is also an armor one puts on to do battle'.³⁸ Therefore, the process of writing should be understood to have also helped the authors as they have used it to combat the negative emotions that they associated with their past. What is more, writing these works gives the authors the means to defend their fathers' memory against those who would remember them in a less than positive light.

Another driving force that can be seen to motivate these authors in their desire to write down their fathers' stories is the familial bond that they feel, even if they were too young when the murder took place to remember very much about their fathers. It has been shown that the generation after a traumatic event feels a strong need to recount what has gone before for very personal reasons:

If the past is to live on and be commemorated, its traces must be carried by generations who did not directly experience it, but who feel motivated to preserve it. The deep affective charges between parents, children, and grandchildren provide a major motivation of that kind.³⁹

While it is not only the children and grandchildren of victims who recount and remember past trauma, it is clear that the emotional ties that bind the memory of that event to subsequent generations provide a powerful stimulus for writing. Indeed, if a particular story is only known within a familial context, writing and publishing it may be a way to help it to pass into collective memory because in that way it is exposed to a wider audience. Therefore, these six authors can be seen to have used this medium to tell their fathers' stories as much as a way to communicate their history as it was a way to help them to come to terms with their own grief.

³⁸ Judith Harris, *Signifying Pain: constructing and healing the self through writing* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), p. 19.

³⁹ Alec G. Hargreaves, 'Generating Migrant Memories' (pp. 217-227) in Patricia M. E. Lorcin (ed.) *Algeria & France 1800-2000: Identity, Memory, Nostalgia* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2006), p. 217.

Thesis structure

This thesis is structured around the themes that have emerged throughout this study and each of the last three chapters addresses a different strand that can be seen to unite the six works. The first chapter charts the emergence of victim-centred narratives within discussions of the history of this period. It is important to establish a historical and political framework before beginning to look closely at these six works in order to contextualise the victims and the violence that ended their lives. In addition to providing the historical and political background to the murders of the six victims whose children's books are the focus of our study, Chapter One is also used to outline the historical and political landscape that immediately preceded the publication of these six books. The works were published within a decade of each other and we will examine the factors that can be seen to have contributed to these authors making the choice to write and publish these works when they did. These factors include the publication of memoirs by some of the people who were involved in perpetrating the violence of the *anni di piombo*; the inauguration in 2008 of a national commemorative day in memory of these victims and the significant anniversaries that occurred in those years, such as the thirtieth anniversary in 1998 of the bombing of the Banca Nazionale dell'Agricoltura in Piazza Fontana and, in 2003 and 2008, the twenty-fifth and thirtieth anniversaries of Aldo Moro's murder. This chapter will draw on the abovementioned article by Ruth Glynn and on Anna Cento Bull and Philip Cooke's recent book, *Ending Terrorism in Italy*, both of which examine the current place of these victims within the canon of *anni di piombo* studies. These authors' publications regarding extreme left- and right-wing violence have also been used in this chapter as a basis for the examination of these forms of political violence. For the historical and political framework contained within this chapter, the analyses found in John Foot's *Italy's Divided Memory* and Giovanni De Luna's *Le ragioni di un decennio* have been useful.

Following on from the first chapter's examination of the history and politics of these years, Chapter Two takes the corpus of works as its focus and gives details of the six works which form the core of this study. This chapter provides information about each of the books and begins to detail some of their differences and similarities, including the authors' varying writing styles, their individual focuses and the themes that connect them: truth and justice, a desire

to portray their fathers as role models for a just and democratic society and to revise the existing public image of them. Additionally, this chapter provides some information about the authors and the circumstances of their fathers' murders in order to provide a foundation for the analysis to follow.

The remaining chapters will address the themes that unite these narratives in order to illustrate the way that the authors write about their fathers and the motives and intentions that underpin their writing. In so doing, we discuss the ways that, by attempting to change the existing discourse on the *anni di piombo* and placing their fathers' stories in a more prominent and empathetic position, they wish to create a new image of their fathers in the collective memory of that period. The theme which is discussed in the third chapter is writing and the self. Each of the six authors have written their books for very individual reasons, however, as detailed above, the act of writing can be seen as an important step in their dealing with their fathers' murders. In this chapter, the act of writing and its effects are analysed with a particular emphasis on the impact that writing about past trauma can be seen to have on the writer. This chapter draws on Marianne Hirsch's writing on postmemory and this model provides an important basis for this thesis as Hirsch's notion of a new genre can be very effectively applied to the six works at the centre of our study. Following on from Hirsch's postmemory model, much of the theoretical framework contained in Chapter Three concerns the writing of the children of Holocaust survivors; their experience of 'inheriting' trauma has strong and interesting parallels with that of the children of those killed during the *anni di piombo*.

Our focus on the writing process allows us to explore the motives behind the choices these writers made when deciding to tell their fathers' stories and make them public. One of the main reasons for writing that we have identified is that the authors wished to alter and control the public image of their fathers. This chapter will assess the methods that they use to achieve this and examine the results. The questions that Judith Butler raises about the place of victims and the differing ways that we mourn different people in today's society in her books, *Precarious Life* and *Frames of War*, have provided a crucial foundation

for this analysis.⁴⁰ The psychological and therapeutic effects of writing about their fathers are also examined in this chapter, predominantly using studies by James Pennebaker and Katharine Hodgkin and Susannah Radstone as our theoretical framework. By writing their fathers' stories, the authors can be seen to write themselves into their history and, through the public appearances that many of them now make, they place themselves in an active role when it comes to promoting the victims' memory.

The theme examined in Chapter Four is forgiveness. As outlined above, in De Luna's assessment of current historiography, emotional and personal responses to the past play a central role in discussions of history which he judges to be increasingly dominated by victims and their families. The question of forgiveness can be seen to fit into De Luna's assessment as it is a recurring element of the books written by and about the children of victims and it also features prominently in interviews with and books written by their mothers, the victims' widows.

Forgiveness is an interesting concept to focus on here since, like writing about past trauma, it can be seen as a way for the victims' family members to regain some control in the face of the hurt that has been caused to them. Our discussion of these issues takes into account the work of a number of philosophers and theorists including Hannah Arendt and Simone Weil. In the Italian context in particular, forgiveness is a problematic issue when it comes to notions of justice and the search for truth and Martha Minow's work, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History after Genocide and Mass Violence*, provides an insight into the legalistic side of forgiveness.⁴¹ A number of the people found responsible for murders that took place during the *anni di piombo* served much reduced prison sentences in exchange for cooperating with the judicial process. Others, such as Red Brigades leader Renato Curcio, were offered a state pardon by the government, which is something that many of the victims' families strongly objected to as the process appeared to offer these offenders preferential treatment over other prisoners and undermined the

⁴⁰ Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London & New York: Verso, 2006); Butler, *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (London & New York: Verso, 2009).

⁴¹ Martha Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History after Genocide and Mass Violence* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998).

seriousness of their crimes. The fourth chapter also investigates the impact that a family's decision to forgive or not can have on the collective memory of their deceased relative. A public declaration of forgiveness not only affects the person being forgiven and the person doing the forgiving, but it can also render the victim more sympathetic.

A crucial element of the images that the authors try to present of their fathers and of themselves is their wish to highlight their place within a democratic and just society, as discussed above. In Chapter Five, we will examine the ways that the commemoration of the victims of the *anni di piombo* can be seen to draw upon the modes of commemoration and remembering that are associated with the memory of the Resistance in Italy during World War Two. Bearing in mind De Luna's comment on selective remembering cited above, this focus on democracy in Italy is particularly interesting. This is mentioned here as a way to contextualise the theme of democracy in the second generation's writing. We can read these authors' highlighting of their and their fathers' apparent principles as a declaration that the values that they stand for represent the complete opposite of the unjust, undemocratic actions of terrorists. This stance has clear echoes of the way that Resistance heroes were held up after World War Two as an example of anti-Fascism in Italy, selectively remembering one aspect of that recent past in a concerted effort to forget, or at least downplay, less honourable aspects.

An effort is made in much of what has been written by victims' family members - their children, but also their widows and others who contribute to the discussion - to highlight their democratic principles and to portray their struggle as one that is relevant to all of society. In a similar vein to the way that partisans were remembered principally for their heroic, anti-Fascist actions, so the victims killed during the *anni di piombo* are portrayed as civilians who were killed while merely doing their job. By writing about them in this way, their families' implication is that, if Italians do not remember them as democratic, anti-terrorist heroes, society risks embarking once more down that path.

More generally, this chapter examines the role that commemorative practices play and, consequently, what part the victims' children and their writing play in the creation and maintenance of a collective memory of these victims. Discussion of ritual is aided by Émile Durkheim's seminal anthropological studies. More recent commemoration theory from James E. Young and the ideas

of historians who have written about the commemoration of post-war and post-Holocaust, including Gabriele Schwab, Paolo Jedlowski and Rebecca Clifford have been used to provide an understanding of the European traditions of commemoration. An examination of Italian government websites enable us to study the importance that the authorities have given to commemorating these victims.

This study has been divided in this way in order to provide an in-depth and focused look at these six books and, as a consequence of this analysis, at the place that these victims hold in collective memory today. The themes that were chosen are by no means unique to these works, this history or this style of writing history, but it is their universality that is crucial as it has allowed us to compare these narratives with works written by other second-generation post-trauma writers.

1 The emergence of the victim

This thesis will use six books as a starting point from which to examine the collective memory of the victims of Italy's *anni di piombo*. The authors of the books at the core of the thesis are all people whose fathers were murdered during that period in politically-motivated attacks, by militants who held radical left-wing political beliefs. These authors offer highly personal perspectives on these historical events and their works represent one strand of narrative among many competing versions of this history. Their interpretations of their fathers' stories present us with a way to examine collective memory today because they form an important new and intimate component of what is a contested and malleable history. Thus, they were chosen for this study because of the impact that they have had on public knowledge and memory of this period. The books were all published between 2003 and 2012 and, while they are not the only books to have been written by children of victims from that time, they make up a large percentage of the works that represent the victims' point of view. Other examples of victim-centred writing include Giovanni Fasanella and Antonella Grippo's edited volume, *I silenzi degli innocenti*; Raffaello Canteri and Francesco Specchia's, *Terrorismo. L'altra storia*; *Sedie vuote*, edited by Alberto Conci, Paolo Grigolli and Natalina Mosna and Domenico and Renzo Agasso's *Il piombo e il silenzio*, although they collect together testimonies from a broader range of sources than just family members. While these works provide important insights and points of comparison, their focus is different to that of this study because they do not look solely at the experience of the victims' children. The next chapter will look more closely at the six works themselves, but first it is necessary to place them in their historical context.

This chapter will examine the emergence of the victim's voice within discussions of the *anni di piombo*. One of the principal reasons that these victim-centred books were written was to give a voice to the dead victims. Ruth Glynn highlights that reports of a total absence of victims' voices are exaggerated, pointing out that memoirs written by survivors and widows were published in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. However, she does acknowledge that during that time, victims were marginalised and that this only began to change in the 2000s:

Indeed, the very articulation of Italy's post-terrorist cultural landscape as anomalous is testament to a significant rhetorical and conceptual shift in public discourses and cultural debates addressing the legacy of the *anni di piombo*... Implicit in that move is a condemnation of Italy's failure theretofore to adequately acknowledge and allow for the experience, sentiments and interests of those who suffered injury or loss in acts of political violence and terrorism, and a call for a more victim-centred approach to the cultural memory of the *anni di piombo*.⁴²

To begin this examination of the emergence of victim-centred narratives, a brief history of the *anni di piombo* will be outlined, in order to contextualise both the violence and its perpetrators and victims. The fact, emphasised above by Glynn, that victim-centred narratives began to be published when they did must also be seen in the context of the way that the period was viewed until that point. As will become clear in our analysis, that the *anni di piombo* and their victims were not adequately acknowledged in Italy until the 2000s plays a crucial part in the victims' children's decision to begin to write about their fathers.

1.1 History and context

Italy, like much of the rest of Europe, experienced a dramatic 1968: students and workers staged mass demonstrations and there was a feeling that society was undergoing a great change. The legacy of Italy's 1968 has been well documented: historians such as Luisa Passerini suggest that many of the protagonists were profoundly influenced by their experience of radicalisation and political activism at the end of the 1960s and that this has consequently had a serious impact on many aspects of Italian society today, including politics, journalism and the way that a collective memory of the period has been created.⁴³ While other countries in Western Europe underwent similar political shifts and societal changes to Italy, with the exception of those in West

⁴² Ruth Glynn, 'The "turn to the victim" in Italian culture', p. 374.

⁴³ Luisa Passerini, *Autoritratto di gruppo* (Florence: Giunti Barbèra, 1988); the legacy of the events of 1968 in Europe has recently been analysed once again using oral history: Robert Gildea, James Mark and Anette Warring (eds.), *Europe's 1968: Voices of Revolt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Germany, none of the youth movements that grew out of 1968 in these other countries evolved into the political violence that Italy experienced in the years that followed:

For international comparative studies, the importance of the Italian case cannot be stressed enough. In hardly any other country did the events of 1968 lead to such a similarly comprehensive *rivoluzione antropologica*, and no other country can so clearly differentiate the before and after in historical time. Only in Italy did the protest mobilization of 1968 directly carry over into a new social movement, the Extra-parliamentary Opposition.⁴⁴

The 'Extra-parliamentary Opposition' that these authors identify was made up of a great many radical left-wing factions. These factions covered a very broad spectrum of left-wing ideologies and organised themselves in innumerable different ways, from the *Indiani metropolitani*, who described themselves as the 'creative wing' of the radical left, to the larger groups who, while still eschewing party politics, channelled their revolutionary ambitions through political parties operating in factories and on the streets rather than in parliament: the principal examples of which at the national level were Lotta Continua, Potere operaio and Autonomia operaia, but there were many other such parties which operated at the local level and which were smaller in size. It should be noted that these groups were extremely numerous; splitting, evolving and reforming based on ideological minutiae over the course of approximately 10 years, from 1968 until the end of the 1970s.

There were also those within the extra-parliamentary left who embraced violence as part of their revolutionary vision of a new Italian society, as outlined in the Introduction. There were many such groups - some small and short-lived, or based strictly in one city - but the best known, and the most prolific in their violence, are the Red Brigades and Prima Linea. Most of their members were drawn from the leftist organisations just mentioned, as well as from the universities and factories. The former perpetrators who have written about their experiences were predominantly members of these groups and the victims whose children's books are at the centre of this thesis were all killed by their members.

⁴⁴ Jan Kurz & Marica Tolomelli, 'Italy' in *1968 in Europe* ed. by Martin Klimke & Joachim Scharloth, (Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 83-96 (p. 83).

1.1.1 *Stragi* and *strategia della tensione*

There were both left- and right-wing perpetrators of the 14,591 politically-motivated attacks that Alison Jamieson has counted.⁴⁵ The attacks carried out by those on the far right tended to be large-scale bombings of public places: the *stragi* mentioned above. Two of the deadliest and best-known examples of *stragi* are the Piazza Fontana and Bologna train station bombings which took place in 1969 and 1980 respectively. Eighty-five people were killed and over two hundred were injured at Bologna train station; the bomb in Piazza Fontana in Milan was detonated inside a bank and claimed the lives of seventeen people, injuring eighty-eight. The Piazza Fontana bombing is now commonly seen to mark the beginning of the period known as the *anni di piombo*, although, as Cooke and Cento Bull have pointed out, it was by no means the first incidence of large-scale violence to take place in those years.⁴⁶ The *stragi* hold a particularly uncertain place in Italian collective memory because in many cases nobody has ever been found guilty of their planning or execution and the court proceedings have often been protracted and ineffectual. There is also a very strong suspicion of state involvement which has seriously impeded the public's ability to have confidence in any of the explanations that have been offered to them.

The suspicion that the state could have been manipulating the right-wing militants who executed these *stragi* has led to the belief that they were part of what is known as the *strategia della tensione*. In sum, the theory behind this strategy was that the right-wing militants who placed the bombs did so at the behest of powerful members of the Italian authorities. These crimes were then blamed on left-wing organisations with a view to causing tension in society, undermining and destabilizing the left and provoking shifts to the right in public opinion.⁴⁷ The reasons behind such a strategy and the motivations of the various protagonists allegedly involved at different levels are detailed by left-wing

⁴⁵ Alison Jamieson, *The Heart Attacked: Terrorism and Conflict in the Italian State* (London and New York: Marion Boyars, 1989), pp. 19-20.

⁴⁶ Cento Bull and Cooke, *Ending Terrorism in Italy*, p. 2.

⁴⁷ Philip Willan, *Puppetmasters: The political use of terrorism in Italy* (London: Constable, 1991), pp. 22-23.

former senator Giovanni Pellegrino in a book-interview with Giovanni Fasanella and Claudio Sestieri:

L'obiettivo della manovalanza neofascista, cioè di chi metteva materialmente le bombe, era quello di provocare allarme, paura, disagio sociale; e quindi di fare in modo che, al dilagare della protesta studentesca e operaia, si reagisse con una risposta d'ordine... A un secondo livello, diciamo degli 'istigatori'... [favorivano] uno spostamento in senso conservatore dell'asse politico del Paese... Al terzo livello, quello internazionale, c'erano interessi geopolitici volti a tenere comunque l'Italia in una situazione di tensione, di disordine e di instabilità interna.⁴⁸

While a full-blown *coup d'état* never took place, there was a real threat in the 1970s that one might occur, as Pellegrino intimates above. De Luna posits that the truth about institutional involvement in these events will only be known when future historians might be able to access legal and archival documents that are currently unavailable, apparently to protect the high-ranking officials who would be placed in a difficult position by their public availability.⁴⁹ The violence of this decade, whether it was perpetrated by the left or the right, can be seen to contribute to this overarching feeling of uncertainty and danger.

1.1.2 Left-wing violence

The Red Brigades were founded in the early 1970s and grew into a national outfit with divisions in cities throughout Italy, while Prima Linea was formed later in that decade and their activity was mainly focused in Milan. Many of the founding members of the Red Brigades were imprisoned in the first half of the 1970s, during which time their activity was limited to kidnapping, damaging property and injuring people, but did not include killing people.⁵⁰ The sort of actions that the Red Brigades undertook became increasingly violent over the course of the 1970s. Today the original leaders are regarded with a measure of respect,

⁴⁸ Giovanni Fasanella and Claudio Sestieri with Giovanni Pellegrino, *Segreto di Stato: La verità da Gladio al caso Moro* (Torino: Einaudi, 2000), p.67.

⁴⁹ Giovanni De Luna, *Le ragioni di un decennio: 1969-1979. Militanza, violenza, sconfitta, memoria* (Milano: Feltrinelli, 2009), pp. 31-32.

⁵⁰ Dorothea Hauser, 'Terrorism' in *1968 in Europe* ed. by Martin Klimke and Joachim Scharloth, (Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. pp. 269-280 (p. 276).

particularly by some on the left. Many of them work for charitable organisations and have otherwise attempted to re-integrate themselves into civil society since their release from prison. The leaders who came after 1975 - especially Mario Moretti - are associated with the group's more violent phase and therefore they are looked upon with less sympathy, despite the fact that the Red Brigades had already started to follow an increasingly bloody path when their founding members were jailed. These founding members - Renato Curcio and Alberto Franceschini in particular - have written memoirs about their experiences and they are well-known figures in Italian society today. Curcio seems to have largely withdrawn from public life to focus on writing and working as the head of a publishing house, *Sensibili alle Foglie*. On the other hand, Franceschini - who dissociated himself from the Red Brigades in 1987 - has been rather prolific in discussions of the *anni di piombo*. He has published several books on the subject and features in Gianfranco Pannone's film about the history of the Red Brigades, *Il Sol dell'avvenire*.⁵¹

Ilaria Vezzani attributes the growth in left-wing violence during the second half of the 1970s to a desire on the left to respond to the perceived *strategia della tensione* and the *stragi*.⁵² She identifies two 'generations' of left-wing militants in the two halves of the decade, stating that the first generation could be characterised by their ideological stance, whereas those who took over after 1974 were driven more by action.⁵³ The theory that there were two phases to the Red Brigades violence is not without its critics and it does rather conveniently seem to shift attention and criticism away from the earlier leaders. Cento Bull and Cooke make an astute connection between Alberto Franceschini's vocal dislike of Mario Moretti and his advocacy of the two-phase theory, implying that the theory has been perpetuated by him for reasons of self-interest.⁵⁴ Nonetheless, that the level of violence perpetrated increased in the second half of the 1970s is undeniable and Vezzani's theory that increased levels of left-wing violence could have been in reaction to the perceived threat of right-wing

⁵¹ *Il sol dell'avvenire*, dir. by Gianfranco Pannone (A.B. Film Distributors, 2008).

⁵² Ilaria Vezzani, 'Gli anni Settanta e la "patologia della memoria"' (pp. 15-44), in Maurizia Morini (ed.), *Figli delle vittime: Gli anni Settanta, le storie di famiglia* (Roma & Reggio Emilia: Aliberti editore, 2012), p. 19.

⁵³ Vezzani, 'Gli anni Settanta e la "patologia della memoria"', pp. 22-23.

⁵⁴ Cento Bull and Cooke, *Ending Terrorism in Italy*, p. 10.

violence seems plausible in light of generally elevated levels of political tension at that time.

In addition to the reasons outlined above, the increased level of left-wing violence can also be attributed to more general problems that traditional left-wing institutions such as the Italian Communist Party (PCI) were experiencing in the second half of the decade. Guido Crainz notes the decline of popular support for the PCI in the latter half of the 1970s. He depicts then leader Enrico Berlinguer as clinging desperately onto the party's traditional ways, unwilling to acknowledge the changing mood of the electorate:

Letta alla lunga distanza, l'insistenza dell'ultimo Berlinguer sulla 'diversità comunista' non appare tanto l'orgogliosa sottolineatura di una granitica realtà, quanto l'appassionato appello a un 'dover essere', il disperato aggrapparsi a qualcosa che si sta scolorendo sotto i suoi occhi.⁵⁵

Crainz outlines that the estrangement felt by many traditional Communist Party supporters was linked to the party's increasingly centrist policies.⁵⁶ This estrangement was compounded by the murder by a police officer of medical student, Francesco Lorusso in March 1977 during a protest in Communist-governed Bologna. That year marked the zenith of a youth movement that had been building throughout Italy's major cities in the preceding years. Robert Lumley describes the movement in these terms: 'they organised themselves into collectives and carried out *autoriduzione*... of transport fares and cinema tickets, set up free radio stations.'⁵⁷ Andrea Hajek underlines that not everyone who was involved in the movement of '77 was necessarily motivated by politics: she stresses that many participants were connected by shared goals, tastes and beliefs and that they were united by lifestyle choices that included music, fashion and other forms of cultural expression. Above all, the movement was largely non-violent in nature.⁵⁸ In May 1977, during a protest in Rome, another young student, Giorgiana Masi, was shot dead by police. Masi's and Lorusso's

⁵⁵ Guido Crainz, *Il paese mancato: Dal miracolo economico agli anni ottanta* (Roma: Donzelli editore, 2005), p. 582.

⁵⁶ Crainz, *Il paese mancato*, pp. 581-582.

⁵⁷ Robert Lumley, *States of Emergency: Cultures of Revolt in Italy from 1968 to 1978* (London & New York: Verso, 1990), p. 295.

⁵⁸ Andrea Hajek, *Negotiating memories of protest in Western Europe: the case of Italy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 59.

murders rocked the movement and influenced the direction of extraparliamentary left-wing protest, leading to increased support for organised political violence as an anti-Communist alternative.

Robert Lumley has also interpreted the growth of support for extreme-left organisations such as the Red Brigades as a rejection of the mechanisms and institutions of the state:

[T]he political culture of '68 contained negative conceptions of democracy, which became the commonsense of many thousands of activists, especially on the extraparliamentary Left. Although the social movements of '68-9 saw remarkable experiments in political participation and unleashed radical democratic forces in Italian society, the existing democratic institutions (parliament, elections) were normally seen as either a formal sham or a palliative.⁵⁹

Lumley's reference to democracy here is very important. As we have already identified, left-wing terrorists are frequently seen by the children of their victims as 'undemocratic' and this lends strength to the argument that by championing their fathers' memory they are, in fact, promoting democratic values.

1.2 Calabresi and Moro: two symbols of the *anni di piombo*

The authors of the six works at the core of this thesis are united by the fact that their fathers were murdered by left-wing militants during the course of the *anni di piombo*. A discussion of the authors and the circumstances of their fathers' murders will be undertaken in the next chapter, but we will first highlight the cases of two of these victims specifically to complete this historical contextualisation. Luigi Calabresi and Aldo Moro are the most famous victims of the *anni di piombo* and the story of their murders can help us to better understand the events of those years.

Luigi Calabresi was a police inspector working in Milan who was killed in 1972. Sixteen years later, his murderers were finally identified when Leonardo

⁵⁹ Lumley, *States of Emergency*, p. 287.

Marini, one of Calabresi's killers, turned state's evidence and testified against the other members of the group. Marini's accomplice was Ovidio Bompressi and Giorgio Pietrostefani and Adriano Sofri were found guilty of having ordered the killing. All four were former militants in the far-left organisation, Lotta Continua. Calabresi was murdered after a long and vicious press campaign led by journalists as well as prominent left-wing intellectuals, who all accused the police inspector of the murder of Giuseppe Pinelli in December 1969. Pinelli was an anarchist railway worker who had been arrested following the Piazza Fontana bombing and died when he fell from the window of Calabresi's office at the police station where he was being interrogated. Initially it was claimed that Pinelli had committed suicide, but various officers' statements were conflicting and changed in the days following Pinelli's death, prompting cries that he had in fact been murdered. The growing media interest, lack of credible explanations for Pinelli's death and the bungled and incredible reaction of the police meant that the story quickly spun out of control; accusations of torture were levelled at the police officers, with Calabresi receiving the majority of the attention.⁶⁰ These events led to the aforementioned press campaign and Calabresi's murder in 1972.

The accusations against the police and the abundant rumours and conjecture that surrounded Pinelli's death were reflected and underlined by Dario Fo's satirical play, *Morte accidentale di un'anarchico*, which was first performed in December 1970. Fo uses the play to make serious accusations against the police force and the Italian authorities more generally for failing to properly investigate Pinelli's death. Like many others, Fo turned away from the institutionalised politics of the left at this time and aligned himself more with grassroots movements.⁶¹ Jennifer Lorch describes his political thinking as 'unaffiliated communism.'⁶² *Morte accidentale di un'anarchico* embodies this shift to the left and expresses the playwright's solidarity and understanding of the frustrations felt towards the mechanisms of the state, including the PCI, by

⁶⁰ John Foot, 'The Death of Giuseppe Pinelli: Truth, Representation, Memory' in Stephen Gundle & Lucia Rinaldi (eds.), *Assassinations and Murder in Modern Italy: Transformations in Society and Culture* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 59-71 (p. 60).

⁶¹ Tony Mitchell, *Dario Fo: People's Court Jester* (London and New York: Methuen, 1984), p. 58.

⁶² Dario Fo, with introduction by Jennifer Lorch, *Morte accidentale di un anarchico* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1997), p. 14.

so many on the left at that time.⁶³ Furthermore, in his use of farce and satire, Fo derided the shambolic investigation by the Milan police and challenged the discrediting of the left in the press.⁶⁴ The circumstances of Pinelli's death have long been disputed and no real, satisfactory conclusion has ever been reached. John Foot has written that, in the end, the Italian judiciary were forced to compromise when they issued their final verdict on Pinelli's death:

Pinelli had neither committed suicide *nor* had he been murdered. He had suffered from an 'active illness,' in part due to the treatment of the police, and had 'fallen' from the window to his death.⁶⁵

Foot writes that Pinelli very quickly became an icon of the extra-parliamentary left.⁶⁶ Ilaria Vezzani states that anger at Pinelli's death motivated a new generation of left-wing militants.⁶⁷ As Pinelli was held up as a left-wing martyr, Calabresi was vilified in the press and there are still some on the left today who consider him Pinelli's murderer.⁶⁸

According to Foot, one of the reasons that Pinelli's murder was embraced so quickly and so fiercely by the Italian left is that the story seems so mysterious and intriguing.⁶⁹ Indeed, even today, it is difficult to pinpoint the facts of the matter. Pinelli was innocent of the bombing; in 2004, following protracted judicial proceedings that began in 1972, a judge ruled that the *strage* was carried out by members of the far-right group, Ordine Nuovo.⁷⁰ Pinelli's death was judged to have been accidental and Calabresi is believed not to have been in his office when Pinelli fell.

Evidence perhaps of a change in public opinion is Marco Tullio Giordana's recent film, *Romanzo di una strage* (2012), whose plot centres on the mysteries of the *strage* of Piazza Fontana.⁷¹ Luigi Calabresi is depicted in a relatively sympathetic light and Giordana portrays the group of arrested anarchists as

⁶³ Paolo Puppa, *Il teatro di Dario Fo: dalla scena alla piazza* (Venezia: Marsilio Editori, 1978), p. 10.

⁶⁴ Mitchell, *Dario Fo*, p. 59.

⁶⁵ John Foot, *Italy's Divided Memory* (New York & Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), p. 184.

⁶⁶ Foot, *Italy's Divided Memory*, p. 185.

⁶⁷ Vezzani, 'Gli anni Settanta e la "patologia della memoria"', p. 25.

⁶⁸ In his book, Luigi Calabresi's son, Mario writes about his experience of finding graffiti describing his father as a murderer even in recent times; this will be discussed in chapter four.

⁶⁹ Foot, *Italy's Divided Memory*, pp. 184-185.

⁷⁰ Cento Bull, *Italian Neofascism*, pp. 20-21.

⁷¹ *Romanzo di una strage*, dir. by, Marco Tullio Giordana (01 Distribution, 2012).

unlucky victims of the process, rather than real suspects or criminals. The film focuses on the right-wing perpetrators of the crime as well as alluding to the shady, powerful figures who manipulated them and, in Giordana's interpretation, Pinelli and Calabresi are shown as unfortunate pawns in a larger, more sinister plot. While, perhaps inevitably for a film with such a notorious historical event at its centre, *Romanzo di una strage* has received criticism for its portrayal of the Piazza Fontana bombing and those associated with it, it is significant, in the context of this study, as an example of the continued interest in and polemic surrounding this *strage*. It is telling that an article that Giordana wrote in response to the criticisms his film received is entitled, 'Il mio film dalla parte delle vittime'.⁷² Benedetta Tobagi, one of the second generation authors at the centre of this study, wrote an article in defence of the director and his film in which she praises his emphasis of the *Ordinovisti's* guilt. She claims that, with this film, Giordana has created a new forum for debate, stressing the importance of speaking publicly about these events as they are pivotal moments in Italy's history.⁷³ In a third newspaper article, Luigi Calabresi's son, Mario Calabresi also commends aspects of Giordana's film, including its portrayal of victims.⁷⁴ The film provides a fictionalised account of events and should not necessarily be expected to adhere to historical facts, particularly when, as is the case with this bombing, they are so hotly disputed. Nonetheless, *Romanzo di una strage* provides a nuanced and, to a certain extent, victim-centred version of events and this fits with the trend towards the victim of recent years.

Pinelli and Calabresi's stories are now inextricably linked, and so are those of their families. Their widows - Licia Rognini and Gemma Capra respectively - were invited to the commemorative day for victims of terrorism by President Giorgio Napolitano in 2009. The two women shook hands and spoke to each other and photographs of them were published throughout the Italian media. Both women were quoted in the press as being happy to have had the opportunity to meet after such a long time.⁷⁵ While Calabresi's murderers are

⁷² Marco Tullio Giordana, 'Il mio film dalla parte delle vittime', *Corriere della Sera*, 29th March 2012.

⁷³ Benedetta Tobagi, 'Perché difendo il film su Piazza Fontana', *La Repubblica*, 2nd April 2012.

⁷⁴ Aldo Cazzullo, 'Calabresi e il film su Piazza Fontana: «Sparita la campagna contro papà»', *Corriere della Sera*, 25th March 2012.

⁷⁵ 'Gemma Calabresi e Licia Pinelli: "Finalmente ci guardiamo negli occhi"', *La Repubblica*, 9th May 2009.

now known, it is unlikely that Licia Rognini will ever know with any certainty what happened in the last minutes of her husband's life. Whether or not he can be considered a victim of terrorism is also disputable, but we must conclude that Rognini was invited to that ceremony because of the connection between Pinelli and Calabresi. This episode is also evidence of the important and prominent role that the *strage* of Piazza Fontana and Pinelli's death hold within any discussion of this period and of politically-motivated violence in Italy.

Luigi Calabresi is an important victim from the *anni di piombo* because of his recognisability. The circumstances of his and Pinelli's deaths have been highlighted here because of the significant place that they hold within the narrative of this period. Pinelli's death was the first in a series of events that would define the 1970s in Italy and the poor way that his case was handled by the authorities has had a profound effect on Italian society and culture, with artists and playwrights such as Dario Fo finding inspiration in the tragedy. The apparently state-sanctioned mystery shrouding Pinelli's death can be seen to link in with the *strategia della tensione*, particularly given the police's hashed attempt to hide the truth. As John Foot has skilfully demonstrated in his study, *Italy's Divided Memory*, an Italian mistrust of the state is nothing new.⁷⁶ However, the events surrounding Pinelli's death seem to have served only to elevate that mistrust, at the cost of truth and justice.

Aldo Moro is the other victim from this period whose story will be outlined here. He is perhaps the most familiar of all the *anni di piombo* victims and he can be seen, to a certain extent, to represent all the victims from that period as the date that he was killed - 9 May - is the date that was chosen to hold the commemorative day in their memory. Giovanni De Luna has noted the symbolic place that Moro holds among the victims of that time, writing, 'tutta la memoria di quegli anni si è raccolta intorno alla figura carica di sofferenza e di dolore di Aldo Moro.'⁷⁷

Moro was a Christian Democrat politician who had held many posts in government during his career, including two terms as Prime Minister. Part of the reason that he became a target for the Red Brigades was that he was working to bring his party and Enrico Berlinguer's Communist Party closer together in a

⁷⁶ Foot, *Italy's Divided Memory*, p. 1.

⁷⁷ De Luna, *Le ragioni di un decennio*, p. 8.

political arrangement that came to be known as the *compromesso storico* and which was considered a fatal mistake among the far-left. On 16 March 1978, his car was attacked by a group of Red Brigades militants; he was kidnapped and the five police officers who were his bodyguard - Domenico Ricci, Oreste Leonardi, Raffaele Iozzino, Giulio Rivera and Francesco Zizzi - were all killed. Moro was held captive for fifty-five days, during which time the Red Brigades sent statements to the press demanding that the government negotiate with them for Moro's freedom in exchange for the release from prison of comrades of theirs. Along with these press releases, two Polaroid photographs of Aldo Moro were sent by the Red Brigades to prove that the politician was still alive. These photographs have become a symbol of those fifty-five days of tension and uncertainty. In addition to these, letters written by Moro were released and published in national newspapers; most of these letters were addressed to his colleagues whom he entreated to negotiate for his release. However, the ruling Christian Democrats, supported by the Communists, refused to negotiate, and on 9 May 1978, Moro's dead body was found in the boot of a Renault R4 in via Caetani in Rome.⁷⁸ These events have been described many times and are now well-known both in Italy and abroad. Barański and Lumley include 'the slumped corpse of Aldo Moro' in their list of clichés that define the post-war period in Italy.⁷⁹

When Moro was kidnapped, there was some popular support for the action, even if that support was largely 'passive', as Ruth Glynn and Giancarlo Lombardi have noted.⁸⁰ Aldo Moro the Christian Democratic politician was not a popular figure among people with left-wing political views and the *compromesso storico* was strongly disliked by many of those to the far-left of Berlinguer's party. However, while the far-left did not disapprove of his kidnapping, he was not a universally hated figure; he was popular within the more left-wing sections of his party and his negotiations with Enrico Berlinguer were welcomed by many.

⁷⁸ Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy*, p. 385.

⁷⁹ Zygmunt G. Barański and Robert Lumley, 'Turbulent Transitions: An Introduction', pp. 1-17 in *Culture and Conflict in Postwar Italy* ed. by Zygmunt G. Barański and Robert Lumley (Basingstoke & London: Macmillan Press, 1990), p. 2.

⁸⁰ Ruth Glynn and Giancarlo Lombardi, 'Introduction: Remembering Aldo Moro', pp. 1-17 in *Remembering Aldo Moro: The Cultural Legacy of the 1978 Kidnapping and Murder* ed. by Ruth Glynn and Giancarlo Lombardi (London: LEGENDA, 2012), p. 1.

Additionally, the two iconic Polaroid photographs and the increasingly emotional and hopeless letters that were published over the fifty-five days of his imprisonment helped to generate sympathy for him. Author Leonardo Sciascia summed up how his outlook was changed in September that year: ‘Non ho mai avuto nessuna simpatia per il Moro politicante, ma ho sentito un grande affetto per quest’uomo solo, negato, tradito.’⁸¹ Moro’s murder signalled the peak of the violence perpetrated by the Red Brigades as well as marking a turning point in their public support.

The retrospective sympathy expressed above by Sciascia is a very important aspect of the public memory of Aldo Moro as a victim: in the prevailing public image of the politician, he is seen to have been abandoned by his colleagues in the Christian Democrat party as they refused to negotiate for his release. Robin Wagner-Pacifi describes the events of Moro’s kidnapping and, especially, the letters that he wrote while captive as a tragedy and a melodrama because they were played out before a captive audience in the form of the Italian public and Moro’s fate lay in the hands of his unswerving political colleagues.⁸² Wagner-Pacifi goes on to detail the extent of Moro’s ‘abandonment’:

This abandonment went so beyond negation of the possibility of negotiation - it culminated symbolically in the ‘Moro is not Moro’ petition signed by fifty so-called friends. Abandonment thus took the egregious form of degradation, with judgements about Moro’s mental and psychological and physical states being made from a distance with no evidence.⁸³

Discussing the actions, or more accurately, the inaction, of the Christian Democrat politicians to whom Moro was appealing in terms of ‘abandonment’ rather than as a legitimate political strategy strengthens the case for remembering Moro as a poor, helpless victim and not merely as a rather unpopular politician. Their reluctance to negotiate for their colleague’s release

⁸¹ Leonardo Sciascia, ‘Aldo Moro è morto due volte’ *L’Espresso*, 24 September 1978, p. 38.

⁸² Robin Wagner-Pacifi, ‘Aldo Moro and the Tragic Afterlife of a Melodrama’, pp. 30-37 in *Remembering Aldo Moro: The Cultural Legacy of the 1978 Kidnapping and Murder* ed. by Ruth Glynn and Giancarlo Lombardi (London: LEGENDA, 2012), pp. 34-35.

⁸³ Wagner-Pacifi, ‘Aldo Moro and the Tragic Afterlife of a Melodrama’, p. 35.

has done much to improve his image and render him more sympathetic in the eyes of the public today.

As stated above, Moro has become the most famous of the *anni di piombo* victims. This might be attributed to his being the most high-profile of the people whom they targeted, but in addition to this, the media attention given to his kidnap, captivity and murder outstripped that afforded any of the other victims and secured him a prominent place in the collective memory of this period. Additionally, just as was the case with Pinelli's death, media speculation about Moro's kidnap and murder led many people to doubt the official version of events and to invent theories of their own about everything from whether or not Moro's letters were truly written by him, to suggestions that the police knew where he was being held all along.

The number of victims of the *anni di piombo* is high and many of their names are, unfortunately and inevitably, remembered only by those who were closest to them. Luigi Calabresi and Aldo Moro's names are known and recognised and, as we shall see, they have, to some extent, come to represent all the others. Arguably, this is true of all the victims whose stories feature in this thesis; they are the best-known of the victims and the fact that their children have written about them only increases their recognisability. However, Moro and Calabresi stand apart from the others because of the place the stories of their murders hold in Italian history, culture and memory and as such, they form an inevitable backdrop to any account of this period. Having given some historical context to the politics and the violence of the *anni di piombo*, now we will examine the way that the former perpetrators of that violence have written about their role in the events of those years.

1.3 Responses to perpetrator-centred narratives

As discussed in the introduction, for a long time the majority of first-person narratives about this period of Italian history were written by ex-terrorists and it is only more recently that the families of victims of terrorism have found ways to add their voices to the discussion too.⁸⁴ While the ex-terrorists' memoirs were

⁸⁴ The list of ex-terrorist literature is long, but memoirs have been written by most of the principal members of the Red Brigades, including Alberto Franceschini, Renato Curcio, Prospero

dominant, these victims' families felt that they had suffered an injustice; it seemed that memories of their loved ones were pushed into the background and surpassed in the public imagination by stories of the perpetrators of violence.⁸⁵ This feeling of injustice appears to stem from the ease with which many of the former terrorists appear to have re-entered public life following the end of their prison terms. This entry into public life has taken the form of published memoirs for many and the success of their books, along with the ample opportunities to appear in public and on television to discuss their writing, has inevitably led to a public profile that is not possible for the people who they killed. This imbalance is underlined here in highly emotive terms by Renzo and Domenico Agasso:

Già, perché i morti sono morti. Gli assassini invece sono tra noi. Ben vivi. Fuori dal carcere. In televisione e sui giornali. In cattedra. In Parlamento. Pretendono la chiusura degli anni di piombo. Cioè il colpo di spugna sui loro misfatti... Restano solo le voci dei parenti delle vittime. Condannati al ricordo. Condannati al dolore. Condannati alla solitudine.⁸⁶

It is true, however, that by the time their study was published, 2008, the situation was already changing: the commemorative day for victims of terrorism was established in May of that year and victims' family members were speaking out in their own memoirs and the edited volumes - three of the six works at the centre of this thesis were published before 2008, as well as Fasanella and Grippo's collection, among other important victim-centred works. Indeed, the fact that this work was published when it was can be seen as indicative of the shift that was taking place.

Nonetheless, the fact remains that, before the emergence of the victim-centred literature that is the focus of this thesis, the victims' family members watched as the perpetrators of the acts that robbed them of loved ones

Gallinari, Barbara Balzerani and Anna Laura Bragheti, as well as by others from the left such as Sergio Segio and from the right, by Francesca Mambro. Early examples of works written from a victim's point of view include a small number of memoirs by survivors of terrorist attacks, namely Sergio Lenci, Mario Sossi and Guido Petter, published between 1979 and 1993. In addition to these, Gemma Capra and Licia Pinelli also published works in 1990 and 1982 respectively.

⁸⁵ Fasanella & Grippo, *I silenzi degli innocenti*, p. 8.

⁸⁶ Renzo Agasso & Domenico Agasso Jr., *Il piombo e il silenzio: Le vittime del terrorismo in Italia (1967-2003)*, (Milano: Edizioni San Paolo, 2008), p. 7.

attempted to remake their lives, often without a hint of remorse or an acknowledgement that their past actions had consequences other than the prison sentences they served. Indeed, in many cases, the former terrorists exclude the victims from their accounts entirely. The dominance of memoirs written from a perpetrator's point of view is mentioned by several of the second-generation authors featured in this thesis, as well as by the authors of edited volumes and it seems clear that these victim-centred works were written, at least partially, as a way to redress the balance within public discourse around the *anni di piombo*. The polemical journalist Giampaolo Pansa has suggested that his country's motto ought to be changed to reflect the revisionist attitude that he believes is displayed to former terrorists: 'dovrebbe esserci il motto: chi muore giace e chi vive si dà pace.' In the same article, he describes in acerbic fashion the ways that, upon being released from prison, the perpetrators of violence from the *anni di piombo* have risen to almost celebrity status:

Se falliscono come autori, i nostri ex possono sempre rifarsi con le interviste ai giornali. E poi con le comparsate alla tivù. E poi con i convegni. E poi con i seminari. E poi con qualche lezione nelle scuole. Dappertutto vengono accolti con pacche sulle spalle. Accompagnate da grida di soddisfazione ammirata: guardate come sono cambiati, come sono diventati civili, come sono pacifici e pacifisti!⁸⁷

While Pansa is known for his politically biased perspective and these citations should be read with that in mind, one must also consider that his opinion on the public position of former terrorists is probably not unique to him.

1.3.1 Injustice and silence

Justice, or its lack, seems to be at the root of Pansa's vehement indignation and it is a theme that will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four where we consider attitudes to forgiveness and in Chapter Five which examines the commemorative practices associated with these victims. As Susan Jacoby points out, it is important on many levels, both for victims and perpetrators, to feel that justice has been done:

⁸⁷ Giampaolo Pansa, 'Chi muore giace e chi vive si dà pace', *L'Espresso*, 15 June 2006, p. 43.

The ancient concept that an offender must pay a penalty before being restored to society embodies a profound psychological as well as social need - and embodies it for the criminal as well as the victim.⁸⁸

Many of the former militants from groups such as the Red Brigades and Prima Linea have served lengthy jail sentences, but there are also those who were released before the end of the term that was given to them. For example, Benedetta Tobagi reports that she was still in her first year of primary school when her father's murderer was released from prison, just three years after the murder, having received a much reduced sentence in exchange for his collaboration with the police.⁸⁹ These reduced prison sentences and the idea that the former terrorists can live today as if their pasts had been erased are but a small part of what seems to irritate Pansa, as well as many of the victims' family members, about the role of former perpetrators in a history of the *anni di piombo*.

The murdered victims cannot tell their own stories and so their family members speak on their behalf to keep their memory alive: 'Dimenticare sarebbe dare ragione agli assassini, sotterrare ancora le vittime'.⁹⁰ The invocation to remember, or not to forget, and the inadequacy of a witness or third party speaking on a dead victim's behalf is very reminiscent of Primo Levi's writing: 'Lo ripeto, non siamo noi, i superstiti, i testimoni veri.'⁹¹ Post-Holocaust writing has greatly informed my analysis of the memoirs studied in this thesis, particularly in Chapter Three, which examines theories of writing about the self. Despite the inadequacies of writing on behalf of their fathers, ensuring that they are remembered publicly is a fundamental aspect of the reason that these victims' children have written the works that they have. Martha Minow underlines the importance, for society, not just for the victims and their families, of talking about past trauma:

Closure is not possible. Even if it were, any closure would insult those whose lives are forever ruptured. Even to speak, to grope for words to

⁸⁸ Susan Jacoby, *Wild Justice: The evolution of revenge* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983), p. 179.

⁸⁹ Tobagi, *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore*, p. 238.

⁹⁰ Jean-Claude Zancarini, 'Familismo morale e richiesta di storia' in *Figli delle vittime: Gli anni Settanta, le storie di famiglia* ed. by Maurizia Morini (Roma: Aliberti editore, 2012), pp. 5-13 (p. 6).

⁹¹ Primo Levi, *I sommersi e i salvati* (Torino: Einaudi, 1986), p. 64.

describe horrific events, is to pretend to negate their unspeakable qualities and effects. Yet silence is also an unacceptable offense, a shocking implication that the present audience is simply the current incarnation of the silent bystanders complicit with oppressive regimes.⁹²

While the same problems of silent bystanders cannot really be seen to apply to Italian society during the *anni di piombo* as they did in the apartheid-era South Africa that Minow describes here, her point is still valid within our analysis. It is seen as insulting to those whose lives have been lost to ignore or forget the events that led to their murders.

1.3.2 Victims vs. perpetrators: ‘memory wars’

That the victims’ children’s works can be seen to some extent to have been published in response to the publication of memoirs by and increased public presence of former terrorists is something that is highlighted by victim-centred works such as *I silenzi degli innocenti* and *Il piombo e il silenzio*. As mentioned previously, these books purport to ‘finally’ tell the story of the *anni di piombo* from the victims’ perspective. In her analysis, Ruth Glynn takes this assessment even further, discussing the consequences of the two competing sets of publications: she has interpreted the tone used in these edited volumes as giving a different meaning to the discussion of victims of that period. Glynn reasons that, by using the language of victimhood, these works concentrate above all on the disparity between the victims and the perpetrators of *anni di piombo* violence; since this disparity has manifested itself most obviously in the dominance of written works by former terrorists over victims and their families, she concludes that the authors of these edited volumes aim to draw the public who read them into the discussion by appealing to them to side with the victims rather than the perpetrators.⁹³

Glynn’s reading of the impact of these edited volumes provides an interesting new level to our analysis by raising new questions about the influence that these books can have on the place of victims in collective memory

⁹² Martha Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History after Genocide and Mass Violence* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998), p. 5.

⁹³ Glynn, ‘The “turn to the victim” in Italian culture’, p. 380.

of the *anni di piombo*. By encouraging readers - and, by wider implication, citizens generally - to take sides, the authors of these works can be seen to perpetuate what John Foot has described as Italy's 'memory wars'.⁹⁴ More importantly, these victim-centred edited volumes do not and cannot represent all of the victims who were killed or injured during the *anni di piombo* since there will always be those who choose not to participate or who are not able to. There continue to be gaps and silences, not least in terms of the diversity of experiences of victims and the lack of variety within the perspectives expressed by their relatives. For example, in her aforementioned article, Glynn calls into question the ability of *I silenzi degli innocenti* to 'finally' speak on behalf of the victims when for instance, by the authors' own admission, the work contains no representatives of the Piazza Fontana *strage*.⁹⁵ It is important to view the edited volumes discussed above and the written works published by perpetrators and victims and their families as a spectrum of memory, all of which forms part of the collective memory of the *anni di piombo* and, consequently, our understanding of the history of that time and its protagonists.

When one set of voices is more prominent than another, that imbalance has negative implications. This is especially true, as is the case here, when the prominent voices tend to belong to perpetrators since they have already silenced their victims once and can be seen to occupy a position of power over them. The Italian state's failure to adequately investigate this period of the country's history has placed the victims in an even more inferior position to the perpetrators of *anni di piombo* violence. The emphasis on the injured parties' victimhood can be read therefore as a way to begin to redress the balance of power. However, to do this in a way that excludes no-one and which avoids creating or adding to existing conflict is very difficult, if not impossible, due to the very personal and sensitive nature of these memories and victimhood more generally. Indeed, the books at the centre of this thesis have now gained prominence over those written by lesser known children of victims, so even within the corpus of victim-centred narratives, one finds evidence of a form of hierarchy. The notion of a hierarchy of grief or of mourning that has been

⁹⁴ Foot, *Italy's Divided Memory*, pp. 14-15.

⁹⁵ Glynn, 'The "turn to the victim" in Italian culture', p. 379.

proposed by Judith Butler is highly applicable to our study and will be discussed further in Chapter Three.

One final point that must be made regarding the problems that have arisen due to the predominance of former terrorists' memoirs is the description of victims in their accounts. As will be outlined in the next section, when the victims are mentioned, it tends to be unemotionally and within the context of the ex-terrorists' actions; they are not usually described with any degree of sympathy. By sidelining the victims in their memoirs, these authors further 'silence' them and this is a fundamental part of the reason that the former terrorists' public presence has been criticised as passionately as it has. Rather than write about the people they have killed, the former terrorists write about themselves in an attempt to remake their public image. This attitude can be perceived as a lack of remorse on behalf of the former terrorists. Jeffrie G. Murphy underlines the significance of a perpetrator's expression of remorse:

This is surely the clearest way in which a wrongdoer can sever himself from his past wrong. In having a sincere change of heart, he is withdrawing his endorsement from his own immoral past behavior; he is saying, 'I no longer stand behind the wrongdoing, and I want to be separated from it. I stand with you in condemning it.'⁹⁶

Following this logic, many of the former terrorists cannot truly be said to have distanced themselves from their past misdemeanours and, therefore, they do not seem to condemn them. The notion that they might be allowed to publicly remake their lives and dictate the memory of this period of history without repenting of their previous crimes seems to act as a further way to wound the victims and their families.

1.4 Ex-terrorists' perspectives

A brief analysis of some of the works written by former terrorists is necessary at this point to provide context for our study of the works written by the children of victims at the centre of this thesis. Just as we ask why the victims' children write their narratives, so we should ask why these former terrorists write theirs.

⁹⁶ Jeffrie G. Murphy and Jean Hampton, *Forgiveness and mercy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 26.

This section will describe some of the themes that emerge from each of the four books examined: their attitudes towards victims and their portrayal of themselves within the terrorist organisation and since being released from prison are of particular relevance to this study. As stated previously, most of the perpetrator-authored works about the *anni di piombo* were published in the second half of the 1990s, when most of these authors were released from prison or were in *semilibertà*, whereby prisoners may leave the prison during the day to work and must return in the evening. The vast majority of these works were written by former left-wing militants. This seems understandable, given that many of the acts of violence attributed to right-wing organisations, such as the *stragi*, have no identifiable perpetrators. Of course, there were more right-wing militants than simply those who committed these acts of mass violence, but as a general rule, while their stories have been told in biographies, edited collections and films, they have not tended to write about their own experiences to the same extent as their left-wing counterparts.⁹⁷

As Anna Cento Bull and Philip Cooke have highlighted, when a former terrorist writes about their past, they also attempt to reconstruct their identity in the present:

Obviously, all reconstructions of the past on the part of former terrorists take place at the crossroads between remembering the past as it was and remembering it as they wish it was, and it is also an exercise in identity (re) construction. Thus, amid a widespread acknowledgement of military defeat, the end of terrorism is revisited in ways which attempt to salvage individual self-esteem and dignity and, where possible, also the collective identity of the group.⁹⁸

This attempted distinction between past and present selves by former terrorists can be seen as one of the principal reasons that many victims, their families and members of Italian society more generally have objected to the dominance of perpetrator-centred narratives within the available literature regarding the *anni di piombo*.

The problem of inequity lies at the centre of this objection since the former perpetrators are allowed to publicly remake their past, salvaging their

⁹⁷ Cento Bull, *Italian Neofascism*, p. 127.

⁹⁸ Cento Bull and Cooke, *Ending Terrorism in Italy*, p. 74.

self-esteem and their dignity, but the people they murdered are not afforded the same opportunity. While they regain their dignity by refashioning public lives for themselves and while the victims and their families remain marginalised, this imbalance is harmful:

Recognizing the indignity of the abuses... is vital in communicating to the victimized, and to the rest of the nation, that individuals do matter... failure to take such steps would most likely convey that individuals and their pain do not matter. That indifference compounds victimization.⁹⁹

These issues will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Five where questions of public acknowledgement of victims are discussed in relation to commemoration. However, it is important at this point to underline these problems associated with the former terrorists' return to public life and the identity (re) construction that they can be seen to undertake in their memoirs as this is a crucial element of the subsequent emergence of victims' voices.

In relation to the idea that the former terrorists can be seen to rebuild their public image through their writing, we must also consider these authors' stated outlooks regarding the violent movements of which they were part. The terms *dissociato* and *irriducibile* are used to describe, respectively, those who claim to have dissociated themselves from the ideologies and actions of the organisations they were once members of and those who have never renounced their part in those organisations and who stand by their ideology and actions. A law was approved in 1987 that meant that those who dissociated themselves would be looked upon favourably by the justice system, usually in the form of reduced prison sentences.¹⁰⁰

In this section, the memoirs of four perpetrators of violence during the *anni di piombo* will be examined in order to identify the way that they have written about this period and their role in it. Of particular interest to our study are the authors' attitudes to their victims. The four authors whose work will be examined - Barbara Balzerani, Adriana Faranda, Alberto Franceschini and Mario Moretti - represent a selection of *dissociati* and *irriducibili* and they are all former Red Brigades militants. Prima Linea's members made a collective

⁹⁹ Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness*, p. 71.

¹⁰⁰ <http://storia.camera.it/norme-fondamentali-e-leggi/leggi/19870218-misure-favore-chi-si-dissocia-dal-terrorismo>

decision to disband the group in 1983 and they all dissociated themselves at the same time. The former members of the Red Brigades therefore present a greater range of post-prison experiences and attitudes in their books because they left the group at different times and for a variety of reasons. Of the four authors, Franceschini and Faranda have dissociated themselves from the Red Brigades, while Moretti and Balzerani have not.

1.4.1 Alberto Franceschini

Alberto Franceschini was one of the founding members of the Red Brigades, along with Renato Curcio and his wife, Margherita 'Mara' Cagol and the title of his memoir - *Mara, Renato e io* - emphasises those early days.¹⁰¹ He was arrested, along with Curcio, in September 1974 and spent the next eighteen years in prison. Franceschini's memoir is co-written with two journalists, Pier Vittorio Buffa and Franco Giustolisi, although the narrative is told entirely from Franceschini's perspective, bar the preface which is used by the journalists to explain how they came to work with the former *brigatista*.

This work can be read as a prime example of a former terrorist attempting to control the public image of his character and that of the organisation he helped to found. In this way, he distances himself from much of the violence and negative connotations now associated with that group. His dissociation from the group is stressed because the letter declaring his defection from the Red Brigades is published at the end of this book. In the letter, Franceschini admits to having taken part in terrorist activity, but distances himself from it by rejecting violence as a means of conducting political struggle.¹⁰² In their preface, Franceschini's co-authors explain that his dissociation from the group came about over the course of their initial meetings with him and they depict a transformation in him as his opinion of the Red Brigades and his role within that organisation seemingly changed.¹⁰³ Furthermore, this narrative emphasises that the early years of Red Brigades

¹⁰¹ Alberto Franceschini, Pier Vittorio Buffa & Franco Giustolisi, *Mara, Renato e io* (Milano: Mondadori, 1988; 1991).

¹⁰² Franceschini, Buffa & Giustolisi, *Mara, Renato e io*, p. 223.

¹⁰³ Franceschini, Buffa & Giustolisi, *Mara, Renato e io*, pp. vii-xii.

activity - when Franceschini was a leader - were relatively bloodless compared to the organisation's later years. In this way, he and his fellow authors can be seen to create a more sympathetic image; readers are encouraged to consider him a reformed character who has seen the error of his ways.

Mara, Renato e io can be divided into two historical eras: the first eleven chapters describe Franceschini's experience of founding and leading the Red Brigades and the second half of the book details his life in prison. The image presented of Franceschini in this work underlines that he was not involved in killing anyone and this emphasis can be seen to endorse the theory, outlined above, that when the Red Brigades were led by Franceschini and Curcio, their primary focus was politics, rather than violence. However, Franceschini admits in this work that, although he did not kill anybody prior to his arrest, it was an act that he would have carried out. He claims that he was prepared to murder magistrate Mario Sossi when they kidnapped and held him captive in 1974.¹⁰⁴ While Curcio and Franceschini were not directly responsible for any murders, the Red Brigades killed their first two victims before the historic leaders were imprisoned. In June 1974, Graziano Giralucci and Giuseppe Mazzola were murdered in the headquarters of the far-right political party, Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI) in Padua by a Red Brigades faction. Although this does not appear to have been a pre-meditated killing and both Curcio and Moretti have subsequently written of their regret, Curcio nonetheless helped to write the *communiqué* claiming responsibility for the act.¹⁰⁵ These episodes provide clear examples of the way that the former terrorists' reconstruction of events and their own identities can be seen to take place, in Cento Bull and Cooke's words, 'at the crossroads between remembering the past as it was and remembering it as they wish it was.' Writing about these actions twenty years later allows the former *brigatisti* to reframe their narratives and present a version of history in which they can more easily justify their past decisions.

In the second half of the book, Franceschini's experience of prison is detailed. He was incarcerated in several different institutions during his eighteen years in prison and he describes the often grim conditions that he lived in, particularly in the high-security facility on the Sardinian island of Asinara.

¹⁰⁴ Franceschini, Buffa & Giustolisi, *Mara, Renato e io*, p. 85.

¹⁰⁵ Luca Telese, 'Curcio, la lotta armata non dà la pensione', *Il Giornale*, 21 January 2009.

The sections which are most relevant to our study, however, are those in which Franceschini describes his and the other so-called historic leaders' responses to the actions carried out by the Red Brigades while they were in jail. Writing about Francesco Coco's murder - the first committed by the Red Brigades after Mazzola and Giralucci - he claims that he did not feel like an assassin: 'Non perché non avessi sparato, ma perché ormai, come dicevamo, "si era alzato il livello dello scontro" e i morti erano prevedibili, da tutte e due le parti'.¹⁰⁶ His dispassionate, unremorseful tone and the suggestion that Coco's death was unavoidable further underlines the point made above regarding these authors' callous attitude to their victims. Franceschini very deliberately downplays the seriousness of this crime and the importance of Coco's life, something that will inevitably be hurtful to the victim's family.

Moro's kidnapping is described as being a decisive moment for the imprisoned leaders because, according to Franceschini, they were expected to comment on and express opinions regarding the events although apparently they had very little idea of what was happening. His account of the period immediately following the kidnap describes the leaders' confusion and disbelief that members of their organisation could have achieved such a feat. They are portrayed as passive actors in these events and Franceschini's account suggests that he and his fellow prisoners found the news overwhelming and disconcerting:

Non parliamo perché non sappiamo se essere felici o spaventati...

Immagino Moro al posto di Sossi e provo disagio. Comunque vada a finire... noi, del nucleo storico, ci siamo dentro, nel bene e nel male.¹⁰⁷

The depiction of this time is interesting because he appears to attempt to create sympathy for himself and the other incarcerated Red Brigades leaders. This sympathy is achieved by portraying them all as passive bystanders who have, apparently wrongly, been vilified by the press. The events are described in a way that emphasises the leaders' ignorance of the kidnapping and their seemingly frantic attempts to understand the meaning and possible consequences of their comrades' actions. He explains that he and the other leaders were in Turin for the start of the trial against them and so were the focus of media attention because they were all together and in the public eye.

¹⁰⁶ Franceschini, Buffa & Giustolisi, *Mara, Renato e io*, p. 138.

¹⁰⁷ Franceschini, Buffa & Giustolisi, *Mara, Renato e io*, p. 150.

According to Franceschini, this media attention had created a public image of the leaders as being powerful and dangerous: 'Le cronache ci presentavano come i veri capi, quelli che, dal carcere, tengono le fila del terrorismo, capaci di dare ordini puntualmente eseguiti'.¹⁰⁸ He disputes this image, implying that their influence was greatly exaggerated and writing repeatedly of the prisoners' ignorance of the group's plans.¹⁰⁹ Franceschini goes on to portray himself as a victim. He writes that he and the other imprisoned leaders began to fear for their lives as the media placed them at the centre of the Moro kidnapping and portrayed them as having a key role in deciding whether the politician would live or die.¹¹⁰ His comments focus on the impact that the kidnapping had on him and the other imprisoned leaders and, importantly, Moro himself is barely mentioned.

Franceschini attempts to portray himself in a sympathetic way by stating that, rather than actually having been involved in orchestrating Moro's kidnapping, he was merely depicted in this way by the media. However, in so doing, he also absolves himself and his fellow incarcerated leaders of any blame for the organisation of these events. He notably writes very little about Moro himself and instead, by focussing on their blamelessness and claiming that their lives were at risk in prison, he casts himself and the other leaders in the role of victim.

1.4.2 Mario Moretti

When Franceschini and Curcio were arrested in 1974, Mario Moretti moved into a more prominent position within the Red Brigades leadership. As mentioned above, with the so-called 'historic leaders' in prison, the level of violence perpetrated by the Red Brigades escalated and this increasingly bloody style of armed struggle is often associated with Moretti's leadership. This association is made by Franceschini in his memoir when he claims that it was only when the decision was made to increase the level of violence perpetrated by the group and to move from burning cars to kidnapping people that Moretti committed to

¹⁰⁸ Franceschini, Buffa & Giustolisi, *Mara, Renato e io*, p. 151.

¹⁰⁹ Franceschini, Buffa & Giustolisi, *Mara, Renato e io*, pp. 150-152.

¹¹⁰ Franceschini, Buffa & Giustolisi, *Mara, Renato e io*, p. 153.

joining the organisation.¹¹¹ The notion that the chronology of the violence committed by the Red Brigades can be neatly divided into two separate halves should be considered with some scepticism, as discussed above. Nonetheless, as part of the process of ‘raising the level of the conflict’, the majority of the murders committed by the group took place in the latter half of the 1970s and early 1980s, while Moretti was one of the leaders.

Moretti’s memoir is structured as an interview with two left-wing journalists, Rossana Rossanda and Carla Mosca.¹¹² The preface of this book is written by Rossanda and she uses it to explain the process undertaken by her and Mosca to meet and interview Moretti in prison. She writes that they met him six times in the summer of 1993, by Moretti’s invitation.¹¹³ His take on the history of the Red Brigades is, according to Rossanda’s preface, relatively positive: he underlines what he sees as the group’s legitimate political objectives and claims that the experience was not entirely fruitless.¹¹⁴ The book is written as an interview, with the journalists’ questions italicised to distinguish them. This style of writing resembles a transcript, giving the impression that Moretti’s words - and those of his interviewers - appear exactly as they were said, underlining the supposed accuracy of this narrative:

Tutte le risposte di Moretti sono nel suo linguaggio, sue sono le parole e le immagini... Ma non sono tutto quel che ci ha detto. Il materiale che resta fuori è vasto; il più grande gruppo armato d’Europa è durato dodici anni. Sono le idee d’una generazione, vite.¹¹⁵

Rossanda’s description of Moretti’s words as emblematic of a whole generation perhaps displays her and Carla Mosca’s underlying sympathy for aspects of the Red Brigades’ cause. They appeal to their readers - especially those of their and Moretti’s generation who experienced these years on the left - to regard Moretti not as a cold-hearted killer, but as the leader of an organisation that, while its methods may have been questionable, had sound political foundations.

While Franceschini, Curcio and the other original Red Brigades leaders were arrested and jailed in the first half of the 1970s, Moretti remained at large

¹¹¹ Franceschini, Buffa & Giustolisi, *Mara, Renato e io*, p. 57.

¹¹² Mario Moretti, *Brigate Rosse: una storia italiana* (Milano: Baldini & Castoldi, 1994; 1998; 2000)

¹¹³ Moretti, *Brigate Rosse*, pp. xi-xii.

¹¹⁴ Moretti, *Brigate Rosse*, pp. xi-xiv.

¹¹⁵ Moretti, *Brigate Rosse*, p. xviii.

until 1981. In this way, he was an active member of the group for more time than anyone else and was instrumental in the foundation of Red Brigades factions in Genoa and Rome, as well as playing an important role in the kidnap and murder of Aldo Moro. He has never dissociated himself from the group, although in 1987 he, along with other former members of the Red Brigades including Curcio, signed a letter declaring that the armed struggle mounted by the group had failed.¹¹⁶ Rossanda and Mosca structure their interview as a chronological account of the history of the Red Brigades and Moro's kidnap and murder are depicted as the pinnacle of the group's activity, as they dedicate two chapters to the event and its aftermath.

In keeping with the theory posited above, Moretti's autobiography provides him with a platform from which to defend the Red Brigades' actions. Cento Bull and Cooke write that Moretti and Curcio - both *irriducibili* - express similar viewpoints in their writing regarding their depictions of the Red Brigades:

Both want to reaffirm the political and revolutionary nature of their organization, against any representation of it as a 'criminal' group. Both also want to emphasize the wide degree of support that their organization could rely upon among various social strata, especially among factory workers, in contrast to any reconstructions which depict the Red Brigades as an isolated group. Indeed, they locate the Red Brigades fully within the struggles of an entire 'generation'. Finally, they are prepared to admit they were defeated but not to admit they were 'wrong'.¹¹⁷

While Moretti does pass retrospective judgement on some of the Red Brigades' actions, he also justifies past decisions by attempting to place them within their political and historical context:

Ho già detto che il nostro è un obiettivo a tempi lunghi, che il soggetto si andrà formando nel corso di un conflitto sociale che si dimostra sempre più radicale, irrisolvibile, e che l'espressione di questa radicalità è la lotta armata. Questa è per noi la discriminante. Sarà ideologico finché volete, ma così era: da una parte la lotta armata, dall'altra tutto il resto.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ <http://www.senzacensura.org/public/arkivio/dc02.htm>

¹¹⁷ Cento Bull & Cooke, *Ending Terrorism in Italy*, p. 119.

¹¹⁸ Moretti, *Brigate Rosse*, p. 42.

Whilst he does not criticise the group's past actions in general, he is critical of certain events. For example, when discussing the murders of Giuseppe Mazzola and Graziano Giralucci in the headquarters of the Paduan MSI branch, he writes that the members of the Red Brigades who broke in did not intend to kill the men; he implies that Mazzola and Giralucci's deaths were the result of the inexperience of those *brigatisti*. However, he states, in very similar terms to Franceschini, that violence and death were an unavoidable aspect of the Red Brigades' activities at that time:

Non era mai morto nessuno nelle nostre azioni, ma chiunque non stesse nelle nuvole sapeva che poteva succedere, e avrebbe modificato la nostra collocazione. E malauguratamente con Padova là ci trovavamo... Non è che la lotta armata ci stava prendendo la mano, si manifestava per quello che è: una lotta dove si muore.¹¹⁹

This citation directly addresses those who would suggest that the Red Brigades only became as violent as they did under Moretti's guidance: the raid on the MSI headquarters in Padua took place in June 1974 and Curcio and Franceschini were only arrested in September of that year. Moretti's stipulation that it was obvious that the group was growing increasingly violent seems to be a deliberate attempt to defend himself from the accusations levelled against him as a leader. This is a point that he will reiterate later in the interview, when he explains that the group felt forced to increase the level of violence perpetrated in response to the deaths of Walter Alasia - a young *brigatista* from Milan who was killed by police in 1976 - and Margherita Cagol, who was also killed by police in 1975:

Ma non siamo noi a decidere che lo scontro abbia forme più pesanti. Le ha. Si muore in questa lotta, muore Walter, muore Margherita. Siamo un piccolo esercito che ha ormai i suoi caduti.¹²⁰

Just as Franceschini deflects blame from himself and onto Moretti, so Moretti states that his hand was forced by events which were out of his control. He uses militaristic, impersonal language and removes any sense of emotion from his reasoning. Again, his sentiment is very close to Franceschini's suggestion that deaths were predictable on both sides of the armed struggle. It is clear that Moretti's focus remains the political aims of the organisation and this is

¹¹⁹ Moretti, *Brigate Rosse*, p. 72.

¹²⁰ Moretti, *Brigate Rosse*, p. 88.

markedly different from Franceschini, who focuses more on the history of the group.

Moretti explicitly defends himself against Franceschini's accusations throughout this book:

Non scambiate Franceschini per l'insieme dei miei compagni delle Br. Mi conoscono fin troppo bene per quel che sono, e non uno è sfiorato da qualche dubbio, neppure quelli cui sono antipatico.¹²¹

He seems particularly disparaging of the fact that Franceschini had dissociated himself from his Red Brigades involvement and is highly critical of his former comrade's view of the past. Moretti further distances himself from Franceschini by placing himself in a morally superior position to him: 'Franceschini ha ormai fatto un mestiere della dissociazione e delle insinuazioni contro le Br. Ha un rapporto contorto con se stesso e la verità'.¹²² Cento Bull and Cooke have pointed out that this reproachful view of the *pentiti* and the *dissociati* is one that is expressed by many of the former terrorists who have not renounced their past actions. They write that the *irriducibili* frame the armed struggle as a 'just war'; they privilege the collective and political dimension and they see the end of the Red Brigades as being due to a failure of political and revolutionary strategy, rather than because of any outside factors.¹²³ These beliefs put them in opposition to their former comrades who can be seen to have turned their backs on the struggle.

While Moretti and Franceschini offer different interpretations of their shared Red Brigades' history, there are elements of their memoirs that resemble each other. It is interesting that their accounts of events such as the kidnapping of Mario Sossi are very similar and, as has been underlined already, they present similarly unfeeling attitudes towards the victims. These similarities suggest that the variations in their stories are attributable mainly to their opposing outlooks on the historical and political success of the group. While Moretti's explanations and judgements of past decisions and actions are evidently influenced by hindsight, he makes no attempt to apologise or to admit that the group's actions were 'wrong'. When he deflects blame away from himself, he places it squarely

¹²¹ Moretti, *Brigate Rosse*, p. 78.

¹²² Moretti, *Brigate Rosse*, p. 76.

¹²³ Cento Bull & Cooke, *Ending Terrorism in Italy*, p. 81.

with the Italian state, whom he considered his enemy at the time when these events took place.

1.4.3 Adriana Faranda

Adriana Faranda and her partner Valerio Morucci joined the Red Brigades in 1976 having previously been members of the far-left wing group, Potere Operaio. Faranda and Morucci left the Red Brigades following the murder of Aldo Moro, which they opposed. The pair were arrested in May 1979, dissociated themselves from the group in 1985 and were released from prison in 1994; the same year that *Nell'anno della Tigre* was published. This work is not strictly an autobiography: although Adriana Faranda is clearly the focus of the book, it is authored by Silvana Mazzocchi and Faranda's name only appears on the cover in its subtitle.¹²⁴ Just as Franceschini and Moretti's collaborators stated in the prefaces to their books, Mazzocchi writes that she first met Faranda while she was in prison, in 1985. Apparently Faranda was reluctant to let Mazzocchi write her story and it was only after Faranda had been granted day release that she agreed to allow it. This work is not a straight interview as Moretti's book was; Mazzocchi has interviewed Faranda, but also her former comrades, family members and others who knew her. Mazzocchi also cites radio and television interviews with her subject as well as other books, including Moretti's. In addition to these third-party sources and her interviews with Faranda, there are sections of this work that Mazzocchi describes as a sort of 'intimate diary' written by Faranda herself and differentiated from Mazzocchi's writing by the use of italics.

According to Marie Orton, this interview format allows Faranda to create a new image both of herself and of her history. With herself as the protagonist, Orton argues that Faranda can dispel media-generated myths about her that portray her as a 'monster'.¹²⁵ Orton's article centres on the premise that Faranda and the other female former terrorists wish to write their version of

¹²⁴ Silvana Mazzocchi, *Nell'anno della Tigre: Storia di Adriana Faranda* (Milano: Baldini & Castoldi, 1994)

¹²⁵ Marie Orton, 'Demonsterizing the Myth of the Terrorist Woman: Faranda, Braghetti and Mambro,' *Annali d'Italianistica* 16 (1998), 281-296 (pp. 284-285).

history in order to, ‘attempt to recuperate their identities of “woman,” and “human being”’.¹²⁶ The sections of *Nell’anno della Tigre* that are authored by Faranda give her a very deliberate platform from which to fashion this new version of her public image. These first-person narrated sections often focus on Faranda’s experience of being both a mother and a *brigatista*; she was one of the only female members of the organisation with a child and the only woman in the leadership of the organisation to have a child. This apparent tension features prominently in both her and Mazzocchi’s writing where it can be interpreted as their attempt to recover both of her aforementioned identities. While it is true that Franceschini and, to some extent, Moretti can be seen to try to render their public images more sympathetic, the creation of a new image with a specifically gendered focus is unique to the female ex-terrorist authors because the ‘maleness’ of Moretti, Franceschini and the others has never been called into question.

From the very beginning of this book, Mazzocchi attempts to render her subject likeable and to place her readers in a position such that they might understand what led Adriana Faranda to become a member of the Red Brigades. Since her work is written, for the most part, in the third person and the biographical scope is much broader than that which we have seen in the male-authored works - Mazzocchi includes details about Faranda’s childhood and adolescence - these details can be emphasised more effectively. Mazzocchi’s portrayal of Faranda underlines from the very beginning that she has changed since the days when she was a *brigatista* and that she feels remorse for her actions. Mazzocchi describes meeting Faranda in the first paragraph of the book’s preface:

Quando le parlai nella sala colloqui di Rebibbia, mi colpì subito per la sua fierezza e per la sua ironia. E per la sua capacità di riconoscere di aver sbagliato, già in quegli anni non ancora percorsi dallo spirito della riconciliazione.¹²⁷

Mazzocchi’s language in this citation is quite different from that used by Moretti and Franceschini’s collaborators. She depicts Faranda as ‘different’ from her

¹²⁶ Orton, ‘Demonsterizing the Myth of the Terrorist Woman’, p. 283.

¹²⁷ Mazzocchi, *Nell’anno della Tigre*, p. 5.

comrades from the very start of her account and emphasises her seemingly positive, human traits to make her a more relatable subject.

Ruth Glynn has argued that the style used when writing about female ex-terrorists differs greatly from that used to describe their male counterparts:

Texts written by, or in collaboration with, female ex-terrorists... distinguish themselves from male-authored or male-centred texts in that their primary concern is to construct a post-terrorist identity distinct from a pre-existing self identified exclusively with the experience of political violence.¹²⁸

It would seem that gender is the fundamental difference between the male former terrorists' desire to create a more sympathetic image for themselves and that of the female authors because, fundamentally, the image of a female perpetrator of political violence is so different to that of a male perpetrator. Ruth Glynn has written extensively on the differing public attitudes to male and female perpetrators of violence. She uses Sergio Lenci's account of his experience of being shot, analysing the fact that, having been attacked by a group of Prima Linea militants that included a woman, he felt he had suffered a 'double wound' because he did not associate women with violence:

Lenci's account yields three key premises: that female perpetration has the traumatic valency of a double wound; that there is a long-established cultural correlation between masculinity and perpetration and between femininity and victimization; and, finally, that that correlation - that cultural resistance to an equation or even an association of women and violence - implicitly works to defeminize the violent woman.¹²⁹

Franceschini's desire to change the public perception of his past actions is rooted in a political and historical justification of them, but for the female authors, the struggle is to create an image wherein they are at once human beings and women who committed acts of political violence. While political violence in and of itself may be deemed to be abhorrent, that perpetrated by a woman is doubly so. Mazzocchi's work is one of the examples used by Glynn and her writing can be seen to fit the above description since, as mentioned

¹²⁸ Ruth Glynn, 'writing the terrorist self: the unspeakable alterity of Italy's female perpetrators', in *Feminist Review*, 92 (2009), 1-18 (pp. 3-4).

¹²⁹ Glynn, *Women, Terrorism, and Trauma in Italian Culture*, p. 136.

previously, her emphasis is on Faranda's difference and the fact that she has seemingly undergone a transformation since her time as a member of the Red Brigades.

In keeping with Mazzocchi's apparent wish to portray Faranda as having undergone a positive change, the Red Brigades' victims and their families are mentioned several times throughout this work and Faranda is depicted as feeling sympathy towards them. This sympathy is very significant when compared with the male ex-terrorists' memoirs wherein victims are described largely without compassion or not at all. In her preface, Mazzocchi writes that Faranda had initially been reticent to speak to her. One of the reasons put forward for this reticence is her apparent desire to show sensitivity to the victims' family members:

Lei mi aveva sempre risposto di no. Non se la sentiva, diceva. Troppo fresche erano ancora le ferite. Troppo attuale il dolore dei familiari delle vittime. Troppo profonde quelle che lei stessa aveva provocato a sua figlia, che aveva lasciato bambina per inseguire le sue utopie.¹³⁰

Mazzocchi draws a parallel between Faranda and her daughter's pain and that of the victims' family members, thereby also portraying her subject as a remorseful victim with a profound sense of guilt. This paragraph is situated at the beginning of Mazzocchi's preface and starting her biography in this way makes an unambiguous statement regarding the portrayal of Faranda that is to come.

Anna Cento Bull and Philip Cooke also highlight the way that Faranda is portrayed as a victim in Mazzocchi's biography. As an example of this victimisation they point out that Faranda's and Morucci's accounts of their arrest are presented differently in *Nell'anno della Tigre* and in Morucci's autobiography, *La peggio gioventù*. Cento Bull and Cooke's analysis highlights the inconsistencies between the two accounts, whereby Faranda's version of the story portrays the police as brutally violent thugs while Morucci insists that the police behaved fairly towards them and were not violent. These differences are evidence of the very different attitudes that Faranda and her former partner hold regarding their past and, consequently, the image of their present self that they would like to show:

¹³⁰ Mazzocchi, *Nell'anno della Tigre*, p. 6.

The first discrepancy [regarding their arrest] highlights Morucci's preoccupation with reflecting upon the past in rational terms and rejecting what he calls a 'culture of victimhood' prevalent among the ex-terrorists, whereas Faranda is mainly preoccupied with regaining both moral self-esteem and society's acceptance of her social re-integration, hence her need to construct herself as a victim as well as a perpetrator.¹³¹

This citation reaffirms that which Glynn and Orton have written regarding the way that female former terrorists write about their past selves, but without the gender angle used previously. It is evident that the question of victimhood has many layers and interpretations. However, Faranda's comparison of her story with that of the victims who were targeted by her organisation goes some way to explain the hurt and outrage expressed by many of the victims' family members in response to these perpetrator-centred works.

Mazzocchi mentions that Faranda and Morucci had sought to contact the families of the bodyguards who were killed during Moro's kidnapping in via Fani, but their efforts were rebuffed. Mazzocchi cites the families' enduring pain as their 'understandable' reason for refusing to meet.¹³² Faranda did meet Maria Fida Moro and this encounter is described as having been more successful:

Adriana voleva domandare perdono alla famiglia dell'ostaggio assassinato. La figlia dello statista accettò dando prova di umanità e carità eccezionali... Adriana ne rimase turbata e sconvolta, Maria Fida Moro si dimostrò comprensiva e disponibile.¹³³

The description of this meeting switches the balance of power from Faranda to Moro; the adjectives used to describe Faranda imply victimhood while Moro is described in a highly complimentary way. By portraying Faranda as the submissive party, Mazzocchi makes a clear statement about her that is far removed from the stereotypical image of a brutal terrorist 'monster'. Compared to the male authors, Faranda seems desperate for the Italian public to accept her and to understand her reasons for acting as she did, on a general human level rather than more strictly through the lens of class struggle. This need for acceptance is either absent or certainly not as strong in the male-authored texts

¹³¹ Cento Bull and Cooke, *Ending Terrorism in Italy*, p. 139.

¹³² Mazzocchi, *Nell'anno della Tigre*, p. 204.

¹³³ Mazzocchi, *Nell'anno della Tigre*, pp. 186-187.

and therefore must be attributed to the gender stereotypes applied to perpetrators of violence that are cited above.

The impression that is given in this work is that the *anni di piombo* and the Red Brigades are a part of her life that Adriana Faranda has drawn a line under and from which she now wishes to distance herself. Mazzocchi focuses on the changes that Faranda has undergone since her time as a *brigatista* and presenting her as a reformed character with an emphasis on her maternity and her remorse marks an obvious difference from the representations of male ex-terrorists. For the victims' family members, this attempt to edit one's public image to seem more amenable can be seen as part of the reason that they chose to begin writing their own testimonials and adding their voices to the discussion of those years.

1.4.4 Barbara Balzerani

The final perpetrator-centred narrative examined in this section is authored by Barbara Balzerani, a Red Brigades leader who has never dissociated herself from the group. She was one of the last of the *brigatisti* to be arrested, remaining at large until 1985. Her work, *Compagna luna*, is unusual among this corpus of works in that Balzerani is the sole author.¹³⁴ In some ways, Balzerani presents a similar attitude to Mario Moretti in this work: like him, she focuses on the group's political values and does not attempt to narrate her 'post-terrorist' self in the way that Mazzocchi can be seen to do for Adriana Faranda. Ruth Glynn notes this difference in her comparison of *Compagna luna* with two other works authored by female former militants:

In contrast with *Nell'anno della Tigre* and *Nel cerchio della prigionia*, the prime concern of *Compagna luna* is not to reconstruct and rehabilitate Balzerani's public image, but, rather, to narrate the traumatic fragmentation of the private self. In line with that aim, *Compagna luna* explicitly rejects the confessional discourse promoted elsewhere.¹³⁵

While it is indisputable that Balzerani approaches her self-writing in a different way than Faranda, she does still attempt to generate sympathy from her readers

¹³⁴ Barbara Balzerani, *Compagna luna* (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1998).

¹³⁵ Glynn, *Women, Terrorism and Trauma in Italian Culture*, p. 120.

and, although she is the work's sole author, the narration switches between first and third-person, lending her story some of the distance that Faranda, Moretti and Franceschini gain from the use of co-authors.¹³⁶

As a means of portraying herself in a sympathetic way, Balzerani begins this account of her life with a description of her hard, working-class childhood and the family's lack of money.¹³⁷ The chapter begins with a short paragraph in which Balzerani makes clear that she and her mother had a somewhat distant and tempestuous relationship when she was growing up. She addresses her mother directly:

Per me, cresciuta felicemente per strada, eri quella da evitare al tuo rientro serale dalla fabbrica... L'estranea che non capivo perché pretendesse di esercitare una qualche autorità su di me e che ogni volta mi chiedevo chi fosse, nella indeterminatezza con cui sapevo di essere una dei suoi figli.¹³⁸

The final paragraphs of this first chapter mirror the first: they are written in the first-person and seem to be addressed to Balzerani's mother. However, in her closing statements, Balzerani states that she missed her mother, she wishes that they had more time to spend together and that she took her mother's name, Maria, as her *nom de guerre*.¹³⁹

Balzerani can therefore be seen to attempt to create sympathy for herself in two ways: firstly, by depicting her childhood as having been unhappy and difficult and secondly by writing in a tender way about her mother. In her introduction, Balzerani stipulates that, above all, she would like her parents to read this book, but that they are no longer alive, so they cannot.¹⁴⁰ Beginning the book in this way, the author immediately steers her readers' thoughts away from the idea that she was nothing but a ruthless killer, just as Mazzocchi and Faranda do. As stated previously, neither Franceschini's nor Moretti's childhoods are deemed worthy of mention in their memoirs. While Balzerani does not employ the 'confessional discourse' of some of her female comrades, she can

¹³⁶ Glynn, 'writing the terrorist self', p. 11.

¹³⁷ Balzerani, *Compagna luna*, pp. 13-18.

¹³⁸ Balzerani, *Compagna luna*, p. 13.

¹³⁹ Balzerani, *Compagna luna*, p. 19.

¹⁴⁰ Balzerani, *Compagna luna*, p. 10.

still be said to try to prompt a sympathetic response because she writes about her emotions and includes these sentimental anecdotes.

This initial section describing her mother and her childhood is not the only moment when Balzerani can be seen to attempt to create sympathy for herself. Later in the narrative, when she writes about Moro's kidnapping and murder, she uses language that suggests she was uneasy about the action and its aftermath and even writes that she had second thoughts about her part in the process. For example, in the sixth chapter, entitled 'Aldo Moro', Balzerani describes the group's preparations for kidnapping the politician. The narrative switches to first-person as she begins to describe her own feelings as the kidnapping took place. Balzerani describes feeling anxious that something might go wrong or that one of the group might be injured, but she does not acknowledge the murdered bodyguards, providing another example of a former perpetrator enforcing silence or absence on their victims. She also describes a certain level of physical detachment when she writes that she could not watch what was happening and that she was only aware of the sound of the guns.¹⁴¹ She creates a sense of detachment in one final way when she writes that politics, not her, controlled her weapon: 'Certo, è la politica a guidare la mia fucile, ma colpo dopo colpo ci lascio un pezzo di me'.¹⁴² In the second half of this sentence, the image of Balzerani's supposed detachment is destroyed as she asserts that she was, in fact, greatly affected by the violence that she perpetrated.

Balzerani goes on to describe the ways that she, with the benefit of hindsight, believes that the Red Brigades were naive to think that the Christian Democrat party might react differently to their kidnapping Aldo Moro.¹⁴³ Like Mario Moretti, she is unapologetic for their actions and justifies them within the historical and political context in which they took place. However, unlike Moretti, she also encourages her readers to empathise with her by describing her emotions, even if her sadness was related to her comrades, rather than the police officers that they killed or the politician they kidnapped. Later in this work, she firmly states that she does not believe that she should apologise for

¹⁴¹ Balzerani, *Compagna luna*, pp. 70-71.

¹⁴² Balzerani, *Compagna luna*, p. 71.

¹⁴³ Balzerani, *Compagna luna*, p. 72.

her actions because it would change nothing for the victims, their families or, above all, for her fallen comrades:

Nessuna riflessione a posteriori, nessun riconoscimento di errore, nessuna disillusione di chi è rimasto, può violentare le ragioni del loro [the dead *brigatisti*] sacrificio, deformandole fino a fargli perdere ogni senso.

Sarebbe come ammazzarli una seconda volta, stavolta per mano nostra e persino nel lascito di essere ricordati per quello che sono stati.¹⁴⁴

Balzerani's assessment of the place of the former Red Brigades members in post-*anni di piombo* Italian society is that they have been isolated from the political situation that informed their actions and therefore they have been decontextualised and turned into monstrous caricatures. In the final chapter she once again asks her readers to remember her humanity as she writes about the difficulties she has had readjusting to life outside of the prison when she has been released for periods of supervised liberty.¹⁴⁵

The stance that Balzerani takes in her memoir can be seen to lie somewhere in between that of Moretti and of Faranda and Franceschini. She has not dissociated herself from the group, but neither is she an *irriducibile*. She defends the Red Brigades while acknowledging that their actions were sometimes ill thought out and demands that her readers look past the image that has been created of the group in the period that has followed their demise.

1.5 Conclusion

As mentioned in the introduction, Giovanni De Luna has claimed that historiography is becoming more victim-centred and so, following his logic, it might seem inevitable that the public interest in this period of Italian history has moved away from the perpetrators in recent years. The focus on specific, identifiable and well-known victims such as Luigi Calabresi and Aldo Moro is also part of a wider trend in collective memory. This phenomenon is examined in greater detail in Chapter Five. However, it is possible to identify a number of factors that can be seen to contribute to the recent emergence of the victim within these discussions. The mid-2000s seem to be a crucial time for this

¹⁴⁴ Balzerani, *Compagna luna*, p. 98.

¹⁴⁵ Balzerani, *Compagna luna*, pp. 135-140.

reassessment of the *anni di piombo*: 2003 saw the twenty-fifth anniversary of Moro's death and the murders of Massimo D'Antona in 1999 and Marco Biagi in 2002 at the hands of the so-called 'New Red Brigades' brought victims back to the public's attention.¹⁴⁶ It is in the decade following these critical dates that the victims' voices can really be seen to appear in discussions of the *anni di piombo*: the commemorative day for the victims was inaugurated in 2007 and the works that are the focus of this thesis were all published between 2003 and 2012.

This focus on the victims comes after years of perpetrator-centred narratives dominating the public discussion of the *anni di piombo*; we have outlined the attitudes expressed by some of the perpetrators in this chapter in order to give an idea of what the victims' children can be seen to have reacted to by choosing to write their stories. There is a tendency among the former perpetrators to claim victim status for themselves in their writing. However, one can go further and ask why the authors are so concerned about their public image. The male authors and Balzerani seem to be concerned with justifying their actions and, more generally, their organisation's actions and defending them within the historical and political context in which they took place. In doing so, they challenge the negative image of the Red Brigades that has been attached to them in the intervening years which portrays them as ruthless and violent murderers. On the other hand, Faranda and, to a lesser extent, Balzerani, are attempting something much more complicated. They wish to reclaim their identity and distance themselves from 'monster' image created of them by the media. Their tactics to this end are very different to those of their male former comrades because they also have to justify their actions as women. Since violence is more often associated with men, they face a more nuanced and complicated struggle to create a new public image of themselves first and foremost as human beings. The marginalisation of the victims and their families in the years following the *anni di piombo*, coupled with the former terrorists' attempts to garner public sympathy seems to have inspired the victims' children to speak up on their fathers' behalf in order to redress the balance and reclaim the memory of that period. The following chapter will begin to introduce the works themselves.

¹⁴⁶ Glynn, 'The "turn to the victim" in Italian culture', p. 374.

2 An introduction to the corpus of works

While the previous chapter has outlined the historical context of the *anni di piombo* and the circumstances in which victim-centred narratives have recently come to the fore, the current chapter gives some details about the works themselves. As well as introducing the works chronologically in the order in which they were published, this chapter will provide biographical details on the authors and their deceased fathers as well as some information about the latter's death. In addition to this, it is important to look briefly at the place that each of the subjects of these memoirs hold in national collective memory; a full analysis will take place through the chapters that follow, but it is useful to provide some biographical and historical context at this earlier point. The collective memory of the *anni di piombo* tends to focus more on victims of the well-known left-wing groups and the six works that comprise the core of this thesis were all written by the children of people whose murders are attributed to militant left-wing political groups and which occurred during the *anni di piombo*. There are works written by the children of victims of right-wing violence. Eugenio Occorsio's work, *Non dimenticare, non odiare: Storia di mio padre e di tuo nonno* is a notable example: his father, Vittorio Occorsio, was a magistrate who was killed by a group of Ordine Nuovo militants in 1976. For the purposes of this study, with its focus on the victims' place in a collective national memory of a historical period, the six texts chosen provide sufficient material. However, a future study into the lesser-known victims and their families would certainly be valid and interesting.

This study will concentrate on works written by the children of victims, as opposed to other family members or victims themselves, for several reasons. Firstly, and perhaps most simply, when one examines the canon of written works concerning the memory of the *anni di piombo*, the books authored by children of victims represent a significant proportion of what is available. While historical works are obviously useful to my study and they and the testimonies they contain will be referred to throughout this thesis, their take on that period is, by necessity, broad and therefore impersonal. However, they provide a crucial historical and theoretical background to the more personal stories told by the victims' children. The books that have been written by former members of the

groups who perpetrated the violence that took place during the *anni di piombo* have been studied in depth already.¹⁴⁷ The six works that have been chosen were all published within ten years of each other - the first in 2003 and the most recent in 2012 - and represent a range of experiences, memories, aims, authors' ages and styles of writing. Three of the authors were very young children when their fathers were killed and the other three were young adults; having this range of ages is important when analysing memory and memory-writing because it has allowed a comparison of the attitudes of those who have 'real' memories of their fathers and those who were too young when their fathers were killed to have anything but vague recollections of them. Additionally, when considering the differences between the six authors, one notes that the three youngest - Silvia Giralucci, Benedetta Tobagi and Mario Calabresi - are writers by profession: Massimo Coco is a violin teacher; Sabina Rossa is a politician and Agnese Moro is a psychologist. However, of these six, only Benedetta Tobagi has written more than one book concerning the victims of this period.¹⁴⁸ Finally, all of the books were published by well-known publishing houses, showing recognition of public interest in these stories.

These six books are the best-known of the books written by children of victims. As I am analysing the place that they can be seen to hold within collective memory, this has been an important factor in choosing these works. Agnese Moro's eldest sister, Maria Fida, has also written about her experience of their father's death, but her books are not included in this study. Maria Fida, along with her son, Luca, has a quite different take on the memory of their father than the rest of her family: she and Luca hold themselves apart from the rest of the Moro family and she has a long history of objecting to and protesting against the collective memory that has been created.¹⁴⁹ While this might make an interesting counterpoint to the works that are included in this study, the inclusion of her work would also complicate our analysis. She is a figure with her own complex narrative and to try to include her works within this study would

¹⁴⁷ Ruth Glynn and Anna Cento Bull and Philip Cooke for example, have written very recently about the place that these works hold in the collective memory of that period of history.

¹⁴⁸ Tobagi's other book on *anni di piombo* victims is, *Una stella incoronata di buio. Storia di una strage impunita* (Torino: Einaudi, 2013). In this work, her focus has turned to the victims of the Piazza della Loggia bombing.

¹⁴⁹ <http://archivio.panorama.it/italia/Maria-Fida-Moro-Le-divisioni-in-casa-non-aiutarono-mio-padre>

require us to give more space to her than to the other authors, not least because she, alone in this community of writers, has written several works about her father's memory. To include more than six books would render this study less focussed and so it is hoped that the works omitted here might instead form part of a future analysis of this period and its victims. The chosen books will be analysed in chronological order starting with the first of the six to be published.

2.1 Agnese Moro, *Un uomo così: Ricordando mio padre*.

Agnese Moro's memoir, *Un uomo così*, was initially published in 2003 and re-published in 2008 in an extended version. In the new section of the 2008 edition, Moro outlines the ways her father, Aldo Moro, is represented in collective national memory and she highlights various cultural initiatives and events that have been inspired by her father's memory. As noted in the previous chapter, Aldo Moro is arguably the best known of the victims of the *anni di piombo*. Agnese Moro was in her early twenties when her father was killed and so is able to draw on her own memories of him in her writing. The first section of the book contains short anecdotes and memories of Aldo Moro that serve to paint an intimate portrait of him as a father and family man, juxtaposed with his public persona as a politician. These passages are descriptive, written in a conversational style and often humorous; Moro writes in a very informal way in this section of the book and these anecdotes and memories, recounted in this way, render Moro's style very different from the others in the corpus.

In the original introduction to the book, Moro explains that she wanted to share these private memories of her father for her own children's benefit:

Queste pagine sono nate dal desiderio di far conoscere ai miei figli qualcosa del loro nonno, che non hanno potuto incontrare in questa vita e che sono abituati a vedere riproposto alla televisione nella terribile fotografia da prigioniero delle Brigate rosse o cadavere nel portabagagli di una macchina circondata da persone agitate. Volevo farglielo vedere, invece, così come lo avevo visto io e come mi è rimasto nel cuore.¹⁵⁰

While Agnese Moro claims that these anecdotes and memories were intended for her children, she writes in the 2003 introduction that, in the process of putting

¹⁵⁰ Moro, *Un uomo così*, p. 8.

this book together, she began to recognise the continuing role that her father had in Italian society:

Aldo Moro, infatti, non appartiene solo a noi, ma anche al suo Paese.

È una delle radici, buone, della democrazia italiana. Ricordarlo così come era, anche nella dimensione familiare, può essere un contributo utile.¹⁵¹

This citation underlines above all Agnese Moro's desire to promote a public image of her father as a role model for democracy in Italy. To describe him as one of the pillars of Italian democracy emphasises how important Moro believes her father's legacy is to the country today. She states that she wishes to promote a memory of him that includes a familial dimension - something that only she and, presumably, her siblings can provide - and thus she writes herself into this legacy.

As illustrated above, one of Moro's stated intentions in writing this book was to introduce a more informal and intimate portrait of her father both to her children and other readers of this work. The newer section of the book analyses responses to the 2003 publication. In the introduction to the extended version, Moro describes the surprise that she felt at the warm welcome it received:

Quando *Un uomo così* è uscito, alla fine del 2003, non ero in grado di immaginare che sorte avrebbe avuto. Lo consideravo un po' come un 'messaggio in bottiglia'. E non sapevo se sarebbe stato raccolto da qualcuno. Interessava la persona di Aldo Moro?

In questi cinque anni ho avuto una risposta decisamente positiva a questa domanda.¹⁵²

Moro's apparent wonder at her compatriots' interest in and sympathy with her father's story is reiterated several times throughout the book. This seems relatively surprising and is perhaps rhetorical, given Aldo Moro's fame and that his death has been commemorated more publicly than any of the others.

Moro uses this book to reflect on and express humility for the many and varied ways that people have publicly shown an interest in her father's story. While he is undoubtedly the most famous of the victims from that time, Agnese Moro's book ties together his public and private personae effectively and

¹⁵¹ Moro, *Un uomo così*, p. 9.

¹⁵² Moro, *Un uomo così*, p. 5.

originally by describing intimate, informal memories of her father in a format not used by any of the other second generation authors. The 2008 re-publication also renders *Un uomo così* unique among these texts in that it is self-reflective because Moro is able to consider and comment on the public reactions to the first publication and illustrate how these have helped her to come to a better awareness of her father's place in the collective memory. In doing so, Moro adds another layer to our understanding of the place that any of these memoirs can have in a collective memory of this time and its victims.

2.2 Giovanni Fasanella and Sabina Rossa, *Guido Rossa, mio padre.*

Fasanella and Rossa's account was the next to be published of the six books in 2006. Sabina Rossa's father, Guido Rossa was murdered by the Red Brigades on 24 January 1979. He was a trade union leader and PCI member who worked in Genoa for Italsider, a metal-working plant, and Sabina was sixteen years old when he was murdered. This work differs from the other five because Rossa chose to write it with the help of someone else: Giovanni Fasanella is a journalist and writer who has written extensively on modern Italian history and the *anni di piombo*. His collection of interviews with victims from those years and their families, *I silenzi degli innocenti*, was published in the same year as this book. While Agnese Moro uses *Un uomo così* to document the efforts that have been made to preserve her father's memory, Sabina Rossa has quite a different motive for writing about her father. Of the six authors, only Rossa has framed the process of writing as an investigation and we could associate this with the fact that she has written this work with a journalist as the investigative style is rather journalistic in that she tends not to write in overly emotive terms and states her aims very clearly at the book's outset. In the preface, Giovanni Fasanella details the conversation that he had with Sabina Rossa which he claims spurred the writing of this book:

Conservo ancora sul mio cellulare il messaggio che Sabina, la figlia di Guido Rossa... mi inviò nell'aprile del 2005... Aveva deciso di indagare sulla morte del padre perché era convinta che, a quasi trent'anni

dall'attentato, non fosse ancora emersa tutta la verità. Sapeva che quella era anche la mia sensazione e voleva che l'aiutassi.¹⁵³

This book, then, documents Rossa's investigation into her father's death. She does not record memories of her father in the way that Moro does, focussing instead on the mysteries surrounding her father's killing. In the process, she meets with one of the men responsible for his murder and others who knew her father or worked with him and are able to tell her more about aspects of his life which she, as his teenaged daughter, did not know.

The Red Brigades claimed that Guido Rossa was shot because he had reported Francesco Berardi, a member of the group working at the same factory, to the police for distributing propagandist leaflets. In the preface, as Fasanella outlines his reasons for agreeing to help Rossa in her quest, he confesses that he believed that her father was murdered for more than just his whistleblowing:

Perché, anche per gente come i brigatisti rossi, uccidere un operaio, per giunta iscritto al Pci e delegato sindacale, non era una decisione che si potesse prendere a cuor leggero: li avrebbe messi in difficoltà nella loro stessa area di riferimento, la fabbrica. Perciò, dissi a Sabina che, secondo me, il padre probabilmente era stato colpito anche perché aveva scoperto qualcosa di ben più grave e compromettente di un 'postino', o avrebbe potuto scoprirlo. Era un'idea che mi ero fatta in tanti anni, nel corso della mia esperienza professionale.¹⁵⁴

From the outset of this book, it is clear that, above and beyond writing her father's history, Sabina Rossa and Giovanni Fasanella plan to change the way that his killing had previously been thought about: they view Guido Rossa's murder as a mystery that they aim to solve. By framing their writing as an investigation in this way, these authors express quite different aims from the other five in the corpus.

The citation from Fasanella above seems to wilfully ignore the fact that, especially by the late 1970s, the Red Brigades were not particularly influential in factories. Guido Rossa is portrayed in this work as an 'unlikely' victim of the Red Brigades because he was a member of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) and a trade unionist. Again, to portray him in such a way is to disregard the fact that

¹⁵³ Fasanella & Rossa, *Guido Rossa*, p. 5.

¹⁵⁴ Fasanella & Rossa, *Guido Rossa*, p. 6.

the Red Brigades' political ideology was far to the left of that of the PCI. The relationship between the PCI, the far-left groups and the more extreme, 'terrorist' groups was always very strained. Indeed, the statement released by the Red Brigades justifying Rossa's murder describes him in a very disparaging way as a 'berlingueriano', after Enrico Berlinguer, the Communist Party leader whose reformist ideas, as we have seen, were unpopular among the far-left:

Compagni, da quando la guerriglia ha cominciato a radicarsi dentro la fabbrica, la direzione italsider con la preziosa collaborazione dei berlingueriani, si è posta il problema di ricostruire una rete di spionaggio, utilizzando insieme delatori vecchi e nuovi; da un lato ha riqualificato fascisti e democristiani, dall'altro ha moltiplicato le assunzioni di ex PS ed ex CC, dall'altro ancora ha cominciato a utilizzare quei berlingueriani che sono disponibili a concretizzare la loro linea controrivoluzionaria fino alle estreme conseguenze:

FINO AL PUNTO CIOÈ DI TRADIRE LA PROPRIA CLASSE, MANDANDO IN GALERA A CUOR LEGGERO UN PROPRIO COMPAGNO DI LAVORO.¹⁵⁵

Nonetheless, Sabina Rossa and Giovanni Fasanella report throughout this book that Guido Rossa's murder must have been due to more than just his denouncement of the '*postino*' Berardi and they set out to uncover these ulterior motives.

As stated above, Rossa meets and interviews several people for this book in order to try to uncover the hidden history behind her father's murder. These people include more than one former member of the Red Brigades - although she does not meet Riccardo Dura, the *brigatista* who delivered the lethal shot, because he was killed during a police raid on a Red Brigades hideout in Genova in 1980. Guido Rossa was also shot by Vincenzo Guagliardo in the attack and he is the first person that Rossa seeks out to interrogate about her father's murder. This interview and the others featured in the book highlight the fact that this work was written as an investigation into historical uncertainties more than a sentimental or nostalgic look at her father's life. While other children of victims also include interviews in their works, none of them interrogates their interviewees in the same accusatory, analytical or detached way as Rossa does.

¹⁵⁵ Fasanella & Rossa, *Guido Rossa*, p. 201.

During the course of the book, Rossa reaches the conclusion that her father was killed by Dura in an act that went against what had been discussed by the Red Brigades - both Guagliardo and the statement issued by the Red Brigades following the murder insist that they had only planned to shoot her father in the legs - and Guagliardo suggests that Dura belonged to a 'militant' faction within the organisation. On the recommendations of several people, including Renato Curcio, she finally speaks to Lovrano Bisso who was a Communist Party secretary at the time that her father was murdered. She discovers from him that her father was part of an 'intelligence agency' inside the party. Bisso tells her that this was a secret group and that they worked to find extremists among the radical-left groups, in the factories and unions, and even within the PCI itself. He reports that Guido Rossa was a key figure within this secret organisation and that his work was highly useful in discovering more about the networks of infiltrated Red Brigades members.¹⁵⁶ Sabina Rossa seems satisfied with this answer to her investigation:

Né io, né mia madre, né mio zio e nemmeno gli amici più cari e i compagni di lavoro, nessuno di noi aveva mai saputo o sospettato che mio padre svolgesse un'attività segreta.¹⁵⁷

She concludes that her father was murdered by Riccardo Dura, at the behest of more senior, more militant members of the organisation - she hints that Mario Moretti may have been involved - because he knew too much about the inner workings and power structures of the Red Brigades.

For Sabina Rossa, then, writing this book in an investigative, journalistic style has apparently served to help her to better understand her father's murder. That her investigation ends following her discovery of her father's involvement in a form of PCI intelligence agency shows that she was satisfied with the answers that she found. *Guido Rossa, mio padre* raises interesting questions about the victims' families' experiences of justice and the importance that the truth - whether it is known or not - holds for them.

¹⁵⁶ Fasanella & Rossa, *Guido Rossa*, pp. 156-159.

¹⁵⁷ Fasanella & Rossa, *Guido Rossa*, p. 160.

2.3 Mario Calabresi, *Spingendo la notte più in là: Storia della mia famiglia e di altre vittime del terrorismo*.

Mario Calabresi's memoir was published in 2007 and is among the best known of the books written by children of victims. As described in the previous chapter, his father, Luigi, was killed on 17 May 1972, when Mario was three years old. Luigi Calabresi, along with Aldo Moro, is one of the better known of the victims of the *anni di piombo*. As already outlined, this has much to do with the press campaign preceding his death, which continues to influence public opinion. Since his father's image is so controversial and unpopular among parts of Italian society, Calabresi, in writing this book, attempts to claim victim, rather than perpetrator, status for his father. This cannot be said to the same extent of the other children of victims who have written about their experiences except Silvia Giralucci; the other authors' fathers' victim statuses are more assured.

Calabresi is the first of these authors to acknowledge his place within a community, indeed the subtitle of his book - *Storia della mia famiglia e di altre vittime del terrorismo* - states this clearly. By situating his family in this community, he strengthens his claim to victim status. Near the beginning of this book, Calabresi bemoans the fact that in bookshops, the shelves dedicated to the *anni di piombo* are almost entirely filled with books written by and about the former perpetrators. While he acknowledges that books depicting the victims' point of view were starting to emerge at the time of his writing, he complains that they were too few.¹⁵⁸ While Sabina Rossa met with former perpetrators from the *anni di piombo*, Calabresi prioritises meeting with people in a similar situation to his. One chapter of the book is devoted to his meeting with Antonia Custra, whose father too was a police officer killed in Milan before she was born. Calabresi highlights how little she knew about her father's death and how unhelpful the Italian authorities seem to have been towards her and her mother. She tells him that she struggled with eating disorders growing up and that she received no support from anyone in this respect either:

La psicologa me la pago io, lo Stato non si è mai preoccupato di questo tipo di assistenza. Non è una questione di soldi, è che non hanno mai

¹⁵⁸ Calabresi, *Spingendo la notte più in là*, pp. 21-22.

pensato che si dovesse intervenire sostenendo le vedove, gli orfani, non solo economicamente, ma psicologicamente, affettivamente. Nessuno se ne è mai fatto carico.¹⁵⁹

It appears that Calabresi wanted to include Custra's story to underline that, for many of the families of victims, there is more support to be found from other members of this community than those authority figures from whom you might expect support. This is a problem that Anna Cento Bull and Philip Cooke have examined in their work. They outline the way that victims' associations were formed and became more formally organised as the years passed and they connect the creation of this formal support network to the frustrating and fruitless experiences that victims and their families had with the Italian authorities and justice system:

[T]he victims and their relatives found that, following a terrorist attack, they had to contend not just with their own emotional needs and with procedural and bureaucratic issues, but also with little or no support from the state and, especially in the case of the bombing massacres, with a succession of trials spanning several decades in which the representatives of state institutions seemingly acted to thwart the course of justice.¹⁶⁰

By including Custra's story here, Calabresi also once again aligns his story with someone who is incontrovertibly a victim. The notion of expecting, but not receiving, support from the government is especially important when the victim in question worked for the government.

Mario Calabresi's mother, Gemma Capra, also plays a central role in his memoir. He writes that she has been very supportive of him and his brothers and that the work she has done with other victims' families inspired him to write his own memoir. Calabresi reports that his mother went to speak to Vanna Marangoni whose husband, Luigi Marangoni, was director of a hospital in Milan. He was shot dead outside their house by the Red Brigades for reporting staff within the hospital who were committing acts of sabotage by unplugging fridges so that the blood they contained would be unusable. Having spoken to Marangoni, Calabresi states that his mother told him she thought the State had been allowed to get away with ignoring victims' families for long enough:

¹⁵⁹ Calabresi, *Spingendo la notte più in là*, p. 29.

¹⁶⁰ Cento Bull and Cooke, *Ending Terrorism in Italy*, p. 161.

Mia madre è una persona focalizzata sull'idea di camminare e guardare sempre avanti, di lavorare per la riconciliazione, il perdono, la sostiene una fede vitale e fortissima, ma quel pomeriggio aveva una voce scossa e mi disse: 'Vedi, Mario, l'ho ascoltata a lungo, ho ripensato a voi, a papà Gigi [Luigi Calabresi], a tutti quelli che abbiamo conosciuto in questi anni che non riescono a ritrovare la forza di vivere, a quello che ci hanno fatto, a quanto siamo stati tutti lasciati soli e a come tutto sia passato in cavalleria e mi è preso lo sconforto: siamo stati tutti troppo buoni, troppo pazienti'.¹⁶¹

In this citation, it becomes clear that Calabresi intends his book to act as a catalyst: he and his family assert that not enough has been done for the victims of the *anni di piombo* and this book should be considered the first step in a plan to redress this injustice.

Mario Calabresi gives memory and commemoration an important place in his discussion. He claims that his family never wanted to influence the trial of those accused of his father's murder, although he reports that their opinions were often sought. He states that the public commemorative gestures that have been made have been more important for his family. In 2004, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, president at the time, awarded his father the *Medaglia d'oro al Merito Civile*: 'Poi arrivò la medaglia. E la frase di Ciampi: "Abbiamo ritrovato la memoria". E questa è la cosa più importante'.¹⁶² He also states that he would like to see a memorial to all the victims, similar to the memorial to the victims of the Vietnam War in Washington. He is the only one of these six authors to put such emphasis on having a physical memorial; a space which represents the collective memory. Furthermore, he writes very approvingly of the then as yet unrealised plans to inaugurate a commemorative day for the victims of terrorism in Italy.¹⁶³

Spingendo la notte più in là is an important and interesting contribution to the canon of work produced by victims' children. His focus on different experiences of victimhood and the question of justice places it apart from the others we have examined so far in this chapter. Calabresi is a well-known public

¹⁶¹ Calabresi, *Spingendo la notte più in là*, p. 68.

¹⁶² Calabresi, *Spingendo la notte più in là*, p. 108.

¹⁶³ Calabresi, *Spingendo la notte più in là*, pp. 92-93.

figure as the director of national newspaper, *La Stampa*, and, as he is a professional writer, this also marks him out from Moro and Rossa. Calabresi's writing is measured and we will see that balance and journalistic integrity are traits that he appears to value when we examine his attitude to the press campaign against his father in Chapter Three. Some of the other children of *anni di piombo* victims will write about the influence that Calabresi's book had on their own decision to write and his book is mentioned in many newspaper articles and other accounts of this time and its victims.

2.4 **Benedetta Tobagi, *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore*.**

Benedetta Tobagi's study of her father was published two years after Mario Calabresi's work. Walter Tobagi was a journalist at *Corriere della Sera* who was murdered on 28 May 1980 by an extreme left-wing group called the Brigata XVIII marzo. Benedetta Tobagi states that she has written this book to document the process of getting to know her father better since she, like Calabresi, was three years old when he was killed. It is a long and detailed study: her book is approximately three hundred pages long, while Calabresi's, Rossa's and Moro's all number around two hundred pages or less.

Tobagi directly addresses the fact that, before she started researching her father's life in preparation for writing this book, she had been more familiar with the public image of Walter Tobagi:

Essere al centro di una tragedia pubblica aveva molti risvolti spiacevoli. Primo, mi collocava in una scomoda posizione di visibilità, del tutto indesiderata. Secondo, avevo l'impressione che l'invasione di questa immagine pubblica, anziché avvicinarlo e aiutarmi a conoscerlo, non facesse che spingere mio padre un po' più lontano da me, come quando inseguì un pallone tra le onde.

Chi era davvero Walter Tobagi? Perché lo hanno ucciso?¹⁶⁴

To illustrate this public image of her journalist father, Tobagi's book contains many extracts from newspaper articles relating to her father and his death. She uses these to demonstrate the often emotional terms with which his journalist

¹⁶⁴ Tobagi, *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore*, p. 13.

colleagues commemorated his death, stating that he was usually described in one of two ways: the ‘good reporter’ or the ‘socialist martyr’.¹⁶⁵ In addition to these two monikers used by his colleagues, Benedetta Tobagi writes that the two adjectives most frequently associated with her father’s name are ‘Catholic’ and ‘Socialist’, giving examples of times when the two adjectives have been selectively used by journalists from newspapers representing each of those camps.¹⁶⁶ In Benedetta Tobagi’s opinion, by condensing her father’s memory into short phrases and adjectives in this way, it has to some extent been politicised. This is underlined when she writes that, for years, the commemoration of his death was organised exclusively by members of the Italian Socialist Party.¹⁶⁷ A large portion of this book is dedicated to adding nuance to these short descriptors. Tobagi goes to great lengths to explain that while her father might have been a Catholic and a Socialist that does not mean that these are the only adjectives that can describe him. This serves as an introduction to and an explanation for her writing her own book: she expresses a desire to reclaim his memory from those who would use it for their own political gains and to try to understand, on her own terms, why he was killed.

Tobagi uses her father’s own notebooks and diaries, which have been kept in the room that was his study, to help her to understand him better. Writing about how his study intimidated and fascinated her when she was growing up, Tobagi explains that her father’s books inspired her:

Ho sempre sentito che [i libri] erano miei. Io avrei saputo amarli apprezzarli e curarli. Credo che il mio desiderio di studiare sia nato lí dentro: un giorno li avrei letti come aveva fatto papà, e avrei capito tante cose, con lui e di lui.¹⁶⁸

While, as a teenager, she finally did overcome her timidity and read her father’s books, Benedetta Tobagi explains that it was only when she was in her twenties and at university that she began to consider the notebooks and diaries that form the basis for this study of her father’s memory. However, they evidently became very important to her: ‘Le parole di mio padre sono arrivate a sostenermi, una

¹⁶⁵ ‘Il “cronista buono” e il “martire socialista”’, Tobagi, *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore*, p. 16.

¹⁶⁶ Tobagi, *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore*, p. 18.

¹⁶⁷ Tobagi, *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore*, p. 19.

¹⁶⁸ Tobagi, *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore*, p. 36.

mano forte che non ti lascia, come ho sempre desiderato sentirla'.¹⁶⁹ Using passages from her father's private writing, Tobagi is well-equipped to move her father's image beyond that described by his former colleagues.

Tobagi writes about her own childhood and adolescence. She describes the difficulties she has felt because she has no memories of her father and because speaking about him was a taboo in her family:

Il dolore è una sostanza pericolosa, difficile da gestire, come un esplosivo molto instabile. Vedo me e la mia famiglia seduti sopra queste casse di tritolo: bisogna stare molto attenti a non farle saltare in aria con gesti bruschi, parole inappropriate o lacrime. Così, strato su strato si sedimenta un blocco di emozioni congelate.¹⁷⁰

Her confessions about growing up in this environment, with her father's memory looming large yet not spoken of, make *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore* seem at times like a form of therapy for Tobagi. More than the other books analysed in this thesis, Benedetta Tobagi's writing is very revealing about the personal struggles that she has confronted as the daughter of a victim from the *anni di piombo*. Tobagi is now very active in promoting commemorative events for victims of that time and speaking publicly about the issues facing victims and their families. This might be construed as a continuation of the therapeutic act of writing about her pain and talking about her father's memory.

Tobagi reconstructs the events leading up to her father's murder, interspersing reproductions of letters, articles and notes written by her father with information about the political situation at the time and about other politically-motivated violence that took place in the 1970s and 1980s. She records her father's writings and plots them against their historical background, creating a clear image of what her father was writing and why. By also including articles written by other journalists and historians of the time, she is able to contextualise her father's actions. Through his diary entries and letters, Tobagi creates a vivid picture of her father's unease at the intensifying atmosphere of that time and the fear that he and his colleagues felt for their lives. These examples of her father's personal and private writing are a crucial element in Tobagi's attempt to depict a more personal side to her father, in order to build

¹⁶⁹ Tobagi, *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore*, p. 51.

¹⁷⁰ Tobagi, *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore*, p. 26.

on or overcome what she sees as the existing politicised public image of him. She portrays him throughout the book as a caring family man who worked very hard and whose priority was always to report the truth. This image is reinforced by the examples of his writing, both professional and personal, that she chooses; these range from a long and touching letter to his wife in which he apologises for not being more present, to examples of detailed notes regarding the political situation and of his attempts to comprehend the motives of those members of the far-left movement who chose to commit violent acts in the name of politics. By portraying him in this way, she creates a much more detailed portrait of her father at this fateful time than his journalist colleagues could have demonstrated. Writing can be seen as a form of catharsis for many of these second generation writers, and an important aspect of this catharsis is the need to regain control of their fathers' memory and Tobagi does this by focussing on his written work and the connection that she says she feels with his words.

Chapter thirteen of *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore* is entitled *Fine del mondo* and Tobagi uses it to give details of her father's murder. She reproduces the newspaper articles that were published announcing his death and writes about the funeral and the letters of sympathy that she and her family have received over the years. Benedetta Tobagi is unique among these authors because her book includes photographs. She uses these to illustrate her account; they are a mixture of professional press photographs and family snapshots. At the beginning of this chapter, there is a photograph of her father, dead and lying in a pool of blood. Under the image, Tobagi has written: 'Lascio quest'immagine qui, nel ventre di questo libro, come sotto un cuscino, un posto protetto, dove - forse - potrà farmi meno male'.¹⁷¹ Again, the emotion in Tobagi's writing is clear and the image is rendered all the more powerful by her description.

The book ends on a very personal note, as Tobagi describes visiting her father's grave and talking to him. She writes that she has always taken a rose to leave at his grave and the last few paragraphs comprise a letter that she has written to her father to leave with the rose. *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore* is an emotional account, but Benedetta Tobagi's writing is not, on the whole, angry or accusatory. Her passion and inquisitiveness are directed towards the future; she is interested in dispelling myths about her father, investigating the

¹⁷¹ Tobagi, *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore*, p. 225.

political climate of the 1970s in general and highlighting that there is more to his history than his being murdered. She seems to do this for her own sake, but, more than that, for the sake of future generations whom she believes might benefit from knowing her father's and other victims' stories:

Sono allergica alla retorica vuota del martire e dell'eroe, che troppo spesso si applica alle vittime del terrorismo, ma non solo. È tanto più facile creare un simbolo e isolarlo su un piedistallo... Appiattare la vita di un uomo dentro una parabola eroica vuol dire anche allontanarla dall'esperienza normale e ridurre la possibilità che divenga un modello a cui ispirarsi nella vita di ogni giorno.¹⁷²

Benedetta Tobagi's work promoting the memory of the victims of the *anni di piombo* is predominantly with young people and we will see that much of this future-facing memory work has at its root a desire to promote democracy. By attempting to create a more three-dimensional image of her father in this book, Benedetta Tobagi has tried to make him seem more human and more sympathetic and to make his memory more nuanced. It seems, when Tobagi explains that her father is generally seen as either a good journalist or a Socialist martyr, that she finds these overblown descriptions irritating and that she would like to use this book to prove that he was just a man after all, making his murder seem all the more unjust.

2.5 Silvia Giralucci, *L'inferno sono gli altri*.

Silvia Giralucci's work was published in 2011 and, like Benedetta Tobagi and Mario Calabresi, she was three years old when her father, Graziano Giralucci, was murdered. As mentioned previously, he was a member of the far-right political party Movimento Sociale Italiano and was killed, along with his colleague, Giuseppe Mazzola, at the party's offices in Padua on 17 June 1974 by a group of Red Brigades militants. Unlike the preceding memoirs, Silvia Giralucci's work considers the 1970s as a whole and her father's death features as a way for her to contextualise her own interest in the period. Her focus is on Padua in the 1970s and she uses this concentrated approach to better understand the political and social context of her father's murder. Padua was

¹⁷² Tobagi, *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore*, p. 292.

historically a predominantly conservative, Catholic city, part of the so-called 'white quadrilateral' along with Verona, Vicenza and Treviso, described by Paul Ginsborg as 'the Christian Democrat heartland'.¹⁷³ However, the city was also home in the 1970s to a large and active community of far-left activists. Autonomous groups such as Potere operaio grew out of the tradition of *operaismo*, 'workerism', born in the area's factories in the 1960s and they saw the use of violence as a logical next step in their struggle for workers' rights.¹⁷⁴ In addition to the far-left political groups, Padua was also home to right-wing militants. The Paduan branch of the extreme-right organisation Ordine Nuovo was led by Franco Freda, who, among other criminal accusations, was eventually found guilty of organising the bombing of the bank in Piazza Fontana.¹⁷⁵

Like some of the other children of victims, Giralucci feels her father's memory has been neglected by the authorities. While others have expressed frustration with a more general Italian apathy towards the victims of this time, Giralucci complains that the city where her father was killed and where she grew up has done little to honour him, preferring, until very recently, to leave the commemoration to neo-fascist militants:

Oltre trent'anni dopo la morte di papà e Mazzola, il comune di Padova ha capito che le prime due vittime delle Brigate rosse, benché di destra, meritavano una commemorazione istituzionale. Quella cerimonia, voluta da un sindaco di sinistra, Flavio Zanonato, è stata l'inizio della mia riconciliazione con la città in cui sono nata... Ed è stato così che le commemorazioni con le croci celtiche, circondate da polizia in assetto antisommossa, sono diventate negli ultimi anni cerimonie più sobrie, dove finalmente partecipano non solo militanti di destra, ma cittadini che vogliono ricordare un pezzo di storia di questa città, e dove posso portare anche i miei figli.¹⁷⁶

Silvia Giralucci writes that her father's memory has been overlooked and ignored because of his political beliefs. 'Uccidere un fascista non è reato/è la giustizia

¹⁷³ Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy*, p. 176.

¹⁷⁴ Gabriele Licciardi, 'L'operaismo veneto fra modernizzazione e conflitto', *Meridiana*, 70 (2011), pp. 209-231 (pp. 215-216).

¹⁷⁵ Cento Bull, *Italian Neofascism*, pp. 30-31.

¹⁷⁶ Giralucci, *L'inferno sono gli altri*, pp. 4-5.

del proletariato'¹⁷⁷ and other violently anti-fascist slogans were used frequently by left-wing militants at the time and it is a sentiment that Giralucci and others - like the journalist Luca Telese who has written a book, *Cuori neri*, which collects together the stories of 'forgotten' right-wing victims - identify even today in some people's attitudes to remembering the victims of that period. It seems their memory is less prominent and less visible than the memory of the victims who held left-wing political beliefs. Giralucci claims to try to understand the polarised view of politics that she sees as defining the violence of the 1970s and, as a consequence, the memory of that time, in order to better understand her father's murder:

Penso che la strada che ho fatto per elaborare il mio lutto privato possa essere utile anche per affrontare il problema di una città, di una generazione, di un paese, che per un periodo ha vissuto la politica come un valore così totalizzante da oscurare persino la *pietas* per i morti dell'altra parte politica. Il rancore, è stato scritto, è un veleno che corrode le tue ossa, mai quelle degli altri. Comprendere anche le ragioni di chi ti è stato nemico è la mia via per guardare con serenità al futuro.¹⁷⁸

Giralucci's stated aims for this study - gaining an understanding of the time for her own peace of mind, but also to help others to understand - mirror those expressed by other children of victims from the *anni di piombo*. Giralucci's case is different from the others, however, because her father, like Luigi Calabresi, is a controversial victim figure. As a member of the MSI, Graziano Giralucci held political beliefs that many would find abhorrent. By focussing her study on the historical and political context of her father's murder, Silvia Giralucci asks her readers to understand her father, not to judge him. She writes in this way to attempt to draw attention away from his political beliefs and to remind her readers, as Benedetta Tobagi does, that her father was just a man. This is something that she has discussed elsewhere and she has made the link between Mario Calabresi's aims in writing about his father and her own:

Il libro di Mario Calabresi... ha fatto vedere le cose da un'altra prospettiva, portando a riflettere sull'individualità del commissario

¹⁷⁷ Ferraresi, *Minacce alla democrazia*, p. 290, note 5.

¹⁷⁸ Giralucci, *L'inferno sono gli altri*, p. 14.

Calabresi. Vorrei accadesse lo stesso per mio padre, considerato sempre un simbolo e mai un uomo.¹⁷⁹

In order to make her study of Padua in the 1970s, Giralucci conducts a number of interviews with figures who lived in the city during those years and experienced the political tumult and rising level of violence. These figures range from a former student who was involved in demonstrations and violence in the university, to Guido Petter, a university professor who was attacked by a group of left-wing militants and Pietro Calogero, a magistrate who is well-known for his role in investigating and prosecuting members of the Red Brigades and other extreme left-wing organisations who were active in the 1970s. Her investigations centre on the far-left autonomous movements, Potere Operaio and Autonomia Operaia and their actions in Padua. Since much of the violence perpetrated by these groups was organised and took place at the University of Padua, a large portion of her research and questions are focussed here. Her choice to highlight left-wing groups in particular can again be read as an attempt to direct her readers' attention away from the right-wing violence that also took place in Padua and the surrounding area.

What sets Giralucci's book apart from the others' is this intense focus on the historical, social and political context of her father's death: it is striking that she does not write about his death or her feelings about it in any detail until the final third of the book. All of the other writers whose works we have examined so far have directed their readers' attention away from the public image of their fathers and concentrated on providing a private, familial version of their history that reminds us that there was more to their lives than their violent ends. Giralucci, on the other hand, barely writes about her father's personality or his life at all, mentioning him only in the context of his politics:

Mi è capitato diverse volte di arrabbiarmi quando mi sono sentita dire da persone che scoprivano, dal cognome, di chi sono figlia: 'Conoscevo tuo padre, era un bravo ragazzo. Era di destra, ma non meritava quella fine'. Mi indignava quel 'ma'. Mio padre non meritava quella fine e basta. Non la merita nessuno.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹ <http://www.secoloditalia.it/2012/08/silvia-giralucci-morire-per-unidea-ho-cercato-di-capire-perch/>

¹⁸⁰ Giralucci, *L'inferno sono gli altri*, p. 114.

She mentions that her mother did not speak to her about her father. Explaining why Guido Petter has had a profound influence on her, she writes that her mother gave her a copy of his diary-memoir when she was younger: 'Nel generale silenzio sulla vicenda di papà, l'avermi dato il libro di Petter credo sia stato un messaggio'.¹⁸¹ At the very end of the book, Giralucci reports that around twenty years previously, one of the rugby clubs that her father had founded and trained had been promoted and that she and her mother were invited to help them celebrate. Giralucci asserts that this was the first time in her life that she recalled her father being remembered for something that he did when he was alive, an acknowledgement for which she writes that she was very grateful.¹⁸² Giralucci avoids writing about her own political beliefs in this book, but the way that she describes the right-wing commemorations of her father's death suggests that she does not share his views. She writes that she would not take her children to the right-wing commemorations and mentions the presence of riot police. She is not openly critical of her father's extreme political views and this allows her to concentrate on her portrayal of him as a man who she wishes to separate from his politicised memory.

Graziano Giralucci was not a public figure like so many of the other victims whose children have chosen to write about them and this might go some way to explain why his daughter has written about the history of the period he was killed, rather than about him more directly, as other authors have done for their fathers. However, while there was no public image of her father in the way that there was for victims like Aldo Moro or Luigi Calabresi, who were well-known even before their deaths, Giralucci can still be seen to attempt to control her father's memory by claiming victim status for him.

The longest chapter in the book contains Giralucci's interview with Pietro Calogero, the magistrate who identified links between the extreme left-wing groups in Padua and the farther-reaching violence of the Red Brigades. He was responsible for arresting a number of leaders of extreme left-wing organisations in Padua and throughout Italy, including Padua University professor and Potere Operaio founder, Toni Negri - whom Calogero controversially accused of Red

¹⁸¹ Giralucci, *L'inferno sono gli altri*, pp. 37-38.

¹⁸² Giralucci, *L'inferno sono gli altri*, pp. 179-180.

Brigades membership and involvement in Moro's kidnapping¹⁸³ - on 7 April 1979.¹⁸⁴ Their interview discloses much about the city in the 1970s and provides a thorough explanation of why Calogero made the decisions and took the action that he did. By dedicating such a large portion of her book to this interview with a magistrate, Giralucci places justice at the forefront of her investigation into the 1970s. She has suffered the injustice of having her father's murder described as somehow less grave because of his political beliefs and by highlighting the democratic judicial process, Giralucci directs her readers' focus away from such polarising political views.

Silvia Giralucci underlines how her father's memory has been manipulated over the years and used to political ends, alienating her and her family in the process. By seeking to understand the context of her father's murder and foregrounding democracy in her interviews, Giralucci demonstrates the senselessness of her father's murder and the attitudes that prevailed in the years that have followed. At the end of the book, Benedetta Tobagi is one of the people that Giralucci thanks, stating that she had been a great help to her in the writing of *L'inferno sono gli altri*. Clearly, then, Silvia Giralucci has been influenced in the writing of her story by those who have gone before her. While her book takes a very different format and might be better described as a memoir to the decade or to Padua than to her father, it is her status as a child of a victim from that time that has given her licence to write as she has, inspired by and with the aid of others in her same situation.

2.6 Massimo Coco, *Ricordare stanca*.

The final book written by a child of a victim from the *anni di piombo* that will be examined in this thesis was published in 2012. Massimo Coco's father, Francesco Coco, was a magistrate who was killed on 8 June 1976 in Genoa along with his two bodyguards, Giovanni Saponara and Antioco Deiana. Massimo Coco, like Sabina Rossa, was sixteen years old when his father was killed. The Red Brigades released a statement claiming responsibility for the triple murder, but to this day nobody has been convicted for the crime. Of all the victims whose children

¹⁸³ Willan, *Puppetmasters*, pp. 182-184.

¹⁸⁴ Jacopo Iacboni, 'Calogero e il Sette aprile. Avevo ragione io', *La Stampa*, 30 September 2010.

have written books that are included here, only Francesco Coco's murder remains unsolved.

Massimo Coco is very clearly influenced by the other books that have been written by children of victims from the *anni di piombo* as he cites their work and has invented categories that he uses to describe them and their behaviour and writing. His book can be read as a critical, sarcastic commentary on other works by victims' descendants. Indeed, he expresses a relatively cynical view of the rest of the community of writers that he finds himself among and of official commemoration and public memory of the victims. His book begins with an account of the 2011 commemorative day for the victims of terrorism. He writes that the ceremony was dedicated to judges and lawyers who were murdered during the *anni di piombo*, his father being one of them, but claims that he and his young son were not present on the list of family members who had seats reserved for them and so they had to sit near the back of the auditorium, among people with no connection to the victims who were being honoured.¹⁸⁵ Starting the book in this way gives an indication of the low opinion that Coco appears to hold of large-scale commemorative events and of the people who organise them. In this book he outlines his views on the uses of the memory of these victims and the ways that he sees that the Italian authorities have let down the victims' families. When describing one of the speeches given at the 2011 ceremony, Coco's disdain for the event is clear:

Recita con un po' di freddezza un antico copione, puntellato su prevedibili parole chiave: parla del dolore, del ricordo, dice di come non si debba mai odiare, di come tutti i colpevoli debbano pentirsi e di come si debba sempre guardare avanti. Mancherebbe solo un bel 'amen' finale, tanto tutto questo assomiglia ormai a un rito antico.¹⁸⁶

Coco's scorn marks his writing out from the others' and offers a very different perspective again on postmemory work. Chapter Five of this thesis outlines the largely positive attitude to the inauguration of an official commemorative day for these victims expressed by their family members, but Coco writes plainly that he believes such public acts of memory serve the organisers more than those being commemorated or their families. The difficulties and complexities

¹⁸⁵ Coco, *Ricordare stanca*, pp. 1-3.

¹⁸⁶ Coco, *Ricordare stanca*, p. 5.

linked to public acts of commemoration will be examined in greater detail in Chapter Five, but it is important to underline Coco's scepticism here to give an idea of his writing style.

Coco stipulates in his writing that he is different from the other children of victims because he does not seek fame or privileges from his status. He writes that at the end of the 2011 ceremony, he and his son were allowed to go to the front of the auditorium to speak with the other family members gathered there:

Ebbene, adesso da vittime sono stati promossi a 'viptime': eccoli tutti qui davanti - mamma mia, quant'era lunga la *privileged's list*! Alcuni di loro sembra che non riescano a rinunciare mai nemmeno a un centimetro di visibilità, agli onori, ai benefici, alle poltrone.

Io invece non sono come loro, sono rimasto un soldato semplice, un 'modello base' che ha voluto seguire la sua vita. Ho preteso di vivere da Massimo Coco e non solo da 'il figlio di Francesco Coco'.¹⁸⁷

Massimo Coco seems to wish to expose what he sees as shallowness and hypocrisy among the children who have written about their dead fathers. He applies the term 'viptime' in a very broad way, without naming anyone in particular, but making allusions throughout his book to other works written by children of victims. Generally, these allusions do not overtly name the authors, rather Coco cites them or makes references that will only be understood by those who have read their books and he tends to mention the best-known works, those written by Benedetta Tobagi and Mario Calabresi.

Given that he was an adolescent when he was killed, Coco can write about his memories of his father when he was alive. He writes extensively about his childhood, including the two years that the family spent in Cagliari, where his father was attorney general - *procuratore generale* - and they all lived in an apartment inside the court building. Coco's account of his childhood focuses on his own behaviour and experiences rather than those of his father and portrays a happy, relatively ordinary upbringing. By portraying his childhood and family in this way, Coco's account is very clearly delineated in the years before and after his father's death. He makes it clear that he is still very hurt by his father's murder and writes that not a day has gone by in the last thirty-six years when he has not thought of his father and pictured him, dead alongside his bodyguards, in

¹⁸⁷ Coco, *Ricordare stanca*, p. 8.

his imagination. Accompanying these thoughts - which, he underlines, are rooted in the fact that he loved his father - are feelings of hatred and rancour for the men who killed him.¹⁸⁸ The expression of these feelings stands out as being unusual among the works examined here. The other authors' feelings towards their fathers' murderers are expressed in a number of different ways, as we shall see in later chapters, but the bitter anger described by Coco is unique.

Coco's tone in *Ricordare stanca* is by far the most cynical of those employed by the writers at the centre of this thesis. Coco is also the author who references the other members of this group the most, even if he often does so in a veiled way. In part, he tries to distance himself from the other children of victims, stipulating, as in the citation above, that he is not like them. However, his story and the themes and situations that he writes about are similar to those described by some of his peers. His style of writing might be less sympathetic than many of the others, but the difficulties associated with forgiveness, commemoration and memory and the problem of an absence of truth arise here more sharply than in the other works.

Massimo Coco seems to begrudge the place that he knows he holds within this community. He claims to be different from all the other children of victims and places himself outside the categories that he has invented to describe them. On the other hand, we have seen Mario Calabresi and others actively seeking to be part of a community of victims' children. Coco acknowledges that all the children of victims have shared experiences, despite not wishing to take part in what he sees as their extroverted attempts to claim the limelight. By inventing categories and unflattering nicknames for the different 'types' of victim that he identifies, he can be seen to criticise the very existence of such a community. However, each of the authors, by writing these post-memoirs, inevitably places him or herself within the community.

Regardless of whether they choose to align their stories with any of the others in the community, these authors are inevitably linked to each other and their writing can therefore be examined as a whole as well as individually. This is a crucial element of this study; by regarding these works and these authors together, instead of focusing on one individual work, the discussion of the memory of the *anni di piombo* can be broadened. The similarities and

¹⁸⁸ Coco, *Ricordare stanca*, p. 47.

differences between these six works and the ways that their authors address themes such as those mentioned above are what this thesis will primarily analyse. In so doing, a picture of the place that these victims and their families hold within the Italian collective memory will become clear.

3 The effects of writing on the collective memory

3.1 Postmemory and a 'community of narrative'

While the previous chapter outlined the style and focus of each of the authors, this chapter will consider the purpose of writing these works: what can the memory of the victims be said to have gained now that their children have written about them?; how have the authors benefited from writing and in what ways can their books be said to have contributed to a collective memory of those years?

The six books at the centre of this thesis represent a community of narrative which describes the experience of being a child of somebody killed during Italy's *anni di piombo*. The term, 'community of narrative' is proposed here to denote the group as a whole and to stress ways that the authors and their works can be seen to resemble and connect with each other. While, as detailed in the previous chapter and as we will further describe in this chapter, the six works are, on the surface, quite different from each other, the aspects that they have in common are what render them interesting and relevant to our study. This community of narrative allows us an enriched understanding of the memory of this period of Italian history because the authors of these six books each provide a personal perspective on the repercussions of these events and, when read as a collective, the aspects of their individual experiences that they choose to recount reveal much about the way that the victims of those years are seen today. These books give us a lens through which to examine the past, but above all, they afford us an understanding of important aspects of Italian society today. In the authors' words, it is possible to read a distillation of Italians' frustration with and distrust of the government and justice system; the esteem in which democracy is held and a desire to nurture future generations of engaged young people.

Let us primarily consider them as a collection of personal writing. To call them 'memoirs' seems misleading; these works detail the authors' thoughts on the lives of their deceased fathers, so would they be better classed as biographies? At the same time, the authors discuss the impact that their fathers' murders have had on their own lives, which suggests that 'autobiography' might

be a more appropriate classification for them. They are memoirs because these books are a way for the writers to look back at their own lives, but many of them were too young when their fathers died to remember much about them, so to use a word so connected with memory might be unfitting. As will be discussed, I have borrowed Marianne Hirsch's term 'postmemory' - invented to describe the writings of children of Holocaust survivors - and coined another, 'postmemoir' to describe these works since this helps to underline the detachment from direct memory and trauma demonstrated by these authors. A brief examination of the use and meaning of the term postmemory will contextualise its use within this thesis and anchor our discussion of these six postmemoirs.

Placing the works discussed in this thesis within the genre of postmemory provides a platform from which to discuss these books and their authors in a collective sense. The books were published within a relatively short space of time and we know that some of the authors influenced and encouraged each other to publish their own stories. Looking at the works collectively and highlighting common themes and stories will also facilitate a comparison with other postmemory works by second-generation authors from different backgrounds, such as the children of Holocaust survivors, allowing us to build a full and nuanced picture of these books within the wider context of written experiences of inherited trauma.

The Holocaust has been described as 'the great trauma of modernity'¹⁸⁹ and therefore the experiences described by the generation following it have set a precedent for any subsequent discussion of written works by the second generation of trauma sufferers. Clearly, there are numerous obvious differences between the experiences of these children and those who lost their fathers during the *anni di piombo*: the children of Holocaust survivors usually grew up with living parents, they comprise many nationalities and the trauma that they have inherited occurred longer ago. Indeed, the violence that occurred during the *anni di piombo* might seem minor when compared with the state-led attempted annihilation of an entire race and the subsequent trauma that was suffered by those writing after the Holocaust and their relatives. However, there are also many ways that their stories - those of the children of victims from the

¹⁸⁹ Kerwin Lee Klein, *From History to Theory* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2011), p. 129.

anni di piombo and the children of Holocaust survivors - resemble each other and these similarities will be our focus here.

Marianne Hirsch has developed a theory of postmemory over several books and articles and it is a theory that can be applied effectively to the writings of the children of victims from the *anni di piombo*. Hirsch has defined postmemory as the relationship between the 'generation after' and trauma that occurred before they were born that has nonetheless marked their lives.¹⁹⁰ Postmemoir is a more appropriate term to describe these works than 'memoir' or any of the other suggestions posited above precisely because it highlights, based on Hirsch's description, the fact that these authors are haunted by a past trauma:

In my reading, postmemory is distinguished from memory by generational distance and from history by deep personal connection. Postmemory is a powerful and very particular form of memory precisely because its connection to its object or source is mediated not through recollection but through an imaginative investment and creation. This is not to say that memory itself is unmediated, but that it is more directly connected to the past. Postmemory characterizes the experience of those who grow up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are evacuated by the stories of the previous generation shaped by traumatic events that can be neither understood nor recreated.¹⁹¹

What identifies these books with this genre then is that postmemoirs are works which have been written as a way to try to somehow come to terms with the legacy of a traumatic event around which the authors' lives have revolved. In the act of writing, however, these second-generation authors do not walk away from their fathers' memory, rather they can begin to shape it and control its use.

It is clear that this term is very apt as a descriptor of the situation of second-generation writers such as Benedetta Tobagi, Mario Calabresi and Silvia Giralucci: they each have a deep personal connection to the trauma in question - the murders of their fathers - yet their sense of the past is not remembered because they were so young when their fathers were killed, rather it is imagined

¹⁹⁰ Marianne Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and visual culture after the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), p. 5.

¹⁹¹ Hirsch, *Family Frames: photography, narrative and postmemory* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, 1997), p. 22.

and mediated through others' recollections. However, the term can also be applied to the experiences of Sabina Rossa, Agnese Moro and Massimo Coco who were young adults when the trauma took place since, like their younger counterparts, their lives have been dominated by the deaths of their fathers. At this point, it is useful to consider these authors as a 'generation', just as Hirsch identifies the children of Holocaust survivors as such, regardless of their varying ages and memories.¹⁹² It is clear that the difference in age at the moment when their fathers were killed is a significant factor in how the six authors will relate to and process the memory of their father. The *anni di piombo* can be seen to have had a different impact on the younger authors than they did on the older ones who were more conscious of the violence and the heightened sense of peril felt at the time. Our decision to group these six works and their authors together, however, was made on the basis that they do, nonetheless have factors in common when it comes to experiencing an inherited sense of trauma. Pierre Nora's description of a generational memory relies on a group's common choices and loyalties:

Generational memory grows out of social interactions that are in the first place historical and collective and are later internalized in a deeply visceral and unconscious way so as to dictate vital choices and control reflexes of loyalty - matters in which 'I' is simultaneously 'we'.¹⁹³

While the second-generation authors are not all the same age and come from different backgrounds and life experiences, they can be seen as having a 'generational memory' nonetheless as they can relate in a similar way to collective and historical memories of the *anni di piombo*. The shared nature of these memories is unavoidable and, while the authors are keen to add their personal voices to the discussion of victims' experiences, their 'I' does, inevitably, also become a 'we'.

¹⁹² It is worth noting, however, that 'generation' is a contested term in historical discourse: Hans Jaeger, 'Generations in History: Reflections on a Controversial Concept', *History and Theory* 24, 3 (Oct., 1985), 273-292.

¹⁹³ Pierre Nora, trans. by Arthur Goldhammer, *Rethinking the French Past: Realms of Memory, Vol. 1: Conflicts and Divisions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), p. 526.

3.2 Memory and silence

Placing the writings of the children of victims from the *anni di piombo* within a postmemory context also permits us to consider the role that memory has had on their decisions to write these works. In order to provide a context for our analysis, we will first examine how memory is depicted and used in the written works of children of Holocaust survivors. Hirsch provides a useful list of the different ways that the concept of second generation 'memory' has been described. The terms that are used highlight the difficult relationship with memory expressed by many of these writers. Hirsch's list includes Ellen S. Fine's term 'absent memory', James Young's 'received memory' and Gabriele Schwab's 'haunting legacy'.¹⁹⁴ Henri Raczymow, a Jewish-French writer who lost several family members during the Holocaust, in his essay originally entitled *La Mémoire Trouée* describes the gaps in his understanding - his memory - of his own Jewish identity:

A memory devoid of memory, without content, beyond exile,
beyond the forgotten. What did I know about Jewish life in Poland?

What had been told to me? Once again, nothing - or next to nothing.¹⁹⁵

Many of the children of Holocaust survivors write about their experiences apparently in a bid to fill these lacunae in their history and 'memory': Hirsch's and others' studies are populated by examples from literature and art that testify to the second generation's attempts to 'mourn a loss that cannot be repaired'.¹⁹⁶ The idea of writing as a way to better understand their identity can also be seen in the work of the children of victims from the *anni di piombo*, who, like the writers mentioned above, sometimes have little or no memory of the trauma that has haunted them growing up.

The idea of a 'haunting legacy' is felt most keenly by the three youngest of the six authors and here the difference in age of the authors is most apparent. Mario Calabresi begins his book by recounting some short anecdotes about his father that he has gleaned from his mother, grandmother and friends of his

¹⁹⁴ Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory*, p. 3.

¹⁹⁵ Henri Raczymow, 'Memory Shot Through With Holes' trans. by Alan Astro, *Yale French Studies*, 85 (1994), 98-105 (p. 100).

¹⁹⁶ Hirsch, 'Past Lives: Postmemories in Exile', *Poetics Today*, 17 (1996), 659-686 (p. 664).

father. Soon, however, the narrative turns from his father to himself as he details his own research into the story of his father's murder, which he claims began when he was fourteen years old.¹⁹⁷ Benedetta Tobagi begins her first chapter by describing the conversations she has had with strangers over the years who have recognised her surname and asked if she was Walter Tobagi's daughter: 'Sono sempre stata la figlia del "povero Walter"'.¹⁹⁸ Silvia Giralucci admits at the very beginning of her narrative that she has no memory of her father and starts by recounting her memories of the 1970s and underlining that the *anni di piombo* do not feature in them, having been shielded from discussions of her father's death by her mother.¹⁹⁹ Calabresi, Tobagi and Giralucci were only three years old when their fathers were murdered and, if they remember them at all, they retain only vague snapshot memories of them. The parts of their books that deal with their fathers' stories are comprised of inherited memories; stories they have heard from others or have collected from newspapers, notebooks and diaries.

The second generation writers who have no memory of their fathers must rely on archives and familial anecdotes for another reason too: as detailed in Chapter One, relatively little was written about this period until recently and even then, the victims' voices were not adequately represented. *Il piombo e il silenzio* and *I silenzi degli innocenti* are two examples of studies of the victims of the *anni di piombo* whose titles focus on the silence of these victims. The authors of the first, *Il piombo e il silenzio*, assert that the silence following the victims' murders can be seen as a 'second murder': 'Uccisi due volte. Dal piombo, prima. Dal silenzio, poi'.²⁰⁰ Giovanni Fasanella and Antonella Grippo also state that their collection of testimonies is based on silences and they refer to the very personal nature of victimhood: 'È un libro sui silenzi, declinato al plurale, perché ci sono tanti modi diversi di vivere lo stesso silenzio'.²⁰¹

Silence is a prominent theme in discussions of second generation Holocaust writing too and many of the difficulties that the post-Holocaust generation faced when writing about their experiences stemmed from the fact

¹⁹⁷ Calabresi, *Spingendo la notte più in là*, pp. 5-9.

¹⁹⁸ Tobagi, *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore*, p. 7.

¹⁹⁹ Giralucci, *L'inferno sono gli altri*, pp. 3-4.

²⁰⁰ Agasso & Agasso Jr., *Il piombo e il silenzio*, p. 7.

²⁰¹ Fasanella & Grippo, *I silenzi degli innocenti*, p. 6.

that the Holocaust was not often discussed publicly in the years following the end of World War II. Elie Wiesel, who, as a young man, survived spells in both Auschwitz and Buchenwald concentration camps, describes the survivors' reticence and the subsequent importance of their testimony: 'Had all of them remained mute, their accumulated silences would have become unbearable: the impact would have deafened the world'.²⁰² This point is picked up again by Sara Horowitz, who writes that the children of Holocaust survivors 'scream on behalf of their parents' pain'.²⁰³ Second generation writing can therefore be seen as a way to drown out the deafening silence. They are speaking, or screaming, on behalf of parents who have lost their voices and there are many motives that push them to do so.

Writing their fathers' stories can be seen as a way for the children of the victims to speak out on their behalf; to add their voices to the discussion and to break the silence described here. Primo Levi has written of the need he felt to attempt to narrate his experience of surviving the Holocaust on behalf of those who could not:

Noi toccati dalla sorte abbiamo cercato, con maggiore o minore sapienza, di raccontare non solo il nostro destino, ma anche quello degli altri... Non saprei dire se lo abbiamo fatto, o lo facciamo, per una sorta di obbligo morale verso gli ammutoliti, o non invece per liberarci del loro ricordo; certo lo facciamo per un impulso forte e durevole.²⁰⁴

Levi's urge to speak on behalf of those not fortunate enough to have survived the Holocaust is informed by different emotions, including guilt, which do not apply to the children of the victims and the irresistible moral obligation that he feels must at least partly be attributed to the enormous scale of the tragedy - something that cannot be easily transposed onto the victims of the *anni di piombo*. However, the children of these victims do strongly wish to give a voice to their murdered fathers - *gli ammutoliti* - and, as outlined in Chapter One,

²⁰² Elie Wiesel, trans. by Lily Edelman and Elie Wiesel, *One Generation After* (New York: Schocken Books, 1982), p.8.

²⁰³ Sara R. Horowitz, 'Auto/Biography and Fiction after Auschwitz: Probing the Boundaries of Second-Generation Aesthetics' (pp. 276-294) in Efraim Sicher (ed.) *Breaking Crystal: Writing and Memory after Auschwitz* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998), p. 278.

²⁰⁴ Levi, *I sommersi e i salvati*, p. 65.

their writings have been instrumental in bringing the stories of these men into a public forum.

Sergio Lenci was an architect who survived an attack by Prima Linea and in his memoir, *Colpo alla nuca*, he writes that people were not always interested in hearing his story. In his introduction to the memoir, Giovanni De Luna describes Lenci's motives for writing his story; echoing the sentiments expressed by Levi, he writes that Lenci felt compelled to tell his own story so that somebody would listen to him and break the silence:

Non chiede di credere alla sua imparzialità, ma solo alla sua onestà: la sua è la voce di chi è già stato risarcito perché si è salvato dalla morte e quindi vuole solo essere ascoltato.²⁰⁵

Lenci, as a surviving victim of a terrorist attack, tells his story from a different standpoint from that of the children of victims and brings a personal perspective to the negative effects that silence can have. He writes that in the early 1980s, he felt he had to hold back on talking about his experience as a victim because, not only were people not interested in hearing him tell his story, they treated him as if he were mad for trying to do so: 'tendevano a fare di me un individuo maniacale'.²⁰⁶ It is telling that Lenci's memoir was first published in 1988 and then re-published in 2009, around the time when much of the other victim-centred literature on the *anni di piombo* was published and a new, more receptive audience had been found. This demonstrates the difference that time has had on the collective memory of these years and we can also conclude that the publication of the postmemoirs has in itself generated more interest in the victims' stories.

Following on from this discussion of testimony and its importance in post-Holocaust writing and to conclude this section, let us briefly consider the place of testimony in the context of the authors' desire for truth and justice for their fathers. Testimony and bearing witness are at least partly rooted in jurisprudence and this is particularly evident and important in the case of the Holocaust survivors who later spoke publicly and in court of their experiences.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁵ Sergio Lenci, *Colpo alla nuca: Memorie di una vittima del terrorismo* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2009), p. 10.

²⁰⁶ Lenci, *Colpo alla nuca*, p. 40.

²⁰⁷ Robert S. C. Gordon, *Primo Levi's Ordinary Virtues: From Testimony to Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 4-5.

By bearing witness to their fathers' stories and framing them in a positive light, one can consider that the authors ask their readers to reach conclusions regarding their fathers which are tantamount to judgements. The authors present their evidence and invite readers to act as jury and judge. This is true to varying degrees within the community of narrative: it is certainly very clear in Sabina Rossa's investigative, journalistic style of writing and perhaps more subtle in a text such as *Un uomo così*, structured as it is around familiar and informal snapshots of Aldo Moro. Similarly, what or whom the reader is asked to judge is not necessarily the same for each author. Mario Calabresi and Silvia Giralucci ask, above all, that their fathers be admitted into the circle of victims. Massimo Coco, on the other hand, demands that the increased visibility of victims and their families be queried and approached in a more critical way. Nevertheless, the very act of writing about their fathers in a way that might cause readers to think differently about the victims may be compared to a judicial process, adding another layer to our understanding of the place that the authors hold within the collective memory development.

3.3 Controlling the public image

Having examined the precedent to this postmemory generation's writing, the following sections will use examples from the postmemoirs themselves to highlight some of the authors' stated aims in writing these works. One of the main justifications that many of the authors give for writing their fathers' stories is that they wish to change the existing public image of them and they attempt to mould the public image of their fathers into a new form that, critically, they have sanctioned. In this way, they can also be seen to insert themselves into their fathers' stories and create a narrative that is rooted in the present day. Benedetta Tobagi writes that she was dissatisfied with the existing public view of her father and so she turned to the personal diaries and notebooks that she found in his old study to bring to light his personal thoughts. To illustrate her motivation for writing this story of her father and describing both his public and private images, she writes about Hector during the battle of Troy. His young son Astyanax was upset when he saw his father in full armour because he did not recognise him and, in order to calm him down, Hector removed his helmet: 'Imbarcarmi in una duplice ricerca intorno alla persona pubblica e privata di mio

padre è stato per me il modo di sfilargli l'elmo impostogli dalla retorica postuma'.²⁰⁸ Each of the authors, it could be argued, is writing their version of their father's story in order to destroy, or at least alter, the existing public image of him.

This process of debunking posthumously created myths can also be seen to show the victims in a more human, ordinary light; in so doing, the authors also remind their readers that their fathers' stories are made up of more than just the traumatic event of their murder. Moreover, this sympathetic image of the victims has been created by their children and it is this image which they are keen to promote and to instil in the public imagination. By rewriting their stories in this way, the authors gain control over the public image of their fathers where previously they had had none.

This desire for control is very evident in *Spingendo la notte più in là*, Mario Calabresi's work. As discussed in the previous chapter, Mario Calabresi's writing can be considered as an attempt to claim victim status for his father, in the face of continuing prejudices against his father from some parts of Italian society. One of the chapters in his book is entitled *Scritte* and Calabresi uses it to catalogue some of the instances, right up until the present, when he has seen posters, leaflets, banners and graffiti denouncing his father as a murderer. Calabresi explains that he sees the fact that people still feel this way about his father as evidence of just how effective *Lotta continua's* slander was:

Coniarono uno slogan che appare inossidabile, semplice, chiaro, capace di attraversare le generazioni... Non c'era però un pubblicitario dietro la campagna, ma molte teste, tra le più illustri del giornalismo, del teatro, della cultura e dei movimenti, accomunate da una furia vendicatrice che le portò a costruire un mostro, a dispetto di evidenze, buon senso e dati di realtà.²⁰⁹

Mario Calabresi takes a critical stance against the journalists and others who slandered his father and, in his opinion, turned him into such a hate figure that he was murdered. Calabresi, writing as a journalist himself, insists that their defamatory campaign was highly unprofessional and seems surprised that it gained so much support. He writes that it seems that most Italians do not now

²⁰⁸ Tobagi, *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore*, pp. 23-24.

²⁰⁹ Calabresi, *Spingendo la notte più in là*, p. 43.

believe that his father killed Pinelli and that he has had support from many different camps, including from some of the protagonists of the violence at the time. By highlighting this support, Calabresi further emphasises the injustice of the damage caused to his father's image by the press campaign and therefore strengthens his depiction of him as a victim. He reports that some people have even suggested that he should not take those who still insist on calling his father a murderer seriously:

Francamente non mi riesce, trovo che perpetrare le false accuse sia un insulto all'intelligenza e penso sia un cattivo servizio alla democrazia e alla convivenza civile. Non parlo dei ragazzini che fanno le scritte, quello non mi spaventa, penso a coloro che ci giocano, che continuano a frequentare pericolosi confini linguistici e a coltivare l'odio e il rancore.²¹⁰

A clear focus on themes of democracy and civic duty in relation to Calabresi's desire for a different image of his father to be known is evident in this citation. He equates his version of his father's story - wherein he was a victim, unjustly targeted for doing his job and let down by his employers, the Italian state, in his hour of need - with democracy and thereby suggests that to continue to view Luigi Calabresi as Pinelli's murderer would be undemocratic. This is a bold claim, to say the least, and is testament to the strength of Mario Calabresi's conviction that his father has been unfairly demonised. Again, on close examination, Calabresi's use of the term 'democratic' might seem out of place here, since the way his father is remembered publicly arguably has little to do with the governance of the country. Recalling once more Norberto Bobbio's writings on the importance of transparent, accountable power in democracies, Calabresi's use of the word can therefore be read in reference to his sense of justice. His desire to control the public image of his father is motivated by his need to show him as more than a two-dimensional hate figure and thereby to ensure that a process of remembering that is, in his opinion, fairer is carried out. For the *post-anni di piombo* authors, writing their father's stories can therefore give them the power to challenge and alter the collective memory.

Graziano Giralucci, Silvia Giralucci's father, while not depicted as a hate figure in the same way as Luigi Calabresi has been, also has a public image which

²¹⁰ Calabresi, *Spingendo la notte più in là*, p. 45.

his daughter has sought to reclaim with her writing. As we have seen, in her postmemoir, Giralucci actively avoids addressing her father's extreme right-wing political beliefs. Like Mario Calabresi, the act of writing enables her to try to claim victim status for him. It is true that right-wing victims of the *anni di piombo* do not feature as prominently, either in these second-generation writings or in collections such as *I silenzi degli innocenti*. Luca Telese, in the introduction to his study of right-wing victims killed during the *anni di piombo*, describes his subjects in sharply defined terms: 'Ventuno ragazzi caduti nella guerra spietata degli anni di piombo: mitizzati dai loro camerati, demonizzati dai loro nemici, dimenticati da tutti gli altri'.²¹¹ Telese implies that, when victims with right-wing associations are remembered at all, their place in today's collective memory is much more polarised than that of other victims. Silvia Giralucci agrees with Telese's judgement:

A mio padre è successo proprio questo, di essere mitizzato, demonizzato, dimenticato. Devo dire che sono stata protetta dal fatto di non aver compreso per tanti anni che l'omicidio di un fascista veniva considerato meno grave degli altri. L'inconsapevolezza mi ha evitato di coltivare quell'odio che si portano dentro tante persone che hanno vissuto la mia stessa situazione.²¹²

The unequal plights of right- and left-wing victims call to mind what Judith Butler has termed the 'hierarchy of grief': not all deaths are mourned equally by society.²¹³ This is a theory that Butler has expanded upon in her more recent work, *Frames of War* wherein she cautions that the frames within which we acknowledge and mourn the loss of life are 'politically saturated.'²¹⁴ This political saturation is evident in the disparities between the public memories of those killed during the *anni di piombo*. Silvia Giralucci writes that it has only been very recently that she has felt a connection with the public commemoration of her father's death because formerly this event was dominated by right-wing militants. As noted in the previous chapter, the first

²¹¹ Telese, *Cuori neri*, p. xi.

²¹² Alberto Conci, Paolo Grigolli, Natalina Mosna (eds.), *Sedie vuote. Gli anni di piombo: dalla parte delle vittime* (Trento: Il Margine, 2008), p. 91.

²¹³ Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London & New York: Verso, 2006), p. 32.

²¹⁴ Butler, *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (London & New York: Verso, 2009), p. 1.

council-led commemorative ceremony in Giralucci and Mazzola's memory was organised by a left-wing Paduan mayor over thirty years after their murder. That Giralucci hitherto felt she could not take her children to the ceremonies is indicative of how alienating she found the presence of the right-wing militants, apparently because she opposes their political views. Highlighting the importance for her that the local council should finally recognise her father's death as an incident for the whole city to remember, not just his family and those who shared his political beliefs, mirrors the feeling expressed by many family members of *anni di piombo* victims that their loved ones' murders should be recognised in an official, public way, not just privately by family members. The importance for families of a public commemoration of their private loss is examined more closely in Chapter Five of this thesis. The council's recognition of her father's victimhood can be construed as an example of democracy in action because in this way, the story of Graziano Giralucci that is favoured by his family can pass into a public domain. This process can be seen as democratic because their views are represented in an official scenario, going some way to replacing the previously dominant, strictly political way that he had been remembered.

Giralucci is a journalist and her apparent desire to delve into the history and meaning of this period and above all its protagonists could be linked to her investigative professional life. Certainly, her interest in the broader historical context is unique among the second-generation writers studied here. The idea of gaining a deeper insight into this period of Italy's history and using it to look forward in her own life can also be read as a way for her to direct attention away from her father's unpopular political beliefs. Giralucci can be seen to try to balance the existing public image of her father not by providing family anecdotes or diary entries, but by sketching the historical background to his murder in an attempt to create a sense of perspective.

3.4 Writing as a form of therapy

Writing their fathers' stories allows the authors to break the historic silence and promote a public image of their fathers. Writing can also be seen as a way for them to try to understand or come to terms with their own history. Raczymow

states that writing has been a way for him to ‘deal with’ the past.²¹⁵ The psychologist, James W. Pennebaker has examined the reparative effects of writing about trauma and his findings mirror Raczymow’s experience: ‘Translating distress into language ultimately allows us to forget or, perhaps a better phrase, move beyond the experience’.²¹⁶ The silence that preceded the second generation’s writing of their stories concerning the Holocaust can be seen to have clear parallels with the silence in the years after the *anni di piombo* and so it follows that writing about the trauma that they have ‘inherited’ might also have beneficial effects on the children of victims killed during that period.

The therapeutic effects of speaking about past traumas are well documented and there are similarities between the act of speaking publicly and writing publicly. Psychologists Katharine Hodgkin and Susannah Radstone detail the liberating and healing effects that breaking one’s silence and speaking out publicly about traumatic memories can have:

The relation between silence and speech is figured as one of liberation, both politically and personally: to reveal truths which have been denied and to remind the world of its responsibilities to those who have suffered, on the one hand; to heal the self by the very act of speaking and being heard, on the other. The injunction to remember, and the corresponding language of forgetting and denial, are directed equally at individuals and at groups.²¹⁷

The effects of breaking a silence are therefore judged to be positive for victims and their families and are useful in helping them gain a place in collective memory.

The need to talk about past trauma is keenly felt by the post-Holocaust writers because Holocaust survivors were terrified by the idea of being forgotten or that people might not believe the horrors they had suffered. Professor Efraim Sicher, a British-Jewish academic born in 1954, writes about the difficulties inherent in trying to describe or even imagine an event as appalling as the

²¹⁵ Raczymow, ‘Memory Shot Through With Holes’, p. 103.

²¹⁶ James W. Pennebaker, ‘Telling Stories: The Health Benefits of Narrative’, *Literature and Medicine* 19.1 (2000) 3-18 (p. 13).

²¹⁷ Katharine Hodgkin & Susannah Radstone (eds.), *Memory, History, Nation: Contested Pasts* (New Brunswick (USA) & London (UK): Transaction Publishers, 2006), p. 99.

Holocaust, especially if one did not experience it directly. Nonetheless, he believes that if his generation did not at least try to write about it, then historical truth would risk being lost or distorted forever:

The telling of the story is nevertheless essential for us to bear witness in the face of denial and complacency in the twenty-first century, when nobody will be alive to tell the story from first-hand experience. Indeed, the burden of collective and personal memory presses on the children of the victims and perpetrators even more because of their lack of knowledge, because of their need to imagine the unimaginable and to fill the gaps in national and family history.²¹⁸

Sicher implies that the 'burden of memory' is what makes members of the second generation write their stories and is strongly reminiscent of the obligation to speak expressed by Primo Levi and cited above. Of course, relatives of victims from the *anni di piombo* do not face the sort of denial that Sicher refers to above. Nonetheless, the lack of public knowledge about the *anni di piombo* and particularly about the people killed in those years can be seen to contribute to the burden of memory that the next generation feel: the seemingly state-sanctioned silence that impedes discussion of much of the violence must also be seen to contribute to this.

The authors might even be described as moral guardians of their fathers' stories and the truth behind them. Hodgkin and Radstone wrote that one reason to speak about past trauma was, 'to reveal truths which have been denied and to remind the world of its responsibilities to those who have suffered'. The question of truth is very important to this examination of the reasons that the second generation authors have written their fathers' stories as they have. We have outlined above that they often wish to change the existing public image of their fathers and that they associate their fathers with democracy in Italy. They claim that promoting this memory of their fathers will have a beneficial impact on future generations of Italians who can look to these men as role models and underlying this is the assumption that the postmemoirs represent the truth. In her examination of the self in biography and autobiography, Liz Stanley makes a

²¹⁸ Efraim Sicher (ed.) *Breaking Crystal: Writing and Memory after Auschwitz* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998), p. 3.

very pertinent point about the present-day influences that shape a biographer's writing:

In other words, 'the biographer' is a socially-located person, one who is sexed, raced, classed, aged, to mention no more, and is so every bit as much as an autobiographer is. And once we accept that ideas are not unique but socially produced even if individually expressed by members of particular social, cultural and political milieux, then we can also extrapolate this to the ideas and interpretations produced by the biographer: *any* biographer's view is a socially located and necessarily partial one.²¹⁹

Therefore, each of the authors, no matter what authority or insight they claim to bring to their father's story, is inevitably tempered by the circumstances in which they live now. While their writing is about the past, it is located firmly and unavoidably in the present and this is a crucial element of our study of these works. As outlined in the next section, these narratives can only ever represent one aspect of the eminently changeable collective memory of these events.

Some of the *anni di piombo* victims' children have written that they feel they have benefited psychologically from writing about their fathers. Silvia Giralucci has described writing about the memory of her father as a way for her to explore her own pain.²²⁰ Benedetta Tobagi reports that writing and speaking about her father makes her happy: 'è una cosa preziosa, un po' come il sole della mia vita, è il "motore" che mi aiuta nei momenti difficili'.²²¹ As stated in the previous chapter, Tobagi's writing often appears to be a form of therapy for her and this citation underlines that healing aspect. Massimo Coco, a professional violinist and violin teacher, has stated that composing a piece of music in honour of victims of terrorism has been an important way for him to express his feelings about the past. Like Levi, he sees memory as an obligation: 'È un lavoro a cui tengo molto, perché mi consentirà di rispettare il dovere del ricordo con il linguaggio che conosco meglio, cioè la musica'.²²² These children of

²¹⁹ Liz Stanley, *The Auto/Biographical I* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1992), p. 7.

²²⁰ <http://www.secoloditalia.it/2012/08/silvia-giralucci-morire-per-unidea-ho-cercato-di-capire-perch/>

²²¹ Conci, Grigolli & Mosna (eds), *Sedie vuote*, p. 71.

²²² Francesco Patti, "Brigatisti assassini di mio padre. E non chiedetemi di perdonare", *Liberio*, 20 September 2013.

victims evidently feel that breaking the public silence that they felt covered their fathers' memory has had a positive impact not only on the public image of their fathers, but also on their own lives because writing has allowed them to 'deal with' or 'move beyond' the trauma of losing their fathers. That they have expressed so explicitly the positive psychological effect of writing garners sympathy from their readers and helps them to gain support for a more visible public memory of these victims by making it clear that they have benefited from writing. They are also able to acquire narrative agency over their fathers' stories by writing about them and the time that elapses between the traumatic event and the act of writing is an important factor in a writer's ability to do this.

3.5 Distance

The distance between the second generation and the trauma experienced by their parents is crucial to our understanding both of why they write and of how they express themselves. Karein Goertz emphasises the role of the second generation as 'sites of mediation', made possible by their distance from the events:

The second generation, with its degree of temporal separation from the event, feels that it has been given a particular task: members of this generation are to be the museums that preserve and transmit their parents' legacy for posterity... They are the sites of mediation between the personally lived past and the inherited past.²²³

Goetz's positioning of the second generation as museums and her use of the word 'sites' immediately calls to mind Pierre Nora and his expression, *lieux de mémoire* - the term has been translated as 'sites of memory' and is used to describe anything that could be considered a depositary of memory within a given community.²²⁴ The 'selves' that the authors project through their writing can also be seen as sites of memory because, as detailed by Goertz above, in

²²³ Karein Goertz, 'Transgenerational Representations of the Holocaust: From Memory to "Post-Memory"' in, *World Literature Today*, 72, (1998), 33-38 (pp. 34-35).

²²⁴ Nora, trans. by Marc Roudebush, 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire', *Representations*, 26, (1989), 7-24 (p. 7).

their books they undertake the role of ‘museums’, preserving and transmitting their fathers’ legacy to the public.

Eva Hoffman has stressed the importance of distance when considering past trauma, ‘Stand too close to horror, and you get fixation, paralysis, engulfment; stand too far, and you get voyeurism or forgetting. Distance matters’.²²⁵ Of course, distance also matters in the opposite sense from that suggested by Hoffman: as we move further away in time from an event, a wide variety of factors can begin to shape memory. Annette Wieviorka highlights this in her study of the increased use of testimony to record the history of the Holocaust. She writes that survivors’ testimonies often change over time or are seen as unreliable because they misremember facts. However, it is not only the unreliability of the ageing survivors’ memories that has caused their testimony to be called into question:

Every testimony is recorded at a precise moment in time, and as such may be instrumentalized in political and ideological contexts that, like all such contexts, are bound to change. The moment when a testimony is delivered tells us a great deal about the society in which the witness lives.²²⁶

As outlined in Chapter One, crucial anniversaries and events that took place in the decade in which the six postmemoirs were published facilitated the authors’ writing of their books. The time that has passed since the *anni di piombo* has created a political and ideological context in Italy that has enabled victim-centred memory to come to the fore and in this sense, Hoffman’s theory is right, distance is fundamental to this newfound focus on the victims.

Silvia Giralucci has underlined what she sees as the importance of distance in her and the other children of victims’ ability to write about their fathers:

Penso che noi figli abbiamo la necessità personale di andare a cercare le ragioni della nostra ferita, e non possiamo che cercarle nella storia; peraltro, noi abbiamo un distacco che chi ha vissuto in prima linea quegli anni, più difficilmente riesce ad avere. Questa è una cosa che sento molto nel confronto con i figli delle altre vittime: tra noi ex bambini, orfani per mano di terroristi, c’è un sentimento particolare che è molto difficile da

²²⁵ Eva Hoffman, *After Such Knowledge: A Meditation on the Aftermath of the Holocaust* (London: Vintage, 2004), p. 177.

²²⁶ Annette Wieviorka, trans. by Jared Stark, *The Era of the Witness* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006), p. 137.

verbalizzare e che nasce dall'essere stati feriti pur non essendo stati parte di quelle tensioni.²²⁷

Giralucci evidently feels that distance has allowed her a sense of perspective on her father's murder, but she also suggests that it is distance from the event that has allowed her to come to terms with her own pain too. In this citation, Giralucci also, interestingly, draws parallels between her father's victimhood and her own sense of being a victim as a result of his murder. In this way she underlines the importance both of distance and of a lack of distance, with reference to her and the other children's intimate connection to their fathers' murders. Her language suggests that she and the other children of *anni di piombo* victims have suffered physical wounds and in so doing she includes herself and the other members of this 'generation' in their fathers' narrative: through this projection, Giralucci justifies her and the other authors' part as mediators of the memory of *anni di piombo* victims today.

Hoffman has highlighted that, in addition to distance, the attitude of those receiving memory mediated by the second generation is also crucial:

Perhaps sometimes it is better to admit that until we can speak genuinely, we should remain silent. Unless we want to engage with this past with imaginative integrity, we should not force ourselves to 'imagine' or 'identify'. The victims of the Holocaust also need their privacy. In a sense, we need to acknowledge the distance at which we stand from events - and from which we have to start if we want to further the reach of our knowledge and sympathies. This is a matter of what could be called moral esthetics, and it is important both for our own and the past's sake.²²⁸

The idea of 'speaking genuinely' that Hoffman proposes here is interesting, if somewhat problematic; she suggests that second generation writers and others must exercise caution when engaging with the past. In this same book, Hoffman writes that Holocaust survivors had been elevated 'from yesterday's untouchables to the Brahmins of the trauma elites', and worries that this might '[turn] horror to fashion'.²²⁹ The 'imaginative integrity' with which she hopes future generations will engage with the past seems to be rooted in sympathy,

²²⁷ <http://www.secoloditalia.it/2012/08/silvia-giralucci-morire-per-unidea-ho-cercato-di-capire-perch/>

²²⁸ Hoffman, *After Such Knowledge*, p. 180.

²²⁹ Hoffman, *After Such Knowledge*, p. 172.

but she, herself the daughter of Polish Holocaust survivors, would encourage an objective and educated mode of remembering that allows the victims to preserve their dignity. It is unclear how Hoffman believes that we can reach a stage where we will be able to 'speak genuinely'. The concept - that distance from past events can facilitate a considered and balanced study of them - rings true for the victims of the *anni di piombo* as it does for the Holocaust victims that Hoffman refers to. However, speaking genuinely seems more feasible as a goal to aim for, rather than as the result which Hoffman suggests it might be in this citation.

3.6 Writing from a personal perspective: questions of dignity and pride

With Hoffman's comments in mind, the following section examines the methods used by the authors to promote a certain memory of their fathers. Hoffman has proposed that collective memory of a traumatic event should be objective in order to preserve the victims' dignity. Writing from the very personal perspectives that these authors do makes objectivity difficult: they have a clear goal, as discussed, to project a particular image of their father, often in opposition or at least in addition to an existing public image. The notion of dignity, however, is an important one within this examination of the ways that the authors write about their fathers. Indeed, it is crucial to our understanding of the authors' reclamation of their fathers' memory: it seems undignified to the victims' memory to remember them in a way that is offensive, upsetting or incorrect in the eyes of their family. Dignity must be seen to play a part in the authors' narratives too: by proposing their fathers as examples of good, caring family men, the authors also paint themselves into the picture as the wounded children and so, by writing as they do, they can be seen to create sympathy also for themselves and to legitimise their place in the story. The children and family members of those killed feel it is their responsibility to speak for their deceased relatives in order to remind future generations of the role that they played during the *anni di piombo*, particularly when the Italian authorities can seem more interested in concealing the history of these events, thereby not treating them with the dignity that their families believe they deserve.

A parallel concept to that of dignity is the pride that the authors express regarding their fathers. This is clear and understandable, given the positive image of their fathers that is being promoted. However it is important to underline this sentiment because in their expressions of pride, they describe certain aspects of their fathers that are crucial to our understanding of this public image. Agnese Moro equates memories of her father and his murdered bodyguards with a sense of national pride:

Quando ascolto il nostro inno nazionale non posso fare a meno di pensare a loro [the bodyguards], a mio padre, e a tutti gli altri che sono stati uccisi perché facevano il loro dovere, professionale o civile, o che hanno incontrato la morte in una delle nostre troppe stragi.²³⁰

Sabina Rossa's writing exudes pride and a sense of accomplishment when she discovers that her father was part of a kind of secret PCI intelligence agency. When she asks Lovrano Bisso if her father's work was valuable, the politician replies in a way that implies Rossa played a crucial part in a pivotal moment in Italy's history:

Il suo impegno politico e sindacale, la sua battaglia contro l'eversione e contro le Brigate rosse, insieme al contributo di tanti altri compagni, sono serviti. Eccome. Hanno impedito che il Paese precipitasse nel buio, lo hanno aiutato a restare libero. Se avessero vinto la destra golpista, stragista e piduista, o l'estremismo violento delle Br, oggi che Paese saremmo?²³¹

By including this quote in her study, Sabina Rossa definitively underlines what she sees as her father's bravery and depicts him as a champion of democracy. Similarly, Benedetta Tobagi dedicates a chapter of her work to illustrating how her father opposed the shady figures he worked with at *Corriere della Sera* who were later discovered to have links to the infamous masonic lodge known as 'P2'.²³²

In a related vein, Massimo Coco wishes to pass on memories of these victims to future generations because he thinks that their stories can be instructive. He states that he believes these stories ought to belong to

²³⁰ Moro, *Un uomo così*, p. 142.

²³¹ Fasanella & Rossa, *Guido Rossa*, p. 161.

²³² Tobagi, *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore*, pp. 198-223.

everybody: 'Il sacrificio dei caduti appartiene a tutti, deve essere universalmente condiviso, perché solo così può avere un senso e tutelare una memoria futura'.²³³ That Coco writes about the victims in these terms - describing their deaths as sacrifices and highlighting what he sees as the importance of their stories being known - reflects the general sense that these victims should hold a significant place in Italian history and memory. These examples show that the authors' strong desire to depict their fathers, if not as martyrs, then as prime examples of good civilians who valued democracy and whose actions - which led to their murders - should be remembered and applauded.

3.7 Narratability of memory

Having an audience and sharing memories is fundamental to the creation and maintenance of a collective memory; it is a social construct made up of witnesses who recount the past and audiences who receive it. This explains collective memory's elastic nature and why it is difficult to pinpoint one true version of history; it varies depending on who is telling the story and also on who is listening.²³⁴ Again in the context of post-Holocaust writing, Mieke Bal explains that the audience often facilitates the telling of memory and that this in turn facilitates the potentially healing power of narrative:

The recipients of the account perform an act of memory that is potentially healing, as it calls for political and cultural solidarity in recognizing the traumatized party's predicament. This act is potentially healing because it generates narratives that 'make sense.' To enter memory, the traumatic event of the past needs to be made 'narratable.'²³⁵

²³³ Coco, *Ricordare stanca*, p. 9.

²³⁴ Alon Confino has written about the ways that collective memory can be manipulated: Alon Confino, 'Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method', *The American Historical Review* Vol. 102, 5 (1997), 1386-1403 (p. 1393).

²³⁵ Mieke Bal, 'Introduction' (pp. vii-xvii) in Mieke Bal, Jonathan Crewe and Leo Spitzer (eds.), *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1999), p. x.

The early recipients of Sergio Lenci's account clearly were not receptive to his story and, as a result, he felt that he had to write his memories down, so that he might still be able to bear witness. The publishing house, *Il Mulino*, saw that there was scope to re-publish his memoir in 2009, when it could be absorbed as part of a collective narrative about the victims of that period because of the increased interest in victim-centred remembering.

Let us also briefly examine Bal's assertion that a traumatic event needs to be 'narratable' before it can enter memory. She does not define her term, but we can assume that memories which are 'narratable' take the form of narratives; they can be given a structure and could be retold by someone who had not heard the original version. They also provide a lens through which to examine part of Italian history: writing as they do offers an element of intelligibility to the memory of this often mysterious and uncertain period. Given these criteria for narratability, all of the books written by the children of victims from the *anni di piombo* fall into this category. Following Bal's theory then, writing the histories of their murdered fathers can be seen to have helped the authors to begin to establish a place for their traumatic deaths in the collective memory while, crucially, maintaining control of their story. Additionally, and returning very briefly to the notion of writing as a form of therapy, converting their fathers' histories into narratable form can be seen to benefit the authors too:

[T]he act of converting emotions and images into words changes the way the person organizes and thinks about the trauma. Further, part of the distress caused by the trauma lies not just in the events but in the person's emotional reactions to them. By integrating thoughts and feelings, then, the person can more easily construct a coherent narrative of the experience. Once formed, the event can be summarized, stored, and forgotten more efficiently.²³⁶

While the authors are not likely to forget their fathers' murders, according to Pennebaker's model, writing permits them, to some extent, to deal with the emotional impact of it.

The children of those murdered during the *anni di piombo* are not witnesses to a traumatic event in the same way that survivors of the Holocaust are; they have not experienced the trauma because they were not killed and

²³⁶ Pennebaker, 'Telling Stories', pp. 8-9.

instead they are ‘witnesses to memory’ with an “un-story” to tell’.²³⁷ However, they have lived with the trauma of their fathers’ murders since they occurred and so they have grown up with the ‘burden of memory’ described by Efraim Sicher. This burden has pushed them to speak up on behalf of their voiceless fathers in order to claim a place for them within the cultural memory of the *anni di piombo* and to promote a certain version of history wherein their fathers are seen in a positive light. Sergio Lenci described the pressure he felt not to speak of his own traumatic experience and we have seen that speaking about the past from a slightly distanced perspective can facilitate the entry of a traumatic event into a wider discourse on the subject. By acting as the mediators of their fathers’ memories and telling their ‘un-stories’, the children of the victims preserve both their fathers’ dignity and their memory and at the same time, they meet a pressing need in themselves.

3.8 Age and remembering

Writing their fathers’ stories can be seen to have benefitted the three younger authors of the six at the centre of this study. Crucially, Calabresi, Tobagi and Giralucci have little or no memory of their fathers, so, among other things, their writing allows them to connect with this previously inaccessible part of their personal history. Although Sabina Rossa, Agnese Moro and Massimo Coco were old enough when their fathers were killed to have memories of them, their books are not memoirs in a traditional sense any more than those written by Calabresi, Tobagi and Giralucci. One of the main unifying factors between the older authors is that they chose to write these works in the same period as their younger counterparts, suggesting that age may have a relatively small part to play in their decision to write these books when they did.

Despite the difference in age, there are many parallels that can be drawn between Moro, Coco and Rossa’s writing and that of Calabresi, Tobagi and Giralucci. In the section above, we examined the ways the authors tried to render their fathers more sympathetic in the eyes of the Italian public by revealing a more private side to them. The author who does this most obviously

²³⁷ Lawrence L. Langer, *Holocaust Testimonies: The ruins of memory* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991), p. 39.

among this trio of older writers is Agnese Moro. As discussed previously, the commemorative day for victims of terrorism is held on the anniversary of her father's death and the image of him in the Red Brigades' makeshift prison is synonymous with the violence of the *anni di piombo*. Agnese Moro, when writing this book, did not have to tell her father's history or contextualise his life or his death. The subtitle to her book is 'Ricordando mio padre', which contrasts tellingly with Silvia Giralucci's 'Cercando mio padre'; Agnese Moro was in her mid-twenties when her father was killed and is the oldest of the second generation writers featured in this thesis.

As noted in the previous chapter, Moro's work is a reflection on the ways that her father's story has inspired people. She seems amazed that anyone outside her family should take such an interest in, or care so much about a man they did not know.²³⁸ Her amazement seems rather disingenuous because, while he was certainly not always a popular political figure, since his death, he has largely been viewed by the public as a sacrificial victim to be pitied.²³⁹ It seems then that Agnese Moro has deliberately cast the public memory of her father in a negative light in order to better highlight her own positive and personal memories. She explains at the end of the book that writing it has helped her to gain a better understanding of her father; to see him through other people's eyes:

Il ricordo che ho di mio padre è diverso da quello con il quale sono partita. È più ricco, più complesso; più 'collettivo'. E sono ancora più convinta che valga la pena di seguitare a ricordarlo.²⁴⁰

By highlighting the way that writing this postmemoir has changed her view and her memory of her father, Agnese Moro creates sympathy for him. She declares her gratitude and surprise at the public manifestations of love and sympathy for him and includes many short, private anecdotes that, we are given to understand, were only known to close family members. In this way, she adds

²³⁸ Moro, *Un uomo così*, p. 128.

²³⁹ Isabella Pezzini very effectively traces the media's reworking of Moro's image after his death in her essay, 'Imago Moro: Medi-a-(c)tion on Aldo Moro' (pp. 136-150) in Ruth Glynn and Giancarlo Lombardi (eds.), *Remembering Aldo Moro: The Cultural Legacy of the 1978 Kidnapping and Murder* (London: Modern Humanities Research Association & Maney Publishing, 2012).

²⁴⁰ Moro, *Un uomo così*, p. 195.

another layer of narratability to Aldo Moro's story by broadening our understanding of her father and by bringing together the different ways that his memory can be seen to live on.

Moro focuses on the legacy of her father's death and she can be seen to emphasise the ways that projects inspired by him embody the values that underscore many of the second-generation narratives: democracy, truth and an engagement with civil society. Moro writes that she admires the efforts of the historian Ilaria Moroni, who manages the Flamigni archive and has been instrumental in the creation of the web portal, 'Per non dimenticare': 'Mi sembra particolarmente significativo un impegno come il suo, nato puramente da quella che un tempo si sarebbe chiamata passione civile'.²⁴¹ The implication here seems to be that Moroni is particularly worthy of esteem because she is interested in the memory of the victims of the *anni di piombo* despite not being a close relative of any of them and despite being relatively young. It is clear from her account that Agnese Moro associates public displays of memory for victims like her father, especially if performed by the young or those not personally associated with a victim, with performing an important democratic duty. Retelling a victim's story through a cultural medium, as the people catalogued in *Un uomo così* have done is also a clear indicator of that story's narratability and thus implies that it can be easily absorbed into a collective consciousness.

Sabina Rossa tells her father's story in quite a different way. Her focus is the truth, something that her co-author Fasanella reports that they were able to find through writing this book: 'E da ogni pagina, abbiamo visto via via affiorare quella verità che entrambi cercavamo, ma che non avevamo trovato nelle carte delle inchieste giudiziarie'.²⁴² Tellingly, and in keeping with the points made above regarding the second generation's desire to control a collective memory and to promote their version of history as the truthful one, Fasanella stipulates that they found *that* truth which they were looking for. Portraying this account of the truth here allows Sabina Rossa to access a version of justice denied to her by the judicial process because she was able to better understand her father's murder.

²⁴¹ Moro, *Un uomo così*, p. 129.

²⁴² Fasanella & Rossa, *Guido Rossa*, p. 13.

Where most of the other children of victims from the *anni di piombo* have tried to write about their fathers' lives and to shift the focus of their public memory away from their deaths, Rossa does the opposite with her investigation. She begins the book by describing her attempts to contact former Red Brigades leader, Renato Curcio and Vincenzo Guagliardo, who she knows was part of the command that attacked her father. She follows this initial chapter with a description of meeting Guagliardo and a transcription of her conversation with him. Immediately, we are reading about Rossa's investigation, not about her father or her family or her experience of losing him. It is only in the third chapter, entitled *Mio padre*, that Rossa describes her father as he was when he was alive. Having begun to establish Rossa's motive for writing this book, let us focus briefly on the section in which she details how she felt in the period immediately following her father's murder.

She writes that, unlike Calabresi, she avoided any mention of the Red Brigades and the investigation into her father's murder and she had no desire to go to court with her mother:

Indifferenza? No, non direi... In realtà, io provavo un odio profondo e un desiderio di vendetta nei confronti di coloro che avevano ucciso mio padre. Non avrei sopportato di dare un nome e un volto ai suoi assassini.²⁴³

She elaborates on her feelings of hatred and need for revenge, saying that she believes now that she avoided reading about or engaging with the court proceedings at the time because she was afraid of these feelings and because she wanted to delay having to confront her father's death: 'Per fare i conti con quella terribile realtà, avrei dovuto essere fredda e lucida. E in quel momento non lo ero'.²⁴⁴ This sentence suggests that, by the time she had come to write this book, she was finally cold and lucid enough to deal with her father's death. When she writes about her first phone call to Guagliardo, she explains to him that she is not contacting him out of hatred or for revenge, but that she would like to speak to him face to face.²⁴⁵ The investigative, journalistic writing style employed by Rossa allows her a detachment from the emotions which might be said to dominate some of the other works in this corpus.

²⁴³ Fasanella & Rossa, *Guido Rossa*, pp. 53-54.

²⁴⁴ Fasanella & Rossa, *Guido Rossa*, p. 54.

²⁴⁵ Fasanella & Rossa, *Guido Rossa*, pp. 16-17.

Massimo Coco was also sixteen years old when his father, Francesco Coco was killed, also in Genoa, by a Red Brigades command. Unlike Sabina Rossa, Massimo Coco does not seem to have been able to let go of his anger at his father's murder. His main reason for writing this memoir seems to be in reaction to the other works written by the children of *anni di piombo* victims. As mentioned in the previous chapter, he does not believe that their testimony brings anything new or interesting to the discussion of the *anni di piombo*, particularly those authors who were very young when their fathers were killed:

Sono forse l'anello più debole nella catena della memoria perché vogliono colmare un vuoto del passato, hanno l'anelito alla comprensione e all'elaborazione privata di un vissuto doloroso e lontanissimo di cui conservano solo le immagini sfuocate e incolori dell'infanzia, e per farlo possono quindi procedere solo con gli occhi degli altri, con il prestito dell'occhiale che possa correggere la loro pur innocente miopia storica.²⁴⁶

Coco is correct in his criticisms: the younger authors can only view their fathers' histories through others' eyes and this is something that they themselves acknowledge. He is also right in his assertion that their yearning for answers is difficult to fill. As Hirsch has written, their memories are not directly connected to the past, rather they are mediated by others' recollections.

Referring to the younger writers as the 'weakest link in the chain of memory' suggests that he finds their contributions to the canon distasteful or unhelpful and, although he writes that he does identify with many of the experiences described by the other children of victims, he feels there is something missing: 'Ma, porca miseria, e la rabbia dove cavolo l'avete messa?'.²⁴⁷ Coco admits that he feels hatred and rancour for those who brought about his father's death and that he is not ashamed of those feelings; he describes them as being with him every day.²⁴⁸ By accusing the other children of victims of moderating their feelings for the sake of their own public image, Coco once again places himself apart from the rest of this community of writers.

Coco's attitude mirrors Giovanni De Luna's concerns regarding what he sees as the new 'victim-centred' approach to history:

²⁴⁶ Coco, *Ricordare stanca*, p. 45.

²⁴⁷ Coco, *Ricordare stanca*, p. 46.

²⁴⁸ Coco, *Ricordare stanca*, p. 47.

Nell'assenza di una politica credibile e autorevole, affidata alle regole del mercato e della comunicazione mediatica, la centralità delle vittime posta come fondamento di una memoria comune divide più di quanto unisca.²⁴⁹

The feelings that Coco expresses seem logical and comprehensible, particularly when we recall that, of all the children of victims whose accounts are examined here, he alone still does not know who murdered his father:

In tutti questi anni io e chi condivide il mio stesso credo abbiamo chiesto solo che si applicasse la legge, nient'altro. Sarà vendetta, odio, rancore? Chiamatelo come vi pare, noi lo definiamo semplicemente 'Diritto'. Noi non vogliamo 'spingere quella notte più in là', ma sogniamo romanticamente di illuminarla con le luci della verità e della giustizia. E scusatemi ancora la retorica, ma non sono stato io a incominciare.²⁵⁰

His appropriation of Mario Calabresi's title is fitting in this paragraph because he and Calabresi have obviously had very different experiences of the judicial system with relation to their fathers' murders. While Calabresi and his family have put their trust into the justice system and, in the end, that trust was rewarded, Coco's family still awaits answers. Coco's disillusionment with the Italian authorities is only compounded by the episode which he recounts at the very beginning of the book of his and his son's treatment at the 2011 commemorative day for the victims of terrorism. Just as Judith Butler has identified a hierarchy of mourning, Coco sees a hierarchy of victims and uses the term *viptime* to describe those who he believes actively seek to flaunt their 'victim' status.

As mentioned above, Coco believes that his father and the other victims ought to be known by all Italians and particularly by the younger generation. He teaches violin in the conservatoire in Genoa and writes that many of the roads around the building are named after people who were killed either during the Second World War or during the *anni di piombo*, including a park named after his father. One day, he writes that he asked his students if they knew anything about the stories behind these street names and that he was very surprised to find that they knew nothing about any of it. He was even more surprised to find

²⁴⁹ De Luna, *La Repubblica del dolore*, p. 17.

²⁵⁰ Coco, *Ricordare stanca*, pp. 9-10.

that the next time he saw them they had studied his family history and were proud to show off what they had learned to him:

Una lezione severa, per me più che per loro: mai sottovalutare i più giovani, spesso sono un campo aperto, fertile, inesplorato. Certo, occorre arrivare lì prima dei ‘cattivi maestri’, questo sì. Dobbiamo essere noi i più veloci a passare in mano loro il testimone della memoria storica, se mi si concede un po’ di sana retorica per metafore, e loro ci dimostreranno di avere le energie per riuscire a correre molto più velocemente di noi.²⁵¹

It is unclear why he believes the next generation will make better custodians of memory than the children of those killed, but he evidently sees a benefit to the memory of these victims being public.

Coco’s postmemoir of his father stands deliberately and proudly apart from those written by the other children of victims whose writing has been discussed here. He does not wish to be known only as ‘Francesco Coco’s son’ and he rages against what he sees as a culture where people take advantage of their unfortunate status as victims or family members of victims. On the other hand, his writing is just another way of documenting his father’s history, like those of Walter Tobagi, Luigi Calabresi, Graziano Giralucci, Aldo Moro and Guido Rossa. He cannot escape being part of the community of narrative because his book performs the same role as these other second generation testimonies. It also explores the same themes, namely, democracy, truth, justice and future memory.

3.9 Conclusion

What ties these authors to each other are the circumstances of their fathers’ deaths; that they should each write in a different style and focus on different aspects is natural and to be expected. They write to bring their fathers’ stories to the fore of a discussion of the *anni di piombo*, but crucially, they write the version of their fathers’ stories that is most agreeable to them: they often attempt to alter the public image of them, creating sympathy by highlighting the ordinary humanity of these men, not just their status as victims, martyrs or heroes. By highlighting these aspects of their fathers’ lives, the authors remind

²⁵¹ Coco, *Ricordare stanca*, pp. 194-195 (p. 195).

their readers of the injustice of their murders. In turn, questions of democracy and the continuing search for truth and justice are raised. Despite the fact that each of these memoirs looks back at a life that has ended, they also encourage us to look forward; each of these authors expresses some hope that, by telling their father's story in the way described here, their version might pass into collective memory and be accessed by future generations. Furthermore, they insert themselves into their fathers' stories and, more than a record of past events, this collection of writing is an examination of the current state of collective memory and the writers' place within it. The authors write for their fathers, to speak on their behalf, but they also write as a way to voice their own anger, to articulate frustrations and to express a sense of loss and grief in reaction to the haunting legacy of their dead fathers. This community of narrative and the themes evident within these six books are representative of the shift in focus from perpetrator-centred to victim-centred narrative and the authors have played an active part in bringing about that shift. With this notion of the impact of an increasingly victim-centred approach to collective memory in mind, the next chapter focuses on forgiveness.

4 Forgiveness

Forgiveness is a concept that recurs both in the memoirs written by victims' family members, and in the texts which deal more generally with the history of the *anni di piombo*. Its presence in these narratives is a clear indicator of what Giovanni De Luna has identified as an increased focus on the emotional aspects of history in Italy.²⁵² By examining this theme, we can gain a greater understanding of the ways that the victims are considered in a public forum. The question of forgiving is bound up with the perceived need to let go of the past and to move on. Therefore, because the *anni di piombo* represent such a controversial and painful part of Italy's history, the family members' willingness and ability to forgive can, at least to some extent, be seen to exist as both a private and a public issue, as they position themselves as narrative and moral points of reference for an understanding of the past. As public interest shifts away from the ex-terrorists and towards the victims and their families, their opinions begin to dominate public discourse and the public increasingly take their cues about how to remember this period from them. If a perpetrator is forgiven by one of his victims, it is no longer just the relationship between these individuals that changes, but the whole public conversation. As a result, forgiving plays a central role in the creation and cultivation of a public image of these victims and their families.

In order to discuss this subject effectively, in this chapter we broaden our analysis to include other texts. While forgiveness is evidently a theme that is important in an examination of the memory of these victims, it is curiously not one that the second generation authors discuss in great detail in their postmemoirs. On the other hand, their mothers, the victims' widows, refer to the subject more and this distinction between the generations is noteworthy. As a way of underlining this difference and in order to provide a fuller picture of the place of forgiveness within the more general discussion, some of the widows' testimonies are analysed in this chapter. In this way, a comparative analysis of the choice that the victims' children have made not to foreground forgiveness in their narratives may be made. In addition, the specificity and distinctiveness of

²⁵² De Luna, *La Repubblica del dolore*, p. 16.

the children's narratives becomes clearer, and a change over time and across generations can be highlighted.

It becomes immediately apparent that religion is a significant factor in this discussion of forgiveness; indeed, Hannah Arendt cites Jesus Christ as the first proponent of the positive effects of forgiveness.²⁵³ Religion is particularly significant in our comparative examination of the victims' widows' attitude towards forgiveness and that of their children. The presence of religion places the widows' narratives apart from those written by the children of victims: none of the second generation authors featured in this thesis write in their works about holding religious beliefs. That the widows and their children discuss the victims and forgiveness with a different focus should, perhaps, not be overly surprising and there may be a number of reasons for the presence of religion in the widows' writing and its absence, or certainly its lack of prominence in that of their children. Foremost among these, as we will discuss, seems to be a generational difference: to borrow Pierre Bourdieu's term, religion holds a more prominent place in the widows' *habitus*, compared to that of their children.²⁵⁴ Religion can, but does not have to, be a channel through which victims might attempt to make sense of what has happened. Regardless of their religious beliefs, or lack thereof, the two generations can be seen to express many of the same views regarding the place of victims within a collective memory of the *anni di piombo* and religion should be viewed as another mechanism by which these views have been formed and articulated.

The theorists on whose work our analysis is based in this chapter frame their ideas around the concept of victims forgiving, or not forgiving, those who have wronged them. It might seem out of place, then, to apply these theories to a discussion of forgiveness in the context of the widows and children of those who have been killed. Certainly, as we will discuss, there are those who would argue that this cannot be considered forgiveness at all, since it is offered on behalf of a third party. However, while it was their husbands and fathers who died at the hands of the perpetrators in question here, the widows and children can still be seen to have been wronged by them; their sudden and brutal deaths

²⁵³ Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 238.

²⁵⁴ Michael Grenfell (ed.), *Pierre Bourdieu: Key Concepts* (Durham: Acumen, 2008), pp. 50-53.

have had a lasting and significant impact on the families who were left behind and, as Silvia Giralucci has illustrated both in a previous citation and here, they can consider themselves victims of these crimes:

La storia del mio rapporto con un padre che non ricordo è scandita dal calendario degli anni di piombo e dalle vicende processuali. Io non sono la figlia di una vittima del terrorismo. Io sono una vittima del terrorismo. Non mi hanno ferito una gamba, mi hanno portato via la possibilità di capire che cosa vuol dire avere un padre. Sono cresciuta e vivo ogni giorno con il vuoto dentro, anche questa è una menomazione.²⁵⁵

In addition to the victims' family members feeling that they ought to also be considered as victims, we might also consider them as such because they present themselves as their fathers' representatives, giving them a voice where previously they had none. Cento Bull and Cooke refer to the children of victims as 'second generation victims', indicating that, in their opinion, they should be considered victims in their own right.²⁵⁶ As highlighted by De Luna, forgiveness is a central aspect of the creation of a victim-centred narrative of the history of the *anni di piombo*: it is used by the victims' families to demonstrate their attitudes to victimhood as well as to portray themselves in a benevolent light within the collective imagination. Therefore, further to considering the family members as a third party offering forgiveness on behalf of their deceased loved ones, their forgiveness will also be viewed with reference to themselves and the hurt that they have suffered and they too will be thought of as victims in this chapter.

The language of victimhood frames the discussion in a very particular and interesting way. By this, we refer to the use of the word *vittime* to describe both those who were killed or injured, but also their family members. Additionally, 'the language of victimhood', can encompass the emotional language often used in discussion of people killed during the *anni di piombo* and their families. By focusing on their status as victims, all of those who use this language, including the authors themselves, invite and encourage a reading of their history that is emotionally-charged and which places them in a weaker position to those referred to as 'perpetrators' or 'ex-terrorists'. The

²⁵⁵ Telese, *Cuori neri*, pp. 195-196.

²⁵⁶ Cento Bull and Cooke, *Ending Terrorism in Italy*, p. xiii.

foregrounding of emotional language that has already been mentioned reinforces this framework, as does the predominance of victims' associations who, by their very nature, encourage a language of victimhood and a notion of these people as passive recipients of pain and suffering, rather than as survivors or active participants. One of the effects of framing our view of victims in this way has been discussed already regarding Ruth Glynn's comments on the polarised language used by edited volumes such as *I silenzi degli innocenti*.²⁵⁷ The topic of forgiveness, emotional as it is, can be seen as another element of this notable construct regarding the memory of these victims.

Finally, forgiveness must be considered to be a fundamental aspect of this discussion because, in Italy, the question of *pentitismo* creates an interesting and often problematic link between forgiveness and justice. This term refers to a law that was created in the early 1980s that permitted an offender to serve a reduced prison sentence in return for their cooperation with the judicial process by providing information about their collaborators. Many former terrorists have benefited from the law, including the men who killed Walter Tobagi. While it must be stressed that *pentitismo* and forgiveness are not identical concepts, the term has strong associations with forgiveness because, in the act of releasing prisoners early, the state may be seen to effectively pardon them of their crime. The application of the law to the cases of some former terrorists has caused public outcry. It is also evident that for the state to act in such a way removes any sense of power from the victim's family: there may be a feeling that justice has not, in fact, been done, particularly in cases where the offenders were released from prison very early into their sentence. The reactions of family members of victims whose murderers have been shown such clemency by the Italian state are detailed below and they add another layer to this already nuanced discussion.

4.1 Why forgive?

In order to begin to understand why certain victims and their family members have made the choices that they have about forgiveness, we will briefly establish a working definition of forgiveness. This will underpin the discussion

²⁵⁷ Glynn, 'The "turn to the victim" in Italian culture', p. 380.

that follows of the victims who have chosen to forgive and those who have not as well as addressing the reasons that forgiveness can be seen as an important element in the creation of a collective memory of this period. There is a general sense that to forgive is a good thing for a victim to do. Susan Jacoby states that, 'forgiveness is seen as an expression of the noblest possibilities of human nature'²⁵⁸ and Robert C. Roberts has gone so far as to describe forgiveness as a virtue, coining the term 'forgivingness' to distinguish this commendable human attribute from the mere act of forgiveness.²⁵⁹ However, the process of forgiveness can be complex and Solomon Schimmel's identification of two types of forgiveness is useful:

In defining forgiveness, it is necessary to make a critical distinction between two types. One is internal, referring to a victim's feelings and attitudes toward the perpetrator, and does not necessarily require that the victim in any way interact with the perpetrator or inform him that he is forgiven. The second type of forgiveness is interpersonal in nature. It refers to something the victim does or says to the perpetrator, directly or indirectly.²⁶⁰

Within the written accounts of victims' family members where forgiveness is expressed, we are obviously considering interpersonal forgiveness since, even indirectly, the perpetrator can know the victim's family's feelings. This distinction between interpersonal and private forgiveness helps us to begin to consider the thought processes that precede a victim's decision to forgive and the potential impact that forgiveness can be seen to have on both victim and perpetrator.

Forgiving is often judged to have a positive effect on both the victim and the perpetrator. When a perpetrator apologises and when a victim grants forgiveness their relationship changes - it is a way of drawing a line under the previous chapter of both of their lives and it shows a readiness to look to the future:

²⁵⁸ Jacoby, *Wild Justice*, p. 332.

²⁵⁹ Robert C. Roberts, 'Forgivingness', *American Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (1995), 289-306 (p. 289).

²⁶⁰ Solomon Schimmel, *Wounds Not Healed By Time: The Power of Repentance and Forgiveness* (Oxford, New York: Oxford Scholarship Online, 2003), p. 44.

The dead cannot return, the deed cannot be undone... None of it can be undone, nor can it be appropriately avenged or made sense of. Only unconditional, impossible forgiveness can switch off the engine of madness and revenge and invite us, with infinite gentleness, to move on into the future... Sadly, unconditional forgiveness is beyond most of us, even though we believe it might be the very thing that could release us.²⁶¹

The choice offered by Richard Holloway here - unconditional forgiveness or madness and revenge - seems rather extreme, particularly when he claims that unconditional forgiveness is impossible. This citation illustrates the perceived importance of forgiveness, and the seemingly life-changing consequences that making that choice can have. This is a choice, it is suggested, that must be made, not only for the victim's own sake, or for that of his or her children, but also for the benefit of the one who has caused him or her harm. This is something that has been highlighted by Hannah Arendt in her discussion of forgiveness and its consequences in the context of the irreversibility of our actions:

Without being forgiven, released from the consequences of what we have done, our capacity to act would, as it were, be confined to one single deed from which we could never recover... Without being bound to the fulfilment of promises, we would never be able to keep our identities; we would be condemned to wander helplessly and without direction in the darkness of each man's lonely heart, caught in its contradictions and equivocalities - a darkness which only the light shed over the public realm through the presence of others, who confirm their identity between the one who promises and the one who fulfils, can dispel. Both faculties, therefore, depend on plurality, on the presence and acting of others, for no one can forgive himself and no one can feel bound by a promise made only to himself; forgiving and promising enacted in solitude or isolation remain without reality and can signify no more than a role played before one's self.²⁶²

That forgiveness depends, as Arendt states here, 'on the presence and acting of others', is fundamental to our understanding of its role in the memory of the

²⁶¹ Richard Holloway, *On Forgiveness* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2002), p. 86.

²⁶² Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 237.

anni di piombo as private family memories become absorbed into a national collective memory of that time. Introducing the very human drama of forgiveness can help to garner sympathy for the victims and change the public perception of them.

Victims and perpetrators might be seen to be trapped in a relationship that has negative effects on both, as they are both reduced to the status of 'victim' and 'perpetrator' and defined by the act that forced these labels onto them. This 'labelling' is especially important to our understanding of the way that *anni di piombo* victims' loved ones write about themselves and about the perpetrators of their fathers' murders because of the public place that the perpetrators also hold within Italian society. Another way to look at the process of forgiveness is to examine this relationship more closely. In her book, *Forgiveness and Revenge*, Trudy Govier identifies two forms of forgiveness: bilateral and unilateral forgiveness. She explains that bilateral forgiveness - where the perpetrator expresses remorse, asks for forgiveness and has it granted by the victim, as opposed to unilateral forgiveness whereby a victim offers forgiveness without it being asked for or even, necessarily, accepted - can be greatly beneficial to both victim and perpetrator.²⁶³ Govier's definition is slightly different from Schimmel's in that bilateral and unilateral forgiveness depend on outward expressions - of remorse from the perpetrator and forgiveness from the victim - whereas Schimmel's two types of forgiveness are based more on the victim's feelings and give less importance to the actions of a perpetrator.

With this in mind, the question of victims choosing to forgive their one-time aggressors seems to depend, according to Govier's description of bilateral forgiveness, on a fairly challenging condition: that the perpetrator sees the error of his or her ways and asks to make amends. It is a scenario not uncommon among victims and perpetrators from the *anni di piombo* and, indeed, in the victims' testimonies, as we shall see, a perpetrator's expression of remorse can often garner sympathy with a victim. On top of this, Govier suggests that the reciprocal actions needed to achieve bilateral forgiveness can have greatly beneficial long-term consequences:

In contexts of bilateral forgiveness, the wrongdoer provides the victim with reasons to forgive. Given such acknowledgement, the victim of

²⁶³ Trudy Govier, *Forgiveness and Revenge* (London & New York, Routledge, 2002), p. 46.

wrongdoing remains free to forgive or not. If she offers her forgiveness, she will offer it freely, on the basis of her own reflection and choice. Forgiving will benefit her by releasing her from feelings of bitterness and a potentially harmful fixation on wrongs of the past. Although what she has suffered will always be part of her, she need not base her identity on the fact that she was wronged. In the process of forgiveness the victim comes to be more than a victim, and the offender is freed to become more than an offender. Given trust and commitment on both sides, there are possibilities for a relationship of moral equality.²⁶⁴

The positive effects of bilateral forgiveness seem to come down to the fact that this form of forgiveness can be seen to strike a balance between perpetrator and victim; a balance that had been compromised by the perpetrator's original hurtful actions. The act of hurting someone, whether physically or emotionally, places the offender in a superior position to his or her victim.

The importance to a victim of regaining power, defining the narrative, and restoring balance should not be underestimated:

To harm a person is to receive something from him. What? What have we gained (and what will have to be repaid) when we have done harm? We have gained in importance. We have expanded. We have filled an emptiness in ourselves by creating one in somebody else.²⁶⁵

Redressing this imbalance allows a victim to recover his or her self-respect and to fill the 'emptiness' described above by Weil. Jeffrie G. Murphy has written about victims' self-respect and the bearing that it might have on their attitude towards their aggressor. He argues in favour of a victim feeling resentment towards whoever has hurt them because he states that this feeling helps them to regain the self-respect that was lost:

I am, in short, suggesting that the primary value defended by the passion of resentment is *self-respect*... Thus some of the primary reasons justifying forgiveness will be found, not in general social utility, but in reasons directly tied to an individual's self-respect or self-esteem, his perception of his own worth, of what he is owed... Resentment (perhaps

²⁶⁴ Govier, *Forgiveness and Revenge*, p. 48.

²⁶⁵ Simone Weil, trans. by Emma Craufurd, *Gravity and Grace* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1952), p. 6.

even hatred) is a good thing, for it is essentially tied to a non-controversially good thing - self-respect.²⁶⁶

Clearly, self-respect forms a crucial part of the relationship between victim and perpetrator and their ability to come to terms with the past. For example, a victim might feel that to forgive a perpetrator who has expressed no remorse and served only a fraction of his or her allotted prison sentence would be a further humiliation to the victim because the perpetrator might not seem to *deserve* forgiveness. Even if the victim does not resent an aggressor, he or she can still feel that, in order to redress this imbalance, some compromise has to be reached. In the corpus of works at the core of this thesis, anger and resentment are seldom expressed. However, as we have shown, the idea of balance is fundamental to the authors' desire to change the public perceptions of their fathers and here we return to the notion of casting off the 'victim' and 'perpetrator' labels. In this way, both parties can feel that they are equals, or at least that they may address each other on a more even plain.

4.2 Forgiveness and faith

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, religion is a significant element in discussions of forgiveness and it is especially important when considering the widows' descriptions of forgiveness. Thus, to preface our examination of these generational differences, we will briefly examine the place that forgiveness holds within the context of Christian faith. While the victims' widows might hold Catholic values and use Christian morality as a reason for their forgiveness choices, their children do not necessarily have a comparable religious grounding. Ginsborg writes that, while Italy remained an unequivocally Catholic country in the years following the *anni di piombo*, numbers attending church dropped and a generational gap among worshippers began to emerge:

The great rites of passage in human life remained distinctly Catholic affairs. A sense of widespread religiosity, of living in a Catholic country,

²⁶⁶ Jeffrie G. Murphy & Jean Hampton, *Forgiveness and Mercy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 16.

remained *the* prevailing cultural norm. But the number of active Christians, and indeed of young clergy, was very much reduced.²⁶⁷

It is clear therefore that the victims' children's generation were less likely to have grown up attending church than their parents' generation was. One might then deduce that, compared to their mothers, the second generation authors have simply grown up in a society in which religion played a less prominent part and that this is the reason that religion is absent from their writing. Our interest in religion and forgiveness within the context of the family members' interactions with the collective memory of the victims has less to do with attempting to explain the generational difference and more to do with simply understanding why the widows have chosen this framework around which to build their discussion of forgiveness. This framework must be examined in order to understand the link that the widows make between their faith and forgiveness.

It can at times be seen as obligatory for a religious person to forgive anyone who has wronged them. This expectation of forgiveness is discussed by Jean Hampton in the introduction to her and Jeffrie G. Murphy's work, *Forgiveness and Mercy*. She describes a Christian minister who asked his congregation to try to be more forgiving and reports that the group attempted to follow his advice, but Hampton states that, ultimately, none of the congregation was any more forgiving than before:

Why, I wondered, do people accept with their heads, but do not believe in their hearts, the Christian message of forgiveness?

The question took on a new urgency after a particularly painful series of events beset my family and plunged us into what one might call an 'orgy of resentment.' What struck me about the anger we felt towards those who had wronged us was that it seemed entirely appropriate and certainly not anything we wanted to give up or overcome. I began to worry that Christianity nonetheless required me to forgive those who had wronged us, which, given their actions, I was loath to do.²⁶⁸

Hampton demonstrates that, even when forgiveness is expected of a person, it is still not an easy choice. Her admission that she was unwilling to forgive those

²⁶⁷ Paul Ginsborg, *Italy and Its Discontents: Family, civil society, state 1980-2001* (London: Penguin, 2001), p. 133.

²⁶⁸ Murphy & Hampton, *Forgiveness and Mercy*, p. 11.

who had wronged her purely because her faith dictated that she should is illustrative of what Holloway, himself a former bishop, described as the ‘impossibility’ of unconditional forgiveness. We might conclude from these statements that, by acknowledging the inherent difficulties of forgiving, but also holding it as a central tenet of Christianity, Hampton and Holloway elevate forgiveness and those who forgive. They are seen to be particularly good or worthy because they have managed to do something that is seen to be very hard. By underlining the difficulty of forgiveness, these authors also absolve those who cannot forgive or whose priorities, like the second generation authors, seem to lie elsewhere.

4.2.1 *Oltre la notte di piombo* and *Sedie vuote*: two perspectives on forgiveness.

In order to illustrate the place that religion holds in the widows’ attitude towards forgiveness and to compare it with the more secular approach to forgiveness taken by their children, in addition to the six core texts written by victims’ children, we will utilise two volumes containing interviews with family members of victims killed during the *anni di piombo*. The first is a work entitled *Oltre la notte di piombo* and, of the two volumes, it has a more overtly Catholic stance, as will be discussed.²⁶⁹ This book is a collection of interviews that journalist, Gigi Moncalvo conducted in 1984 with family members and friends of five victims of terrorism and one Mafia victim. Four of the six chapters are comprised of interviews with the widows of these victims. In the other two chapters - those regarding Mafia victim, General Carlo Alberto dalla Chiesa and university law professor, Vittorio Bachelet, who was killed by the Red Brigades - Moncalvo interviews the men’s children. All of his interviews focus on the relatives’ experiences in the years following their loved ones’ murders and each of them is asked about their faith and the role it plays in their ability to cope. As explained above, attitudes to forgiveness can be seen as an example of the way that the public image of the victims is created by their families. Consequently, in this work, by asking family members specifically about their experiences of

²⁶⁹ Gigi Moncalvo, *Oltre la notte di piombo* (Roma: Edizioni Paoline, 1984).

forgiveness and underlining their apparent benevolence, Moncalvo therefore contributes to the formation of a public image of the victims.

The interviews collected in this volume all have a religious focus; Moncalvo was a Catholic journalist and the book was published by a Catholic publishing house and one of Moncalvo's aims in conducting these interviews was to emphasise the role that Catholicism has played in these families' lives. Although we cannot conclude, from the testimonies highlighted below, that Catholic faith and forgiveness are a universal factor in the lives of the families of victims from the *anni di piombo*, that these widows have chosen to discuss their husbands and their husbands' killers in this way is significant. The generational differences are more pronounced within this discussion than in any other aspect of the victim-centred narratives examined here and that, in itself, renders these interviews important to our understanding of the place of the victims within the collective memory of the *anni di piombo* today.

Oltre la notte di piombo was published in 1984, at the end of the period generally considered as the *anni di piombo*. The women who are featured here had not been widowed long before their interviews: their husbands were all killed between February 1980 and September 1982. This is some time before the stories of victims of terrorism were generally considered of public interest, as evidenced in Sergio Lenci's account of his experience in the previous chapter. However, the introduction, written by Catholic academic and writer Gaspare Barbiellini Amidei, is reminiscent of many of the texts written much later:

Quanto sono vive le famiglie di certi morti, quanto sono morti le famiglie di certi vivi! Dopo tanta retorica, dopo tanti memoriali, dopo tanta strategia d'archivio, nella storia di terrorismo e della comunità civile che lo ha sconfitto, finalmente parlano le famiglie vive dei morti, delle vittime, se la parola non mettesse timore, bisognerebbe dire: degli eroi.²⁷⁰

With his use of the word '*finalmente*', Amidei suggests that the family members of the victims of the *anni di piombo* have been unable to tell their stories before: a complaint that we have seen resurfacing twenty years later in works such as *I silenzi degli innocenti*. This seems to echo Lenci's complaint that victims were marginalised even at that time.

²⁷⁰ Moncalvo, *Oltre la notte di piombo*, p. 9.

Oltre la notte di piombo is a noteworthy study because it is a volume that collects together victims' family members' testimonies at a time when victim-centred narratives were extremely rare. An interesting comparison can be made between this work and a more recent collection of interviews, *Sedie vuote*, which was published in 2008. This volume contains interviews between relatives of victims killed during the *anni di piombo* - mostly second generation and including five of the authors from the corpus examined in this thesis - and young people from Trento. In the preface to *Sedie vuote*, while discussing the key themes that emerged in the interviews and that they deem to be essential to a victim-centred understanding of the *anni di piombo*, the editors emphasise the centrality of forgiveness.²⁷¹ Indeed, each interview contains a question about the subject. Some of the interviews from *Sedie vuote* have already been cited and this volume offers a secular, modern perspective on forgiveness in the context of *anni di piombo* victims that will be placed alongside that of *Oltre la notte di piombo* and the six core texts. In this way, we will bring together the two generations' attitudes to forgiveness and highlight examples where the victims' children can be seen to hold noticeably different views to their mothers.

4.3 Benedetta Tobagi: *Non mi consolava affatto.*

To begin this comparative study of widows and second generation authors, let us consider the attitudes of Benedetta Tobagi and her mother, Stella. Her views are in the public domain because she is one of the widows interviewed by Gigi Moncalvo for the aforementioned volume, *Oltre la notte di piombo*. In the interview, the impression that she gives above all is that she hopes that these wrongdoers might see the error of their ways: 'Semmai è la loro ideologia che va condannata. Loro devono pagare finché è possibile, ma stanno già pagando e si spera che cambino'.²⁷² Stella Tobagi discusses feeling amenable to the possibility of opening a dialogue with them, underlining that they, like her and her family, had suffered because of Walter's murder:

Una volta usciti quelli saranno ancora persone che in qualche modo hanno sofferto, così come noi. Quindi il mio atteggiamento, se loro mi

²⁷¹ Conci, Grigolli & Mosna (eds), *Sedie vuote*, p. 8.

²⁷² Moncalvo, *Oltre la notte di piombo*, p. 53.

cercheranno, se le circostanze ci faranno incontrare, sarà quello di vedere se e come sarà possibile ricostruire insieme, quali segni porre - noi e loro - per trasformare in una realtà positiva questa realtà che è stata così negativa per tutti.²⁷³

However, it is important to remember that at the time that this interview was conducted, meeting her husband's killers was hypothetical since they were still in prison. In fact, they were released from prison by 1986, only six years after Walter's murder. Benedetta Tobagi writes that, when she was sixteen, her mother arranged for one of the men involved in her father's murder, Francesco Giordano, to come and meet the family. Her mother had been writing letters to him since he was in prison. Tobagi points out that he was an *irriducibile* and so he has never tried to distance himself from his past political violence and may still believe that his actions were justified. Giordano acted as the look-out for the gang who killed Walter Tobagi and, unlike the other members of the group, served almost all of the jail term that he was sentenced to. The visit is seen by Tobagi as a way for Giordano to draw a line under this part of his past:

Credo [Giordano] cercasse il suo momento di catarsi. La mamma era stata in corrispondenza con lui per tutti gli anni di carcere: incontrarlo era l'esito naturale di un percorso liberamente scelto, ma voleva che fossimo presenti anche noi figli.

Non ricordo che parole furono pronunciate, quel pomeriggio resta appannato nella mia memoria. Mio fratello, Luca, vent'anni, reagì con fastidio e una certa durezza. Vorrei aver saputo fare come lui. Ma avevo sedici anni, ero preoccupata per la mamma e mi sentivo annichilita. La presenza di quell'uomo sul divano bordeaux del tinello era perturbante.²⁷⁴

Benedetta Tobagi does not describe how her mother felt during or after the visit, but her and her brother's reactions are strikingly different from the sentiments expressed by Stella Tobagi above with regards to opening a dialogue.

The divergent attitudes of Benedetta and Stella Tobagi towards the men who murdered Walter are indicated more than once in *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore*. In this work, Benedetta Tobagi writes that her mother draws her

²⁷³ Moncalvo, *Oltre la notte di piombo*, p. 44.

²⁷⁴ Tobagi, *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore*, pp. 11-12.

strength from her faith and that this was something that she has not always been able to comprehend:

Altre volte mia madre si produceva in enunciati che avevano il sapore di una predizione. Il più solenne: ‘Dio ti ha dato un grande dolore, ma sarai ricompensata: in queste cose io vedo lontano’. Sentivo ogni fibra del mio essere ribellarsi a questa visione retributiva. Non mi consolava affatto. Non riuscivo ad accettare un mondo in cui un futuro appagamento umano e affettivo deve essere ottenuto a prezzi così atroci.²⁷⁵

Tobagi expresses frustration with her mother’s reliance on Catholicism, implying that she created an almost saintly figure of her dead husband and she quotes a passage from her mother’s interview with Moncalvo to illustrate her point:

Rabbia per tutto quello che è accaduto? Rabbia perché è stata spezzata la vita di Walter e tutte le cose che lui aveva faticosamente conquistato e per le quali lottava? No, rabbia no. Perché io credo che Walter non potesse coronare diversamente la sua vita e il suo modo di vivere.²⁷⁶

Benedetta Tobagi’s thoughts on forgiveness are recorded once again in *Sedie vuote*, where she questions the emphasis placed on forgiveness by the media in discussions of victims of the *anni di piombo*:

[N]on condivido il fatto che si ponga tanta enfasi sulle dimensioni del perdono e della riconciliazione, come se il problema degli anni di piombo in Italia fosse solo un problema fra le vittime e i carnefici, quando invece ci troviamo di fronte a fenomeni politici e sociali molto complessi. Trovo che ci sia un colpevole spostamento del *focus* della problematica da parte dei mezzi di comunicazione, atteggiamento peraltro molto comodo, perché di sicuro effetto emotivo e di scarso impegno intellettuale.²⁷⁷

Here, Tobagi extends her criticism beyond her mother’s outlook and underlines that she believes such an emotionally charged victim-centred approach to history can be particularly unhelpful, echoing Giovanni De Luna’s sentiment. When she is asked about forgiveness in her interview in *Sedie vuote*, Tobagi immediately states that she is not religious and that she feels it is important to declare this in order to clarify that her thoughts on the subject are not

²⁷⁵ Tobagi, *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore*, p. 31.

²⁷⁶ Moncalvo, *Oltre la notte di piombo*, p. 54; Tobagi, *Come mi batte forte il tuo cuore*, p. 27.

²⁷⁷ Conci, Grigolli & Mosna (eds), *Sedie vuote*, p. 74.

influenced by religious tenets. She goes on to explain that she believes only a victim can forgive: 'mio padre è morto, non può perdonare i suoi assassini e nessuno può farlo in vece sua, se non Dio'.²⁷⁸ Benedetta Tobagi makes a very clear and deliberate distinction between her own approach to her father's memory and to the men who killed him and her mother's.

Forgiveness is an interesting key to understanding the generational differences between different members of a victim's family. As described previously, Benedetta Tobagi's work is framed as an investigation of her father's life using his writing in order to better understand him as a person since she was very young when he was killed. Her mother, on the other hand, has certain tenets she believes in *a priori*, which appear to be closely connected with her Catholic faith and which include the idea that it is wrong to condemn a person rather than an act. Stella Tobagi's religious beliefs have led her to respond in the way that she has, whereas Benedetta, lacking these beliefs around which to frame her response to her father's murder, uses her writing, among other strategies, as a way to explore her father's memory in an investigative and journalistic way. Stella Tobagi had been in contact with Francesco Giordano since he had been sent to prison and was apparently eager for her children to meet him. Benedetta Tobagi's attitude to her father's murderers is more analytical and the fact that she makes reference to her mother's approach to her father's memory - and criticises it - underlines her desire to rewrite the existing narrative in her own way, distinct from her mother's moral certainties.

4.4 Gemma Capra: *Padre, perdona loro.*

Gemma Capra, Luigi Calabresi's widow and Mario Calabresi's mother, published a memoir in 1990 and, as with Stella and Benedetta Tobagi, it is enlightening to compare Luigi Calabresi and his mother's perspectives.²⁷⁹ Additionally, Calabresi's relationship with his mother is comparable to that of Stella and Benedetta Tobagi because, like Benedetta Tobagi, Mario Calabresi has spoken openly about the fact that his mother's approach to his father's memory has

²⁷⁸ Conci, Grigolli & Mosna (eds), *Sedie vuote*, p. 73.

²⁷⁹ Gemma Capra & Luciano Garibaldi, *Mio marito il commissario Calabresi: Il diario segreto della moglie, dopo 17 anni di silenzio* (Milano: Edizioni Paoline, 1990).

been influenced by her religious beliefs, whereas he is not a believer. Unlike Benedetta Tobagi, however, Calabresi appears to have found his mother's religious attitude helpful:

[N]ella posizione di mia madre c'è sempre stato un ancoraggio che alla fine mi faceva trovare il centro. È una posizione che mia madre ha fondato sulla profonda fede religiosa che la sostiene. Io non ho la sua fede religiosa, mi manca quell'ancoraggio, ma ho visto che il suo modo di vivere era alla fine il più giusto... perché la rabbia, il rancore e l'odio ti portano a sbandare continuamente. E così facendo permetti agli altri di decidere della tua vita.²⁸⁰

According to Calabresi therefore, Gemma Capra's religious faith has permitted her and her family to some extent to shrug off their 'victim' label; by not allowing themselves to get angry, the family can gain some power over Luigi Calabresi's killers.

Capra's work precedes her son's by more than fifteen years and is noteworthy from this perspective because she was attempting to introduce a victim-centred narrative at a time when these were very uncommon. The book is also interesting because of the framework within which Capra has chosen to write it: it is published by Edizioni Paoline, the same Catholic publishing house that published Gigi Moncalvo's *Oltre la notte di piombo*, and much of Capra's discussion, particularly of forgiveness, is expressed in religious terms.

In her biographical work, the religious framework that Gemma Capra has used to illustrate her thoughts on forgiveness allows her to gain some power back from the men who killed her husband and rendered her a widow and a victim. Capra recounts that she asked for the words, 'Padre, perdona loro perché non sanno quello che fanno', to be included in her husband's obituary in *Corriere della Sera* with reference to the men responsible for her husband's death. She writes that she thought it was right to ask God to forgive her husband's murderers because she knew they would be unhappy for the rest of their lives anyway, a phrase reminiscent of Stella Tobagi's statement cited above that Walter's killers had suffered too. She also discusses her own attitude to forgiving:

²⁸⁰ Conci, Grigolli & Mosna (eds), *Sedie vuote*, p. 37.

Quella frase [Padre, perdona loro] fece pensare a molti che gli assassini io li avessi perdonati all'indomani del loro crimine. Ma il perdono mio personale non era esattamente il sentimento che provavo, nei confronti di persone senza nome e senza volto. Neppure odio, provavo, perché credo d'essere incapace di odiare, ma pena, profonda pena. Pensavo, e penso tuttora, che si può perdonare, anzi, parlando da cristiana, si deve perdonare a chi chiede perdono, a chi è pentito del male che ha fatto, a chi, come disse Gesù, 'non sa quel che fa'.²⁸¹

Gemma Capra's forgiveness is evidently rooted in her religious faith and carries a condition: she will forgive whoever asks for her forgiveness. Capra adds an interesting caveat; she feels, as a Christian, that she should forgive whoever has repented of the evil that they have committed. When Capra made these comments, her family did not know who was responsible for her husband's murder, which is why she writes that she felt she could not forgive faceless, unnamed people. In the section below that looks at Massimo Coco's thoughts on forgiveness, he expresses the same sentiment. Capra states that she felt pity towards her husband's unknown killers and that forgiveness would only be offered by her if and when it should be asked for.

The conditional nature of her forgiveness is a point that she expands upon in an interview with journalist Dario Cresta-Dino published in *La Repubblica* in 2007:

Dario Cresta-Dino: Dio insegna il perdono. Lei chi ha perdonato?

Gemma Capra: È difficile rispondere a questa domanda senza correre il rischio di un malinteso. Non si può perdonare con la bocca se non lo si è fatto prima con la mente e il cuore... Padre perdona loro perché non sanno quello che fanno. Indica a noi una strada, ci dà il tempo del cammino. Io su quel cammino, mi creda, ci sono.

Dario Cresta-Dino: E a che punto si trova?

Gemma Capra: Leonardo Marino ci ha chiesto perdono. Io l'ho perdonato. Nessun altro ci ha chiesto nulla.²⁸²

²⁸¹ Capra & Garibaldi, *Mio marito il commissario Calabresi*, p. 140.

²⁸² Dario Cresta-Dino, 'Gemma Calabresi: "Solo ora torno dove uccisero Luigi"', *La Repubblica*, 16 May 2007.

Her forgiveness is given on the trust that Marino has seen the error of his ways, having suffered in prison and under the weight of the crime that he committed, and has now repented, demonstrating bilateral forgiveness.

Gemma Capra's faith is mentioned again in the *La Repubblica* interview when she discusses the way that it has allowed her to turn her anger into a more positive emotion:

Dario Cresta-Dino: Lei, Gemma, non ha mai smarrito Dio?

Gemma Capra: No. La fede è sempre rimasta con me. Ho sempre sentito vicino Dio, mi ha aiutata a non andare a cercare vendetta. Per merito della fede la rabbia si è trasformata in dolore, con il tempo è cresciuta la mia sensibilità, si è allargata agli altri, ho imparato a prendermi maggiore cura degli altri.²⁸³

Thus, while Capra admits that she has only been prepared to forgive Marino because he asked for her forgiveness, she still shows a gracious attitude towards the other members of the group who murdered her husband. Anger and resentment are emotions that one might expect to be expressed by someone whose loved one has been killed in a senseless act of violence and yet they are conspicuously absent in many of these accounts. This absence has also been noted in the previous chapter by Massimo Coco with reference to other victims' children's books. By portraying themselves as compassionate and benevolent, the family members make a very clear and deliberate distinction between themselves and those who killed their loved ones.

Mario Calabresi's attitude to his father's killers centres around justice rather than faith. In his interview in *Sedie vuote*, Calabresi stresses what he sees as the fundamental importance of having faith in the justice system and he underlines the fact that, in his opinion, clemency is a decision that must be made by lawmakers, not victims' families: 'non spetta alle famiglie concedere la grazia o esprimersi su di essa'.²⁸⁴ When asked directly about forgiveness, Calabresi replies that he takes issue with the way that forgiveness has become a public matter: 'Il perdono è un percorso personale e interiore: se è reale, sincero e profondo non può essere pubblico. È un percorso lungo, non lineare,

²⁸³ Cresta-Dino, *La Repubblica*, 16 May 2007.

²⁸⁴ Conci, Grigolli & Mosna (eds), *Sedie vuote*, p. 27.

difficile, che dura una vita'.²⁸⁵ This attitude echoes that of Massimo Coco who, as we have shown, has expressed irritation at the public displays of emotion that he feels have come to be expected of victims and their families. As noted above, Calabresi seems to hold his mother in high esteem and she has been very influential in the choices that he has made and the actions that he has taken regarding promoting the memory of his father and that of other victims killed during the *anni di piombo*. Their outlooks speak to each other in the sense that, in different ways, they both display a reasoned approach to Luigi Calabresi's memory and the question of forgiveness.

4.5 Eleonora Moro: *E io, nel profondo, li ho perdonati.*

Eleonora Moro, Aldo Moro's widow, is, like Stella Tobagi and Gemma Capra, a widow for whom the question of whether or not to forgive is apparently resolved by her Catholic faith. She discusses the difficulties she has had in forgiving her husband's former political colleagues - men who she describes as having allowed Moro to be killed - in the first interview she ever gave to the press in *La Stampa*, thirty years after Aldo Moro's murder:

Eleonora Moro: Vede, a coloro che lo hanno fatto uccidere non posso stringere la mano. Se li incontro, li saluto da lontano e filo via rapidamente.

Ferdinando Imposimato: Non riesce a dar loro la mano?

Eleonora Moro: Io non sono una cristiana così santa. Sono una cristiana molto semplice... Vede, dopo la morte di mio marito mi sono messa a studiare, dal punto di vista cattolico, la difficoltà del perdono. Perché uno può dire: li voglio perdonare. E io, nel profondo, li ho perdonati. Ma quando li vedo, attraverso la strada e vado dall'altra parte. Più che la morte di mio marito, mi ferisce il fatto che sia morto un innocente a causa delle perverse mire di quattro stupidi mascalzoni. Se solo fossero stati modestamente intelligenti avrebbero capito che al potere non si arriva mai attraverso il delitto.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁵ Conci, Grigolli & Mosna (eds), *Sedie vuote*, p. 46.

²⁸⁶ Ferdinando Imposimato, 'La prima intervista di Eleonora Moro', *La Stampa*, 26 February 2008.

Moro's desire to avoid her husband's former colleagues seems to stem, not from a lack of forgiveness on her part, or repentance on theirs, but because she is still hurt by the injustice of her husband's tragically pointless murder. She claims to have forgiven them for what she sees as their part in his assassination, but seems to have done so out of a sense of duty. Nonetheless, in order for her to forgive the offenders it is not necessary for her to begin a relationship with them.

Moro's discomfort at the idea of seeing her husband's former colleagues is understandable, particularly given the very public and lasting debate surrounding the Christian Democrat party's uncompromising stance during Moro's captivity and the theories that have emerged in the intervening years that point to state involvement or collusion in the event.²⁸⁷ John Foot writes that the Italian state was partly blamed for Moro's death and that the Moro family became increasingly frustrated with the party's refusal to negotiate: 'Relations between Moro's family and the state broke down. The fracture has never been healed'.²⁸⁸ Eleonora Moro's refusal to shake hands with these former allies of her husband's demonstrates Foot's assertion. In the next chapter, the relationship between the Moro family and the state will be examined in more detail in the context of the commemorative ceremonies conducted in Aldo Moro's memory. It is telling that Eleonora Moro focuses here, not on her husband's murderers, but on his former colleagues. The Red Brigades seem incidental in her estimation of who should be held responsible for Aldo Moro's death, echoing the situation described in Chapter One: Moro is remembered as having been 'abandoned' by his colleagues and thus he is doubly victimised.

In a similar way to some of the widows whose testimonies are mentioned above, in her postmemoir, Agnese Moro seems to feel sorry for the men found responsible for her father's murder and she underlines their common humanity. Agnese Moro met Alberto Franceschini, a founding member of the Red Brigades and has commented:

Non è una questione di perdono - quello è un fatto personale e squisitamente interiore, contro il rancore che uccide, per fermare la catena del male -, ma del guardare in faccia la realtà. È quello che mi sembra di aver fatto incontrando Alberto Franceschini... Ho visto il viso di

²⁸⁷ Willan, *Puppetmasters*, pp. 224-225.

²⁸⁸ Foot, *Italy's Divided Memory*, p. 201.

un uomo, con dentro la sua vita, le sue speranze, gli errori, la prigione, l'intelligenza, i capelli brizzolati, i segni di tante cose.²⁸⁹

Agnese Moro seems to view her meeting with Franceschini as a way to draw a line under the past and to focus on the present. Crucially, however, she has not met with the men who were actually responsible for killing her father - Franceschini was not part of the group who kidnapped and murdered Aldo Moro. He has disassociated himself from the Red Brigades and their activities, which might also be considered a factor in Moro's decision to meet with him. This could mean that it was easier for her to come face to face with Franceschini and possibly easier for her to see beyond his previous violent actions.

Nonetheless, Moro stresses the importance of remembering that these people - the killers, not only Franceschini - are human beings who have committed awful acts:

E anche loro, i terroristi, gli aggressori, sono uomini e donne... Non sono il male. Sono persone che hanno fatto il male. Un male terribile. Ma persone... L'umanità è il nostro terreno comune.²⁹⁰

By highlighting the 'humanity' of Franceschini as opposed to depicting him as a brute, Moro, like Stella Tobagi, separates the agent from his acts. This is a concept that Govier holds to be fundamental to the act of forgiveness:

To forgive is to regard a wrongdoer as a moral agent who, in a particular context and often with mitigating excuses, has acted wrongly. But it is also to regard him, trustfully and hopefully, as a person distinct from his acts and capable of better. In bad circumstances, that person made bad choices, but he should, in better circumstances, be capable of making better choices. To forgive someone is to regard that person as a fallible, but changeable human being, one capable of improvement.²⁹¹

Moro's separation of actor and action allows each party to move away from their roles as 'victim' and 'perpetrator' - a crucial step on the path to forgiveness as it helps to redress the power imbalance between them.

Like Mario Calabresi, Agnese Moro is more focussed on questions of justice than forgiveness and makes a very strong distinction between the two:

²⁸⁹ Moro, *Un uomo così*, p. 151.

²⁹⁰ Moro, *Un uomo così*, p. 150.

²⁹¹ Govier, *Forgiveness and Revenge*, p. 59.

Che cosa c'entra il mio perdono con la sua vicenda giudiziaria? Il mio perdono non è necessario per permettere a un ex brigatista di uscire dal carcere, non è richiesto. Ed è giusto che sia così, perché si tratta di valutare il percorso di riabilitazione compiuto, la pericolosità, e così via. Non penso sia corretto scaricare sui familiari delle vittime questa responsabilità, facendo sanguinare di nuovo ferite mai veramente rimarginate.²⁹²

Forgiveness in the context of justice will be addressed later in this chapter, but it is important to note the generational variances in both Gemma Capra's and Eleonora Moro's approaches to forgiveness and those of Mario Calabresi and Agnese Moro. These citations all come from interviews that took place in the second half of the 2000s and therefore we can disregard the idea that the younger authors' perspective is a result of the passage of time or developments in the judicial process. Rather, the fact that the widows write about showing clemency while their children prefer to leave such matters to the judiciary offers an interesting insight into the ways that these two generations of victims' family members have different priorities when it comes to their loved one's memory. Thus, the second generation authors can use the discussion of forgiveness as another way to create an image of their fathers that is distinct from that which has gone before.

4.6 Sabina Rossa: *oggi quei ruoli così definitivi non ci corrispondono più completamente.*

Several of the victims' family members, like the Tobagi family and Agnese Moro, have met with former offenders and in many of these cases, a desire to understand and to see the humanity of these people is demonstrated. As demonstrated above by Agnese Moro, a meeting like this, where the victim feels in control and is able to sympathise with the perpetrator, can be an opportunity for a victim to redress the power balance between the two. A good example of a victim/perpetrator relationship being transformed by their meeting is that which is recorded by Sabina Rossa in her postmemoir. Rossa sought out Vincenzo

²⁹² Conci, Grigolli & Mosna (eds), *Sedie vuote*, pp. 210-211.

Guagliardo, one of the members of the Red Brigades involved in her father's murder. Although he has never dissociated himself from the Red Brigades or repented of his actions, Guagliardo had served over twenty years in prison and this is something that Rossa writes was important to her.²⁹³ He was at first reticent to speak to her, but she persisted, insisting that she did not regard him as a 'monster'. When he finally agreed to speak to her, he admitted that he found the interview difficult:

Vedi, se tuo padre fosse ancora vivo, se lo avessimo colpito soltanto alle gambe, io avrei con lui un confronto alla pari. Gli direi: tu hai agito seguendo le tue ragioni, io seguendo le mie. Ma con te, Sabina, è diverso. Davanti a te mi sento in colpa...²⁹⁴

Interestingly, Guagliardo admits to feeling guilty only towards Sabina Rossa and he expresses no remorse for her father's murder, indeed, he seems to stand by the political reasons for the attack on Guido Rossa when he states that, were he not dead, they could speak as equals. This reasoning underscores his status as an *irriducibile*. Guagliardo's admission of guilt seems to alter the balance between the pair and makes Rossa see him in a completely different light:

Sono stata risucchiata in una situazione difficile, perché io avrei dovuto essere la 'vittima' e lui il 'carnefice'. In realtà mi sono resa conto che oggi quei ruoli così definitivi non ci corrispondono più completamente: il tempo è passato, entrambi abbiamo subito un'evoluzione che ci ha permesso di arrivare a quel momento.²⁹⁵

Although Rossa had gone to visit Guagliardo with the intention of asking him probing questions about her father's murder, she reports that once she realised that neither she nor Guagliardo could be defined by their accustomed roles, she steered the conversation to more general topics. In so doing, Rossa demonstrates a degree of empathy towards Guagliardo because he was uncomfortable talking about Guido Rossa and their 'victim' and 'perpetrator' roles are very explicitly dismantled. Agnese Moro wrote that she saw her meeting with Alberto Franceschini as a way of 'looking reality in the face' and a similar sentiment might be seen to underpin Rossa's change of attitude during her meeting with

²⁹³ Fasanella & Rossa: *Guido Rossa*, pp. 16-19.

²⁹⁴ Fasanella & Rossa, *Guido Rossa*, p. 25.

²⁹⁵ Fasanella & Rossa, *Guido Rossa*, p. 26.

Guagliardo. The shift in balance that occurs allows her to retain her self-respect while ensuring that he has suffered for his crime. While she does not mention forgiveness, this change in their relationship is significant.

4.7 Silvia Giralucci: *Per me è semplicemente inconcepibile.*

Silvia Giralucci expresses a very similar approach to forgiveness to that of Benedetta Tobagi outlined above. In their interviews in *Sedie vuote*, both of these women totally reject the idea that forgiveness or clemency might overrule an ex-terrorist's sense of responsibility. According to Giralucci, the prospect of forgiveness is used by the ex-terrorists as a way for them to feel less guilty about the violent acts they committed. She states several times that, just as she and her family have suffered from the loss of her father, so the people who killed him should have to live with the consequences of their actions:

Non sono una di quelle persone che negano il diritto di chi ha sbagliato a rifarsi una vita... Sono usciti dal carcere, ma la loro responsabilità rimane. Non si diventa ex assassini, semplicemente perché io non divento un'ex orfana. Il mio papà non torna.²⁹⁶

This statement somewhat contradicts that of Gemma Capra, who wrote that she felt it was important to show Luigi Calabresi's murderers clemency because, after all, she was certain they would be unhappy for the rest of their lives anyway, having committed such an atrocious crime. It is this certainty - seemingly rooted in the widows' Catholic faith - which Silvia Giralucci appears to lack in the above citation. Indeed, in her postmemoir, Giralucci states her position on the idea of forgiving her father's killers very clearly and underlines her secular outlook:

Ho ripetuto per anni, a chiunque me lo chiedesse, che non riesco neppure a pensare al perdono per gli assassini di mio padre. Da laica immagino il perdono solo all'interno di una relazione, e io con quelle persone non ho nulla da spartire.²⁹⁷

²⁹⁶ Conci, Grigolli & Mosna (eds), *Sedie vuote*, p. 95.

²⁹⁷ Giralucci, *L'inferno sono gli altri*, p. 158.

Giralucci's unequivocal self-identification as a non-religious person within this statement regarding her unwillingness to forgive people she has no form of relationship with implies that she equates unconditional or unilateral forgiveness - wherein one is prepared to forgive a stranger - exclusively with the religious faith demonstrated by the widows in their testimonies.

Therefore, Silvia Giralucci equates the granting of forgiveness with religious faith and with a sense of misplaced or missing justice. In this sense, her views are very much in line with many of the other second generation authors who, as we will show in the next section, stress the distinction between personal forgiveness and justice administered by the proper authorities. When Giralucci is asked again about forgiveness in *Sedie vuote*, she repeats the same sentiment expressed in her own book and replies that she does not feel she is in a position to give it, nor, in her opinion, should the ex-terrorists ask for it:

Come tutte le altre vittime del terrorismo, non ho né ho mai avuto alcuna relazione con queste persone e quindi non capisco proprio che cosa mi si chieda col perdono. Per me è semplicemente inconcepibile... Penso che loro vorrebbero essere aiutati nel loro reinserimento sociale, nella loro riabilitazione, dal fatto che le vittime dicano: 'Passiamoci sopra'. A questo, tuttavia, non sono disponibile.²⁹⁸

These citations make clear the difficulties that can arise when forgiveness is offered by proxy, particularly where justice is involved. Giralucci, like Benedetta Tobagi, feels that forgiveness can and ought only to be offered by a victim.

4.8 Forgiveness and justice

There are clear and important links between forgiveness and the attainment of justice in the aftermath of the *anni di piombo*, particularly given the problematic relationship that many of the victims have with the Italian state. This problematic relationship is not unique to victims of terrorism and their families, however. Paul Ginsborg has written of the deep-rooted mistrust between Italian citizens and the state which he ascribes, at least partly, to a failure on the state's part to provide justice:

²⁹⁸ Conci, Grigolli & Mosna (eds), *Sedie vuote*, p. 98.

Italian families have become resigned to the fact that redress of grievance is a very lengthy and unpredictable affair. This resignation, though, has increasingly been accompanied by growing cynicism towards the state, politics and even democracy. The state has failed in one of its most important legitimating duties, the provision of justice.²⁹⁹

Viewed in this context, it appears that its historic failure to provide justice has undermined the state's relationship with all Italians and the experience of the victims of the *anni di piombo* merely serves to demonstrate this.

We have already seen that many of those who perpetrated violence during this period were given prison sentences, sometimes of considerable length and that others were released from prison in a relatively short space of time. To see an offender receive a punishment that seems appropriate to his crime can have a positive effect on a victim's willingness to forgive because it restores the power balance that we have seen to be so crucial in these relationships. Susan Jacoby affirms that some level of secular punishment for crimes is something which is strongly desired by most victims and an important part of the forgiveness process: 'Remorse may wipe the slate clean with the gods, but men and women generally demand a more tangible penance'.³⁰⁰ One reason why a perpetrator standing trial and a verdict being delivered by a judge is obviously very important is that it takes the onus away from the victim:

A trial in the aftermath of mass atrocity... transfers the individuals' desires for revenge to the state or official bodies... The trial itself steers clear of forgiveness, however. It announces a demand not only for accountability and acknowledgement of harms done, but also for unflinching punishment.³⁰¹

Of course, what Minow underlines here - the removal of the power to punish from the, possibly vengeful, hands of victims - is the basis for judicial systems. However, her assertion that a trial is a vehicle for accountability and public acknowledgment of wrongs done is particularly appropriate given the long-held suspicions of state involvement in the violence and that many of the families of victims from the *anni di piombo* still do not know who killed their loved ones.

²⁹⁹ Paul Ginsborg, 'Italy', in *Families and States in Western Europe*, ed. by Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 106-128 (p. 123).

³⁰⁰ Jacoby, *Wild Justice*, p. 6.

³⁰¹ Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness*, p. 26.

The desire for justice to be meted out is expressed by all of the victims whose testimonies we have examined in this chapter. Their forgiveness is not offered instead of punishment, but alongside or as a consequence of it. Bianca Galli's husband, Guido, was a magistrate and law professor killed by members of Prima Linea in March 1980. In her interview with Gigi Moncalvo, in which she discusses her husband's murder and her own victimhood, she underlines the significance that justice holds for her: 'Se tornassero liberi gli assassini di Guido? Proverei amarezza pensando che la giustizia non funziona come dovrebbe'.³⁰² In the interview, Moncalvo asks her about the controversial law which was introduced by Francesco Cossiga in 1982 which offered shorter prison sentences to those who volunteered to provide information about their comrades.³⁰³ Moncalvo refers to it as the 'pentiti' law, but Galli rejects that term:

Preferirei chiamarla soltanto 'legge 304'. Secondo me, infatti, il termine 'pentito' ha un alto significato morale che va ben definito e non frainteso. Fino a prova contraria, pentito è colui che provando rimorso per il male commesso chiede perdono a chi ha offeso e per riscattarsi desidera espiare la propria colpa... È una legge che lo Stato ha creato per risolvere i suoi problemi nei confronti del terrorismo. Per una ragione di Stato quindi può avere un significato, ma - da un punto di vista umano - è ingiusta nei confronti delle vittime e dei loro familiari.³⁰⁴

Galli here demonstrates very clearly how important it can be for a victim and his or her family members to feel that justice has been served by the proper authorities. Galli's idea of repentance is fundamentally linked to a person's morality and is quite discrete from that which might be outlined by a judge. The law that Galli and Moncalvo discuss in her interview was named the 'pentiti' law by journalists and an offender's penitence would not necessarily, under this law, affect his chances of receiving a reduced sentence.

³⁰² Moncalvo, *Oltre la notte di piombo*, p. 123.

³⁰³ It should be noted that *pentitismo* is a term that occurs most frequently in Mafia contexts where it is used to describe Mafia turncoats who, in return for reduced sentences, collaborate with the justice system. As is the case with *pentiti* associated with the *anni di piombo*, it is not necessary for a *Mafioso* to express repentance for his actions, but the decision to become an informant means that he can never return to the organisation.

³⁰⁴ Moncalvo, *Oltre la notte di piombo*, p. 120.

Vittorio Bachelet was a professor of law who was shot dead by members of the Red Brigades on 12 February 1980; his son Giovanni and Giovanni Kessler, an anti-Mafia prosecutor, wrote an article in which they outlined the differences that they saw between Christian reconciliation and the pardon meted out by law. According to the authors, there were very distinct circumstances under which someone accused of taking part in the terrorist violence of the *anni di piombo* might benefit. The authors stipulate that, in order to benefit from this law, the offenders must have dissociated themselves from the groups and that the judge must be convinced of the authenticity of their dissociation. According to Bachelet and Kessler, an offender's repentance should have played no part in the treatment they received in the judicial system under this law.³⁰⁵

The question of *pentitismo* and the Cossiga law has been taken up by other victims' family members in addition to Bianca Galli. Giovanni Bachelet was moved to send a letter to *La Stampa* in 1991 regarding the possibility of releasing Red Brigades leader, Renato Curcio from prison early. Bachelet condemns the motion to pardon Curcio, stating that it would give this prisoner, as a former member of the Red Brigades, privileges not afforded to other prisoners and make a mockery of the deaths of so many innocent people, including, of course, Bachelet's father.³⁰⁶ In addition to Bachelet's letter, Silvia Giralucci wrote directly to the president to express her disapproval, while Giuseppe Mazzola's family threatened to renounce their Italian citizenship in protest.³⁰⁷ The question of Curcio's early release was hotly debated in the press and in government at the time and Curcio subsequently remained in prison for a further seven years.

The role of *grazia* within the context of justice is discussed by Mario Calabresi in his interview in *Sedie vuote*:

Noi chiediamo soltanto una cosa: che la grazia non venga presentata come un altro grado di giudizio, quasi fosse un'assoluzione. La grazia può esserci nel rispetto della verità giudiziaria acquisita: lo Stato decide per un gesto di clemenza.

³⁰⁵ Giovanni Bachelet & Giovanni Kessler, 'Leggi d'emergenza e riconciliazione cristiana: distinguere per non separare', *Il Margine*, January 1986, 3-10 (pp. 4-5).

³⁰⁶ Giovanni Bachelet, 'Il figlio di Bachelet, "È un'ingiustizia"', *La Stampa*, 9 August 1991, p.1.

³⁰⁷ Antonello Francica, "'Non siamo più italiani finché resta Cossiga": Moglie e figli di una vittima delle Br ora rinunciano alla cittadinanza', *La Stampa*, 18 September 1991, p. 8.

A me sembra una posizione estremamente lineare ma da troppi è stata considerata strana e originale.³⁰⁸

Calabresi's belief that victims' families ought not to be involved in the judicial process has already been cited above. This statement reiterates this point and underlines the fundamentality of justice, delivered correctly and by the proper authorities, in this difficult and complicated relationship between victims, perpetrators and the state.

We have established that for most victims to consider forgiveness, the perpetrator must demonstrate that he or she has changed in some way and often, it seems, this change might take place by means of their serving a prison sentence. The basic need identified by Jacoby for an offender to be seen to have been punished for his wrongdoing extends to wider society too and the way that the public think about these former terrorists will be influenced by an understanding that they have undergone a punishment fitting to their crime.

4.8.1 Massimo Coco: *posso sapere chi fu a ucciderlo?*

Of the six second generation authors examined in this thesis, only Massimo Coco does not know who killed his father and thus, the question of justice takes on a fundamental importance to his story. He expresses anger at the thought of forgiving his father's killers without knowing the truth about his murder:

Oggi mi dicono che dovrei perdonare i suoi assassini. Va bene, d'accordo, dobbiamo essere clementi. Ma prima, per favore, posso sapere chi fu a ucciderlo? Posso conoscere almeno nomi e cognomi dei macellai che hanno sconvolto la mia vita e quella dei miei familiari?³⁰⁹

It is not clear who has told Coco that he ought to forgive, but it is evident that he finds the very idea insulting. He cannot separate the action and the agent when he does not know who that is. He cannot find solace in the fact that his father's assassins have been punished by the Italian justice system because they patently have not.

In his own postmemoir, Coco states very clearly and with pride that he is not going to forgive his father's killers:

³⁰⁸ Conci, Grigolli & Mosna (eds), *Sedie vuote*, p. 28.

³⁰⁹ Fasanella & Grippo, *I Silenzi degli Innocenti*, p. 58.

Quanto a me, anch'io appartengo a un 'partito', e rivendico con orgoglio questa militanza: è quello del non-perdono, ma voglio che rimanga un mio ambito personale e privatissimo, non lo sbandiero al mondo.³¹⁰

Once again, Coco sets himself apart from the other children of victims and expresses disdain at the notion of sharing such emotions in a public forum. However, his statement mirrors that of Calabresi and of Tobagi cited above: all three are clear in their conviction that the debate surrounding forgiveness and victims has become too public, too informed by the media and in this way, risks sensationalising and trivialising this private and personal decision if these questions are asked in a very public manner.

While other victims have used forgiveness as a way to highlight the contrast between themselves and the men who killed their loved ones, Coco's rage will not be suppressed. As we have seen in the previous chapter, he expresses irritation that none of the other children of victims have written about feeling anger at their fathers' murders. His opinion of the victim's role and the place of forgiveness in the judicial process echo those of Calabresi and Moro discussed above, although he expresses himself in much stronger language, presumably because he, more than they, feels that he has been let down by the justice system. The difficulties associated with this perceived lack of truth and justice will recur in the next chapter concerning questions of commemoration and memory.

The question of justice helps to adjust the victim's sense of self-respect which we have seen to be crucial in cases of forgiving. The importance of an offender receiving adequate punishment for his crime is also linked, for victims, to a feeling that they are not alone with their grief and that the authorities are interested in helping them by ensuring the men who robbed them of their loved ones are made to pay for their crime. In this way, their public displays of grief can also be seen to contribute to a public memory of their dead husbands and fathers; they invite others to share their experience and, as mentioned above, the perceived failings of the Italian justice system are a unifying element in Italian society. If a victim feels that someone - whether that is the perpetrator or the state - is holding back information that might help them to understand the hurt that they have been subjected to, then they will find it hard to rid

³¹⁰ Coco, *Ricordare stanca*, p. 9.

themselves of their 'victim' status because they are still in a weaker position than the perpetrators. This becomes especially important in the context of justice, when truth, or perceptions of truth, and a victim's clemency take on a different kind of importance within the debate. Following on from this, we will more thoroughly explore the role that decisions made in courtrooms have on a victim's willingness to forgive.

4.8.2 Forgiveness and agency

Tied to the difficult processes of justice, retribution and forgiveness is the question of agency. Martha Minow states that, 'To expect survivors to forgive is to heap yet another burden on them'³¹¹; Trudy Govier's explanation of bilateral forgiveness begins with the perpetrator repenting of his action, feeling remorse and seeking forgiveness from the victim. In other words, it is vital, on this path to forgiveness, for a victim to have some control. One of the principal difficulties with law 304 is that it can be seen to rob the victim of this feeling of control because, in shortening the perpetrator's prison sentence, the likelihood that the victim might feel the perpetrator would undergo any profound change or repentance is reduced.

By shortening a perpetrator's jail sentence, the path to forgiveness that includes justice and retribution as important steps is interrupted because forgiveness can be interpreted as having been delivered by the state, rather than by the family who have been wronged. The fact that this interruption might have been enacted by the Italian authorities so as to free themselves of the 'inconvenience' of terrorism, as Bianca Galli sees it, is doubly problematic for the victims. Agnese Moro, writing about the importance of understanding terrorism in order to be able to process this traumatic history, claims that the first step ought to be to uncover the truth about these events. While she goes on to state that ex-terrorists should speak honestly about the past, the first body that she suggests turning to for help is the Italian state: 'Il primo versante riguarda l'impegno delle istituzioni per la ricerca e l'accertamento della verità, il che vuol dire rendere disponibili tutti i documenti pertinenti e necessari'.³¹²

³¹¹ Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness*, p. 17.

³¹² Moro, *Un uomo così*, pp. 148-149.

The Moro family's problematic relationship with the Italian state has already been discussed, but this citation does not refer only to that family; here Moro makes clear the continued significance and gravity of the state's inaction towards and perceived disinterest in the *anni di piombo* victims' legacy.

The victims' families' sense of injustice has influenced their decisions to write their stories in an attempt to draw attention to their situation and to have justice served away from the courts by presenting a new and, to their minds, more balanced public image of their loved ones. In this way, the authors ask their readers to engage with their fathers' stories almost as jurors: we are presented with their version of events and entreated to side with the victim, in a bid to provide a sense of justice that history has denied them. This act of asking their readers to judge their narratives is highly reminiscent of Primo Levi's famous assertion in the appendix to *Se questo è un uomo* that he is but a witness; his readers are the judges: 'nello scrivere questo libro, ho assunto deliberatamente il linguaggio pacato e sobrio del testimone... I giudici siete voi'.³¹³ The authors have attempted to take control of their fathers' stories through their writing and present these new versions as a way to then take some control of the collective memory by influencing their readers.

Writing about these injustices as a way to bring them to the public's attention is not confined to the families of victims and it did not begin with the families of victims from this period. Sergio Lenci writes that he felt disappointed by the Italian authorities' lack of interest in finding and convicting the people guilty of shooting him. He puts himself on an equal footing with the families of other victims because - in a stance that once again mirrors that of Primo Levi - he states that he is interested in obtaining justice not only for himself, but also for other victims who could not speak for themselves:

Mi sono sempre sentito come rappresentante 'vivo' di tutti coloro che sono stati uccisi in attentati simili al mio e la cui morte, a parte i funerali solenni e le belle parole, è stata subito accettata senza tanto indagare, al di là della scoperta degli autori materiali, della pistola, del giubbotto antiproiettili.

Non è questione di perdono o di vendetta, come alcuni vogliono attribuirmi. Qui si tratta di fare luce sulla vicenda come è doveroso e

³¹³ Primo Levi, *Se questo è un uomo* (Torino: Einaudi, 1976), p. 223.

possibile di non accettare l'intrigo, la menzogna, l'omertà anche se rivoluzionaria.³¹⁴

In his memoir, Lenci writes about the trial of his aggressors and he appears very disillusioned by the process. Echoing the sentiments of Bianca Galli, he suggests that the court system, with its lenient treatment of *pentiti*, might not have the victims and their family members' best interests at heart. Indeed, he accuses the state of favouring former terrorists over their victims:

Ho però capito che era ed è in atto una battaglia per difendere la libertà di chi la vuole negare a tutti gli altri. Tuttavia, chi chiede con la violenza la libertà di negare la stessa libertà agli altri viene difeso con la speranza-certezza (o meglio convinzione) che la libertà concessa a tutti abbia il potere di sconfiggere di per se stessa le ipotesi liberticide.

È illecito pensare che sotto la difesa della libertà di opinione si nascondano, a volte, scopi non chiari?³¹⁵

The widely held belief, voiced here by Lenci, that there are still truths to be discovered concerning the *anni di piombo* and its protagonists interrupts the forgiveness process. This is clearly evident in the testimony of Massimo Coco above who cannot forgive nameless perpetrators and it is also apparent in the words of Agnese Moro who assumed that there are documents regarding the past that have been hidden by those in power when she wrote that the state must make available any necessary papers so that hidden truths might finally be known.

Another family member who has expressed disappointment in the treatment his family have received from the Italian authorities is Mario Calabresi. In *Spingendo la notte più in là*, he writes about the pardon - *grazia* - that Ovidio Bompressi received from President Giorgio Napolitano. Nobody warned the family and the news that one of his father's murderers was being released early came as a shock to them, 'Bastava così poco per trasformare un gesto che poteva essere di pacificazione in uno schiaffo'.³¹⁶ Calabresi's beliefs regarding a victim's family's involvement in the judicial process have already been detailed and once again here he is clear that he does not think his family should be

³¹⁴ Lenci, *Colpo alla nuca*, pp. 65-66.

³¹⁵ Lenci, *Colpo alla nuca*, p. 76.

³¹⁶ Calabresi, *Spingendo la notte più in là*, p. 71.

consulted before the State passes legislation. However, he points out that to not even consider mentioning this to them underlines the authorities' seeming indifference to the victims.³¹⁷

Justice is therefore a crucial element of victims' decisions to forgive although the Italian state's role in the judicial process is often problematic and can even be construed as deliberately obtuse, which hinders a victim's ability and willingness to forgive. The authorities are seen not to have protected victims from a known terrorist threat and then not to have supported their families or made a concerted effort to investigate the crimes or bring those responsible to justice. Indeed, a strong argument can be made that the Italian state sanctioned and was involved in some of the criminal acts of violence that took place during the *anni di piombo*. This distrustful relationship between state and victims has impeded many families from feeling as if they can forgive, but it has also affected the way that they deal with their memory of that period.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter began with an outline of ways that forgiveness can be interpreted and it has been demonstrated that a victim's decision to forgive can be based on myriad different factors, all of which are highly personal. Nonetheless, there have been threads that have flowed through all of the narratives presented here. Firstly, the relationship between a victim and an offender has proven to be crucial. While every victim's story is unique, for many of the victims' family members, an ability to look beyond the evil act that was committed and see the perpetrator as a human being has helped to bring about forgiveness. This separation of act and actor has sometimes occurred following a meeting between victim and perpetrator or it has been inspired by a Christian belief that all men are equal and should not be judged by other men.

There are clear and important differences between the widows' approaches to forgiveness and those of their children. Fundamental to our understanding of this topic, and the reason that a chapter has been dedicated to it, is that forgiveness provides a key to understanding generational differences in remembering and memory. These will be further explored in the next chapter in

³¹⁷ Calabresi, *Spingendo la notte più in là*, pp. 71-72.

the context of commemorative practices, but to note and examine the way that attitudes to the ex-terrorists can be seen to change over time, even within these families, is a useful tool for comprehending the fluidity of collective memory.

Another narrative that has been recurrent throughout this examination of forgiveness is the role that power has played in forgiving. As well as robbing these families of fathers and husbands, the people responsible for their murders robbed the families of their power. We have seen this power balance referred to in terms of a victim's self-respect and it is crucial, for a victim's dignity, that their decision to forgive goes some way to redress this imbalance. For some victims it has been enough to know that a perpetrator has been punished for his crime; for others, some gesture of repentance was required; others feel that, in order to regain their self-respect, a perpetrator must reveal information about their past crime that will help the victim to understand the injustice they have been subjected to.

An offender's repentance has allowed many victims to begin to make these steps towards forgiveness because it allows them to see the humanity in the offender, rather than just the wicked act that he committed. For an offender to repent of his actions and ask a victim for forgiveness also goes some way to restoring the power balance between the two. Of course, the victim has the choice, following an offender's repentance, to forgive or not, giving them a level of control over the situation that they did not previously have. Questions of power and status will be addressed in the next chapter too, where the memory of the *anni di piombo* will be examined by looking at the ways that the victims from that period are commemorated.

5 Commemoration and memory

Commemorative practices are an important part of the public image of the victims of the *anni di piombo* because they unite the victims' narratives. In principle, the comforts of ritual and tradition connect all the victims, regardless of who they were in life and how, where or when they were killed and so, in a study of such a relatively disparate group, commemoration might be seen as one of the unifying elements. The social aspects of collective memory outlined in the introduction are particularly interesting for our study of the commemorative practices associated with the families of victims of the *anni di piombo* because they are examples of people coming together to share their personal memories and negotiating them publicly. Public displays of shared grief and memory such as these can be seen to contribute to the composite, public memory of the people killed during the *anni di piombo*. Commemorative ceremonies help to form, shape and maintain the collective memory of this period and its victims because they are held in public and are aimed at remembering the victims in a specific way, just as the postmemoirs written by the victims' children aim to do.

This chapter will explore the role of commemoration in the creation and maintenance of a collective memory of the victims of the *anni di piombo*, and how the six works discussed in this thesis engage with, respond to and are framed by public - official and non-official - commemorative practices in Italy in recent years. Commemorative practices can be seen to represent the collective memory in action: by looking at who is commemorated, who attends the events, who funds them and how the ceremonies have evolved we can understand better the place that the memory of these victims holds within modern Italian society. The discussion will begin with an analysis of established theories on ritual, commemoration and mourning. Following this broad examination of the subject, the focus will turn to the Italian case more specifically and we will consider commemorative practices as public spaces for victims' relatives to express their grief. Italy has an interesting history of public commemoration and, particularly since the end of the Second World War a certain national image has been propagated in a way that the creation of a collective memory of this more recent period of history can be seen to resemble. This awareness of existing

national commemorative practices will provide an important framework for analysis of those which commemorate the memory of the victims of the *anni di piombo* today. Analysis of commemorative practices for the victims of the *anni di piombo* helps to shed light on the significance and specific contribution of the works studied in this thesis.

5.1 Commemorative practices: ceremonies

With reference to a society's memory, James E. Young underlines the role that commemoration and ritual can play in the preservation and creation of a group memory, 'If societies remember, it is only insofar as their institutions and rituals organise, shape, even inspire their constituents' memories.'³¹⁸ These ceremonies also serve as a way to reaffirm the group's bond; they are a way for the victims' family members to publicly express their grief and to invite others to empathise with them as they remember their loved ones. Paul Connerton suggests that commemorative rites can 'give value and meaning to the life of those who perform them'.³¹⁹ Émile Durkheim notably studied the role that ritual played in keeping social groups together and he explains this here, with reference to a rite such as we might see organised to remember the victims of the *anni di piombo*:

The traditions whose memory it perpetuates express the way in which society represents man and the world; it is a moral system and a cosmology as well as a history. So the rite serves and can serve only to sustain the vitality of these beliefs, to keep them from being effaced from memory and, in sum, to revivify the most essential elements of the collective consciousness. Through it, the group periodically renews the sentiment which it has of itself and of its unity; at the same time, individuals are strengthened in their social natures.³²⁰

Similarly, as in Durkheim's analysis, the commemorative ceremonies that take place for victims killed during the *anni di piombo* serve to reinforce the bond

³¹⁸ James E. Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), p. xi.

³¹⁹ Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 48.

³²⁰ Émile Durkheim, trans. by Joseph Ward Swain, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1976), p. 375.

between the mourners and they are also a way to keep the victims' memory vivid in the minds not only of their family members, but also those of a wider audience.

However, rituals are clearly also rigid affairs. Their structure is formalised and arguably not as expressive as the writing, for example, of a memoir or postmemoir. Nonetheless, the performative aspect of ceremonies is very important, not least to those who participate, as Paul Connerton has highlighted:

Rites are not merely expressive... But rites are expressive acts only by virtue of their conspicuous regularity. They are formalised acts, and tend to be stylised, stereotyped and repetitive... Rites are not merely formal. We commonly express our sense of their formalism by speaking of such acts as 'merely' ritual or as 'empty' forms, and we frequently contrast them with acts and utterances which we speak of as 'sincere' or 'authentic'. But this is misleading. For rites are felt by those who observe them to be obligatory, even if not unconditionally so, and the interference with acts that are endowed with ritual value is always felt to be an intolerable injury inflicted by one person or group upon another.³²¹

This last sentence certainly rings true for the children of *anni di piombo* victims studied in this thesis and we have already mentioned scenarios that illustrate this: the importance that Silvia Giralucci places in the inauguration of an apolitical commemoration of her father and Massimo Coco's affront at not being on the list of invited guests at the 2011 commemorative ceremony in Rome are good examples of what Connerton has described as the value that can be endowed in rituals.

Since commemorations encourage people to think about the past event which is being commemorated, perhaps for the first time, Richard Ned Lebow has argued that they can also help people to draw a line under that event:

Current events broadly affect the way in which people remember earlier events. Commemorations of past events lead people to make upward revisions in memories about the event or the individuals involved. They

³²¹ Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, p. 44.

appear to help people cognitively assimilate such events, which precludes the need to ruminate further about them.³²²

In this way, we can see that commemorative ceremonies are an essential channel that link the past with the present, but also place the past firmly in the past, and which help to support a particular collective memory.

Many commemorative ceremonies are used to remember the victims of the *anni di piombo*. There is the national commemorative day in their memory, the *Giorno della memoria*, which was first celebrated on 9 May 2008 and which purports to encourage remembering of all the victims of terrorism in Italy. In addition to this all-encompassing commemoration, there are ceremonies for individual victims that usually take place on the anniversaries of their deaths. These are typically organised by family members, although it is not uncommon for figures such as politicians, journalists and former colleagues of the victim to also be present. In this context, official commemorative ceremonies for the victims from the *anni di piombo* can be seen as a way for the public to understand the violence of those years - to 'cognitively assimilate' it, as Lebow would have it - and, to some extent, to accept that version of history, barring the need for further rumination on the subject.

5.1.1 Commemorative ceremonies as theatres of mourning

The function of the public ceremonies that are organised for each victim does, however, go beyond the strengthening of kinship bonds and the revival and maintenance of their memory. We must remember that these events commemorate a death; for the family members and friends of the deceased victims, the ceremonies might be regarded as part of the mourning process. Jay Winter, in his work on the memory of the First World War, writes of the importance of generating a feeling of community among mourners, such as we have seen articulated above with regard to commemorative ceremonies. Winter explains that commemoration was a logical next step for groups of mourners after the war:

³²² Richard Ned Lebow, 'The Memory of Politics in Postwar Europe' (pp. 1-39) in Richard Ned Lebow, Wulf Kansteiner & Claudio Fogu (eds.), *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2006), p. 9.

From consolation and support, it was a short step to commemoration. The bonds shared by those in mourning, by widows, ex-servicemen, the disabled, the young and the old alike, were expressed openly in ceremonies of collective memory.³²³

Durkheim also recognised the importance of collectively expressing grief because it strengthened a community's bonds, benefiting not only the bereaved, but the larger group too:

Of course they [a mourning group] have only sad emotions in common, but communicating in sorrow is still communicating, and every communion of mind, in whatever form it may be made, raises the social vitality... In fact, whenever the social sentiment is painfully wounded, it reacts with greater force than ordinarily: one never holds so closely to his family as when it has just suffered... The group feels its strength gradually returning to it; it begins to hope and live again. Presently one stops mourning, and he does so owing to the mourning itself.³²⁴

Therefore, according to Durkheim, the act of mourning publicly and in a group is an essential part of the grieving process. Indeed, the authors of the postmemoirs that form the basis of our study, by writing their sorrow can be seen to share their grief in a way comparable to that described here by Durkheim.

In addition to the positive effects that it can bring to mourners, it has been argued that to use a public commemorative ceremony as a means of expressing grief can also serve to depoliticise mourning:

The relation between grief and commemoration assumed in the social-agency approach is one in which the private pain of past experience is alleviated through being symbolized in shared forms. This view of commemoration as a kind of therapeutic reflex presumes an organic relationship between the individual, the agencies of civil society and the nation-state. It takes the politics out of mourning. In so doing, it projects a contemporary emphasis on the recuperative function of narrative back

³²³ Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European cultural history* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 30.

³²⁴ Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, pp. 401-402.

on to both the commemorative activities and the psychic realities of people in the past.³²⁵

These authors make several assumptions in this statement that, in the context that we are examining, prove problematic. They propose that taking the politics out of mourning should be seen as a positive step in the mourning process. However, this approach seems rather normative: for the families of victims who were killed during the *anni di piombo*, control over their loved one's memory is paramount. The concept of depoliticizing memory through a public commemorative ceremony implies that this control would be removed and might possibly also impede their search for the truth:

Public ceremony may often be felt to serve the glory of the commemorators or a government more than the remembered persons, and the public noise may not make personal remembrance easier.³²⁶

The presumption at the heart of the statement made by the authors cited above - that of 'an organic relationship between the individual, the agencies of civil society and the nation-state' - might not be true of every group of mourners and it certainly cannot be said of the victims of our study. The converse of Ashplant, Dawson and Roper's statement might therefore be more appropriate to our study: when there is not an organic relationship between the individual and the nation-state - as is the case with the Moro family and other families featured in this study - a public ceremony can be quite unwelcome and certainly not deemed to be therapeutic. Aldo Moro's funeral is a good example of the way that public commemoration can be problematic; Moro wished to have a private burial and this took place in Torrita Tiberina. However, a state funeral was nonetheless organised for him and that ceremony took place in Rome, where an empty coffin

³²⁵ T.G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper, 'The politics of war memory and commemoration: Contexts, structures and dynamics' (pp. 3-85) in T.G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson & Michael Roper (eds.), *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 43.

³²⁶ Nico H. Frijda, 'Commemorating' (pp. 103-127) in James W. Pennebaker, Dario Paez & Bernard Rimé (eds.), *Collective Memory of Political Events: Social Psychological Perspectives* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1997), p. 117.

was used.³²⁷ The state ‘funeral’ was televised, heightening the sense that this bizarre spectacle served nobody but the politicians who wished to be seen to be in attendance. The fact that this ceremony was televised can also be seen as a way to draw a close on the public spectacle of Moro’s kidnapping and death. As highlighted previously, the Polaroid photographs taken of Moro by the Red Brigades were published in newspapers at the time and helped to fuel the media’s obsession with and public speculation surrounding Moro’s fate.

Above, Jay Winter points out the consolatory nature of grieving publicly; Durkheim states that mourning as a group has a positive effect on the mourners and Ashplant, Dawson and Roper describe the ‘recuperative function’ of commemorative ceremonies. All of these authors, then, see a therapeutic goal in the performance of public ceremonies in memory of a deceased loved one. While elements of what each of the above authors has written can certainly be applied to the families of victims of the *anni di piombo*, it is by no means certain that public commemorative ceremonies will perform a therapeutic function for everyone. As demonstrated above, in order for this form of commemoration to have a healing effect, it is essential that the family are in agreement with it.

5.1.2 Commemorative ceremonies as a link between past and present

Commemorative practices are mediated by the fact that, although they are ostensibly a way of remembering the past, they are very firmly rooted in the present and this means they are inexorably shaped by current events. As discussed in Chapter Three, the authors around whose work this thesis is framed can be seen as a crucial link between past and present:

Quella della memoria è una strana condizione: il passato lascia tracce, e a volte sono tracce indelebili: ma poi è il presente che ricorda - non potrebbe essere altrimenti - e il passato si veste in buona misura come al presente aggrada. Il testimone media tra lo ieri e l’oggi: porta il passato

³²⁷ Foot, *Italy’s Divided Memory*, p. 201. Miguel Gotor has also analysed the impact of that funeral: http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/9-maggio-1978-lo-schiaffo-a-paolo-vi-storia-e-fallimento-della-mediazione-vaticana-per-la-liberazione-di-aldo-moro_%28Cristiani-d'Italia%29/

entro il presente, ma, altrettanto, il presente dentro a ciò che chiamiamo il passato.³²⁸

Jedlowski's final sentence here can be read as a description of the writings of the children of victims: the perspective that they bring to the past is very much coloured by their present and the specific way that they would like their fathers to be remembered.

Gabriele Schwab - in the context of Holocaust commemoration - asserts that, precisely because commemorative ceremonies take place in the present and provide the framework for future memory, the input of the next generation is crucial. While her style is rather prescriptive, the general points that she makes here are pertinent to our study:

A politics of mourning that is mindful of the question of justice and responsibility must be grounded in a politics of memory, of inheritance, and of generations. It must be a politics that orients itself toward a future to come, while taking responsibility for past histories of violence and the ghosts left behind.³²⁹

Schwab's argument foregrounds a 'generation after' who look optimistically to the future, but who also seek to address past injustices, as we have seen that the authors at the centre of this study attempt to do in their writing.

There are fundamental differences, however, between remembering a loved one by writing about him or her and organising or attending a public event in his honour. While they certainly can both be read as ways to anchor the past in the present and to put forward a specific image of a loved one to be remembered, the ceremony is a more dynamic, performative and plastic way of remembering. The ceremonies we refer to in this chapter all tend to follow a similar formula, but there are variations year on year: for example, different principal speakers - usually children of victims, including Benedetta Tobagi and Silvia Giralucci - are invited each year to lead the ceremony that marks the

³²⁸ Paolo Jedlowski, 'Il testimone e l'eroe: La socialità della memoria' (pp. 15-29) in Paolo Jedlowski & Marita Rampazi (eds.) *Il senso del passato: Per una sociologia della memoria* (Milano: FrancoAngeli, 1991), p. 27.

³²⁹ Gabriele Schwab, *Haunting legacies: violent histories and transgenerational trauma* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), p. 149.

Giorno della memoria and honours are awarded to groups of school children and adults who have played a part in commemorating victims of terrorism.³³⁰

Commemorative ceremonies and postmemoirs are victim-centred modes of remembrance and they both work to promote a memory of the victim in the present. In different, but connected ways, the books and the ceremonies place what were once solely private memories and private grief in a public arena and they aim to pass these memories on to future generations, with a view to encouraging those generations to eschew violence and terrorism and to embrace democratic values. While writing about their fathers has been seen to have cathartic benefits to the authors, so attending a commemorative ceremony that has been organised in his honour by someone who is removed from the immediate family might be seen to have comparable beneficial results because it shows that the memory of that victim is valued by a wider range of people. Additionally, attending a formalised ritual like this has been shown to be important for the strengthening of a mourning community. In the following section, we will look at this issue more closely by examining the ceremonies that take place in memory of victims of the *anni di piombo*.

5.1.3 Giorno della memoria

Formally named *Il Giorno della memoria dedicato alle vittime del terrorismo e delle stragi di ogni matrice*, the remembrance day for victims of terrorism was officially dedicated in May 2007 with the inaugural ceremony taking place the following year on 9 May. The creation of the commemorative day was initiated in part by Sabina Rossa, who, as well as being the daughter of one of the men killed by the Red Brigades, is a senator with the Social-Democratic party, *L'Ulivo* and so she could use her authority as a senator and her personal connection as the child of a victim to promote the victims' memory. The commemorative day should thus be seen as another example of the way that the collective memory of those killed during the *anni di piombo* has been influenced and shaped by the

³³⁰ Details of each year's *Giorno della memoria* can be found on the Quirinale website, along with transcripts and videos of Napolitano's speeches and information about who was honoured each year: http://www.quirinale.it/qrnw/statico/eventi/memoria_terrorismo/2014/giorno_memoria.htm

postmemory generation. The law that was passed to designate 9 May as *Giorno della memoria*, stipulates the day's aims:

1. La Repubblica riconosce il 9 maggio, anniversario dell'uccisione di Aldo Moro, quale "Giorno della memoria", al fine di ricordare tutte le vittime del terrorismo, interno e internazionale, e delle stragi di tale matrice.
2. In occasione del "Giorno della memoria" di cui al comma 1, possono essere organizzate, senza nuovi o maggiori oneri a carico della finanza pubblica, manifestazioni pubbliche, cerimonie, incontri, momenti comuni di ricordo dei fatti e di riflessione, anche nelle scuole di ogni ordine e grado, al fine di conservare, rinnovare e costruire una memoria storica condivisa in difesa delle istituzioni democratiche.³³¹

In the years that have followed, the *Giorno della memoria* has been marked by an official ceremony in one of the parliament buildings in Rome attended by family members of the victims as well as politicians and it has been led by Giorgio Napolitano, who was President of the Republic between 2006 and 2015.

From the wording of the law detailed above, it is clear that this commemorative day is not intended only to represent the people killed in the 1970s in Italy. However, the fact that it is celebrated on the anniversary of Aldo Moro's death inevitably draws those assumptions, compounded by the fact that, according to the Quirinale website, the ceremony seems to be attended almost exclusively by guests with links to victims from that decade.³³² The inauguration of an official commemorative day to be held on that date suggests that, in answer to years of accusations of neglect from the victims' family members, the government wish to be seen to be actively creating and sustaining a public memory of the victims of that period. To mark the passing of the law that brought the commemorative day into existence, Napolitano wrote an open letter to family members of victims of terrorism in which he emphasised that this day was something that he knew they desired:

³³¹ <http://www.parlamento.it/parlam/leggi/07056l.htm>

³³² The only example of the presence of Italian victims not associated with the *anni di piombo* among those remembered is the 2009 ceremony, when Monsignor Giorgio Nencini, a military chaplain, presented a book entitled *Ai caduti delle missioni all'estero* that was dedicated to all Italians, military and civilian, who, since 1950, had lost their lives while working for their country to promote peace and to combat terrorism.

<http://www.quirinale.it/elementi/Continua.aspx?tipo=Comunicato&Key=8539>

Ho seguito e incoraggiato, negli ultimi mesi, il percorso delle proposte di legge volte a istituire un 'Giorno della memoria' dedicato alle vittime del terrorismo e delle stragi di tale matrice... Nel darvene annuncio, desidero sottolineare il significato e l'importanza che attribuisco alla decisione del Parlamento: essa colma un vuoto di memoria storica e di attenzione umana e civile, che molti di voi avevano dolorosamente avvertito.³³³

Although ultimately he recognises the members of parliament as instigators of this law, Napolitano places himself very much at the centre of the process by writing this letter using the first-person form. However, as Giovanni De Luna has pointed out, the inauguration of this ceremony does not address certain serious questions levelled at the Italian government about state involvement and collusion in the events of the *anni di piombo*. Regarding the 2009 ceremony, when the Piazza Fontana bombing was discussed and Pinelli was included in the list of victims for the first time, De Luna notes that Napolitano's voice wavered during his speech when he mentioned Pinelli's name: 'non solo per il dolore ancora bruciante di quel lutto ma anche e soprattutto per la devastante immagine dello Stato e delle istituzioni che da quel nome veniva evocata'.³³⁴ Clearly, this is simply De Luna's interpretation of Napolitano's frame of mind when he gave that speech. Although the historian's comments regarding the state's questionable treatment of certain victims are pertinent, his criticism of Napolitano might be judged to be rather unfair. After all, Napolitano, along with Sabina Rossa, was one of the instigators of the law that brought the commemorative day for victims of terrorism into being. His support for the victims' families seems to have been welcomed by them; the cynicism expressed above by De Luna does not appear to be shared by those to whom Napolitano addressed his letter. Furthermore, as the head of state, Napolitano's role, arguably, is not, as De Luna seems to suggest, to answer for the past actions of the Italian government and so, perhaps, his criticism might be more appropriately levelled at some of the members of parliament instead.

As mentioned above, it is rare for such events to be devoid of power struggles and political disputes as different parties vie to have their voice heard. These wranglings, however, can have a serious impact on the collective memory

³³³ <http://www.quirinale.it/elementi/Continua.aspx?tipo=Comunicato&key=5603>

³³⁴ De Luna, *La Repubblica del dolore*, p. 74.

as a whole. Young has identified the role that national remembrance days can play in a state's attempt to unify memory and create a sense of national identity:

If part of the state's aim, therefore, is to create a sense of shared values and ideals, then it will also be the state's aim to create the sense of common memory, as foundation for a unified polis. Public memorials, national days of commemoration, and shared calendars thus all work to create common loci around which national identity is forged.³³⁵

What might be perceived as the state's attempt to distract from its own shady involvement in these events, framing the remembrance day as a positive step forwards for victims can be read as the latest move in their attempt to portray themselves in a less negative light within collective memory. Since the ceremonies that have been held to mark the *Giorno della memoria* have predominantly focused on the victims who died during the *anni di piombo*, it seems logical to conclude that the collective memory which the Italian government is attempting to mould regards this period of history.

As noted above, the date that was chosen for the ceremony is very significant. John Foot reports that there were debates in parliament about when the day should be celebrated and the two choices seemed to be either 9 May, the date that Moro's body was found, or 12 December, the date of the Piazza Fontana bombing. Foot equates the choice of 9 May with a concentration in Italian politics on the cases of left-wing violence and a shift away from the *stragi*; something that he sees as accurately reflecting public opinion about the *anni di piombo*.³³⁶ Cinzia Venturoli has also written about the way that the choice of date can be seen to reflect the subordinate place of the *stragi* within a collective memory:

[L]e stragi sono meno ricordate, oppure lo sono in modo più incerto e più parziale, se così si può dire. Una figura come quella di Aldo Moro è più facilmente presente nella memoria e forse è stata ritenuta più simbolica rispetto a morti che si confondono fra le persone, che non rappresentavano nient'altro se non il loro essere cittadini comuni.³³⁷

³³⁵ Young, *The Texture of Memory*, p. 6.

³³⁶ Foot, *Italy's Divided Memory*, p. 200.

³³⁷ Cinzia Venturoli, *Stragi fra memoria e storia: Piazza Fontana, Piazza della Loggia, la stazione di Bologna: dal discorso pubblico all'elaborazione didattica* (Viterbo: Sette Città, 2012), p. 51.

Using the anniversary of Moro's death for the commemorative day for all victims of terrorism can be seen to reflect a desire for narratability within memory. Aldo Moro's death, while still senseless and brutal, has a clear narrative arc and identifiable characters, unlike the unfortunate victims of the *stragi*. This clearly reflects the tendency that we have highlighted in Chapter Three whereby a victim's story is more easily accepted into the collective memory when narratable. The fact that the stories of the victims of the *stragi* cannot be so easily told - as Venturoli points out, they can seem interchangeable and as individuals they were not targeted for a particular reason - does not help their public memory.

Nonetheless, choosing a date that is linked to one specific victim to represent '*tutte le vittime del terrorismo, interno e internazionale, e delle stragi di tale matrice*', seems rather counter-productive as it privileges one individual and questions are once again raised regarding the apparently varying grievability of lives.³³⁸ Venturoli suggests that 12 December might have been a more appropriate choice.³³⁹ There are many reasons why this date might, in fact, be more meaningful and inclusive as a way of remembering all victims of terrorism. Above all, the Piazza Fontana bombing and the other *stragi* created a larger number of victims and so, to foreground the *stragi* in this way would be a way to remember more people. Furthermore, as Venturoli points out above, the victims of the *stragi* are ordinary citizens, '*cittadini comuni*'. Certainly, the victims of left-wing violence were also ordinary citizens - and this is something that their children, as we have seen, have gone to some effort to underline - but their status as public figures also elevates them above that. To publicly commemorate these faceless citizens in a large, officially sanctioned ceremony would make an important statement regarding the position that these victims hold within a collective memory and, arguably, would go some way to alleviate Butler's 'hierarchy of grief'. Michael Keren has pointed out that 'personification' in fact makes commemoration more effective, rendering it 'comprehensive and attractive to many'.³⁴⁰ The decision to use this date confirms Aldo Moro's status

³³⁸ Butler, *Frames of War*, p. xxii.

³³⁹ Venturoli, *Stragi fra memoria e storia*, p. 51.

³⁴⁰ Michael Keren, 'Commemorating Jewish Martyrdom', in Michael Keren and Holger H. Herwig (eds.), *Memory and Popular Culture: essays on modes of remembrance and commemoration* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2009), pp. 9-22 (p. 9).

as the iconic *anni di piombo* victim and it seems that, by tying his well-known name to the more general commemorative day, the politicians and members of the victims' associations can hope to raise awareness of other victims of terrorism; those described by Foot as being 'more mundane'.³⁴¹

In light of the point made above regarding the fact that this commemorative day could be used by politicians and the state to draw attention away from their part in this history and remembering the problematic relationship between Moro's family and members of the Christian Democrat party, we might also reflect on the potential benefits to politicians of being seen to publicly and officially commemorate their former colleague in this way. We have discussed the unease that Eleonora Moro has said that she feels when confronted with her husband's former political allies and in the next section we will see that her children have expressed outright hostility towards them. If there really have been attempts made to avoid discussing state involvement regarding Pino Pinelli and Piazza Fontana as De Luna suggests, surely Napolitano, but also the other politicians who attend and speak at the commemorative ceremony also avoid any mention of the often ambiguous part which that institution has played more generally in this period of political history. By couching Moro's memory in that more general memory of all the victims of the *anni di piombo*, one might conclude that, with this commemorative day, the Italian state also partially exonerates itself of facing up to its responsibilities regarding this difficult aspect of its history.

As is evident from the wording of the law designating 9 May as *Giorno della memoria* cited above, no official mandate for the commemoration of these victims was specified in the creation of the commemorative day; aside from the ceremony in Rome, any other commemorative events or projects should be organised - and funded - on an individual basis by local councils and schools. There are several ways to interpret this fact. Firstly, one might view this lack of official mandate as a way for the government to avoid any practical or monetary responsibilities connected to this day. They might still associate themselves with bringing the day into being and politicians can attend the ceremony in Rome, but their part in remembering the victims, and in encouraging others to remember, can end there. On the other hand, perhaps it is asking too much of

³⁴¹ Foot, *Italy's Divided Memory*, p. 200.

the *Giorno della memoria* and its organisers to expect instructions on how to commemorate the victims. The law states that, in order to mark the day, ‘possono essere organizzate... manifestazioni pubbliche, cerimonie, incontri, momenti comuni di ricordo dei fatti e di riflessione’. These suggestions are open to interpretation and, in this way, each community that wishes to can remember the victims of the *anni di piombo* in a way that is most pertinent to them.

Ceremonies like the one in Rome take place across Italy on 9 May and many local authorities use the opportunity to commemorate ‘local’ victims; to unveil a new statue or street named after a victim or to launch scholastic initiatives aimed at educating young people about the *anni di piombo*.³⁴² The flexibility of the commemorative practices associated with the *Giorno della memoria* could, therefore, make it an even more effective means to remember the victims since each ceremony that is organised can have a focus that is meaningful to those in attendance. However, De Luna has observed that, certainly in the years immediately following the law’s creation, many local authorities did not choose to mark the date:

Dopo la sua approvazione, infatti, attraverso le prefetture, i comuni furono invitati a far conoscere al governo le eventuali iniziative assunte in merito; in provincia di Torino, su 315 comuni, solo quello del capoluogo rispose all’invito!³⁴³

While it may have taken a few years for the invitation to remember these victims throughout the country to be taken up, it is clear that more ceremonies do take place nationally now.

A very important aspect of the commemorative events that occur is the involvement of young people. The law mentions schools specifically and this is one area where the government is attempting to be more explicitly supportive. In 2013, for example, a large portion of the ceremony in Rome that marked the *Giorno della memoria* was dedicated to awarding prizes to school groups who had entered a competition entitled, ‘Le buone pratiche: storia e memorie a scuola. Lavorare in classe sui temi legati a terrorismi, criminalità organizzata, violenza politica’. The competition was organised partly by the government Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and by the Ministry for Education,

³⁴² <http://www.memoria.san.beniculturali.it/web/memoria/percorsi/progetti>

³⁴³ De Luna, *La Repubblica del dolore*, p. 71.

University and Research (il Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali and il Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca). The groups which received awards came from all over Italy and had produced projects that centred on various different events from Italy's history, including the *anni di piombo*.

While this competition is an example of the government actively encouraging young people to think about their country's recent history, this is one of few examples of such an initiative. It seems that projects like this and didactic materials are provided and supported, for the most part, by private enterprise. One example of this is the web portal, *La rete degli archivi per non dimenticare*.³⁴⁴ This website was launched during the 2011 commemorative day for victims of terrorism and it is run by the State Archive of Rome and the Flamigni archive, a private archive owned by Sergio Flamigni, a former Communist Party senator. The director of the Flamigni archive, Ilaria Moroni, was responsible for setting up and maintaining the website and in 2013 she was awarded a medal of honour by president Napolitano for her work. The website contains information about the victims of the *anni di piombo* and, more generally, political violence in Italy since the Second World War, including victims of the Mafia and organised crime.

This web portal is a very modern and effective way to commemorate the victims of the *anni di piombo* and other politically-motivated crimes. The fact that its founders have been able to draw on a wide variety of resources from the archives means that it provides ample information for those who are interested in these events. We will focus here on the section of the site entitled '*didattica*' in order to gauge what it might be seen to bring to the *Giorno della memoria* and its relations with young people in Italy. The aforementioned competition, for which school groups were awarded prizes during the 2013 *Giorno della memoria*, was organised and advertised by the people who manage this web portal. The 'didactic' section of the website is, therefore, a way to encourage school teachers to take part in such projects with their students and it also contains information about training sessions that they provide for teachers. These initiatives meet the criteria set out in the second part of the law creating the commemorative day.

³⁴⁴ <http://www.memoria.san.beniculturali.it/web/memoria/portale/portale>

The involvement of the State Archives in this web portal means that there is some input from the Italian government into this scheme and the site's 'About' page stresses president Napolitano's enthusiastic support for the initiative. Nonetheless, these are projects which have been set up and funded, for the most part, privately. While the provision of didactic materials would seem to be a natural way to meet the stated aims of the *Giorno della memoria*, it is predominantly left to web portals like this, managed by non-governmental staff, to ensure that they are available.

As the commemorative day becomes a more recognisable date in the Italian calendar, more has been done by the government to regulate the task of commemorating, and specifically that of involving young people in commemoration. In 2014, a memorandum of understanding (*protocollo d'intesa*) was agreed between the victims' associations and the Ministry for Education, University and Research (MIUR) with the purpose of delineating parameters and responsibilities for organising commemorative events in memory of victims of terrorism. It is worth stipulating that, in the years following the inauguration of the commemorative day for victims of terrorism, a succession of different governments with varying political leanings have held office in Italy. This memorandum of understanding is important for this reason too: this agreement can be seen to safeguard the *Giorno della memoria* from changes that occur at a governmental level. The document issued to mark the agreement states its aim using language that mirrors that used in the original law inaugurating the commemorative day for victims of terrorism:

Realizzare iniziative didattiche e formative volte ad approfondire il tema del terrorismo e a conservare tra i giovani la memoria di tutte le vittime del terrorismo, interno e internazionale, e delle stragi di tale matrice.³⁴⁵

The document outlines what can be expected both from the government and the associations and recommends that a committee be formed between representatives of MIUR and of the victims' associations to agree an annual programme of activities.

The memorandum of understanding suggests that the need for a more formal organisation of the activities associated with this commemorative day has

³⁴⁵ [http://www.scribd.com/fullscreen/223049634?access_key=key-](http://www.scribd.com/fullscreen/223049634?access_key=key-1n9sesjk1mgmkvci6a17&allow_share=true&escape=false&view_mode=scroll)

[1n9sesjk1mgmkvci6a17&allow_share=true&escape=false&view_mode=scroll](http://www.scribd.com/fullscreen/223049634?access_key=key-1n9sesjk1mgmkvci6a17&allow_share=true&escape=false&view_mode=scroll)

been recognised. It underlines and reinforces the aims for the day that are stipulated in the law cited above and, to some extent, it removes the onus from individual councils to organise events and activities. The focus on didactic initiatives as a means to promote the memory of these victims among Italian young people is already present in the stated aims of this commemorative day, but creating a committee comprised of both government and civilian members provides crucial accountability which can be seen to have been missing in the organisation of past years' activities. The subject of the *Giorno della memoria* and the victims' associations will be addressed once again later in this chapter when we will examine their role in passing on memory to future generations. In the next section, however, we will concentrate on the physical sites where commemoration takes place.

5.2 Commemorative practices: memorial sites

In Italy, as we have noted, ceremonies are held every year on 9 May to commemorate all the victims of terrorism and other ceremonies take place throughout the year to commemorate victims of the *stragi* and individual victims, usually on the anniversary of their death. Now we will turn our attention to less ephemeral ways of remembering; often these individual commemorations will happen near or at the place where the victim was killed and in these places one might find a commemorative plaque or other form of memorial. To have a memorial plaque erected, somebody, either an individual or a group, must pay for it, decide where it will be placed and what words will be engraved into it. These decisions can become problematic when there are different and contrasting motives and memories at play.

One risk of setting a person's memory in stone or brass is that each memorial site can represent but one type of memory: that which is etched into the memorial. Memorialising somebody in this way endorses the creation of an 'official' memory which might well contradict or offend other people's individual memories: 'Institutionalized forms such as the memorial or remembrance day might just as often work to divest as to remind subsequent

generations of the obligation to remember'.³⁴⁶ This argument is expanded upon by Young:

Museums, archives, and ruins may not house our memory-work so much as displace it with claims of material evidence and proof. Memory-work becomes unnecessary as long as the material fragment of events continues to function as witness-memorial. Are we delegating to the archivist the memory-work that is ours alone? Do we allow memorials to relieve us of the memory-burden that we should be carrying?³⁴⁷

Young's point is certainly valid and thought-provoking - and we will see later in the chapter that he is not alone in cautioning against an over-reliance on memorials and museums - but considered in the context of the difficult memory of the victims from the *anni di piombo*, the presence of memorial plaques and statues must be considered an essential element in the creation of a collective memory. Just as the postmemoirs written by the victims' children were written after many years of apparent silence and apathy on the part of the Italian authorities, so the presence of a tangible reminder of these victims - in the form of a memorial or a statue - allows their children to see that they have not been forgotten: they stand as a permanent reminder of these victims to anyone who passes by and chooses to look at them. Additionally, they provide a logical place for individuals to congregate when they wish to remember or think about a victim. An important personal victory cited by Silvia Giralucci was to have the plaque commemorating her father moved from a nearby lamppost to the wall of the building where he was killed.³⁴⁸ Massimo Coco too recounts the pride that he felt when his students chose to study his father's history after he pointed out that a nearby park was named after him.³⁴⁹ Indeed, Coco's story is an example of how memorials might be seen to relieve us of the 'memory-burden' that Young states we should be carrying since it was only when he spoke to his students about it that they made the effort to learn about his father.

³⁴⁶ Ashplant, Dawson and Roper, 'The politics of war memory and commemoration', p. 45.

³⁴⁷ Young, *The Texture of Memory*, p. 127.

³⁴⁸ Giralucci, *L'inferno sono gli altri*, p. 5.

³⁴⁹ Coco, *Ricordare stanca*, pp. 194-195.

It has been proposed that one must want to remember to be able to use memorials effectively,³⁵⁰ but the fact that they are tangible reminders of the past is significant, particularly in a history as contested as that of these victims:

Touching war memorials, and in particular, touching the names of those who died, is an important part of the rituals of separation which surrounded them. Many photographs of the period show mourners reaching out in this way, thus testifying that whatever the aesthetic and political meanings which they may bear, they are also sites of mourning, and of gestures which go beyond the limitations of place and time.³⁵¹

The tactile nature of these memorials is clearly significant, especially when examined alongside the more abstract annual commemorative ceremonies. Indeed, the significance is underlined by Young in the title of his book on the subject of memorials, *The Texture of Memory*. In summary, plaques and memorial sites can be seen to play an important role in the commemoration of victims from the *anni di piombo*. Their role may not always be clear and some may argue that, given their permanence and the rigid view of the past that they provide, they can be unhelpful to mourners and those who wish to remember. Nonetheless, they are also meaningful to many, for precisely those same reasons, as outlined in the examples from the children of *anni di piombo* victims given above. Commemorative ceremonies alone cannot adequately represent the memory of all the victims, so the use of plaques and statues to remember adds to the mosaic of collective memory.

There is currently no memorial to all the victims of terrorism and the *stragi* in Italy and Mario Calabresi has written that he believes such a memorial would be useful as it would provide a place of collective memory.³⁵² As mentioned above, however, there are many other forms of memorials to these individual victims - plaques and toponymy, predominantly - and collective memorials to the victims of the *stragi*, usually located in the places where they took place. In addition to these memorials, statues of some of the victims can be found. It is clear that the commemorative day in honour of their memory is the main vehicle for promoting the collective memory of these victims. For most of

³⁵⁰ Young, *The Texture of Memory*, p. 15.

³⁵¹ Winter, *Sites of Memory*, p. 113.

³⁵² Calabresi, *Spingendo la notte più in là*, p. 92.

the families of the victims, it seems that the act of remembering publicly is what is most important to them and in the next section we will examine the meaning that these commemorative practices hold for the families and the significance of their public and official nature.

5.3 Memory expectations: what official commemoration can mean to victims' families

In what appears to be a clear attempt to create sympathy and to shape the collective memory round their version of history, in their writing many of the family members of victims of the *anni di piombo* recount, in emotive and sometimes highly-charged language, the ways that they feel they have been abandoned by the Italian government. Framing their stories in this way is another method that the authors use to generate sympathy for their fathers, but also, above all, for themselves. For this reason, their engagement, or disengagement with official commemoration will be examined here as this is a means for them to control the predominant narrative and thereby influence the collective memory. As discussed previously, Massimo Coco, of all the second generation authors, expresses himself in a particularly violent way when writing about the public commemoration of his father; he writes about attending the ceremony marking the 2011 *Giorno della memoria*, but not being recognised as the son of a victim. It is worth underlining again that he is the only one of the authors who still does not know who killed his father and so the anger that he expresses and the injustice that he claims to feel regarding his family's treatment by the Italian state can be seen to stem at least in part from this. In an interview in *I silenzi degli innocenti*, Coco recounts that his mother received a medal honouring her dead husband's valour, not during an official public ceremony, but on her doorstep, presented to her in an envelope by a police officer. He describes the affront felt by his family at this gesture:

Uno schiaffo alla memoria e alla lealtà di mio padre, un gesto scortese, irrispettoso che ci ferì molto. Dopo qualche tempo, fu organizzata una cerimonia riparatrice al Quirinale, ma ormai l'offesa era fatta.³⁵³

³⁵³ Fasanella & Grippo, *I silenzi degli innocenti*, p. 64.

In the interview, Coco goes on to describe his mother's upset at not being invited to a ceremony commemorating one of the police officers who died alongside her husband. For this family, the lack of a state-organised public commemorative gesture appears to offend their private memory.

Another example of the Italian state's apparent negligence of the memory of a victim of the *anni di piombo* is the story of Antonia Custra as told by Mario Calabresi in *Spingendo la notte più in là*. Custra's father, Antonio, was a police officer shot dead during a protest in via De Amicis in Milan in 1977. Calabresi writes of his surprise at Antonia Custra's ignorance of her father's story. She apparently did not know the name of the man convicted of his murder or whether or not he was still in prison and she was dismayed to learn that there was nothing commemorating his death in the street in Milan where he was killed. Custra sums up her feelings about the lack of memorial succinctly: 'Peccato, tutto ciò che può ricordare è benvenuto'.³⁵⁴

Despite Aldo Moro's fame, in her memoir, *Un uomo così*, his daughter, Agnese expresses surprise when she finds that her father has a firm place in the Italian collective memory. She describes this discovery as unexpected (*inaspettato*) for various reasons, including the way she feels the Italian government has neglected Moro's memory: 'Inaspettato perché istituzionalmente è stato fatto ben poco per ricordarlo'.³⁵⁵ Her sister, Maria Fida Moro, expresses a similar sentiment, claiming that only rarely have efforts been made to commemorate their father by the Italian authorities and she lists many more examples of occasions when she has been offended by the state's treatment of her father's memory.³⁵⁶ It seems curious that the sisters should feel this way about the public memory of their father, given that he is seemingly so familiar to Italians today, but it is well-documented that the reaction of his Christian Democrat colleagues and other members of the government to his kidnapping was controversial because they refused to negotiate with the Red Brigades despite the supplications of the Moro family. Miguel Gotor systematically details the complicated nature of different Christian Democrat politicians' reactions to Moro's kidnapping: having studied their diaries and bearing in mind the

³⁵⁴ Calabresi, *Spingendo la notte più in là*, p. 29.

³⁵⁵ Moro, *Un uomo così*, p. 130.

³⁵⁶ Maria Fida Moro, *Nuvole rosse sulla trincea invisibile* (Roma: Reality Book, 2009; 2010), p. 68.

involvement of some politicians - including Moro - with the CIA-sponsored secret anti-Soviet Union operation, *Gladio*, he demonstrates that much of Moro's colleagues' decision-making must have been influenced by their attempts to protect their own interests, while they also speculated about whether Moro had already disclosed secrets that might compromise them.³⁵⁷

Agnese and Maria Fida Moro's feelings are echoed by their brother, Giovanni, in an article published in *La Stampa* to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of their father's death. He is quoted as saying, 'Spero che al prossimo decennale i capi della Dc ci spieghino perché trattano la figura di mio padre come se fosse un fantasma'. In an accompanying interview with Christian Democrat senator Giulio Andreotti, it is revealed that Giovanni Moro asked Andreotti not to attend the commemorative ceremony for Aldo Moro in Bari and so he had subsequently not attended the ceremony in Rome either.³⁵⁸ This is a very deliberate attempt to express the family's unhappiness, with the Christian Democratic party, but also and above all, with Andreotti specifically.

In Chapters Two and Three, we noted that Silvia Giralucci claimed to have had difficulty engaging with the public commemoration of her father because the ceremony was always dominated by right-wing militants. She writes of her relief when, after a long period of time, a left-wing mayor of Padua took control of the commemoration and drew the focus away from the neo-fascists thereby, she feels, acknowledging the place that her father deserves within a collective memory of Padua. Giralucci has written that she welcomed the mayor's actions because she believed that they allowed her father to be remembered in a context divorced from his political views as never before. She frames her story as a struggle to claim the status of victim for her father and so, for a public official to take her side and encourage the memory of her father to become part of the city's heritage is seen as a victory by her, emphasising the importance of public, official commemoration to victims' families.

For many of the victims' families, a public acknowledgement by a representative of the Italian authorities - in whatever form it may take - provides a significant affirmation that their loved one's memory exists in a wider

³⁵⁷ Miguel Gotor, *Il memoriale della Repubblica: Gli scritti di Aldo Moro dalla prigionia e l'anatomia del potere italiano* (Torino: Einaudi, 2011), pp. 17-23.

³⁵⁸ "Moro, una lezione di tolleranza" Casini ricorda la sua volontà di dialogo e il rispetto per l'avversario', *La Stampa*, 10th May 2003, p. 6.

forum. This connection between public memory and mourning is one that John Foot has also highlighted. He discusses the effects of the so-called ‘memory wars’ that Italy has undergone:

People expected forms of memory to be constructed for them. They demanded recognition for themselves, or relatives, or fellow countrymen, in terms of commemorative objects and events. Memory expectations were often very high, and this created concerns about a ‘lack of memory’.³⁵⁹

Foot suggests that the emphasis that we have seen placed on public commemoration by the family members of the *anni di piombo* victims might go beyond their personal experience and be connected instead with the national psyche. Once again, we must remember Judith Butler’s theory of there being a hierarchy of mourning:

How do our cultural frames for thinking the human set limits on the kinds of losses we can avow as loss? After all, if someone is lost, and that person is not someone, then what and where is the loss, and how does mourning take place?³⁶⁰

The inverse of this question might be, ‘If mourning does not take place, then the person who is lost is not someone’. Of course, the families of victims from the *anni di piombo* mourn their loss, but public commemoration encourages the circle of mourners to widen and accommodate others, even strangers. Of course the family members know that their lost loved one is someone, but they also want the rest of Italian society to acknowledge it and mourn with them so as to affirm their personal tragedy.

The emphasis on public over private commemoration invests power and meaning into the public memorials that do exist, at least in the eyes of the victims’ families. The ‘politics of memory’ described above by Schwab are rooted in justice, responsibility and future generations and it is clear that these are crucial factors in our discussion of the commemoration of these victims. By rendering these private memories public in the form of books or interviews, the victims’ families are creating sites of memory that are at once private and public.

³⁵⁹ Foot, *Italy’s Divided Memory*, p. 15.

³⁶⁰ Butler, *Precarious life*, p. 32.

In this way, official memory is both challenged and enriched as private and personal memories and experiences are added to the existing records.

5.4 Stewards of memory

In addition to the forms of commemorative practice mentioned above, we must also consider the writing and publishing of personal memoirs as a form of commemoration. We place written narratives in this context in line with Pierre Nora's definition of the *lieux de mémoire*, or sites of memory. They are, he writes:

[A]ny significant entity, whether material or non-material in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community.³⁶¹

Thus, as discussed in Chapter Three, the memoirs and postmemoirs written by victims and their children fall comfortably within this category. The commemorative day that has been established on 9 May can also be described in this way, as can the memorial plaques and statues that exist across Italy. In addition to these, any meeting or commemorative ceremony that takes place in the name of one of these victims is a *lieu de mémoire* too as it contributes, as we have seen, to their memory today. In this section, specific examples of these *lieux de mémoire* from the *anni di piombo* will be analysed in order to determine their contribution to this collective memory.

While each of the postmemoirs, plaques and ceremonies is a reminder of the victim, it is necessary to examine the meaning that is invested in each of these by some of the people who engage with them because this interaction is what maintains the memory in a collective sense. Of course, those who 'engage with' these *lieux de mémoire* are numerous: all of those who attend commemorative ceremonies for victims; school groups who conduct research projects into this time; any person or organisation who commissions a commemorative work of art, a plaque or a statue and the organisations who arrange meetings or talks to mark a significant anniversary. This list is by no means exhaustive and many more people engage with these *lieux de mémoire* because they are, for the most part, accessible to anybody. Many of the people

³⁶¹ Nora, trans. by Arthur Goldhammer, *Rethinking the French Past*, p. xvii.

whom we have identified as engaging with the *lieux de mémoire* of the *anni di piombo* victims will also, in some way, pass their experience on by talking about that victim or taking a photograph and so they can be seen to contribute to the collective memory. As Halbwachs has informed us, for a collective memory to exist and grow, it requires people to engage with it and share it.

Jonathan Huener, in his work exploring the commemoration of Auschwitz, *Auschwitz, Poland, and the Politics of Commemoration*, refers to ‘stewards of memory’³⁶². He uses this term to denote anyone who works to protect and preserve the memory of the camp and the events that took place there. This study will borrow this phrase and apply it to the memory of the *anni di piombo*. The stewards of this memory are many and varied. The relatives of the victims seem to be the principal stewards of memory: they have predominantly led the push to have an official commemorative ceremony for the victims of the *anni di piombo* and it is largely because of their memories, writings and public engagement that their loved ones’ stories continue to feature in current discussions of that period. In addition to the victims’ family members, there are the politicians who were responsible for bringing the *Giorno della memoria* into being. Giorgio Napolitano is probably the most notable of these ‘stewards’; the fact that such a prominent statesman has shown an interest in these victims has aided their cause, particularly in the face of the prominent media presence of former perpetrators, and seems to have brought legitimacy to the families’ struggle to carve a place for them in the collective memory.

The list of other people who might be categorised as ‘stewards’ of the memory of the victims of the *anni di piombo* is lengthy; we might also include Ilaria Moroni and Sergio Flamigni, the teachers who encourage their students to undertake memorial projects and, indeed, those students, as well as town councillors who decide to name streets or parks after victims. What is most interesting about this term is not that it can be applied to a huge variety of people, but that it suggests these people are acting in a neutral capacity. This clearly is not the case for the people who I have listed above, all of whom have an interest in ensuring that the memories are preserved and passed on. Sometimes this interest is personal, as it is with the family members, but the

³⁶² Jonathan Huener, *Auschwitz, Poland, and the Politics of Commemoration, 1945-1979* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2003), p. 229.

majority of those who have dedicated themselves to the maintenance of the memory of the *anni di piombo* seem to have been motivated by other reasons. Indeed, this is why so many people - from school teachers, to the president of the Italian Republic - act as stewards of memory: because there are so many interests involved in the creation and maintenance of this collective memory, all of these people contribute to ensure that it does not rest solely in the hands of politicians or family members. Sharing the burden of memory is important to victims' family members, as detailed in the previous section. The official recognition and promotion of a collective memory of their loved ones can be seen as important to the families for another reason too: we have highlighted the happiness described by Agnese Moro on discovering that so many different people were engaged in promoting her father's memory. She sees this as an expression of civic duty and throughout the postmemoirs, as we have made clear, the themes of democracy and community engagement with the past are very prominent. That the authorities also appear to have recognised these victims as potential role models for a democratic Italy serves to uphold this image.

5.4.1 *Giorno della memoria* 2013

The memory of the Jewish victims of the Holocaust is protected and promoted by a well-established 'world centre' in the form of Yad Vashem in Tel Aviv, which, as well as being a memorial museum, is also a centre for research, education, commemoration and documentation. There are teams of people here employed to manage and protect the memory of Jewish Holocaust victims. The memory of the victims of the *anni di piombo* does not have an equivalently powerful steward of memory in Italy. We have already seen that the *Giorno della memoria* was set up by a group of politicians with the blessing of the victims' associations and of the victims' family members and that the ways in which the day is used to commemorate victims from the *anni di piombo* is determined on a local basis, with some recommendations, for example, from the network set up by Ilaria Moroni. However, until the memorandum of understanding mentioned above was agreed, it was unclear whose responsibility it was to organise the ceremony every 9 May or to oversee other events and activities that marked the day. It seemed that these responsibilities might not lie with a government body, as one might expect, but that these details might

actually have been addressed on a more ad hoc basis. On 13 April 2013, the *Associazione Italiana Vittime del Terrorismo* (AIVITER) published the following announcement on its website, describing it as ‘urgent’:

Si avvicina il 9 maggio, Giornata dedicata alle Vittime del terrorismo e delle stragi di tale matrice. La complessa attuale situazione politico-istituzionale e la conseguente relativa incertezza non hanno ancora consentito agli Uffici del Quirinale di programmare la tradizionale cerimonia nel corso della quale il Presidente della Repubblica è solito incontrare le vittime e i loro familiari.

Considerando il brevissimo periodo di tempo che ci separa ormai dal 9 maggio e le difficoltà che nasceranno nell'organizzazione di qualsiasi iniziativa, siamo stati pregati di raccogliere comunque le adesioni di coloro che, pur nella situazione di incertezza e con riserva, desidererebbero essere invitati.³⁶³

Certainly, Italy was undergoing a moment of serious political upheaval and insecurity in April 2013 following elections that failed to establish a coherent government. Nonetheless, it is surprising that this sort of Internet-based announcement should be the way that this information was communicated. As a similar announcement did not appear on the Quirinale’s website, it appears that, unless the government sent personal letters or emails to all the interested parties, the responsibility for transferring this information fell solely to the Association. This message underlines the significance of the treaty that was agreed in 2014 and the difference, even at a symbolic level, that having a committee to hold to account can be seen to make. The communiqué states that those who wish to be invited should contact AIVITER: taking a passive approach absolves the Association - and the Italian government - of the need to select who should be invited, while also stipulating that only victims and their family members will be considered eligible to attend. In this way, potentially difficult decision-making is removed from the authorities.

That such a seemingly important commemorative day can have been apparently forgotten about by the authorities and the task of inviting guests left to a private victims’ association a mere fortnight before the ceremony was due to take place seems astonishing. This appears to indicate that, until 2014, there

³⁶³ <http://www.vittimeterrorismo.it/iniziativa/iniziativa.htm>

was not a dedicated committee or working group within the Quirinale, no equivalent of Yad Vashem, to act as a guardian for this ceremony and commemorative day. The apparent lack of importance afforded this *Giorno della memoria*, such that it can be completely forgotten, albeit during an extraordinarily turbulent political period, makes a fairly clear statement to the victims and their family members about the Italian state's awareness of them.

The official recognition of victims that has come with the creation of this *Giorno della memoria* seems to be highly meaningful for many of those involved at a personal level in the creation and maintenance of a collective memory of these victims. However, official commemoration, through public ceremonies and memorials, is only one aspect of the commemoration of these victims. To gain a better understanding of the ways that these victims are commemorated in Italy, it is necessary to also examine the forms of commemoration that take place for these victims at a more local level.

5.5 Organising commemoration

The largest commemorative events that occur in memory of *anni di piombo* victims are those organised in the cities where the *stragi* took place to mark their anniversaries. While these events can still be seen as 'official', they are organised, not by the Italian government, but by not-for-profit victims' associations. These associations are very important stewards of memory since the victims of the mass violence of the *stragi* are much less visible within a collective national memory of the *anni di piombo*. In Brescia, site of the Piazza della Loggia bombing that killed eight people and injured one hundred and three on 28 May 1974, there is a *Casa della Memoria* which organises events to mark the anniversary and also works more generally to promote the memory of the victims. There is another organisation in Milan which works to preserve the memory, not just of the bombing in Piazza Fontana, but of all the Milanese victims from the *anni di piombo*, called *Casa della Memoria di Milano*. Their website details the ceremonies and events that they have been involved in organising, including the inaugurations of many parks and streets in the name of victims from these years. There is an association for the relatives of the victims of the Bologna train station bombing and their website states that the association was formed in order to, 'Ottenere con tutte le iniziative possibili la

giustizia dovuta'.³⁶⁴ To this end, the organisation has collated a large amount of information pertaining to the trials and proceedings that have taken place since the bombing, as well as providing documentation of the annual commemorative events in the city.

For individual victims, large-scale commemorative events seem typically to be organised by former employers along with the victims' associations and, additionally, with support from other not-for-profit groups such as the *Associazione Nazionale della Polizia di Stato*, the *Unione Nazionale Mutilati per Servizio* and the *Associazione Nazionale Magistrati*. Usually, ceremonies of this nature take place on significant anniversaries. For example, the newspaper, *Corriere della Sera*, organised a day of remembrance in the form of a conference in 2010 for their former employee, Walter Tobagi, to mark the thirtieth anniversary of his murder.³⁶⁵ Emilio Alessandrini, a magistrate who was killed in Milan in 1979 by members of Prima Linea, has had an association set up in his name by some of his high school friends. There is also a 'Fondazione Emilio Alessandrini' and both of these organisations aim to preserve Alessandrini's memory by organising conferences, scholarships and commemorative events: the association's website highlights that events organised in Alessandrini's name should, above all, help to promote democracy and justice.³⁶⁶

In Genoa, there is an annual ceremony to mark the anniversary of Guido Rossa's death. There is a statue of him in Largo XII ottobre in Genoa with a plaque whose inscription emphasises Rossa's bravery and there is also a separate monument to him in the city. Both of these memorials are dedicated to him by Italsider workers, his former colleagues. In his interview in *I silenzi degli innocenti* Massimo Coco complains that his father, who was also killed in Genoa, does not receive the same level of commemoration because he was a judge and had no political allies to organise such public remembering:

Guido Rossa è un simbolo, ma certo non lo è diventato mio padre. Eppure, entrambi sono morti per un servizio allo Stato, nel senso più ampio della comunità. Nel caso di Guido Rossa, c'è stata una parte politica che ha assunto su di sé il compito di onorare la memoria di un servizio svolto nei

³⁶⁴ <http://www.stragi.it/index.php?pagina=associazione>

³⁶⁵ http://milano.corriere.it/milano/notizie/cronaca/10_maggio_28/tobagi-anniversario-agguato-moratti-de-bortoli-1703099839709.shtml

³⁶⁶ <http://www.emilioalessandrini.it/associazione.html>

confronti dello Stato. Nel caso di mio padre, non essendoci una parte politica, avrebbe dovuto essere proprio lo Stato ad assumersi la responsabilità di onorare la sua memoria. Ma lo Stato non ha saputo onorare i suoi morti. Né rispettarli, né proteggerli.³⁶⁷

While this may have been the case in 2006, when that book was published, it seems that Francesco Coco's death, and that of his police escort, Antioco Deiana and Giovanni Saponara, is now commemorated by the local authorities in Genoa.³⁶⁸

Vittorio Occorsio was a judge murdered by members of the neo-fascist group, Ordine Nuovo in Rome in 1976 and there is a plaque in his name in the street where he was killed, unveiled in 2011 and another in a nearby park that dates from 2003. There is a scholarship awarded annually by the *Associazione Nazionale dei Magistrati del Lazio* to high school students who have written essays on the themes of liberty and justice and it is given in the names of Vittorio Occorsio and Mario Amato, another judge who was murdered by right-wing militants in 1980. Similarly to the previous cases we have examined, Occorsio is predominantly remembered and commemorated in the public sphere by his former work colleagues, yet his family play an active part in these commemorative ceremonies too.

While the annual commemorative day for these victims is a symbolic occasion to call to mind the tragedies of the *anni di piombo*, it is clear that for the families, friends and colleagues of these men, 9 May is marked each year in addition to the anniversary of the death of each of these individuals. These ceremonies are rarely just family affairs; as we have seen, they are often funded by charitable associations who have some link with the deceased, usually through the work they did in life. This can be seen as one of the reasons that the victims of the *stragi* are not as well-known: there is a greater risk of their memory fading into obscurity because they are not generally seen as individuals, as Cinzia Venturoli has highlighted, and they do not have the same powerful memory stewards as many of the victims who were individually targeted do.

³⁶⁷ Fasanella & Grippo, *I silenzi degli innocenti*, pp. 66-67.

³⁶⁸ <http://iltirreno.gelocal.it/massa/cronaca/2013/06/14/news/commemorazione-del-procuratore-coco-1.7258915>

5.6 Resistance memory

The focus on democracy and civic duty that is evident in discussions of the memory of victims from the *anni di piombo* has a strong precedent in Italian history in the way that memory of the Italian Resistance during World War Two has been constructed. To claim that there is but one memory of this part of Italian history would be incorrect: this memory is as divided as the memory of the *anni di piombo* and other aspects of Italian history. However, there is a prevalent myth of the Resistance that has much in common with the way that victims of the *anni di piombo* are often remembered. For many years, the partisans were remembered predominantly as left-wing anti-fascist heroes. However, this view is clearly revisionist and such an idealised vision of the past has been challenged in recent years by both left- and right-wing scholars.³⁶⁹ After World War Two, tales of the seemingly heroic efforts of Resistance fighters and the idea that Italians should be viewed as distinct from Fascists dominated the memory of that period, replacing more difficult memories of Fascism and Nazi collaboration. Rebecca Clifford highlights this distinction in her study of Holocaust commemoration in Italy and France:

Tied to the Resistance narratives of the post-war era were the notions of the *bons Français* and the *italiani, brava gente*: the belief that the French and Italian people had acted honourably during the war, had not participated in war crimes, had overwhelmingly supported the Resistance, and had actively rejected wartime anti-Semitic policies. These ideas played a particularly powerful cultural role in Italy, where the notion of the *brava gente* drew on a Manichaeian opposition between ‘bad’ Germans and ‘good’ Italians to suggest that Fascism had been largely benevolent.³⁷⁰

The Constitution that was drawn up in the wake of the Second World War and at the start of the First Republic represented a new democratic era for Italy and had the values embodied by the Resistance at its core.³⁷¹ This view of the past

³⁶⁹ Jonathan Dunnage, *Twentieth-Century Italy: A Social History* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2002), p. 225.

³⁷⁰ Rebecca Clifford, *Commemorating the Holocaust: The dilemmas of remembrance in France and Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 6.

³⁷¹ Sandra Z. Koff & Stephen P. Koff, *Italy From the First to the Second Republic* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 14.

effectively transforms the victims of the *anni di piombo* and the partisans into the protagonists in a struggle against a perceived threat from the Right. There are clear parallels between the use of these anti-fascist partisan narratives as a model for a future Italy and the way that the victims of the *anni di piombo* are proposed as martyrs who must be remembered in order to create a more democratic society in Italy today.

However, while the idealised values of the Resistance were taken up by some of the family members of victims of the *anni di piombo* in a bid to render their loved ones more worthy of remembrance, the memory of the Resistance was also used in the 1970s by many members of the far-left organisations to their own ends. As discussed in Chapter One, during much of the 1970s, there were fears among sections of the left of an imminent right-wing *coup d'état*. Some of the members of the extreme-left organisations, including the Red Brigades, justified their decision to take up arms by claiming that the perceived increased power of the Right mirrored the rise of Fascism in the 1930s and, by invoking the Resistance, they could claim that violence was a reasonable reaction to the new threat.³⁷²

Of course, there are significant distinctions to be drawn between the memory of the Resistance in Italy and that of Italy's 1970s: there is greater consensus around the memory of the partisans and their role in the war in Italy, although the often simplistic view of partisans as heroes can be seen to mirror the selective way that the victims of the *anni di piombo* are sometimes remembered publicly; the Resistance 'heroes' are seen as such within a different context from the victims that we are studying because they were fighting a common enemy in the form of Fascism and the people who were murdered during the *anni di piombo* were not at war. Despite these important distinctions, collective memory of the Resistance is an interesting and appropriate example to use in our examination of commemorative practices in Italy in relation to the memory of the victims of the *anni di piombo*. Both the memory of the Italian partisans and the memory of the victims of the *anni di piombo* focus on the deaths of civilians; both of these periods of Italian history

³⁷² Philip Cooke, 'A riconquistare la rossa primavera': The Neo-Resistance of the 1970s' in *Speaking Out and Silencing: Culture, Society and Politics in Italy in the 1970s* ed. by Anna Cento Bull & Adalgisa Giorgio (Leeds: Legenda, 2006), pp. 172-184 (pp. 175-180).

can be seen to contribute to a sense of national and cultural identity; the commemorations of both the Resistance and the *anni di piombo* place a strong focus on young people and the cultivation and promotion of a collective memory of the Resistance, like that of the *anni di piombo*, is influenced heavily by those who have first-hand knowledge of the events and their families.

In order to illustrate this link and to underline this interesting commemorative trend, we will examine the ways that the stewards of the memory of the Resistance can be seen to work with young people in Italy. ANPI (*Associazione Nazionale Partigiani d'Italia*) and its affiliates undertake work in schools with the aim of transmitting the values of the Resistance and democracy and good citizenship are the focus of much of the didactic programmes in evidence on the association's website.³⁷³ Their efforts have obviously been effective: in his study of young people's understanding of the Resistance, Daniele Mezzana concludes that the majority of the over 2000 students who took part in the study identified a link between the Resistance and their national identity, but alongside this, 'una identità legata all'essere cittadino attivamente partecipe della vita politica e sociale'.³⁷⁴ This resembles the way that Italians are encouraged to remember the *anni di piombo* victims. In the law that was passed to create the *Giorno della memoria*, democracy is fundamental. Indeed, it states that anything that is organised to mark the commemorative day should be done so in order to, 'conservare, rinnovare e costruire una memoria storica condivisa in difesa delle istituzioni democratiche'.

Using both the memory of the Resistance and the memory of victims of the *anni di piombo* to promote democratic values in Italy can be read as a deliberate attempt to focus on positive aspects of history, disregarding those which are less honourable. Just as the promotion of Resistance values is an expression of anti-Fascist sentiments, so the promotion of the victims of the *anni di piombo* can be seen as an expression of a kind of anti-terrorism. This form of selective remembering provides an image of the past that is easier to digest; there is little mention of collaboration or widespread public support for the Red Brigades. In Chapter Four, we illustrated that the Italian state's frequent failure

³⁷³ <http://www.anpi.it/mm/>

³⁷⁴ Daniele Mezzana, *Memoria storica della resistenza nelle nuove generazioni* (Milan: Mursia, 1997), p. 87.

to provide justice for its citizens has resulted in an innate mistrust of government and authority. With continued political confusion, it seems that Italian citizens will continue to embrace some form of civic religion and its heroes and martyrs.

5.7 Conclusion

Commemoration lifts from an ordinary historical sequence those extraordinary events which embody our deepest and most fundamental values. Commemoration... is in this sense a register of sacred history.³⁷⁵ As these lines from Barry Schwartz illustrate, what makes commemoration vital to the victims' family members is that it renders what might have been forgotten public and important, regardless of any problems that may be associated with these rites. We have seen that ceremonies such as that which takes place in Rome every 9 May allow the disparate family members whose only sad connection is that one of their loved ones was killed in a certain timeframe to come together and mourn. We have also seen that these acts of public mourning are essential to their ability to process their grief. While these memories remain contested and the commemorative practices and sites are perhaps not perfect or adequate for everyone, this seems to be changing over time. The inauguration of the *Giorno della memoria* has had a significant effect on the number of commemorations and the scale and media coverage of them. The political features of all of these examples of commemoration will always be present, but that is only to be expected; they are ever-evolving and they encompass many points of view and many memories. As the collective memory evolves, so will the commemoration; more memoirs and books of interviews will almost certainly be published; more plaques and statues erected and perhaps the *Giorno della memoria* will be given a more formal structure.

Without these commemorative practices, it is clear that the memory of the victims would be even less vivid than it already is. With the increased public presence of the victims' family members in recent years, it is logical that commemoration of the victims has also increased and become more formal. One

³⁷⁵ Barry Schwartz, 'The Social Context of Commemoration: A Study in Collective Memory' in *Social Forces*, Vol. 61, No. 2, December 1982 (pp. 374-402), p. 377.

can only expect that, in years to come, this way of anchoring the past in the present will continue to grow.

Conclusion

The aim of this thesis has been to chart the place of victims killed during the *anni di piombo* in Italian collective memory. To enable this, six works written by the children of some of these victims have been taken as a focus for the study. The analysis of these six works offers a new and interesting way to examine this period of Italian history which, until recently, seemed not to feature very prominently in the collective memory. There has been a shift in the last decade from remembering the *anni di piombo* with the perpetrators as the central protagonists to a more victim-centred approach. This shift in focus has been welcomed by the victims' family members and victims' associations as in this way they can begin to redress the previous imbalance of memory. Furthermore, a victim-centred refocus of the history of this period is preferable to a one-sided, perpetrator-centred view. While historical and judicial truths remain unknown - for example, the names of Francesco Coco's killers and of the perpetrators of many of the *stragi* - the fact that the balance of power can to some extent be seen to have transferred back to those whose power had been erased is also significant and important. In this way, the victims' family members can feel, finally, that they have attained some sort of justice.

Writing is the medium used by the victims' children for a variety of reasons. It has allowed them to construct an image of their fathers that they find agreeable and given them an opportunity to communicate this image to a large number of people. Writing has also been demonstrated to have performed a cathartic role for the authors, giving them an effective outlet for years of frustrations. The different styles of writing employed by the six authors have also allowed them to demonstrate their personal priorities and grievances, rendering each work more powerful in its individuality. Thus, Sabina Rossa's work is used to let her investigate her father's murder on her own terms, concluding that previous investigations had stopped short of uncovering the truth about the reasons for his killing. On the other hand, Agnese Moro revisits her earlier publication, adding personal reflections on the public reaction to her writing about her father's memory. Massimo Coco's book details his frustrations, not only with the Italian authorities who have failed to discover who killed his father, but also with the way that the victims of the *anni di piombo* have been

remembered in society, including the contributions of other victims' children. The three youngest authors also use their works to examine the memory of this period as a whole and seem to have influenced and supported each other in their writing. Mario Calabresi writes in order to dispel the apparently entrenched view of his father as a murderer; Benedetta Tobagi's writing uses her father's notes and articles to examine the *anni di piombo* from his perspective as well as her own and finally, Silvia Giralucci writes as a way to claim victim status for her father and to try to understand the extreme choices made by some of that generation which led to the violence of those years.

It has been demonstrated throughout this thesis that writing these books has been the authors' means of shaping the collective memory of their fathers. As such, they attempt to create sympathy for their fathers and in their depictions they emphasise their humanity, stressing that there was more to these men than their murders. They foreground the injustice of their murders in this way and underline that their fathers can be seen as models for a modern democratic society. This is central to the authors' desire to promote a positive public image - or, in some cases, simply an image - of their fathers as it allows them to stand opposed to terrorism and gives the authors and their fathers the moral high ground. This is particularly important in this context since the Italian government cannot be seen to have engaged in a satisfactory way with the memory of the *anni di piombo*. In this way, the authors also insert themselves into their fathers' stories, at least indirectly, because they take on the role of caretakers of their memory. Thus, we have seen that they attempt to continue their fathers' stories, rendering them relevant and interesting also in today's society.

The second generation's voices are heard very clearly in the discussion of forgiveness too. Once more, this theme relates very closely to current debates surrounding the collective memory and is influenced by recent social, historical and political events. Forgiveness is about the relationship between perpetrator and victim and so, in this analysis it has been necessary to consider the victims' children and widows as victims too. This is a role that many of them identify with already. Writing about their fathers is a way for the authors to wrest some power from the perpetrators and forgiveness - especially if it is expressed publicly - is another element of this attempt to change this power dynamic. From a psychology perspective, forgiveness can be seen as a way for a victim to

recover self-respect. However, the decision is very complicated and personal and innumerable factors can influence a victim's choice to forgive or not. Much of our discussion of forgiveness has been concerned with the role of religion in this delicate process. It has been shown that the victims' widows' Catholic faith has had a large part to play in their forgiveness. This raises questions about generational memory since there is a marked distinction between the widows' propensity to forgive and that of their children. Forgiveness has thus been a useful key to allow us to study the widows' decisions and thoughts since their perspective is much less evident within the collective memory of the victims than that of their offspring.

Following years of struggling to have their perspective included in discussions of the *anni di piombo*, the creation of a commemorative day in their honour has finally provided the victims and their families with a public, state-sanctioned commemorative ceremony. This has marked a significant step forwards in terms of creating a place in the collective memory of the *anni di piombo* for the victims. Even before this official commemoration was inaugurated, the importance of publicly expressing grief - even if it was only in a small ceremony - was recognised. It has been shown that public displays of mourning can help grievers to begin to alleviate their pain and the private, individual commemorations held by family members have been an important constant in the years following their loved ones' murders. Inviting others, people who did not personally know the victims in life, to share their grief is a continuation of the process of promoting a sympathetic public image of these victims. Following on from this, public commemoration provides the victims' families with a solid foundation from which to justify their own position as champions of their fathers' memory. Therefore, to have their private grief publicly and officially recognised is a fundamental aspect of the victims' families' desire to shape the collective memory.

Placing the memory of all of the victims of terrorism together in the same commemorative day is, in some ways, problematic: since the day chosen is the anniversary of Aldo Moro's death, his memory might eclipse that of some of the lesser known victims. Since Moro and most of the other better-known victims, including those discussed in this thesis, are victims of left-wing violence, their perceived dominance of the collective memory might be construed as harmful to the memory of victims of right-wing violence and particularly to the memory of

the victims of the *stragi*. However, holding one commemorative event for all the victims can, to a certain extent be seen to counteract the hierarchy of mourning that has been identified, as all victims are at least included in the same ceremony and ostensibly remembered equally. It has been shown that each year this event has a different focus and that each year since its inauguration its aims and objectives have become more refined. These factors can be seen to bode well for a future memory of the more anonymous victims of the *anni di piombo*. It might also be argued that to write a thesis purporting to address the memory of the victims of the *anni di piombo* while focussing on the memory of a select few might seem to perpetuate this hierarchization of the victims. Nonetheless, this thesis's aim has been to closely examine the memory-making techniques of six authors as a way to reach a better understanding of the process more generally. The choice to exclude victims of right-wing violence from our analysis has allowed us to evaluate more clearly the case studies that were chosen.

The connection made between the sympathetic depiction of the victims and democracy provides the foundation for much of the public commemoration of them. Public commemoration also gives the victims' families a forum to engage with young people. While the authors stop short of defining their fathers as martyrs, there are many similarities between the way that they use their fathers' stories to rewrite history in a way that is more agreeable to them and the partisan-centred retelling of the history of Italy's involvement in World War Two. The involvement of young people in these ceremonies and, more broadly, in competitions and the like, reinforces the notion that these victims should be seen as role models for democracy for future generations of Italians. They can be seen as anti-terrorists just as the partisans and their supporters were proclaimed as anti-fascists in the past. Embedding these modern commemorative practices in a historical precedent strengthens their argument.

In this analysis of the collective memory of the victims killed during the *anni di piombo*, democracy has been the theme that has surfaced time and again. It connects the past and the present in a way that also allows the victims' children to look to the future and create a lasting presence for their fathers in collective memory of this historical period. Within a relatively disparate collection of writing about people who have little in common apart from the circumstances of their deaths, democracy and democratic values can be construed as a unifying factor. It has been made clear throughout this thesis that

public perceptions of the victims killed during the *anni di piombo* have changed in the years since their deaths. Furthermore, this change can clearly be said to have come about thanks to the influence of writing such as the books authored by victims' children and other victim-centred narratives.

Within this discussion of the changing nature of the collective memory of the *anni di piombo*, it is important to remember that the works written by the victims' children should not be interpreted as the definitive history of that period. The increased representation of victims in the historiography of the *anni di piombo* is a positive step towards a more balanced collective memory. This is especially important given the fact that perpetrator-centred narratives previously dominated. Therefore, what is crucial is that the victim-centred narratives bring a sense of balance to the collective memory; this can only be the case given the past absence of their voices. To gain a full understanding of the events of that period, the stories of protagonists from both sides should be heard. Of course, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to find a balance that will be to everyone's liking; this is the nature of history and of memory. Nonetheless, the postmemoirs written by the children of victims killed during the *anni di piombo* cannot be said to have produced these works solely in a bid to censor or mute the former terrorists. Rather, they complement the existing historiography and contribute to a fuller understanding of the period.

This study of the victims from the *anni di piombo* has endeavoured to outline on a thematic basis, using close textual analysis of six postmemoirs, the place that these people occupy in current collective memory of that period. It is evident that their position has changed greatly in recent years and will continue to change in the future. The problematic nature of this memory is unlikely to be resolved with the unveiling of any official state secrets and it is improbable that a definitive historic truth will be attained. Nonetheless, to continue to monitor the changing place of victims within the historical discourse will be a valid and interesting project. The possible approaches are myriad, but some particularly interesting ideas might be to conduct a study based along gender lines, allowing a comparison of the different ways that male and female authors record their experiences. This approach could also provide a basis for a more in-depth examination of the victims' widows' perspectives. An analysis of the ways that the collective memory can be seen to differ among generations, possibly employing an oral history approach would offer insight into the potential

directions that the collective memory might take in the future. Finally, an analysis that incorporates the lesser-known victims would broaden the existing corpus. This period of history and its protagonists will continue to raise rich and intriguing questions in Italy and beyond. These questions are relevant to scholars, but also, and perhaps most importantly, to Italians who feel that elements of their history remain contested and unresolved.

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