The Roman Quarantine

Intimate uncertainties, narratives of emergency and
creative freedoms as examined through the lived
experience of the Italian COVID-19 lockdown

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How did the reaction to the COVID-19 virus challenge the role of the Italian state as well as personal perceptions of freedom and uncertainty explored through living in lockdown?

Cover photo taken by the author in Rome, 18th of March 2020 [Day 8]

'What is a society that has no other value than survival?'

(Agamben 2020)

'[COVID-19] has become a disruption of the most unspeakable proportions […] It has disrupted at a national level, at a personal level, at an intimate level.' (Manley 2020)

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Abstract

On the 9th March 2020 the Italian president Giuseppe Conte placed the country in lockdown as a preventative measure against the threat of the growing COVID-19 virus. As the first western democracy to restrict the movement of an entire country this move sparked what would become an international wave of emergency lockdown measures. At its peak in Italy COVID-19 claimed 919 lives in one day. As the measures continued into a third month the wider economic, political and social repercussions of this extensive lockdown became as pertinent as the death count. Through the operationalisation of an analytical framework that queries narratives of state responsibility, uncertainty and freedom in the reaction to the COVID-19 virus, as paralleled to the an auto-ethnographic account of an anthropologist quarantined with a Roman family this study will interpret the realities of life in lockdown for those living in Italy during this unprecedented health crisis.

Key words: COVID-19; Italy; Uncertainty; Freedom; State Control; State of Exception; Lockdown

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Introduction

On the 20th of January 2020, a thirty-eight-year-old man checked himself into a local hospital in Codogno, Lombardy, becoming the first COVID-19 patient in Italy (Godin 2020). Ten days later, the Italian government announced that it had its next cases of the virus. A Chinese couple in their sixties, who had contracted symptoms during their holiday travelling through Italy, were being treated at Rome's Spallanzani Institute for Infectious Diseases. The couple had originally landed in Milan on the 23rd of January (Corriere della Serra 2020). Accordingly, president Giuseppe Conte announced on the 31st of January that he was calling a state of emergency in Italy, suspending all flights between Italy and China and placing further cautionary measures at all airports (Corriere della Serra 2020). In late February, eleven municipalities in Northern Italy that were believed to be the original clusters of burgeoning case numbers were placed under quarantine (La Reppublica 2020). Mere days later on the 9th of March, Conte placed the entire sixty million population under quarantine. As of the end of March, the country had become the first Western epicentre of the COVID-19 virus with over 75,000 cases and more than 11,000 deaths (Ministero della Salute). The trajectory of this virus sparked an undeniable path of destruction affecting not only Italy but 177 countries worldwide and causing 34,000 deaths, as of the 30th March (BBC 2020). Accordingly, by the beginning of April 2020, more than a third of the world had been placed under some form of state facilitated restrictions from closing large public events to police checks for permission to shop (Kaplan, Frias, McFall-Johnsen 2020). The ensuing economic, social and political impact of the virus has been, and will be, volatile. The stock market alone has seen its lowest plunge, surpassing the financial crisis in 2008 (BBC 2020). At the time of the fieldwork, governments across the world were rapidly facing the challenge of how to mandate quarantine measures, whilst simultaneously supporting health systems, businesses and populations faced with the unknown trajectory of this virus. The rapidly progressing situation began to call into discussion topics and conceptualisations on state strategy and responsibility, and abstract terms such as uncertainty and freedom.

This study will exemplify how ethnographic experience can be integrated in the localized interpretation of the mammoth impact that this virus is having across the world, as perceived through the lived experience of the Italian lockdown, which at the time of the fieldwork (February-May 2020) was the location suffering the most significant losses in regards to lives lost and lives restricted

due to COVID-19. By analysing individual reactions to the uncertainty of lockdown and state strategies of control in Italy the thesis will examine how the impact of COVID-19 in Italy sparked discussion of esteemed philosophical and theoretical discourses. The three chosen topics of state strategy, uncertainty and freedom will be examined at length in their complexity as related to this particular moment for Italy and its residents, as was ignited by their consistent appearance in the data and analysis.

I arrived in Rome, Italy, in February 2020 for a different research project - shortly before the presence of COVID-19 began to impact Italy severely. As a British national working towards a Dutch Masters programme in cultural anthropology based in Utrecht, the Netherlands, I quickly found myself in lockdown close to the heart of the outbreak in what would become the first and one of the most severely affected countries as the initial spread of COVID-19 took hold of the West[1]. My location in Rome and my anthropological education pushed me to use my circumstances in Roman lockdown to examine how a national lockdown in Italian society could be analysed through an ethnographic lens. Thus, through the triangulation of auto-ethnographic interpretation with participant observation, visual methods, questionnaires and interviews this research project will depict how the data gathered strived to answer the following research question:

How did the reaction to the COVID-19 virus challenge the role of the Italian state as well as personal perceptions of freedom and uncertainty explored through living in lockdown?

The structure of the thesis will tie theoretical and analytical framework into a timeline of personal ethnographic reflection foregrounded through particular vignettes written during the fieldwork in the diary style that they were written. The focal three chapters are named Phase 1, 2 and 3, which became the terms for the different temporal moments of the Italian reaction, as is explained later. Phase 1 will discuss the initial circumstances around the 9th of March 2020, when the Italian government decided to put the population into lockdown. The first chapter will consider the drastic impact of this sudden lockdown in Italy as related to the extensive existing philosophical meditations on state and sovereignty as conceivable instigators of states of emergency, and the power relations
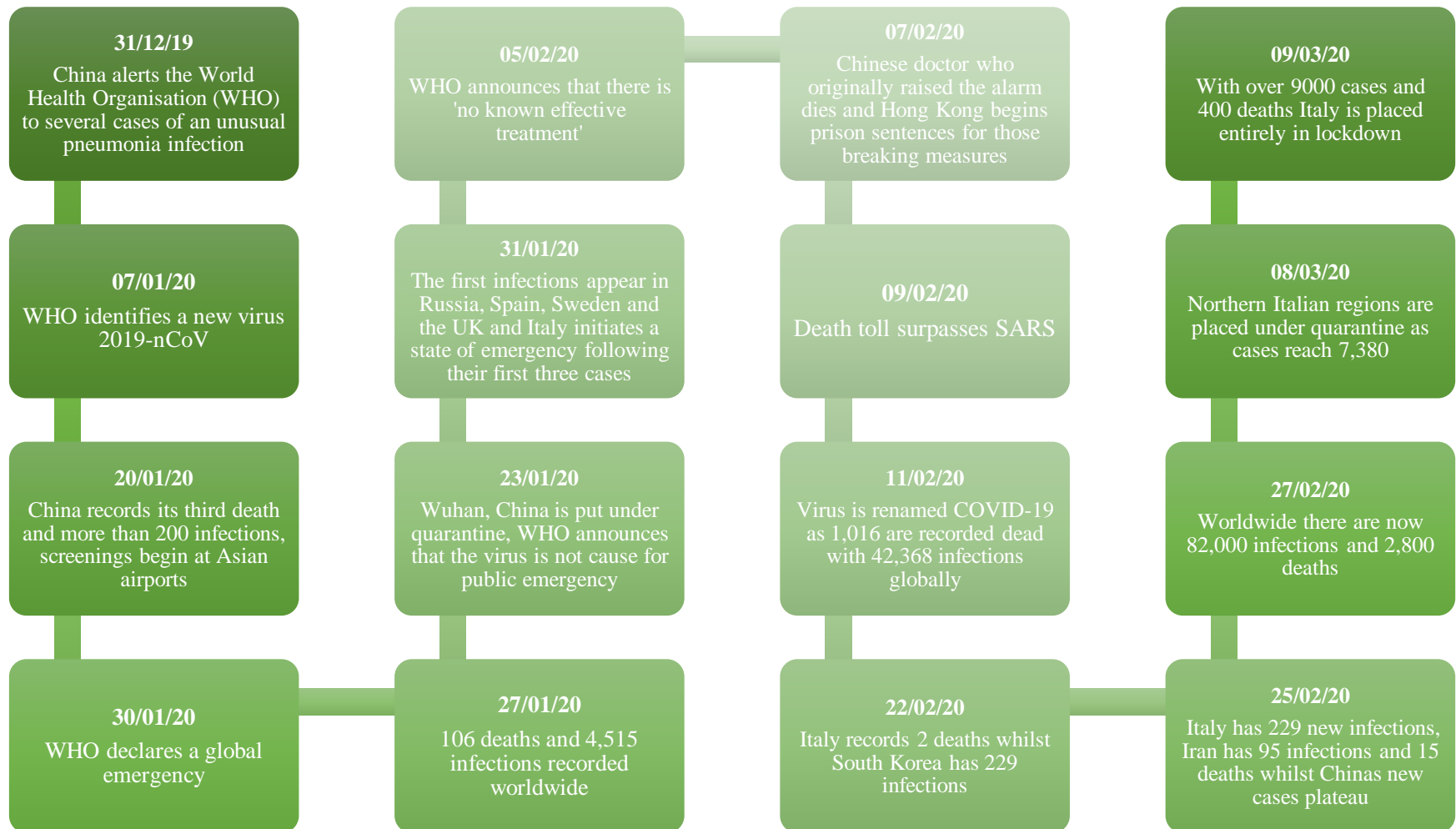
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1 At the time of writing the virus has gone to have a larger impact with regards to cases, deaths and extended lockdown measures in other countries such as the United Kingdom, Brazil and the United States of America. However, in the first wave of COVID-19 outside of China, where the virus began, Italy became a face of the virus as they initiated the first strict measures on a democratic population, and it became a worldwide phenomenon.

that are instigated therein. The first phase will then analyse how the reception of the state measures considered in the existing theory were interpreted through the data gathered envisaged by the individual opinions and physical observations collected on daily life during the initial stages of the lockdown. Focusing in from the broader contextualisation of state responsibility outlined the next chapter, Phase 2 will consider the individual reception to lockdown once the initial shock had settled, by considering how the participants living through this experience began to personally interpret the lockdown and their circumstances. This chapter will examine literature on uncertainty to highlight how conceptualisations of disrupted linear narratives can be applied to individuals that have been restricted by the state to their homes, particularly in a western neoliberal and democratic understanding. Lastly, moving beyond the initial stringent measures, the final chapter Phase 3 will look to the future by considering how participants and myself began to reassess and give meaning to notions of freedom as underscored by the physical restriction of lockdown. The notion of the restricted freedom as a catalyst for interplay with autonomous self-reflection and creative resilience will be illustrated through the use of visual imagery to highlight how a participant chose to use the lockdown to find a form of resilient creativity in their uncertain circumstances.

Following the introduction, the trajectory of the thesis will begin with particular contextual clarifications in order to provide necessary foundation for how the research project came about in such uncertain circumstances. Initially a timeline of the COVID-19 virus is depicted to clarify the speed with which the impact spread worldwide, followed by an explanation of the use of the term 'phase' to define the chapters of the thesis. The preface then collates an explanation of the unique research timeline following the outbreak in Italy and the change in topic by describing the specific triangulation of methods used. The collation of a preface chapter is used to highlight how this research project spontaneously found its purpose in the appearance of three overall topics of the thesis (state responsibility, uncertainty and freedom) that defined themselves within discussion with the participants and the personal lived experience of the author. This thesis will follow a chronological reflexion on the lived experience of being quarantined with an Italian family in central Rome as examined through an anthropological lens. As the study is grounded foremost in personal and auto-ethnographic reflection the use of 'we' and 'I' are inevitably present when discussing the observations that I perceived personally. The ethical considerations of this presence will be included in the preface section.

COVID-19 Timeline

This graphic is used to depict visually the rapid three-month timeline of the COVID-19 virus from its initial discovery in Wuhan, China until the expansive lockdown measures were initiated in Italy.

31/12/19
China alerts the World Health Organisation (WHO) to several cases of an unusual pneumonia infection

05/02/20
WHO announces that there is 'no known effective treatment'

07/02/20
Chinese doctor who originally raised the alarm dies and Hong Kong begins prison sentences for those breaking measures

09/03/20
With over 9000 cases and 400 deaths Italy is placed entirely in lockdown

07/01/20
WHO identifies a new virus 2019-nCoV

31/01/20
The first infections appear in Russia, Spain, Sweden and the UK and Italy initiates a state of emergency following their first three cases

09/02/20
Death toll surpasses SARS

08/03/20
Northern Italian regions are placed under quarantine as cases reach 7,380

20/01/20
China records its third death and more than 200 infections, screenings begin at Asian airports

23/01/20
Wuhan, China is put under quarantine, WHO announces that the virus is not cause for public emergency

11/02/20
Virus is renamed COVID-19 as 1,016 are recorded dead with 42,368 infections globally

27/02/20
Worldwide there are now 82,000 infections and 2,800 deaths

30/01/20
WHO declares a global emergency

27/01/20
106 deaths and 4,515 infections recorded worldwide

22/02/20
Italy records 2 deaths whilst South Korea has 229 infections

25/02/20
Italy has 229 new infections, Iran has 95 infections and 15 deaths whilst Chinas new cases plateau

Phases of Lockdown

The timeline above outlines the global timeline following the COVID-19 outbreak that brings us to the instigation of a national lockdown in Italy on the 9th of March. Following this move, we entered the first phase of lockdown.

The **'first'** phase of the Italian lockdown was from the 9th of March to the 3rd of April – which was then prolonged to the 4th of May, in this time there were some small changes made (e.g. further closures of factories or adjustments such as allowing mothers to go outside with children on their street) but the predominant measures that the public needed to stay inside, going outside only for necessary work (health professionals, supermarket workers, transport workers etc.) and shopping (groceries and medication), if needed they could exercise within 200m of the home or walk the dog. If anyone left the house, they should carry an '*auto-certificazione*' form that explained why they were outside and contained their personal relevant information.

The **'second'** phase of the lockdown was from the 4th of May to the 18th of May. The public could go out to particular shops that were allowed to open (art and book shops, childrens' clothing shops), parks were open again and individuals could meet with particular '*congiunti*'2 in small groups. Travel was allowed within the region but not outside without permission of the authorities through evidence of family emergency or work necessity – as with the 'auto-certificazione' in Phase 1. At this point the public were also allowed to individually exercise outside again.

The **'third'** phase of the lockdown was from the 18th of May to the beginning of June as the strictest measures were lifted, meaning that the public could now go to restaurants, bars and museums again and travel between regions was allowed. Nevertheless, masks were still compulsory inside shops, bars, public transport. Schools were still closed. Museums needed to be booked in advance and had mandatory temperature checks. Supermarkets kept distancing measures and queues.

As of the time of writing (August 2020) these measures are still maintained for the most part. Masks are necessary inside shops, restaurants, cafes and other public establishments. Travel is permitted around Italy. However, though tourists are allowed to enter the country, the discussion on Italians

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2 'Congiunti' directly translates to 'kin' but in this context it became a broad description for relative or relation.

entering other countries is ongoing, as evident in most international travel following localized COVID-19 restrictions on movement.

The thesis structure follows this structure of phases predominantly in name but not in relation to the specific measures that have been described here. This is because the use of the word phase became an omnipresent term in the Italian reaction, used on a daily basis in discourse as the situation continued, and thus it was essential to integrate it within the thesis. The term has been used in the thesis to connect with the phases of measures that the public lived through in the Italian reaction in name, but not to connote or relate to the particular restrictions that were in place at those moments, as has been outlined above. For example, the first 'phase' of the thesis focuses on the first month of the lockdown (10th of March to 10th of April roughly) and the initial state of emergency initiated in those moments of restricting a population to its homes. Then the second 'phase' of the thesis is the next month (10th of April to the 1st of May) where the effects of the daily life in lockdown became a part of reality and the uncertainty of the moment set in. The final thesis 'phase' then jumps to the initial repercussions of coming out of the strictest lockdown moments following the 4th of May and how the process continued as life tried to return to a sense of normality and I was able to travel again on the 15th of June. Using diary notes, I kept a daily record of the first phase - between the 9th of March and the 4th of May - to highlight the more intricate changes occurring in that moment. A condensed and stylized version of this can be seen in Appendix 3 in order to clarify queries about the individual perception of lockdown within the broader phases of the thesis that will follow.

Preface

Due to the rapid timeline of COVID-19 outlined previously and the unique trajectory of this study, it is necessary to give some reflexive clarification as to the ethnographic approach and the triangulation of methods used, as well as how the topic was established. This preface will highlight the contextual circumstances that bore this research project and how the fieldwork essentially chose me before I had the chance to realise it. Then the delineation of the various methods used will be outlined to highlight how the data analysed later in the study was collected. Finally, this prologue will reflect on the ethical ambiguities of such an embodied and personal research project.

In early February, I arrived in Italy with the intention of carrying out a research project in Rome. I had lived in the capital for six months as a live-in au pair[3] back in 2015, so I reached out to my host family with regards to finding accommodation as it would be easier than finding a room alone, at least at first. The family connected me with Greta[4], a single mother in her early fifties who I already knew as I had tutored her fifteen-year-old daughter Mimi. I arrived in Rome on the 11th of February when there was little discussion of COVID-19 yet, but within two weeks the situation began to rapidly change. I travelled to San Vigilio in the North of Italy with Mimi in her school holiday on the 25th of February, where we found ourselves directly between the two most affected areas - Lombardia and Veneto. The location of this trip meant that I wouldn't be allowed to travel back home to either the UK or the Netherlands without a mandatory quarantine, which at the time seemed impossible. Thus, I found myself at the beginning of March looking at the probability of staying in quarantine with Greta and Mimi, for at least a month.

Greta never questioned my presence throughout my stay, she always made me feel welcome and part of the family despite the challenge that this must have been for her as a single mother in those uncertain moments, with no viable income for months[5], yet they both made me feel as though I was

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[3] An au-pair is a live-in or live-out individual who works for a family in another country to their own. Typically, they assist with child-care but can also provide language help, cooking, cleaning, travelling with the family etc. There are regulations in Europe as to the number of hours and pay required. I have worked sporadically as an au-pair in Italy and Greece since 2015.

[4] Pseudonyms have been used throughout the thesis to maintain respect and privacy for the two individuals that I lived with.

[5] Greta works independently in the film industry in Italy and abroad. As most productions can have large numbers of staff on set in close circumstances it was not a priority for the government to consider prioritising this industry.

another family member. On the first day of lockdown Greta joked that we would be like *Little Women*, referencing the Louisa May Alcott book[6], which would become quite true as we did everything together for the next ten weeks - we planned meals and shopping, cleaned, moved furniture, exercised, discussed, argued, cooked, fixed items that inevitably broke, gossiped, celebrated birthdays and Easter, mourned losses… Essentially, we lived through every high and low together in this small space, sharing one bathroom. With Greta I would discuss the virus in hushed tones, condoning the misinformation, sharing social media headlines and local gossip whilst with Mimi I would play endless Burraco[7], grow avocado plants and discuss topical controversies. I am privileged to have been allowed to watch this feisty, yet incredibly genuine and kind duo experience the whole process of quarantine as Greta let her hair go grey and worked on her kitchen garden and Mimi voiced her fears for the future and missed her friends. It could have been a far more challenging moment to have a stranger living in your every moment, thought and experience but they never faltered. I valued this because as well as being an anthropologist carrying out an ethnographic study, I was living out this moment of uncertainty and fear for myself whilst far from my own securities, normal routine and concerned for my own family and friends abroad.

These contextual circumstances in my field site meant that the fieldwork process became an example of 'accidental ethnography', described by Basnet et al (2020) as a process of (re)negotiating terms of engagement within the fieldwork itself. In any ethnography, the researcher must remain flexible to changes in the field. However, I found myself not only living with my participants for four months but also personally interpreting the same topics as I was discussing with them. The term 'accidental ethnography' is positioned as a process that can 'add new layers of meaning […] and create moments for the unspeakable to be spoken' (pg. 207) which became an inevitable and invaluable part of quarantining with, and therein observing, my participants. Furthermore, through this interpretation of accidental ethnography I began to embody my own research before I had the chance to plan it through the record of daily notes and the inevitable participant observation that I was perceiving every day from waking up to falling asleep.

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[6] *Little Women* is a book based on the adventures of four March sisters in their passage from childhood to womanhood. The book has been made into several adaptations of which one film was released in late 2019. The film highlighted the cacophony of noise and life in the March household as the sisters and their mother dealt with daily life whilst the father was at war and this setting was the theme that Greta was referencing to, she works in the film industry and is always aware of the latest releases and critiques

[7] Burraco is a popular card game in Italy based on a rummy-style. In my experience card games are taken very seriously in Italy and the rules must be adhered to closely, even which players should break the pack, and who should begin - because Italians prioritise ensuring a fair game.

Methodological Process

Once the initial shock of the lockdown had died down and we had found some sense of routine in our days inside, I began to consider how I could use this situation within a new research project. As mentioned, I had been recording my experience through short notes in books and my phone since the beginning of the research project in order to keep track of my own personal process as an anthropological researcher. This diary format, which merely began as a reporting method of the research, would become the first, and an integral element, in proposing the groundwork for a new research topic. Beginning with diary method, I will outline the triangulation of methods used in the study considering participant observation, questionnaires, interviews and visual methods in order to outline the variety of data gathered that will be analysed within the main thesis.

Diary method connotes a wide range of methodological tools that that have been used by social science researchers extensively in qualitative research (Bartlett and Milligan 2015). On the one hand, structured or solicited diaries can be required from participants that encourage them to follow guidelines and surveys or otherwise the format can follow more organic forms such as memory books and auto-biographical reflections that record emotional reactions (Harvey 2011). Nevertheless, the value of diary methods for recording authentic and immediate reactions in a variety of research spheres makes it an attractive method for researchers (Alaszewski 2006). Within my research the use of a daily diary where I could quickly record moments, quotes or memories from the day gave me an opportunity to generate a dynamic account of the lockdown experience that engaged with the emotional, intimate and embodied experience of being isolated with an Italian family. Jacqui Gabb (2009) stated that when analysing data collected through diary method in intimate settings, it is 'pertinent to retain the emotional messiness, uncertainties and fluidity which constitute relational experience, because by leaving in methodological and experiential loose ends we retain the vitality of lived lives' (pg. 37). Using diary method on a daily basis enabled me to establish a deeper and more integrated perception of lockdown as lived with Greta and Mimi. This is evidenced in the photo book depicted in Appendix 3 where I integrate particular diary notes with both participant observation and visual imagery of the experience to create a multidimensional record of the most restrictive moments of quarantine through the lens of Roman family life.

In anthropological research, participant observation is a method 'through which one takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning

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the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture' (DeWalt and DeWalt 2011, 1). It is a method engaged to uncover knowledge which lies beneath the surface of everyday lives, that researchers can strive to articulate but remains outside the awareness and consciousness of the research population. The process of observation is not 'about just being there' but demands a more active way of documenting the daily lives and collecting data (O'Reilly 2012, 18). By living with Greta and Mimi in this moment I was able to integrate the extensive participant observation I was gathering, alongside auto-ethnographic formats like the diary method, vignettes and images to create a foundation from which I could analyse the theoretical meaning found in a daily lived experience of lockdown.

The logical way to gather further data whilst limited by the lockdown was online, which in March 2020 was beginning to boom with platforms discussing the impact of the virus on ethnographic research[8] as other social scientists began to be affected worldwide. As stated previously, the virus had inevitably become my every waking moment within Roman lockdown, it was everything I discussed with those around me and everything I researched about. Thus, working from the inspiration of the online platforms, I decided to begin with what I could, namely the questions that I was asking myself and others already. I compiled a questionnaire (see Appendix 1) that had seven different sections of questions:

- **Personal information** (name, home country)
- **Contextual information** (chosen location and reason e.g. study, work)
- **Italian state reaction** (lockdown measures and management)
- **Quarantine experience** (chosen routine, highlights/negatives)
- **Communication** (experience of loved ones, use of social media, sharing of information
- **Italian communal reaction** (neighbours, signs of solidarity)
- **Future uncertainties** (future perceptions of freedom, safety)

I used a Word document format so that the questionnaire could be sent quickly and be easily accessible to ensure that respondents could edit and reply with as much creativity, speed and information as they wanted to. These considerations also meant that I received more willing

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8 See the Google Doc 'Doing Fieldwork in a Pandemic' which became an invaluable source of collaborative discussion about the struggle of transforming research projects in these circumstances through finding ways to continue gathering research in the COVID-19 moment.

respondents as highlighted by Dhiraj Murthy (2008, 842). I focused initially on contacting au pairs so that I could hear from individuals that were in the same situation as me, perceiving the situation from inside a family home whilst also tied to another home abroad. Firstly, I reached out via the largest WhatsApp and Facebook groups of au pairs in Rome[9], but the reception was frosty, and in discussion with those who did reply I realised that many were reluctant to discuss the families that they were living with and working for. I received one successful participant through the WhatsApp chat – an au pair called A from Germany, and one more participant through the Facebook page – another A from France. I realised that the data that I was receiving from these few replies was beginning to engage with theoretical considerations, but I needed to broaden my net in order to give more dimension to the research. Thus, I decided to post on Expat Facebook pages in order to gather the opinions of those who had been quarantined in their temporary homes in Rome:

> 'Hello! I am looking for individuals (Italians or expats) to complete a quick questionnaire for me about their experience of quarantine for my Masters thesis research.
> If you have some time free send me a PM, I would love to hear your perspective!'[10]

I chose Expats (and Italians on expats pages) because the language barrier was smaller but also because they had this innately broader understanding of the situation as they had close connections to their home countries experiencing different reactions and relations to the impact of COVID-19. Typically, the Italians on these pages also had an international orientation, through working or studying abroad. The media image portrayed of the reaction of other countries (e.g. Germany, France and the USA) could often be very different to what life was like actually living there, which gave these individuals the opportunity to compare those experiences and portrayed narratives directly to Italy. In the data analysis of the questionnaires this awareness of different reactions gave the respondents a sharper critique and awareness of the Italian situation, through commenting comparatively to other countries. The final questionnaire can be seen in Appendix 1 entailing the questions asked of the participants (both the expats, au-pairs and Italians). I kept the majority of the questions open-ended to allow for a range of responses and the participant to interpret the question how they chose to (O'Reilly 2013, 112-138). I prefer this method because it allowed for both more considered, authentic and honest responses but enabled respondents to answer with freedom as they

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9 The 'ROME AU-PAIR' Whatsapp group has approximately 150 members and I received 3 replies, 2 were eventually willing to share data. The 'ROME AU-PAIR' Facebook page has 8,400 members and I received 3 replies, again 2 were successful. The 'Au-Pair in Rome/Italy' page has 11,000 members and I received 3 replies – none were successful. I define 'successful' here as receiving a questionnaire from the individual.
10 I posted on the 'Expats living in Rome' group which has 26,000 members and I received 5 replies – 2 were successful. I posted in the 'EXPATS LIVING IN ITALY' group which has 7,900 members and I received 5 replies, 4 were successful. PM refers to private message.

chose. This meant that in some cases answers varied in length and depth from different respondents, for example the replies to the question:

Moving away from quarantine do you think your perception or understanding of safety (physically, technologically, socially) will change?

B[11] from the USA replied with short, concise answers:

'I don't think so'

whilst A[12] from Italy answered:

'Yes, but in a useless manner. We learned about social distancing, washing hands accurately and similar; but you don't prevent a pandemic disease by training people to this, you prevent it only through a global good governance, tackling overpopulation, health monitoring, access to essential medicines all over the world. Instead, what we will have are new protocols and a bunch of good-practices on how to face similar situations. Just like after the 09/11/2001 in the air transport security, people will start to pay attention to a lot of details that aren't able to keep them safe, and that's all. After all, security is often an illusion, so I guess one couldn't expect nothing more than this.'

These two particular answers illustrate the variety of responses that were received from different respondents which eventually allowed for a more complex analysis and argumentation sparked by how these respondents were interpreting the impact of the virus and their time in lockdown.

As I was receiving the questionnaires through my online pursuits, I was meanwhile carrying out interviews with all the contacts I could reach through my network, friends and family. This process was based upon a snowball sampling method wherein I reached out through friends for individuals who would like to speak about their experience in lockdown, and then through those relations asked the interviewees if they knew others interested (Weiss 1995, 25). The lockdown was the topic on everyone's mind in Italy so as I spoke with one friend, or a friend of Greta/other acquaintance who would then recommend that I spoke to another relevant friend and onwards. This made for a 'passive approach' that Karen O'Reilly (2013, 127) suggested is more appropriate, and in my experience, I would agree. Through this method I reached six individuals with whom I shared unstructured interviews that originated with the same questions sent through the questionnaires. I would contact

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[11] B from the USA replied to my post on the Expats Facebook page. I received his questionnaire on 25th of May
[12] A from Italy replied to my post on the Expats Facebook page, asking if his opinion would also be relevant. I received his questionnaire on the 23rd of May

them however they preferred, through WhatsApp, Facebook messenger or phone call and record the conversation for later transcription using NVivo. Luckily due to the quarantine most people had a lot of time to share so scheduling difficulties were minimal. Typically, because we were introduced colloquially the interviews became extended, free-flowing and in-depth conversations where we shared experiences, questioned current information about the virus and critiqued our individual narratives through the lens of each other's lockdown experience (O'Reilly 2013, 112-138). *'Thanks for not making me feel like a subject and keeping it casual. It has become a struggle to talk about COVID-19 but it didn't feel so here'* stated Y[13] at the end of our interview when I asked for his feedback, which summed up my personal reflection on the interview process as a whole.

The final methodological approach focuses on visual formats, which will be considered more extensively in Phase 3, but delineated briefly here. In lockdown many were alone presented with the opportunity of social interaction only through phones. For me, Greta and Mimi this became an occasion moment for capturing endless photos and videos of our lunch, the sunset, the birds outside and more which can be seen in Appendix 3. This process became a method of coping as we received visual insights in return from friends in different locations. Thus, I decided to engage the photo elicitation technique in my interviews and questionnaires. By asking the respondents to share a photo with me that epitomised their experience I was granted a deeper insight into their personal perception of lockdown. The act of sharing a photo doesn't require the wordy, sophisticated answers that participants might have felt pressured to share in the questionnaire thus connecting more closely with their lived experience and giving us a topic to discuss and connect over (Wodak and Meyer 2016, 273). Sharing this personal capture of a moment always made the respondent more comfortable with me and open to discuss what the photo meant to them, or what it captured subliminally. This process meant that visual data became an integral element of how I began to interpret how respondents gave meaning to the situation they were in and deepened my own reflective process. I found further exploration in the use of 'memory books' discussed by Rachel Thompson as valuable sources of documentation, resources for elaboration and tools of reflecting on identity (2005, 201). Looking back over my experience of lockdown in collation with the textual explorations enabled me to synthesise my auto-ethnographic experimentation into a collection of photos that, as integrated

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[13] Y is a medical student based in an area North-East of Milan but originally from Cyprus, he has been researching the COVID-19 virus and volunteered with the efforts. I interviewed him on the 6th May 2020. He was also vocal in sharing his experience of Italian lockdown for Cypriots and Turkish friends back at home, which gained a lot of online media speculation.

throughout the thesis and in the 'memory book' in Appendix 3, can illustrate the complexities of lockdown experience through intimate observation.

Thus, as has been outlined, the empirical data gathered for this study focused on three core elements: **auto-ethnographic interpretation** of diary method, vignettes and participant observation, **interview/questionnaires** with other individuals experiencing lockdown and **visual methods** integrated through personal record and photo elicitation. This methodology allowed me to amalgamate a multi-dimensional interpretation of how lockdown was experienced and could give meaning to the theoretical topics raised.

Ethical Reflections

The unique nature of this research context and site, as stated previously, meant a particularly complex ethical picture. The thought of ethics became omnipresent for me throughout the four months that I stayed in Rome as the line between my own personal thoughts and those I was interpreting became indistinguishable. The intimate and immersive nature of the research meant that consent couldn't be granted one time through a form but implicit through ongoing engagement with Greta and Mimi (Stellmach et al. 2018, 3). This generated a problem for the validity of my research, as it could only be perceived through my own anthropological lens, and that of Greta and Mimi. Whilst I was trying to record everything that I was seeing, hearing and questioning I was also surrounded in every waking moment by the moral ambiguities of my position. Greta and Mimi understood that I was there for research and that my topic had changed to considering the virus, but their understanding of anthropology and ethnography was minimal and similarly their comprehension of my data gathering. Once the initial shock had worn off, it was far easier for us to see it as a project and they actively supported me in finding connections to interview or online articles to consider. However, there had to be a distinction in the research between my voice as a researcher and the voice of Greta and Mimi (Pauwels 2015, 14). To deal with this distinction I did not interview them directly, this is because I did not want to change our living relationship and impact my position within the household. Though I believe it could have provided some interesting insights to interview my hosts I felt uncomfortable with the idea of interviewing Mimi as she is a child and I did not want to concern her with the more serious aspects of our situation, also the moment did not arise in four months. This meant that I kept the participant observation, and

extensive daily discussion with them, separate from the other methods of research which helped with my own empirical process separating 'home' from 'research'.

I strived to manage the ethical challenges of the situation in two ways by returning first to the 'ethical code' that I had drawn up before the research began, see Appendix 2, which grounded my moral concerns (Jorgensen 1971, 322). Firstly, I strived to involve as many different individuals from other backgrounds as possible. I had first-hand insight into family life for these Roman women and their close family, so I strived to diversify my research group where possible. This is a part of my reason for choosing Expats, because they were from different countries and in Rome for a variety of reasons. Otherwise I used pseudonyms for Greta and Mimi to ensure a level of confidentiality as I mention their presence and private lives quite extensively, and in my photobook depicted in Appendix 3 I only use photos that don't clearly depict their faces. For the other participants I use their initials because though they gave consent to use their answers and photos, but I still want to maintain a level of privacy and anonymity for them similarly. The focus of my research is how these individuals perceived lockdown as a collective yet individual experience, not how their socio-economic or personal background affected that. As for the use of photos in Phase 3, as previously stated, when using the elicitation method the exchanges were more colloquial and usually with participants that became comfortable to share and talk with me more organically, thus I was able to make sure they were happy for me to use their personal photos.

Phase One

The previous graphic that charts the timeline of the COVID-19 virus from its initial detection in December 2019 to early March 2020 when Italy became severely affected, highlights how prevalent and aggressive the trajectory of this virus became. Country after country became affected by this invisible threat that could perceivably affect everyone, sometimes with deadly consequences. Meanwhile there was little evidence on how to prevent, curb or cure COVID-19, which ensured that in the initial stages of the pandemic, the seemingly inevitable answer was to establish isolating measures and then complete lockdowns. Presented with this health crisis, state systems worldwide were quite suddenly needed to act quickly and comprehensively. The choice to reduce a society to its homes whilst dictating who was 'important' enough to be allowed to leave this safety became a matter of international, national, local and personal dialogue. Lockdown decisions disrupted global narratives of social life, health systems and state responsibility whilst placing citizens themselves into meditations on their freedoms and safety. Typically, philosophical and political dichotomies of state such as these were reserved for totalitarian regimes facing conflict or crisis, and yet in March 2020, Italy became the first western democracy to place its sixty million population into lockdown in the face of COVID-19.

This chapter will begin with a vignette from the first day of lockdown where the shock of entering a lockdown is depicted through a shopping trip to illustrate the insecurity that ordinary daily tasks began to mean. Through the combination of personal narrative and theoretical analysis, this first phase will create a contextual foundation for the thesis by depicting how this moment challenged individual conceptualisations of political power through this particular reaction of contemporary democratic Italian society.

Day One

Its nearing 9pm on Wednesday 11th March and it's the first day of official lockdown. We are eating dinner when we decide it is probably a good idea to go to a supermarket. Earlier today Mimi finally made it back home from her spring holiday in the mountains and we have been so focused on getting her home safely that we hadn't realised the reality of what we are now restricted too. It has been a tense few days waiting for her to return once she wasn't allowed to take the train and then today we held our breath worried that she would get stopped and questioned. How bizarre to be questioned when just trying to return to your home and mother.

Greta suggests we could try to get the shopping delivered. However, as with many of her suggestions they remain hanging in the air until someone takes charge, so I grab the iPad and try to access the online Coop. There are no slots available for home delivery until the second week of April – in a month. I try the online Carrefour website and there is a queue to get into the website itself. So, we sit at dinner and I decide probably its best to go now, right? Its night-time so there will be less people and who knows what tomorrow holds at this point? Shops are running out of food as displayed on every news and social media channel, and the online options aren't available so maybe I have to? I'll just go and get essentials and then be home again, the shops are just a two-minute walk away after all.

The Coop is already closed but the Carrefour is open 24 hours a day, so it seems the best plan. As I walk out of the gate, the street is eerily empty, one chihuahua launches himself at my - apparently offensive - feet. He seems as on edge as the rest of the people I find in the dark streets. I walk along Via Margutta then cross Via del Balbuino and onto Via Vittoria. These are some of the busiest Roman streets at any other time. In this area there are probably very few people actually living, that haven't escaped to second houses, which is a double-edged sword right now. I wouldn't mind the odd face instead of just empty streets…

Greta has given me the screenshots of her online order, so my plan is to just go in, select the items and get out. She suggests that I can tell them I want the shopping delivered tomorrow; I don't know how that works but I'll work it out. There is no check at the door so I presume I can enter. Carrefour has a long thin entrance way, as if you're entering an underground tunnel. In this moment it feels like a bottleneck. There are a few people around, wearing masks and glancing nervously at me for not wearing one. The shop is only three aisles wide, not ideal at this moment, but this is it, the shelves are full, there are few people, just do it Sarah. Carefully. The trolley makes the most awful sound, squeaking with every small movement so I leave it, wandering up and down each aisle multiple times gathering items to bring back. I stack them carefully, a Jenga of edible objects.

Shopping seems like an easy task for most people on most normal days, I should choose the pictured items Greta has sent me and then I leave. However, this is food shopping in Italy - and every

family has its preferences - which are held to with such regard as if I were choosing clothes. I must only choose bio eggs, but they aren't there... If this is the last shop we do for a while it has to be right, it could be far more uncomfortable to go food shopping in the future. I check my phone as the additional requests come pouring in: olive oil, spaghetti, mezze maniche, pane, crackers, bresaola, zymil latte, ceci in glass, parmigiano reggiano, cime di rapa…

It sounds silly to be so perfectionist over these tiny things, but I know from years of experience that brands matter in Italy. There is no mezze maniche and Greta is shocked 'no short pasta?!' - we are reduced to choosing between 'farfalle or penne rigate?' The latter wins so I move on to the fresh pasta.

In the end I decide it is more time effective to take pictures of the shelves which she can then circle and return. As I wander back and forth and over and over, I can see the staff are understandably nervous. Being a supermarket worker working at 9pm on the first day of a national quarantine must already be nerve-wracking, but then watching a blonde tourist wander back and forth and again messaging away on her phone whilst filling her cart she most definitely can't carry herself must be heightening the irritation.
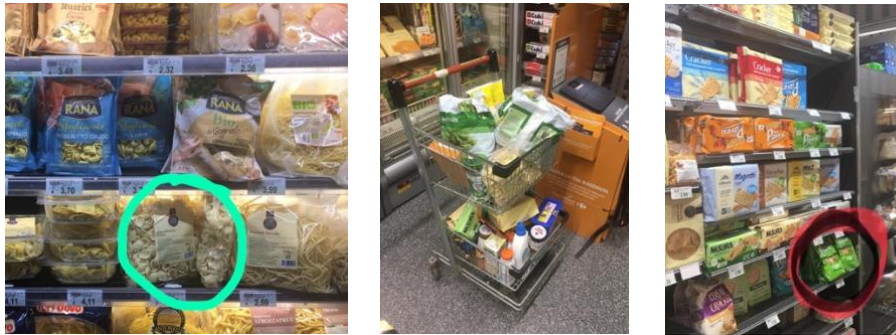
As we near 40 minutes inside (yes somehow 40 minutes) the stakes are suddenly raised, Greta is now saying she doesn't mind Barilla spaghetti type no. 11 or 12 as Conte is apparently announcing right at that moment that everything will shut down officially. Only supermarkets and pharmacies will open from now on, and with restricted hours. As I reach the frozen area a policeman arrives at the front door to check numbers of people inside. Suddenly there is a queue of people outside with the same idea as me. I can't see the policeman or the queue, but I feel their impatience and hear the staff discussion pushing down on me as I go back for crackers and the last two milk bottles. I feel bad for taking the last two but then someone must have taken the seven beforehand… and at 22:15, I'm at the checkout. I feel as if the staff have breathed a collective sigh of relief. And the queue outside. I feel very foreign. But at least we have shopping for two weeks. And then what? Where will we all be in two weeks?

Working from the sense of insecurity and state control that this vignette written on the first day of lockdown in Rome has illustrated this first chapter will move forward by considering how the COVID-19 virus challenged state, collective and personal perceptions of security. This analysis will position the COVID-19 reaction predominantly in relation to Giorgio Agamben's conceptualisation of 'state of exception' (2005) and Michel Foucault's 'biopolitics' (2008) as underpinned by auto-ethnographic and participant perceptions. In order to consider these terms effectively in relation to the example of COVID-19 and its impact on Italy, the stated terminology must first be defined.

The term 'state of exception' was first engaged in relation to Carl Schmitt's definition of a 'sovereign' – a position that possesses a supreme or ultimate power (Agamben 2005). Schmitt, a German jurist and political theorist, defined that the role of a 'sovereign' lay in the ability to call a 'state of exception', which is the ability to suspend the law with impunity in the name of public good (ibid, 1). In contemporary society, the term 'state of emergency' has become more colloquially used in governmental decision making, as was initiated by the Italian government in late January 2020. Typically, the decision follows a situation of emergency such as an environmental or political conflict where the decision to call a 'state of emergency' empowers the government to act without the legislative and juridical restrictions it would normally have.

Giorgio Agamben is an esteemed Italian philosopher who has written extensively on the concept of the 'state of exception' examining the ambiguity of its association with civil war, resistance and its positionality in the 'no-man's land between public law and political fact […] juridical order and life' (2005, 3). He strengthens the ambiguous nature of the term by depicting it as either a 'legal form of what cannot have a legal form' in the result of periods of political crisis or, as in the suspension of law itself, a preliminary condition for the relation that binds and simultaneously abandons a living being to law (ibid). Agamben highlighted that the 'state of exception' has become a 'dominant paradigm of contemporary politics', as can be envisioned in the case of the Nazi State or the USA Patriot Act, where intensive measures of state control followed periods of conflict unquestioned because of the emergency that had preceded the legislative changes (ibid). These moments in political discourse challenged the legal, political and biological narratives of citizens in relation to juridical order. For example, the USA Patriot Act enhanced law enforcement tools in the name of deterring terrorism. In light of Agamben's conceptualisation here, how can the outbreak of COVID-19 and the emergency measures that the Italian state then initiated be considered?

In order to understand the expression of a 'state of exception' as initiated in Italy in January 2020, the concepts 'biopolitics' and 'biopower' must also be explained. Michel Foucault, the French philosopher, discussed these terms extensively as the involvement of biological factors in political

debate and interference which also enable a 'state of exception' to become integrated within the security of biological matters in legislation. Agamben explored the collaboration of 'biopolitics' and 'state of exception' in his depiction of the role of 'sovereignty' as power over population, as well as Schmitt's proposed power over territory (2008). Agamben expanded on these narratives of biopolitical control in his suggestion that 'sovereign' power is established then, in his perception, through the production of a political order that decides which members of a population are permitted to involve themselves with a 'bios' life - political involvement and citizenship, or is reduced to a 'zoe' life - animal/naked/'bare life' (2017, 5). These philosophical concepts highlight how the 'sovereign' can take power by deciding who is allowed to live a 'bios' life and who is reduced to a 'zoe' life which can be envisioned in situations such as the European management of the recent refugee crisis or legal restrictions on Planned Parenthood in the United States of America, where biological and basic rights become the fodder of political debate. Agamben would suggest that a 'sovereign' power lies in moments where a state such as the European Union is able to dictate which refugees are allowed to be citizens of a country, involving themselves with the permittance and legislation over their biological, political and 'bare' needs[14].

The concepts discussed here become more pertinent to the Italian situation in the COVID-19 moment through the proposal of Foucault, who focused on state control as represented through the manipulation of punishment and 'biopower'. Foucault delineates 'biopolitics' as the use of control enabling the state to reduce citizens to a 'bare life' in order to control and securitize political life, as arguably evident in the Italian reaction to the COVID-19 outbreak (Chandler 2020, 26). For the first months of the Italian 'state of emergency', there were few visible repercussions but in March, the Italian state was able to step by step close educational institutions, then museums, then an entire population to its homes in the name of protecting the population against the virus and attempting to stop the rapid spread of COVID-19. Though the virus then went on to cause lockdowns in several other countries as the spread progressed, Italy was the first western democracy to initiate these arguably authoritarian measures, involving themselves with the biological needs of a population in reaction to this emergency (McFall-Johnsen 2020).

The purpose of analysing the political and juridical reaction in Italy to the COVID-19 crisis is not to critique the origins of the philosophical theories of exception and power in relation to the state that have been outlined here, but to understand how they can find meaning in this particular moment of

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14 See Human Rights Watch article: EU Policies Put Refugees At Risk

biological threat. Italy initiated a 'state of emergency' on the 31st of January 2020 in reaction to the COVID-19 virus, defined by the state itself as:

> Emergencies of national importance which must be tackled immediately with extraordinary means and powers, the Council of Ministers decides on the state of emergency, on the proposal of the Prime Minister, after having obtained the agreement of the region concerned. The state of emergency may be declared upon the occurrence or imminence of natural disasters or events related to human activity in Italy. (Protezione Civile, n.d.)

This decision meant that Italy stopped flights to and from China and gave regional authorities the ability to use special powers, such as passing policies on privacy laws quickly with less litigation and giving police powers to stop and search the public more easily, with an initial 5.3 million euros allotted to the prevention of the virus (France24 2020). When I arrived in Rome on the 11th of February 2020, the 'state of emergency' was already in place, as defined in the timeline earlier, and yet I was unaware that this strategy had been engaged as, except for the temperature controls at the airport, there was little discussion or awareness of the COVID-19 virus yet.

Building upon the theoretical framework constructed thus far the analysis of empirical data will now be assessed through the lens of Agamben's 'state of exception' and Foucault's 'biopolitics'. When analysing the data gathered from the questionnaires/interviews, participant observation and auto-ethnographic experience there were particular exchanges, scenarios and observations that engaged with these previously discussed concepts. Thus, the analysis of the data in this section will be interpreted through an analytical framework that organizes these moments into three particular overarching themes that tie to the propositions of Agamben and Foucault: *state presence, state narrative* and *state powers*. The focus of this analysis is not to highlight the positive or negative impact of the state decisions but to consider how the data can give meaning to how these concepts are envisioned in the case of a biological threat (COVID-19) and the state (Italian) reaction. By highlighting the three main themes, the analysis will characterise how, as in Foucault's conceptualisation of biopolitics, the Italian state was able to employ methods of power and control to maintain the lockdown measures and a 'state of emergency' within a western, modernized and democratic country. *State presence* highlights how the use of various security figures became a part of lockdown life exemplifying Agamben's understanding of how the state supports a normalized sense of fear and emergency in daily life. *State narrative* describes how the use of language and rhetoric became a version of 'biopower' even within individual homes as the state and media perpetuated a particular narrative throughout the lockdown to remind the public why they were sacrificing their personal freedoms. *State powers* examines the establishment of bureaucratic

measures that gave the evident security presence the powers to stop individuals and minimize their movements. This provides a further example of 'biopower' by evidencing how the state enabled particular figures to question individuals and monitor their travel locally, regionally and nationally, restricting them to a form of 'bare life'.

State Presence

> 'It's not my decision about being safe, it's always by the government' *A*15

The first theme is the physical presence of the state which perpetuated an image that strengthened its overarching power and control over the country whilst in lockdown. This was presented predominantly through military presence but later through the controls of the necessary shops that were open. The quote displayed above from a questionnaire by a German au pair highlights a query about the role of the state in its physicality. In A's perception, the state holds the responsibility to ensure the public feel safe but in this 'state of emergency' in Italy a fine line appeared between protecting those in their homes, and/or keeping them in their homes in the name of safety.

I was in Rome on a Friday night in November 2016 when the terrorist attacks in Paris occurred and I vividly remember walking home later that night, surprised by the ample military presence suddenly everywhere. From then onwards, with every visit to Rome, the presence of soldiers at embassies, metro stations and piazzas became normalised16. However, from the middle of March during the COVID-19 lockdown, the presence of the state became almost suffocating. I stayed in the centre of Rome, which meant that I needed to regularly walk through Piazza di Spagna, which hosts the Spanish embassy. I became very aware that in my first few outings to the shop, I would see often up to ten individuals on the streets that were either police or military whilst seeing only two or three members of the public heading to the shop or walking the dog. In the beginning I felt sympathy for these soldiers who had to stand protecting empty buildings because at least on a normal day they would have a plethora of tourists wandering past for distraction, but now they had empty and arguably apocalyptic streets. Yet, I felt watched almost constantly and when I went to my friend's apartment just minutes away to pick up some items, I questioned for a while whether I would be

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15 A from Germany was the first person to reply to my request on the Au Pair in Rome whatsapp group. I then contacted her on the 31st March when I asked her for a short diary of her week. She initially declined to be involved but once I told her it could be bullet points and short she agreed and sent it to me. I eventually did not use it in the study. A then agreed to complete a questionnaire as well and returned it to me on the 3rd May

16 For a British national the sight of armed police or military personnel is rare, they are usually present at large events or airports for example – so seeing them at every metro stop in Rome was a more notable sight for me than it might be for others from countries with more armed security

allowed to carry her yoga mat back without being questioned. In reality I never had anything to hide, but I was a British national in Rome temporarily and now wasn't the time to risk being questioned for carrying a yoga mat. The presence of the state in my own movement thus perpetuated a sense of fear and insecurity in my daily life whilst carrying out innocent tasks.

Photo 1 & 2
These photos are taken from the terrace on the first sunny weekend of the year. The helicopters were present most of the morning on the 9th of April and then reappeared the next day at lunch.

Photo 3

I took this photo on my way back from a food shopping trip when the evenings were still dark.
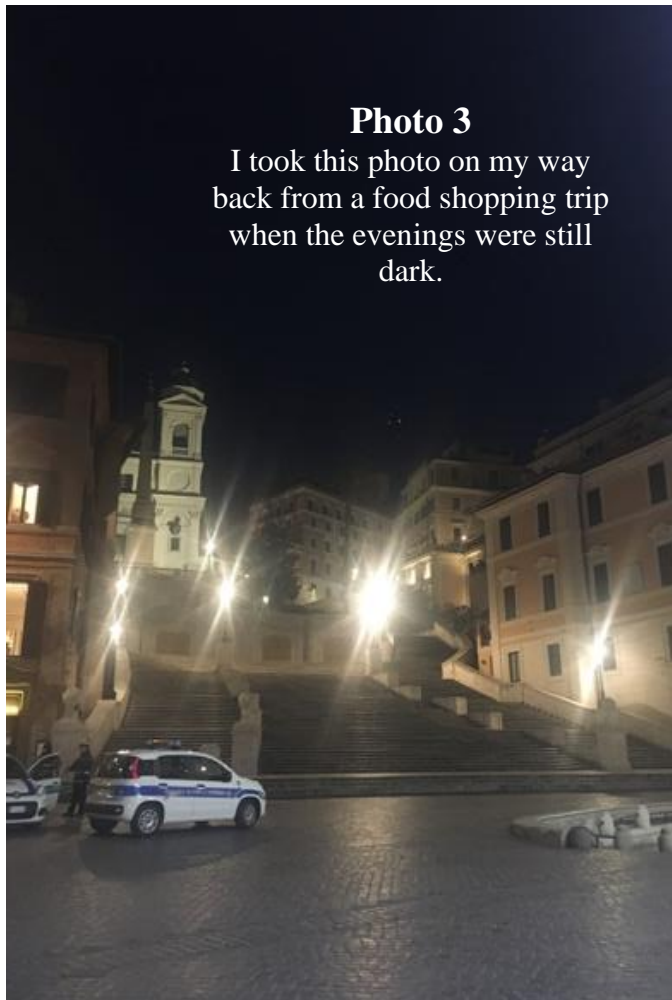
Photo 4

I took this photo on a beautiful sunny day at the beginning of April in my first queue for a shop – even the pigeons have to queue!

Photo 5

This photo was taken on my way to the shop, the later version is above
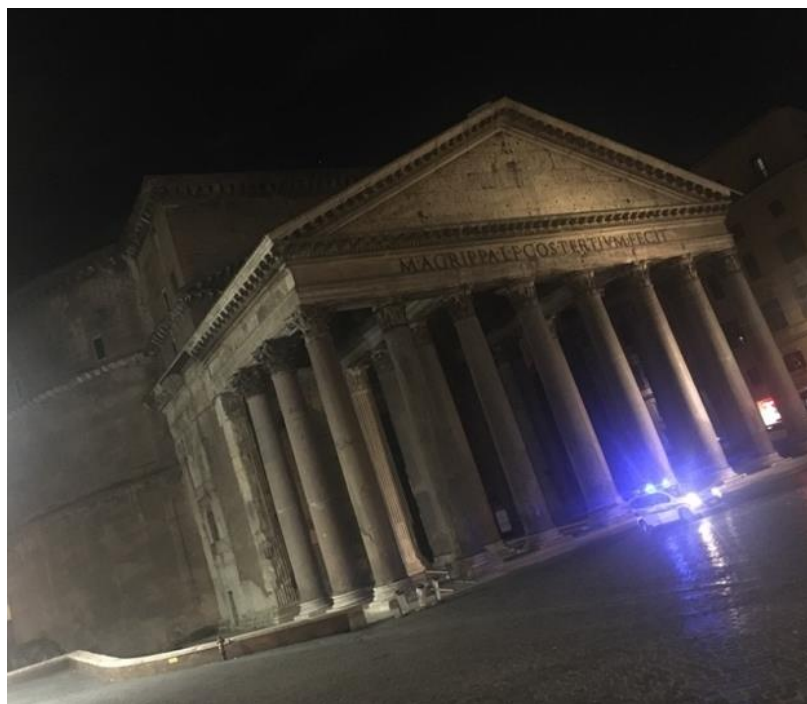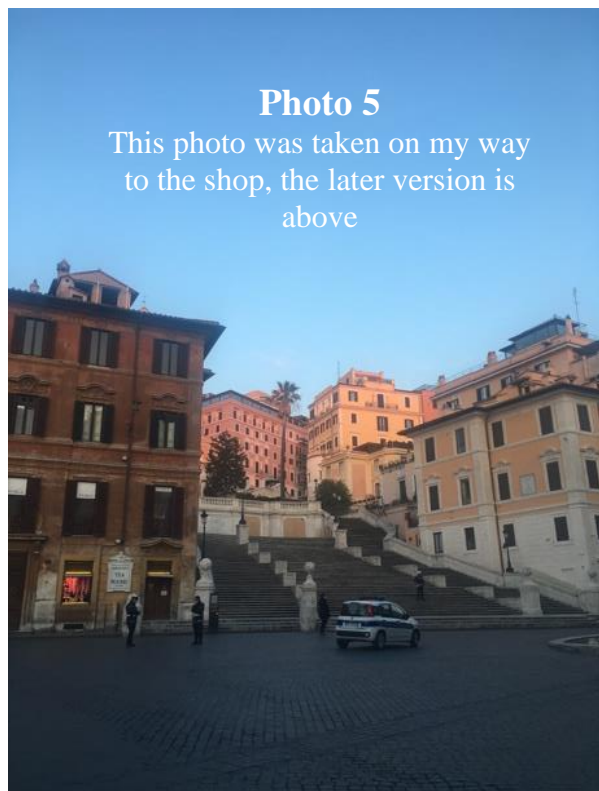
Photo 6

This was the last evening walk around the city before lockdown, it was already eerily quiet, the air was heavy with uncertainty

The photos depicted illustrate the state presence I observed firsthand in my minimal movements outside and also inside the house. In photos 3 and 5 taken on the 18th of March I captured the view of the Piazza di Spagna that I would see whilst on my way to the larger Coop supermarket. As described despite there never being more than one or two people on the piazza, there were always several police in this position day and night. Photo 6 was captured the week before lockdown began on the 4th of March, the Pantheon is shown with a police car parked in front. Unlike at the Piazza di Spagna, it was unusual to see a police car in front of the Pantheon watching a silent square, as though this longstanding and monumental icon needed protection from the incoming viral pandemic. Photo 1 and 2 show the helicopters that became a regular sight from our apartment captured on the 9th and 10th of April. I remember several mornings where I would wake up at 8 AM to the sounds of helicopters so close over the apartment that it felt as though the ground was shaking. Sometimes we would look out of the balcony to see three in the sky above, coming so close that we could see those inside filming or hanging out from the door. Greta would say *'they're making sure that people are not on the streets'*, but to me this seemed a significant effort to find the odd stragglers just heading to walk the dog and an eerie reminder of the power the state was displaying to ensure that we stayed within the terms of the measures.

Photo 4 shows the most normal 'presence' of control that has become synonymous with the COVID-19 moment but was bizarre in early April at the time of capture - attendants outside shops monitoring how many people were coming in and out. This Carrefour always had a line of people waiting to get inside, despite being very small and close to another Coop that was always empty. This sense and presence of control became a normal sight for us whilst going about our lives, reminding us always that we couldn't just spontaneously pop to the shops anymore. In fact, planning our shopping began to revolve around which times there would be a queue and if there was, we would just come back the next day. These captured moments highlight the presence of authoritarian power within the 'state of exception' that Agamben proposes: the Italian government was evidently active in its role to keep us within the rules and in doing so, securitized every action we made outside of the home. The 'state of emergency' that we were living in had made the idea of going outside now a question of legality, security and health. Though we were still actively political citizens, we were reduced in this moment to a form of 'bare life', a life focused on the necessity of what we needed without risking ourselves or others – as controlled, maintained and envisaged by the ample state presence.

State Narrative

> 'Italians are already a country where they care about their families. And I think they were all united in this as a big family.' *A*17

Italy has a historic knowledge of turmoil from the fall of the roman empire to fascism, recessions and earthquakes. The image presented by the Italian political and public media (daily TV updates and news, radio and social media) was that the COVID-19 pandemic was another upheaval that the - notably Italian - spirit and culture would defeat, if they acted together, as Amandine - a French au pair - connoted above. The narrative told was that Italy was in its darkest days and everything would be sacrificed by the state and the public in order to defend against the virus, hence the extensive lockdowns (Financial Times 2020). The videos shared of Italians hosting musical concerts at the weekends from their balconies became an emblem of the cultural and communal spirit that held the country together in the first moments of realizing the reality of the situation with particular war songs such as 'Bella Ciao' becoming most popular. Similarly, H18 who is an Egyptian student, referenced that 'here in Santa Marinella, they used to play the national anthem on a very loudspeaker every day at six, for one week I think.' This image of the national anthem 'Fratelli d'Italia' being played every day at 6 PM, which was the time the daily numbers of infections and deaths were published, paints an image of nationalistic wartime spirit in the face of the pandemic.

The sharing and community enabled through these videos gave us hope on darker days, and the slow-motion videos of the empty capital set to emotional music began to spread worldwide as a message to other countries beginning lockdowns19. Joseph Owen highlighted that 'in times of crisis, the function of language takes on a new salience' (2020) and this was evidenced by the narrative of nationalism and the mass media facilitation of an image of Italy as strong and stable in the war against this invisible enemy. Despite losing our ability to participate in basic political, social and biological freedoms outside of the house, we were reminded repeatedly in daily news bulletins or social media posts that we were staying inside for a reason - to protect ourselves, each other and the country. This dichotomy was being pushed, shared and supported by the general public and figureheads in nightly updates to ensure that there was no protest to these measures when faced with

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17A is an au pair from France. She answered my request on the Au Pair in Rome page and returned her questionnaire to me on the 25th May.

18 H is an Egyptian student studying in Rome who answered my request on an Expat Facebook page. He sent me his questionnaire on the 17th June.

19Drone video

Piazza Navona performance

such a significant 'state of emergency', and the reasoning seemed logical enough to ensure that the general public followed the measures. Despite being a democracy, I never saw any political opposition or challenge to the measures being pushed by the Italian state. Furthermore, I only saw protests in the initial stages of the lockdown when prison visits where stopped but then there were no protests until later in May and June, when we left lockdown, in resistance to wearing masks.

In a sense, this use of language in the political narrative became a form of a Foucault's proposed 'biopower' by enabling the control of the population and restricting their needs to necessity (Chandler 2020). Education was paused, hospitals had to send home non-urgent patients whilst operations were delayed, large events cancelled, religious services paused indefinitely amongst many other significant restrictions on social freedoms but these restrictions went unnoticed because when the enemy is invisible and so intimately personal, there seemed to be little resistance, in my perception and the respondent reactions.

State Powers

'Thousands of people have been checked and fined, so clearly someone was not following protocol.' *V*[20]

The final point of analysis relates to the small bureaucratic forms of power that became normalized in the restriction of our lives, the first being the 'auto-certificazione' which was required for all individuals to carry when leaving the house. The form stated your personal information (name, residence information, personal document numbers), the reason you had for being able to leave the house and the origin and destination of your journey. On the 29th of April, Greta told me that her sister had taken a walk from her house in Trastevere to visit her son living in Parioli, which is around an hour walk but both are regions within central Rome. As she returned to her house, police approached her and informed her that they had seen her walking in Parioli and now in Trastevere, warning her that this was not allowed. Similarly, another friend informed me that she had been running outside of her building when the police approached her and told her that she had to run no more than 200 metres away from her residence. She informed them that this meant she could only run back and forth along the street, they replied that then this was what she needed to do. These small anecdotes alongside the news stories criticizing people going out and reporting on fines

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[20] V is an American/Italian journalist based in Rome who I knew through a mutual friend. She wrote extensively on the COVID-19 situation including the fact that her wedding was postponed due to the pandemic. She sent me her questionnaire on the 3rd May.

became normal discussion during the first phase of lockdown. As V defined above, each reminder made us feel comfortable that people were being punished for breaking the rules. If we were restricted to forms of 'bare lives' deprived of our ability to participate in political, social and biological forms as 'normal' then we didn't want to be making that sacrifice alone. The state controls, and media commentary reminded us that we were in lockdown together, and the measures applied to everyone.

A controversial topic following the COVID-19 outbreak that was discussed extensively worldwide was the role of technology and surveillance in tracking and controlling the virus. The use of surveillance in tracking citizens has always been a problematic aspect of state control in a 'state of emergency' as highlighted in the USA Patriot Act referenced earlier. However, the value of data in personal phones has become a crucial tool in the defence against the COVID-19 virus with many countries rapidly changing legislation in relation to data sharing in order to give companies greater access to location services and track movements (European Law Blog 2020). This directly links to the conceptual depiction of how the state involves itself directly with biological matters in the name of a 'state of emergency', quickly pushing through the necessary legislation. In Greece, individuals needed to text the government when and why they wanted to leave the house and wait for a reply giving them permission. In South Korea, phones were tracked to create a map for citizens to check if they crossed paths with virus patients. In Singapore, Germany and Iran amongst other countries, the use of downloadable apps that collect real-time data on symptoms and locations have been discussed and enforced (Business Insider 2020). In Italy, the state collected anonymized location data from telecom operators to check on citizens whereabouts. As described in the anecdote of Greta's sister we began to feel constantly watched as the state clearly established forms of securitisation in its presence, its narrative and its controls even to the extent of the phones in our pockets in order to keep us following the necessary measures and restricted to our homes, and arguably bare lives.

Chapter Conclusion

The three topics analysed here in relation to the concepts of 'biopolitics' and 'state of exception' construct a framework for exemplifying how the reaction to COVID-19 in Italy began to challenge and adapt the role of the state. By identifying how the state began to control movements outside of the house and perpetuate a narrative that would not be amiss in circumstances of conflict or war the severity of the situation became a 'state of exception' in reaction to COVID-19. This first chapter

alongside the chosen pictures and vignette have contextualized the circumstances that the state was presented with in March and April 2020, highlighting the insecurity and state measures that became a normalized part of daily life for those living through this moment. Agamben stressed that a 'permanent state of exception' has become an essential practice for contemporary states in relation to citizens who are removed from the political system (2005, 2 and 2020). In the example of the COVID-19 emergency, like the Third Reich that lasted twelve years juridically, the viral pandemic could viably push society and the state into a sense of suspended exception and uncertainty. Now that Phase 1 has underlined the wider contextualisation of the circumstances faced in relation to narratives of state control, it is necessary to interpret how these measures began to affect personal narratives of present and future lives suspended in this COVID-19 exception.

Phase Two

For Phase 2 of the discussion, the focus moves forward from the existing framework considering how the COVID-19 exception gave meaning to concepts of 'state of exception' and 'biopolitics'. The aim of this chapter is to understand how the contextual circumstances of emergency, that have already been described in Phase 1, redefined daily life both for the participants involved and myself. Phase 2 will build initially upon Giorgio Agamben's own 2020 perception of the COVID-19 virus to consider how he expanded the 'state of exception' concept to incorporate the notion of uncertainty in this contemporary paradigm. After exploring the existing literature in relation to the impact of COVID-19 in Italy the analysis will also consider the integration of the notion of 'rupture'. By positioning this moment as a 'rupture' in Italian state, social and cultural narrative Phase 2 will express how this virus managed to disrupt planned presents, futures and most personal narratives of linear life.

Day Eight

Today I feel low, my throat is sore and my muscles ache. I keep doing the check they suggest - holding a deep breath for 10 seconds to see if my chest feels tight. My biggest fear today has become somehow getting the virus. Of course, I am concerned for my parents at home especially with my mother working two days a week as the oldest nurse in the office, but I know they have been quarantining as long as we have, ahead of the UK numbers. I am young and healthy, but I am reliant on Greta for shelter and support right now, and for the foreseeable future. If I got the virus now what would I do? How would I see a doctor? Would I need to isolate somewhere? I know that Greta understands the reality of hosting me and suggesting I stay during this moment, so she is not about to kick me out. But I couldn't personally handle the possibility of risking either her or Mimi. I do a workout with Mimi because more than anything I don't want them to think anything is wrong with me. I want to share how I feel but I can't because I don't want my parents or friends or Greta to worry that I have it…

I'm sure its paranoia, the constant discussion of the virus has got into my head and this is just a physical reaction to the stress of this constant limbo. I mean how can a person sit all day in quarantine for a virus, talking about a virus, thinking about a virus and not feel somewhat sick? But meanwhile I know that I eat so well here, I sleep endlessly, I rest all day. And more to the point I have been quarantined for over a week already, the virus isn't travelling in on a fly!

In the end I will just try everything I can do in my power, take paracetamol, have a hot bath, then drink hot honey and lemon and go to bed early. If it is not better tomorrow, then I will worry.

Day Twelve

There is something completely galling about 793 people losing their lives - seven hundred and ninety-three. Its incomprehensible. My brain doesn't want to believe it. Yet here I am checking. It is a bit complicated to do but I check the website every day at this time, I have to find it through my browser which is always difficult because I have to go back into my favourites then find the website, scroll down through the cookies and then select the English translation. Its fiddly but everyday around four minutes past six you can see the results.

Yes, results as if it is a horse race or a football match, its bizarre to sit and watch the numbers of deaths and infections. Each of these people lived somewhere and had friends, parents, children, loved ones. Then each of those loved ones has their loved ones. Each of the ears on which the news will fall will be changed, knowing someone else has died in a bed, with nobody. I hope that maybe the nurses have time to check in and be there, to hear their thoughts and prayers in those last moments. How hard it must be to have the weight of so many last words on your head, walking

around with all these thoughts that should have been given to someone who would know, who might understand more. Instead these strangers wander, carrying the knowledge that they shared the most intimate moments with a person for whom they were everything in that moment, when they had no other option. When they became reduced to a bed and a number that reaches my phone every night at around 6.

I sit on the sofa, the light is soft, the sofa is white. I am comfortable, ironically comfortable as I read about this worst type of news. It is like a space appears in my stomach, like a punch or a blow, as if the breath has been taken out of my body for a moment thinking about those people. A number can't describe, it can't comprehend, it will just go into a system for newspapers, websites and countries to compare or future scientists to ponder but none of those will value the details of number 549 or 265 and what they wanted to share in their last moments. Whether they wanted to be more than a number.

Even though we don't speak, Greta also knows, I can hear the news running in the next room. If we speak it into reality it enters ours, so we let it hang in the air, to weigh down upon us as we eat dinner and get ready for bed. We don't want to mention it because then it makes it real, it makes the situation real. That today in the time we were waking up or wondering what to have for lunch or doing exercise these people were losing everything. And their people were losing the chance to say everything they thought they would have time to.
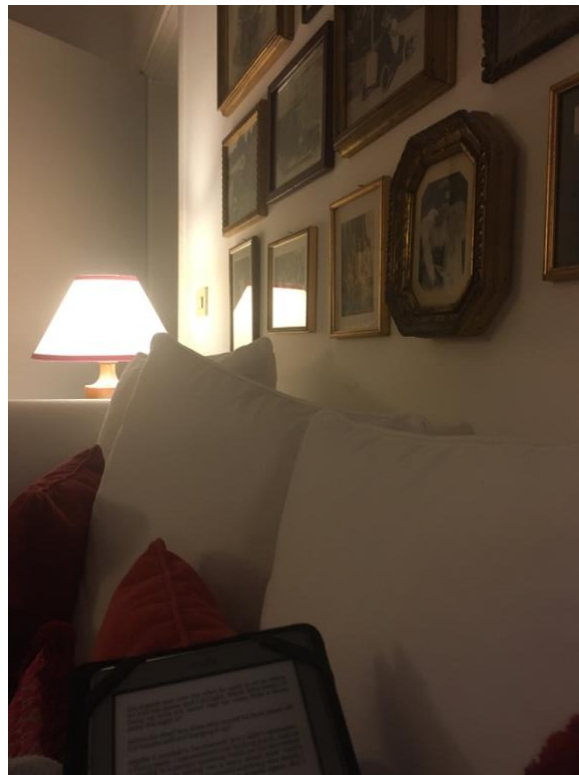
These two vignettes capture some of the darkest moments of the lockdown experience for me as the reality of the situation began to set in, and we realised that every element of our future personal, collective and global lives was now uncertain. Uncertainty is an inherently and incongruously abstract term. In relation to this study, the term will be operationalized in relation to the notion of 'rupture' which is particularly evident in the COVID-19 emergency.

Holbraad et al. state that 'ruptures are moments at which value emerges through a break with something' which became true in my personal experience. As defined in the previous vignettes, my own value system began to adjust dramatically with the first moments of quarantine in Rome (2019, 1). At the beginning of the Italian lockdown when other countries were not yet feeling the impact of the virus, I was receiving messages from loved ones on a daily basis asking why I was choosing to stay in Rome rather than be with my family, questioning my decision and concerned for my welfare and future. In that moment, my basic needs became my daily concern and in that moment my priority became where I could sleep, eat and have a sense of purpose. The thought of attempting to take a train to a plane and then fly through two airports to go somewhere safer was not an option for me, especially if I became a risk to my family or my mother who is a nurse and would not be able to work for two weeks. It was inevitably not an easy choice to make but I had to think of the best option for everyone and being together with family wasn't necessarily a priority anymore if we were safer separately. Holbraad et al. define a rupture as a 'radical and often forceful form of discontinuity' (2019, 1) which became true in my own understanding of this moment following the lockdown, therefore their conceptualisation will foreground the framework of this second phase in close association with Agamben's own criticism on the notion of uncertainty in relation to his earlier concept 'state of exception'.

On the 26th February 2020, Agamben wrote a piece for an Italian journal titled 'L'invenzione di un'epidemia' in which he stated that the COVID-19 virus is an exaggerated and falsified epidemic. Agamben proposed that the virus has been created by the Italian state to operate as a tool of mass panic and ensure the viable need for 'frenetic, irrational and entirely unfounded' authoritarian measures such as state control and presence that were considered in Phase 1 (European Journal of Psychoanalysis 2020). This piece ignited a heated discourse on the one hand about the outdated limitations of Agamben's claims and the tangible evidence of the virus itself as the numbers continued to rise, but on the other hand, the underlying reality of the situation unfolding and particular truthful elements of Agamben's argumentation. In Agamben's perception, state systems treat any emergency event as an opportunity to suspend normal judicial practice encouraging citizens therein to accept a 'bare life' and limitations on their personal liberties in moments of crisis, which

then become the rule creating a submissive, authoritarian state lead by a ruling sovereign (Chandler 2020, 26). Though Agamben's opinions were picked apart by critics, the focus of his narrative simply was that in this moment Italians were conceivably able to remove most elements of their lives outside of the house when threatened by the prospect of getting sick. In this account for the Quodlibet, he highlighted his analysis of how the state can normalize the conditions of an emergency to the extent that this particular process of measures, as discussed in Phase 1, in response to the COVID-19 virus went unchallenged. Agamben argued that citizens in Italy allowed the reduction of their lives to its biological condition and not its social or political necessity as supported by the process of living in a perennial state of fear and insecurity (Stanford University 2020). This is where the conceptualisations of 'state of exception' and 'biopolitics' that were depicted in the first chapter intertwine with the notions of fear and uncertainty that will underscore the next phase of analysis.

A rupture such as a state of emergency can become an active ingredient in redefining lived experiences through both positive and negative transformations. Building upon the operationalisations of ruptures that Holbraad et al. propose in moments following states of emergency and exception this chapter will consider how the temporality of a lived experience in lockdown can give meaning to these interpretations. When analysing the empirical data gathered, it became evident that participants referenced to particular elements of uncertainty in this moment when dealing with the Italian reaction to COVID-19. Thus, in the following analytical framework I will collate the topics raised into two focal themes: time/routine and shared experience/communication.

Time & Routine

'We understand the importance of routine and logic and applied this to the experience, we still have emotions, anger, sadness, happiness, but those things don't override the logic of the situation.' *D21*

When the lockdown arrived in Rome, the 'rupture' in our lives was not an instant or mammoth shock changing our lives from one day to the next. In reality, I was eating dinner at a restaurant on a Saturday. On Sunday I was considering how I could carry out research without meeting people unnecessarily. On Monday we were planning how Greta would travel to collect Mimi as she could not come back without using trains and then that evening the announcement came that starting on

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21 D is a Cypriot student that I connected with through a friend of a friend. I interviewed her on the 1st May, and she shared separately some interesting insights with regards to the photo elicitation technique, which will be discussed later

Tuesday, we were going into lockdown. As D stated above, we had to find the logic in the situation because life carries on. It has to. We had to wake up, eat breakfast, wash ourselves and find something to do within our means. Nonetheless, the fear and uncertainty of the moment and the future was subtly building. This reaction supports Agamben's 2020 argumentation as whilst we were attempting to make sense of this moment for ourselves, we never questioned whether or not we could just go outside for fear of getting sick. Resisting the suspension of our lives was simply never a consideration as the rumours and fear of the virus grew perpetuated by state, public and media narrative. As highlighted in the previous vignette with Greta and Mimi, we reached a point of anxiety about the virus entering the apartment that we were removing our shoes outside, cleaning keys and phones after each outing, cleaning post, removing all food packaging where possible, cleaning fruit with bicarbonate of soda. We never questioned the validity of the virus because the narrative and rising numbers were enough evidence, and thus we began to accept the suspended 'state of exception' and restriction of our lives that Agamben proposed that the state enables following an emergency event.

In a sense we kept each other going in those initial shaky moments by focusing on some sense of routine, which predominantly focused on food. Our only plan for everyday was what we would eat, and when we would buy what we needed to eat. Looking back on the diary that I kept in those days, the routine of food became our foundation. Eventually we had an unspoken schedule of who would set the table, who would cook, which plates we would use, even to the extent of who had which placemats (see Appendix 3). Greta threw herself into cooking food, always with love, and significance – *'pasta al sugo for lunch because it makes your heart happier', 'fried potatoes because they're good for the liver', 'lentils on a Monday to bring money'*, and pizza and beer always on a Sunday evening. This is how we found some sense of routine and also began to perceive the time passing through the change in seasonal vegetables and fruit alongside the blossom on the trees outside as spring arrived. Greta and Mimi had such enjoyment for food and different fresh fruits and vegetables that it became contagious, every time the food delivery arrived Greta would bring us the latest fruits *'look at these beautiful lemons, incredibile – they're better than a bouquet of flowers Sarah!'*

Daniel Knight and Charles Stewart examine how the role of time became integrated within economic crisis in Southern Europe, stating that 'crises turn ordinary daily routine inside and expose the seams of temporality to view' (2016, 3). They state that time can become elastic in moments of crisis and this was the case for us quarantined in Rome. We tried to keep some sense to the day through our three meals, reading in the morning, watching TV or studying in the afternoon and exercising before dinner but the heavier questions were always hanging over us. Mimi did not know if and when her

school would be going back, or when she could see friends again, whether they would be able to go on holiday in the summer as usual. Similarly, Greta wondered when the film industry would ever be necessary enough to return to work and she could have a viable income again. Meanwhile, I had no plan or knowledge of when, how or if I would able to leave Italy, and where I would go. We continued life in this seemingly endless cycle of flux, as these questions at the back of our minds became heavier.

In the data gathered from the participants, the topic of time was touched upon regularly particularly in relation to a neo-liberal focus on productivity. V discussed this topic in particular when outlining how she herself is '*a product of globalisation*' splitting her life between the USA and Italy, but now the impact of the virus was uncovering the '*dark side of globalisation*' in the many freedoms in travel, work and lifestyle we have been afforded. She thought that *'being under lockdown has shown that us slowing down is a good thing, for the environment, for ourselves, for our mental health, to be closer to our families during the day. I think right now people working from home ARE working more. But perhaps going forward a more balanced work-load can give a really healthy work flexibility. I think that work culture has become a bit unhealthy.'* The different understanding of time that individuals had to build during lockdown in relation to how they spent this 'new' time they had been 'given' within the circumstances. The principles of neoliberalism thrive on individual efficiency and economic growth which the COVID-19 moment was challenging with regards to the global economic situation but also supporting through providing a workforce restricted to its homes able to work both day and night with minimal workplace liabilities (Manderson and Levine 2020, 3). This challenge was touched upon by several participants who highlighted the difficulty of maintaining efficiency in these uncertain moments as critiqued by D: *'we didn't adapt well to the way we perceive time, I feel insecure about how to plan my time and how to say no to people. I felt insecure about how I was managing my time. Just because you're in the house you can allocate time to anything you need, but this becomes dictated by you being online and your flexibility.'*

These challenges to negotiations of time relate back to the dual quality of 'ruptures' attributed by Holbraad et al. (2019), who outlined that moments of rupture can be perceived as positive and dynamic, as well as inherently negative and disruptive. As the time in lockdown began to extend and other countries put in place similar measures, the narrative of productivity in lockdown became omnipresent and normalized. Those who had jobs were encouraged to continue working from home, often with little regard to their other demands such as childcare or mental health. Yet paradoxically this new time also became a possible positive for a future of uncertainty, being able to manage our own times from home should encourage independence, minimise travel and perhaps stress. As the

time continued, this became an element that individuals hoped would be the positive in a future moving away from COVID-19, as highlighted by V and D.

Shared Experience & Communication

> 'Everybody had a different approach to quarantine. I think it mostly depends if you're alone, where you are, how your relatives and friends are living the situation. We are mirrors, especially if we are stuck in the same situation.' *J22*

As J outlines above, the need for shared experience to make sense of what we were feeling was paramount in the reaction to the COVID-19 emergency. Greta was always on the phone discussing with her loved ones about the latest numbers, cures, causes and comparing with her friends abroad. Every day there was a new conclusion, video, or key piece of information, which would change completely by the next week. However, in this shared exchange of information we found comfort. I was in daily communication with friends across the world discussing what was happening in their cities and homes. The majority of the participants affirmed this sense of needing connection whilst in physical isolation. Another respondent P23 from Mexico stated that: *'More than ever we are in need of something to belief in and connections, and, for now, social media is the place where we are finding these connections that can go beyond national or spatial borders.'* As P highlighted, here a key aspect of the data was the need to compare to the process and situation through connections with other countries, to remind ourselves why we were staying inside. We craved the need to connect with others across borders, beyond our own four walls, to hear that we weren not alone in losing the ground we stand on. As Italy was the first European country to go into lockdown, I followed as friends went through the reaction in stages shortly after me – the initial shock, the denial, the anger, the sadness, the positivity. In essence we were going through the stages of grief for the life and security that we had left behind, as well as 'anticipatory grief' for the future. We were conceivably grieving, as Scott Berinato stated, 'at micro and macro level':

'There's denial, which we say a lot of early on: *This virus won't affect us*. There's anger: *You're making me stay home and taking away my activities.* There's bargaining: *Okay, if I social distance for two weeks everything will be better, right?* There's sadness: *I don't know when this will end.* And finally there's acceptance. *This is happening; I have to figure out how to proceed.'* (Harvard Business Review 2020)

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22 J relates to Jacopo Rufo – the Italian photographer who will be discussed in Phase 3. I contacted him through Instagram and received his questionnaire on the 29th May

23 P, a student from Mexico replied to my post on the Expat page. She sent her questionnaire back to me on the 15th May.

With regard to this conceptualisation of grief, the COVID-19 reaction pushed humanity to move away from the typical cyclical notion of 'rupture' as crisis foretold by a history of linear processes and functionalist understandings where event happens followed by crisis and then improvement and/or change. Instead, in this situation following the COVID-19 outbreak, the rupture was more fractured, scattered across the world with different temporal realities and the anticipation of unknown futures can be questioned and moulded.

Chapter Conclusion

The strength of anthropology lies in its ability to interpret social, political and economic factors through local and intimate contexts. However, human behaviour cannot be analysed in isolation, in this case both figuratively and literally, and thus these personal reflections of how individuals and myself gave meaning to the uncertainty of this moment cannot be seen as broad conclusions on how lockdown measures impacted personal narratives. Instead, this second phase has focused on the intimate aspects of the COVID-19 lockdown that were voiced by respondents living in the moment. By integrating how the contextual circumstance sustaining us in a 'state of exception' can be envisaged in personal understandings of time and shared experience, the phase has grounded the previous theory in reality. Through focusing on how the consideration of ruptures can give meaning to the intricacies of the slow collective experience of grief for live experienced across the world, the phase showed how the COVID-19 has supported and challenged existing literature.

Phase Three

Thus far in this study, the framework of analysis has considered how Italy presented a state of exception/emergency to its population creating a rupture in time that challenged notions of state responsibility and disrupted intimate uncertainties in the name of preventing the ongoing global health pandemic. The third and final phase will move forward from this examination by reflecting on how the experience of lockdown challenged negotiations of freedom for the participants, as COVID-19 became a reality of present and future narratives rather than a shock rupture.

The final phase will begin with a vignette from the balcony of the apartment in Rome on the 20th day of lockdown. It illustrates the reflexivity I personally found in the moment of lockdown in being able to pause and enjoy more sensorial experience. This underscores the notion of personal reflection and 'self-work' that is entwined with the concept of freedom by Michel Foucault in his 'technologies of the self' (1988). This interplay will form a foundation for how the final chapter considers individual resilience to the lockdown in Italy – and the creativity that was sparked for individuals in this moment.

Day Twenty

As I sit and feel the sun warm my skin, I realise how strange it is to listen to nothing. There are no cars, no people, no buzz. Two minutes away is one of the most popular piazzas in Rome and yet there is nothing. I wonder when was the last time that I listened to nothing. Even at home, in bed I can hear a housemate or a radiator but here in this moment it is just me. But I'm not completely alone because there are a symphony of birds flying all around, as if they have taken it upon themselves to fill the emptiness. I always think I can hear someone walking down the path but every time I look to check, it is a pigeon searching in the leaves that have fallen from the wall. And every time I think: when I would have ever cared that this pigeon would be the most activity I have seen all day?

Of course, I am with people, I see the same two people every day. But there is something about the excitement of the unexpected and unknown people out there. It has been so long since I was uncomfortably making small talk or wondering how I look or meeting someone new. Nervously meeting new people or laughing too hard at a joke. And yet here we are, me, the pigeon and the smaller birds that are becoming braver every day.

There is another noise, sometimes I can hear horse hooves from somewhere up the hill near the church. Every time I almost think I am imagining something because what horse could possibly be walking around Rome right now... maybe a police horse - that is the most realistic option but then why… what are they possibly policing that they need a horse up there? Maybe the horse needs exercise?

I stay sitting, reading my book and listening. Occasionally there is a passing person trying to entertain themselves with tasks. The young Milanese woman below collecting yet another parcel (she is actually Roman but she came from Milan at the beginning of the lockdown and thus will forever be known as 'from Milan') or her nervous boyfriend going for a run. Or perhaps the older man upstairs in his fancy suits and shades heading to the supermarket for dinner as he cannot cook. Or occasionally one of the young men from the offices below coming to pick up something with his little hairy dog. These are the majority of the individuals that make it to this back pathway and every time they do, we run to the balcony to see who and report back to each other. It's the height of entertainment.

I wonder if life had gone on as planned, would I have ever sat on this terrace in the sunshine? Or known the details of every passing neighbour?

To examine the complicated and intricate understanding of freedom in the impact of COVID-19 on individual narratives, this study will reengage with the theory of the Michel Foucault. The examination returns to the first chapter where the consideration of Foucault's understanding of 'biopower' and 'biopolitics' were analysed in relation to state manipulations of control in situations of emergency, depicted in the restriction of personal freedoms outside the house by the Italian state in reaction to COVID-19 (Chandler 2020, 26-29). The study will build upon Foucault's extensive philosophical argumentations as the narrative turns to the topic of freedom which is an elusive and catalytic philosophical term. Freedom is an abstract term that can be manipulated broadly within social science examinations, yet in the context of this study in Italy, the term will be positioned as an inevitable output of critique for the Italian population who found themselves restricted to their homes without the daily social, biological and political freedoms they were previously able to enact outside of the house. Building upon the previous groundwork thus far in the research that considered how the Italian state was able to exert its use of 'biopower' over the population, restricting their freedoms in this emergency and the 'rupture' that this caused at intimate level, the study will move forward to consider how the temporality of lockdown began to impact negotiations of freedom, as underscored by Foucault's principles.

A simple conclusion of the Italian situation could be that in scenarios where 'biopower' is displayed through authoritarian measures there is accordingly less freedom, but Foucault (1988) resisted this idea by stating that freedom does not disappear when power is exercised, as it can only be used over free subjects. He proposed that freedom is not a naturally given virtue but a historical phenomenon that is intuitively relative to the situation at hand. This can be evidenced by, for example, modern social and economic challenges such as nationalism and capitalism which challenge notions of liberty and autonomy. Nevertheless, in Foucault's understanding there has always been a complicated interplay presented within relations of freedom even looking back over historical abuses of power such as slavery. Foucault suggested that freedom in its interaction with power should be linked to a degree of 'self-reflexivity' and 'self-work' in understanding individual agency, thought and perception, even in moments of physical restriction (Connolly 2014, 60-75). Foucault's positioning of freedom in relation to self-reflexivity is where the analysis of the COVID-19 impact in restricting people to their homes enabled them to renegotiate conceptions of freedom. When asked about her consideration of freedom in response to the COVID-19, D answered: *'I see smaller freedoms as freedom. The freedoms I initially valued are not there anymore. Its inaccessible, the freedom to visit my family, my friends it is gone. Also, my sense of freedom with speech and touch and everything has shrunk. The only freedom I have left is of my mind, to choose the way I live in the*

house.' The most evident restrictions on freedom internationally were in the sense of movement in the various COVID-19 measures as borders were closed and state controls were instigated, as discussed in Phase 1, that restricted all everyday movement to necessity. However, as D illustrated, at the individual level, the freedom of the mind when presented with an unknown amount of time inside, removed from external social and cultural stimuli, became the challenge for individuals as lockdown extended. This statement supports Foucault's understanding by highlighting how individuals in lockdown began to look inward in reflection as a display of autonomy whilst restricted physically. The method of critique and reflection that was generated through the completion of questionnaires and interviews became a method of self-reflection for many of the participants. Several voiced their appreciation separately to me for the opportunity to consider how their perceptions of freedom, time, security, safety and connection had been challenged through their time spent in lockdown. This became a two-way exchange as by the end of my first month in lockdown, I was beginning to grow frustrated at my circumstances and restrictions. As I began to interview and discuss with others how they had interpreted their circumstances, I myself found reflexivity in understanding how others had been challenged or encouraged by the moment.

Freedom in Lockdown

The notion of freedom was not a topic that I was focusing on when I first began to send questionnaires out. This was because, initially, the most logical elements of the research topic were the discussions of state power and uncertainty but as the lockdown continued and the initial questionnaires were returned, I began to see that the notion of freedom was appearing regularly as a theme that the Italians and expats were considering in answer to my questions about state responsibility and personal uncertainty. Furthermore, the variety of different perceptions replies captured a wealth of different conceptualisations of freedom from individuals with different nationalities, locations, political interests, backgrounds, economic standing, education and so forth, all brought together by the shared experience of lockdown. At that point it was clear that this term needed separate analysis, therefore in a second version of questions I asked:

> Moving away from quarantine do you think your perception or understanding of freedom
> (physically, technologically, socially) will change?

This question generated a variety of different interpretations of freedom. One interpretation that stood out was the relation of participants to their home countries, and the different valuations of

freedom there. M[24] stated that she thought *'we're still very free'* in relation to her knowledge of home in China where stricter measures were in place. She saw how the Italians cared for each other, referencing how her neighbours would cook and sing from the balconies, suggesting that in their community, they found a sense of autonomy within this new reality. A also referenced to her home country when stating that she believed *'we don't value what we have, we take it for granted [whilst] in other countries you don't have no freedom at all for example in war areas or dictatorships.[...] in Germany the government could not even do a quarantine because Germans would protest against it, freedom is like the highest value in Germany.'* This interpretation of how Germany was dealing with the virus linked to another consideration on the value of freedom. In A's estimation freedom has a higher value in Germany than in Italy, which stood out to me in relation to the different cultural understandings of freedom whether, in the German sense, freedom is the ability to go outside and live a 'normal' life in the sense of daily routine (shopping, meeting friends, drinking coffee) or in the Italian sense: to be able to stay at home safe from a virus and protect your country. G[25] from Italy touched upon this with his answer, outlining that *'I think that freedom is not about this. In this situation, it was our duty to stay inside and I think it was the right thing to do - so my freedom wasn't hindered. Freedom is not about being able to do whatever we like, I do not like that concept, but maybe because I actually can. If I was constrained inside my house with no reason I would be hindered, but there were good reasons. It is not about the individual freedom in this moment.'* This answer ties into the narrative of state that was discussed in Phase 1, G believed that it was his duty to restrict his freedoms for the greater good of the nation. This notion of the right/correct decision was also supported by Y from Cyprus who believed that *'I always thought it was my own will to stay away, to stay home. My medical education convinced me that this was the correct thing to do, so I did not feel pressurised. What I felt pressurised to do was give up team sports, the not being able to do that or know when I will again really bothers me. It's the first time any of us are pressured into stopping a relationship with people. I need more time to see how it really affected me, something happened but we will only see it after we go back to normal.'* Here Y focuses on the social deprivation that being in lockdown enforced, which was a common topic amongst the participants as lockdown extended. Often it seemed that the lack of social stimulation was a crux of the Italian reaction where social interaction is a integral part of the culture, as V, who is half American/Italian, referenced: *'Italians by nature and culture are social and have never social distanced in their lives.*

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24 I contacted M through Instagram as she was sharing her experience with lockdown whilst living with her boyfriend in Rome. She sent me her questionnaire back on the 27th of April

25 G was a friend of a friend that I met through studying, he was quarantined in Rome. I carried out an interview with him on the 2nd of May

It literally goes against their DNA.' The answers from V also highlight a final element of the notion of freedom that became integral with the answers: its relationship with the future, as V stated: '*I think we have been at the apex of freedom, access and ease. [...] I think humans have a short memory to be honest, but I do hope that this will lead to a renaissance of sorts for some time.'* This question of uncertainty for the future and how it could look relates back to Phase 2 where the discussion of time and routine in lockdown perception was highlighted. The possibilities of a new routine or appreciation of time coming out of lockdown, at least initially, was a theme that illustrated itself fervently within the answers on freedom: A from Italy believed that *'at the beginning, we will appreciate more what we have, even small things like running in a park, but soon enough we will get used to it and we will forget again. At least until the next quarantine.'* Meanwhile B from America focused on a possible collective loss of existing freedoms stating that *'we're probably going to lose a lot of freedoms, globally'* in contrast to P26 from Ireland who believed that he would be able to travel as normal: *'as someone who travels a great deal, or did, it has been hard to not have that freedom. I have become determined to travel more after this and see the large swaths of the world that I have dreamed of visiting before but not got around to going too.'*

This variety of interpretations and considerations on this abstract concept of freedom provided many links to the existing argumentation of the thesis that has risen out of the experience of lockdown. As highlighted above, some individuals tied freedom to a sense of cultural valuation controlled by state responsibility, which would support Agamben's belief of the integral role of biopower manipulated by the state in maintaining a sense of control over the moment. Whilst the discussions of future uncertainties as the world moves away from the lockdown measures highlight the rupture in global linear narratives that the COVID-19 impact has had through personal fears and hopes However, overall this collection of answers highlights the reflexivity that the lockdown moment encouraged these individuals to have, in their musings on this broad concept and how it relates to their live, which brings us back to the suggestions of Foucault considering how freedom or a perceived lack of it can interplay with 'self-work' (1988).

'Hold your breath'

As depicted in the diary I kept (see Appendix 3) the use of photos became paramount to me as a way of processing my experience and in capturing moments of my day to sharing with family and friends

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26 P from Ireland contacted me following my post on an Expat page. He sent me his questionnaire on the 14th of May.

also in lockdown. As the research began to take shape the role of image in capturing experience became entwined with the reflections that participants were sharing. Through the use of photo elicitation, I will consider how individuals reinterpreted their circumstances to find purpose in the quiet, and a sense of future and freedom within post-lockdown understanding. William E. Connolly stated that 'creativity is an essential element in any image of freedom' in his examination of how philosophical understandings of freedom, such as Foucault's, can relate to creativity (2014, 62). This

relationship became a key element of my personal experience of quarantine. Painting, taking photos and watching films became our outlet of freedom in the apartment with Mimi, whilst then sharing recommendations or photos with family and friends to capture the moment was a source of enjoyment and comparison with their experience. As the time began to pass, I enjoyed using social media to connect with how others were understanding and sharing their time in lockdown in order to feel less isolated and connect with others' experiences. This was when I decided to engage with the method of photo elicitation in my interviews by asking how others were choosing to capture their own experience of lockdown. Initially asking participants for personal photos was more uncomfortable and many did not want to share because they did not feel that they had anything to show. However, for the individuals that did share, I was granted insight into a new intricacy of how they experienced the moment. In her room in Bologna working towards her PhD, I felt very alone so she passed the time by sending pictures to her sister of their favourite pastime, eating biscuits, whilst also sharing drawings back and forth of their favourite childhood characters – as they would draw them (photo 1&2). Whilst on break from teaching at a primary school M27 sent me a selfie with the saviour of the Italian COVID-19 moment – Amuchina (photo 3), which is a sanitizing cleaning product that was sold out in every supermarket and became quite the coveted item. Greta asked me on every shopping trip if I could find some – in the end we had to go to a separate shop solely for Amuchina. D and P shared photos of their dogs restricted themselves behind
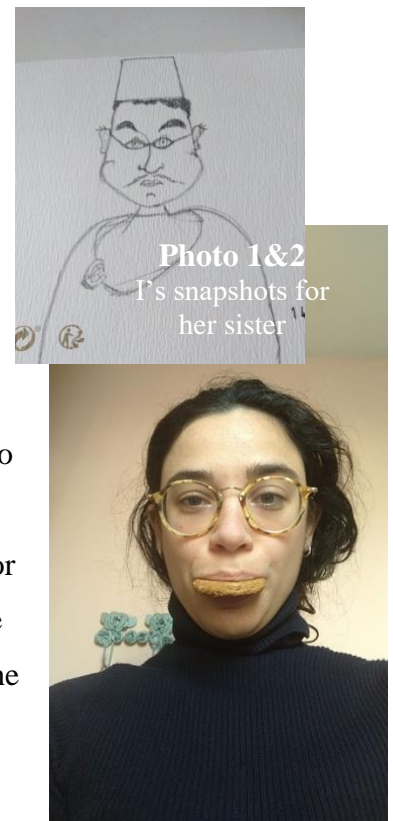

Photo 1&2
I's snapshots for her sister

Photo 3
M's Amuchina selfie

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27 M from Greece I knew through a friend of a friend, and I interviewed her on the 6th of May.

bars (photo 4&5), D said that at this moment watching her dog Bandit and the sunset she realised that she had become like a pet herself watching life from inside her small reality. L[28] shared a photo of the chickens she had purchased, part of the new lifestyle she began in the countryside whilst in quarantine for the virus and away from her normal jet set lifestyle flying back and forth to her hotels in Morocco (photo 6&7). O[29] suggested that for her the lockdown hadn't felt very restrictive as she could work from home in the Sicilian countryside, sending a picture from her picturesque terrace (photo 8). Despite being strictly against the use of his phone in lockdown, G sent through a portrait that his housemate had painted during lockdown of him with a basil plant that referenced to the infamous pesto al Genovese from Genova where he grew up (photo 9). As individuals began to show me photos, they opened up in remembering particular moments that had occurred over the lockdown always looking back fondly. This is the value of using photo elicitation within research, as the parts of the brain that process visual information are older due to

Photo 4 & 5
D and P's dogs considering their restrictions

Photo 6&7
L's slower lifestyle outside Milan

Photo 8
O's quarantine view in Sicily

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28 L from Italy was quarantined in the North of Italy outside of Milan away from her husband and step-daughters. I contacted her through Greta who used to live with her in Paris. I interviewed her on the 10th of May.
29 O from France moved to Italy six years ago, when I met her. I sent her a questionnaire that she sent back on the 16th of June.

evolution, than those that process verbal information (Harper 2002). Thus, the method can evoke deeper elements of human consciousness striving for 'not simply an interview process that elicits more information, but rather one that evokes a different kind of information' (pg. 13).

Photo 9
G's basil portrait painted by his housemate

I found an intriguing example that tied the presented conceptual topics of state control and uncertainty within these contextual COVID-19 circumstances to particular interpretation of individual creative freedom in the memory book *Hold your breath* by Jacopo Rufo. Rufo, who had found himself in Roman lockdown at his girlfriend's apartment away from his normal routine, work and family was used to a certain freedom of movement across borders in order to do his job. As he began to face the reality of no income, he realised he needed to find a way to create some form of work in this moment and so he created what became a unique and fitting visual interpretation of his intimate experience in lockdown. The book collates a personal insight as recorded in short diary-style narratives and photos taken within 500 meters of the apartment he was in – mostly from the terrace and roof. This book became Rufo's saving grace, as people were able to pre-order it before its completion and therein provide him with the money he needed to survive the lockdown. When I contacted him with regards to my research, he told me that '*sharing thoughts, photos, ideas are important if you are alone and it has been my only income, I actually survived thanks to the book.*' In the end, the book has been sold out and posted worldwide sharing worldwide an insight into how lockdown felt and looked in Rome. Reading the book at the time of writing this thesis (August 2020), the reflection is cathartic for me as I see my own thoughts through the lens of Rufo's narrative. In Appendix 4 I display particular pages that engage with the theoretical framework of the study. In a sense this memory book became a metaphor for the process of the lockdown and this study, a unique example of how an individual used this rupture in time creatively as a reflexive opportunity illustrating the operationalisation of freedom that Foucault was proposing. By creating a memory book to share and critique his experience and identity as a citizen in Roman lockdown Rufo found his own sense of reflexive freedom in resilient expression and understanding that will find precedence in itself beyond the COVID-19 moment.

Chapter Conclusion

The final phase has drawn a framework of analysis depicting how individuals found creative expression when faced with restrictive lives and notions of freedom as summarised in Jacopo Rufo's memory book. As tied to Foucault's delineation of 'self-work' in moments where autonomy is challenged the phase builds upon the notion of a rupture such as the COVID-19 outbreak as a 'positive' occurrence as well as inherently negative, as highlighted in Phase 2. This piece will hold relevance for individuals who experienced Italian lockdown but also for those who didn't, being able to glance through those pictures and moments gives a snapshot into a narrative of an individual faced with lockdown in the COVID-19 moment.

Epilogue

Day 98

This weekend I have felt out of place. Apprehensive. I think we could all feel it in the apartment, like time was shifting again. Life is almost normal again, a new normal but some semblance of reality compared to before. Mimi is in a rhythm with school (albeit through her laptop from home), Greta is preparing for jobs during the summer. The virus is still there, seeping into the edges but life is moving on. I am the loose end now, my time here is up.

I have travelled to Rome nine times in the past five years, so I know the journey well, the airports, the train, the process. I'm so used to it, to packing, and saying goodbyes. I am more used to planes and trains than being in a car. But this journey is different, it has been planned for months in my mind.

The process of getting a flight was endless and exhausting, the first four flights were cancelled and then postponed. Meanwhile rumours circulated about who could fly, which restrictions are in place and which companies are going out of business. In the end I was considering how to take the train back through Genova and Frankfurt. All of these options with baggage and masks and questions and documents. An impossible prospect when life has become so small.

As I travel back to the airport behind a plastic screen, driven in a taxi by a masked man who sanitized his hands after touching my luggage I think back to the day I arrived in Rome. The friendly taxi driver then who I sat in front next to as we chatted away about the unusually hot weather. He was bemused by the idea of an English girl from the Netherlands coming to work on Via Margutta. He offered me sweets and shook my hand, that was just four months ago and here we are – a lifetime later.

I remember the song that was playing on the radio that afternoon in February as we drove past the Trinita dei Monti 'shiny happy people holding hands, shiny happy people laughing'. The irony is not lost on me as I look out at the masked Romans heading to work on this Monday morning. They are definitely not holding hands.

Concluding Thoughts

A pivotal aspect of this research study was to answer the research question:
How did the reaction to the COVID-19 virus challenge the role of the Italian state as well as personal perceptions of freedom and uncertainty explored through living in lockdown?

In order to answer this question, the thesis has presented an ethnographic timeline of impact following the COVID-19 viral outbreak as perceived in localized interpretation from March to May 2020. This analysis has been grounded in a triangulation of research methods that examine the impact through a variety of empirical processes.

The thesis began with how the COVID-19 outbreak sparked a nationwide lockdown and a new narrative of state control in this Italian state of emergency. Through the construction of an analytical framework that highlighted three elements of the state reaction supported by theoretical understanding this primary phase focused on the changing role of the Italian state as supported by both respondent and auto-ethnographic perception.

Once this contextual background had been presented the second phase focused in on the personal relationships that respondents in Italy reinterpreted with the state, the future and particularly uncertainty in the face of such a powerful 'rupture' in present and future linear timelines. Through the exploration of key elements of the moment voiced through auto-ethnographic and participant experience, the abstract notion of uncertainty in relation to daily routine, shared experience, communication and time was given meaning within this localized context.

Turning to the possibility of a new future as Italy finds a tentative reality living with a viral threat the final phase constructed an agenda of analysis based on the consideration of freedom. This argumentation positioned freedom in relation particularly to creative reflexivity and self-reflection in the COVID-19 moment. The study illustrated how individuals interpreted their given circumstances and defined their own personal versions of resilience in their experience of lockdown and approach to a life moving from restrictive lockdown to a restrictive reality.

Once the initial lockdown measures began to cease and the dust settled the reality of the COVID-19 situation began to appear for Italy as the public left their homes again. The narrative previously told,

as defined in Phase 1, that we would come out stronger and victorious was undermined as I strolled through streets filled with masked, cautious Italians. Despite the severe restrictions for months, and all that had been sacrificed, the virus is still a tangible problem causing momentary outbreaks and challenging the notion of travel and borders worldwide. The realities of the change in state process that were outlined in Phase 1 seem set to stay, the state presence is still ample and controls have moved to taking contact details at restaurants and cafes. Furthermore, the notion of uncertainty, discussed in Phase 2, has become a underlying threat to existence following every individual who questions the reality of a future without certain freedoms such as holiday travel or seeing loved ones abroad. As stated in a reactionary piece to the SARS epidemic - 'the objective is to contain disease, not to contain human beings' (Mandavilli 2003) but what happens as the viruses become more prolific and uncontrollable?

Recommendations for Research

It is important to state definitively that the data gathered can only provide a particular interpretation of the COVID-19 moment. The participants all had a particular privilege in their ability to be in lockdown: they are in education and/or work, most were traveling outside of their home country, personally unaffected by the virus health-wise, with access to the internet and having a safe space to quarantine in. Furthermore, I am a middle class, highly educated, British, white woman with the ability to remain in Rome for an extended research project. This perpetuates a particularly unique and specific version of the COVID-19 lockdown. A weakness is that the findings here cannot be generalized for a large percentage of the world who needed to risk leaving lockdown in order to survive. Similarly, I did not speak with anyone who had a medically confirmed case of COVID-19, so I cannot speak for those who have suffered with the short-term or long-term effects of this virus. Nevertheless, in this weakness there is also strength. The unique ethnographic opportunity that I was presented with to perceive how this virus impacted a society as interpreted through the intimate and embodied experience of Roman lockdown provided an inimitable insight into how potential future lockdowns dealing with COVID-19 could be interpreted and give meaning to wider political, social and biological narratives.

In order to bring a conclusion to the research project that has been explored here I will look back on the two statements that opened the thesis from Giorgio Agamben (2020) and Manley (2020):

'What is a society that has no other value than survival?'

(Agamben 2020)

'[COVID-19] has become a disruption of the most unspeakable proportions […] It has disrupted at a national level, at a personal level, at an intimate level.' (Manley 2020)

In my opinion these two statements clarify the relevance of this ethnographic study as we look towards future research projects on the impact of this virus. The international reaction to COVID-19, as Manley highlights, has created a disruption at every level of understanding and perception changing the future of research with regards to travel, health and safety alone, which was defined in Phase 2. This raises an entirely new sphere of anthropological study that will need to engage with the relations of individuals with their circumstances whilst at a distance. Agamben's statement similarly defines how future research can relate to COVID-19, as previously statements such as this one above would have related to communities facing environmental, criminal or state threat. Yet now they can be applied to an invisible virus restricting a worldwide population to its homes. How does this reinterpret the notions of social, cultural and political freedoms that individuals have been accustomed to? How will anthropology adapt to the new role of researchers behind masks?

Anthropology plays a key role in health pandemics by establishing a holistic methodology that examines daily lives lived in processes of uncertainty and thus it can find a clear relevance in this moment by interpreting how state measures, interrupted individual narratives and creative resilience can be examined within larger examinations of the COVID-19 impact. The role of anthropological research in mapping the varied truths in pandemics and constructing new ones is invaluable (Atlani-Duault and Kendall 2009, 210). This study has proposed a triangulation of multidimensional methodology that engages with individual accounts of a lockdown experience and therein proposing an intricately localized and important for ongoing research into COVID-19 realities and future lockdowns.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Questionnaire

Below I include the questions used for the questionnaire that I also used for the interviews. I made small adaptations to the questions depending on the particular respondent, for example if they were Italian, I asked about their home city rather than home country.

<div align="center">Italian Quarantine Questionnaire</div>

First of all, thank you for giving me some of your time to answer these questions.

The aim of my study is to consider how the quarantine period had an impact on daily life. I hope that you feel able to answer the following questions as openly as you can, I will fully anonymise any information that I choose to include in the final paper which you can have full access to if you wish.

Thank you again and let me know if you have any questions!
Sarah Barker

Name:
Home country:
_____

Looking back at Phase 1, how do think the impact of the virus has been managed in your country thus far?

In your perception have people listened to the measures put in place by officials, either nationally or regionally – in your country?

Have these measures made you feel safe in your daily life during quarantine?
_____

How did the quarantine affect your daily routine?

What became the unexpected highlights and negatives of your days in quarantine?

How have those you are in contact with coped with quarantine?
_____

Has online communication helped in your experience of quarantine?

Has social media had a more positive or negative role (or both) for you during the quarantine?

How do you feel about the mixture of information about COVID-19 (regarding measures, cures, causes) that has been shared?

_____

Have you seen any particular forms of solidarity or community appearing in your country in reaction to the quarantine?

Overall how well or badly do you think your country has reacted in comparison to other locations you have been in contact with?

_____

Moving forward from quarantine what do you think or hope will change?

Moving away from quarantine do you think your perception or understanding of freedom (physically, technologically, socially) will change?

Similarly, do you think your perception or understanding of safety has changed?

Appendix 2

Ethical Code

My moral principles entering the fieldwork process:
- Protecting the confidentiality of the subjects involved in data interpretation and representation through anonymized names
- Prioritizing integrity when communicating with participants, I expect honesty from my participants and thus I must be honest with them
- Non-discrimination against particular participants
- Intellectual property protection when inputting information into programmes and documents
- Removing myself from situations that are harmful to me or families involved
- If I discover myself in environments of abuse in my research then I will step back and re-evaluate my personal boundaries with regards to the situation and the individuals involved in considering further action

Appendix 3

The appendix is a makeshift memory book that compiles particular diary notes of meals, quotes, news headlines, weather updates and more alongside particular photos of daily life in Roman lockdown. The book highlights the ups and downs of life as presented through my intimate and individual perception to evidence the uncertainty of the moment, and the need for creating and sharing.

10th March Day 1
Dads Birthday, waiting for Mimi to come back from San Vigilio

11th March Day 2
University and Embassy calls

12th March Day 3
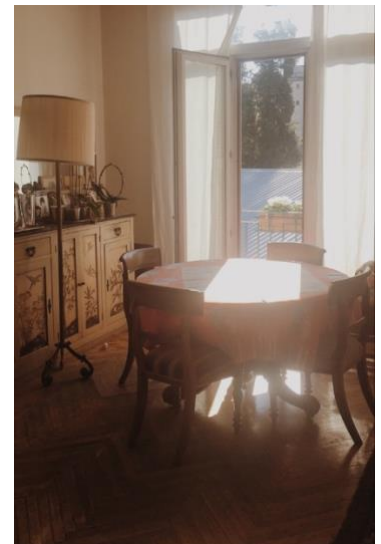Final confirmation to stay in Rome from university

13th March Day 4
First shopping trip, rude pharmacy employees
Elderly people everywhere, are they lonely?
6 pm balcony concerts begin

14th March Day 5
First weekend, fried zucchini flowers on toast
Two litre bottle of wine from Greta's niece

15th March Day 6
Trying to find a schedule
What do the animals/birds think about now the streets are empty, do the dogs miss their friends too?

16th March Day 7 & 17th March Day 8
Hard days, feeling unwell, dark and rainy
Mum went to two shops in the UK before 8am – both empty
There is sun on the balcony in the afternoon until 15:09

18th March Day 9
Shopping for the first time with a mask
Apocalyptic streets
My family were supposed to be coming to Rome today on holiday finally, they have never been
'In Italy it was 3000 cases the last three days but today its 2000'

19th March Day 10
Playing Burraco
Learning Kinstretch
5000 new infections
We run to see who is coming in the building every time, now they know and look up to us
'I don't enjoy the thought of my family as part of a nation-wide science experiment in the UK'

20th March Day 11
Hayfever arrives – Greta is concerned
600 deaths
Frustration at friend's denial at home
UK shops have food again, relief

'It took over three months to reach the first 100,000 cases worldwide, and twelve days to reach the next 100,000'

21st March Day 12
Mimi goes outside to the courtyard finally
Guacamole toast for lunch
Felt like a good Saturday until..
Almost 800 deaths
Restricted shop times, no industry or exercising outside

22nd March Day 13
Mothers Day in UK, sad to be away
Making pancakes for breakfast
Pumpkin risotto for lunch
'I think by telling everyone else its ok, I'm telling myself'
UK fatality rate is higher than Italy had at that stage in time, they are still not in lockdown

64

23rd March Day 14
No sugar in the house, but we don't want to go out and buy it
Hayfever gets worse
'Everyone in The Netherlands is suddenly a runner'
Feeling lethargic
Don't want to reply to anyone anymore
I just want to play Sudoku and watch crime TV
programmes

24th March Day 15
Bad sleep
Beat Mimi at Burraco finally, we are not playing
competitively anymore
Arguments, problems with Mimi school schedule
first time doing a Tabata workout

25th March Day 16
Better numbers of deaths and infections
Tomato pasta for lunch – Greta made it with love – she said it's good for feeling happy
Prince Charles is positive
'Smells like spring'

26th March Day 17
Case numbers get worse
'He who goes slowly goes safely and goes far'
Tuna pasta for lunch
Neighbour has endless amazon deliveries, we are
unimpressed
Cold and rainy but beautiful sunset
NHS clap starts in UK every night at 8pm
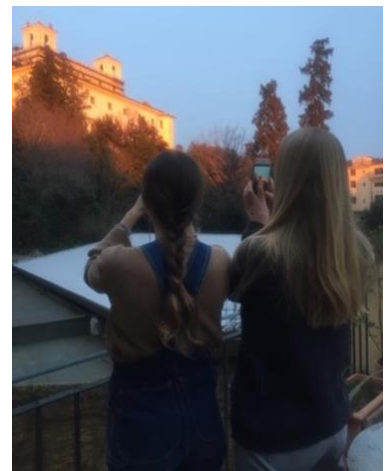
27th March Day 18
Pesto pasta for lunch
Everyday feels like Sunday
*'I can tell that's a food delivery by the sound of the
car'*
969 deaths
Mug microwave cakes
Mum goes back to work in the UK, nervous

28th March Day 19
Whole week without going shopping
Trip to Coop
Four police, four army, six dogs
Nervous
Bought the wrong mozzarella, wrong pizza base,
wrong peanut butter

29th March Day 20
'Sunday Morning' Velvet underground
Clocks go forward but who notices?
Two workouts
Face masks
Later sunset
Facetime home

30th March Day 21
Sun is back
50 people with the virus walking around fined this weekend
Finished watching Gilmore Girls

31st March Day 22
'English people follow rules'
End of March already

65

Unmotivated friends in other countries
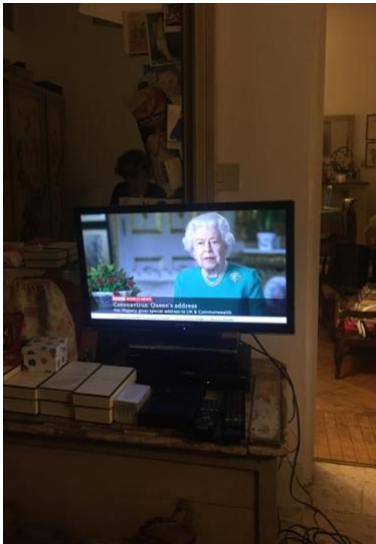Pizza without flour

1st April Day 23
Greta anxious to go outside
Mums allowed to walk with children on their street
Masks for specific people
Burgers and fried potatoes
Mimi put lavender oil on my pillow to help me sleep

2nd April Day 24
Bad hayfever
Mimi playing outside, Greta anxious
Greta puts all of Mimi's clothes in the wash when she comes in the door

3rd April Day 25
Bird comes inside during breakfast
Mum walked 150 times around the garden to do 10,000 steps
Saw the same homeless guy on Via Condotti, how is life for them right now…
Venchi gelato shop is open?!
My jeans are tight
Friends in The Netherlands are negative about the measures there

4th April Day 26
Greta gets a proper mask from a neighbour who is a dentist

5th April Day 27
Feeling underwater, static
'Everyone above is living normal life but everything here in Italy is frozen'
Sit in the sun
Pumpkin risotto
Boris Johnson in hospital
The Queen makes an announcement, we are reassured

6th April Day 28
Bad hayfever night
1 hour of ashtanga with Greta
Artichoke risotto
I've missed my time in Rome, all the things I wanted to do
Enjoying Italy from my sofa
Lentils for dinner - Lentils on a Monday brings money
Mimi and Greta arguing
My brother is worried – I feel guilty
UK is getting worse

7th April Day 29
Mimi's school isn't teaching French because the teacher doesn't want to
Farmers market is open again, but not answering the phone
Big moon again, one month on since the beginning

8th April Day 30
The fresh market is open!
Good news, reassuring
Fish market is also open!
Fancy easter egg delivery to the neighbour
Greta did first headstand!
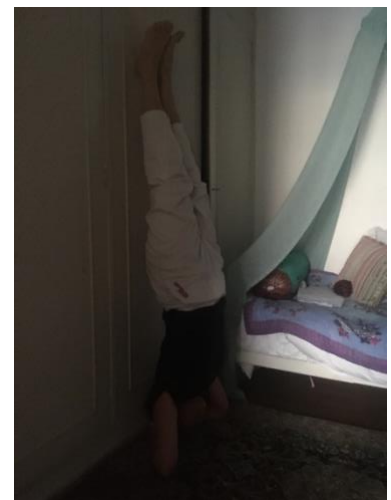
9th April Day 31
One month
Greta goes to the Natura Si shop, she hated it
45-year-old man shouting at older woman, staff coming too close
Pasta with zucchini for lunch
Children start to play outside
Quarantine extended til 3rd May

10th April Day 32
'April is normally a happy time in Italy'
980 dead in the UK, mum is working still
I love opening the shutters in the morning, Greta
leaves them for me to do

11th April Day 33
Watching Casa de Papel
Quiet
Long queue to the beach… Greta angry
914 dead in UK, Mum is working still
Climb up to the roof for the sunset

12th April Day 34
Easter!
Greta organised a beautiful surprise
Italian traditions
Salami and boiled eggs, beans and pecorino cheese
Chocolate
Greta has a headache, she's sad, worried about future,
it might be a year…
23000 people fined over the weekend
737 deaths in the UK, mum working
Dad building stuff
Clive panicking, proposing they isolate in the house

13th April Day 35
Fruit delivery

14th April Day 36
Bookshops are supposed to open, but they don't in
Rome
Pumpkin risotto
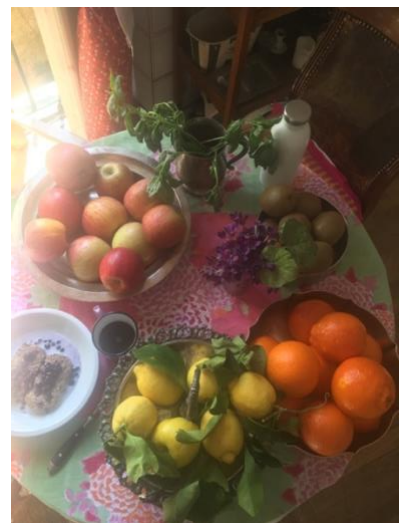
15th April Day 37
Groundhog day… is real

16th April Day 38
English madness at three weeks more
Less meat more vegetables
France and Uk are being stricter

17th April Day 39
'Tomorrow is Saturday we can sleep in..'
We sleep in everyday
Pride and Prejudice film
Sense and Sensibility film
Giving Mimi an English movie education
Greta tells us about when she met Hugh Grant

18th April Day 40
August the Avocado plant is growing

19th April Day 41
Frustrated at the situation in the UK
Raising money for the NHS as if it isn't a state institution

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'Everyone is focused on this as if it's a charity event not a pandemic'

20th **April Day 42**
75 euros spent on fruit and vegetables
Everything is breaking
Toilet seat, two lamps, dishwasher
'I don't want to take up a new hobby or do a headstand or become an artist or shave my head, I just want the last two months back'

21st **April Day 43**
Lack of PPE in the UK
NL announcement
The TV broke
'We've done everything, argued, watched movies, tried new exercises, done remote shopping, cleaned, done clothes washing everything fifty times and we're running out of patience'

22nd **April Day 44**
Life is coming back
First shop with new mask

23rd **April Day 45**
Mums birthday
Blew out candles on Facetime

24th **April Day 46**
First walk outside with Mimi
'Its so weird, this is always open… no this shop is closed?!'
So many dogs that want to be pet but we can't pet them
8 police cars
One army truck
Two police horses
We are uncomfortable seeing people in groups
Painting for Mimi's new room one day

25th **April Day 47**
Liberation Day
Pumpkin risotto
8 helicopters
Fly by
Watched Sisterhood of the travelling pants film
Ostia man fined 4000 euros for running on the beach

26th **April Day 48**
Late breakfast

Our neighbour, Umberto misses spaghetti al sugo so Greta takes him a plate for dinner
Happy house
Orecchiette al sugo
Greta is unimpressed by the neighbour running to Ponte Milvio
Talented Mr Ripley
We can go out from the 4th May

27th April Day 49
Another painting day

28th April Day 50
Problems with neighbours

29th April Day 51
Greta's sister warned for walking to Parioli
We walk a little further
Mimi goes into her first shop

30th April Day 52
My birthday
Sunshine is all I want
Flower delivery
Presents from the shops that are open
Spaghetti alle vongole lunch
Walk to the arts shop
Made scones

1st May Day 53
Organised Mimi's wardrobe, donated clothes

2nd May Day 54
Walk to Popolo
Last days of empty Rome

3rd May Day 55
Last day of empty streets
We can now golf, surf, canoe
Walk to Pincio for sunset and wait for the police to leave, within 5 minutes there are 8 people on the viewpoint
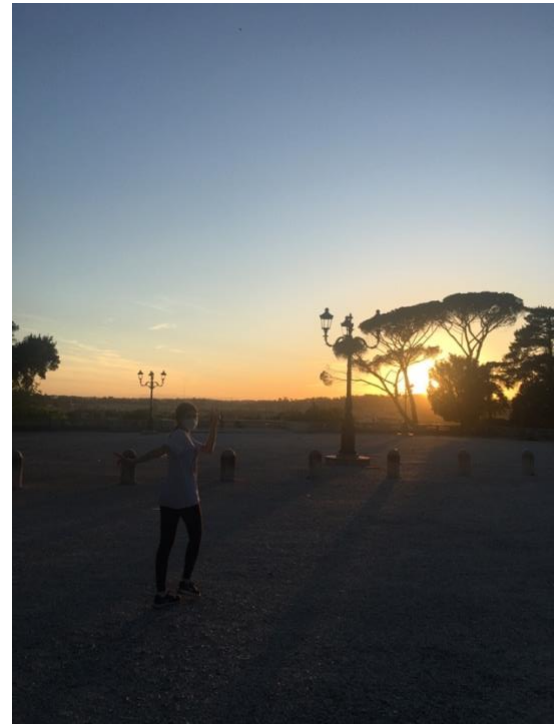
Appendix 4

In this appendix I will depict particular pages from Jacopo Rufo's book *Hold our breath* that is discussed in Phase 3. In the discussion I will highlight how the memory book that Rufo created became a catalyst for my study, drawing the topics of state, uncertainty and future together in one creative output. All copyright for the photos and text belongs to Jacopo Rufo.
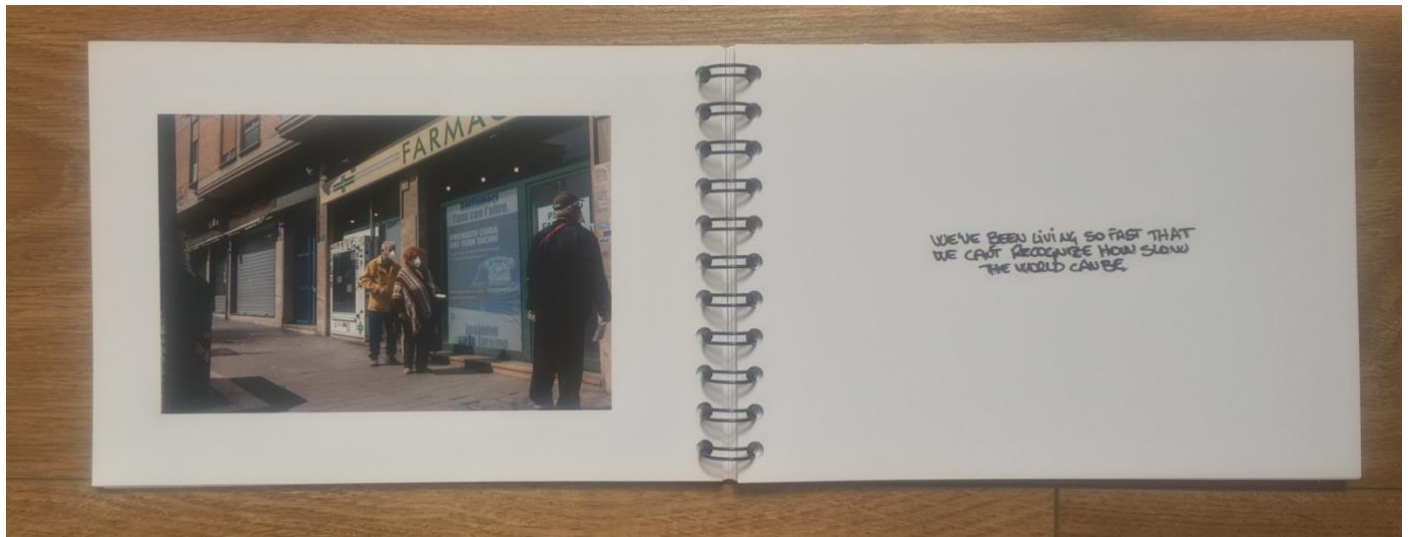

Figure 1: *'We've been living so fast that we can't recognize how slow the world can be'*

These pages relate to the notion of time discussed in Phase 2. Rufo presents an image of two elderly Italians queueing for a pharmacy in the lockdown wearing masks. The imagery of the 'slower' individuals alongside Rufo's quote ties to the way in which the COVID-19 rupture forced the world to pause and reflect on the possible errors of moving too fast.
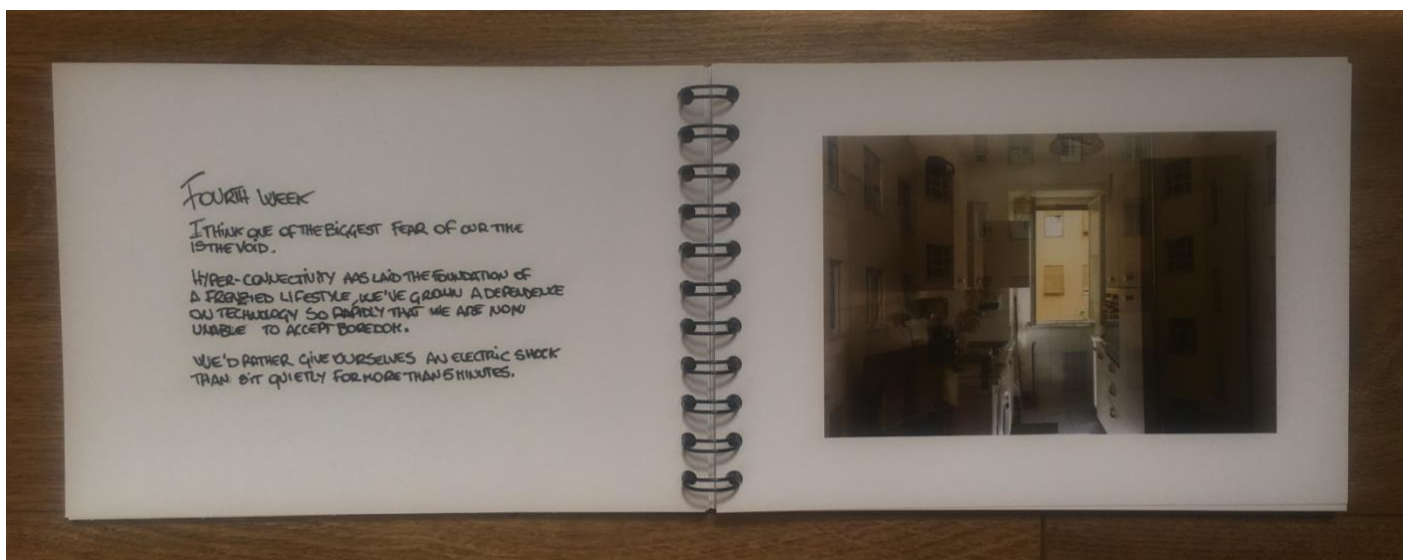

Figure 2: *'Fourth Week: I think that one of the biggest fears of our time is the void. Hyper-connectivity has laid the foundation of a frenzied lifestyle, we've grown a dependence on technology so rapidly that we are now unable to accept boredom. We'd rather give ourselves an electric shock than sit quietly for more than 5 minutes'*

Continuing with the notion of time in lockdown as opposed to the previous speed of the world Rufo here reflects on how society has grown accustomed to instantaneous entertainment – which was lacking after weeks in lockdown. His statement suggests the type of 'self-work' that Rufo was doing during his lockdown considering his valuation of freedom in relation to speed and movement. The picture is an overlay comprising two pictures – one of his kitchen and another of the outside of a building. This juxtaposition of inside and outside creates a paradox of lockdown thinking querying the spaces we were occupying whilst dreaming of outside.

Figure 3: *'I really would like to be a seagull today'*

This is a personal favourite of mine as I remember several days where I dreamed to be a bird or wondered what the nature outside was thinking of the sudden silence, as touched upon in the vignette for Phase 3. The connotation of a bird as free due to the ability to fly high above the quiet city was something, I'm sure many apartment restricted Italians dreamed about.
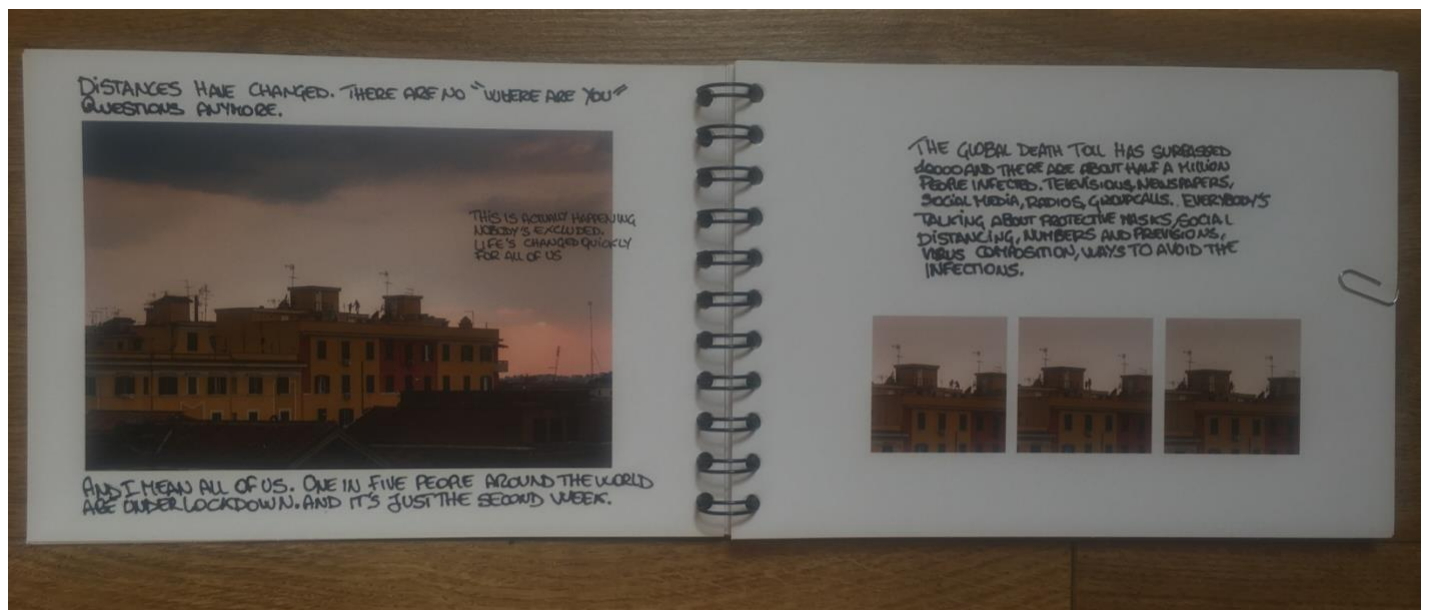

Figure 4: *'Distances have changed. There are no 'where are you' questions anymore'*

These pages from earlier in the book, and lockdown, highlight the shared experience of lockdown that was being promoted by state controls. Rufo says 'Nobody's excluded. Life's changed quickly for all of us' referencing to the quick impact of COVID-19 around the world. He also states how everybody is talking about the virus and ways to avoid the infections. These statements are juxtaposed against pictures of another building with two figures dancing on top. This returns again to the notion of shared connection but also isolation. The information overload was exhausting but the silence was still louder.