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The Ustica Tragedy in 1980 Italy: War in the Mediterranean?

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On June 27 1980, during the night, a civil airplane (DC-9 Itavia) flying from Bologna to Palermo in Italy blew up and disappeared into the Mediterranean Sea next to Ustica island. All 81 passengers on board died. The most complete inquiry conducted by Judge Rosario Priore concluded in 1999 that the DC-9 accident "occurred following military interception activity". It did not, however, identify any guilty party. In 2007 Francesco Cossiga, who was Prime Minister in 1980, declared that the DC-9 was mistakenly shot down by a French missile, so leading to the reopening of the case with new international information requests. More recently Giuliano Amato, a PSI leader and Prime Minister in 1992, partially confirmed Cossiga's words, speaking about a NATO covert action aimed to strike a Libyan aircraft (because of the alleged presence of Qadhafi on board) which was hiding itself under the Italian civil airplane. More than forty years after the events, however, we still do not know exactly what the reasons underlying the tragedy were and which countries were guilty and the Ustica tragedy is still one of the biggest unsolved mysteries of Italy. The aim of the present paper is not, of course, that to reach a complete conclusion as to who is directly to blame for the tragedy. As an international historian, the aim of the author is instead to turn back to the events of that time trying to put together the many pieces of the puzzle and to provide a plausible international framework for the tragedy. It is not possible, in fact, to isolate what happened in Italy on June 27 1980 from the patchwork of international tension of that time (from Afghanistan and Iran to Middle East, North Africa and Malta just to mention the main arc of crisis) as well as from the traditional dual track of Italy's foreign policy, the Atlantic one and the Mediterranean one.

Keywords: *Ustica, Italy, Libya, War, Cold War*

Introduction

On June 27, 1980, during the night a civil aviation plane flying from Bologna to Palermo in Italy blew up and disappeared into the sea next to Ustica island. All 81 passengers on board died. We still do not know today what exactly happened that night and the Ustica tragedy is still one of the biggest unsolved mysteries of our country.

Last September, Giuliano Amato, former Prime Minister in 1992, in an interview in the Italian newspaper *La Repubblica* explicitly described a scenario of a covert war in the Italian sky and called upon the Macron government in France to collaborate in the search for the truth on the Ustica tragedy and apologize to Italy for France's role in it (Fiori 2023).

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Amato's statement reopened a wide-ranging debate in Italy, dividing public opinion into those who applauded his courage and those who questioned his motives and the timing of his words, assuming reasons of self-interest (Abbate 2023, Bobibi 2023, Tobagi 2023, Vecchio 2023, Ginori 2023 Cappelli 2023, Noto 2023, Tonacci 2023).

It was the President of the Association of the Ustica victims' families, Daria Bonfietti, who apparently closed the September debate stating that, in any case, Amato's declaration marked a step ahead in the direction of the search for the truth, after 43 years in which "it was exactly that lack of truth which was depriving Italy of its dignity" (Bonfietti 2023).

The Ustica affair may be considered from a variety of perspectives. The intent of this paper is to analyse it from a historical point of view.

For many years I have had the privilege of being a member of a Scientific Committee of historians involved in extensive research around the Ustica tragedy on the basis of new declassified primary sources, in collaboration with the Association of the Ustica victims' families.

What contribution can history make? I would like to start my reflections quoting Luca Alessandrini, who is the coordinator of the above-mentioned Scientific Committee:

> *Can history repair things? No, it can't. It cannot give lost lives back, it cannot give back those decades of missed reconstruction of responsibilities, it cannot relieve the private pain of families and the public pain of citizens. History, in any event, can place the issue in a bigger framework, in a more complete collective past, so raising awareness. It is something like a grieving process. There is pain, a vacuum, loss – in this case of loved ones, of public truth, of State, of justice and democracy. The loss cannot be filled, but the grieving process can help with acceptance of the idea that it happened and can help those affected to live with it* (Alessandrini 2020, p.10).

I will organize the analysis into three parts. Firstly, after attempting to put together the many elements useful to reconstruct the event, I will endeavour to summarize the main steps taken by the Italian justice and political systems in the search for the truth. Secondly, I will go deep into the international framework of the Ustica tragedy, describing international relations and Italy's foreign policies at that time. Doing so, I will propose the main hypotheses formulated up to today in an attempt to explain the most plausible scenarios of the tragedy. In conclusion, I will say a few words about the process of public memory building in these 44 years, starting from the setting up of a memorial museum in Bologna, where the wreck of the plane is preserved.

From a methodological point of view, starting from considering the main theses proposed by scholars as well as by journalists to explain the Ustica tragedy, the essay will summarize the most significant conclusions of the original research conducted by the author as well as by the other members of the above-mentioned scientific Committee. This research is based on both secondary and primary sources, with particular reference to newly declassified diplomatic documents in the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Malta and Italy. It is worth mentioning here the important turning point represented, from the perspective of

the archival research in Italy, by the Renzi Directive, the executive order by which the then Italian President of the Council of Ministers, Matteo Renzi, in 2015 requested the many Italian public Administrations to release documents relating to the Ustica tragedy and to other dramatic episodes of recent Italian history[1]. Notwithstanding the many limits of this documentary declassification process, the Directive represents an important step in the direction of the building of a more transparent political system.

The Event, the Italian Justice and the Political System

As I mentioned before, the night of the 27 June in 1980 a DC-9 Itavia civil aviation plane disappeared from the air traffic control radars near Ustica. At Palermo airport they waited for the aircraft for the whole night. It was just the next morning that bodies and fragments of the plane were discovered in the sea. 81 passengers died, including 13 children aged from a few months to 12 years. Only 38 bodies were ever recovered. Immediately, numerous inquiries started and a variety of hypotheses were formulated. Foreign advisors were consulted, air traffic control notes and radar records were looked for (some were found to be incomplete, some others concealed, some others destroyed).

Initially, a structural failure of the aircraft was supposed. Then other hypotheses prevailed: that of a terrorist attack (there could have been a bomb on board), that of a missile deployed by a military aircraft or that of a collision during the flight (Ranci 2020, Biacchessi Colarieti 2002).

Last but not least, what happened in the sky over Ustica on June 27 was linked by many people to the recovery two weeks later, on July 14, of a Libyan MIG aircraft on the Sila mountains in Calabria, in the South of Italy, not far from where the Itavia plane crashed into the sea (Tucci 1980). Some depositions suggested in fact that the Libyan MIG crash could have happened some days before and so could be directly linked to the DC-9 tragedy.

In the immediate aftermath of the tragedy, Itavia was taken as the scapegoat for what happened, up to the point of forcing the company to close under economic pressure, notwithstanding the first inquiry report transmitted to the Italian parliament excluded the hypothesis of a structural failure of the aircraft (Ranci 2020, p. 104 ss.).

After that, silence falls: a “Wall of Rubber” (“Muro di gomma”) – to cite the apt expression from a Dino Risi movie of 1991 – symbolizing the impermeability of the political system. Neither the Parliament, nor the political parties, nor public opinion developed a specific interest in the Ustica tragedy, with the only exception of some Italian newspapers, first of all the *Corriere della Sera*. It’s worth mentioning here the important contribution of Andrea Purgatori, the recently

[1]Renzi Directive. Archivio Centrale dello Stato. Rome: https://acs.cultura.gov.it/tag/documentazione-declassificata/.

deceased Italian journalist, who was the first to put forward the missile theory and did much to keep public interest alive[2].

The first turning point was in 1986, when the Committee for the truth on the Ustica tragedy was established. The President was Francesco Bonifacio, former President of the Corte Costituzionale and it was composed by leading personalities including Adriano Ossicini (vice President of the Senate), the members of Parliament Antonio Giolitti (Socialist Party), Pietro Ingrao (Communist Party) Pietro Scoppola (Cristian Democracy Party) and Stefano Rodotà (Independent Left) and by the sociologist Franco Ferrarotti. The Committee signed an appeal to the then President of the Republic, Francesco Cossiga, requesting to put an end to the silence and to cast light on the case[3].

Thanks to Cossiga's interest and to the action of Giuliano Amato (who was then the Secretary of the Council of Ministers in the Bettino Craxi government) the amount needed for the recovery of the wreck was allocated and in 1987 the French company Ifremer started a complex operation to bring the wreck to the surface. In the meantime, public interest grew and in 1988 the Association of the relatives of the victims was established. In the same year, the Parliamentary Inquiry Commission on terrorism began working on the Ustica tragedy (Ranci 2020, ch. 4).

Another important turning point was in 1990 when Judge Rosario Priore took the lead of the inquiry. His investigation lasted 9 years and it counted 350 witnesses, 980 search warrants, 89 legal examinations and up to 300 international rogatories. It was during this period that the DC-9 wreck was reassembled in the hangar of Pratica di Mare to be inspected by Judge Priore and his consultants.

When Judge Priore closed his investigation, his final judgement was 4969 pages long[4]. In his investigation, Priore could not identify the perpetrators of the Ustica tragedy and therefore he could not open a trial on the massacre's causes and perpetrators. However, he excluded both the structural failure and the bomb hypotheses and accused many Italian officials of perjury, abuse of authority and aiding and abetting. He also committed to trial four Italian Generals with the charge of high treason, for omitting in their communications to the government important information on military aircrafts in flight next to the DC-9[5].

It's worth recalling here that in his judgement Judge Priore underlined the scenario of international war in which the Ustica affair took place: "Beyond any doubt the DC-9 accident occurred following military interception activity"[6]. "The lives of 81 innocent citizens were lost in an action that was nothing less than an act of war, an undeclared war, a covert international police operation against our country, whose boundaries and rights were violated" (Biacchessi Colarieti 2002, p. 15).

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[2]In the month of August 1980 Purgatori was the only journalist who supported the missile hypothesis (Purgatori 1980).

[3]Appeal to Cossiga (1986).

[4]*Priore Final Judgement*, Ordinanza Sentenza Priore, Procedimento Penale Nr. 527/84 AGI. (https://www.stragi80.it/documenti/gi/).

[5]The four Generals, Lamberto Bartolucci, Zeno Tascio, Corrado Melillo, Franco Ferri were definitively acquitted in 2007. (See: N.A. 2007).

[6]*Priore Final Judgement*: 3953.

More than that, on the basis of numerous witnesses and evidence, Priore confirmed in his judgment that the Libyan MIG discovered on the Sila mountains in Calabria fell some time earlier than when it was found. Therefore he concluded that it appears likely that it fell in the same circumstances in which the Itavia DC-9 precipitated.[7]

More recently, in 2011, the Court of Palermo ordered the Defence and transportation Ministries to compensate the victims families for not having ensured their safety during the flight and having withheld the truth. The Supreme Court confirmed the verdict, thus underlining that the most likely causes of the incident were either a missile strike or a collision during the flight (Ranci 2020, pp. 12-13).

Despite these juridical conclusions, however, it is still not clear which countries were responsible and which flags the aircraft in the Italian sky that night flew.

An important turning point was Francesco Cossiga's declaration in 2008 on TV and then to the judges. He stated: "When I was President of the Italian Republic in 1986, our intelligence service informed the then Undersecretary Giuliano Amato and me that it was the French, with an aircraft carrier, that launched a missile…". He then went on to say that the French had information that Qadhafi could be on board, but he was saved because the Italian intelligence service SISMI had informed him of a possible attack and he decided not to fly[8]. As I mentioned at the beginning of this paper a more recent interview with Amato confirmed this hypothesis. On the Italian newspaper *La Repubblica*, in fact, Amato asserted that the most credible thesis was that of a simulated NATO military exercise, intended to cover an attack on Qadhafi's MIG, and that the error that saw the DC-9 being struck could be attributed to the French Airforce, with American complicity (Fiori 2023).

Both these statements, therefore, suggest the same thesis, that the Itavia DC-9 was struck down in error by a missile launched from a French (or American?) aircraft in search of a Libyan MIG – on which Qadhafi was presumed to be travelling – which was hiding itself under the Italian DC-9.

While this is the most accredited hypothesis, numerous other possible explanations have been put forward. We shall explore them in the next part of this paper, discussing in depth the international scenario of those days.

The International Scenario

The role of the historian may be valuable in depicting the background to the tragedy and the framework in which it happened. If during the night of 27 June 1980 the Itavia DC-9 encountered on its route the missile which would interrupt its flight, it is a central question for historians to understand which countries could have entered Italian airspace and territorial waters. We should therefore place the Ustica tragedy within the context of Italy's foreign relations at that time. As Luca

[7]Ibid: 4963.
[8]Interview to Francesco Cossiga. *SkyTG24*. 19 February 2008.

Alessandrini wrote, quoting March Bloch "History can provide contexts; can provide interpretations … A historical phenomenon is never properly explained without reference to the historical moment in which it takes place" (Alessandrini 2020, p. 8).

Even just a quick glance back at the international scenario in the summer of 1980 allows us to understand how crucial that moment was.

The year 1980, in fact, represents a real turning point between a period of detente between the US and the USSR and one of renewed tension which led historians to speak about a "Second Cold War".

From the East to the West everything seemed to indicate that détente had completely disappeared: the assault on the American Embassy in Teheran in November 1979 with the taking hostage of 53 American embassy staff, and, just one month later, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979; the Soviet SS20 missiles in the East of Europe and the decision of the Atlantic Alliance to install mid-range missiles in some Western European countries, which caused great tension in Europe (Westad 1997, Westad 2005). As Leopoldo Nuti wrote: "the end of 1979 seemed to be the point of no return of an apparently unstoppable tendency towards confrontation, and 1980 saw the coming back to a logic of a head-on collision between the blocs after years of dialogue" (Nuti 2020, p. 22, Bill 1998).

Particularly important in that context was the Middle East theatre, after the signing of the Camp David Agreement, by which for the first time an Arab Country, Egypt, recognized Israel. In a few short months Egypt became isolated within the Arab World, was expelled from the Arab League and a new tension arose in the region.

In this scenario of growing tension, in the same 1979, Saddam Hussein increased his leadership in Iraq and decided to accelerate the national nuclear program. France and Italy collaborated with Iraq in the nuclear field, exporting a variety of materials destined for its reactors, so distancing their policy from that of the United States, which in the same period condemned Iraqi nuclear policy and added Iraq to the list of countries which supported terrorism. Israel was, however, the country which feared most Iraqi nuclear acceleration. And it was Israel which was suspected to be the mandator of some attacks against a number of French industrial plants that produced parts of Iraqi reactors. This culminated in the well-known Osirak episode in June 1981, when the Israeli government attempted to solve the problem by bombing the Iraqi Osirak reactor then under construction (Weissman Krosney 1981, Braut-Hegghammer 2011).

This regional scenario serves as the backdrop to a first hypothesis concerning the Ustica tragedy, which traces the origins of what happened in the Italian sky in June 1980 back to the framework of Israeli-Iraqi-French relations. In the opinion of Claudio Gatti, a well-known Italian scholar, who in 1994 published a book entitled *Il quinto scenario* (The Fifth Scenario), the Itavia DC-9 was struck down in error by a missile launched from an Israeli fighter plane which mistook it for a French aircraft that it was supposed was transporting uranium to Saddam's Iraq. Claudio Gatti was convinced that not only did Israel have a strategic interest in attacking French-Iraqi collaboration, but it also had the military competence to do

that and an intelligence organization able to cover the entire operation (Gatti Hammer 1994).

Considered by Judge Priore during his nine years investigation, Gatti's thesis was at the end rejected because of lack of sufficient evidence about an Israeli's aircrafts presence in the airspace over Ustica.

Italy was indeed concerned to what was happening in Middle East, due firstly to its relations with Iraq, but more than that it was the Mediterranean context that attracted most Italian attention. In the summer of 1980, in fact, Italy played a pivotal role in avoiding an alteration of the military balance in Southern Europe after the 1979 British retreat from Malta, a crucial Mediterranean crossroads. On August 2, 1980, Italy and Malta signed in La Valletta a bilateral agreement under which Italy would assure Malta's neutrality with an additional protocol that provided direct economic assistance. Under this agreement Italy appeared to replace the UK in preventing Moscow from acquiring air and naval bases, as well as facilities on the island and, at the same time, it appeared to succeed in keeping Malta from shifting towards Libya (Merlati 2020, Merlati and Vignati 2023).

On the same date, while Italian Undersecretary of State Giuseppe Zamberletti was signing the agreement in La Valletta, a bomb explosion in Bologna railway station caused more than 200 victims.

One of the various hypotheses proposed during the years to explain the Ustica tragedy is the one put forward by Zamberletti. In his opinion, the Ustica and Bologna tragedies were closely connected and both were directed by Qadhafi. As clearly emerges from Zamberletti's book of 1995 "*La minaccia e la vendetta*" (The Threat and the Vengeance), the Ustica tragedy was the threat of Qadhafi, who wanted to send Italy the message not to sign the Italian-Maltese agreement. The Bologna station bomb was then the vengeance for having signed it. The reasons lay in Qadhafi's hostility towards Italian Maltese policy which excluded Libya from a crucial point in the Mediterranean (Zamberletti 1995).

Judge Priore took all these elements into deep consideration and also in more recent times the public debate has moved back to Zamberletti's interpretation (Grignetti 2016a, b). In terms of evidence, however, the numerous examinations of the wreck conducted from 1990 to 1999 excluded the possibility of a bomb on board, thereby failing to confirm the main assumption of a Libyan terrorist attack.

The last scenario we are going to consider, the North African one, is certainly no less complex and directly calls into question French and American responsibilities, as mentioned above quoting Cossiga's and Amato's affirmations.

Qadhafi's Libya was again one of the main actors. We must consider Libya's relationship with the US separately from Libya's relationship with France.

Relations with the US were at this time full of contradictions and, from 1977 to 1980, the Carter administration had to carefully consider Qadhafi's Libya because of the many interests involved as well as because of the new sources of tension which arose. On the one side, the US imported more than 40% of Libyan total oil production and in Libya up to 4000 American citizens worked (Nuti 2020, p. 33). But on the other side, the assault on the American Embassy in Tripoli in December 1979 created deep tension. This episode – quoting Leopoldo Nuti, who carefully studied Us foreign policy towards Libya during the Carter years –

marked a "point of no return in Us-Libyan relations", even if many attempts to defuse tension were made (Nuti 2020, p. 36).

Nevertheless, Nuti admonishes, it would be an error to exaggerate this state of affairs. "From a methodological point of view, the risk is to backdate to 1980 the many strong tensions between Washington and Tripoli which were to develop in the following years, particularly under Reagan". In other words, "in 1980 Libya was a growing problem, of course, but not a primary objective of US foreign policy, as it became in the following years." (Nuti 2020, p. 43).

A unilateral and isolated American covert action to eliminate Qadhafi in June 1980 does not appear, therefore, entirely plausible. Different considerations, however, should be made about a possible involvement of Giscard D'Estaing's France. The topic has been explored in depth by the Italian scholar Bruna Bagnato, who for many years has been engaged in archival research on French policy in North Africa.

Relations between France and Libya "at the hour of Ustica" were "complex, ambiguous and tortuous, subject to the turbulence of Tripoli's aggressive strategy towards Egypt, Tunisia and above all Chad" (Bagnato 2020, p. 81).

In January 1980 some Tunisians armed and trained by Libyans conducted a raid in the city of Gafsa, in Tunisia, assaulting government buildings. France sent there its soldiers, thus provoking a strong Libyan reaction: at the beginning of February the French embassy in Tripoli and the consulate in Bengasi were attacked and diplomatic relations between the two countries were interrupted (Bagnato 2020, p. 85).

At the same time, turning to Chad, Qadhafi was trying to extend his influence over the country by supporting rebel forces (also against the French) in a context of civil war. Above all, Qadhafi was attempting to interfere in Egypt's internal affairs, thus provoking Sadat's reaction. There is much evidence of concerted Egyptian-French plans to eliminate Qadhafi, dating back to 1977. Giscard D'Estaing himself mentions in his memoirs a 1977 joint plan (D'Estaing 2004, pp. 178-181). Furthermore, in 1980 a new Egyptian-French collaboration would lead to a military uprising in Tobruk (Bagnato 2020, p. 84).

If French involvement in the scenario of the Ustica tragedy is therefore quite plausible considering French-Libyan relations at that time, how can we explain the Italian involvement? Why, in other words, was it in Italian airspace that the enemy aircraft were chasing each other?

"Italy had an American wife and a Libyan lover". This is the well-known sentence largely used in the public debate to indicate the deep ambiguity of Italian-Libyan relations in those years. The relationship with Qadhafi was fed by political ambiguities, economic convergences and personal complicities, while at the same time Italy aimed to play a significant role in the framework of NATO countries.

The Seventies had been a period of great prosperity in Italian-Libyan relations from a commercial and economic perspective. Just think of the intensity of the exchanges between the two countries (in 1977, 25% of Libyan imports came from Italy) and of the cooperation agreements which provided that Libya would supply Italy with oil and Italy would build refineries and infrastructure in Libya (Vanderwalle 1995, Cresti Cricco 2012, Varvelli 2009). As a consequence of that,

Italy ended up maintaining a political approach towards Libya which was in contrast with that of the Allies.

After the Gafsa events, Italy did not condemn Qadhafi as the other allies did, carefully considering not to damage ongoing cooperation agreements. Also in April 1980, despite numerous political assassinations of Libyan citizens in Italy and in other European countries, Italy failed to join the Allies in taking a stand against Qadhafi. Through UK archival sources we now know how enormous the British effort to convince the Italians to take a stand against Qadhafi together with other European countries was and also how the main Italian concern remained that of navigating through "conflicting pressures". From the UK Foreign Office perspective, the principal reasons behind the Italian "ambiguity" were its enormous economic interests at stake with Libya[9].

Above all, more important in the framework of the Ustica affair, there was another hot issue in Italian-Libyan relations: the undisturbed use of Italian airspace by Libyan military aircraft. We are referring to what is known as "the Yugoslav corridor": based on a secret agreement between Libya and Yugoslavia, Libyan aviation could use Yugoslav airports for training and repairs. On the route to Yugoslavia, Libyan military aircraft could cross Italian airspace without any formal authorization, taking advantage of the deficiencies of the Italian radar system (Ranci 2020, p. 42).

This "Italian inattention" was a source of great concern in the United Kingdom. Writing from the Embassy in Rome to the Foreign Office about the Libyan MIG crash on the Sila mountains in Calabria, the Embassy official W. R. Tomkys underlined how the "activities of Libyan air force interceptor aircraft over the Mediterranean [were] of continuing interest to the Department" and added that the MIG incident was "embarrassing" for Italy for not having intercepted it[10].

In his final judgement Judge Priore explicitly refers to those "holes of the Italian radar system" as the framework of what happened during the night of the 27 June 1980[11].

Conclusions

There was a war, in conclusion, in the Mediterranean on the night of 27 June 1980. It was a covert war which violated Italian borders and sovereign rights, killing 81 innocent civilians. After 44 years, and notwithstanding an enormous number of inquiries, we still do not know exactly who was fighting in the Italian sky that night. Those who knew did not speak.

It is not too late, however; a lot of work has been done and many hypotheses have been formulated and scrutinised. Historians on one side and public opinion on the other could still participate in the search for the truth. Historians can go on

[9]Telegram from M. E. Pellew (Embassy in Rome) to J. Crosby (FCO), "Italo/Libyan Relations", 12 June 1980, FCO 93/2345, The National Archive UK (TNA).
[10]Telegram from William Roger Tomkys (British Embassy, Rome) to Douglas Hardings (FCO), "MIG 23 Crash in Calabria", 4 August 1980, FCO 93/2345, TNA.
[11]*Priore Final Judgement*: 4962.

exploring the archives and through their research can contribute to distinguish between different scenarios and make the context of the tragedy increasingly clear. Public opinion can put pressure on governments, demanding serious commitment in the battle for justice, first of all within the framework of Italy's current international relations.

As mentioned before, credit should be given to Daria Bonfietti, the President of the Association of the Ustica victims' families, for having stimulated an ongoing public debate around the Ustica tragedy and for having contributed to building a public memory of it over the years.

One of the most important steps of this process was the creation of the Memory Museum in Bologna, inaugurated in 2007. The wreck of the DC-9 was transported there from Pratica di Mare and the recently deceased artist Christian Boltanski created an installation to host it: around the reassembled wreck there are 81 dark mirrors and 81 loudspeakers broadcast sighs and whispers of simple, common sentences, thus underlying how random and ineluctable the tragedy was. Big black boxes containing the passengers' belongings (shoes, toys, glasses….) are placed next to the wreck.

The cinema as well has played an important role in cultivating the memory of Ustica over the years, starting from the above mentioned "Muro di Gomma" of 1991, up to the more recent movie "Ustica" by Renzo Martinelli. They are completely different movies: the first recounts "the guilty silence of politics, while the second, also thanks to the advice of Judge Rosario Priore, is an attempt to propose a plausible thesis around the tragedy. Both of them, however, represent important steps not only in the process of public memory building, but also in the search for the truth and justice. Doing so, they are an example of civil engagement.

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