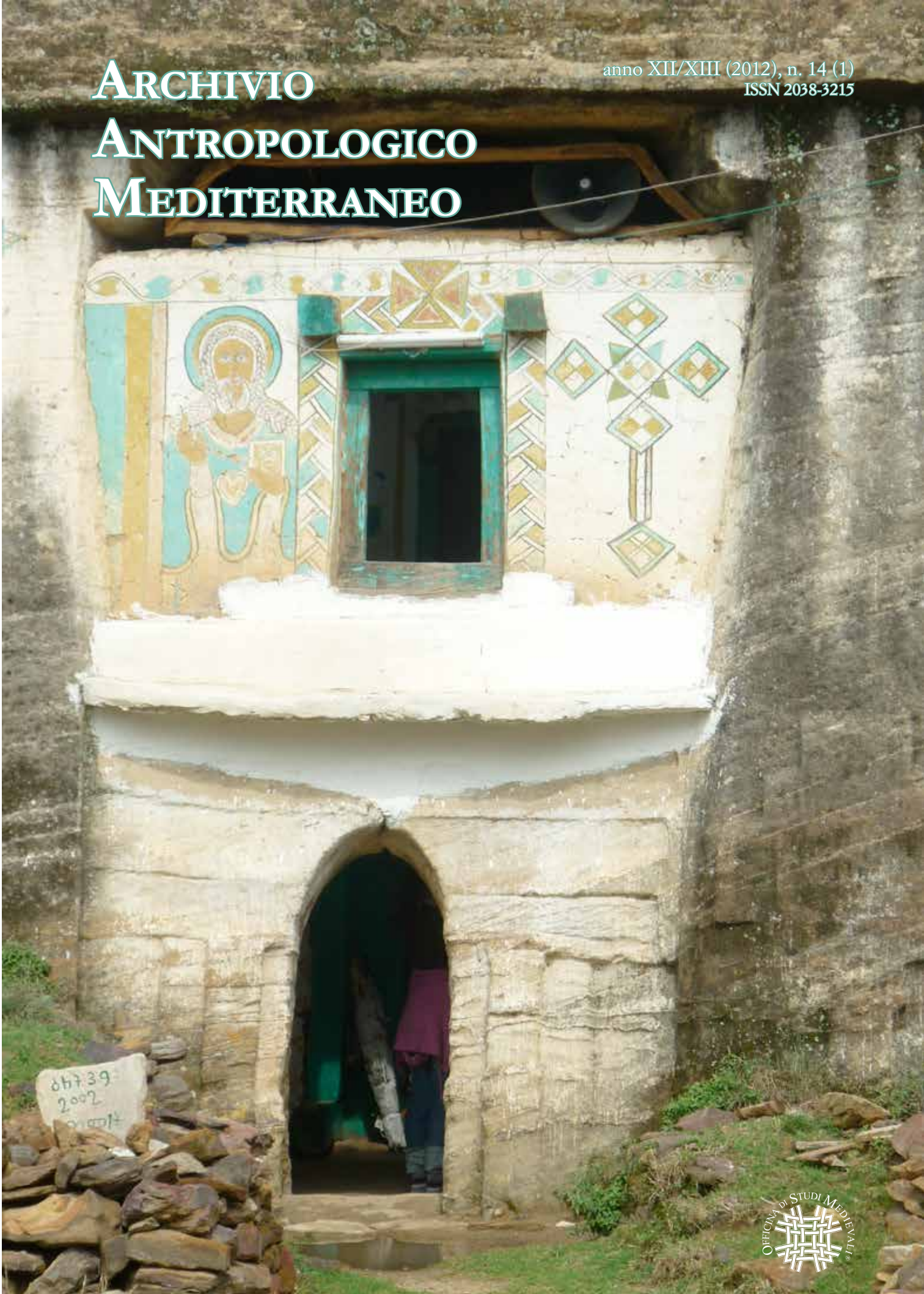


ARCHIVIO ANTROPOLOGICO MEDITERRANEO

anno XII/XIII (2012), n. 14 (1)
ISSN 2038-3215



01739
2002
2001

ARCHIVIO ANTROPOLOGICO MEDITERRANEO on line

anno XII/XIII (2012), n. 14 (1)

SEMESTRALE DI SCIENZE UMANE

ISSN 2038-3215

Università degli Studi di Palermo
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Giovanni Orlando

The dilemmas of anthropology 'at home' when your home is Sicily: between problem-solving critique and appreciative inquiry

1. *Introduction: doing fieldwork 'at home' in Western Sicily*

This article* combines personal and theoretical reflection on the dilemmas of emotion and positionality that I faced deciding to conduct fieldwork in Palermo as a 'native anthropologist' (Mascareñas-Keyes 1987). Having been born in the city to mixed (Italian-English) parents, I lived there for twenty-four years before settling in London to train as an anthropologist. However, I came to study Palermo as an object of ethnographic inquiry only through a mixture of chance and second choices.

I left my native city sharing anthropology's seemingly inexorable romance with cultural variation (MacClancy ed. 2002), and with a strong political interest in issues of globalization and development. These preoccupations led me to a (brief) period of study in south-western Uganda, dealing with the impact of two national parks on a group of former hunter-gatherers, and to a funding application for a PhD project along similar lines. This was unsuccessful, and by the time I received the news, I had also become wary of the idea of carrying out development fieldwork in sub-Saharan Africa. Faced with the prospect of starting a four-year doctorate without financial support, and in a context I wasn't entirely convinced by anymore, I took the quick decision to change both topic and site. I therefore decided to make Palermo the object of my future anthropological inquiries. I reasoned that if all failed, again, on the funding side, I could at least considerably reduce my fieldwork expenses by living at home.

Part of the explanation for my initial lack of interest in Palermo as an ethnographic field, I later realised, was my limited awareness of the anthropological tradition of research on the island. Though discovering this tradition, and its quality, proved welcome, delving further into it also proved somewhat disappointing. Since the 1970s, in fact, Sicily has been at the centre of scholarly debates largely dealing with negative aspects: economic 'under-development', codes of honour and gender inequality, mafia. After reviewing these debates in

sections one and two of the article, I set out in search of ways to escape their strictures.

I thus reflect on the possibilities offered by 'appreciative inquiry' to anthropologists who study Sicily. Appreciative inquiry (AI) starts with two closely related assumptions. First, that the topics we select strongly influence what we later 'find'. Secondly, that systems of knowledge develop in the direction of what they most consistently ask questions about. From this ensues that if we want to deal with positive aspects of a culture, we need to organise research in a way that permits us to appreciate—to ask questions about—also the positive, not only the negative, within that culture. My decision to select as topics for my Palermitan ethnography the networks created by ethical consumers, fairtrade retailers and organic farmers was based on this approach.

2. *Encounters in the Sicilian studies field*

Sicily has exercised a strong attraction upon foreign travellers and scholars [...] . Sicilian reactions combine curiosity, availability [...] but also a sense that the island's culture is being treated as a form of folklore.

(Fiume 2006: 37)

In this section I offer a selective review of key texts in Sicilian studies, in order to analyse the constitutive elements of the negative image that has dominated this tradition of research. The review is organised chronologically¹.

Cronin (1970) is one of the first anthropological monographs published on Sicilian culture. A study of 'culture change', it deals with a town in Western Sicily (*Nicuportu*)² and with Sicilian migrants in Sydney. Cronin focused on kinship organisation (especially marital and familial relationships) as part of a broader debate, at the time fierce, on the role of the southern Italian family. She discussed the strong bond between sons and mothers, and the role paternal authority had on these. Children

and women were considered incapable of regulating their own behaviour and in constant need of supervision by more responsible individuals (men). She demonstrated that the concept of 'extended family' widely used at the time was empirically unfounded, and suggested instead that of 'bounded network'. Such networks were, though, still based on kinship.

Blok (1974) provided an interesting explanation of the origins of mafia in western Sicily, combining social anthropology and history in a study of the tiny village *Genuardo*³. He treated mafia as a specific section of the island's agrarian social structure that developed after Italy's unification (1860-61). Between an absentee land-owning aristocracy and a vast populace of poor peasants, violent individuals took advantage of the new state's inability to exert power. The leaseholders and guardians of the nobility's estates thus became *mafiosi* by acting as middlemen, who specialized in operations of resource, and thus social, control. These individuals exploited opportunities, at the same time defending the aristocracy's interests against peasants, state bureaucrats and brigands, but also plotting with such actors to gain advantage from the nobles.

Schneider-Schneider (1976) painted a comprehensive picture of western Sicily's condition in a seminal study of the rural town *Villamaura*⁴. They began by acknowledging that since the 16th century the world had been locked in a system of macro-provinces ruled by Europe, organised into metropolitan cores and rural colonies, with the latter providing raw materials and labour force. They demonstrated that Sicily had been a semi-colony within this system, relegated to the production of grains and the export of migrants. It was this economic position that caused the island's 'under-development', and gave rise to three dominant cultural 'codes': friendship, cunning and honour. Though «Friendship was the critical relation which defined the networks of exchange in Western Sicily, and the operative social structure was (and is) the coalition of friends» (*Ibidem*: 103), cunning and honour also meant the «expectation that it is likely, indeed proper, that each person will pursue his own interests to the detriment of others if necessary» (*Ibidem*: 83).

Chubb (1982) conducted an insightful comparative study of urban political patronage in Palermo. She showed how the relationship between different classes took the form of a clientelistic system: one based on highly unequal exchange between parties linked by strong personal ties. Chubb identified the administration of economy by the ruling Christian Democratic party as the most powerful factor in Palermo's clientelistic system. She argued that the political system «works less through the distribu-

tion of benefits to all-comers than through the astute management of *scarcity*» (*Ibidem*: 98, italics in the original). While scarcity (poverty) was an issue for the city's working class, the middle class was also involved in patronage through an exchange of favours for jobs, promotions, bureaucratic mediation, etc. Chubb thus interpreted clienteles as being found among all social classes. The phenomenon was not dependent on a culture of poverty, but resulted from the structural characteristics of the economy and of regional and national politics.

3. Sicily and anthropology's Mediterranean paradigm

Although these [studies] were carried out in years of radical social, economic and cultural transformation, change was rarely built into their descriptions. While authors noted in passing, usually in the conclusion, that things were changing, the body of their texts gave a picture of stability and continuity.

(Filippucci 1996: 58)

In this section I explore shortcomings in the previous works, explaining how they fitted, historically, in Mediterranean anthropology's epistemological framework. I argue that to be able to explore new, emergent aspects of contemporary Sicilian culture, it is necessary to acknowledge the past central tenets of such a framework.

At the heart of the anthropological tradition in question was a belief in the homogeneity, and thus comparability, of the three provinces constituting the Mediterranean basis: southern Europe, northern Africa, and the Middle East. This stemmed from an ideological take that saw them as 'half-way' between fully modern, complex societies (North America and northern Europe), and so-called primitive ones (the former colonies of European empires)⁵. Key elements were identified for the comparative ethnography of a distinctive Mediterranean 'culture pattern' (Sweet, O'Leary 1969). This included socio-cultural and ecological features: the presence of pre-industrial nation-states; large rural populations but with a distinctive urban character of life; monotheistic religions; similar climate, topography, fauna and flora. Also key were those elements found in the works reviewed above: an emphasis on honour and the fulfilment of sexual roles as a requisite for social status (gender segregation and the subordination of women); strong local and regional identities; the preference for 'personal' forms of politics.

Many Mediterranean studies scholars have with

time changed their position. As Albera and Blok have noted:

It seems that a spectre is haunting those who write on the Mediterranean area: the trait list. Two well-known dangers underlie these characterizations. First, by emphasising common features you play down differences [...] . A second and perhaps even greater danger [...] is presenting an ahistoric, essentialized picture of something that is obviously in a state of flux (2001: 18-19).

Other authors, taking suggestion from aspects of post-modernism, have also pointed out the ethnocentric creation of 'exoticism' that results from casting in deterministic terms complex places and peoples, and how this represents an exercise of power (Schneider ed. 1998). With this new awareness at hand, what can we read in the works discussed above?

Cronin (1970) chose a sample of poverty-stricken, semi-literate agricultural labourers in *Nicuportu*, while in Sydney she selected migrants through 'snowball' sampling on the basis of shared birthplace rather than residence, diffusing her informants' locations. She did this in order not to bias her sample towards the lower rates of change usually found in working-class, ethnic 'ghettos'. One wonders why similar considerations about cultural variation were not applied to *Nicuportu*, given that peasants made up only a section of Sicilian society even during the latifundist period (Schneider, Schneider 1996), and landed estates were not universally present on the island's territory (Fentress 2000).

Blok (1974) says little on the period of 1961-67 when he did fieldwork in *Genuardo*. Sabetti notes that he «focuses on a period between 1912 and 1922», and also that one could hardly tell «that the village he studied [...] is an Albanian town with a long history rich in revolutionary and Socialist tradition, at times combined with intense ethnic conflict, very different from the Weberian perspective of order and power that informs [his] analysis» (2002: xx). Blok's work is also problematic because it fostered a view of the mafia as 'indigenous' to the locale, insofar as it was not easily separable from a cultural milieu sharing in expressions of violence and exploitation. (Blok (2000) has since changed his opinion.)

Schneider-Schneider (1976), as Blim recently argued, «remains the most important introduction in English [...] to understanding the Sicilian underdevelopment and its costs» (2006: 5). However, similar fallacies recur also in this work. The authors inverted the causal chain explaining backwardness from the local culture to the world economy, but this ope-

ration leaved unaltered the image underlying such culture: sectarian, plagued by low-intensity violence, codes of honour, cunning and interested friendship. Even if these values become an effect rather than a cause, they remain all there is. Also, though Sicilian culture was not represented as immutable, their timescale remained vast, as did the absence of change in the picture (but see below).

Chubb's (1982) analysis, still potent, drew a sharp contrast between political life in the south and the north of Italy that was ultimately unsubstantiated, because she did not deal with the latter part of the country. She did not study clientelistic politics in the north, nor collectivist ones in the south (Zuckerman 1984). Her picture can therefore easily play into exoticising contrasts of whole geographical areas. Also, she made claims about the attitudes and beliefs of entire social classes in Palermo, but relied on few primary sources for them.

I believe it is the underlying framework discussed above that needs to be confronted if the contemporary complexities of Sicily are to be fully taken into account. There is a need to ask new questions, beyond simply finding new answers to old ones. Is it possible to carry out research in Sicily without focusing—at least exclusively—on rural places and issues, without depicting an image of the island's inhabitants as locked in all-encompassing negative values (even if interpreted as 'defensive' strategies)? More crucially: how is this possible, both theoretically and methodologically?

4. *Studying Western Sicily: appreciative inquiry and research design*

Appreciative inquiry distinguishes itself from critical modes of research by its deliberately affirmative assumptions about people [...]. It focuses on asking the *unconditional positive question* to ignite transformative dialogue and action within human systems.

(Ludema *et al.* 2001: 191, italics in the original)

In this section I explore how the use of an appreciative inquiry (AI) paradigm can contribute in overcoming some of the weaknesses of past Sicilian studies.

The epistemological impasses raised in section two are not the only factors that have rendered the study of Sicily problematic. They were those most at play in the past, but others still are, shared by Mediterranean scholarship as part of the social sciences. Among such impasses is an underlying assumption of problem-solving critique as the cornerstone of social scientific inquiry. This is by no means univer-

sally-held, but it is widespread: a tendency to start with the 'negative'⁶ in order to critique it, explain it, and sometimes — among an even smaller number of committed scholars — possibly solve it. Sabetti provides a good example of this trend when he writes: «To explain why some particular phenomenon or condition exists is not [...] another way of justifying its existence. Even revolutionaries who want to change the world for the better need to understand the status quo» (2002: IX).

The suggestion that, in order to change reality for the better, one has to embark primarily on unpacking the status quo — the negative — has itself a number of unforeseen (negative) consequences. In the past fifteen years, scholars and activists alike have become more and more preoccupied with the destructive consequences of exclusively critical approaches to social science (Freire 1994, Gergen 1994). In part, this destructiveness has resulted from the spread of postmodernism (Marcus 1994). I would argue that epistemological primacy to critique and emphasis on the negative in society are not shared only by postmodern scholars. Older traditions, themselves heavily criticised by postmodernism (Marxist and political economy-oriented ones), share in this assumption. Its potential result is to constrain the capacity to produce alternative perspectives on human life. The next paragraph outlines the most common ways in which this can happen.

The first one, unexpected to most scholars, is the limitation of true inquiry itself. Many (though not all) forms of social critique rely on the establishment of dichotomies in order to gain both purpose and intelligibility: «discursive structure[s] in which this is opposed to that» (Ludema *et al.* 2001: 190). Such way of reasoning is by nature conservative, insofar as it restricts intellectual dialogue to the terms of dualistic oppositions. A containment of human conversation and possibilities ensues that institutes artificial barriers, which impede the discovery of new points of view on persisting social problems. Second, and closely related to the former, is the marginalisation of voices that do not fit within the received terms of the debate. When emphasis on the negative and on critique come to constitute the driving force of a scholarly tradition, they can in time foster the reification of the field of study: «As arguments proceed within the terms of the boundary, other realities, values and concerns are removed from view» (*Ibidem*: 190). Third, because all social sciences are to a certain degree unconsciously premised on visions of the cultural ideal, it follows that approaches centred on criticising the negative can «contribut[e] to the proliferation of subtle but pervasive hierarchies by locating people [...] on implicit axis of good and bad» (*Ibidem*:

191). Finally, simply critiquing the negative can engender helplessness in communities, because people's capacity to build and sustain positive change depends on their ability to envision alternative realities based on conceptions of life, joy and beauty.

From the discussion in sections one and two, it is evident how these problems have all affected Sicilian studies. I will now define theoretically the central tenets of AI.

It should be made clear from the start that AI shares in full the desire by committed scholars to confront pressing social problems and contribute in resolving these⁷. Also, adopting AI as an underlying approach does not translate into the naive omission or overlooking of defects or faults in any human situation. In the same way as critical social science is not entirely compromised by the shortcomings mentioned above, and has an important role to play both in academia and society, in turn AI is not obtusely focussed on good qualities and on what is already functioning⁸. The one key difference between AI and scholars of a critical inclination is that AI takes the initial counter-intuitive stance that, to improve the negative in society, one has to begin from the positive. This position is usually referred to as the 'unconditional positive question' (Ludema *et al.* 2001), which in research practice translates into the initial selection of a positive topic to study. (There are further elements in a research design inspired by AI (Cooperrider, Whitney 1999), but these are not relevant my work.)

The first and most important step is thus to select a positive topic for research. This is crucial because, according to AI, human groups and the systems of knowledge they produce tend to move in the direction of what they study (in nature, plants grow towards their most important source of energy, light, a phenomenon known in botany as 'heliotropism'). The reason human knowledge systems tend towards what they most actively and collectively ask questions about might be related to what Kuhn (1970) discusses. Kuhn showed that all scientific paradigms incorporate, at any given time, a set of assumptions about what questions are deemed valid, and about what results are deemed significant in order to answer the given set of questions. In this sense, what we ask prepares the stage for what we later empirically 'find'. Questions can be fateful. This would explain the movement of scholarly traditions in particular directions, and the fact that these directions are usually recognised by scientists only after considerable time (as in Mediterranean studies' case). In turn, because the results of our inquiries provide us with the knowledge on which basis we envision the future, it follows that the initial choice of topic is crucial in either foste-

ring or constraining peoples' capacity to transform their own realities for the better.

5. Conclusion: towards an anthropology of Sicilies

Sicily no longer represents a 'paradise inhabited by devils', according to the old adage, but a place like any other, with peculiar dynamics of modernization and resistance to modernization, to be read according to open models.

(Fiume 2006: 54)

Following the above epistemology, I decided to investigate for my PhD emergent, positive values in contemporary Sicilian culture: those connected to the fairtrade and organic foods phenomena. Such a decision was also (inevitably) rooted in coincidence and personal circumstance: the fact that I had been involved locally in the fairtrade and organic movements during my undergraduate years. Selecting these particular aspects of contemporary Palermitan life was thus a juxtaposition of previous acquaintance, and of AI's epistemology. In this final section I discuss the values in question, adopting as counterpoints the 'codes' historically attributed to Sicilians.

The core values of fairtrade are those pertaining to ideas of social justice and human equality (Jaffee *et al.* 2004). The emphasis of the initiative is primarily on the rights and needs of other human beings. An expanded relational ethics (Whatmore 1997) is thus created by engagement with such initiative. This perspective works to widen individual commitments and go beyond the 'here-and-now' of everyday life, to reach the 'there-and-then' of the lives of other human beings; for fairtrade, in particular small-scale marginalised producers living in the global South. But this ethic of care (Smith 1998) also constantly strives to be as all-encompassing as possible. It sees the Human Being in the Southern peasant (Goodman 2004), endowed with a series of inalienable rights such as minimum wage, gender equality, education, health provision, child welfare and similar, across the cultural and economic spectrum. Calling on such broad, universal connections allows the initiative to have the societal impact it needs for its very own survival and continued functioning.

Now recall the behavioural attitudes attributed to Sicilians: a pronounced sense of individualism, of minding one's own business (and family); a preference for cunning and shrewdness as opposed to respect for universal principles (the Law, or Civic Duty); the control of women by men; etc. All these elements are in stark contrast to the motives characterising involvement in the fairtrade phenomenon. The ethics of caring at a distance, and thus

the idea of inalienable rights to withhold no matter the (geographical, social) difference, oppose actions committed only in favour of one's own house, friends, local party men and so forth. The spread of activities linked in different ways to fairtrade, such as import enterprises, retail outlets, NGOs and informal civil society groups in the city of Palermo can work as transformative forces for the local culture and the people who enact it.

With regards to organic agriculture, here I focus on a discursive field that links this to the environmental cause, as expressing and being shaped by concerns for 'nature' (Kaltoft 1999). As for the case of fairtrade, certain cultural aspects within environmentalism represent a considerable innovation to the general picture of Sicilian culture that I have criticised. Such concerns broadly centre on a core value that can be (summarily) defined as 'taking care of nature' (Conford 1992). In this sense, the relationship between the environment, comprising to different degrees animals, plants or the whole 'living' planet, and human beings (in anthropological terms: the relation between nature and culture), is recast on the basis of engagement with organic foods. For example, whereas mainstream agricultural and consumption practices are considered unsustainable, i.e. as harming animals, plants etc, adopting the principles of organic-ness is a way of redressing such harm (Guthman 2003). This stance is very similar, if not connected, to the ethic of care outlined for fairtrade's agency. Indeed, one might label it an ethic of care for the environment. Attached to such ethic is a varied set of values corresponding to senses of civic duty and responsibility, which are once again similar to those already discussed for the fairtrade phenomenon.

In the last decade or so, a number of works has been published that share a plural perspective on Palermo (Cole 1997; Gunnarson 2008; Schneider, Schneider 2003). Though these studies make no reference to AI's epistemology, and they still select quite negative topics from which to begin their analyses, they are all focused also on the positive that can be found today in Sicily. The Schneiders in particular have reached an understanding of Sicily's 'plural cultures' (Schneider, Schneider 2005) that is not only more thorough, but which offers the possibility of studying the island in a whole new manner.

Doing research for their second monograph on Sicily (Schneider, Schneider 1996), the authors discovered a social group that had exhibited since the turn of the 20th century values contrary to the ones commonly assigned to the island. The people in question were families of small-scale rural artisans, who read newspapers and discussed national and international politics, were often left-wing, and

among whom marital relations were open to mutual cooperation and trust. Summarising their academic trajectory, the Schneiders (2006) have recently noted how, as a result of this new evidence, they became particularly attentive to 'cultural variation'. In their third monograph, based entirely on fieldwork in the region's capital of Palermo, they write:

Looking back now, it seems obvious that yet other possibilities and alternatives would have been evident had we taken into account the cities [...]. To trace the foundations of the cultural codes in question [...] to Sicily's deep history [...] denies agency to the subjects of one's research, whose practices and values, like any other people's culture, are an inconsistent and at times conflictual mix (Schneider, Schneider 2003: 116-7).

These words are a reflection of changing paradigms. In my work, which deals with different actors from the Schneiders', I have nevertheless taken inspiration from them.

Today, resolving Sicily's 'culture issue' for the anthropologist that sets out to study the island requires adopting as epistemological a-priori the idea that society is never uniform. Different organizational forms are found in it which display different sets of values. Such values always arise from people's concrete, everyday experience, and thus regard what they think and feel; they are constantly being (re)created, acted upon and negotiated, making them vary not only between but also within social groups. People's motives are not simply the product of their external environments (though this is a powerful factor shaping social life). Because human events are unique and complex, the processes that surround people are always themselves transformed by the very actions they foster.

Insofar as critical social science maintains an exclusive problem-oriented perspective on the world, it reduces the ability of researchers and activists to develop novel theories that can engender fruitful human conversation, imagination and commitment, all indispensable ingredients in the transformation of society for the better. The case of Sicily within Mediterranean studies has been a textbook example of this reductionism.

Notes

* I gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the UK's Economic and Social Research Council (award

PTA-030-2006-00260), and of the Royal Anthropological Institute (Emslie Horniman Anthropological Scholarship Fund 2006). This article arises from my participation at the Connections Eight conference: 'Speculative Futures: Practicing Methodologies? Reflections from the field, held at the University of Bristol in 2009. I would like to thank the Connections Eight team at Bristol's Department of Sociology for comments on earlier versions of this article.

¹ For reasons of space I have limited the review geographically to Western Sicily, temporally to the post-war period, linguistically to English, and analytically to works authored by anthropologists.

² Cronin's fictional name for the town of Partinico.

³ Blok's fictional name for the village of Contessa Entellina.

⁴ The Schneiders' fictional name for Sambuca di Sicilia.

⁵ Mediterranean anthropology developed after World War Two, when fieldwork in the former colonies became problematic and scholars began to look at other areas.

⁶ Clearly, there is variation among what people classify as 'positive' or 'negative'. Here I cannot elaborate on this point. I take it for granted, though, that mafia, domestic and public violence, gender subordination, and economic 'under-development' are not positive issues.

⁷ AI is part of action research, whose aim is: «To produce practical knowledge that is useful to people in the everyday conduct of their lives. ... to contribute through this practical knowledge to the increased well-being — economic, political, psychological, spiritual — of human persons and communities» (Reason, Bradbury 2001: 2).

⁸ Thus doing AI in Sicily does not mean «to criticize foreigners who 'have invented the mafia' and in general *parlano male della Sicilia* [speak ill of Sicily]», an attitude that has «long typified Sicilian political rhetoric» (Blok 1986: 169).

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Navi, navigatori, navigazioni ai tempi di Omero

Disponiamo dei mezzi per fissare le idee ed affinare le nostre conoscenze sulle navi, i navigatori e le navigazioni ai tempi omerici, tra il XIII e il X secolo a.C., epoca di riferimento dei testi omerici, e tra il VIII e il VII secolo, quando il testo epico viene fissato nella scrittura? In seguito alla spedizione in barca a vela che l'autore ha diretto sulle presunte strade di Ulisse secondo l'*Odissea*, è possibile precisare e verificare con l'esperienza le caratteristiche tecniche delle navi armate dall'eroe e dai suoi marinai, i *pentekontores*. I testi mostrano la composizione e le capacità degli equipaggi, quali erano le manovre e le pratiche utilizzate per le grandi navigazioni. L'autore, con la collaborazione di un architetto navale, riesce a proporre in scala la ricostruzione grafica di una nave di questo tipo. Il disegno così prodotto è abbastanza dettagliato e preciso da fornire gli elementi pertinenti per l'elaborazione di un modellino su scala ridotta in tre dimensioni, e anche, se si proponessero dei mecenati, per dare le informazioni cifrate e i piani preliminari adeguati per ricostruire, un giorno, una nave da guerra dell'epoca omerica capace di navigare.

Parole chiave : Odissea; Marinaio; Vela; Architettura navale; Nave da guerra.

In homeric age boats, seamen and sailings

May we pick up the means to fix our ideas and refine our knowledge on the boats, the seamen and the sailing in the Homeric times ? i.e. in the XIII-X centuries before J.-C., the age what the Homer's text refers to, or in the VIII-VII centuries, the age when the epic text was for the first time written? Following the sail expedition, steered by the author, on the supposed sailing ways of Odysseus, according to Greek text, one can clarify and by experience verify the technical characteristics of the boats managed by the hero and his seamen, the pentekontores. How were the crews collected and composed ? What were the capabilities of the crews ? How the boats were operated ? How the commanders and the pilots managed long sailing ? The author propose, with the help of a naval architect, to graphically recreate a boat of this type, at scale. The drawings so designed are enough detailed and accurate to supply the pertinent elements in order to build a three dimensions model, and indeed, with the help of some patrons or « mecenés », in order to give the numeral figures and the preliminary plans suited to rebuild, maybe, an Homeric age sail war-boat.

Keywords: *Odyssei; Seafarer; Sail; Naval-architecture; War-boat*

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I popoli tra "natura e cultura" nelle Storie di Erodoto

Le *Storie* di Erodoto di Alicarnasso hanno svolto un ruolo fondamentale non solo nel campo della storiografia, ma anche in quello dell'etnografia. Le parti etnografiche, infatti, occupano la prima metà dell'opera e in esse lo storico ha potuto inserire i dati raccolti su usi e costumi di quei popoli che egli stesso aveva osservato nel corso dei suoi viaggi. L'articolo si propone di rintracciare e analizzare, in particolare, le informazioni relative alle abitudini alimentari allo scopo di risalire, sulla base di esse, al livello di civiltà del popolo che le adotta. A seguito dell'analisi dei comportamenti alimentari, i popoli verranno distinti nelle categorie lévistraussiane del "crudo" e del "cotto". In questa analisi verranno altresì segnalate tutte quegli scenari in cui le categorie strutturaliste non sono in grado di definire adeguatamente la complessità del variegato panorama umano raccontato dalle *Storie*.

Parole chiave: Erodoto; Cotto; Crudo; Agricoltura; Nomadismo.

"Nature and culture" people in Herodotus' Histories

The Histories of Herodotus of Halicarnassus played a fundamental role not only in the field of historiography, but also in that of ethnography. In fact, the ethnographical parts occupy the first half of the work. In these parts the historian entered data on uses and customs of those peoples which he observed during his travels. The article aims to gather and analyze, in particular, the information on eating habits in order to establish the level of the civilization of people by which they are adopted. After the analysis of eating behaviors, these peoples will be divided into the categories of "raw" and "cooked" conceived by C. Lévi-Strauss. In this paper will be also indicated all those scenarios where structuralist categories are not able to describe adequately the complexity of the various human panorama told by histories.

Keywords: *Herodotus; Cooked; Raw; Agriculture; Nomadism.*

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Ercole, eroe mediterraneo, nelle tradizioni sulla fondazione delle città andaluse

Nel racconto di fondazione di molte città andaluse – Cadice, Siviglia e Granada soprattutto – Ercole, o i suoi predecessori o epigoni, compaiono come eroi fondatori. I tentativi di identificare dei padri fondatori delle città andaluse cercano di recuperare il racconto dell'Antichità di fronte al periodo islamico. La presenza di questi racconti diverrà più forte nei secoli XVI e XVII, soprattutto nei cronisti delle "antichità ed eccellenze" delle città andaluse. La presenza del Mediterraneo e dei suoi eroi, soprattutto il diluviano Tubal e dell'Ercole greco-africano, sarà una costante.

Parole chiave: Andalusia; Racconti di fondazione; Ercole; Mediterraneo; Cronache spagnole

Hercules, Mediterranean hero, in the traditions on the foundation of Andalusian towns

In the foundation story of several Andalusian towns – Cadix, Sevilla and Grenada above all – Hercules or his predecessors or epigones appears as founding heroes. The attempts to identify founding fathers of Andalusian towns try to recover the Antiquity's tale against the Islamic period. It is during the XVIth and XVIIth Centuries when these stories will gain a wider influence especially in the chroniclers of Andalusian town's "antiquities and excellences". The presence of the Mediterranean and its heroes, mainly the diluvian Tubal and the Greek-African Hercules, will be a constant.

Keywords: Andalusia; Foundation Stories; Hercules; Mediterranean; Spanish Chronicles

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Grossisti, farmacie, ONG e medicina tradizionale. Il mercato dei farmaci tra pubblico e privato in Tigray (Etiopia)

Dopo la guerra civile e la sconfitta del DERG (1991), il nuovo governo etiope ha dato inizio a una politica di liberalizzazione economica. Questa ha coinvolto anche il settore sanitario, che ha visto la nascita di nuove imprese sia nel settore clinico sia in quello della distribuzione e

vendita di farmaci; oggi in Etiopia nel settore farmaceutico coesistono strutture pubbliche e private.

L'articolo fornisce un quadro dell'organizzazione della distribuzione dei farmaci in Tigray attraverso l'analisi delle politiche dei grossisti pubblici e privati. Si illustra anche il mercato dei farmaci analizzando i differenti tipi di venditori (farmacie pubbliche e private, *drug-shops* e *rural drug-shops*), le ONG e il mercato informale della medicina tradizionale, focalizzandosi su come gli individui si muovano in questo complesso sistema per far fronte ai propri bisogni di salute.

Parole chiave: Etiopia; Farmaci; Antropologia medica; Ong; Medicina tradizionale

Wholesalers, pharmacies, NGOs and traditional medicine. Market of drugs between public and private in Tigray (Ethiopia)

After the Civil War and the defeat of Derg (1991), the new government in Ethiopia has started a program of liberalization of economy. This has involved the health system too, giving rise to new health enterprises both in clinical sector and in distribution and selling of pharmaceutical drugs. As a consequence, nowadays in Ethiopia in the pharmaceutical sector there public and private facilities co-exist.

The paper gives a sketch of organization of distribution of drugs in Tigray Region through the description of the policies of public wholesalers and private ones as well. It illustrates also the market of drugs analyzing the different kinds of drug sellers (private and public pharmacies, drug-shops and rural drug-shops), the charity sector, and the informal market of traditional medicine focusing in how people cope with this complex context in facing their health and care needs.

Keywords: Ethiopia; Pharmaceuticals; Medical Anthropology; Ngo; Traditional Medicine

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The dilemmas of anthropology 'at home' when your home is Sicily: between problem-solving critique and appreciative inquiry

This article deals with problems of emotion and positionality stemming from my fieldwork in Palermo as a 'native anthropologist'. It begins with a brief narrative of the casual life circumstances that brought me to study the city, before critically analysing in section one the regional tradition of research. Since the 1970s, Sicily has been at the centre of scholarly debates largely dealing with negative aspects: dependency, honour and shame, mafia. After re-

viewing the main anthropological studies of the island, in section two I focus on the epistemology shared by these as examples of Mediterranean studies, and on how with time this field has changed. In section three I reflect on the possibilities offered by Appreciative Inquiry to anthropologists who currently study Sicily. Appreciative Inquiry starts with two closely related assumptions. First, that the topics we choose are fateful: they contribute in setting the stage for what we later discover. Secondly, that systems of knowledge grow in the direction of what they most actively ask questions about. It thus follows that if we want to deal with positive aspects of a given culture, we need to design research in a way that allows us to appreciate – to ask questions about – the positive, and not only the negative, within that culture. In the article's conclusion, I suggest the need to approach Sicilian culture(s) as a plural construct.

Keywords: Native ethnography; Sicilian anthropology; Mediterranean studies, Appreciative inquiry; Fairtrade/organic movements.

Il dilemma dell'antropologia 'a casa' quando la tua casa è la Sicilia: tra problem-solving e appreciative inquiry

L'articolo tratta la questione dell'emozione e del posizionamento derivanti dalla mia ricerca sul campo a Palermo come 'antropologo nativo'. Dopo un breve racconto delle circostanze casuali che mi hanno portato a studiare la città, nella prima parte compio un'analisi critica della tradizione di studi sull'area regionale. Dagli anni Settanta, la Sicilia è stata al centro di dibattiti accademici che in gran parte hanno riguardato aspetti negativi: dipendenza, onore e vergogna, mafia. Dopo una rassegna sui principali studi antropologici sull'isola, nella seconda parte mi occupo dei presupposti epistemologici condivisi da questi studi, esemplificativi delle tendenze degli studi sull'area mediterranea, e del loro cambiamento nel tempo. Nella terza parte rifletto sulle possibilità offerte dalla *Appreciative Inquiry* agli antropologi che attualmente realizzano ricerche sulla Sicilia. La *Appreciative Inquiry* ha come punto di partenza due assunti strettamente interconnessi. Primo, gli argomenti che scegliamo contribuiscono a predefinire il terreno di ciò che successivamente scopriamo. Secondo, i sistemi di conoscenza crescono soprattutto in direzione di ciò che costituisce l'oggetto delle questioni che vengono poste. Ne consegue che se vogliamo occuparci degli aspetti positivi di una determinata cultura, dobbiamo impostare la ricerca in un modo che ci permetta di apprezzare – di porre questioni a proposito di – gli aspetti positivi, e non solo negativi, di quella cultura. Nella conclusione, suggerisco la necessità di guardare alla(e) cultura(e) siciliana(e) come un costrutto plurale.

Parole chiave: Etnografia nativa; Antropologia della Sicilia; Studi mediterranei; *Appreciative inquiry*; Commercio equo e solidale/movimenti per il cibo biologico.

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«Non sapevo che bisognasse tenerlo nascosto». *Associazione e nuove forme di cittadinanza nella gestione dell'AIDS a Mekelle*

I percorsi biografici e le pratiche quotidiane dei malati di AIDS resistono a ogni tentativo di ridurre la malattia a evento biologico. L'indagine etnografica condotta in Tigray (Etiopia) ha evidenziato infatti come i vissuti e le esperienze di malattia interagiscano con i significati simbolici che vi si addensano intorno e con l'apparato sanitario (locale e transnazionale, governativo e non-governativo) preposto alla prevenzione e alla gestione dell'epidemia.

In primo luogo, sarà esplorato il legame tra la pluralità delle concezioni dell'AIDS, le sue ricadute sociali e i tentativi dei pazienti di gestire e trovare una soluzione olistica al male. In secondo luogo, sarà esaminato l'apparato sanitario, come detentore di un potere che plasma categorie sociali, determina l'accesso a specifici diritti, modella pratiche corporee e al tempo stesso costituisce un campo per nuovi sensi di appartenenza e (bio)socialità. Un campo all'interno del quale le associazioni dei malati sperimentano nuove soggettività e innovative pratiche di educazione alla cittadinanza.

Parole chiave: Etiopia; AIDS; Associazione; Cittadinanza; Sistema medico

"I did not know I should keep it hidden". *Associations and new forms of citizenship in the management of HIV-AIDS in Mekelle*

The daily life and the biographical paths of HIV-positive people resist any attempt to reduce the sickness to a mere biological event. The ethnographical inquiry carried out in Tigray (Ethiopia) highlights how personal experiences of sickness are mold by both the symbolic meanings that are linked to AIDS and the (local and transnational, government and non-government) health apparatus preventing and managing the epidemic.

Firstly, I shed light on the close relationship between the plural conception of sickness, its social consequences and the attempt of HIV-positive people of managing and seeking for a holistic care of their affliction. Secondly, I analyze the health apparatus as a power that creates social catego-

ries, determines the conditions of access to specific rights, shapes bodily practices and as a field where new senses of belonging and (bio)sociality can arise. A field where the associations of sick people can experience new subjectivities and new practices of citizenship education.

Keywords: Ethiopia; AIDS; Associations; Citizenship; medical system

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Una “medicina tradizionale moderna” tra istituzioni politiche e associazioni di guaritori in Tigray (Etiopia)

Contestualmente alla decentralizzazione del sistema sanitario e all’apertura al libero mercato intraprese dal governo federale etiope, si assiste, da parte delle istituzioni, ad un rinnovato interesse nei confronti delle risorse terapeutiche tradizionali.

Dai risultati di una ricerca etnografica compiuta nella città di Mekelle, capitale dello Stato del Tigray, è emerso come intorno alla prospettiva della professionalizzazione dei guaritori convergano e si scontrino interessi molteplici e spesso divergenti, su scala locale, nazionale e transnazionale. In tale contesto, è la categoria stessa di “medicina tradizionale” a essere costantemente ridefinita e manipolata a seconda degli scopi perseguiti dai differenti attori in gioco.

Attraverso l’analisi delle strategie di legittimazione messe in atto dai guaritori tradizionali (e dalle loro associazioni) e l’esposizione di casi etnografici specifici, si mostrerà come la dicotomia tradizione-modernità risulti euristicamente inefficace nell’analizzare le dinamiche in atto in un contesto caratterizzato dalla coesistenza concorrenziale di una pluralità di risorse terapeutiche.

Parole chiave: Etiopia; Sistema medico plurale; Medicina tradizionale; Professionalizzazione; Strategie di legittimazione

A “traditional modern medicine” among political institutions and healers associations in Tigray (Ethiopia)

Together with the decentralization of the health system and the market liberalization started by the Ethiopian federal government, we have seen the institutions’ renewed interest toward traditional therapeutic resources.

The results of an ethnographic research carried out in Mekelle, the capital city of Tigray Regional State, have shown how multiple and often differing interests – at local, national and transnational level - converge and clash around

the prospect of the professionalization of traditional healers. In such a context, the category of “traditional medicine” is continuously redefined and handled in relation to the aims pursued by the different actors at stake.

Through the analysis of the strategies of legitimization enacted by the traditional healers (and their associations) and by showing particular ethnographic cases, the paper will show how the tradition-modernity dichotomy is heuristically ineffective in order to analyze the dynamics that shape a context characterized by the coexistence and competition of a plurality of therapeutic resources.

Keywords: Ethiopia; Plural medical system; Traditional medicine; Professionalization; Strategies of legitimization

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“Il mio futuro è scaduto”: Politiche e prassi di emergenza nelle vicende dei rifugiati in Italia

Nel contesto italiano ed europeo di politiche basate sull’emergenza, molti rifugiati, soprattutto nei centri urbani, vivono in condizioni di emarginazione sociale. Nel 2007, a Torino, queste situazioni sono state rese visibili attraverso l’occupazione di un edificio, da parte di alcuni centri sociali e di rifugiati senza dimora. Basandosi su un’indagine etnografica svolta dal 2007 al 2009, questo articolo vuole indagare le prassi di diversi attori sociali – istituzioni, terzo settore, rifugiati – coinvolti nelle vicende, analizzando la complessità delle loro voci, motivazioni, strategie e relazioni. In particolar modo, l’articolo intende esaminare come i soggetti diventino “attori dell’emergenza”, relazionandosi a un contesto legislativo e sociale che dimentica e rimuove le alterità.

Parole chiave: Rifugiati; Politiche; Italia; Emergenza; Occupazione

“My future is expired”: Emergency refugees policies and practices in Italy

Within European and Italian policies based on emergency, many refugees in Italy, especially in urban contexts, do not find housing and live in situations of social exclusion. In 2007, in Torino, these emergency situations were made visible through the squatting of a building, led by refugees and squat centers. This article focuses on the practices of few subjects – institution, ngos, refugees – involved in these emergency situations, analyzing the complexity of their voices, stakes, strategies and relations. The article particularly examines how these subjects become “actors of emergency”, within a social context which forgets and

removes the other. The research draws on an ethnographic fieldwork carried out from 2007 to 2009.

Keywords: Refugees; Policies; Italy; Emergency; Squatting

they overwrite/obfuscate the questions constantly posed in their daily life.

Keywords: Qana; Israeli-Palestinians; Power; Dissent; Hardship.

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“Arabi della panna”. Dominio e dissenso tra i palestinesi-israeliani di Cana

L'articolo ha per argomento i modi in cui le forme concentrate dei poteri, il dissenso e il disagio si intrecciano nel particolare vissuto dei palestinesi-israeliani di Cana (Israele). Tra il 2007 e il 2008 una serie di suicidi e tentati suicidi tra minorenni induce le autorità israeliane ad inserire la cittadina in un programma ministeriale nato per indagare sul *problema*.

L'articolo non fornisce risposte a queste morti, ma descrive, per frammenti, il contesto nel quale sono maturate. I giovani palestinesi-israeliani di Cana vivono ad un tempo due diversi paradigmi identitari: il modo palestinese, quello appreso in famiglia, propagandato dalle organizzazioni della resistenza o che viene dai racconti e dalle esperienze dei territori di Cisgiordania e della Striscia di Gaza e quello israeliano che domina le istituzioni politiche, economiche e culturali. A ciò vanno aggiunti gli effetti del dispiegarsi dei nuovi modelli di consumo che filtrano nelle case e sovrascrivono/annebbiano le domande continuamente poste dalla loro situazione quotidiana.

Parole chiave: Cana; Palestinesi-Israeliani; Poteri; Dissenso; Disagio

“Cream’s Arabs”. Domination and dissent between Israeli-Palestinians from Qana

This article concerns the way in which concentrated forms of power, dissent and hardship interweave with the particular personal experiences of Israeli-Palestinians from Qana (Israel). Between 2007 and 2008 a series of suicides and attempted suicides among minors have induced Israeli authorities to include the town into a ministerial program conceived to look into the problem.

The article does not give straight answers to those deaths; it describes instead the context in which they, and other forms of social distress, matured.

The young Israeli-Palestinians from Qana experience at the same time two different identitarian paradigms. The Palestinian paradigm, that may be learned in one’s family, propagandized by the organizations of resistance, or originated from the stories and experiences of the West Bank territories and the Gaza Strip. On the other hand, the Israeli paradigm dominates the political, economic and cultural institutions. Added to this are the effects of the unfolding of new consumption patterns acquired at home;

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Redazione Archivio Antropologico Mediterraneo

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