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Article

The All-Seeing Eye of State Surveillance in the Italian Football (Soccer) Terraces: The Case Study of the Football Fan Card

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Abstract

The football (soccer) stadium in Italy has been, since its origin, not only a ludic space but also a symbolic setting that has often reflected national socio-political issues such as the country's north/south economic and political divide, the existence of organized crime, the promotion of radical political ideologies, and, concomitantly, racism and homophobia. In such a milieu, the spectacle of football can suddenly shift to symbolic and factual violence. One of the main tools of the complex Italian counter hooliganism model (CHM) is the *Tessera del tifoso*, a compulsory fan ID scheme adopted in 2009 to curb football spectator violence. This paper attempts to systematically evaluate this scheme for the first time, adopting as its conceptual frame Giorgio Agamben's concepts of the state of exception, bare life, the (concentration) camp, and *dispositivo* (apparatus). It is argued that the *Tessera del tifoso* serves as a most prominent example of a CHM based on a permanent state of exception manifested by an increase in State surveillance, control, and regulation of fans' lives with potential implications for their civil liberties and freedom.

Introduction

Through different but complementary analyses, Michel Foucault (1977, 1978) and Giorgio Agamben (2005) have stressed how State power is exercised on individuals and groups. Both social theorists have examined relationships between power, surveillance technologies, and increasing State regulation of human life. Influenced by Foucault's analysis, Agamben (2003b) has pointed out how an increase in control over citizens' lives comes with governments' recurrent use of a "state of exception" logic, which shapes citizenship, politics, and, most importantly, identities in the name of security. When governments invoke the concept of identity, in many cases this is related to some sort of risk control priority aimed, for instance, at perceived deviant groups such as illegal immigrants (Ajana 2010). Identity is used as a criterion for providing individuals with rights and duties but it may be employed to exclude individuals or entire social groups, promoting hostility in public opinion and often creating new "folk devils." In this milieu, ID card schemes may become a form of social control and discipline, and for this reason, they have been hotly debated in the literature and have been linked to issues of nationality, governmental surveillance, and civil liberty (Bozbeyoğlu 2011; Browne 2005).

Football (soccer) is not alien to the concept of risk control. In Europe, the securitization of the football stadium has been coupled with discourses focusing on the notion of identity. The securitization of fans'

identities has become crucial to the Italian counter hooliganism model (CHM) (Testa 2010, 2013; Testa and Armstrong 2010).

This paper is the first to systematically assess the *Tessera del tifoso* (football fan card) scheme, which constitutes an important part of the Italian CHM. In doing so, the paper uses as its conceptual framework the work of social theorist Giorgio Agamben (2003b, 2005). The *Tessera del tifoso* is a compulsory ID card scheme that was introduced in 2009 by the Ministry of the Interior (*La Gazzetta dello Sport Online* 2009); each card bears the holder's name and photo, allowing stadium stewards and police officers to easily control football fans.

To accomplish our aims, this paper opens by explaining the theoretical frame of the analysis and specifically Agamben's (1996, 1998, 2001, 2003a, 2003b, 2005, 2006) concepts of the state of exception, the (concentration) camp, bare life, and *dispositivo* (apparatus). The final section of this analysis¹ employs Agamben's concepts to examine the *Tessera del tifoso* scheme, in turn discussing its possible implications for Italian football fan rights while at the same time presenting recommendations to balance the just aims of the Italian government to maintain public order while respecting fans' civil liberties.

Giorgio Agamben, Sovereignty Power, and Legalization of Lawlessness

For decades, we have been living in a state of exception which has become the rule, just as in the economy, crises are constant. Nowadays, the state of exception, which should always be limited in time, is the model ordinarily adopted by governments, and this occurs precisely in countries that call themselves democratic.²

Agamben opens his elocution by pointing out that what is commonly referred to as life was for the ancient Greeks divided into two different concepts: *Zoē*, denoting the common life of all living beings and what Agamben terms "bare life," referring to a valueless life that views the human as a bodily organism, and *Bios*, which refers to full life in the community with political dignity regulated by laws. Sovereignty works neither in *Bios* nor in *Zoē* but in the relationship that constitutes them. A transformation from bare to politically recognized life involves a change to what is deemed a valuable or "good" life. However, Agamben warns that this process can be reversed. To describe this shift, he employs the ancient Roman law concept of the *homo sacer* (Garofalo 2005). A *homo sacer* (sacred man) was defined as a man found guilty of a crime and who, as such, was considered to be liable for sacrifice by the community to the Gods.

¹ This study is based on three research strategies. It first adopts an Agambenian conceptual frame. This framework was used prior to data collection and after our literature review as the "scaffolding" of the study creating "categories" and "descriptors" using in the coding process (Owen 2014: 7). Our second strategy focuses on data collection from documents such as governmental directives, laws, sentencing examples and debates listed in socio-legal periodicals and in the Italian media. Data were collected from 2013 to April 2017; the author of this study used online search engines and Italian research engines such as *DeJure* and *Altalex*; several keywords were used, including "*Tessera del tifoso*," "*calcio e violenza*" (football and violence), "*violenza negli stadi*" (violence in stadiums), and "*stadi daspo*" (football banning order). Our last research strategy involves a "directed content analysis" using MAXQDA. Employing the theoretical framework to categorize prior research, the author identified significant notions and variables and used them as initial coding groups (Hsieh and Shannon 2005; Potter and Levine-Donnerstein 1999); subsequently, operational definitions for each category were determined using the theory. The categories used reflect concepts such as the state of exception, the (concentration) camp, bare life, and *dispositivo* (apparatus). An audit trail was implemented to promote research accountability and a neutral free research process. When data did not fit the coding categories, they were examined to determine whether they could fit an existing category as a subgroup or form part of a new category.

² Giorgio Agamben's interview given to Italian journalist Peppe Savà (2012).

The homo sacer occupied a no man's land between political life and the execution of the death sentence, residing outside of the community but not yet outside of existence; a man divested from all political and religious dignity and reduced to pure material existence, excluded from political life (Agamben 2001). This man ceases to belong to the community—to the dimension of the “insider”—and is relegated to a non-place par excellence—“outside.” The homo sacer loses his identity to remain “naked,” devoid of essence, rich only of his own *Zoē*, and occupying a “bare life” common to all living beings.

Sovereignty banishes uniqueness, depriving individuals of political rights and rendering them subjects of its force, determining who lives and who dies. This condition is clearly represented symbolically by today's illegal immigrants; the term “illegal alien” adopted in the USA labels and shapes an individual's existence as a criminal while at the same time it does not recognize any legal status for migrants. Through this process, illegal aliens become de facto bare lives living in a stateless condition. Agamben (2003), through his analysis, clarifies how bare life is created. He explains that in the western civilized world, bare lives are produced through the state of exception. The state of exception is the *conditio sine qua non* necessary for bare life to manifest. Agamben's state of exception has its roots in Carl Schmitt's theory; Schmitt explains that the foundation of the State is based on the state of exception, a condition that goes beyond current laws where a system of laws no longer works but a new system is not yet promulgated and working. Hence, those who make decisions during this timeframe exercise sovereignty and with each decision generate a new legal order (Schmitt 2006).

A permanent state of exception is central to understanding western politics; through this process, individuals can be stripped of their *Bios*, becoming bare lives; this describes the process of excluding an individual from the *polis* while at the same time highlighting processes of objectification carried out by the sovereign to rule. Agamben identifies the state of exception as the political-legal mechanism through which the exception and the law become indistinguishable. The exception is the original structure through which the law refers to life and it includes life in itself via “suspension” and exclusion. Today, the exception is the norm and it is so widespread that anyone in a democratic State can risk becoming a bare life. To explain this bio-political aspect of sovereignty, Agamben uses the example of a (Nazi) camp (Agamben 1998). In the camp, the political identities of inmates are erased and they are reduced to a mere biological existence, recipients of the full force of sovereignty. The sharp divide between *Zoē* and *Bios* forms the basis of Agamben's biopolitics. The need for the sovereign of a “space” devoid of political rights—within which it asserts its power in an immediate and unmediated way—promotes disturbing circumstances; refugee detention centers such as the French Sangatte but also casual contract workers and benefits claimants are examples of those who are segregated in these real and symbolic spaces.

The camp keeps expanding in today's society. While in a totalitarian regime, a charismatic leader may condemn any individual to a bare life, in a democratic State, individuals who have the potential to become bare lives can contribute to other individuals becoming bare lives; the inner and outer borders of the camp are increasingly blurred to satisfy the need for pre-emptive risk management (Rose 2000). In turn, following Diken and Laustsen (2003), we move from an exceptional discipline tool, such as Foucault's panopticon, to a generalized surveillance function represented by Agamben's idea of the camp, wherein individuals are not only scrutinized but can also be transformed into bare lives. Surveillance thus involves not only observing but also controlling and regulating lives. In this milieu, processes of social inclusion and exclusion can occur via mobile forms of surveillance such as national and international ID schemes and their databases (Rose, as cited in Diken and Laustsen 2003). Foucault considers these techniques of control manifestations of biopower; however, Agamben goes beyond Foucault's biopower concept. Biopower is the meaning hidden in any form of power that throughout history is designed to take over and dominate the life of the “other.” According to Agamben (2006), this domination is accomplished via *dispositivo* [apparatus]; *dispositivo* is “anything that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviors, opinions, or discourses of living

beings” (Agamben 2009: 14). In modern society, *dispositivi*³ are constantly used, fostering biopolitical processes that not only repress but also promote life, categorizing individuals into those who are desirable in terms of behavior and those who resist and are a nuisance to society. This creates a paradox of citizens who in being treated as criminals tend to consider “normal” a rapport between the State and its citizens characterized by suspicion and control (Agamben 2003a).⁴ Following this logic, compulsory ID schemes not only promote social sorting as a form of surveillance (Lyon 2007) but may as a byproduct target every citizen who does not fit sovereign normalization standards. This “unintended” consequence occurs so often that it raises questions surrounding the democratic nature of today’s society.

Adopting an Agambenian approach, this paper will assess: 1) whether the *Tessera del tifoso* scheme may be regarded as originating from a state of exception and if increased levels of surveillance and control exercised by the scheme over football fans have the potential to be extended to other Italian societal domains as the metaphor of the camp suggests and 2) whether the *Tessera del tifoso* has the potential to exert biopower and to ultimately create bare lives curbing fans’ civil liberties and freedom.

State of Exception, Bare Lives, and Beyond: Making Sense of the *Tessera del Tifoso*

In 2016, after the Milan vs. Juventus Italian cup match, a group of Milan fans stormed a pub located in the capital city of Rome and stabbed two Juventus fans. In total, 71 fans received DASPOs (stadium banning orders) and the police seized knives, screwdrivers, paper bombs, firecrackers, batons, and drugs. While these weapons did not enter the football stadium, they were ready to be used outside of the venue (*RAI news Online* 2016). One year later, in 2017, two cars owned by the President of the Pescara FC were allegedly destroyed by the Pescara FC fans in retaliation for the team defeat (6 -2) against the SS Lazio (*Sky Sport Online* 2017). Recent data released by the *Osservatorio Nazionale sulle Manifestazioni Sportive* (2017) (the National Observatory on Sporting Competitions [ONMS])⁵ about the football season 2017-2018 still make somber reading: it reports an increase of football matches injured from 19 to 30; the injured among the police forces is increased from 21 to 24; and among Stewards⁶ there is an increase from 1 to 3.

This situation is also complicated by the proven links between some hardcore football fans and the extreme right and the mafias.⁷ Such episodes underscore that violence in Italian football is still an unresolved problem; since 1963, Italian football has caused 22 deaths, as Table 1 shows.

The *Tessera del tifoso* scheme was introduced in 2009 by the Italian Ministry of the Interior to tackle football violence. However, since its implementation, the *Tessera del tifoso* has spurred controversy and has been protested by Italian fans; even the European Football Federation (UEFA) in 2010 expressed its perplexities about the scheme. The former UEFA president Michelle Platini stated, “I do not like the *Tessera del tifoso*; the UEFA does not support police records on fans.” It is our contention that the *Tessera del tifoso* scheme and the evolution of the Italian CHM have not only shown their inefficacy but may be considered as a good living example of Agamben’s state of exception process.

³ Plural for *dispositivo*.

⁴ Bourdieu (1993) would identify this due to the State’s use of symbolic violence.

⁵ The ONMS is composed of representatives of sport institutions and police forces who not only monitor the development of the football season to prevent violence but who, according to intelligence, may also advise local authorities to stop matches to ensure public security or to apply any action to prevent the escalation of violence and racism.

⁶ Private security officers managed by the football clubs.

⁷ To read more about the link between Italian football and mafias, see Testa and Sergi (forthcoming).

Table 1: Football-related Deaths

Date	Name	Match	Episode
28 April 1963	Gaetano Platano	Salernitana-Potenza	Hit in the temple by a bullet fired by a rival fan
28 October 1979	Vincenzo Paparelli	Roma-Lazio	Injured by a petard fired by a rival fan
21 March 1982	Andrea Vitone	Roma-Bologna	Killed by a fire started by a petard released in a football shuttle train
8 February 1984	Stefano Furlan	Triestina-Udinese	Killed during clashes between rival fans at the match
2 October 1984	Marco Fonghessi	Milan-Cremonese	Killed after being stabbed by rivals after the game
13 April 1986	Paolo Stiroli	Pisa-Roma	Killed by a fire in a football shuttle train
7 December 1986	Giuseppe Tomasetti	Ascoli-Sambenedettese	Sambenedettese fan stabbed by rivals
23 October 1988	Nazzareno Filippini	Ascoli-Inter	Ascoli fan killed during clashes between rival fans
4 June 1989	Antonio De Falchi	Milan-Roma	Roma fan killed after an attack from rivals outside of the stadium
10 January 1993	Celestino Colombi	Atalanta-Roma	Died after fan clashes during the match
30 January 1994	Salvatore Morchella	Ragus-Messina	Died after jumping from a football shuttle train to escape opposition fans
29 January 1995	Vincenzo Spagnolo	Genoa-Milan	Genoa fan stabbed by Milan rivals
4 May 1997	Roberto Bani	Salernitana-Brescia	Died during fan clashes in the stadium
1 February 1998	Fabio di Maio	Treviso-Cagliari	Died during fan clashes after the match
23 May 1999	Ciro Alfieri, Giuseppe Diodato, Vincenzo Ioio, Simone Vitale	Piacenza-Salernitana	Killed by a fire on a Salernitana football shuttle train
17 June 2001	Antonio Curro'	Catania-Messina	Messina fan killed by a petard thrown by rival fans
20 September 2003	Sergio Ercolano	Avellino-Napoli	Napoli fan who fell from a wall during fan clashes at the match
27 January 2007	Ermanno Licursi	Sammarinese-Cancellese	Manager of Cancellese killed during a clash between rival fans
2 February 2007	Filippo Raciti	Catania-Messina	Police inspector killed while policing violent clashes between rival fans and police after the match
11 November 2007	Gabriele Sandri	Motorway A1, fuel Station Badia al Pino	Lazio ultras killed by a police officer intervening to stop clashes between rival ultras in a motorway service station

30 March 2008	Matteo Bagnaresi	Motorway, fuel station Crocetta near Asti	Hit and killed by a bus carrying Juventus fans
25 June 2014	Ciro Esposito	Napoli-Fiorentina	Killed by gunshot fired by a Roma ultra

Common Good, Fans, and the State of Exception

Whether authoritarian or democratic, many governments explain their actions by using the notion of the common good (Edwardes, Hosein, and Whitley 2007). This concept was used by the Greek philosopher Plato and it has been linked to the value of justice. According to Plato, political decisions should consider common benefits to the whole society. In this way, people can be united and not divided by conflicts (Ferrari 2007). However, the common good concept tends to be quite vague, taking different meanings according to different people. For the utilitarian Jeremy Bentham, good is equal to human happiness; the government's role is to promote the sum of human happiness while minimizing the amount of suffering. Edwardes, Hosein, and Whitley (2007) detail how the common good can also mean "safety" according to philosopher John Locke, "liberty" according to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and the elimination of "social harms" for Karl Popper. The common good logic makes it an extremely easy (and in some cases dangerous) tool that governments can use to justify their actions and to implement their ideological agendas by using exceptions. In fact, this idea is often invoked in 21st century society as a means to address deviance by focusing on surveillance and risk control (Murakami Wood, Ball, Lyon, Norris, and Raab 2006). Within this context, uncertainty and predictability become a significant means to ensure security and to justify emergency actions such as pre-emptive surveillance (Rabinow and Rose 2003, 2006). This setting may be conducive to the Agambenian state of exception. In reference to liberal democracies, Agamben believes that states of exception are created through a consistent erosion of legislative power that is replaced with a strong executive power. Currently, modern democracies have witnessed a blurring of boundaries between executive, legislative, and judicial powers. This trend is risky, as it can lead to the production of bare lives, singling out and excluding perceived troublesome social groups. The Italian Counter Hooliganism Model (CHM) serves as an example of this process, as its expansion has been based on a constant erosion of the autonomy and power of scrutiny of Italian parliamentary power via the use/abuse of *Decreti Legge* (Decree Laws).⁸

The Italian government's intervention to tackle football violence started with Law 401/1989, the first law aimed at resolving this problem (Testa 2013). Since 1989, Italian counter hooliganism legislation has become increasingly complex (Testa 2010; Testa and Armstrong 2010). The body of regulations has often been developed by the government via *ad hoc* public and political panic-induced interventions. One of the most incisive interventions has involved increasing the monitoring and control of fan stadium access. In 2005, this strategy took a strong turn when the government introduced stadium stewards. However, the most important development has involved formalization via *Decreto Legge* (Decree Law -DL) n. 162/2005 of the *Osservatorio Nazionale sulle Manifestazioni Sportive*. Moreover, in 2005, control over access to football stadiums has become more stringent, tickets have become nominative, and fans now have to show their ID cards to purchase tickets to watch away games. Fans must also provide copies of their ID cards, which are sent to local police stations.

In 2007, the government promulgated DL n. 8/2007, which introduced the DASPO (football banning order) to be issued by the city chief of police, and Article 9 (Law n. 41/2007), which forbids football teams from selling tickets to individuals who have been convicted for offenses carried out because of or

⁸ *Decreti-Legge* (DL). The DL is a provisional measure issued by the Italian government with the force of law. Article n. 77 of the Italian Constitution states that in cases of extraordinary need and urgency, the government can issue a DL.

during a match, even if sentences are not final. Two years later, the government introduced the *Tessera del tifoso* scheme via a ministerial directive (*La Gazzetta dello Sport Online* 2009). The cards are similar to credit cards in their use of radio-frequency device (RFD) technologies; they are issued by football clubs and are now compulsory for the purchase of seasonal tickets. Each card includes a picture of the fan, allowing police and stewards to easily identify the holder and to control access to stadiums. To obtain a card, a fan must subscribe to an ethics code. The scheme's promoters have claimed that it is not a controlling or repressive tool. Instead, it aims to provide fans with privileged access to stadiums, with a simplified means of purchasing tickets, and with the ability to take advantage of promotions and opportunities not only through football fan clubs but also for financial services offered by banks supporting the *Tessera del tifoso* scheme. However, to obtain a card, fans must meet stringent criteria and police must ensure that holders are not DASPO receivers and, following Article 9, have not been convicted (even for a non-final sentence) for football violence five years preceding the submission of a card application form. Data on fans are managed and stored by football clubs. Article 9 has thus become crucial to the scheme. In protest against this *en masse* fan filing system, many supporters have decided to refuse the *Tessera del tifoso* system and to instead purchase match tickets.

In 2010, the ONMS informed fans that the scheme was to become compulsory for watching away games. Also, in 2010, the Italian government audited the scheme's impact in terms of reducing violence. Even though the government assessment was somewhat controversial, the Ministry of the Interior affirmed that the card scheme had reduced violence levels. However, some media outlets and several associations were dismissive of the government's analysis. They stated that the card scheme's function to prevent non-cardholders' (those deemed dangerous by authorities) access to stadiums has been circumvented, as most hardcore fans had still been able to enter stadiums, creating risks to public order. The stratagem adopted involved purchasing tickets for other sections of a stadium excluding terraces, hence creating dangerous conditions whereby rival fan groups watched matches in the same section.

In January 2010, in response to widespread protest from fans and to address their complaints regarding the storage and sharing of personal data collected at the point of *Tessera del tifoso* subscription, the Italian Ombudsman for Data Protection ruled that football supporters who subscribe to the card must be informed of how their personal data are treated and stored. A fan's consent must also be obtained when data are used for marketing purposes (Pizzetti 2010). In 2011, the Italian Council of State argued that forcing fans to sign a contract with a bank to receive a card is unlawful and an unfair business practice (Pellizzari 2011). In the same year, the government instituted the *questura* online system (police station online). This new addition to the scheme requires that a football club's ticket office must be linked to the national police database, allowing for the real-time vetting of fans, thus verifying an absence of security impediments to accessing a stadium. In the same year, the ONMS also agreed with football authorities to introduce a significant restriction on fan movements. Tickets were in turn sold only to those fans living in the Italian region where a match was played.

In 2012, the ONMS declared its intention to replace the *Tessera del tifoso* (TDT) with the Fidelity Card (FC) system. This news was well received by the majority of fans and by Federsupporters (the Italian Football Fans Association). ONMS directive n. 6/2012 stated that the new card would be similar to a loyalty card, entitling holders to discounts and other benefits connected to their favorite football teams (Bianchi 2012). The new card would have also allowed fans to purchase match tickets for themselves and for their acquaintances. Some newspapers claimed that the scheme's repressive and bureaucratic model was replaced by a more fan-friendly one; the new scheme would have made it easier to access a stadium and would have enabled fans to attend away games. However, the Italian police chief publicly rejected this interpretation, reiterating that nothing had changed in terms of violence prevention and public order dispositions (*La Repubblica Online* 2012). Hence, the entire bureaucratic process used for accessing stadiums was not changed. Moreover, security dispositions and the compulsory nature of the card remained in place. The implementation of Article 9 and the connection with the Italian police real-time

vetting system (*questura online*) were unchanged, to the disappointment of the many fans and fan groups who complained of being singled out and treated unfairly for the actions of a few violent individuals. In fact, the only difference between the TDT and FC was that the latter had no credit card functions.⁹ The ONMS intervention also stated that a TDT-FC holder could purchase tickets to away games as long as *questura online* vetting was applied. For this reason, in 2013, several football clubs, and particularly the AS Roma, started to issue their own away football match cards, allowing fans to travel to watch their teams play; however, this did not replace the government-promoted scheme. This type of card was created in an attempt to distance itself from the TDT-FC. The card lacked an ethics code for fans, a chip, and RFID technologies, and so there were no links to financial institutions. Implemented by the AS Roma Club and by other clubs, the scheme essentially created a dual system whereby traditional TDT-FC cards supported by the Italian government were juxtaposed with away games cards supported by clubs, as these were perceived as being more fan-friendly.

In 2013, the Salernitana vs. Nocerina football match (Lega Pro) was suspended 20 minutes after it had started. The ordeal began when the chief of police of the city of Salerno forbade Nocerina supporters from attending the game due to concerns of possible violence. Fans of the Nocerina team did not accept this decision and asked their players to withdraw from the match in protest, thus threatening them. Even though the police reassured the team and its players against potential fan reprisals, the team decided to stop the match, pretending that five players had been injured during the game. After interrupting the match, the Nocerina fan Facebook page invited all fans to celebrate in the city's Piazza Diaz (Diaz Square) and to wave the team's flag. From this episode, the new coalition government led by Democratic Party (PD) leader Matteo Renzi announced the institution of a task force to formulate new strategies to tackle football fan violence (*Sky Sport Online* 2013). The task force aimed to revise the TDT-FC once again, strengthening the stadium steward's functions.

In 2014, the task force issued a series of recommendations that made it easier to purchase football match tickets online using smart phones. Additionally, tickets could be sold at the last minute prior to a match, and parents could bring their minor children to a stadium.¹⁰ It was also recommended that football clubs appoint a supporters' liaison officer to help improve relationships between clubs and fans. As far as the TDT-FC was concerned, the task force did not abolish the card; however, it was no longer required for children under 14 years of age.

The task force's recommendations were not well received by many supporter groups. In April 2014, a public meeting was attended by representatives of fan organizations from across Italy, including basketball fan groups (*Telenord Online* 2014). During this meeting, the conveners expressed their reservations surrounding the card and Article 9. In 2014, the author of this paper asked the president of the Federsupporters—an organization that was part of the task force—if anything had changed in relation to the controversial TDT-FC. The president confirmed that many changes had been welcomed as they aimed to improve relationships between authorities and fans; however, security/public order dispositions were left unchanged by the task force, showing that there was more to be done in this respect.

In August 2014, during the Napoli vs. Fiorentina match played in Rome, a Neapolitan fan was killed by a hardcore Roma fan, and riots broke out between fans and police forces (*Il Fatto Quotidiano* 2014). The Italian government responded with a new DL (n. 119/2014), extending the DASPO's application to those convicted of public order offenses; the DASPO was increased to up to 10 years for recidivists (FIGC

⁹ As no substantial differences exist between the *Tessera del tifoso* and Fidelity Card in terms of violence prevention and risk control functions, the paper uses TDT-FC as their acronym.

¹⁰ Task Force Report retrieved from http://www.governo.it/sites/governo.it/files/misure_stadi.pdf.

2014). The *arresto in flagranza differita* (deferred arrest-DA)¹¹ was extended to those who had promoted racial, ethnic, and religious hatred. A group DASPO could be issued so that anyone, regardless of guilt, could receive a ban order if one happened to be in the company of troublemakers. The Minister of the Interior could forbid fans from traveling to watch away games for two football seasons. The ONMS was also given the right to assess a match's level of danger and to stop a match; its decisions were final. Finally, for those fans who were DASPO first-time recidivists, the "public security special surveillance" prevention measure used for terrorists and Mafia members would be applied. Those under special surveillance must adhere to strict rules (e.g., not leaving their homes without alerting authorities, remaining at home at night [from 10:00 pm to 6:00 am], and not participating in public meetings). The TDT-FC was left unaltered.

In assessing the development of the Italian Counter-Hooliganism Model, it is evident that the excessive use of rushed decree laws has introduced exceptional dispositions into the Italian legal framework. The preventive DASPO and Deferred Arrest, both controversial in relation to football fans' civil liberties (Testa 2013), were introduced through decree laws.¹² The TDT-FC also serves as an example of this trend; it was not even implemented through a decree law but instead through a simple government dispositive that is not a law but has the same degree of power. In 2009, the Italian government implemented a compulsory ID system targeting a specific segment of the Italian population: football fans. A parliamentary debate on its introduction did not occur but would have been advisable, as this would have unearthed its possible negative consequences on Italian football supporters and assessed its effectiveness in terms of stopping violence. One of the main effects of the TDT-FC has been to promote the construction of a specific social group—football fans—as a threat to public order. It signifies a change in the relationship between fans and the State; fans must identify themselves to avoid being framed as a danger whether this is justified or not. The ONMS stands at the apex of the all-seeing eye of State surveillance. Since its institution, this entity has gained substantial discretion and decision-making power, expressing its vetoes on football matches; on movements of fans; and on the legitimacy of their banners, chants, and other activities in stadiums. Moreover, through its bureaucratic process, the TDT-FC has—together with the police militarization of the football match, restrictions imposed on fans (control over chants and banners), and the use of old, unsafe stadiums¹³—discouraged ordinary fans from gathering at stadiums. The latest research from the Italian think tank Censis (2017) shows that attendance at Serie A matches is 20% lower than in Spain and 40% lower than in the UK.

The last seven years have witnessed a significant increase in State control and discipline imposed on Italian football fans. The Italian football stadium has played a pivotal role in this process, showing potential to become a symbolic borderless location or an Agambenian camp—a space of discipline and control, posing concerns for all citizens' freedoms and civil liberties and promoting bare lives.

The "Camp," Bare Lives, and the Italian Terraces

In risk-control societies, there is always the possibility of shifting from an exceptional discipline to generalized control, extending the Agambenian camp to other domains of society. Means of signifying practices of surveillance and punishment may be used to normalize other social groups in other "troubling" social circumstances. In Italy, the possibility to translate these practices of control from the football stadium to the street is real. In 2015, following the first of May protest held in Milan against

¹¹ When it is not possible to immediately arrest a suspect for security or public safety reasons, the suspect is still considered to occupy a state of *flagrante delicto*; hence, the police could arrest a suspect 36 hours after the perpetration of a crime by using video-photographic evidence or other rather vague "objective elements" (see Testa 2013).

¹² For an analysis on their implications for football fans' civil liberties, see Testa (2013).

¹³ The average age of an Italian stadium is 62 years, and among the oldest are the Venezia stadium (1913) and the Siena and Livorno (1938, 1935).

government economic austerity, fights erupted between a collection of protesters and police. The police trade union organization SIAP invoked the use of the football DASPO on the protesters, and minister of the interior Alfano supported this idea (*RAI News Online* 2015). It was also not by chance that after violent episodes occurred in Rome in the preceding year, the government announced new counter hooliganism dispositions, including them in the context of a plan to render the capital city a national “security model” (*Il Sole 24 Ore* 2014), targeting ways in which social protest could be expressed. The potential for the football DASPO to be used outside of the stadium was manifested in 2017 when the urban DASPO was introduced; individuals deemed antisocial or undesirable, including homeless persons, would be banned by local authorities (mayors) from accessing city areas where antisocial and undesirable behaviors are displayed. As part of the DASPO, the TDT-FC was hypothesized to be extended to the monitoring and control of protesters; the same holds true for trade unions and students (*Blitz Quotidiano* 2010; *Senza Soste* 2010). This intention shows the potential role of the TDF-FC as a *dispositivo*: a fundamentally tactical tool designed to rationally strengthen relationships, to direct them in a certain way, to block them or fix them, and to use them (Agamben 2006). In the case of social protest, the TDT-FC can be used to discipline and control State-perceived troubling segments of the population, even though article 21 of the Italian Constitution states that all citizens “have the right to freely express their own thoughts by word in writing and by all other means of communication.”¹⁴

In this milieu, biopower not only represses but also promotes life. Biopower classifies individuals into desirable ones who behave appropriately by following dominant social standards and those who resist and who thus should be normalized or excluded. This paper argues that fan obligations to join the TDT-FC scheme has not only promoted social sorting as a form of surveillance (Lyon 2007) but may promote bare life as its by-product; the scheme combines exclusion with the differentiation and classification of individuals. In this regard, the introduction of the TDT-FC has had several implications. First, according to Article 9 (Law 41/2007), fans who have not been definitively condemned for football-related crimes can experience difficulty in obtaining a TDT-FC (i.e., in accessing a stadium even when in the meantime they have paid their debt to justice via the DASPO).¹⁵ This point is significant because fans are denied access to a stadium until the judicial process has ended with either a conviction or an acquittal, and in Italy, it takes a long time before a court appeal is exhausted and a defendant is finally sentenced. The Court of Human Rights has condemned Italy several times for its lengthy penal process. To date, the situation has not improved (Custodero 2016). Thus, fans risk being punished twice via the DASPO and when the DASPO expires via Article 9 for not qualifying for the card until the judiciary process is complete.

The second consequence is that this compulsory ID scheme has not only promoted inequality between “ordinary citizens” who are only required to possess one ID card and football fans who are required to possess two forms of compulsory identification, namely the State ID card and the TDF-FC. Rather, it has also been used to promote social sorting between “good” (normalized) fans who possess the card and “bad” fans who do not possess the card either because they have failed its stringent screening process or because they refuse to join a scheme that is considered an infringement on their civil liberties of freedom of movement. These fans are banned from the game because they are viewed by the State as a threat to the social order. This exclusion for the “common good” conflicts with article 3 of the Italian Constitution, which prescribes that “all citizens must have equal social dignity and are equal before the law without distinction of sex, race, language, religion, political opinion, and personal and social conditions.”

Finally, the scheme presents another possibly unfavorable consequence. As noted above, in 2012, the ONMS allowed all football clubs to develop away games cards provided that purchases were made by

¹⁴ Italian Constitution accessed from: <http://www.constitutionnet.org/files/Italy.Constitution.pdf>.

¹⁵ It is worth mentioning that the DASPO is already a controversial tool and serves as another clear example of the “state of exception” nature of the Italian counter hooliganism model (Testa 2013).

following the same security vetting procedure approved by the government. In 2013, AS Roma away game cardholders (approximately 6,000) were barred from watching the Serie A's Livorno-Roma game because 23 fans were considered dangerous by the ONMS (Zucchelli 2013). Thus, cardholders who had passed the *questura online* screening test and who had paid for a card were denied their right to watch the match. However, AS Roma fans holding a TDT-FC government card were able to attend the match. In September 2013, a similar situation occurred at the Parma vs. Roma match, when all 6,000 away game cardholders were deemed undesirable. These episodes show the importance of the ONMS' as an unquestionable judge that (on the State's behalf) may decide who is or is not a "desirable" supporter while discriminating not only between TDT-FC holders and non-cardholders but also between those who possess the "right" card and those who do not, even when the security vetting procedures used are the same. This modus operandi is a fundamental trait of the Italian CHM, which is based on a general deterrence rationale; in the hope of preventing a small minority of individuals from engaging in violent behavior, the State disciplines and controls all fans by preventively restricting their movement via the TDT-FC.

The TDT-FC, while justified by the Italian government as a means to promote public security at football matches while at the same time providing benefits to fans and strengthening their relationships with their favorite teams, seems to have developed into something completely different. This compulsory ID scheme is playing an important role in the progressive securitization of Italian football and fans without, most importantly, significantly curbing the recurrence of violent episodes. To support this statement, we highlight one of the many episodes of violence that has occurred due to Italian professional football. On May 2014 (5 years after its implementation) during the Coppa Italia's Fiorentina vs. Napoli match held at Rome's Olympic Stadium, three Napoli football fans were injured by an AS Roma ultras' gunshots before the match had started (*Il Fatto Quotidiano Online* 2014), and one Neapolitan fan died. Such violent events have certainly not been stopped by the TDT-FC program; in fact, football spectator violence is on the rise; data for the 2014-15 and 2015-16 football seasons confirm this trend and are supported by the Italian chief of police (Pasqualino 2017; Custodero 2015). The latest report of the Italian Football Players Association (2015-2016) (Associazione Calciatori 2017) stresses a 125% increase in threats, intimidation, and physical aggression against players and teams.

A Eurispes survey (2014)¹⁶ has also documented Italians' perceptions of football spectator violence; only 20.7% of the Italians interviewed (1 in 5) stated that football stadiums are safe. In contrast, 60.7% viewed stadiums to be dangerous and as places where children should not be brought, as violence between fans and between fans and police often occurs. Italian chief of police Franco Gabrielli (2017) confirms this perception and has stated to the Italian Parliament antimafia commission that convicted criminal individuals are frequently present in Italian football terraces (Bazzucchi 2017). For instance, he states that 27% of AS Roma *curva* (terrace) ticket holders have criminal records. These results—which should be read considering also the increase of racism in the Italian football stadium¹⁷—are significant and not surprising, as solutions that address football violence cannot be based solely on pre-emptive and repressive State measures as the Italian approach shows. Rather, it is imperative to ensure that football

¹⁶ Survey retrieved from: <http://www.eurispes.eu/content/calcio-eurispes-il-607-dei-tifosi-lo-stadio-%C3%A8-un-posto-pericoloso>.

¹⁷ L' *Osservatorio sul razzismo e antirazzismo nel calcio* (The Italian Observatory on Racism and Anti-Racism in football) recently pointed out that during the ongoing season 2017-2018, 60 significant episodes of racism have occurred and this anomic context is gradually extending to youth tournaments (Cf. <https://www.avvenire.it/agora/pagine/razzismo-nel-calcio-e-nel-calcio-giovanile>). The author of this paper is currently working as an expert in the steering group of the European Union-funded project BRISWA, a project co-financed under the E+ programme (EAC/A04/2015), which aims to study how racism manifests (recent trends) in football, to assess police and decision-makers' interventions determining good and bad practices, and to provide policy recommendations to stakeholders.

clubs, authorities, police, fan associations, and fan liaison officers collaborate constructively to promote a positive fan experience while keeping the public safe.

Conclusion

These years of recurrent emergency developments of the Italian counter hooliganism model have promoted the gradual expansion of a corpus of measures for the “deviant football fan” based on an “exceptional” logic that does not always seem consistent with the Italian legal system’s principles of fairness and equality. Rather than criminalizing all football fans, it would be more fruitful to ensure that all stakeholders collaborate constructively in the management and control of stadiums to improve the fan experience. This approach is promoted in the UK by ENABLE, a participatory action research project started in Sweden, which aims to gather evidence and to analyze, identify and develop good practices in the management of crowds at football matches (Stott, West, and Radburn 2016).

In relation to applying the TDT-FC, the Italian government should carefully assess its effectiveness;¹⁸ such an assessment should be done by an independent body. We argue that, like schemes employed in other European countries such as Croatia and Poland, the TDT-FC should be abolished in favor of adopting a more holistic counter-hooliganism strategy.

First, the professionalization of stewards must be promoted, as stewards have important responsibilities in controlling stadiums, monitoring fans within stadiums, vetting fans at access gates, and notifying the police of suspects and offenders. No stringent criteria are used to select stewards; generally speaking, stewards in Italy are inexperienced and poorly trained low-paid students, or they are unemployed persons or pensioners who take the job to earn extra money. Unlike systems in place in the UK, in Italy, training courses are brief (lasting from 42 hours to 6 days), and no prerequisites or licenses are required to perform the job. Concomitantly with the complete re-thinking of the stewards’ organization, the use of the supporter liaison officers (SLO) must also improve and must reflect exactly the guidelines issued by the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA).¹⁹ A 2017 survey of the Federsupporter (the Italian football supporters association) highlights significant problems in relation to the use of SLOs by the Italian football clubs. As mentioned earlier, in 2014 the Government Task Force made recommendations to tackle football fan related violence. One of the most significant recommendations was to implement the UEFA guidelines prescribing that every football club must appoint an SLO. They must also include in their websites a section that focuses on the SLO, aiming to establish a dialogue with the fans. Most importantly, the SLOs must work in collaboration with the *delegato sicurezza* (security officer) and must attend the meetings of the *Gruppo Operativo Sicurezza* (Security operative unit) (Federsupporter 2017: 42). The survey results were discouraging, and none of the main guidelines were respected; the Federsupporter (2017) findings include a lack of interaction between the SLO, the police, and the *delegato sicurezza*; SLOs are most of the time unaware of the decisions taken, during the away matches, by the

¹⁸ In 2017, the Italian government expressed an intention to make the TDF-FC more “fan” friendly; however, the compulsory trait remained unaltered so that fans, if they wish to buy a yearly ticket or attend the away matches, must have the TDF-FC. The process to obtain the TDF-FC, which has been analyzed by this paper, is largely unaltered, including the power of the National Observatory on Sporting Competitions to stop fans’ access if not possessing the TDF-FC.

¹⁹ The Union of European Football Associations clearly defines supporter liaison officers (SLOs) and their functions: The SLO is “a bridge between the fans and the club and help to improve the dialogue between the two sides. Their work is dependent on the information they receive from both sides and the credibility they enjoy with both parties. The SLO informs fans about relevant decisions made by the club management and, in the other direction, communicates the points of view of fans to the club management. The SLO builds relationships not just with various fan groups and initiatives but also with the police and security officers. The SLO engages with SLOs of other clubs before matches to contribute to supporters behaving in accordance with security guidelines” (UEFA 2011: 10).

police in relation to the use of banners, drums, and megaphones. Most notably, SLOs do not have a constant dialogue with the clubs and their different departments.

Second, there remains the problem of aging and, in some cases, dilapidated football stadiums. While several new stadiums are projected to be built or restructured in the near future, this involves a very lengthy process, and currently many Italian stadiums are not entirely safe environments for fans and their families. From a crowd management perspective, the period of fan outflow from stadiums should be relatively brief; the access points for emergency vehicles, personnel, and police forces should be ensured in preparation for emergencies or risky situations.

Finally, and equally importantly, it is necessary to modify the rationale on which the Italian CHM is based. The literature on extremism warns against the use of draconian, punitive, and pre-emptive responses and emergency dispositions (Huysmans and Tsoukala 2008). In some cases, they can have a paradoxical effect, favoring the radicalization of individuals and ultimately increasing levels of violence. Such risks are even more evident when governments deal with political and ideologically oriented fans significantly represented in Italian terraces. It would thus be advisable, for instance, to impose a lifetime DASPO on recidivists, but only for offenses that have been committed twice; two strikes of legislation have proven effective at deterring recidivism (Shepherd 2002), and this approach has been adopted by the UK government for those who carry knives (Travis 2015). When issued a DASPO for the first time, an offender should also attend a compulsory social cognitive skills-based rehabilitation program (Bennett, Farrington, and Huesmann 2005; Robinson 1995; Pullen 1996; Walters 1999). Football violence offenders are largely ideologically oriented in Italy (Spaaiji and Testa 2016) and tend to employ a skewed self-justifying cognitive process that frames them as victims unjustly blamed by the State and by the police. This under siege warrior logic (Testa and Armstrong 2008, 2010; Testa 2010) is based on a shift in personal responsibility and on distorted moral thinking. Programs such as the Italian Exit Onlus, which is aimed at violent radical right extremists, after being appropriately modified, could prove useful. This type of program involves one-on-one sessions/interactions based on principles of empathy, trust, and work-relationship building, while at the same time promoting critical thinking to address distorted moral reasoning (prejudice, racism, xenophobia, and ethnic/cultural polarization) and abusive group issues. By applying these recommendations, the Italian CHM would be perceived by fans as firm but fair, a perception that is not widely shared in Italian terraces; this could also help revert the extent to which fans, treated as criminals, view suspicion, filing, and control as the norm in dealing with the Italian state.

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