LULU CONFLICTS AND REACTIONS TO PERCEIVED INJUSTICE. AN ITALIAN CASE STUDY

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RESUMEN	ABSTRACT
La resistencia local en contra de los controvertidos usos del territorio es un fenómeno común que se encuentra con una creciente regularidad en todos los países democráticos. No obstante, en este momento, no se conocen muy bien las reacciones cognitivas a la percepción de injusticia en este tipo de conflicto. A partir del estudio sobre el movimiento italiano contra las líneas de tren de alta velocidad, (LULU) se presentan dos estudios cualitativos. En el primero, el análisis de contenido muestra que los activistas percibieron las consecuencias, los procedimientos y las interacciones con los agentes que toman las decisiones como injustas y mostraron un proceso de información *dietrológico*. En el segundo se confirman los resultados del primero y se identifican modalidades parecidas de percepción. Por último, se plantean las implicaciones y limitaciones de la investigación realizad	Local resistance to controversial land uses is a common phenomenon occurring with increasing regularity in all democratic countries. However, little is known at present about cognitive reactions to perceived injustice in such conflicts. Using as case study the Italian movement against the High Speed Railway (HSR), I performed two qualitative studies. In Study 1 content analysis revealed that activists perceived as unfair the outcomes, the procedures and the interactions with the decision-making agents and showed *dietrological* information processes. In Study 2 the results from Study 1 were confirmed and paranoid-like modes of misperception and misjudgement were identified. Limits and implications of this research are discussed.

Key words: LULU conflicts, perceived injustice, paranoid social cognition, decision processes.

Local resistance to controversial land uses is a common phenomenon which occurs with increasing regularity in all democratic countries (Bobbio, 1999). It has been matter of concern for public administrations almost elsewhere, since many locally unwanted project sitings have come to a

standstill (Bobbio, 1999). In North American and European countries protest movements emerge almost every time the authorities propose the localization of unwanted plants, so often that it has been coined an acronym, NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) to describe them (Dear, 1992). This label reflects the point of view of the general interest bearers and assigns a negative connotation to protest movements. In particular, it has been recently observed that the NIMBY syndrome perspective is based on assumptions of irrationality, selfishness and ignorance of siting opponents that empirical evidence have systematically not confirmed (e. g. Futrell, 2003; Gibson, 2005; Roccato, Rovere, & Bo, 2008); hence, in this paper, protest movements will be referred to as LULU (Locally Unwanted Land Uses) (Freudenberg & Pastor, 1992), a more neutral label from a value judgment standpoint. Moreover, social movements are today a matter of great concern because they promote a new form of participatory democracy: Raising expectations that people should be involved in decision-making processes pertaining to all the aspects of the public life (Moyer, MacAllister, Finley, & Soifer, 2001), they develop as responses to the traditional political participation on the wane (Bobbio, 1999).

Many authors recognize perceived sense of injustice as an important spring of mobilization for the opponents. For example, Klandermans' psycho-political approach (1997) suggests that sense of injustice (as well as collective identity and collective efficacy) represents a key element of collective action. Many recent researches confirmed the efficacy of such factors in predicting collective action (e.g. van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008) and, more specifically, in predicting participation in LULU movements (Mannarini, Roccato, Fedi, & Rovere, in press). The literature shows that opponents' perceived sense of injustice is often experienced towards decision makers and authorities (Burningham, 2000; Wolsink, 2006), underlining the relevance of procedural and interactional facet of sense of justice, as evaluations of the siting decision process (Mannarini, Caruso, & Lana, 2008).

Many social and political psychologists have addressed their interest to the perception of procedural justice. Thibaut and Walker (1975) showed that procedural justice influences individuals' reactions to the outcomes they receive, as well as their evaluations of the parties responsible for the decision. Their definition of procedural justice included two main features: Process control, referring to how much people are allowed to have their say

before the decision is made, and decision control, that is, whether people have any say in the actual return of the decision. Since these first contributions, it has been suggested that other factors may influence people's perception of procedural justice. For example, Leventhal, Karuza, and Fry (1980) claimed that procedures are judged as fair if they are performed consistently, without self-interest, in the basis of accurate information, with the opportunities to correct the decision, with the interest of all concerned parties, and following moral and ethical standards. More recently, researchers showed that procedural justice also depends on the conduct of the decision makers, identifying two main factors of the interpersonal facet of procedural justice (also called interactional justice) (Bies, 1987): Whether the reasons underlying the decisions are clearly and adequately explained to the affected parties (Bies, Shapiro, & Cummings, 1988), and whether those responsible for the decisions treat the affected people with dignity and respect (Bies & Moag, 1986).

Initial studies on procedural justice were conceived to discriminate between procedural and outcome fairness: Methods for separating the effects of outcome and procedure variables were used (for example, Folger & Konovsky, 1989; Greenberg, 1990; McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992; Tyler & Caine, 1981, Tyler & Lind, 1992). However, Brockner and Wiesenfeld (1996), based on the analysis of 45 independent studies, showed the interactive effects of procedures' and outcomes' representation and evaluation to explain individuals' reactions to decisions. Three features of the interaction have been pointed out: (a) when outcome are unfair or have a negative valence, procedural justice is more likely to have a direct effect on individuals' reactions; (b) when procedural justice is relatively low, outcome favourability is more apt to show positive correlations with individuals' reactions; and (c) the combination of low procedural fairness and low outcome favourability raise particularly negative reactions. Among the theories that may account for this interaction effect, the Referent Cognitions Theory (henceforth RCT) (Folger, 1986) is apt to explain the impact of distributive and procedural justice on individuals' feelings of anger and resentment toward the decision-making agent (Brockner & Wiesenfeld, 1996); therefore, it may be considered as the most fruitful theoretical frame for the present research, designed to study the perception of procedural and distributive justice in LULU movements (Mannarini et al., 2008).

Folger (1993) suggested a review of the construct of relative depriva-tion originally proposed by Stouffer, Suchman, DeVinney, Star, and Wil-liams (1949), which claimed that people are discontent and potentially re-bels when they perceive a discrepancy between their actual standard of life and the one they believe they should have. Folger's starting point is a link between relative deprivation and what Kahneman and Tversky (1982) called the "simulation heuristic", the active construction of mental scenar-ios, such as speculating about the possible occurrence of particular events (predictions) or reconstructing how events might otherwise have occurred in the past (counterfactuals). Simulation-derived judgments are an impor-tant component of emotional experience (frustration, regret, resentment, and indignation) that involve a comparison between an unfavourable reality and a favourable state that can be imagined (Folger, Rosenfield, Rheaume, & Martin, 1983).

To study the simulation heuristic as an underlying cognitive process re-sponsible for the occurrence of relative deprivation phenomenon, Folger proposed the concept of a *referent state*, the product of an imaginable sce-nario (simulation) involving alternatives to existing states of affairs and their anticipated consequences. The essence of the RCT can be captured in the *would/should* phenomenological account: In a situation involving out-comes allocated by a decision maker, resentment is maximized when peo-ple believe they *would* have obtained better outcomes if the decision maker had used other procedures that *should* have been implemented (Cropanzano & Folger, 1989).

The last RCT version (Folger, 1993) suggested that the joined presence of three factors might elicit more resentment than any other combination of conditions: (a) procedural unfairness, perceived when the procedures do not consider stakeholders' input or do not allow them to have any influence on the decision outcome; (b) unfavourable outcomes, considerably lower than easily imagined alternative outcomes; and (c) interactional unfairness, with unclear and inadequate explanation of the reasons for the decision and an improper and unethical conduct of the decision maker.

The social psychological literature shed some light over the outcomes, the procedures, and the interpersonal facets that might elicit reactions to decisions underlining, from a behavioural standpoint, the importance of sense of injustice for the participation in collective actions (Klandermans, 1997; Mannarini et al., in press). Furthermore many authors researching

into perception of justice used emotional reactions as dependent variables: Among them resentment and anger were the most widely considered (e.g. Cropanzano & Folger, 1989; Folger et al., 1983; Folger & Martin, 1986). Evidence from studies on protest movements also depicted opponents emotional reactions to unfair decision processes as resentful, angry, and fearful (Klandermans, 1997), but just a few contributions tackled cognitive response of recipients to unfavourable decisions.

Thus, we are far from understanding cognitive reactions that might be elicited by unfair perceived decision processes within "multiorganizational fields" (Evans, 1997; Klandermans, 1992) made up of projects proponents, media, political actors, and others (Futrell, 2003), just as the frames in which LULU movements usually develop (for an exception, see the "cognitive liberation" effect described by Futrell, 2003).

The goal of the present research was to explore perception of justice and subsequent possible cognitive reactions in LULU conflicts using as case study an Italian movement against the construction of a high speed railway (from now on HSR). The anti-HSR movement, born in the Susa Valley (near Turin, North-Western Italy) in the early 1990s, protests against the railway project designed to link the cities of Turin and Lyon within a European plan of high speed railway network.

The anti-HSR movement increased exponentially in the last years, in particular from the autumn 2005, when some clashes with the police occurred and the local population stopped the works the Government tried to begin. After these episodes the movement and the HSR project gained media visibility and, at the end of 2006, 62.7% of the Susa Valley residents were against the siting of the new railway (Campana, Dallago, & Roccato, 2007; for more details, see Ferlaino & Sacerdotti, 2005; Giliberto & Giudice, 2006; Sasso, 2006).

The first section of the paper, Study 1, consists of the first step of the research I conducted to understand whether perception of injustice was a relevant feature for the anti-HSR movement as shown in literature, and to identify possible theoretical keys for a better understanding of reactions to decision processes in LULU conflicts. Succeeding evidences presented in the first part, Study 2 intended to go into more depth of cognitive responses with individual interviews, conducted to delve into "dietrological" mechanisms as presented in Kramer's (1998) "paranoid social cognition" framework.

Study 1

Goals

Based on an exploratory qualitative approach, this study was performed with the aim of investigating the anti-HSR movement participants' perceptions of the decision process that led to the localization of Susa Valley as the site for the new railway line. In particular, the first goal was to understand whether the factors that, according to Folger's (1993) theory, might elicit more resentment in the decision recipients were present. The second goal was to recognize possible reactions to the decision process, considering both behavioural and emotional responses, and especially cognitive reactions, in order to derive from the data insights to identify a fruitful theory for a better understanding of this lacking facet.

Method

Instrument and participants

Three focus group discussions with anti-HSR movement activists were held in April-May 2006 in a meeting room in Bussoleno (Susa Valley, Piedmont). The focus groups represented the initial phase of a broad research project designed and conducted by researchers in the Department of Social Psychology of the University of Turin. Its principal results have been published in a book edited by Fedi and Mannarini (2008).

The focus group discussions were planned by the research team and explored the following topics: (a) motivations to get involved in the movement, (b) representations of the different actors involved (the anti-HSR movement, the identified out-groups, the Valley community), (c) perceived costs and benefits of participation, (d) perceptions of community changes related to protest, and (e) forecasts of the future of the HSR, of the anti-HSR movement and of the Susa Valley as a whole. Background information about the participants was collected including name, age, occupation and past experiences of participation. The focus group sessions were conducted by two members of the research group, who took turns acting as moderator and note-taker.

Eighteen anti-HSR activists (7 men and 11 women) aged 19-63 (average age 41 years) participated in the focus groups; they were recruited during episodes of mobilization.

Data analysis

   Group discussions were recorded with the permission of the interview-ees and transcribed. The texts were content analysed using the Atlas.ti software (Muhr, 1997). Codes (reported in Table 1, together with the fre-quency of each code) were assigned to parts of the text. These codes were framed ad hoc to detect RCT components of perceived injustice (problem-atic issues, alternative to HSR, lack of dignity and respect, lack in listening inputs, and unclear explanations), outgroup representation (outgroup identi-fication, outgroup interests, and relationship with outgroup), and possible reactions (emotions, behavioural responses, and "dietrology", i.e. the search of what is hidden behind the events).

Table 1.

Codes, descriptions and frequencies concerning focus groups' content analysis

Codes	Brief description	Frequencies
Lack of dignity and respect	Whether the decision makers had an improper and unethical conduct.	23
Emotions	All the emotions that participants related to the outcome, the proce-dure or the relationship with the decision makers.	23
Behavioural responses	Actions following the perception of injustice concerning the deci-sion process.	17
Problematic issues	Issues concerning the project reported as problematic.	12
Unclear explanation	Concerns the explanation of the reasons that informed the siting decision.	12
Dietrology	The search of what is hidden be-hind the events.	10
Outgroup identification	Actors (politicians, media, build-ers, etc) identified by participants as responsible for the outcomes of the decision process.	7
Alternative to HSR	Alternatives to HSR suggested by the activists.	6

Codes	Brief description	Frequencies
Outgroup interests	Every possible interest or motivation that might have led the outgroup to the siting of the HSR.	4
Lack in listening inputs	Whether stakeholders were not allowed to have their voice.	4
Relationship with outgroup	Which kind of relationship, if any, has been established with the outgroup.	2

Results

Outgroup representation

Unlike laboratory conditions pertaining to most research about perception of injustice, the study of LULU movements is concerned with a "multiorganizational field" which involves many different actors (Futrell, 2003; Klandermans, 1992); thus, the first step for understanding the perception of decisional processes was to investigate the activists' representation of the decision makers. Movement's members identified siting proposers, those who took part in the decision process and who had interests in building the new railway, mainly in politicians and building contractors related to each other and forming a single outgroup: "There is a political, industrial network that pushes… it's all one system…" (FG3—hereinafter quotations from focus group sessions are specified with the starting letters FG and the focus group's progressive number). As in Gibson (2005), several activists stated that both the actors had particular and personal interests that go beyond the civic good: "All political tricks, money tricks, mafia tricks… here there is someone's interest… to the detriment of many others" (FG2).

Sense of injustice

Anti-HSR movement members clearly regarded the outcome of the decision as unfavourable, since the new railway was what they were struggling against. In particular, interviewees revolved around five problematic issues concerning the railway project. Three of them involved the localization of the railway: (a) environmental concerns; (b) health concerns, such as the presence of uranium and asbestos in the mountains that should be pierced; and (c) transport matters, such as the few travellers interested in

moving between Turin and Lyon. The other two ones involved the project content and idea of building a HSR itself: Economic reasons on the one hand, and ideological controversies on the other hand, as an activist stated: "Should we have the myth of HSR against one's will? The myth of the rapid train, of technology…?" (FG3).

For what concerns the perception of procedural injustice, activists' discourse widely highlighted how explanations, both regarding the project itself and the reasons that led to its planning and siting in the Valley, have been missing. Proponents often promoted the plan through slogans avoiding an open discussion with the local population over technical features: "The first 'no' is for not even begin a discussion over a project like this one without talking with local people first, with people living in the territory, as it happens now…" (FG1). Participants reported that they did not have voice, neither their opinion was asked nor authorities listened to them when they proposed alternatives to the HSR project: "You cannot come here and decide on my back something that nobody requested, something about which I didn't even give an opinion because you did not even asked me" (FG1). They especially proposed the improvement of the current railway, but some also proposed broad solutions such as different money and resources allocation in other lacking sectors: "Then we demand money to be used as a resource, there are kindergartens, train stations to be reopened, they closed them" (FG1).

Finally, concerning the interactional facet of the decision process, the perception of unfairness stood out as one of the most important factors fostering sense of injustice (the code "lack of dignity and respect" and the code "emotions" were the most frequently assigned), which emerged as a shared feeling among participants who described the outgroup's behaviour as violent, abusing, frightening, and overbearing: "It was just the matter that there was an abuse, not as much toward the land, but rather toward people being there to defence the territory" (FG3).

Reactions to decision processes

Interviewees were likely to frame their protest actions as a reaction to the decision of siting the HSR infrastructure in the Susa Valley, which was perceived, as results exposed in the previous section showed, as unfair: "Those who were supposed to defend us, turned out to be muggers… after that you participate… participate to all the events organized by the anti-

HSR movement" (FG 2). Local population involved with the anti-HSR movement stopped to devolve responsibilities to others and began to participate to local initiatives: Marches, instructive meetings, electoral rolls, leafleting, and demonstrations were some of the most popular activities participants were involved in. While initiatives were increasing the number of people taking part in local actions was increasing too: Some participants claimed a high participation of local population which was congruent with results from a survey, conducted at the end of 2006, revealing that 48.0% of the local population had taken part in protest actions in the 12 months preceding the survey (Campana et al., 2007).

As far as procedural and interactional unfairness was concerned, activists' emotional reactions emerged: A sharp anger was the most frequently mentioned (11 over 23 quotations referred to it), but fear and exasperation were also present. Moreover, interviewees reported the feeling of been teased by the authorities together with the feeling of been betrayed, as in the following quotation: "This feeling of been absolutely betrayed, insulted, mocked, and teased made everybody pissed, but really everybody, from kids to seniors, without class distinction, work, profession, religious belief…" (FG 3). On the whole, signs of the mentioned sense of injustice explicitly emerged in the focus session, for example, as in the following excerpt: "You realize you are living an unfair situation that comes down from the top, and, what's more, by force" (FG 2).

Finally, for what concerns cognitive reactions to decision process, a recurring element emerged from the data: Some of the interviewees seemed to apply the same way of attempting to make causal attributions about the reasons which led to the current decision outcome. They searched for what might potentially be hidden behind the events, guessing about hypothetical proponents' evil intentions or actions, phenomenon which in Italy is often referred to as "dietrology". In this way of reasoning causal attributions sometimes developed into statements which might seem negative exaggerations of events, as this quotation shows: "Susa Valley traffic has been increased on purpose to propose and make allowance for the High Speed, so what may still shock us?" (FG 2).

Discussion

Obtained results provided qualitative information supporting the value of Folger's (1993) theory for explaining feelings of anger as reactions to

siting decision processes. Indeed, as it can be assumed according to Folger (1993), anti-HSR movement activists' resentment toward the decision makers grew jointly with the perception of injustice. The latter includes all the three factors (unfavourable outcomes, unfair procedures, and interactions) that were supposed to elicit the worst reactions (cfr. Mannarini et al., in press).

Focus group analysis also confirmed evidences concerning behavioural and emotional responses. As the literature on protest movements showed (for example, Klandermans, 1997), protest actions are related to the sense of injustice experienced by participants, as well as the first emotional reaction is anger, confirming most studies on the interactive effects of outcomes and procedures (see, for example, Cropanzano & Folger, 1989).

Coming to the most innovative results, the focus groups showed the presence of attribution strategies to which we referred as "dietrological" phenomenon, which is related to attributional instigation research and to research concerning distrust and suspicion. For what concerns the former, some authors have shown that people seek to determine the causes of their and others' behaviour when the behaviour in question is unexpected, associated with negative outcomes, or both (Pyszcznski & Greenberg, 1981; Wong & Weiner, 1981). Following this line of reasoning, since people expect and want procedures to be fair as well as their outcomes to be favourable, Brockner and Wiesenfeld (1996) underlined that people should start sense-making or information-seeking activity when procedures are unfair, outcomes are unfavourable, or both. As a result, when current outcomes are unfavourable, the level of procedural fairness should be highly informative; when procedures are unfair, the level of outcomes favourability should be highly informative in turn. They also suggested that, when outcomes are unfavourable, procedures are unfair and people are in a sense making mode, external cues that address their informational needs should be particularly influential. For what concerns the latter, researchers have recognized that distrust and suspicion are common and recurring problems both at the interpersonal and the collective level (Fox, 1974; Pew Research Center for the people and the Press, 1998; Sitkin & Roth, 1993). Suspicion, which constitutes one of the primary components of distrust, is defined as a cognitive state in which a perceiver entertains multiple hypotheses about the motives of a person's behaviour (Fein, 1996). Moreover, suspicion entails believes that "the actor's behaviour may reflect a motive that the actor

wants hidden from the target of his or her behaviour" (Fein & Hilton, 1994, p. 169).

Thus, it is plausible to broaden our understanding of the process we referred to as "dietrology" following this line of investigation, since it deals with the information seeking activity and also with a suspicious cognitive state. Kramer's (1998) paranoid social cognition articulates a new framework in which contributions of research over attribution search and over distrust and suspicion merge into. More specifically, the author elaborated on two general propositions deriving from previous empirical observations. First, there are more common variants of paranoid cognitions, defined as misperception and misjudgement, characterized by misplaced or exaggerated distrust and suspicion of others; second, paranoid cognitions may be viewed as interaction products of information processing strategies and the social contexts more relevant for the individuals. Briefly, paranoid cognitions are attempts to make sense, and cope with, a threatening social environment, in which expectations have been violated or there are no suitable and promptly available schemas for understanding what is happening. In Kramer's view, these forms of paranoid cognitions are causally connected to the social context in which the perceivers are embedded and reflect an attempt adaptation.

According to Kramer's (1998) model, paranoid social cognitions are activated by situational factors that cause states of dysphoric self-consciousness, aversive forms of heightened public self-consciousness characterized by the feeling that one is under intense evaluative scrutiny. As consequences, people are motivated to make sense of the situation that is inducing it and to formulate an adaptive response. These attempts promote hypervigilant and ruminative modes of information processing (social vigilance entails people's attempt to pay attention and to learn from others' actions, while social rumination entails people's systematic thinking about what others do as a way to decide how much to trust them) (Kramer & Wei, 1999), which in turn contribute to three distinct modes of paranoid-like misperception and misjudgement. First, sinister attribution error, i.e. the tendency to overattribute lack of trustworthiness to others (Kramer, 1994), associated with the tendency to be overly suspicious of others' intentions and motives, in particular to overestimate the extent to which others are paying attention to them and critically evaluating them (Kramer & Hanna, 1998). Second, the overly personalistic construal of social interactions, i.e.

the tendency to view others' actions in unrealistically self-referential terms. Third, the exaggerated perceptions of conspiracy, i.e. the tendency to over-attribute coherence and coordination to others' actions (Kramer, 1998).

At this stage, I considered Kramer's (1998) model as very fruitful to deepen our knowledge about cognitive responses to decision processes perceived as unfair, mainly for two reasons. On the one hand, because it is a theoretical frame conceived to explain cognitive processes through which people attempt to make sense of threatening environments, such as those in which people perceive a sharp sense of injustice; on the other hand, because paranoid cognitions may account for "dietrological" responses. Thus, I used Kramer's model in Study 2, aimed at reaching a deeper understanding of cognitive processes triggered by perception of injustice in LULU conflicts.

Study 2
Goals

Based on the evidence emerged in Study 1, this section was conceived as an in-depth examination of cognitive processes induced by the percep-tion of an unfair decision process. In particular, my main goal was to un-derstand whether anti-HSR movement participants showed paranoid-like modes of misperception and misjudgement. Following Kramer's (1998) model, I aimed to identify, besides distrust and suspicion toward the out-group, three biases: (a) the sinister attribution error, (b) the overly personal-istic construal of social interactions, and (c) the exaggerated perceptions of conspiracy. Furthermore, since the focus groups analyzed in Study 1 were conceived to perform a preliminary and general investigation of protest actions instances, I intended to consider more specifically activists' percep-tion of injustice.

Method
Instrument and participants

Eleven individual face-to-face interviews with anti-HSR movement activists were held between December 2006 and April 2007, either in their home or in public places.

Four sections composed the interview plan (I do not present here the complete interview plan due to problems of available space, but readers interested in the full version may write and ask it to me): (a) interviewee's

background information; (b) proposers -representations and relationship with the anti-HSR movement; (c) HSR- unfavourability and alternatives; and (d) decision processes, public opinion and injustice. Besides the first one, the other sections included questions aimed to investigate the following two topics. On the one hand, perception of injustice: Unfavourable outcomes, in particular asking which issues activists perceived as problematic in the project and which alternatives they thought about; unfair procedures, questioning how the project was presented and the involvement of local population in the decision process; and the perception of interactional injustice were investigated. On the other hand, paranoid-like misjudgement and misperception: Since cognitive responses concern how people search and process information to make sense of the social environment and of the relationship established with others, no explicit questions were inserted in the interview plan, but general queries concerning the outgroup and the interaction episodes were conceived.

The interviewees (4 men and 7 women) aged 25-65 (average age 47 years) were all residents in Susa Valley. Three of them were personally contacted during manifestations or public meetings, while eight were selected through a snow-ball procedure.

Data analysis

Interviews were recorded with the permission of the interviewees and transcribed. The texts were content analysed using the Atlas.ti software (Muhr, 1997). Codes (reported in Table 2, together with the frequency of each code) were assigned to parts of the text.

Table 2.
Codes, descriptions and frequencies concerning the interviews' content analysis

Codes	Brief description	Frequencies
Outgroup interests	Every possible interest or motivation that might have led the outgroup to the siting of the HSR.	53
Problematic issues	Issues concerning the project reported as problematic.	45
Unclear explanation	Concerns the explanation of the reasons that informed the siting decision.	41

Lack of dignity and respect	Whether the decision makers had an improper and unethical conduct.	38
Dietrology	The search of what is hidden behind the events.	30
Outgroup identification	Actors (politicians, media, builders, etc) identified by participants as responsible for the outcomes of the decision process.	27
Overestimate of others' attention	The tendency to overestimate the extent to which others are paying attention to the movement.	24
Overestimate of critic evaluation	The tendency to overestimate others' critic evaluation of the movement.	24
Lack in listening inputs	Whether stakeholders were not allowed to have their voice.	23
Media misinformation	Concerns either the distortion or the lack of information about the HSR plan spread by media.	22
Distrust	Concerns activists' distrust toward the proposers.	22
Alternative to HSR	Alternatives to HSR suggested by the activists.	19
Coherence and coordination	The tendency to overattribute coherence and coordination to others' actions.	17
Outgroup actions and behaviours	Which kind of actions outgroup enacted toward the movement or for the HSR plan implementation.	16
Relationship with outgroup	Which kind of relationship, if any, has been established with the outgroup.	12
Initial HSR presentation	Initial notification of the HSR plan to local population.	9
Social vigilance	The extension to which interviewees paid attention to others' conduct or motivations or the extension to which they thought they need to do it.	9
Others' actions self-referring	The tendency to evaluate others' actions in unrealistic self-referential terms.	0

For what concerns the outgroup, I kept three codes used in Study 1 (outgroup identification, outgroup interests, and relationship with outgroup) and I inserted a new code to identify outgroup behaviours and actions. For what concerns perception of injustice I also kept the same codes (problematic issues, alternative to HSR, lack of dignity and respect, lack in listening inputs, and unclear explanation), adding a new code pertaining to the notification of the project (initial HSR presentation) and a second one pertaining to media misinformation. Finally, to identify Kramer's (1998) paranoid cognitions I used two codes referring to distrust and social vigilance and four codes related to the modes of paranoid-like misperception and misjudgement (others' actions self-referring, coherence and coordination of others' actions, overestimate of others' attention, and overestimate of others' critic evaluation).

Results

Outgroup representation and sense of injustice

The interviews' content analysis confirmed evidences concerning the outgroup representation and the perception of injustice emerged in Study 1. Interviewees recognized as decision makers mainly political and economic actors (firms, enterprises, banks, and politicians), and also mafia and organized crime: "There are specific interests at an economic and a political level, then there are some economic, industrial, entrepreneurial lobbies behind all this, having an absolutely strong interest to realize public works" (10, W, A; hereinafter quotations from interviews are specified with the interview's progressive number and with the main characteristics of interviewees: gender M = man; W = woman and age Y = young, 25-35 years; A = adult, 36-60 years; S = senior, over 60 years). In addition, activists mentioned the mass media as part of the outgroup, whose members were represented as connected to each other by economic interests and personal profits. Indeed, the mass media were depicted as spokespersons, conveying information congruent with the outgroup's particular interests; activists referred to and focused on the last ones to explain what proposers thought about and pursued: "In my opinion, everything belongs to that circle I was telling about: Companies, politics, and information, that, in some way, are linked and joined together following a certain goal that was that of building and giving this plan a meaning" (3, M, A). However, it is important to notice that interviewees highlighted wide differences between local and na-

tional political actors and media: Since Susa Valley local administration was against the HSR, it was not perceived as part of the outgroup, as well as local newspapers.

Interviews analysis also confirmed that activists' perception of injustice involved outcomes, procedures and interactions, as highlighted in Study 1. Once more, five problematic issues regarding both the project and its localization emerged (issues concerning health, environment, transports, money, and ideologies). As replays to transport critical matters, interviewees set forth simpler and faster alternative solutions, such as the improvement of the current railway, while as replays to economic matters they proposed different allocations for economic resources.

In order to gain more knowledge about perceived procedural injustice, one question of the interview plan was conceived to investigate the enactment of procedures preceding the outcome. The decision process leading to the siting of the HSR has been perceived as a "decide; announce; defend" (Dad) process, a decision making strategy that places emphasis "upon minimising public involvement in the decision-making process and vesting authority and control firmly in the hands of the responsible organisations" (Kemp, 1992, pp. 167-168). Two main reasons may account for the perception of a lacking involvement of local population. On the one hand, since the localization of the new railway has been decided almost twenty years ago, some interviewees were too young to be interested in this issue and some others did not live in the Valley. On the other hand, interviewees did not have the chance to get the idea of what happened before the HSR siting because no information was available, as this quotation showed: "Nobody presented it to us! Nobody presented it to us, projects came out last spring, but… nobody even presented it to the administration, never mind to local population!" (7, W, S). Thus, they perceived they did not have any control over the process and over the outcome. Therefore, the perception of interactional and procedural injustice was tightly entwined, involving the decision makers' conduct in implementing the project itself.

Interviewees described the relationship with the proposers as uncommunicative and hostile. The lack of dialogue made the anti-HSR movement inputs and alternatives to fall on deaf ears and the explanations of the HSR siting reasons to be missing. The hostility rather led to a strong perception of lack of dignity and respect: Among the episodes activists referred to as the proponents' most unfair moves, there were the use of violence and the

settlement of armed forces in the Valley, but also corruption and territory invasion. In general, activists perceived as unfair the outgroup behaviour, starting from the project notification to the more recent political moves, and recognized in it the most important factor that prompted them to the protest:

> When I come to your home and you don't want me in, and I knock down your door, it's something that hurts and pissed you at the same time, because till a moment you have this resentment, this offence, but then, immediately start 'now I defend myself', and if you want to come in you have to knock me down (3, M, A).

Distrust, suspicion and social vigilance

The relationship with the outgroup was clearly characterized by a lack of trust. In particular, distrust involved politicians because of the motivations that induced them to stand up for the HSR (economic interests to the detriment of the "common good"), and some interviewees accused them to be in bad faith.

As far as distrust toward the outgroup was concerned, suspicion and "dietrology" emerged. Activists appeared to be troubled by what might be hidden behind the slogans the outgroup used to support their point of view: "The only replays they use are 'you are against the progress', 'not in my back yard'…" (3, M, A). According to Kramer (1998), wondering what may happen behind the surface and entertaining hypothesis about the motives and the honesty of others' behaviour are related to social vigilance and rumination: On the one hand, my interviews did not allow to infer how much time people spent thinking about others, but, on the other hand, some statements revealed that activists needed an high level of attention for not passing up what was taking place in their environment:

> It's about being in a state of alert, pricking up your ears and being ready to figure out or to capture everything for not being cheated in some ways that are deceptive, that are ways to wheedle people […] here it's like looking around and never knowing, never being safe, it's like a ghost being around you, so that you need an extreme attention, it's a tricky moment, we have to pay attention to the single words, reading between the lines, to hang in there…(10, W, A).

In regards to this topic, an interesting point of view emerged: Some activists stated they needed to pay more attention to the current Government (a left-wing coalition was in charge at the time the interviews were conducted) because it enacted community involvement policies (in contrast to the previous Government, composed by a right-wing coalition, which was easily identified by activists as an enemy) which appeared not so transparent to the eyes of participants, as clearly explain the following extract:

> We know very well we cannot trust them, but their modes changed: They are apparently friendly, they show this attitude of being friendly, of listening, of meeting us, but then you find out that initiatives they take, tactics they use, and statements they make are opposite (10, W, A).

Paranoid-like modes

When analysing the modes of paranoid-like misperception and misjudgement, it would be too much arbitrary to judge as exaggerated some interviewees' thoughts considering one version of the events to be the only true one. Thus, presenting the following results, my aim is to underline similarities between the biases outlined by Kramer (1998) and data obtained through my content analysis. Exaggeration and overstatement will not be the central core of the following results because it is not fundamental for the purpose of the present research to establish if distortions of facts occurred, but to understand if these modes of information processes are responses to the threatening environment participants were living in.

The perception of conspiracy concerns the tendency to overattribute coherence and coordination to others' actions, in particular to seek links between different actors engaged in independent actions. Although I already showed as activists reported links among politicians, the media, and economic actors, it is not proper to relate them to this bias for at least two reasons: In interviewees' perception the actors included in the outgroup were not different one from the other because they had the same interests in the HSR project; moreover, the link between economic and political interests has been object of critics by some scholars (see, for example, Cicconi, 2004; Imposimato, Pisauro and Provvisionato, 1999). Nevertheless, some particular links between the actors perceived as belonging to the outgroup emerged in the interviews: For example, an activist described the violent actions toward the local population as a tactic to arouse people and to in-

crease their opposition for having an excuse to stop the project's progress; some others explicitly stated that the Valley was living a conspiracy.

The sinister attribution error concerns the tendency to overattribute lack of trustworthiness to others and to be overly suspicious of others' intentions and motives (which is vivid and sharp in activists' words, as showed above), but, in particular, it concerns the tendency to overestimate the extent to which others are paying attention to and critically evaluating oneself. Trying to understand if activists showed this tendency, I considered both the extension to which media, as part of the outgroup, paid attention to them and the extension to which proposers seemed to be influenced by their actions. Interviewees argued that the media paid a lot of attention to the movement, "The Valley was under the spotlights" (9, W, Y) as one of them said, in particular from the autumn 2005, but gave back a negative image of it. Furthermore they asserted that the movement had a great influence on proposers' actions, and almost all of them thought to be strong and to bother them:

> If we take a look to the results, this is a project they should have been realized some twenty years ago, but there is still nothing, this means that we bother anyhow, that we caused some problems to politicians, companies (6, M, S).

Finally, for what concerns the critical evaluation of the movement, clearly emerged that activists perceived themselves to be seen and referred to just in their negative aspects, in a stereotyped manner or attributing them actions and episodes that did not belong to them: "The image is that of violent, idle, and dangerous people, I think there was a demonization, I know, the word is ugly and overused, but I really think our motivations were not presented" (5, W, A).

A final remark concerns the bias I referred to as the overly personalistic construal of social interactions. Since the interviews focused on issues pertaining to the movement participants and their relationship with the outgroup, verbalizations over social interactions regarding the activists were expected and thus they could not been considered as indications of this bias.

Discussion

Results provided qualitative information supporting evidences emerged in the first study and confirming the Referent Cognition Theory (Folger,

1986) as a fruitful theoretical framework to understand perception of injustice in LULU conflicts.

In addition to evidences from the first study, some new elements emerged. First, the media were included in the outgroup and activists widely referred to media information to understand the HSR plan development and to account for authorities' motives and actions, especially because the relationship with political and economic actors was perceived as uncommunicative. Second, the initial project notification was perceived as absent and this led to a tightly overlap of interactional and procedural injustice concerning the outgroup's conduct in implementing the decision. Rather than disconfirming results regarding the interactive effect of outcomes favourability and fairness of procedures that caused them (Brockner & Wiesenfeld, 1996), this evidence supported Folger's (1993) claim about the account of attributes of procedural unfairness that accompany the outcome itself. On the whole, an overwhelming sense of injustice was felt by all the interviewees.

The perception of unfairness made the anti-HSR movement participants in a sense-making and information-seeking mode, and external cues addressing their informational needs were particularly influential: Their relying on media information to make sense of the environment confirmed Brockner and Wiesenfield (1996) prompt on the one hand, and framed the context in which paranoid-like modes developed (Kramer, 1998) on the other hand. In fact, activists depicted their social context as a threatening environment, in which expectations regarding the fairness and equity of decisions have been violated. Thus, facing an environment characterized by pervasive lack of respect, unfair outcomes, and thick information "haze" (Futrell, 2003), activists expressed distrust, suspicion and social vigilance toward the outgroup. Moreover, they reported they were often under an evaluative scrutiny, they were critically judged, and presented some notions of conspiratorial intents, giving support to Kramer's (1998) model as a suitable frame for a better understanding of LULU movement activists' cognitive responses.

General discussion

Studies 1 and 2 yielded consistent results concerning the perception of injustice. Both my focus groups' and interviews' content analyse revealed that anti-HSR movement participants perceived a strong sense of injustice,

concerning outcomes, procedures, and interactional facet of the decision process. These result confirmed Folger's (1993) hypothesis about the combination that may elicit the worst reactions of resentment. The RCT core, the would/should account (Folger & Martin, 1986), was clearly recognizable as the following. Facing the HSR project, activists engaged in protest actions because they believed they *would* have obtained better alternatives, such as the improvement of the current railway, if decision maker agents had acted properly: they *should* have pursued the common good and represent citizens interests, instead of considering their own profits; they *should* have referred to the local population to enact a voice procedure, instead of planning the works without a previous consensus; they *should* have behaved in a correct and transparent manner, instead of dropping information and enacting violent actions.

Results supported the idea that a comparison between an unfavourable reality and a favourable state that can be imagined may be a strong spring inducing emotional, behavioural, and cognitive reactions. For what concerns the first two, evidences emerged in Study 1 confirmed previous research: Sense of injustice felt by activists conduced to anger, fear and resentment, which in turn motivated people to participate to protest actions (Cropanzano and Folger, 1989; Folger et al., 1983; Folger and Martin, 1986; Klandermans, 1997; Mannarini et al., in press). For what concerns the latter, "dietrological" attribution strategies emerged in Study 1 suggested a theoretical framework to bear on in Study 2. Kramer's (1998) paranoid social cognition, articulating a model in which contributions of research over attribution search and over distrust and suspicion merge into, was considered the starting point to delve into activists' cognitive responses to decision processes.

On the one hand, Kramer's (1998) account of the environment in which paranoid-like cognition may emerge is congruent with the data gained either with the focus group sessions or with the interviews: As explained above, alternatives to the existing state of affairs, strongly perceived as unfair and disrespectful, framed a social context recognized as threatening and unclear. On the other hand, interviewees' information processes and making-sense activities showed some similarities to paranoid judgmental consequences: Decision makers were perceived as trustworthy, suspicion and social vigilance permeated the evaluation of others' actions and motives, and some notions of the resulting biases emerged.

The first implication of such results concern Kramer's (1998) model value: Even if it was not originally conceived to explain information process strategies in LULU contexts, it turned out to be a fruitful theoretical frame to understand cognitive reactions to decision processes perceived as unfair. The same remark may be done about the RCT: My research provided empirical support to Folger's theory value in predicting resentment as a form of hostile feeling toward those responsible for the decision. A future comparison between activists and people that do not participate in protest actions over their perception of procedural and interpersonal injustice would be interesting.

A second implication may be drawn following Kramer's (1998) explanation on how social vigilance and rumination develop into a vicious circle: Vigilant appraisal of social information generate more elements about which people ruminate, and rumination in turn may generate paranoid-like hypothesis that prompt focalized attention to others' actions. In a clouded and sinister world, appearance may not be what it seems and so, even the non-existence of evidence or information can become a form of confirmatory evidence. This suggestion confirms Slovic's (1993) claim on the "fragility" of trust, arguing the presence of a variety of cognitive factors that contribute to the asymmetry of trust-building versus trust-destroying process. Consequently, the evidence that paranoid-like judgements aroused together with the perception of injustice supported many critics' point of view relative to the enactment of decisional policies denying the opportunity to voice. Some scholars argued that administrations should implement strategies characterized by the involvement of the stakeholders in the decisional process, in order to overcome the impasses often generated by LULU conflicts (Bobbio, 1999; della Porta, 2004; Perulli, 2005). Critics mainly focused on protest reactions, but results from this research pointed out that cognitive responses may contribute to exacerbate and reinforce distrust toward decision agents, which in turn makes it difficult to come to an agreement with the outgroup. Using Cropanzano and Folger's words, "the lesson for administrators is that if people do not participate in decisions, there may be little to prevent them from assuming that 'things would have been better if I had been in charge" (1989, p. 298).

The present research had two main limits. First, an intrinsic problem concerned the codification of the texts, since it was not likely to define as "exaggerated" activists statements regarding the decision process agents:

The analysis was conducted in a "multiorganizational field", in which authorities' true intentions and motivations were almost impossible to identify and to be used as basis for comparison (for more details, see Cicconi, 2004; Ferlaino & Sacerdotti, 2005; Imposimato et al., 1999). Second, the qualitative approach necessary to explore activists reactions in the first study and to investigate paranoid-like judgements in the second one, did not allowed me to obtain generalizable results. A future quantitative approach to this issue would be obviously welcome.

Finally, I would like to remark that, far from complying NIMBY's assumption of irrationality, the paranoid social cognition model provided a framework to understand LULU movement participants' reactions as "intendedly adaptive responses to disturbing situations rather than manifestations of disturbed individuals" (Kramer, 1998, p. 254). This point of view is consistent with the social movements' literature highlighting that activists address critical social problems standing for the society's fundamental values, such as justice, democracy, security, and freedom (Moyer et al., 2001).

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