

[The Potential Conflict with the Outsider]¹

Introduction

Sometimes, we tend to remember the great difficulties that previous Italian generations met in the migration experience, whether internal, from the south to the so-called «industrial triangle», or outside the national borders: Germany, Switzerland, America and so on.

Remembering is a very important activity. It is even more to the man uprooted from the original context. From that point of view, actually, something worth noting: the great difficulties never run out with the gradual emancipation from the main essentials needs. Rather, when the strict necessity begins to become a memory, the sign of the tension experienced in dealing with the social reality of settlement, i.e. the population already integrated and indigenous peoples, seems to stay alive in the experience of the migrant. And this seems true, even more, when we take into consideration a socio-economically homogenous local context.

It should be stressed again: only few times we tend to remember the past and build on those experiences.

On the one hand, therefore, it can be argued that the lack of respect for others in interpersonal relationships, as in the case of prejudices and verbal humiliations, always runs the risk of falling into general oblivion, passing through the filter and the images of the «nervous life» (Simmel 1903) and of indeed tenuous, intergenerational narratives. On the other hand, – we repeat – oblivion and erosions of the lessons from the past do not ever involve the masses of people who have lived and continue to live on their own skin, by *strangers*, the complexity of the relationship with the integrated people in a daily shared environment.

The question comes up again, with reversed roles, when my country – Italy – realizes it represents a huge magnet in the service of process of labour market globalization: with all the consequences that the case involves in the common sense.

I believe that this brief introductory framework can help to enhance the analysis proposed by Norbert Elias on *estrangement*, understood as a relationship of interdependence between members of different groups. So, starting from the German sociologist's contribution, the purpose of this article is to focus on the image of today (individual and group) migrant in a *relational* key. More specifically, we want to help in the organization of a useful frame to understand the potentially conflicting relationships in which the perception of this strangeness occurs. The goal is to recover stimuli and concepts of primary importance to the toolbox of those who wish to study *immigration* and *ethnic relations*, trying to connect the reality experienced by people at the nodes, indeed crucial today than ever, that take shape from the social representations conveyed by the mass media and by the decisions made within the political-institutional sphere.

¹This essay is a progress report of the International Conference «Beyond dichotomous thinking: the society of individuals. The legacy and continuing relevance of Norbert Elias's sociology», held at the University of Florence from 07-10 to 09/10/2010.

Winston Parva's research

We can immediately say that the segment of Norbert Elias' work that we explore today, on the one hand, it is not instantly recognizable, and somehow reducible, to a specific field of inquiry: for example, we do not immediately deal with discussions regarding the presence of the global migrant within national boundaries, on the other hand, because of the lack of a sectorial connotation, the analysis of the Winston Parva's case is a perfect example of this author extraordinary capacity to mitigate many of the dichotomies and the suggestions that (too often) crowd and plastered the discourse of social science *sui generis*.

More specifically, it seems to me that the results and merits of this work can be interpreted as a direct reflection of a perfect integration between theory and data: an effective theoretical and conceptual apparatus – the «morphogenetic-trial» of the figures² – and an empirical research dropped in a sociological significance contest: the Anglo-Saxon one, in which there is an internal territorial mobility related to mature and established processes of industrialization and urbanization.

Well, the starting point of my re-reading of *The Established and the outsiders*³ may be represented by the following statement: the value of Elias' conceptualizing contained in the research on the inhabitants of Winston Parva's territory, consists in having persevered and reached the aim to identify a possible *lowest common denominator* underlying «latent or potential conflict»⁴ between members of groups involved in daily relations *vis-à-vis*.

This statement is absolutely instrumental in fact, being structured according to the objectives of this paper, it contains all the limitations and omissions which are typical of such an idiographic thesis – that is, sensitive to the historically and socially-located concepts nature – and of the vain attempt to fence off all the stimuli and the solutions contained in the path of a «giant» which Norbert Elias (Cavalli 2009).

But, we try to introduce a brief description of the facts and context. For the researchers, the Leicester *hinterland* Winston Parva's reality is a reality of modern constitution and as a matter of expansion. It is divided into three zones: zone A, a residential, middle-class, B and C, however, working-class. The latter two were later built and offer people the same housing conditions (Elias, Scotson 1994: 89-109). You might say: a substantially uniform and characteristic of the emerging social spaces model under technical, economic and urban development of the twentieth century.

Actually, at least two major theoretical pillars of sociological-industrial culture seem to be into question. The first step is focusing on mechanical and linear crossing from a model of «*gemeinschaft*» made of traditional relationships and social spaces, to a «*gesellschaft*» model characterized by the collective rationality inherent in modern social differentiation (Tönnies 1887-1912); the second point under discussion is the causal Marxist link between proletariat solidarity and monocausal of the that conflict generating reasons, or, to put it more clearly, the one of a conception of *power* attributable almost entirely to the possession of material means and resources.

In Norbert Elias' eyes, an historical process in which there is a passage from the characteristics of a traditional

² N. Elias et alii (1997), *Towards a Theory of Social Processes: A Translation*, in «The British Journal of Sociology», Vol. 48, n. 3, pp. 355-383; F. Squazzoni (2000), *Norbert Elias: per una sociologia morfogenetica e processuale*, in «Intersezioni», XX, n. 2, pp. 285-296. On the concept of figuration: N. Elias (1990), *Che cos'è la sociologia?*, Torino: Rosenberg & Sellier, pp. 143-156; S. Tabboni (1993), *Norbert Elias: un ritratto intellettuale*, Bologna: Il Mulino, pp. 87-158; R. Van Krieken (1998), *Norbert Elias*, London: Routledge, pp. 52-62; T. Quintaneiro (2005), *The concept of figuration or configuration in Norbert Elias's sociological theory*, in «Teoria & Sociedade», vol. 12, n. 1, pp. 54-69.

³ N. Elias N., J.H. Scotson (1965), *The established and the outsiders*, London: Frank Cass & Co.; germ. tr., *De gevestigden en de buitendstanders*, Utrecht and Antwerp: Het Spectrum 1977; it. tr., *Strategie dell'esclusione*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1994. The original edition of this group research was published in 1965. However, as a single author, Norbert Elias wrote the introductory essay in English put in the German edition of the work (1977).

⁴ L. Gallino (1993), *Dizionario di Sociologia*, Torino: Utet, p. 152. Gallino writes: «A distinction, whose scope is often underestimates, is the one between the likely and the active conflict, that is between a conflict provoking situation and a conflictual behavior empirically observable by the parties involved. [...] A further distinction, between shown and latent conflict, involves the hypothesis that the observed conflict between two or more persons, at least in some cases, only one event – a symptom – of a different and deeper conflict that people are still unable to discern the real nature, and in the same subjects are not always aware» (*Ibidem*).

community life to those of society and rational relations conceived as immanent and universal categories can not be considered credible: there is, at least, the possibility to observe some *syncretism* between different forms of social ties as a result, very often, arguing for homogeneous social classes and categories is only a linguistic device, since the result is attitudes and connotations that characterize the groups and people (the working class, the middle class, the guild, party, etc..) and, moreover, conceiving classes as with opposite and divergent world views around a structural contradiction, in that case, of an economic kind (there are always interdependencies and power differentials between groups belonging to the same class, category or community) is also a serious.

Indeed, the aim of the research is the widely used tendency to form communitarian stratifications, not only within the larger suburban community represented by the neighbourhood and by the *hinterland*, but, above all, within a social class protagonist of industrial modernization: that working Anglo-Saxon class, whose characteristics appear to be homogenous not only with regard to socio-economic status, but also for the *absence of somatic linguistic or religious differences* (as we know, the case of social inside mobility emerged from the Italian industrialization processes is not as homogeneous).

Well, this particular type of *intraclass stratification* is created - and this is the lowest common denominator - from the durability of the men relationship with their territory and, consequently, from the intensity of the social bond and from the institutionalization of the relations of affinity and kinship within a given social circle (Simmel 1908). From this all the dimensions of rooted \leftrightarrow foreigners figure⁵ stem, that is between workers groups settled on that territory for at least two generations and new arrived. In this regard, Elias writes:

You meet here, in a particularly pure form, a source of power differentials - between interdependent groups - which plays an important role in many other social settings, but frequently covered by other distinctive features of the groups concerned in the eyes of the observer, such as skin colour or social class. At a closer look you can often find that even in these cases, as in Winston Parva, a group has a higher amount of cohesion of others and this difference in integration substantially contributes to the power *surplus* of the first, the greater cohesion allows this group of reserve for its members, the social positions that allow them to handle a higher power, thereby strengthening the cohesion, and to exclude members of other groups⁶.

The contrast between foreign and rooted, then, is primarily marked by the *elementary relations of power* (Elias 1986: 155-185), by a supposed superiority also transmitted and recognized (almost in a passive way) from the *outsider* and, therefore, we can say, by daily domination and subordination relations in which emerge clearly, not only representations, actions and responsibilities of a group to another group, but also and above all, *the production and the social reproduction of stigma and stereotype*⁷: for nature, outsiders are considered individuals tending to anomie, deviance, generally rude and / or dirty people, with the immediate consequence of not being accepted as part of the activities and social spaces that should be characteristic of that category. As the title of the Italian translation of the work says, the main *focus* seems to be just, to detect size comparable to the «strategies of exclusion» (Elias 1994). Observed strategies - it is worth repeating - in a homogeneous socio-economic reality. It is at this point that the Elias' contribution meets the analytical goals pursued here.

⁵ It is desirable highlighting how the concept of *representation* can be attributed to, in an initial of epistemological analysis, that Simmel of *mutual action*: in fact, the need to build the object of the study in relational (individual or group) and space terms (see R. Cipollini, *Foreigners. perception of foreigners and ethnic prejudice*, Angeli, Milan 2002) is present in both of them. Tabboni, however, in this regard, states with great punctuality that «the figure gives an account of the *interdependence*, rather than the mere *interaction*» (S. Tabboni, *op. cit.*, 1993, p. 237).

⁶ N. Elias, *op. cit.*, 1994, pp. 19-20.

⁷ For a comprehensive analysis of the stigma topic: B. Link, J. Phelan (2001), *Conceptualizing stigma*, in «Annual Review of Sociology», vol. 27, pp. 363-385. For an analysis of stereotype concepts and of the linked processes: M. Delle Donne (1998), *Stereotipi e Pregiudizi*, Roma: Edup.

Figuration, and the latent and potential conflict

The «empirical paradigm» (ivi: 17) highlighted here, helps us to consider the issue of foreignness *sui generis* as a «humana condition» of many contemporary tension and violence forms, especially those of micro kind, limited in intra-district, intra-communal, intra-school scopes and so on (Elias 1987). In particular, the *perception* of *threatening foreignness* that emerges as a clear indicator of the representation of «deep-rooted and not» seems to reproduce the characteristic signals of all these potential and latent conflicts that - today - take shape in those contexts where the daily coexistence between ethnic groups - living with a stranger - has become no longer a *given quota*, but *structural*.

However, it is worth pointing out: the conflict between individual and/or between social groups, for its connotation, can not be considered or, worse, treated as a representation or as a universal crystallization in the interdependence of power in the relationship between humans. It is rather *potential to be present, and possibly synchronically latent and maybe manifest*, when it questions the balance of those interdependencies. From this point of view, Simmel and Elias epistemology appear somewhat distant, even though Norbert Elias, in the wake of Simmel, is committed - as we have said - to amend the monocausal and ideological idea of conflict, and to assert a connotation, purely sociological, as relational (and non-economistic), of the concept of power.

It is fair to say that the conflict is always permeated by figures showing a power differential, but it is also correct to observe that it is a type of individual or group reciprocal action - *Wechselwirkung* (Simmel 1908) - whose characteristics and symbolic contents appear to be - always - historically and socially determined, and whose *uncertain outcomes*, may fluctuate from trading (symbol of openness to dialogue perhaps encouraged by the public and political attention to these possible solutions), to self-referentiality and to individual and group identity (Melucci 1991; Melucci 2000), when it is potential, up to the verbal and physical violence, when the recognition and the fruitful exchange of communication between the players involved can not or will not be achieved (in this case it tends to remain latent, however, if urged, can explode with vehemence). And this seems true, even more, when these tensions are worsened, and made more complex by *cultural* and *linguistic* variables - differences.

It is also true, however, we all are struck by the pages devoted to research data on Winston Parva. We are shocked because we see strong similarities with the narratives and experiences of Italian immigrants in the south, in addition, today, there are strong similarities with the observable reality in some quarters of Rome, Milan and other cities and territories in which the phenomenon of migration and the different forms of marginalization affect strongly on the social fabric of popular neighbourhoods and settlements⁸. Often in these situations - also the other with the same socio-economic conditions - there are tension and discomfort, or lack of integration between Italian and foreign citizens, even when these are legally residing with their more or less structured groups and their communities.

Of course, therefore, we do not want to obscure the experiences of recognition and solidarity that - in our contemporary world - are formed spontaneously in the name of faith, of a moral influence, of respect for human rights and mutual tolerance. However, I think it is equally important to produce an analysis and some tools aimed at those situations less comfortable in terms of social solidarity and pursued dialogue: only to contribute to an understanding.

Thus, it seems appropriate to begin to advance a number of questions that stimulate reflection and debate. For example, how to decline Elias' contribution on the *outsider exclusion* in a «post-industrial» and «global» contest? Or rather, how to enter the effective analysis of power differentials in the not theoretical but real mists of consumerist fragmentation or, conversely, between the drifts of belonging to a hard identity that, sometimes, especially among the roots, appears to be nourished, not by an effective cohesion of a group, but by a real symbols and social belonging market (especially in politics)?

In terms of research, once established the interdependence on the field, we must never stop at the fundamen-

⁸ See: Rete a Colori (1998), *Milano, Stadera: immigrazione, leggi e norme sociali*, Milano: Angeli; I. Fontana (2001), *Non sulle mie scale. Diario di un cittadino alle prese con l'immigrazione clandestina e l'illegalità*, Roma: Donzelli; A. Augustoni, A. Alietti (2009), *Società urbane e convivenza interetnica. Vita quotidiana e rappresentazioni degli immigrati in un quartiere di Milano*, Milano: Angeli.

tal task to record and describe data that emerge from either side. Rather, we should use the main dimensions of representation between *established* and *outsider* such as *indicators of a latent or potential conflict* in which – it must be said – the outsider is not always so little set in a group as to be well disposed to suffer, and incorporate passively an alleged, perceived or represented condition of inferiority (by the locals). In environments of a global society in which the phenomenon of migration has become - I repeat - a *structural fact*, the stranger who has consolidated his stay is very often linked to a solid belonging, to a group solidarity, more than it is the native citizen who enjoys the full inclusion of not only legal, but also, unfortunately, the most radical and destructive forms of individualization and distraction. On the contrary, however, the *newly arrived foreign* (illegal alien and asylum seeker), or the one who has lost the dignity of a precarious *legal and social inclusion*, but also the one who is deviant, all they suffer, increasingly, the differential of institutionalized power and the connected stigma (the illegal, the Rom, the indigent, etc.), with all the economic, legislative and political aggravating and differentials. All this strictly without any appeal.

But, precisely, what are these dimensions of the representation which can be used as indicators of the contexts in which the most important problem for the social fabric becomes that of conflict mitigation and mediation, as well as construction of a subjective awareness of rights and duties, of a freedom of action and a capacity for dialogue, especially with regard to the prospects of future generations (Touraine 1997; Touraine 2004)?

If it is true that the indicators and dimensions of the likely or latent conflict are the same of Elias' representation, it is true that the presence of these indicators confirm the validity of all those analysis that emphasize, starting from the fundamental contribution of Georg Simmel (1908), the outsider «ambivalence» - the stranger - and its not easy reducibility to rational categories of interpretation⁹, whether positive or negative¹⁰. In the centrality given to the rational categorization (individual and collective), which is typical of modern Western civilization, the fault of to distinguish friend from foe still persists. However, besides these two defined and circumscribed sets, there are also outsiders and foreigners we can not know *a priori*, they are different from us and *not* easily polarizable¹¹; they are apparently released from our world, our certainties. They are ambivalent because they generate a *tension* between attraction and rejection, between curiosity and fear. Unfortunately, we are often forced to observe the attempt to overcome this ambivalence with the location of these experience into the category of enemy, and undoubtedly, Norbert Elias' contributes giving an important reading in this location, as able to overcome the idea of a process due solely to the categories of rational intellect, using the instrument of representation between interdependent groups that otherwise appear to be *differently integrated* within them and from the frame of meaning of the territory.

In this scenario, and in my view, the gossip, the stereotype, the communication of stigma as a form of affirmation of a «power differential», continue to be the most reliable indicators of a shift that seems to overcome plenty of inter-group dynamics, and everyday life, to embrace a risky and easily documented tendency to *make inferiority as institutional*, the «social gardening» (Bauman 1991) that in the history of Western modernity (look in our house) has become terrible forms of genocide, extermination and repression and that, anyway – in best – can only grow the way for a proposal, not for *recognition* and *inclusion*, but, of *assimilation*¹².

In fact, this social production and reproduction of the stigma that at the beginning of this article, we mentioned

⁹ For a discussion on the ambivalence of the stranger in the thought of Georg Simmel see: L. Perrone (2005), *Da straniero a clandestino. Lo straniero nel pensiero sociologico occidentale*, Napoli: Liguori, pp. 45-52; S. Tabboni (2006), *Lo straniero e l'altro*, Napoli: Liguori, pp. 40-43.

¹⁰ Zygmunt Bauman writes: «Ambivalence, or the ability to assign an object or event more than one category, is a specific disorder of language: it represents a flaw in the function name (and segregation) that the language should fulfil. The main symptom of the disorder is the intense discomfort we feel when we are not able to correctly interpret a situation and choose between two alternative situations» (Bauman, 1991; it. tr., 2010: p. 11).

¹¹ In physics and chemistry, the polarizability is the tendency of a charge distribution, as the electronic cloud of an atom or molecule, to be distorted from its original form for the effect of an electric field and the outside.

¹² Still, with Zygmunt Bauman: «Assimilation, as distinct from multicultural exchange or from cultural diffusion in general is a typically modern phenomenon. He derived its character and its significance from the modern 'nationalization' of the state, that is the attempt by the modern state, to achieve the legal, linguistic, cultural and ideological unification of the population that inhabits the territory under its jurisdiction». See: Z. Bauman (2010), *op. cit.*, pp. 161-180.

to be particularly alive in the memory of the migrant, is presented today – in the twenty-first century – as a compelling issue that involves not only daily intercultural coexistence areas, very rough, but also social institutions, particularly with regard to those responsible for information, education and personal development and sense of citizenship, but even before this, it fully involves the objective responsibility of those *policy makers* who should operate within the constitutional framework of values of advanced constitutional democracies (Villa 2008).

The attention of Norbert Elias in relation to «power differentials» and its extension in relation to all the events that these differentials can take – from the inter-subjective relationship, to the inter-group one, up to the situations that have a high level of institutionalization – makes compatible and mutually fruitful the universal representation analysis with the analysis historically determined by latent and potential emerging conflicts in a global society. Today, both forms (interdependence and potential / latent conflict) are substantiated by various levels of analysis of reality and with different nuances: for example, you need to integrate what is built in daily living and interpersonal relationships and in contexts with what happens in the systematic production of symbolic contents and, likewise, you need to monitor the debate and actions intensity and quality where decisions are made, or better where rules are produced and enforced.

Faced with this complex scenario, conflicts and tensions related to people in the flesh and bones continue to be relations whose results are quite uncertain and unpredictable, especially when left to themselves, out of control or, worse, when worsened or corroborated on the one hand, from the objective difficulties in communication between cultural connotated actors, and the on other, form very sophisticated and institutionalized social ways of representation of the stereotype, of planned training of public opinion, of legal and social exclusion¹³.

Tools and conclusions

Within a short essay, I tried to work up some useful conceptual tools for the interpretation of the typical tensions in our society, invested with momentous social and cultural changes. Changes that often give rise to a real «concern of differences» (Wieviorka 2008). To do this, I have not chosen to deepen the traditional multicultural debate between opposing universalism and particularism, liberalism and communitarianism¹⁴ forces. I fairly preferred to use as a starting point the solid work of a German sociologist of Jewish origin.

Since Norbert Elias' contribution, it was, therefore, tried to show how the interdependence of communities or groups with different power positions can be fraught with forms of stigmatizing collectively produced, disseminated and exploited. The latter – in their origins – are independent from economic, legal, political, physical and / or cultural variables, as, indeed, Winston Parva's relations between the workers suggest. More generally, they have to do with the relationship established with the man who is a outsider to a well-established social circle. Indeed, interdependence and the subsequent subordination forms are, firstly, determined by the intensity of the affinities and the communitarian social cohesion. Cohesion and affinity, in relationships, in living together, have come to burden members of other groups, as well as individuals released from particular social ties.

From this point, hypothesized as *a possible common denominator of potential or latent forms of conflict*, we tried to distinguish clearly the interdependence, the power differential, from the possible conflicting relationship. In fact, while the former appears to be a condition reproducible in many contexts, the second, when actually observed, is always historically and socially determined by cultural orientations and by the actors' actions that compose it (Touraine 1973), and then, apart from being essentially unpredictable in outcome, it appears, unlike the first,

¹³ With reference to the legal status of non-EU worker and its inclusion let me refer to: A. Villa (2009), *Il lavoratore extracomunitario in Italia. Legittimità del soggiorno e modalità di inserimento*, in «Economia & Lavoro», n. 2. With reference to the stereotyping in public opinion and in the political debate let me refer to: A. Villa (2008), *Immigrazione, mass media e ricerca sociale*, in «Problemi dell'informazione», n. 3; A. Villa (2010), *Una funzione dello stereotipo*, in «L'Espresso», n. 3.

¹⁴ For a critical reading of this guidelines: G. Sartori (2000), *Pluralismo, Multiculturalismo e estranei: saggio sulla società multi-etnica*, Milano: Rizzoli. M. Wieviorka (2001), *La différence*, Paris: Balland; it. tr., *La differenza culturale. Una prospettiva sociologica*. Laterza, Bari-Roma 2002. E. Colombo (2007). *Le società multiculturali*. Roma: Carocci.

highly conditioned by economic, legal, political, social situation, or, even, correlated with variables that have to do with whether or not the possibility to access to knowledge.

In the practice of empirical research, then, this theoretical sensitivity should substantiate in the attempt to point out the significance of the relationship within which the conflicting action (even potentially) is based. This involves a considerable effort. In fact, the researcher's task may not be to be placed conveniently in one faction or another, or, worse, within a normative approach. It seems clear, therefore, that interdependence and power differential indicators – the stigma and the various stereotyping processes, or any effort to define the opposite – are the main way to weave the web of meaning able to understand the relationship by analyzing the specific symbolic content of mutual actions.

That is to say, it is possible to argue that the stigma and stereotypes are produced in the presence of a collective process of categorization; it must be said that it reflects a certain power differential in relationships, but the forms, methods and the limits within which this process is expressed – with the symbolic contents – always depend on the historical type of likely or latent conflict expressed in it and on the wider legal, political, economic and social system offering conditions and the frame way to define the situation and the actors involved.

Therefore, despite the similarities found in the experience of all those who have been perceived and labelled as outsiders (interdependence, the power differential manifested through stigma and stereotype), conflicts and tensions that emerged from the territorial mobility of the first industrialization do not appear to be comparable from one country and another, as well as, more importantly, issues related to the last century migration can not be considered similar to the consequences and the amount of heterogeneity of the global flows that we see today.

So, along the track made of power differential and the often overlooked likely conflict relationship, we can see the different social, economic and legal conditions existing among the studied Anglo-Saxon workers¹⁵, in his time, by Elias, all those today situations in which there is a substantial «deceptive calm» and impetuous reactions following the Castelvoturno massacre (2008)¹⁶ and Rosarno oppressive event (2010)¹⁷, to cite two glaring facts that constitute the history of my country. We can also detect the actual power differential emerging between divergent tendencies: when we are faced with the demand for space to practice our faith and an opposed stigma, where it presents. And again, we might reflect on the fact that a conflict dynamic within a school environment is not comparable but it is related to the symbolic content, to an explicitly racist event or public representation.

Given these few but significant examples, I believe that the tools offered here are a good starting point to reach - in work and in research - a *flexible discernment capacity*. Indeed, on the one hand, they may be useful to understand if there is, a larger and better defined, «exclusion strategy» (Elias 1994), or whether it is observable at various levels of production of meaning (provisions, laws, symbols, news, dialogues, rhetorical), on the other hand, they may

¹⁵ As I reported earlier, in the Anglo-Saxon context studied by Elias there is «an *internal territorial mobility* related to *mature and established* processes of industrialization and urbanization».

¹⁶ *Revolt broke out after the massacre. Immigrants: Italians racist (Scoppia la rivolta dopo la strage. Gli immigrati: italiani razzisti)* in the «Corriere della Sera», 09/20/2008: «The day after the Africans massacre is the day of the Africans revolt. But not against *camorra* which Thursday night killed six non-EU to restore the rules of a criminal government that claims the tax from those who want to sell drugs in the territories where the clans Casalesi command. The revolt is against anyone in particular, so it is against all. It starts with the tears of five or six boys and girls in front of the shuttered tailoring Exotic Fashions, site of the massacre, and it grows to explode first in a roadblock, and then in a procession that resembles a procession of possessed people, a hundred people with bars, bottles and stones that break windows, uproot road signs, batter the cars. And they accuse the Italians of being racist. The police in riot control, but is not involved. Roadblocks on, everything is done under the eyes of the police, and yet they all start-up without repression. It is clearly a choice to avoid dangerous escalations also in terms of public order. At the end the mediation proves its effective strategy».

¹⁷ *The revolt of the immigrants in Rosarno (A Rosarno la rivolta degli immigrati)* in «Corriere della Sera», 01/07/2010: «Hundreds of cars destroyed, uprooted and tipped-out bins, houses railings damaged. Scenes of urban warfare in Rosario, in the Piana of Gioia Tauro, for the revolt of several hundreds of non-EUworkers engaged in agriculture and settled in inhumane conditions in an old disused factory and another abandoned structure. The protest broke put because of the wounding of two non-EU people by unidentified people with compressed air weapon and hunting pellets. The wounded, among whom also a political refugee from Togo with a regular permit of stay, do not raise particular concern, but the will to react probably smoldering for some time in the workers colony piled into the Rosarno structure under the limits of the bearable, and others in the same condition in Gioia Tauro in the the Ex Opera Sila building, was ready to explode. In total, about 1,500 immigrants, all employed in the harvesting of citrus and vegetables».

be useful in locating the critical points, or better, to understand if there are margins to mediate the conflict, to implement the dialogue, to build effective citizenship through autonomous negotiation between actors involved.

Ultimately, the train which travels along this track has the destination/target to increase and spread knowledge about the «potential conflict with the outsider». However, it carries with it the knowledge that - once arrived at your destination - there is a need to enhance that human enrichment always achieved, not only in the *encounter*, but also and above all, in the effort made for recognition mutual.

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