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Biopolitics the Sicilian way

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> In the dynamics of power, of absolute power, nothing exists other than what is concrete.
>
> Roberto Saviano (2007: 98).

Hazy borders

On the outskirts of Bagheria, just a few kilometres from Palermo, numerous town buses connect the main town of the island to Bagheria where the poet, story-teller and witness to a long gone civil ethos Ignazio Buttitta grew up. Some buses stop in front of a modern building, the people get off and quickly enter the hall of the building. In the 1990's this building used to house the Hotel Zagara, then, in just a few months, after the municipality of Bagheria conceded a change in zoning permits – it was transformed into a private clinic – "La clinica Villa Santa Teresa", one of the most luxurious clinics on the island. On the other side of Bagheria, not too far away, there is a building which used to house just a few years ago what was called ICRE – Industria Chiodi e Reti (Nails and Wire Netting Industry). Despite the name, it was supposed to be a warehouse for building materials belonging to Leonardo Greco, a member of the local mafia clan. In the world of *Cosa Nostra* that warehouse was known as the "Ferro" (Iron). This is how it was described by Nino Giuffré, one of the last "pentiti" ("penitent" mafiosi turned state witnesses), a top ranking Mafioso, during his interrogation:

> «We would go to the "Ferro" in Bagheria in the morning. Provenzano was there. I remember that this warehouse for iron goods was one of the most important places where Provenzano used to meet people. And let us say that it was also the place where the Corleonese adversaries used to be exterminated. That is to say that here appointments were given to people that were no longer considered trustworthy and once they got there they didn't get back home. They were killed. *It was like an extermination camp, one of Cosa Nostra's extermination camps*» (1).

Obviously, in Bagheria, at the beginning of the new millennium, it was important not to get the wrong bus. In similar ironic vein, those of us who

are more familiar with the Sicilian health system could, deep down, sustain that the island's hospitals are also places from which one never returns. We would be doing Villa Santa Teresa an injustice, and would be simplifying things somewhat, particularly, the network of relations and meanings that link *Cosa Nostra* to a significant portion of the Island's "civil society". Villa Santa Teresa is a clinic, in fact, renowned for medical excellence in Sicily, where radiodiagnostic equipment, for example, is the best of its kind in the South of Italy. The owner of Villa Santa Teresa was the engineer Michele Aiello. He, too, was from Bagheria and in 2000 he was the major tax contributor to the Sicilian Tax department. There seems to be nothing unusual up to this point. However, there is a rather curious point, and that is the fact that his name appears in one of the pieces of paper (called a *pizzino*) taken from Totò Riina – one of the *Cosa Nostra* bosses – when he was arrested in January 1993. When, in April 2003, the "stereotactic radio surgery" service was installed in Villa Santa Teresa, Michele Aiello had already served a few months in prison, accused by the magistrates court and by some "collaboratori di giustizia" (state witnesses) of being a *riservato* (known, that is, only to a few heads) member of *Cosa Nostra* and of acting as a prestanome ("name-lender") in the area of Health in the interests of Bernardo Provenzano, who was also at the head of *Cosa Nostra* for over twenty years [(2)].

I am not really interested in the penal and legal implications of such a scenario. I am rather more interested, on the other hand, in the businessman, himself – one of the richest Sicilian contributors – elegant, middle class, who according to the declarations of the "pentiti" and in the conversations intercepted by law enforcers, appears as a kind of legal alter ego of the invisible, and for 40 years, elusive Bernardo Provenzano [(3)]. What are his tastes, his passions, how does he discipline his body, he who had brought to Sicily the "total body stereotactic radio surgery" and who, at the same time, had represented on the public scene, the interests of the person who for decades had ordered the physical disintegration of many human bodies? And what can we say of his cousin, Aldo Carcione, associate professor of radiology at the University of Palermo, accused of having illegally broken into the computer Registry of the Procura della Repubblica (Public Prosecutor's Office) of Palermo, to extract information with regards to the enquiry into Aiello and other "Mafiosi" [(4)]? What embodied notion of the State does this university colleague of mine envisage?

It is not easy, in the absence of a specific ethnography, to give answers to these questions. For the moment we can only further expound on the web of relationships that, confounding the borders between the legal public domain and illegal networks, between health and torture, between bio-

powers and the powers upon «bare life» (AGAMBEN G. 2005), which seems to begin to outline a peculiar Sicilian declination of modernity. On first sight in fact it seems clear that Villa Santa Teresa, a flagship health clinic in Sicily ("private", but paid by the "public"), and the "extermination camp" of *Cosa Nostra* are connected by very profound and surprising links. In some cases such links are metonymic – during some of the inspections carried out after Aiello's arrest, the subterranean quarters of the clinic revealed further secrets. Tunnels that lead externally, a series of rooms equipped to receive fugitives – a tip-off had indicated the presence of Provenzano in those secret hide-outs. Other "pentiti" had referred that the boss would get around the city of Palermo by travelling in an ambulance. When they looked for him in the underground quarters of Villa Santa Teresa he had already escaped outside. In other cases the relationship is metaphoric. Many secret rooms in fact are hidden in the underground of the so-called "civil society" of Sicily. The engineer Aiello boasted a complex network of friends and acquaintances. For example, his personal secretary, Maria Masi had a brother (Francesco) and a sister (Paola) both condemned for aiding and abetting Matteo Messina Denaro's, a *Cosa Nostra* boss from Trapani, being on the run. Furthermore, while Paola Mesi is indicated as the boss's companion, both her brother and sister work in a company owned by Carlo Guttadauro, the brother of Giuseppe, whom we shall shortly encounter, an entrepreneur also from Bagheria, was condemned for mafia association.

However, the friends and acquaintances of the owner of Villa Santa Teresa are not only Mafiosi. Giorgio Riolo, the Marshal of the ROS ("Reparto Operativo Speciale") of the Carabinieri and the Marshal of the Guardia di Finanza, Giuseppe Ciuro, assigned to the DIA ("Direzione Investigativa Antimafia") are trusted friends and collaborators. According to the judges of the Procura (Public Prosecutor's Office) of Palermo, with whom the two marshals had been collaborating for a while and working together on delicate mafia investigations with some of those judges, both were passing on reserved information to the engineer, information that concerned investigations and wiretapping carried out by the judges in his regard. Furthermore, Riolo, who had been given the task by the judges of the Procura of installing the wire taps, was also employed by Aiello to set up and debug the computerised security system and video surveillance at Villa Santa Teresa. The judges and the colleagues (the uncorrupted ones) of the two marshals are able to record their conversations and in November 2003 they are both arrested together with Aiello with the accusation of external support in mafia association [(5)]. Another marshal of the Carabinieri, Antonio Borzacchelli, is among the circle of acquaintances of Michele Aiello. The

two know each other and have been in frequent contact, but after 2001 their relationship intensifies, after Borzacchelli is elected regional parliamentarian in the Biancofiore, a list associated with that of the UDC ("Unione Democratici Cristiani"- Democratic Christians Union) party. In the course of the regional legislature, Borzacchelli is an outspoken advocate during the legislative assembly of the interests of the private health sector, more than once, intervening in the debate concerning the elaboration of a fees list regarding the professional health services carried out by private health groups. In truth, the "honourable-marshal" entertains even more cordial relations with Salvatore (Totò) Cuffaro, the former Governor of the Sicilian Region who was forced to hand in his resignation after being condemned to 5 years imprisonment for having passed on reserved information to people linked to *Cosa Nostra* (January 2008), but was re-elected in April of the same year to the Senate of the Italian Republic. On admission of the Governor, relations between the two political men are close and frequent – they meet on a daily basis, even before the election of the former marshal to the regional parliament. These relations are interrupted at the beginning of 2004, when Borzacchelli, like his colleagues ends up in prison, with heavy accusations. According to the magistrates, Borzacchelli, who knew of the investigation into Aiello's case, was blackmailing Aiello by threatening him to reveal what he knew about him and his affairs to the judges. At the same time, he was informing Aiello and a group of other people, of the investigation, thus allowing Aiello to take precautionary measures, and was taking advantage of his institutional position to subordinate his political activity to the private interests of Aiello [(6)].

The network that we are outlining, begins at the Villa Santa Teresa clinic, connects up with the homicidal practices of the Corleonesi and, through certain public functionaries, extends the web of illegal connections between fragments of the State and "forms of criminal life", which in turn reverts back towards the medical-health system of the Island. Even Totò Cuffaro, in fact, knows the engineer Aiello well. He goes to visit him at the Clinic, where they freely talk of diagnostics and radiography, in the shielded radiology room. From what Cuffaro says, these seem to be passions they have in common, since the engineer invests so much money in health and the politician by profession is a medical radiologist. As stated before, I am not particularly interested in the "penal" truth of the entire situation, which is in any case attested by judgements not yet res judicata. I am rather curious, on one hand, about the density and clarity of the network and how this network outlines plots that connect spheres of society that, in an ideal Weberian model of the State, should be radically distant one from the other, and, on the

other hand, by the civil lack of discipline of the bodies and practices of these men, who act at the core of the political, military and health institutions of the State, and whose ethical sense they should have incorporated. In realty, the State that they have incorporated and the means of this incorporation do not seem, at first sight, to be easily collocated within classical theoretical scenarios, thus evoking, at the same time, forms of advanced biopolitical governmentality and forms of exercising a sovereignty founded on the capability of inflicting violent and (in appearance) illegal death. In order to be able to comprehend the "moral economy" (ASAD T. 2003) and the more general economies of self and the agency of which such incorporated attitudes seem to be part, we have to further examine the social web of relations which revolve around the public figures till now evoked.

As we have said, the former Governor, is a doctor, as are many of the exponents of his party. Antonino Dina is also a medical radiologist and regional parliamentarian and party leader of the UDC in the ARS ("Assemblea regionale Siciliana"- Sicilian Regional Assembly) as well as a faithful follower of the Cuffaro family. Aiello and his employees turn to Dina in order to fix the prices of the health-medical services that the Sicilian Region has to pay. Domenico Miceli is also a doctor, and intimate friend of the former Governor and former Health Councillor of the Town Council in Palermo. Miceli is a family friend of Cuffaro. He was best man at his wedding and knows his wife well, who is also a doctor. Together with her, he acquired a Radiodiagnostic company, which was then passed on to Michele Aiello, when he entered the world of Sicilian Health entrepreneurship. In June 2003, Domenico Miceli, who was at the time the health town councillor of Palermo, was arrested for external support in mafia association (7). His legal situation seems complicated from the outset. Someone informs him that the police and the magistrates are investigating his case and wiretapping his conversations on politics, business affairs, public examinations for posts within the health structures, together with another doctor, Giuseppe Guttadauro (8). The latter, who is the assistant head physician in the Public Hospital in Palermo, had been condemned for his affiliation with the Brancaccio family, together with hundreds of others, in the Maxiprocesso (Maxi-Trial) against *Cosa Nostra*, set up, in the 1980's by Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino. After being released at the beginning of 2001, he was back in prison a year later, for the accusation of having organised cocaine trafficking from South America to Sicily. On that occasion his wife and son Francesco were also arrested. Giuseppe Guttadauro became head of the Brancaccio "family", one of the most important mafia families in Palermo, after the arrest of the Graviano brothers, mafia bosses involved in the

murders of Falcone and Borsellino as well as that of Don Pino Puglisi, the parish priest in a neighbourhood that had dared resist the pressures of the mafia. According to Nino Giuffré, turned State witness, Giuseppe Guttadauro, together with other mafiosi, had invested capital in the acquisition of diagnostic equipment at Villa Santa Teresa. His brother Carlo, entrepreneur and employer of Maria and Francesco Mesi, who had been arrested for harbouring the fugitive Matteo Messina Denaro, had himself been arrested for mafia association. More recently, a similar fate occurred to one of the Guttadauro brothers, Filippo, accused of being an important link in the protective network which allowed Bernardo Provenzano to elude the law for forty years. Vincenzo Greco, the boss's brother-in-law, was also a doctor; he, too, was condemned in 1996 for mafia crimes - in 1993 he had medically assisted Salvatore Grigoli, one of the killers of Father Pino Puglisi.

Another doctor with peculiar connections and a close friend of the boss (Provenzano) and of the former councillor Miceli, was Salvatore Aragona. Not only Miceli's friend, but also a friend of Totò Cuffaro, he was condemned, in the first hearing, to nine years imprisonment (reduced to five years in the Court of Cassation) for external support in mafia association – he had provided a false alibi for Enzo Brusca, a powerful boss close to Riina and Provenzano, accused of homicide, made a false certificate for a hernia operation declaring it was (which was not) done on the very day in question at the Ospedale Civico in Palermo. Guttadauro and Aragona demonstrate a very high level of familiarity – the boss of Brancaccio talks to him about the history of the mafia and of highly delicate issues, such as the homicides of General Dalla Chiesa and of the judges Falcone and Borsellino. Salvatore Aragona, on his part, from the wire-tapped discussions, demonstrates a profound knowledge of the mafia world and the world of regional politics. Indeed, the doctor-boss of Brancaccio, the surgeon who provided the alibi for the *Cosa Nostra* boss and the medico- councillor from the Municipality of Palermo continually talk about the regional and national political representatives that could have and/or should have guaranteed the effectiveness of mediation channels between interests of which they felt to be the bearers and the actions of the Institutions.

Necropolitics

In this cross-section of Sicily at the beginning of the millennium, we see a private clinic in which the control of the health of Sicilian citizens is exercised by means of the most modern diagnostic and therapeutic equipment

available and, at the same time, we see an extermination camp, where the power of *Cosa Nostra* is concretised in the exercise of extreme forms of violence on the bodies of the very same citizens, in contiguous alignment, side by side occupying the same space. Both these scenarios, the apparently legal one in which, by means of advanced technologies, a "power of life" is exercised, and the other completely illegal scenario, in which, with similar technological precision, a terrible "right of death" is manifested (FOUCAULT M. 1978: 119-142), seem to participate in a unique system of dominion [(9)]. To put it in broader terms, beyond any official rhetoric and disciplined politological taxonomies - modern State and *Cosa Nostra*, "dressage", "the administration of bodies" or the "calculated management of life" (FOUCAULT M. 1978: 123), on one hand, and "the right to *make* one die or to *let* one live" (*ibid*.: 122), on the other, could seem to configure as pervasive expressions of a single system of governmentality. On the other hand, on a social level, around and in support of, a similar association, we find exponents of a "mafia middle-class" (SANTINO U. 1994, 1995) – men and women that give life to a dense network capable of incorporating diverse and ideally separate (if not in contrast with each other) spheres of Sicilian society. This aspect, therefore, takes on a connotation – which we suppose may be different from the biopolitical aspect, or from that founded on the exercise of sovereignty, with the possible use of violence, which, apart from the ethical foreboding and orderly disciplinary partitions, may well be worth investigating. In effect, in this paper we will try to put this peculiar declination of Sicilian modernity into focus, by following only a few of the numerous avenues that open up, once one begins to reflect upon the practices that, on the Island, link power over life and death, dominion and practices of manipulation of bodies.

Firstly, however, it is necessary to dwell on the conceptual scenarios within which to inscribe our reflections. In the light of the cases described above, the Sicilian case could be seen as an example of a "necropolitical project" (XAVIER INDA J. 2005b: 16-18), that is to say, as a kind of governmentality that makes it possible to exercise large-scale forms of violence, in the name of, however, a declared will to safeguard the vital interests of a community. A kind of "dark side" of "governmentality", the Necropolitics would uncover the coercive and violent nature of the project and of the practices of modernity. Achille Mbembe, who developed foucaultian theses on the relationship between biopowers and forms of mass destruction, declared that he was interested in investigating:

> «those figures of sovereignty whose central project is not the struggle for autonomy but *the generalised instrumentalisation of human existence and the material destruction of human bodies and populations*» (MBEMBE A. 2003: 14).

From his point of view, similar organised modes of practising terror, which he calls "necropowers" (*ibid*.: 17), are constituted from the functioning of systems of late capitalistic governmentality. In particular, the necropolitical dominion is characterised by the construction of "death-worlds", originally declined in the system of slave labour on plantations and in those of the colonies, that later extended to the borders and beyond the centres of Western power, on one hand, and by the ever more frequent break out of forms of mass destruction within their ordered ambits of life, on the other (MBEMBE A. 2003: 39-40). To this multiplication of political agencies, to this fragmentation of powers and of institutional worlds there is a corresponding production and reproduction of forms of violence, internal and external to classical political partitions (*ibid*.: 31-32). Mass violence and terror, thus become experiences that constitute the daily lives of multitudes of people. At the same time, for those who occupy positions of dominion, security and the construction of more and more rigid protective apparata against violence become illusory and obsessive needs.

Therefore, as the thoughts of Appadurai (2005) and the affirmations of Mbembe (2003: 39) show, concerning the wide-spread use of violence, no contemporary political sphere can today feel immune against forms of global violence. The scenarios that Mbembe himself often dwells on, the research contained in the volume on governmentality edited by Xavier Inda (2005a, part V) or the many ethnographic studies of recent times dedicated to such themes mostly regard worlds that exist on the margins of the centres of advanced capitalism (even though, on the other hand, a book like *Gomorra* shows, by means of its specific literary style, with a disturbing lucidity how, in Campania, biopolitics and necropowers, violence, terror and production of wealth, murders, toxic waste of Lumbard capitalism and accumulated riches of Northern Europe, have by now become part of a unique system of governmentality). Despite this, I do not believe that the line of post foucaultian thought and the connected concept of necropolitics can be mechanically applied to the Sicilian reality. Certainly, if that exemplified by the daily practices and ways of incorporating the State on the part of the doctors, Guttadauro, Aragona, Miceli, Greco and Cuffaro should become a dominant model; if the public-private health model founded on substantially illegal capital, as it emerged in Sicily, and became widespread also in Calabria, Campania, Puglia, should by now saturate the state health system; if, in other words, the economic and political interests and the violent practices of an emerging middle-class mafia should clearly merge together with the functioning of the state biopolitical machine and should become hegemonic, we could probably then talk, for the region of South-

ern Italy, of *necropolitical governmentality*. Currently, however, the situation is still in a state of flux, the trials are still proceeding and the results are not definitive. The interests of the power groups that control social relations, both legal and illegal resources, by means of extreme forms of violence, are not collectively and officially legitimated – although there hovers a widespread Nicodemic consent around these interests, nor do they present themselves as agents of a general health and well-being of the population – despite the fact that they adopt self-legitimating and paternalistic rhetoric. In public discourse, indeed, these interests and similar representations are set against those present in other sectors of "civil society", for which, they are, as expressed in the words of condemnation by Pope John Paul II, in a famous talk against the mafia in the aftermath of the massacres of 1992, expressions of a "culture of death" which go against those of a "culture of life". A part of civil Sicilian (and Italian) society still opposes the idea of mafia activity as being an inevitable corollary of the peculiar declination that the project of modernity has assumed in the history of the Italian national state. Men and women of the antimafia movements and of the institutions, especially in the late 1990's, have claimed an ethical, practical and political access to a full and ideal modernity.

Sensitive to such similar political dialectics, Jane and Peter Schneider have put forward an interpretation of the historical and social processes that have led to the emergence of a "civil society" in Sicily that has laid down the basis for the birth of a strong anti-mafia movement[(10)]. In a study carried out in 1996, the two scholars put forward the hypothesis that, in the decades immediately after the unification of Italy, together with the emergence of a dominant class of non- absentee land owners and professionals, one can see in Sicily, the propagation of a demographic model, of social practices and of new cultural attitudes, linked to the world of artisans. The artisan families, in fact, were the first to practice, even within the context of internal rural towns, new marital and sexual behaviour, centred on the control of births, modern types of sexual practice and a greater respect and autonomy for women (Schneider J. - Schneider P. 1996: 12). Together with the peasant movement immediately after the two world wars, these new behavioural models originating from the artisans, constituted the structural basis on which to build, in the following fifty years, a bio-political, urban "civil society", capable of bringing forth a strong antimafia movement. On the contrary, the originating social basis of the Mafia is to be sought in the relationship between the land owners, strata of the peasant world capable of carrying out a role of mediation and town business sectors. In a more recent study, Jane and Peter Schneider (2003) deal directly

with an analysis of Sicilian civil society, paying special attention to the impact the antimafia movement has had in the social and political affairs of the Island, especially in the years (1991-1994) immediately preceding and those successive to the spate of important mafia killings against politicians, magistrates, clergy, and against the artistic patrimony of Italy.

The interpretation of the two American scholars highlights important aspects of the social and political history of Sicily in the last decades. It shows, in fact, how the daily life of a significant part of Sicilian society, in keeping with what has happened in all the Western societies in over a century, has been affected by "foucaultian" processes of modernisation, in which, the forms of «a power which is exercised directly upon life» (FOUCAULT M. 1978: 121) have taken on a central role. Their analyses, furthermore, allow us to understand the processes that, beginning with these changes, have made the birth of a civil reaction to mafia violence possible, and at the same time, outline the complicated characteristics of Sicilian civil society. With respect to the possibility of interpreting the relationship between the Mafia and society in terms of "necropolitics", the hypotheses of the Schneiders can furnish, it seems to me, a more complex image of the dynamics and conflicts taking place in Sicilian society. Despite these merits, however, their version seems also to produce certain simplifications. "Mafia" and "civil society", in fact, in their analysis, seem to assume the characteristic of mutually impenetrable entities that have contrasting genealogical histories and that express irreconcilable social positionings[(11)]. From a similar perspective it is not easy to attribute importance to processes of co-penetration between legality and illegality, between biopolitics and violence, between the control of life and destruction of bodies, between legitimate capital and hidden forms of circulation of goods, people or their parts that, we have seen, are beginning to interest important sectors of Sicilian, Southern and Italian society and upon which the notion of necropolitics seems able to set its aim. Beyond that, a dichotomic approach to the socio-political dynamics (on one hand, the mafia world, with its sociological and cultural "roots", and on the other, "civil society", the expression of a different social history) may run the risk of not detecting the sedimentation of forms of co-penetration, nor the ways in which they take shape in social practices, nor, finally the web of connections to which these practices give life and from which they begin to weave new "forms of life" even around the violent and arbitrary expressions of power over human life (HUMPHREY C. 2007). It is in this sense, in my opinion, that it is possible to recuperate the notion of necropolitics. This notion, in fact, freed of its abstract nature especially by certain post- foucaultian positions and by the crypto-func-

tionalistic connection between biopolitical governance and its perverse effects, can prove to be useful for an anthropological interpretation of the processes taking place and of the concrete practices of the social actors such as the above-mentioned mafia or para-mafia doctors, corrupt politicians and state officials. In the following pages, I would like to further elaborate on the analysis of the relationships between bodies, between "powers of life" and "powers of death", by taking into consideration powers, fields and practices, that, neither the suggestions made by Mbembe, nor the interpretation proposed by the Schneiders concerning the relationships between "civil society" and "mafia society", seem to be able to interpret.

Of the many ways of destroying a body

To do this, let us leave for a moment the (apparently) biopolitical rooms of Villa Santa Teresa and (perhaps) the necropolitical dealings that connect the violent world of *Cosa Nostra* in order to try and examine more closely how, in the eighties and nineties, this power on "bare life" (AGAMBEN G. 2005) was practised in the extermination camps of *Cosa Nostra*. Giovanni Brusca, a mafioso from San Giuseppe Jato, the above-mentioned Enzo Brusca's brother, close friend of Riina and Provenzano and head of the commando that blew up the cars of Giovanni Falcone and those of his police escort, has given us a detailed account of what was going on in the "Ferro":

> «I've never denied the fact: I tortured people to make them talk. I strangled those that confessed, and those who didn't talk. I dissolved bodies in acid, roasted corpses on grills. I buried the remains in graves dug with excavators (...) To strangle them I would use a very thin nylon cord, two of us would hold down the poor wretch by the arms, two would hold down the legs and one, from behind would pull on the string... After about ten minutes death would come. How did we know? Because the body tissues would loosen and the person would pee and shit himself…That was the sign. (...). We had to make sure that the death had occurred. It would have been really risky to put a body in acid which could have had convulsions or spasms. Splashes of acid would have been fatal for all those present (...) You've got to keep in mind that it takes 50 litres of acid about three hours to disintegrate a body. Sometimes we would use a burner with a flame to increase the effect of the heat (...) The body slowly dissolves, the victim's teeth remain, the skeleton of the face is deformed. The pelvis can remain partially intact... In the end, you can hardly see anything. After that you collect the remains and dump them somewhere. At San Giuseppe Jato we would throw them in the river (...) Up to the beginning of the eighties, we would use a much more primitive and much slower system. We would roast the bodies on grills. We would

> begin in the early morning and finish by sunset – to make one corpse disappear would take from seven to eight hours and truck loads of wood to keep the flame alive» (LODATO S. 2006: 161-163).

Acid necro-technology carried out on behalf of *Cosa Nostra*, in this case, takes the place of stereotactic radio surgery practised by the health operators of a health clinic under the regional health plan of the Sicilian Region, set up by (economic and social) mafia capital, and producing effects that are not less "rational". The bodies are dismembered, broken up, annihilated and made to disappear by means of necrophilic "scientific" know-how that seems to be somewhat common in the world of mafia organisations.

> «As in Auschwitz, in the Nazi concentration camps, even the mafia picciotti, who were condemned to death, would be dragged to the gallows, tortured, killed and, finally, cremated in an incinerator, that was an old wooden stove, once used to bake bread. A slight breeze, and the remains of the victim would disappear into thin air. The concentration camp of the mafia bosses could be found in the Cardillo countryside, hidden by a row of trees, and from the sight of passers-by. It was the property of an ally of the Corleonesi family, Salvatore Liga, ready and willing to allow "friends" to use the 100 degree centigrade oven when the command was given» (MIGNOSI Enzo, Corriere della Sera, 13 July 1997: 15).

More recently (January 2008) in the countryside of Cinisi, a town near Palermo where, in 1978 the mafia had made the body of Peppino Impastato [(12)] explode, law enforcement officers had arrested a man, who was close to the Lo Piccolo mafia family and who was nicknamed "cagnoleddu" ("little doggy"), while he was digging on land that had been pointed out as a secret cemetery by a *pentito*, where the clan for years had buried the corpses of the persons that had been eliminated and made to disappear [(13)]. Besides the history of *Cosa Nostra* is full of bodies that disappear never to be found and of sudden and often useless exhumations. Rather emblematic in this regard is the case of Mauro De Mauro, a journalist for "L'Ora" abducted outside his home by three men belonging to *Cosa Nostra* in September 1970 and never seen again. The search for De Mauro's body was carried out to no avail till 2006 when, from the revelations of Francesco Marino Mannoia, an important mafioso held in the United States, it was discovered that the journalist had been kidnapped, tortured and then strangled on orders of the mafia top brass and his body buried in the bed of a river, under a overpass in the vicinity of Corleone. Mannoia declared that he had himself exhumed the body, together with other bodies that had been buried in that secret cemetery in 1977, so that they would not be discovered due to construction work that had to be carried out in the area at the time. He had dissolved the body in

acid [14]. The boss's declarations seemed to have put an end to the search until, a year later, following the revelations of a Calabrian pentito. The exhumations of the bodies in a cemetery of a small town not far from Catanzaro were carried out where the body of De Mauro was supposed to be buried in place of a "ndranghetista" who was to be believed dead – without success, however, since of the five skulls that were dug up, none was the skull of De Mauro [15].

The bodies of enemies killed are rapidly taken out of circulation, pulverised, and thrown into abandoned wells, buried in secret cemeteries. Subjected to extreme forms of manipulation/ disarticulation, they seem to have to be subtracted from sight – from the sight of the investigators, obviously, who must not be able to find any traces of the body (FALCONE G. 1997: 26-27), but also from the sight of other members of the organisation or of those who live in environments connected to victims, and who, however, will easily be able to associate the secret surrounding the disappearance of those bodies to the surplus of violence which has determined their definitive annihilation. Beyond the obvious instrumental value (the elimination of every element, every bodily trace that may lead to investigations) such practices seem to inscribe themselves in that which, along with Asad (2003), we can define as an economy of *agency* in which particular relationships are drawn between individual bodies, violence, power and social bodies. In the case of the Sicilian mafia (and of other mafia organisations) the "body of the enemy killed" seems, on one hand, to constitute itself as an extreme sphere of material resistance against the action of violence, while, on the other, it offers itself to certain manipulations, thus rendering them at the same time possible, by which both the relations of power and meaning, as well as the forms of inclusion and of exclusion, are modulated, constructed, represented and, thus, interpreted [16].

If from Sicily we shift over to the Campania described by Roberto Saviano, here, too, the body which is acted upon with dismembering violence emerges as an inherent element of the action of the territorial *governance* of the Camorra groups. In the hinterland of Caserta, in fact, together with all kinds of toxic and illegal waste, the land offers up the bones of the dead (SAVIANO R. 2006: 315), the remains of exhumations from the cemeteries, secretly (re)buried by the Camorra system. As in Cinisi with the Lo Piccolo family, in Mondragone as well, a small town in the Caserta area, dominated by the La Torre Camorra clan, the bodies of the enemies killed, are subjected to particularly aggressive violence – they are slaughtered and thrown into wells, where hand bombs are thrown down to tear them apart, and making the whole well collapse upon them (*ibid.*: 295). Just as in the

Bagheria of Aiello and Provenzano, Augusto La Torre, the boss of Mondragone, from the very beginning of the nineties, got into the health sector by acquiring an important private health clinic that had been controlled by a local politician who was killed in the course of a confidential meeting, thrown in a well that already contained other corpses, and blown up in the "Mondragone style"(SAVIANO R. 2006: 295-297). In this case, as well, in the end, the connections between the thanatopolitical practices of dominion and biopolitical forms of *governance* take on connotations, that are quite particular [17]. Saviano, in fact, narrates how the very boss who tore apart the bodies of his enemies by throwing hand grenades in the well-graves, would also exercise a capillary control over the health of his fellow citizens, by checking their HIV tests and physically eliminating (some of) those who were infected (*ibid.*: 304-305). The territorial dominion of a Camorra boss is exercised through the biopolitical practice of HIV tests and produces precise necropolitical effects.

It is no doubt difficult to attempt to attribute to each of these practices of the thanatological manipulation of the corpses of the mafia victims, a specific meaning, perhaps within an abstract and hypothetical symbolic system or cultural code [18]. One could, on the other hand, try and ascribe such practices to some general taxonomic system that is able to, perhaps, shed light on their meaning [19]. The theoretical option, adopted here, more in line with contemporary critical anthropology of violence (TAUSSIG M. 1987, 1997, MBEMBE A. 2003, ASAD T. 2003, APPADURAI A. 2005, DEI F. 2005) rather than with the formalising needs of an anthropology of a philosophical aspiration or the hypostatisation of a symbolic anthropology, would lead us, on the other hand, to a closer consideration of the necropolitical practices which take place in mafia contexts and to attempt to collocate them in appropriate historical and political scenarios and in specific moral economies [20].

If, therefore, we try and observe the thanatological practices carried out by the men of the mafia, it seems to me that it may be useful for our analysis to distinguish between two different types of bodies that are assaulted by the action of the mafia power – on one hand, those that are killed and left at the scene of the crime, on the other, those for whom the mafia violence reserves a further and more extreme form of manipulation. In the latter case, it is possible to make a further distinction between those bodies that are dismembered in secret closed quarters such as "camps of extermination" or hidden wells or cemeteries that are concealed from sight, and those bodies, on the other hand, whose fragmentation takes on a form of public pulverisation.

Firstly, as far as the thousands of bodies massacred by criminal organisations and left in the streets, in the piazzas and houses of Italy in the course of the last decades is concerned, as well as those made to disappear in secret, we may recall the considerations of judge Falcone who, with regards to the way of inflicting death, points out how the mafia would always chose:

> «the least risky and fastest way. This is its only rule. It does not have a kind of fetishistic preference for one technique or another. The best way remains the 'lupara bianca', the pure and simple disappearance of the victim, without any trace of the body or blood (...) That is why strangling has become the main killing technique for *Cosa Nostra*. No shootings, no noise. No wounds and therefore no blood. And once strangled, the victim is dissolved in a tank of acid which is emptied in a well, or drain, or any dump whatsoever (...)» (FALCONE G. 1997: 26).

Immediately after, however, he adds:

> «Having said this, there are cases in which the type of assassination and the modalities of execution are indicated by the reasons and motivations [for the assassination]. The singer Pino Marchese was found with his genitals in his mouth. According to some people, he had committed an unpardonable offence – he had had an affair with the wife of a "man of honour". Pietro Inzerillo, the brother of Salvatore, was discovered in the boot of a car in New York with a bundle of money in his mouth and in between his genitals: "You wanted to grab too much money and this is the way you end up"» (*ibid*.: 27).

The body of the victim is basically a target that has to be eliminated with the least amount of risk and as efficiently as possible. Therefore, the action has to be rapid and efficient, and the result certain. This does not mean, however, that the way the homicidal action is carried out may not resort to styles of execution that, besides the conscious will of signification, highlight implicit levels of meaning in the act itself[21]. Nor does it meant that in the concrete performance of the homicide there may not be a precise communicative intention that finds direct expression in the treatment reserved for the body that is killed. At Catalfàro, a town of the Iblean region where I carried out a long ethnographic study, the corpse of one of the 15 people killed during a ten-year war between local mafia bands was found with the penis cut off and inserted in the mouth, the stomach cut open and sown up again, with signs of sexual violence and sperm on the face. Here too – as in the case mentioned by Falcone – the violated body it is said could have signified the abuse of sexual passion on the part of the victim directed towards prohibited people. With different intentions of meaning, but similar in horror, is the violence perpetrated on the slaughtered bodies by the Camorra described by Saviano – heads cut off and torn apart by lighting petrol in the mouth (SAVIANO R. 2006: 130), arms, torso and face

battered with nails on hammers, tongues and ears cut off (*ibid*.: 143) to indicate, by popular interpretation, an exemplary punishment of persons who had betrayed their leaders. Even without wanting to detect a code that allows us to interpret the body of the victim as a text that can be deciphered, the surplus of violence that in some cases can be unleashed upon a body makes us think that at the base of this usage there is a kind of formalised communicative modality, endowed, though be it in an implicit manner, with a social and political function (of warning, intimidation, a demonstration of force, an assertion of dominion over a territory and its bodies) that is culturally significant. In similar cases, the victim's violated body seems to become a rhetorical tool by which to indicate, if not actually signify, the capacity of absolute dominion over life and death exercised by mafia violence. This violence does not only underline the "bare life" of those bodies (AGAMBEN G. 2005), and therefore to reaffirm one of the fundamental elements of being a power, but, by manifesting itself in extreme forms, it inscribes itself on the victims' bodies by dismembering them and dismembering the materiality of the body itself. As Saviano (2007: 98) reminds us: «In the dynamics of power, of absolute power, nothing exists other than what is concrete».

Besides the capacity of the martyrised body of signifying or of the will of the executioner of transmitting messages by means of the torment of a body, the slaughtered bodies of the mafia, by their mere permanence in the public space, offer themselves up to the public eye and, in so doing, produce meaning and commentary beyond the will of the killers of transmitting (particular) meaning. The photographs of Letizia Battaglia and Franco Zecchin, taken (mainly) in Palermo between the second half of the 1970's and the early 1990's, and recently collected in a volume, show with extreme clarity the dramatization of the exposition of the corpse in a public space – a circle of people (there are many children among them) some standing on a truck and others on the side observing the body of "Ninu u' Karate" killed in 1978 in the Vucciria market place; the body of Ignazio Pedone, "incaprettato" [trussed goat – a typical method of the mafia where the neck is bound to the arms and legs by slip knots joined behind the back. When the victims pull on the cord, they choke] taken out of his car and surrounded by a circle of men and feet (Casteldaccia 1986); or children again and elderly people scrutinising the body of a victim of mafia violence lying on the ground (Palermo 1979).

It is almost as if numerous passages of the text of Saviano (for example pages 114 and 115, SAVIANO R. 2006) seem to provide the soundtrack to those images, even if this time the voices speak a Neapolitan or Casertano

dialect. The bodies of the dead killed, exposed to the public eye and commentary, can therefore be inserted in a sphere of narrative representation, – people speak of it – but it is also visual – the photos of Zecchin and Battaglia have (nearly all) appeared in the regional and national daily papers, the images of those dead men have been transmitted on television where often the very authors of the crimes have seen them, commented, judged [22]. The presence of these bodies, in the end, continues to be palpable also after their removal from the public space. Roberto Alaimo (2005: 43-44), in an interesting literary guide to Palermo, affirms, in an ironic tone, how in the sightseeing tour that an ideal citizen may envisage for a foreign visitor there be provision also for:

> «street corners where the most famous mafia crimes have been committed. Here they killed General Della Chiesa, here they shot Pio La Torre, etc. (...) but this is none other than a ride in a car that the inhabitants of the town reserve for a first time visitor, a sample of that nonchalant approach that they maintain when dealing with matters of death. Examples of which one can see in that feigned true- suffering cynicism with which the mafia crime scenes are shown to the traveller – Here they shot Gaetano Costa, poor man».

A similar experience happened to me, sometime after I had been living in Catalfàro. In that farmhouse, three people had been killed, they had bothered someone they should not have – here, on this corner, a Calabrian man was shot, in that ditch, the body of so and so had been dumped.

If we look beyond the modalities of producing corpses, both methods – be it that based on the disappearance of the body from the public scene and the dissolution of the remains, or that connected with the public pulverisation of the body – evident connotations appear of an extreme violence and of the application of that which Remotti (2006b: 25) calls "dehumanising projectuality". In the thanato-metamorphic interpretation proposed by Remotti similar practices are held to be incapable of giving life to anthropo-poietic forms of cultural valorisation and, in this sense, they are imagined as anti-cultural, as indicators of forms of degradation and the loss of meaning of an entire culture (*ibid*.: 26-28). It just may be that these hypotheses seize upon the ontological substance, so to speak, on which similar forms of extreme violence rest, even though, with the prospect of such a world-wide diffusion (Malkki L. 1995b, Mbembe A. 2003, Appadurai A. 2005, Xavier Inda J. 2005b, Agamben G. 2005), one would have to come to the conclusion – alarming, though true – that whole masses of human beings live in situations of dissolution, of cultural apocalypses [23]. With respect to such hypotheses that, by way of having to observe social processes and practices from a certain distance, end up projecting many supposi-

tions concerning the social practices of (millions of) human beings, I prefer to adopt a different explorative strategy, perhaps because I am tied to a land which has age-old habits even of quite extreme forms of violence and management of death. And I ask myself questions on the ways in which, even in conditions of violence and the arbitrary exercise of that basis of power which Agamben (2005) considers to be the exercise of violence on "bare life", it is possible that that violence, and not only the fact of being accustomed to it or being able to overcome it, by means of other cultural methods, can produce new forms (necropolitics, for example) of the organisation of life (at a cultural level, even though it may be difficult to predict or agree with the ethical outcome)[(24)].

Therefore, despite the extreme nature of the violence directed upon the bodies of the victims, the two diverse ways of treating mafia corpses which are not simply left in the public space, however dehumanising they may be, seem to be able to give life to forms of meaning, though in ways and situations that are quite different from each other. We should note, however, with regards to the two ways of making bodies "disappear" – taking them away from public view, hiding them or destroying them, and tearing them to pieces in public and, thus scattered, exhibiting them – how this can reasonably simply come down to basic practical reasons (the former can be accosted and "convinced" to come to a secret meeting from which they will not come out alive, the latter sometimes cannot even be approached). It is true, however, that the two ways of radical destruction of the bodies seem to produce different effects on those who cause the death, as well as on those who witness the event. On first sight, in fact, the bodies that disappear seem to be mostly those of the "internal enemy", people that belong to or have something to do with, the criminal sphere – people affiliated to the clans, people that have been "approached" or confidants. The others, on the other hand, are the bodies of "external enemies" – judges, men of the police force or, in the period of the Corleonesi massacres, simple, and thus emblematic citizens of the "other" State – blown apart by bomb attacks. Obviously, we are dealing with an altogether provisional distinction and easily falsifiable (Peppino Impastato's uncle, a mafioso from Cinisi, was blown up in his car, the body of Mauro De Mauro, as we have mentioned, has never been found) that, however, it seems to me, can help us further along in our considerations on the relationship between the practice of death, bio or necropolitical forms of exercise of dominion and the creation of spheres of meaning.

In the public space, outside the mafia organisation, the body of the "internal enemy", whose transformation into corpse and whose remains are hid-

den from the view of the non-adepts, gain meaning by subtraction – it is the actual disappearance and the fact that no traces are left, which produces an implicit, ambiguous, but unequivocal sense of death. The absence of remains, furthermore, by impeding any further action on/with the body of the dead person (re-exhumation, re-composition, re-memorisation, mourning, but also enquiry), seems to block, on the outside, any production of discourse and meaning and thus, emphasises the absolute power of those that exercise an annihilating violence [(25)]. For those who, on the other hand, carry out the technologies of death in secret in the "extermination camps", the body of the victim seems to offer itself up to the violent action by providing an overabundance of performative pretexts by which to produce an explosion of "manipulatory" (disintegrating) operational capacity and, together with this, paradoxically, a *routine-isation* of terror [(26)]. At the same time, however, among those in the organisation, who did not end up at that time being the victims, the human remains, the by-product of this exercise of extreme violence and the discarded materials of the necropolitical action, from the moment that they are removed from any external manipulation – because they are buried in hidden cemeteries or dissolved in acid – produce a shared secret. A secret that, if on one hand, underscores the ephemeral nature of the power of death, that is now and then exercised – all executioners are potential victims, whoever roasts a corpse or blows it apart in a well, may one day end up being dissolved in acid – on the other, shows how the bodies of the mafia, friends and enemies alike, are always at the disposal of necropolitical power, thus ratifying its force through the availability to inflict/receive a violent death.

Unlike those mentioned above, the bodies of the "external enemies", disgregated in public by mafia violence mean, on the other hand, from an excess of meaning that their fragments, torn apart and strewn in the public scene, like the hyper-killed corpses used to signify and warn (De Luna G. 2006: 74, 118), clearly show to all the force of the criminal organisation and its will to dominate over life and death. At the same time, the pursuit of a surplus of violence on the body seems to mark clearly the distance between those who, though they can be eliminated at any time, belong to the "inside" world and those who are irrevocably on the other side of the border. Finally, as in the case of the bodies removed, destroyed and made to disappear, also in this case, the extreme violence, publicly exhibited, seems designed to annihilate, through these bodies, any further possibility of discoursive production. With a slight difference, though. Indeed, despite such a totalitarian claim, in this case the surplus of violence that disgregates the body leaves traces in the public space that cannot be erased. If

this can confer to the members of the organisation who implement actions of such violence, a momentary increase of prestige and personal power [27], the bodies of the victims, by the mere fact of being subjected to practices of violent disgregation in the public eye seem to be able to produce, in turn, forms of performative re-appropriation and protest by those who have been placed, by means of the terrorist action itself, on the other side of the border (that of the victims). The remains of these bodies, in fact, that the excesses of mafia violence have scattered in space, unlike the excesses perpetrated on the hidden corpses, offer themselves up to further and contrasting actions of manipulation. Collected, reassembled, commemorated, investigated, they act as performative pretexts – this time externally – making forms of discoursive rearticulation possible which, in turn, as we shall see shortly, can be used against the necropolitical power's claim for hegemony. With respect to the inside bodies, that can disarticulate/or be disarticulated and can be disgregated, thus remaining prey to the hidden discourse of mafia violence, those outside, that the mafia power can pulverise at any time, remain however available for the action of other powers, thus participating in the production of alternative discourses to that of death.

Mafia wars?

In journalistic jargon (Lodato S. 1994), in the literary one (Saviano R. 2006) and, in part, in the historical one (Dickie J. 2005) the practices of death that have just been described outline quite a real scenario of war. However, if we try to compare the methods of treating the bodies of the victims with, according to De Luna (2006) those of the wars of the 20th Century, the analogy does not seem to be true. Or rather, the scenarios that take shape in the case of the people killed by the various mafia organisations do not seem to properly fit into those outlined by the nonetheless important work of De Luna. According to the historian, in fact, the methods used in treating the corpses of the enemy killed in war can be classified according to a grid that counterposes on one hand spontaneous and organised forms of violence (De Luna G. 2006: 98-99) and, on the other, wars of an asymmetrical kind and symmetrical wars (*ibid.*: 81-88). In the case of wars between nations that recognise each other's statutes, the body of the enemy – though it does not undergo a process of glorification and commemoration which is reserved for the corpse of a friend – is respected and conserved. This is not the case, on the other hand, when the conflict is between political entities that do not recognise a mutual equality. In this case, the body can

be violated, manipulated, exhibited to demonstrate one's superiority and the other's inferiority. If the organised acts of violence connote the action of the national states, those that are spontaneous, less controlled and "rational", are part of the process of destructuration of formal powers. In this sense, while the dialectic between symmetry and asymmetry connotes wars between states, that between the organisation and the spontaneity of violence seems, on the other hand, to be part of situations of "civil war", as in the case of Italy after the World War or that of Spain. Here, in the temporary absence of a sovereign state capable of exercising the monopoly of violence and in the battle for reconstruction, the bodies are submitted to a violence and manipulation the can be quite radical, and that serve to underline the distinctions (between friend and foe, right and wrong) that are not easily perceivable in the social setting (De Luna G. 2006: 103) as well as to reconfirm the mutual non- belonging to the same sphere of intimacy and, at times, to the same humanity (Luzzatto S. 1998: 89-90).

In effect, it seems that none of these ways of treating a corpse can be applied with precision to mafia violence. Mafia violence is exercised almost exclusively within the confines of the nation state and is directed not only within the secret community, but also against other citizens and against institutional figures (judges, law enforcement officers, journalists, politicians). We are not dealing, therefore with a symmetrical war, even though, it is possible that in its more recent past, top bosses of *Cosa Nostra* have perhaps aspired to counter the Italian state on an equal footing. Thus, to be frank, in these cases the violence exercised on the bodies of its enemies (those of judges Falcone and Borsellino, for example) would lead to the thought that there was a will at the top level of the criminal organisation of expressing a position of superiority over a state that was seen or imagined as defeated, subordinated and attacked by means of/ through the bodies of its representatives. On the other hand, by going along the lines of De Luna's idea on the subject, we cannot really represent mafia wars as "civil wars". The forms of violence that is practised on bodies are planned and organised and have nothing or little to do with spontaneous action, attributes that are more likely to make one think of the capacity of *agency* of strong "state"-like institutions. At the same time, the terroristic disintegration of the bodies of judges, men and women of law- enforcement agencies and, in some cases, of politicians, rather than serve, in a situation of categorical uncertainty, to produce the distinction between "friend and foe" – as occurs, according to De Luna (2006: 103) in a civil war – has rather been a way of creating an extreme gap between

two political entities, at the time seen as distinct and set against each other, one of which, *Cosa Nostra*, challenges and admonishes and perhaps blackmails the other.

To all this we should add that the most extreme forms of the application of violence on the bodies of victims – that of the secret dissolution of bodies – are carried out against enemies to which equal dignity and equal humanity is not attributed, as in the case of asymmetrical wars. Strangulation and dissolving the body in acid, hidden burial and the secret disposal of body parts, are practices reserved to members of the organisation itself, people that up to the very moment of their disappearance presented themselves as members of a secret criminal elite. In these organised, planned and technically functional cases, the value of the terroristic treatment of the corpse of the enemy killed does not seem to lead back, neither, to the will to dominate of a state or, however, of a power formalised upon segments held to be inferior, nor to the necessity of the fragments of a pulverised State of constructing for itself, its own political authoriality by means of the exercise of an extreme violence. On the other hand, however, as may happen in a civil war, this violence does seem to be connected to a kind of categorial and social ambiguity, but it seems directed towards bodies that belong to an intimate sphere that is already predefined, even though torn apart by a continual process of self-fragmentation. If in the jargon of *Cosa Nostra*, an affiliated member presents a new member to one of his peers by using the expression "*è la stessa cosa*" (it's the same thing), the violence of the disappearance of the corpse and dissolution of the body, literally acts within the *Cosa* itself, involving with a rhythm, at times paroxystic, individuals connected by ties of (supposed) ritual brotherhood (PAOLI L. 2000). What is, then, this extreme violence, that on one hand creates the sharing of horrible secrets between members of a group – who remain alive for as long as they can share the secret – while, on the other hand, can be directed within the criminal community itself, slaughtering its own members and destroying their bodies? How does this violence act? What socio-political effects does it determine?

Neither the historiographical taxonomies of De Luna (2006), nor the ontological ones of Remotti (2006) can, I believe, be of great assistance. A more useful consideration in my opinion is that proposed by Appadurai (1999) in a study dedicated to the relationship between ethnic violence and processes of globalisation. According to Appadurai the extreme forms of ethnocidal violence refer to a surplus of rage that:

> «calls for an additional interpretative frame, in which uncertainty, purity, treachery, and bodily violence can be linked» (APPADURAI A. 1999: 321)[28].

The vivisection of the bodies, the thanatological rage, manifest themselves in situations of categorial uncertainty with regards to the "ethnic" belonging of people whose social existence is, however, characterised by a distinct social intimacy with the executioner. In these scenarios, the forms of violence on bodies, connected to the idea that the body represents the sphere of intimacy, according to Appadurai are (1999: 319):

> «mechanisms for producing persons out of what are otherwise diffuse, large-scale labels that have effects but no locations».

The practices of violence that, implying vivisection, damage the intimacy of the body of someone who is classified as other, but with whom there are previous forms of intimacy, would, therefore, have the effect of producing, in the bodies that, by exercising that violence, remain intact, the sensation of being real people (*ibid.*: 59). It is in similar situations,

> «where endemic doubts and pressures become intolerable that ordinary people begin to see masks instead of faces. In this perspective, extreme bodily violence my be seen as a degenerate technology for the reproduction of intimacy where it is seen to have been violated by secrecy and treachery» (*ibid.*: 319).

Appadurai's interpretation refers, as stated, to "ethnic" violence, in which the problems of classification are tied to those concerning the construction of an (individual and social) intimacy and to the search, often suspect, for traces of ethnic "substance" in the bodies of the victims (and of the executioners). Appadurai himself, in reality, demonstrates how the web of relationships between classification / body / belonging / ambiguity / violence operates on more general planes with respect to the specific discourse of ethnicity and can be applied also to other categories of subaltern figures (woman for example)[29]. Moreover, we have known for a while now that the question of "ethnicity" is only one of the numerous possible grids of classification, and therefore, of incorporation, of individual and collective belonging, tied, in its specific contents, to specific historical-political conditions of the exploitation of resources and of the production of hierarchies (COMAROFF J.- COMAROFF J. 1991: 51-61). The violence exercised by mafiosi against men and women of the state or practised within the criminal organisation itself is certainly not an "ethnic" violence and therefore, the bodies are not blown apart, dismembered, dissolved in acid or made to disappear in search of material-symbolic confirmation of the presence/absence of common ethnic "substances". And yet «uncertainty, purity, treachery, and bodily violence» (APPADURAI A. 1999: 321) seem to be decisive aspects in order to understand in part at least some of the forms of extreme violence exercised by men of the mafia. The violence on the bodies of

internal enemies, for example, that practised in the numerous places of extermination of *Cosa Nostra*, often incorporates/ed the practice of torture, especially when it is/was a question of obtaining information or confessions that substantiated betrayals or deception perpetrated by the victim against his own "family" or *Cosa Nostra* in general. Indeed, besides forms of hierarchical structuring, of different levels of institutional articulation and of bodies ideally meant for the mediation of internal conflicts, from a social point of view, the mafia organisation seems to be connotated by a marked competition between its members for the control of specific symbolic capital such as that of *honour* and *force*, of criminal capital, and obviously of important economic capital. The men of the mafia operate, therefore, in a state of mutual competition in which the possibility and the capacity to exercise violence play an important role. In a similar scenario, dominated by secrecy and daring, the accusation and the suspicion of betrayal – of the ideal regulations that should regulate the behaviour of its members (secrecy, honourable sexual conduct, prohibition of contact with law enforcers and magistrates, etc.), of the common interests or, more often, of those who occupy positions of dominion – are almost obsessive [(30)]. Hence, the importance of practices, such as interrogations before death, allowing concrete and substantial basis to suspicions to consolidate– at the end of these interrogations, the uncertainty vanished – as did, often, the bodies of the tortured and murdered victims; the betrayal had been proven – as had the precise mafia and criminal nature of the executioners, the purity of the "family" reaffirmed – through the elimination of the organic remains of the "traitors" who, by letting themselves decompose, had in some way confirmed the impure nature of their bodies [(31)].

Besides, many mafiosi, define their organisation as a kind of an *elite* of crime, made up of *men of honour* who, in order to be part of it, have to show themselves capable of killing other human beings [(32)]. Practising forms of extreme violence on the bodies of members of their own organisation – persons, like executioners, capable of killing – is an action, therefore, that does not limit itself to conferring power to killers, or to establishing a kind of shared secret that reaffirms, temporarily, the cohesiveness of the group of the living. This violence against the bodies of the members of one's own social body, such as that studied by Appadurai (1999), in demonstrating in a concrete manner the existence of impure traitors (*infami*), reconstructs an intimacy which is believed to be threatened and reaffirms, by reproducing it, the presence of "real" mafia men – we who remain alive by torturing the bodies of those who have betrayed demonstrate the existence of a society of real men of honour. In this case, the groups that define themselves,

the categories to which the practices of bodily violence confer a concrete nature, are not of the ethnic type, but rather, seem to express a hierarchy which is almost caste-like of individuals who compete amongst each other for the control of criminal, social and economic capital, founded on violence itself and on the capacity to transversely connect various strata of society; and who compete with the external world to continually define the borderline between being inside or outside the mafia organisation. As we have said, from a sociological point of view, criminal hierarchy and capital seem to be connotated by a marked instability and by highly elevated levels of (violent) competition which render their ability to settle and take root difficult. When, however, we begin to examine these dynamics from the "cultural" point of view, criminal qualities and hierarchies tend to be represented, by members of mafia associations, as well as by intellectuals within the Sicilian context, as substantial, primordial and based on "natural" qualities belonging to specific types of humanity [(33)]. In reality, beyond any apologetic representation and self attribution of an imaginary and inherent *honourability*, we are, as with any other institutional taxonomy (DOUGLAS M. 1990), in the presence of forms of naturalisation and incorporation of precise political cosmologies. Cosmologies and forms of subjectivity that structure themselves within moral economies and *agencies* (ASAD T. 2003) which in turn, cannot be thought of outside the scenarios of a global expansion of (in this case, illegal) capital and of the different processes of adaptation/change/resistance that are set in motion in single specific localities (APPADURAI A. 1996, 1999). Despite the fact that they represent themselves and that they can even be perceived as such, the mafiosi, therefore, are not men that are tied to ancient codes of honour, nor do their ideal rules of conduct express "traditional" moral values. These representations, that can certainly be incorporated (i.e. habitually lived) and therefore (can) also be disembodied (or rather consciously and strategically played out), should be considered performative effects/tools by which criminal groups, both local and transnational, compete for the control of symbolic, political and material resources within global scenarios. As Appadurai (2005: 61-62) points out, the possibility of anthropological comprehension of the diverse "imaginary ethnocides" is tied to the analytical capacity of differentiating contexts in relation to the ways relationships are structured between the «forces of global capital, the relative power of states, the alternating events of race and class and the diverse power of mass media». In the case of Italian and Sicilian mafia violence, while we have at our disposal political and historiographical analyses that allows us to understand its collocation in the political-institutional global scenarios (for example ARMAO F. 2000, LUPO S. 1996, 2008), besides the recent studies by

Jane and Peter Schneider (2003, 2006, 2007), we do not have studies that are able to furnish up to date versions of the "cultural" dimensions of such processes [34]. Greater awareness of these issues is rather evoked by certain literary works. I am obviously thinking of Saviano's book (2006) in which the nexus between bodies, violence and forms of re-organisation of production and the circulation of global capital occupies a key position, but I am also thinking of the evocations proposed by Giosuè Calaciura, a writer and journalist from Palermo, in *Malacarne* (1998), a novel on the Mafia. In this novel, the narrating voice of a hypothetical mafia pentito, narrates, in a tone that ranges between hallucination and a sort of hyper-reality, the bodies of mafiosi that are dismembered, through acts of self- cannibalism (CALACIURA G. 1998: 75), and that, through their decomposition, display the lack of incorporated patterns by which the relationship between an intimate "self" and the social world is constructed (CSORDAS T. 1990, 1997). *Malacarne* describes, furthermore, *selves* that become *eccentric*:

> «And thus we understood that we were not the masters of that immense shack, that they made us believe through electronic lies. They made us believe it by leaving us an endless part of even more far- fetched earnings (...) We understood that we were losing power even over ourselves, and that we were no longer able to talk to each other in that ancient run down shack in the quarters where everyone speaks their own language, has their own laws and even their own patron saint (...) What we perceived as an anthropological decadence was in part filled by nine zero figures that the compass of our computer indicated as our daily earnings» (CALACIURA G. 1998: 36-37),

thus evoking the rhetoric of eccentricity by which George Marcus (1995: 48-53) reconstructs the de-centralisation imposed by the extreme accumulation of capital to identities of the family members of *elite* United States financiers. In connection with similar processes of the re- organisation of criminal-economic capital, the *Malacarne* pentito finally brings us back to the question of the violence practised on the bodies within:

> «And in that explosion of truth, in that re-emergence of our bad memory, you forced us to live a lie, by telling the blood of our blood the falsehoods that were necessary for the survival of all (...) by exterminating dynasties that carried the names of the informers without reserve, by shooting once more with the usual cruelty of vengeance, but in an unusual pattern of killings mister judge, without the support of reasoning or strategy. We killed to cancel out half of the sick soul, in the total annulment of those cancerous cells which we eliminated by eradicating the entire damaged organ in the amputation of ourselves, mister judge» (CALACIURA G. 1998: 135).

Malacarne is a term in Sicilian dialect that indicates a person who has an inclination for crime. In the course of the hearings in which Michelle Aiello is condemned the following exchange takes place between the judge

who invites the business man to confess, and he, in turn, reaffirms to which power, in the last instance, goes his incorporated sentiment of loyalty:

JUDGE MONTALBANO (turning to Aiello): Saying certain things has a certain liberating effect, believe me. Then you will feel better. I am not at all convinced that you are a callous criminal.

ENG. AIELLO: I, a criminal *nun ci sugnu* - I am not, dear...

J. M.: Believe me, I am saying this in your interest. Whether you talk or not... Someone who deals with so many people is able to understand if the person before him is a so-called *malacarne*, or whether he is a person who has made mistakes. I am inviting you to assume your responsibilities.

E. A.: But I am assuming my responsibilities [35].

Paolo's smile

The interpretation that we have pursued till now is clearly of a provisional nature. In order to be able to understand the ways in which the components of the armed branch of *Cosa Nostra*, as well as those – white collar workers, doctors, politicians, university professors – who animate the various layers of connections between "civil society" and the mafia that can be seen in the world of the Sicilian health system, incorporating the presence of the Italian State (and/or the presence of forms of necropolitical power), we would need to have at our disposal ethnographic knowledge that at the moment, it seems to me, is not available. Only a meticulous ethnography that delves into the operative modes of various state apparata (judiciary, police force and forces of repression, as well as the health structures), with their procedures and forms of producing consent and violence could grant some plausible form of contextualisation and generalisation. This too, however, would not suffice. The analysis, in fact, should be extended to other systems of governance, connected, but not identifiable with that of the state. In the first place, I am thinking of the weight the Catholic Church has exercised and still exercises in the formation of conscience (TORRE A. 1995, PROSPERI A. 1996), in the production of bodies and in the moulding of that particular Italian (and Sicilian) declination for modernity. Not being able, on this occasion, to develop a similar analysis [36], I shall limit myself, in conclusion, to taking up the thread of a question left unresolved in the preceding pages, by which we can shed some light on the importance of the ritual and "religious" dimension for understanding processes of incorporating power in Sicily.

In fact, if we recall how, in dealing with the problem of mafia violence exercised on the bodies of outside enemies by means of "explosive" and disintegrating forms of violence, I had underlined that, in these cases, the remains of the victims, disseminated in the public space, offered themselves up to forms of manipulation exercised by other powers, that were different and counterposed to that of the mafia. Indeed, around the remains of the victims of some of the most horrible mafia massacres (those of judge Falcone, his wife and bodyguards, those of judge Borsellino and his bodyguards), in 1992 certain important political and symbolic games were played out. I will not dwell on the various funeral ceremonies, ritual moments of extreme drama, charged with tension and emotion and riddled with innumerable conflicts (the civil society against the mafiosi and against the representatives of an inept and defeated State, police officers, who wanted to be close to the corpses of their comrades in arms, against the carabinieri, charged with maintaining order and who held them back from the centre of the scene, in the cathedral, a woman, Rosaria Schifani, and her funeral cry against the assassins of her husband). Moments in which the control of the scene and ritual language were almost completely in the hands of the Church and its representatives. I prefer to concentrate my attention on another aspect, less evident and less glaring, connected to the death of judge Borsellino.

Less than two months after the massacre at Capaci, in which *Cosa Nostra* (with a commando led by Giovanni Brusca) had assassinated Giovanni Falcone, a car bomb also killed judge Paolo Borsellino and five bodyguards in via D'Amelio, right in the centre of Palermo. Borsellino knew that the mafia was out to kill him– he had clearly stated as much to family and friends, he had alluded to it in public, just before his death. A photograph by Franco Zecchin shows him while he is participating in a commemorative procession of his friend Falcone (BATTAGLIA L. - ZECCHIN F. 2006). He is walking beside an armed bodyguard, carrying a candle. He has the look of a man who knows, who has understood, only apparently looking into the void, but as though he could see in that ritual an anticipation of his own funeral. At the elections for the office of Governor of the Sicilian Region held in 2006, Rita Borsellino, Paolo's sister, who had been a candidate for the Centre Left for the office of Governor, did not obtain the consensus of the majority of Sicilians, who preferred, instead, to vote for Dr. Salvatore Cuffaro. Before the assassination of her brother, Mrs Borsellino would have never imagined of being able to carry out such a public commitment. In some of her writings, she describes what led her, at first, to her battle against the mafia, and then to take on a political battle. In this case too, the religious question is of decisive importance:

> «One day I was deeply troubled by doubts, by personal reflections and uncertainties (...) Just at the very moment that I was in such a crisis state, it was a winter afternoon in 1993, I got a telephone call from Assisi. For me Assisi has always had a particular meaning since it is the place, that for years now, I often go to visit to recharge my batteries not only from the spiritual point of view. The person calling me was the director of the Cittadella of Assisi (...) On the phone he asked me something extraordinary, and that is, to participate in the annual meeting of the youth of the Cittadella and to deliver the concluding speech. The topic that I was asked to prepare had to do with the Beatitudes. They wanted me to apply one of the Beatitudes to my brother. I remained almost in a *trance*» (BORSELLINO R. 1996, p. 21).

In these words we have a sense of an intimate religiousness that is profoundly lived outside of the public sphere that, however, lays down the basis for the possibility of a public declaration. In the words of Rita Borsellino we can see described a quasi conversion to a religiousness which is no longer private but also lived as an ethical and political choice. Other aspects, that are just as interesting, emerge from the words of this strong woman, capable of a psychological, existential and ethical effort, which is not easy to carry out. In remembering, with affection and a sort of discretion, the last tragic moments of her brother Paolo, Rita Borsellino brings to light an unexpected detail:

> «There were only a few people together with my brother Paolo – four men and a woman who protected him, huddled around him, almost embracing him. Almost nothing remained of the bodies of these young people, but they gave us the enormous gift of maintaining the body of Paolo almost intact, and preserving the expression of that smile of his that was his most beautiful trait. That smile that survived death itself was like a message, a path to be followed» (Rita Borsellino, in CASTAGNERI R. 2006: 110).

Cosa Nostra, as much as it is able to destroy the life of a woman and five men of the State and to dismember their bodies, is unable to cancel the smile from the face of the judge[37]. His body, protected by the bodies of the representatives of the Police Corps of the State, remains miraculously intact, almost as if to testify to an irreducible capacity of resisting the annihilating action of the power of the mafia. In this dramatic image of the bodies of the young police agents which disintegrate, pulverised by mafia violence, in being able to protect, with their sacrifice, the body and the smile of the judge, a subtle symbolic game seems to be played out. The bodies of the agents and that of the judge seem to us to be, in fact, placed in the heart of a field of overlapping and, at the same time, contrasting forces, in which the power of the State, that of Church and that of the mafia, find expression. *Cosa Nostra* exercises the power of extreme physical violence by disgregating in public the bodies of its enemies. The state which seems to come out defeated from this battle for power, nonetheless dem-

onstrates, through the sacrifice of its agents and the destruction of their bodies, at least the will of the single individuals – despite the defeat of the state's political capacities – to exercise control over the body of judge Borsellino. The Church, on the other hand, continues to provide ritual models for the public expression of death, pain, civil disdain. At the same time, the memory and the words of Rita Borsellino – inspired as we have seen, from an approach towards the world of faith – produces an iconic representation, close to that produced by sanctity, that makes it possible to disengage that body from history and the forces that disturb it, and to place it in a different sphere, which is ethical, political and religious. As Bruce Lincoln states:

> «The bodies of those who are purified of sins through the sacraments of the Church and the practice of a saintly life do not decay, but partake of eternity, freedom from decomposition being one of the foremost proofs of sanctity» (LINCOLN B. 1989: 125) [38].

A classically religious "sanctity" – in being able to free itself from the (violent) process of decomposition imposed by mafia violence – and at the same time modernly civil, capable of establishing – beyond and at times contrary to the State which in Sicily runs the risk of taking on the connotations of a real necropolitical power – the civil and political commitment of many and of reaffirming the centrality of a kind of religious discoursive order in the ways of imagining new forms of life and society.

Notes

[1] Cit. in BIANCHI S. M. - NERAZZINI A. 2005: 126-127. For information and data reported in this first part, besides BIANCHI S. M. - NERAZZINI A. 2005, also see BELLAVIA E.- PALAZZOLO S. 2005 and PACI G. 2006.

[2] Michele Aiello was condemned at the first hearing for 14 years of imprisonment for mafia association in the trial against "The moles (informants) in the District antimafia Office in Palermo" which involved the former Governor of the Sicilian Region Salvatore Cuffaro who was condemned to 5 years, for aiding and abetting.

[3] Bernardo Provenzano was arrested on 11 April 2006.

[4] On 19 January 2008 Aldo Carcione was condemned in the first instance to 4 years and 6 months for revealing and utilising official secrets and unlawful access to the computerised system of the Public Prosecutor's Office.

[5] On 19 January 2008, in the trial in which governor Cuffaro was condemned, Giorgio Riolo was condemned in the first instance to 7 years imprisonment. Giuseppe Ciuro was condemned to 4 years and 8 months for aiding and abetting.

[6] Antonio Borzacchelli, arrested in 2003, on 28 March 2008 was condemned in the first instance to 10 years imprisonment and banned for life from public office for graft, aiding and abetting and revelation of secret information.

[7] In the Appeals Trial (16 October 2008) Domenico Miceli was condemned to 6 years and 6 months – the penalty was reduced with respect to the 8 years received in the first instance) for external support in mafia association.

(8) The investigators suspect an institutional source, some collaborators name Borzacchelli and Cuffaro, for which they are later condemned in the first instance.

(9) Concerning the relationship between the power of the health institutions and the power of the mafia in Sicily, cf. Paci's study (2006) which deals with the question from a strictly judicial point of view. Also Dino A. (2006: 167-171) makes brief references to similar topics, but, despite occasional references to the work of Foucault M. (*ibid.*: 169), he does not develop his thought along post-foucaultian lines.

(10) For a critical use of the notion "civil society" as applied to Sicilian reality, cf. Schneider J. - Schneider P. 2001.

(11) One can perhaps detect in this theoretical position the consequence of the more than legitimate ethical and political positioning of the authors in the public scene in Sicily in the 1980's.

(12) Peppino Impastato, the son and nephew of mafiosi, after having adhered to the extraparliamentary left, had begun to attack the local boss, Gaetano Badalamenti, from the microphones of a private radio station in Cinisi. In May 1978 his body was found torn apart by a bomb in the vicinity of the railway tracks. The investigations, which lasted more than 20 years, come to the conclusion that this was a mafia homicide in which the killers tried to simulate an accident that occurred to the young man while he was attempting to prepare a hypothetical bomb attack.

(13) *La Repubblica* – Palermo 30.01.2008.

(14) Ziniti Alessandra, *La Repubblica*, 12 October 2006.

(15) *Il Corriere della Sera*, 24 September 2007.

(16) The expression "body of the enemy killed" obviously refers to the recent historiographical work by De Luna G. (2006), to which we shall return.

(17) For notions of necropower and necropolitics, to which I shall shortly return, see Mbembe A. 2003 and Xavier Inda J. 2005.

(18) As, at least up to the beginnings of the 1980's, a large part of the anthropological and sociological studies have tried to do when they have interpreted the expressive aspects of the practices of the mafiosi, in particular, those connected to violence and bloodshed; cf. Hess H. 1973, Blok A. 1974, 1981, Schneider J. - Schneider P. 1989, Fiume G. (ed.) 1989. In 2000 as well, Paoli in an important volume in which rightfully he claims the centrality of the cultural dimension in the analysis of Italian mafia phenomena against that of economic or judicial reductionism, he believes that this cultural dimension goes back to a "set of cultural codes, rituals and regulations" (Paoli L. 2000: 80).

(19) Along this line of thought, we can collocate the work of Favole concerning the fate of the human remains after death and their "symbolic signification" within the process that he denominates as "thanato-metamorphosis" (Favole A. 2003: 21), as well as the re-elaboration of this notion by Remotti F. (2006b), and the research carried out by a group of scholars within the model proposed by Remotti F. (2006a).

(20) Besides the general theoretical divergences and research styles, that which does not convince me in the proposal by Remotti is that of considering the practices of "thanato-metamorphosis" as being necessarily conscious (Remotti F. 2006b: 6) and of a consciousness (be it partial) that is attributed to entire societies. These are suppositions which, whoever works within a theory of the practice will find difficult to accept today.

(21) In a recent interview, a priest who had been the parish priest in one of the towns of the Aspromonte with the highest number of mafiosi and with very close family relations in the local clans, believed that, for an expert in the field, it was possible to recognise, with a certain precision, the hand of the killer, from the type of wounds inflicted on the body of the victim.

(22) Cf. with regards to affirmations by Giovanni Brusca (in Lodato S. 2006: 105) and the description of the same scene made by Bianconi G. - Savatteri G. 2001: 82-84. Saviano R. (e.g. 2006: 117) more than once underlines the centrality that television images (and cinematographic versions) have for the *camorristi*, be it on a purely instrumental plain, or within more complex strategies of self-representation.

(23) There seem to be clear, if not declared, assonances with De Martinian thought in these recent theses of Remotti.

(24) For works that to me seem to move in this direction, cf. Taussig M. 1987, Malkki L. 1995a, Hyden R. M. 1996, Comaroff J. - Comaroff J. 1999, Das V. 2005, Appadurai A. 2005, Humphrey C. 2007.

(25) Cf. De Luna G. 2006: 219-220, 239-244 and Giletti-Benso S. 2006: 249-250, regarding the case of the desaparecidos, on which, however, also compare Perelli C. 1994, for whom – differing from what is sustained by Giletti-Benso, the capacity of constructing memories and social action despite the disappearance of the corpse is carried out through the construction of a corporeal and incorporating memory (*memoria de sangre*, in fact). Obviously, within the criminal world, as is demonstrated by the case of De Mauro's corpse, when the remains are not completely pulverised, they can undergo further manipulations. For an analysis of the relationship between practices of manipulation of corpses and forms of discoursive production, in Sicily, cf. Palumbo B. 2003.

(26) This emerges with force in the declarations of many mafia pentiti cf. Calderone, in Arlacchi P. 1994 and Brusca, in Lodato S. 2006.

(27) Cf. Brusca in Lodato S. 2006: 104-105, Bellavia E. - Palazzolo S. 2005: 43, Bianconi G. - savatteri G. 2001: 63. The implementation of the attacks against judges Falcone and Borsellino has, at the same time, produced in some members of *Cosa Nostra* – who have since become collaborators of justice – the effects of critical, if not ethical, distancing, from the strategies of massacres perpetrated by those belonging to the Corleonese power group.

(28) The study by Appadurai, which appeared for the first time in 1998, has been recently translated into Italian (2005).

(29) Cf. Appadurai A. 1999: 318, n. 11.

(30) Cf. Buscetta, in Arlacchi P. 1996: 84-91, Calderone, in Arlacchi P. 1994, Paoli L. 2000, Armao F. 2000, Dino A. 2002, Aqueci F. 1989.

(31) Among the many possible examples, the use of electric charges applied to the testicles (*Corriere della Sera*, 25 February 1998: 15), the practice of making holes in the belly of the victim, to spill the guts, or in the skull to make pieces of brain ooze out (from depositions at trials of the Catanesi Mafia groups). Recently, newspapers reported the statements of a pentito from the Mafia family from Corso Calatafimi that a man of honour was brought to a secluded place (a *malasenu*, in Sicilian dialect, a secluded storage of agricultural tools, although in the journalistic transcription the term indicates places where they torture, question and kill people) where he was beaten and humiliated by a score of other mafiosi, without being killed (*Il Giornale di Sicilia*, 14 February 2009).

(32) Cf. Falcone G. 1997: 60, Calderone, in Arlacchi P. 1994: 53-57.

(33) For a substantially culturalistic critique of Pitrè, cf. Lupo S. 1996, 2008. Cf. also Triolo N. 1993.

(34) This of course does not mean that there is a lack of analysis of the cultural dimensions of the violent practices of the Mafia (Paoli L. 2000, Ingrascì O. 2007, Dino A. 2002, 2008, Siebert R. 1994, 1996, Puccio Den D. 2008), but only that they do not fit into the theoretical scenarios outlined here and do not seem interested in dialoguing with the current trend of an updated critical political anthropology.

(35) Cit. in Bianchi S. M. - Nerazzini A. 2005: 129-130.

(36) On this topic I have dedicated a monograph (Palumbo B. 2009). In this case too, it should be pointed out that there is no lack of literature that attempts to reconstruct the relationship between the Church, Mafia, and antimafia in Sicily (for example Dino A. 2008, 2002, 2000, 1997, Puccio D. 2008a, b, 2002, 2004, Stabile F. M. 1989, 1996, 1997, Fasulo N. 2008). These studies, however, besides the diversity of approach (sociological, anthropological, pastoral-historiographic) are not backed by solid ethnographic practice (from the anthropological point of view) and above all they seem to be quite removed from the theoretical scenarios evoked here. For a more attentive critical analysis see Palumbo B. 2009, chapters 1,4,8.

(37) Rita Borsellino (2006: 24), Paolo's sister, recalls how the hand of 24 year old Emanuela Loi, who was one of the bodyguards of the judge on the day of the massacre in via d'Amelio, was found on the fifth floor of a building, still gripping a gun.

(38) Other than specialistic historiographic and anthropological literature on the bodies of the saints, cf. for some interesting comparative cases, also those cases of the post-socialist countries examined by VERDERY K. 1999.

[translated from the Italian by Paul Dominici]

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