

“Migrant Democracy”: From War Crimes to Crimes of Peace

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Abstract

Between breaking news and tweets about sinkings, rescues, rejections, deaths at sea, naval blockades, one often has the feeling that everything has already been said and written in the swirl of institutional and non-governmental on the subject of migrants.

In Italy in particular, the above-mentioned situations still fill the media agenda and remain trending topics for weeks on social networks such as Twitter and Instagram, are not only ideological and/or symbolic, but also material and all too often categorised as "war crimes", when it would be more accurate to recognise the sinking or naval blockade as a "crimes of peace".

It's necessary to overcome this pathology of communication/information and to return to the idea of rethink human rights and talk about "migrant democracy".

Keywords: digital communication, migration, crime, peace, intercultural media, migration

1. Introduction

In general, the awareness of a multicultural reality has all too often led to the formulation of ethnocentric models and strategies for the defence and protection of models and strategies for defending and preserving one's own culture and the identity of the group to which one belongs.

This corresponds to the activation of a mechanism of negation of the "other" based on the concept of "diversity". In addition, the globalisation of markets has promoted the formation of a network of relationships that the absence of consolidated and secure reference points, generating a strong sense of loss, from which the fears and insecurities of a "society born liquid" (Appadurai, 1996).

They have been amplified and increasingly thematised in the old and new media.

This aspect has been present throughout human history and has always been characterised by movements of individuals, groups and cultures, triggered by changes of a political-economic, religious and environmental nature.

The difference between the political refugee and the economic migrant, the theme of nostalgia and belonging, security and the accentuation of difference are aspects that characterise the public debate in Europe and beyond.

However, the consequences of the phenomenon of immigration go far beyond the political agenda, as they affect the nature and character of national cultures, thus seriously challenging borders and identities.

Policies responding to the phenomenon of migration are usually accompanied by problems of different etiology and aetiology and are often addressed differently, as the tragic episodes in the Parisian banlieues or the attack on the London underground in London underground in the same year (Appadurai, 1996).

The recent Islamic terrorist attacks in Europe have certainly not helped to reduce the dangerous rhetoric of fear and threat of fear and threat, which is understandable in an era of global terror, but it is counterproductive because it reproduces the logic of difference instead of reproduces the logic of difference instead of overcoming it.

Even today in the Italian media political landscape, for example, we are still witnessing a criminalization of the

foreigner.

These tensions are observed in the media: they clearly show the future of public culture and the civil arena, a culture that will be marked by diversity and contrasts and the result of these tensions will produce decisive moral and ethicaleffects.

The means of communication are the mirror of the diversity inherent in the European social fabric.

The media online and offline are not limited to reproducing this diversity, but actively contribute to its proliferation(Silverstone, 2007).

With *breaking news and tweets* of sinkings, rescues, rejections, deaths at sea, naval blocks very often one has the perception that everything has already been said and written in the vortex of institutional and non-governmental communication on the theme of migrants.

2. Media and Migrants in Italy

In Italy, in particular, the situations listed above, which still fill the media agenda and remain *trend topics* for weeks on social networks like *Twitter* and *Instagram*, are not only ideological and / or symbolic, but also material and too often categorized with the expression "war crimes", when more correctly that sinking or that naval blockade should be recognized as a "crime of peace".

Over time, the peace crimes system has sought different forms of legitimacy.

It describes itself as inclusive, but delegates to the border and traffickers the selection of existences. It is liberal, but liberalizes everything except the mobility of people.

It stigmatizes irregular flows, but does not replace them with regular entries, giving vigor to the grammar of the uncontrolled invasion, it saves human lives when it wants or can, but rejects and holds people (note 1).

Franco Basaglia (1924-80), as well as being remembered as the architect of the closure of psychiatric hospitals in Italy, he was the first to use the term "crimes of peace".

This was the title, among others, of an important collection of essays on the control of life and poverty through conformity and medicalisation (note 2), focusing on how this concept provides an analytical key to all institutionalised violence, which serves as a strategy of violence that serves as a strategy of social preservation, order and existing power relations.

These crimes involve citizens and non-citizens in a grey area between war and peace, crime and legality, which gradually leads us to accept disorder, violence and cruelty as the "norm of life in peace" (note 3).

They reflect, both at sea and on land, those policies which are often mistaken in their exclusive attention to physiology, as if this pit were sufficient for the human condition is sufficient for the human condition.

Thus, the scenario we are faced with shows, on the one hand, media narratives and various seemingly abstract statistics of migrants rescued at sea, on the other hand, the armed forces that regulate the entry and exit from the borders and the detentions of as many human lives on African or European territory.

Once again, we are faced with a clear paradox: we are trying to legitimise any form of treatment of the migrant as a functional element of national policing (and of national sovereignty), while the "guest" is seen as a destabilising foreigner.

The case of Libya illustrates this perfectly.

Most of the migrants who leave the Libyan coast arrive in Italy with the wounds of forced labour, deprivation, sexual abuse and murders of which they are often witnesses (note 4); a physical and psychological violence that has already taken place in Libyan territory even before embarking on the long sea voyage in the boats.

In addition, following the signing of the "Memorandum di Intesa", a document on cooperation in the field of development and the fight against trafficking in human beings was signed (note 5).

Paolo Gentiloni, former President of the Italian Council of Ministers, and Fayed al-Sarraj, President of the Presidential Council of the Libyan Government, in Rome in February 2017, the Libyan territory is still today a fragmented country with a local economy based on corruption, trafficking and smuggling.

What we are witnessing is the trampling of the most basic human rights, combined with the obvious inadequacy of the Libyan coastguard and the apparent impossibility of obtaining humanitarian protection in Libya; all this is done

in the name of protecting migrants. protection of migrants and the fight against human traffickers, but then clashes with the will and the means of the (very few) testimonies of the same surviving migrants who, once in Italy, are rarely heard in the media. space, even though they are people who, more than others, should have a say (Albahari, 2017).

Therefore, 'hosting' does not always mean opening up to the other, constructing an empathic communication or an open and objective narration. Hospitality "as a crime" is a phenomenon that is not limited to countries such as Libya, Egypt, Afghanistan, Iran, whose faces of violence and criminality are now also visible in their economy and political organisation, or in the Mediterranean, where more than 15 thousand migrants died in 2017, but also on Italian territory.

3. Crimes against hospitality

Foreigners in Italy who are not registered as residents are called "clandestines"; this term derives from clam, which means "hidden", so that those without a passport or identity card become illegal and irregular (note 6).

Perhaps because they are "hidden", clandestines deserve to be imprisoned in a place that is itself hidden, labelled as illegal, seemingly an enemy, and considered a criminal?

This is the question posed by the philosopher Di Cesare (2014) in his Italian work "Crimini contro l'ospitalità" in which he describes in detail the life of foreigners inside the CIE (Identification and Expulsion Centre) of Ponte Galeria in Rome.

The foreigners considered illegal on the basis of the crime of clandestinity introduced in Italy on 15 July 2009 ("Bossi-Fini" law) are detained in the identification and expulsion centres. This law was repealed on 2 April 2014. The law was repealed on 2 April 2014, making the offence a misdemeanour, but the expulsion and criminalisation of re-entry into the country remained in force.

The Ponte Galeria CIE is the largest in Italy with a capacity of more than 354 places (176 men and 178 women), but for security reasons the deliberately not used for security reasons. According to data from the State Police, in 2012, 2,124 immigrants were (1,529 men and 595 women) from countries as diverse as Pakistan, Ukraine, Senegal, Serbia and Egypt.

Egypt, creating a Babel of languages, religions and cultures.

Many are former prisoners, victims of trafficking and exploitation, people fleeing conflict, drug addicts or survivors of torture and persecution.

But once inside the CIE, no distinction is made between immigrants and refugees, or between those who have just arrived or those who have between those who have just arrived and those who have lived on Italian territory for a long time.

It does not take into account the individual history of each person or their different problems: not only are they irregular, but some of them are potential criminals. not only irregular, but also potential criminals, if some of them have already committed crimes; this makes it much easier to criminalise all internees in the eyes of public opinion within the CIE regulation.

The internees do not know what they can or cannot do, what rules they must respect, but above all they do not know their rights and therefore cannot defend themselves. rights and therefore cannot defend themselves, lodge complaints, appoint lawyers or apply for asylum. for asylum. In 2005, in a report entitled Temporary Presence, Permanent Rights, Amnesty International denounced the violence and abuse suffered by detainees, where excessive and humiliating use of sedatives and tranquillisers, inadequate medical care, physical assaults by public security agents, lack of hygiene and communication with the outside world are just some of the facts that emerge.

Paradoxically, however, the language used by the ministry refers to internees as "guests".

Di Cesare (2014), in this regard, speaks of CIEs as "modern total institutions", enclosures that give a subhuman aspect to those enclosed, highlighting the concept of the "zoologisation of human beings", which can be defined as a strategy to insult humanity, to turn people into animals, erasing the unmistakable and irreplaceable accent of each one, or worse, as the reduction of life to its radical nakedness, where the victim is lost in the fragile network of symbolic identifications until the dissolution of his or her identity in a fragile network of symbolic identifications to the point of dissolving his individuality, i.e. becoming an exponent of a species.

In her critique of the nation-state, Hannah Arendt (2009) has shown how the homogeneity of the nation, which the

state seeks to represent by citizenship by birth, and which the state seeks to represent by eliminating all heterogeneous residuals, produces stateless persons and refugees, non-persons deprived of the right to membership; in this way, the human rights doctrine, which was designed to work within a single state and in the complex treaties between different nation states, is lost.

The juridical inexistence of the immigrant automatically decrees social inexistence, since he is rejected in a non-place, in a extra-territoriality from which they can disappear at any time without anyone really noticing.

Every desire to exclude the other repeats the ancestral ethnocentric gesture in which we find the "wild" and the "savage". When the human species is classified in a hierarchy, the door is opened to the dehumanisation of the "irrecoverable", of those subhumans reduced to beasts.

If there is such a thing as a savage, then, according to Di Cesare (2014), it is the racist who stiffens the unit, naturalises the differences and irreparably divides humanity); the invention of inhumanity has never ceased to be effective and racism, in its elusive, invisible forms, seems to be reappearing, continuing to discriminate, but not "in the name of race", but in the form of "rejections" and the "necessary" return of immigrants to their countries of origin.

This metamorphosis is evident where the principle of biological inequality is replaced by the argument of cultural difference and the clash of civilisations.

The reported scenario seems to indicate the entry into a post-racist era and the birth of neo-racism: "cultural racism" (or neoracism), based on the categorisation of cultural traits (customs, language, religion), which tends to replace the concept of race with that of ethnicity. with that of ethnicity or, more generally, with that of "cultural differences" (note 10).

This approach emerged in the second half of the 20th century, following the growing stigmatisation of "classical" biological racism. biological racism, based on the direct association between natural characteristics and intellectual or moral traits.

Since it was no longer possible to promote these forms without being severely criticised, it was necessary to had to be reformulated and disguised, using the concepts of "ethnicity" and "culture" as a yardstick, essentially as a racial euphemism.

"Implicit racism" theorises the total incommensurability between different cultures, which are considered as monolithic entities that have no way of communicating with each other and must not be allowed to come into contact or mix; The promotion of a formal respect for diversity therefore supports a policy of mixophobia, which regards the foreigner as a threat, an as a threat, an unassimilable and undesirable entity.

Among the causes of this phenomenon is the "obsession with downgrading", the fear of the disappearance of differences between one's own status and that of others. of the differences between one's own status and that of the "inferior" ethnic group on the social scale, guilty of "sucking in" the natives and offending their "ethnic honour".

In the face of these new forms of more subtle and sophisticated discrimination, the main risk today in our society is a "commemorative" one. In the face of these new, more subtle and sophisticated forms of discrimination, the main risk in our society today is a "commemorative anti-racism" that guards an enemy that no longer exists, using outdated criteria based solely on biological differences as a yardstick for judgement.

4. Conclusion

There is an urgent need to rethink new political and communicative strategies on the issue of cultural difference and international migration. But above all (re)cultivating a culture of hospitality, supported by a culture of listening and co-habitation in the globalised world. Hitlerism left behind the idea that one can choose with whom one lives, but obviously this cannot be a choice.

Before making any social pact, each of us is bound to "others" never known, on whom his very existence depends. One cannot pretend to know and own a certain space and then choose with whom to live within it and to form one's own identity.

In a 2.0 society that has made connection and relationship the key words of the new forms of participation, where connection and relationship are the keywords of the new forms of participation and communication offline/online, the prefix "co" of the word "coexistence" must be considered in its deepest sense: not only as union or proximity to the other, but also as simultaneity.

To live together is rather to share this spatial proximity in a temporal convergence, in which the past of each individual can be articulated in the common present, in order to find the consonance of a common future: a future based on the ability to listen to the other who shares the same spaces with me (note 15).

The first step, according to the philosopher Chul Han (2017), is to "welcome" the other, that is, to accept the other in his or her otherness.

The second is to offer to listen, to let the other speak, to open the space of his otherness:

Welcoming in a hospitable way "is an inspiration, but it does not annex the other, it guards and protects".

But this may not be enough.

The alternative to crimes against peace and crimes against hospitality is no longer to be sought exclusively in rescues, in greater humanity, or in new strategies of intercultural communication, but in greater justice, starting from the assumption that injustice is such when there are viable alternatives or, to some extent, already existing options.

New practices of "migrant democracy" are emerging, based on a broader and more just politics that is able to challenge the supposed consensus on peace crimes: already in 2015, many documents published by Frontex and Europol have highlighted how the fight against illegal immigration is seen as a key instrument for maintaining an area of peace, justice and security for European citizens.

The interior ministers of countries such as Austria, France and Germany have recognised that the "porosity" of the Mediterranean is being exploited along with the threat of international terrorism. But what about the solidarity initiatives with migrants in ports, train stations and border crossings, where citizens, local institutions, secular and religious associations offer a smile and material aid on a daily basis, outside the police mechanisms of the so-called hotspots?

What we are witnessing is, on the one hand, a new form of tribalisation that refuses hospitality, contact with the other, the foreigner, fed by a strong sense of insecurity and a confused media narrative that does not inform but rather shapes "tribal minds". On the other hand, a sustainable democracy is being activated, renewed precisely on the basis of the existence and needs of migrants, in an attempt to combine inclusion and democracy, social intimacy and shared citizenship.

Migrant democracy is the new socio-political and cultural condition to invest in, a new concrete practice, a horizon to be pursued, capable of creating pathways of local citizenship and transnational solidarity within a broader economic and political vision of participatory democratisation. and political vision of participatory democratisation.

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Notes

Note 1. Albahari M. (2017). *Tra la Guerra il mare. Democrazia migrante e crimini di pace*. Trento: manifestolibri.

Note 2. Basaglia F., & Basaglia O. F. (2013). *Crimini di Pace: Ricerche sugli intellettuali e sui tecnici come addetti*

all'oppressione. Milano: Baldini e Castoldi.

Note 3. *Ibidem*

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4.

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Note 5. Albahari M. (2017). *Tra la Guerra il mare. Democrazia migrante e crimini di pace*. Trento: manifestolibri

Note 6. Di Cesare D. (2014). *Crimini contro l'ospitalità*. Vita e violenza nei centri per gli stranieri, Genova: Il melangolo.

Note 7. *Ibidem*

Note 8. *Ibidem*

Note 9. *Ibidem*

Note 10. Giaccardi C. (2010). *La comunicazione interculturale nell'era digitale*. Bologna: il Mulino.

Note 11. Taguieff AP. (1999). *Il razzismo. Pregiudizi, teorie, comportamenti*. Milano: Raffello Cortina Ed.

Note 12. Giaccardi C. (2010). *La comunicazione interculturale nell'era digitale*. Bologna: Il Mulino.

Note 13. *Ibidem*

Note 14. Di Cesare D. (2014). *Crimini contro l'ospitalità*. Vita e violenza nei centri per gli stranieri, Genova: Il melangolo.

Note 15. *Ibidem*

Note 16. Han Chul B. (2017). *L'espulsione dell'Altro*. Milano: nottetempo.

Note 17. <http://www.poliziadistato.it/articolo/38038>