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Mafia Violence

Political, Symbolic, and Economic Forms
of Violence in Camorra Clans

Edited by **Monica Massari and
Vittorio Martone**

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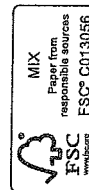
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Some of the natural persons and legal bodies mentioned in this volume have not yet been definitively convicted, and therefore fall under the principle of presumed innocence. The events in which they appear to have been involved are narrated here for historical and documentary reasons, and no judgments are made as to their criminal and civil liability.

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Abbreviations

- ASN (Archivio di Stato di Napoli)
CNR (Criminal Network Resilience)
- CPA (Commissione parlamentare d'inchiesta sul fenomeno della mafia e sulle altre associazioni criminali similari)
DDA (Direzione Distrettuale Antimafia)
DIA (Direzione investigativa antimafia)
DNA (Direzione nazionale antimafia e antiterrorismo)
DPR (Decreto del Presidente della Repubblica)
ISTAT (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica)
- LBU (Local Business Units)
- MI-DCPC (Ministero dell'Interno - Direzione Centrale Polizia Criminale)
MVR
NCO (Nuova Camorra Organizzata)
NF (Nuova Famiglia)
OCR
- the State Archives of Naples.
an algorithm that offers evaluations of a criminal network's ability to recover after a shock.
Parliamentary Anti-mafia Committee.
- Anti-mafia District Board.
Anti-mafia Investigative Board.
National Anti-mafia and Anti-terrorism Board.
Decree of the President of the Italian Republic.
Italian National Institute for Statistics.
an ISTAT indicator that measures the number of business units in a given locality.
Ministry of the Interior - Central Criminal Police Board.
Mafia Violence Rate.
New Organised Camorra.
New Family.
Organised Crime Rate.

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Doing Research on Mafia Violence

An Introduction

Monica Massari and Vittorio Martone

In modern Western societies, violence is an extremely complex phenomenon that takes on many shapes, often morally ambiguous and thus difficult to interpret. If we adopt a definition of violence that considers it to be an act of power leading to intentional offence, above all physical, committed against others (Popitz 1990), a remarkably diverse range of forms emerges: war, revolution, riots, mass murder, genocides, terrorism, harassment, delinquency, crime and so on. Thus, we see forms of institutional violence perpetrated by authorities, but also forms of anti-institutional violence aimed at authority (Ruggiero 2006, pp. 2–3). Nor can one exclude forms of illegitimate violence carried out by individuals and illegal groups, including criminal organisations that use it to achieve their goals in gaining power and wealth, engaging in violent confrontations, both inside and outside their own criminal context, to affirm their hegemony and authority. Although one of the key conceptualisations of violence in social theory, developed by Norbert Elias in the late 1930s, stressed how from the Renaissance onwards the process of civilisation allowed Western societies to internalise control and reduce violence (1939), the history of the past century has repeatedly witnessed rises in statistics for violence and delinquency. Elias did not believe that violence could ever completely disappear from social life, and even if he remarked that control over violent impulses would represent the dominant ethical standard regulating the behaviour of a civilised humanity, in all likelihood he could not have foreseen that the word “violence” was to become ubiquitous, increasingly applied to countless phenomena (Wiewiorka 2009). Indeed, above and beyond the quantitative increase in violent phenomena, that which has grown in the West is a pervasive perception of violence, making it impossible to continue considering it no more than a residue of modernity (Bauman 1989).

From this viewpoint, a list of the various types of violence with which we are faced on a daily basis could be endless, as could an inventory of the traits taken on by violence in various social contexts:

It is short and episodic as a slap in the face; or massive and organised as a war. It can be passionate and angry as a quarrel; or callous and impersonal as the bureaucratic administration of gas chambers. It is happy as a

drunker carousing, fearful as soldiers in combat, vicious as a torturer. It can be furtive and hidden as a rape-murder, or public as a ritual execution. It is programmed entertainment in the form of sporting contests, the plot tension of drama, the action of action-adventure, the staple shocker of the news edition. It is horrible and heroic, disgusting and exciting, the most condemned and glorified of human acts.

(Collins 2008, p. 1)

Following 9/11, the outburst of fundamentalist terrorism in the United States and in Europe has made Western societies increasingly conscious that “we must be wary of images of a general decline in violence in the contemporary world” (Wieviorka 2009, p. 1). Widespread violence in many realms of daily life and a growing familiarity with its manifestations, both among individuals and on a macro-social level, have intensified our awareness of the fact that it must be counted among the phenomena that dominate human existence. “The world is as full of violence as ever”, Wolfgang Sofsky reminds us in his essay dedicated to terrorism, genocide and war, even as “we have woken from the dream that reason will prevail” (2003, p. 61).

Mafias and the Use of Violence

This volume deals with the particular kind of violence perpetrated by criminal organisations, dwelling on the case of Italian mafias and especially the Camorra. An expert use of violence and terror, in differing forms and degrees of intensity, including the simple threat of violence, has always represented one of the distinctive features of mafia behaviour. Its foremost sense is that of a *physical* or tangible violence, committed in a rational or professional way in order to offend adversaries and traitors, to enforce or violate deals and contracts, to attack or defend markets and businesses, to uphold one’s own reputation, to affirm sovereignty over a given territory, to influence the beliefs and actions of adversaries along with, more generally, all those who make up the social, political and economic context in question.¹

Even a fleeting glance at the various expressions of mafia violence, whether inflicted or simply brandished as a threat, suggests that although these actions are largely inspired by an *instrumental* rationale and thus serve the objectives set by an organisation or its single members, they do not shun the *symbolic* meanings of violence and its profound strategic and communicational impact. The resounding spectacle produced by certain murders, the deafening silence in cases of *lupara bianca*, the seeming senselessness of arrogant ostentations of power, and even the choice of the tools used – sawn-off shotguns, pistols, Kalashnikovs, bazookas, explosives: all of this does not simply ensue from choices made on the basis of practical efficiency. At the same time, it meets the needs of communicational *effectiveness*, and the subjects towards whom it is addressed are not necessarily confined to criminal milieus.

In spite of the fact that as of the mid-1990s the explicit use of violence by mafias has tended to decrease and the total number of homicides traceable to the main mafia organisations has diminished, the data available shows irregular trends among the various contexts. Especially as regards Campania, the region of southern Italy where the Camorra finds its historical roots and exercises its power to this day, recurring explosions of *faide* and conflicts among the major clans that control this territory, along with a tendency towards a greater use of violence, have led the Camorra to be responsible for approximately half of the mafia murders seen in Italy over the last 20 years.²

On this point, one must recall that it was believed at length that the various mafia organisations kept to the general principles of *frugality* and *gradualness* in their use of violence. This is confirmed by some of the norms contained in the internal codes and statutes of these organisations, intended to regiment their pure power of action and regulate its usage. Competence in effectively controlling the use of violence and the ability to inflict it with an increasing degree of professionalism – counting on experienced hit squads and personnel willing to engage in violent confrontations – have often allowed one mafia group to prevail over another. And yet, the innate tendency shown by bosses and lower-ranking members to manipulate these principles for utilitarian purposes, according to the occasion, and the peculiarities one can observe in the range of actions deployed by mafia organisations in various regions, point towards a more multifaceted state of affairs. This requires a close examination of the organisational structures of the various clans and their strategic plans, carried out within a broader analytical framework capable of taking into consideration the characteristics of the economic, social and cultural contexts in which mafia violence may occur.

Camorra Violence: Territories, Markets and Criminal Networks

In this light, Campania’s Camorra – made up of a variety of criminal figures with differing characteristics – provides an extremely interesting case on which to reflect. Indeed, it consists of a set of criminal groups that replicate the development historically seen in the various territories in which they are rooted, taking on disparate features and using differentiated repertoires of action, and functioning within specific economic sectors. To underline this heterogeneity, many scholars prefer to use the plural form of the term Camorra, i.e. *Camorras* (Camorras), in order to stress their internal variations and high rate of conflict. Internal fragmentation is in fact one of the explanatory factors most used to comprehend this mafia organisation’s particular aggressiveness. In other words, the Camorra seems to adopt a prevalently *horizontal* organisational model, incapable of containing the use of violence and using it with a sufficient degree of professionalism and farsightedness.³ Surely enough, with very few historical exceptions,⁴ in Campania no groups or families have proven able to enforce an enduring hegemony, nor are there instances of coordination or long-lasting alliances which would indicate a “unitary” mafia organization.

This correlation between a horizontal model and mafia violence is analytically stimulating, especially when seen in a comparison with other major Italian mafias. In the first part of this volume, we therefore included a specific analysis of the forms, features and evolutionary tendencies of violence within the other leading mafia organisations, i.e. Calabria's 'Ndrangheta and Sicily's Cosa Nostra. And yet, the multifaceted state of organised crime in Campania, along with its operational branches in other regions of Italy and abroad, calls for a more in-depth examination of the phenomenon and a more inclusive analytical framework that accounts for the characteristics of the historical-social contexts within which mafia violence has unfolded.

Taking a glance at the content of the various chapters, we may now put forward a general classification of the phenomenon of Camorra violence, based on the three analytical dimensions to which the results of the research contained above all in the second part of this volume are specifically dedicated: the *territories* within which the various groups are rooted, the *markets* in which they operate and the *networks* of which they are composed and through which they take root in the local society.

As regards the *territory*, one possible classification distinguishes between *provincial Camorras* and *city Camorras*.⁵ The latter are rooted in certain quarters of Naples, where criminal groups are highly fragmented, consisting of small clusters, and are largely involved in illicit trafficking, extortion, and other businesses often within the informal economy (smuggling, prostitution, underground gambling, fencing and usury). This phenomenon reflects the characteristics of Naples as a Mediterranean city,⁶ in particular its unregulated metropolitan context (with a lack of urban planning and widespread unauthorised development) and its bloated informal economy, making the border between legal and illegal activities difficult to establish.

The provincial Camorras, on the other hand, can rely on more complex internal hierarchies and exercise their control over the territory, even though they have a strong penchant for entrepreneurialism in legal markets. In the case of the province of Caserta, in the northern part of Campania, these characteristics became visible with the *Casalesi clan*, a single federated criminal structure that endured for over three decades.⁷ Also in the northern and southern areas of the province of Naples—on the slopes of Mount Vesuvius—powerful criminal families took shape who were capable of controlling extensive territories but wished to maintain their own autonomy, so much so that they often came into conflict among themselves. In this case as well, mafia phenomena reflect the area's socio-economic scenario; originally marked by a rural type of economic and demographic structure, over the last half-century it has undergone rapid growth from both a demographic and industrial point of view.⁸ The provincial Camorra originally took shape through operations in commercial intermediation for agricultural products, later moving mostly into the construction cycle and lastly gaining control of legal markets (including real estate, commercial distribution, legal gambling and surveillance, in addition to financial services). Control over tenders, public administration and local politics was therefore much more intense here.

These two expressions of the Camorra can be flanked by a third, made up of the clans operating at the outskirts of the city of Naples and in the immediately surrounding areas. These districts arose during the intense urban transformation that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s and now consist of large neighbourhoods with public residential buildings mainly inhabited by impoverished families. This urban development gave rise to a high concentration of social and residential disadvantages within run-down neighbourhoods, flooded by a demographic boom that generated real pockets of reproduction of various forms of delinquency. The spatial features themselves of this urban fringe allowed dealing points to be first constructed and then fuelled by well-structured drug trafficking networks. Here, violence takes on organised and exceptionally bloody forms: for example, during the first Scampia *faida*, named after a neighbourhood located to the north of Naples, there was a peak in mafia-related homicides.⁹ Bringing up the issues stemming from the concentration of distress in the outskirts of the city is not equivalent to maintaining a direct and systematic correlation between social fragility and mafia criminality. Nonetheless, the persisting state of decay in certain spatially limited areas facilitates the widespread use of violence as a form of social control and is capable of attracting representatives of powerful groups of organised crime.

This brings us to the second dimension of our current analysis: *markets*. A certain element of pervasive violence also determines the Camorra's ability to operate in legal and illegal markets, where mafias take on a function of control and gain hegemony over economic transactions, even outside their own regional context.

In attempting to create a model of the mafias' role in the economy, we may distinguish between three contexts of action, on the basis of analytically different regulatory criteria: the irregular and illegal economy; the formally legal economy in private markets; the public economy. In the first area, in economic sectors heavily marked by informal or irregular administrative practices (i.e. counterfeiting, tax evasion, illegal labour) a certain demand for regulation can be seen, which mafias provide by committing violence.¹⁰ The second context of action concerns private markets. Here, mafias can offer various kinds of services to businesses, by providing protection, circumventing free competition, containing unionist conflicts and providing inflows of cash. Nevertheless, the most evident forms of mafia entrepreneurship are also situated within private markets, when it is the bosses themselves or their affiliates who in one way or another take over the control of businesses, investing the capital gained from extortion and illegal trafficking in legal activities. With the exception of a few cases, Camorra groups take shape within clans who hold strong positions in legal markets which are actually characterised by a widespread illegality as well. The history of the Camorra shows that the first steps in the careers of major bosses took place at the crossroads between criminal, illegal and legal activities. In this framework, Camorra clans represent the ending point of a historical evolution that began with the violent regulation of legal and illegal

markets which had already acquired an international scope, well before the time when other mafia organisations reached a global position (Brancaccio and Castellano 2015; Brancaccio 2017).

The third and last context of market activity concerns the public economy, that is, all sectors subjected to institutional regulations. These are the most enticing sectors for money laundering and reinvesting mafia capital in the legal economy, as they offer the chance to gain monopolies and preferential access to public resources, by putting pressure on and reaching deals with public administrations. Here, mafias make wide use of corruption to facilitate infiltration into contracting and subcontracting, areas which are traditionally marked by locally defined restrictions, control over which becomes strategic.¹¹

The last analytical dimension considered here concerns the criminal *networks* these groups are composed of, but also the dense network of complicity and collusion between mafias and the sphere of politics, institutions and the economy. Here, violence can be used to create social relations, one of the channels through which mafias produce social capital,¹² which is in turn the main resource through which mafiosi succeed in forming bonds aimed at providing active support and obtaining the consensus necessary to survive and reproduce themselves (Sciarrone 2009). Camorra clans rarely resort to the explicit use of violence or intimidation when they can rely upon widespread cooperation among criminal, economic and political figures.¹³ This collusive method is mainly used for penetrating and sometimes subjugating local politicians, while the use of violence and intimidation is mostly replaced by a different and perhaps more sophisticated and convincing tool: corruption.¹⁴ As has been shown in recent studies, this model also characterises the Camorra's mobility and its expansion in Europe and in other areas, where the decrease in the use of violence is accompanied by a higher degree of organisational sophistication and flexibility (Allum 2016, Martone 2017, Vesco and Belloni 2017). Although clans are usually part of a globalised economic scenario, they have established relationships with specific business contexts in the various territories in which they operate, promoting collusion and complicity with businessmen, entrepreneurs, politicians and professionals. Camorra clans usually invest in several sectors, at both national and international levels, mainly in the fields of catering, clothing, fuel distribution, real estate and illegal gambling and betting. The Camorra's mobility is mainly achieved through corruption and laundering vast amounts of money, or through reinvesting the huge sums of money that clans can funnel into legal activities. By reinvesting in the legal economy, violence becomes minimal, which means that both social concern and law enforcement agencies' attention also become very low.¹⁵

A concealed or foresworn violence does not imply that the activities that traditionally define a mafia's control over a local area, such as extortion, have completely disappeared. Indeed, long-standing criminal families who have constructed violent entrepreneurial careers in both legal and illegal markets have proven to be the ones most involved in reinvesting in the legal economy. The military branch of these same clans, on the contrary, shows a tendency to return

to extortion in order to replenish their coffers and pay wages to members. Lastly, magistrates in Campania have identified a new *modus operandi* – the “mixed group” – that brings together members of different clans who, through “channels of financing less complex” than those based on complicated co-partnerships in legal companies, aim at more immediate sources of income, “thus inaugurating a more evident form of control over the territory” (DNA 2012, pp. 75–6).

Extortion and violence, at times uncontrolled, currently characterise the criminal scenario of the wider metropolitan area of Naples, where almost half of the roughly 90 clans known to exist operate. Judiciary initiatives and the disappearance of some of the city's historical clans have made this scenario much more conflictual and chaotic. New leaderships with modest power come to the surface and soon sink back down, alliances become variable and mercenary and positions of command are often covered by third generations who have replaced the older leaders without, however, inheriting their strategic skills and authority. New groups are born, whose members are extremely young, mainly involved in drug dealing and driven by a thirst for power:

these ‘small armies’ are often formed out of youths with no reference points and no real historical-criminal identity who, initially anonymous delinquents, have taken over the territory thanks to their daily use of violence, which is more openly displayed than ever and is used as a tool to affirm themselves and subjugate others, but also to launch challenges towards adversaries.

(DIA 2017, p. 111)

The youthfulness of this new generation of urban criminals, above all when they act with particular ferocity and violence, has made a strong impression on public opinion, inspiring some of the most recent media representations of the Camorra. So-called “baby-bosses” and “baby-gangs” are the leading actors in this new narrative: teenagers who attempt to conquer territories with spectacular displays of firepower, some of the most notable of which are the so-called “*stese*”, slang for a raid carried out in a neighbourhood by a group of armed youths who shoot indiscriminately, with the aim of terrorising the inhabitants and laying claim to sovereignty over the area.¹⁶ This phenomenon, among its various repercussions, has had a great deal of resonance in fiction and audiovisual productions, as has recently been confirmed by the international success of the television series *Gomorra*, whose third season (2017) describes a clan of young and extremely young criminals in the neighbourhood of Forcella, in the centre of Naples, who carry out *stese* and prosper within Campania's mafia.¹⁷

Methodological Framework

The project underlying this volume began to take shape in 2014, at a moment in which the visibility of Camorra violence in Campania, and in the city of Naples in particular, had not yet reached such an alarming state. Our research

was guided from the outset by a vision of violence, which had always been held to be the distinctive trait of the clans' way of acting, not only as a tool through which to affirm control over a territory and exercise forms of power over other criminal groups and local society, but also as an important means for social and economic regulation. A willingness to turn to violent conflict and the professional use of violence no doubt represented, on the one hand, one of the main resources available to Camorra groups, able to concretely define their supremacy and their reputation vis-à-vis rivals and competitors. On the other, however, in a few contexts this facilitated processes in which criminal behaviour proliferated, adopted by groups with various origins who were capable of establishing themselves more or less stably and operating within both unlawful and formally legal markets. This is why we preferred to investigate violence committed by organised crime from a wider perspective, taking into consideration either the use or the threat of widespread violence – both material and symbolic – within economic activities and, more generally, social relationships.

From a methodological viewpoint, our research was carried out according to a perspective aimed at combining both empirical and theoretical tools through the adoption of a multi-disciplinary approach which draws on sociology, criminology, history, anthropology, economics, political science and geography. It used both quantitative and qualitative data, elaborating information coming from secondary sources, conducting in-depth interviews and creating focus groups with key observers, whether witnesses or experts. The diachronic and comparative approach adopted by the authors offers a wide and unique overview of the similarities and differences existing among criminal organisations active in different areas and fields, while the case-study methodology allowed us to broaden our analysis of specific forms of mafia violence within given territories, markets and contexts. In particular, the comparative approach, aimed at drawing out contrasts and analogies between mafia organisations active in different territories over time, provided the general backdrop against which our research activities unfolded, following four main directions: historical-social analyses; diachronically oriented qualitative analyses; press analyses; case studies.

The preliminary phase of our project consisted of a historical-social analysis of the Camorra's use of violence, proceeding with a carefully pondered analysis of the literature and the major historical, sociological, economic and anthropological studies available, many of which are largely unknown abroad. Our qualitative and diachronic analysis called for an identification of the main indicators of the use of violence by organised crime in Campania (on both a provincial and a municipal level) and an analysis of their combination and frequency, based on a perusal of the data concerning trends in criminality over a ten-year period (2006–2016). This work was flanked by an analysis of the local press, which proved to be highly useful in analysing the narration and the wider social representation of Camorra violence in the local press, and in identifying the main semantic fields brought into play in constructing a collective understanding of violence. This analysis was built around queries

made to a large database elaborated during fieldwork, which brought together a corpus of articles concerning events of Camorra violence that occurred in the provinces of Naples and Caserta, published in the local editions of the leading local daily newspaper over a period of approximately 3 years, from 2013 to 2016, i.e. the years marked by the highest peaks in the level of violence in the area. The fourth line of research was carried out with a case-study approach, i.e. through an in-depth analysis focused on the local level.¹⁸ For each of the sub-areas taken into consideration,¹⁹ field research was carried out through a mixed-method approach, relying on collecting and analysing several sources: institutional sources²⁰ and reports, judicial files, focus groups and semi-structured interviews with key observers, as outlined at the end of each chapter.²¹

Outline of the Book

Based on the results of original in-depth field research and the analysis of case studies, this book addresses the phenomenon of violence committed by Italian mafias over the past 30 years, with specific attention given to the case of the Camorra. Although widely held to be one of the foremost features that characterise organised crime's *modus operandi*, the different forms of violence implemented by mafias have not as yet been systematically studied in an academic context. Hence, this book aims at filling this gap by providing a theoretical and empirical contribution towards the analysis of one of the lesser known – albeit highly visible and dangerous – dimensions of mafia action. Through the adoption of an approach specifically tailored to the need to adequately balance theoretical and empirical tools, and thanks to the involvement in a major and coherent project of a group of distinguished scholars and experts in the field, the pages which follow provide – we hope – a unique overview of the multifaceted nature of the violence currently committed by mafia groups, focusing on specific actors – i.e. Camorra clans, but also other traditional mafia organisations such as Cosa Nostra and the 'Ndrangheta; specific contexts – i.e. different territories but also various markets, both legal and illegal; and specific practices and performances – whether highly visible or symbolic.

The first part of the book, entitled *Violence and Mafias*, adopts a diachronic and comparative perspective aimed at providing an overview on the phenomenon of mafia violence during the past 30 years, by focusing on the three most prominent criminal organisations active in Italy: Cosa Nostra, the Camorra and the 'Ndrangheta.

Chapter 1, by Monica Massari, offers an introduction to the main features and dynamics of mafia violence in Italy, concentrating on the major criminal organisations historically rooted in the southern part of the country, such as Cosa Nostra in Sicily, the 'Ndrangheta in Calabria and the Camorra in Campania. The author's attention is primarily dedicated to the qualitative aspects of mafia violence, trying to go beyond a strictly quantitative analysis which would risk providing only partial information as to the phenomenon. In particular, the focus is on the distinctive traits of and the meanings taken

on by mafia violence in the recent history of these organisations, from a perspective that considers it not only as an important *strategic* resource but also, and above all, a *social* resource. A resource that is able to generate and/or nourish factors bearing on the identities, both personal and collective, found within these groups, which have important repercussions on the broader social and economic context in which they operate.

The following chapter, written by Alessandra Dino, analyses the use and meanings of violence inside Sicily's Cosa Nostra, seen within a wider theoretical framework which stresses the importance of the communicative aspects associated with violent mafia acts. Adopting a chronological and comparative outlook while taking up studies, trial proceedings, wiretappings, interviews with state witnesses and other first-hand empirical data, special attention is given to: communicational aspects and the realm of emotion; narrative and discursive forms; the relation between violence, secrets and power; violence and death; violence, fear and pain; violence and guilt; violence and repentance; violence and falsehood. The analytical framework is borne out by references to specific episodes in the history of Cosa Nostra dating to the past few decades: from the spectacle made of violence during the second mafia war to the internal violence against women; from the "immaterial" extent of the symbolic domain that spans the entire process of raising youth, to the dialectical violence expressed in verbal confrontations. Lastly, the "terroristic" and "hyperbolic" violence seen in the massacres committed in the 1990s is discussed, as is the deception with which investigations are led astray, identifying ambiguity as the most sophisticated form of a violence that is no longer "solely" mafia-related.

Homicides of politicians, prosecutors and judges perpetrated by mafiosi often make the media headlines, but are rarely considered in the social sciences, as Maurizio Catino and Francesco Moro emphasise in Chapter 3. In the 1980s and the early 1990s, mafia wars in Italy took a heavy toll on anti-mafia judges, law enforcement officers and politicians. The intrinsic relevance of the topic is increased by mafias and organised crime extending their reach beyond traditional strongholds and borders in recent decades. This makes it even more important to understand why and when organised crime groups directly challenge political and judicial authority (and/or other high-profile targets such as trade unionists and journalists). This chapter focuses on the three most prominent mafia groups currently operating in Italy – i.e., Cosa Nostra, the Camorra and the 'Ndrangheta – and investigates the rationale(s) underpinning their use of high-profile murders. The chapter critically reviews the major theories that can explain the use of violence in organised crime, focusing on four dimensions: (a) the organisational features of criminal groups, (b) the type of markets penetrated by mafia groups, (c) the structure of political opportunities and (d) law enforcement strategies. It is based on the empirical analysis of an original dataset of mafia homicides carried out since the late 19th century in Italy.

Chapter 4, by Rocco Sciarrone, deals with the issue of violence as a distinctive trait of mafias, adopting an analytical approach that draws our attention to the various *forms of capital* that characterise these particular groups of organised crime.

As is well known, mafia violence not only obeys an instrumental logic, but also has a highly symbolic meaning: it is an economic resource through which wealth is produced, but also a social and cultural resource, important in creating consensus, a reputation and legitimacy inside and outside the organisation. Precisely as organised violence, it is furthermore a fundamental component of the mechanisms of economic and social regulation through which mafiosi control economic transactions and social relations, i.e. markets, contexts and territories. The chapter's main thesis is that mafia violence not only destroys social relationships, but also contributes to building new ones, through the production of social capital: a crucial resource which allows mafia groups to persist in both time and space. Thus, mafiosi are specialised in the use of violence and are furthermore experts in social relationships, since violence and social capital are crucial components for understanding mafias' *modus operandi* in the field of illegal markets as well as in the economic and political arena.

In Chapter 5, Umberto Santino addresses the issue of the relations between violence and mafias by way of a theoretical hypothesis subjected to an analysis of the phenomenon of the mafia, understood as a multifaceted reality in which criminal, economic, political and cultural factors converge. Thanks to the tools offered by socio-historical analysis, this chapter examines mafia violence by focusing on three emblematic cases that occurred in Sicily over half a century: the massacre of Portella della Ginestra, which occurred on 1 May 1947, considered as an example of interaction between criminal-mafia violence and institutional complicity; the murder of Giuseppe Impastato, the political activist who, born in a family of mafiosi, was killed by Cosa Nostra in 1977 because of his anti-mafia activities; and, finally, the mafia war that occurred in Sicily during the early 1980s, which involved different families belonging to Cosa Nostra and led major Italian anti-mafia legislation to be implemented, which still represents a model internationally.

The second part of the book, entitled *Beyond Gomorrah: Camorra Clans and the Use of Violence*, represents the outcome of a major project entitled "The use of violence and organised crime. A socio-economic analysis of the case of Camorra clans in Campania" (STAR-1 Line) carried out in 2015–2017 by a research group mainly based at the University of Naples Federico II, coordinated by Monica Massari. The project was co-funded by the Fondazione San Paolo and the University of Naples Federico II.

Adopting a geographical approach, Chapter 6, written by Caterina Rinaldi and Carlo De Luca, offers an overall view of the local system found in the region that provided the backdrop for our fieldwork, Campania, and two of its provinces in particular, Naples and Caserta, looking at the main socio-economic dynamics which can help explain the emergence of local criminal organisations. Indeed, there is no doubt that territorial dynamics affect and influence the behaviour of the actors operating in a certain context, nor that, at the same time, the territory is in turn shaped and transformed by them. Thus, the aim of this chapter is to highlight the main features and evolving dynamics characterising the areas where the major Camorra clans are currently based,

taking into consideration, from a comparative perspective, a wider social and economic context (i.e. the other regions in southern Italy and the country as a whole) by using, among other things, the tools offered by Geographic Information System-GIS techniques and map representations.

The chapter which follows is written by Luciano Brancaccio and analyses Camorra groups and families as an emergent phenomenon that takes place within social and economic spaces and is related to the violent regulation of legal and illegal markets. Camorra groups act as extended family businesses, through large networks of kinship, intertwined with economic activities and often connected, through marriage strategies, to other violent families. Clans are mostly based on open entrepreneurial-type networks which operate in several economic sectors, while widespread violence in social relations and above all in economic transactions is the condition for the birth of this type of mafia. For these reasons, the features of Camorra clans are closely tied to the territorial context in which they emerge. The chapter thus focuses on the characteristics, strategies and dynamics of Camorra clans operating in four areas: 1. Naples' city centre; 2. the outskirts of Naples; 3. the Province of Naples; and 4. the Province of Caserta falling under the control of the Casalesi cartel. Finally, the chapter analyses the ways through which the use of violence shapes and affects the entrepreneurial model Camorra clans adopt in managing various economic sectors.

Chapter 8, by Gianluca Gatta, offers an analysis of the narration of Camorra violence found in the local press and outlines the main semantic fields brought into play in constructing a collective understanding of violence. This analysis is built around queries made to a database elaborated during fieldwork, which brings together a corpus of articles concerning events of Camorra violence and published in the local editions of the daily newspaper *Il Mattino* from 2013 to 2016. What emerges is that media are not only sources of information about the phenomenon analysed but true agents in themselves, considering the hyper-coverage of mafia violence, its symbolic and communicational aspects and the spectacular forms of Camorra violence, with a chain reaction triggered between traditional media, social media and the protagonists of the violence. Through an analysis of the vocabulary used in headlines published by the local press and a number of selected violent events, the author emphasises how the narration of Camorra violence often evokes a sort of plague from which the social fabric suffers, destroying its equilibrium and thus contributing to a general atmosphere of social insecurity, while the links between violence and its economic, social and political implications become virtually invisible.

Criminal networks build their strength on relationships of trust between members, which allow for the production of services such as protection or access to strategic resources, whether social or economic. Their activities are often carried out thanks to the role played by individuals who offer their skills and services in an "opaque" or irregular way. Such relationships are strategic and cannot be considered in terms of mere networks of interpersonal relations between agents that operate in the shadows or the criminal arena, nor can they

be underestimated or ignored when effective prevention measures and policies are to be implemented. In this regard, Chapter 9, written by Mauro Castiello, Michele Mosca and Salvatore Villani, analyses how criminal groups belonging to the Casalesi clan – a criminal organisation that has imposed the yoke of its power across a large territory in the area of Caserta, but is also active across a wider area – use violence in a *gentle* way. This is confirmed by the low levels of violence currently recorded in the area, in order to pursue illicit goals through direct or indirect management of economic activities aimed at maximising their profits. The true strength of this clan seems to be its strategic use of highly qualified human capital and its penetration into the economy and politics. This strategy weakens traditional law enforcement policies and stresses the need to develop more effective ones.

The construction industry was the first significant source of wealth for the Casalesi clan, analysed in Chapter 10. Judicial files describe this clan as a particularly compact structure, with a federation of groups connected to a central decision-making body and a military control over the territory, obtained through the use of violence and the construction of a large network of external supporters, in particular in the administration of local public tenders. The literature on the topic highlights their aptitude for reinvesting illegal funds in complex businesses, especially by obtaining public contracts and tenders in the construction industry. Hence, this chapter, written by Vittorio Martone, shows the Camorra's ability to regulate this market by focusing on the use of violence carried out in order to control workers, avoid strikes and protests and keep trade unions out of the way. The methodology relies on a qualitative biographic approach which discusses two life histories that are somehow "antithetical": on the one hand, a well-known trade union representative of the construction industry, victim of violent intimidation (attempted murder); on the other hand, his assailant, who was affiliated with a Camorra clan once belonging to the Casalesi federation and has recently turned state's witness.

The focus of Chapter 11 is the Camorra and its changing relations with local politics, especially in the area of Caserta, a province historically dominated by the same Camorra cartel, the Casalesi clan. Through an approach that involves analysing the decrees that allowed town councils to be dissolved for mafia infiltration, paired with crime statistics, this chapter firstly defines the difficulty in analysing mafia-local politics relationships in Italy in the post-war period. Secondly, it explains what mafia-local politics relations look like. Thirdly, it discusses the nature of the mafia-local politics and analyses specific case studies of Camorra infiltration to identify how the relationship has evolved. Lastly, it concludes that there has been a transformation of the use of violence into consensual corrupt tools. According to the authors' findings, since the mid-1990s there has been a marked shift in the political behaviour shown by the Neapolitan Camorra towards the local political elite, becoming less violent, more business-like and using more traditional techniques of corruption.

Gabriella Gribaudi addresses gender relations within Neapolitan Camorra clans in Chapter 12. Deeply rooted stereotypes often suggest that women do

9 More than half of the 203 mafia homicides that occurred in Italy in 2004 were related to the Scampia *faida*. See Chapter 1.

10 As remarked in some of the classic studies which have addressed this issue in the past, mafiosi can be involved in regulating illegal economies (Schelling 1971) thanks to their ability to reduce the high degree of uncertainty and the elevated costs for transactions witnessed within them (Gambetta 1993).

11 Some typical examples include the construction cycle, waste disposal, commercial distribution and the real estate market. All of these sectors are discussed in this volume.

12 The analysis of violence as a resource and an instrument through which mafiosi produce or increase various forms of capital (economic, social, cultural and symbolic) is addressed in Chapter 4.

13 For some emblematic examples of this “gentle use of violence”, see Chapter 9.

14 For an examination of the changing relationship between the Camorra and local politics, see Chapter 11.

15 This *modus operandi*, widely used in the localities in which the Camorra originated, is known as *inabissamento* (submerison) (DIA 2017, p. 112), which refers to an abandonment of the use of violence as a strategy of camouflage.

16 For an analysis of the new narratives of violence, see Chapter 8.

17 Particular reference must go to the book written by Roberto Saviano (the author of *Gomorra*, 2007) entitled *La Paranza dei bambini* (*Gangs of children*, 2016), where the term “*paranza*” – originally used for a fishing boat and its crew – indicates a “hit squad”, following the slang used by members of the Camorra.

18 See Chapter 8 for further details on the methodology used for this type of analysis.

19 The area of Caserta, the northern and eastern part of the province of Naples, the area comprised within the urban belt surrounding Naples, and Naples’ city centre.

20 These sources include crime data and reports released by the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Justice, reports drafted by specialised agencies such as DNA and DIA, and proceedings of the Parliamentary Anti-Mafia Committee.

21 Judges and prosecutors, law enforcement officers, members of trade and anti-racketeering associations, trade unionists, politicians, experts, entrepreneurs, journalists, social operators, teachers, members of associations and NGOs and other experts.

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Notes

- 1 The phenomenon of mafia violence has been a topic for reflection since the earliest phases of the tradition of studies on mafias and, more recently, some amount of more systematic research. For an analysis of the academic debate, see Part I of this volume and particularly Chapter 1.
- 2 Trends seen in mafia murders in Italy as of the 1960s are discussed above all in Chapters 1, 3 and 5.
- 3 See Chapter 3, whose authors analyse the relationship between the Camorra’s horizontal organisational model and its ability to commit *high-profile murders*.
- 4 Here, we refer above all to the war that occurred between 1978 and 1983 between the *Nuova Camorra Organizzata* (NCO), a federated criminal group founded by boss Raffaele Cutolo that dominated Campania between the 1970s and 1980s, and the *Nuova Famiglia* (NF), a wider-ranging alliance of criminal groups. This war was responsible for over a thousand deaths in Campania, more than those caused by political terrorism in the same period (see Chapter 2).
- 5 Chapter 7 proposes a model aimed at contextualising Camorra groups and families as phenomena emerging from specific economic and social contexts.
- 6 With reference to Leontidou 1990.
- 7 See Chapter 9, which deals with the history of the Casalesi clan.
- 8 The history of local development in the province of Caserta and the area surrounding Mount Vesuvius is reconstructed, respectively, in Chapters 10 and 13.

not play a significant role inside criminal groups. An analysis of judicial files concerning the Neapolitan Camorra, however, suggests that women do indeed play autonomous roles (especially in managing the drug business and loan sharking), often display a high degree of autonomy with respect to their male counterparts and succeed in using violence in a peculiar way. This chapter focuses on the characteristics of violent actions committed by women and points towards specific female criminal profiles. Comparing different sources, such as judicial files and historical archives, articles from the press and theatrical and literary texts, the author addresses various female Camorra figures who play crucial roles within a range of illegal markets.

Finally, in the last chapter, written by Carolina Castellano and Anna Maria Zaccaria, the focus goes to another case study, i.e. Ottaviano, a small town at the foot of Mount Vesuvius, in the province of Naples. This municipality’s name is associated with Raffaele Cutolo, boss and founder of the *Nuova Camorra Organizzata* (NCO), established in 1970, who played a central role in Italian crime in the 1970s. In this chapter, the authors focus on analysing the local context in order to delve more deeply into the relationship between the community, violence and the myths surrounding Cutolo. By reconstructing the main events that marked the history of Ottaviano since the late 19th century, the analysis seeks to investigate the elements underlying the genesis and development of violent powers in the area. The local community is addressed not as an object of study but rather as a space in which one might locate oneself in order to investigate people’s experiences of violence and their memory of the mafia war. Methodologically, this chapter is inspired by community studies and includes oral sources, gray literature, local history, literary texts, direct observation and on-site surveys as well as judicial documents.

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Part I

Violence and Mafias

DC) involved Cutolo, who was detained at the Ascoli Piceno prison, in negotiations to liberate Ciro Cirillo, the DC regional chairman of public works who had been kidnapped by the Neapolitan section of the Red Brigades. The circumstances surrounding Cirillo's release have never been clarified (Alemi 1988). Together with the wave of violence generated by the conflict surrounding tenders for reconstructions following the 1980 earthquake, the sensational case of negotiations between the DC, NCO and Red Brigades, conducted entirely inside prison, led the judiciary to take strict repressive measures through a wholesale arrest in June 1983. After the *maxiprocesso*, there was a decline in both the political-military power of the NCO and the individual sway exercised by Cutolo, who was kept in isolation as of 1982.

The NCO case had a powerful impact on politics, the military apparatus and, above all, public opinion. Amplified by the *spectacularisation* of the conflict with the NF as well as the media hype surrounding the boss, who wrote (or rather, plagiarised) popular poems to feed his own myth and talked with journalists during the *maxiprocesso*,¹ this event became the paradigmatic case of the "Camorra"; furthermore, the Camorra was identified specifically with Cutolo and the city of Ottaviano in public discourse. The mafia war catapulted the city, besieged by journalists and police forces, under the media spotlight (Rossi 1983; Cederna 1983). The history of Ottaviano is caught up with the history of the NCO, reduced to brief periods of time and restricted spaces, and characterised by an "unexpected" wave of violence that shocked local residents. In the 1980s, a number of pioneering investigations and studies focused on Cutolo and the NCO, but tended to relegate the community of Ottaviano to the background (Sales 1993; Lamberti 1992). Analogously, this crime-centric narrative revolved around the straightforward career of the boss: from the first "bloody incident" to his socialisation within the criminal universe while in prison and his sectarian project, this narrative followed a stereotypical trajectory (Bianchi and Sabbatino 2009). Public discourse represented the mafia as having appeared in Ottaviano together with Cutolo, thereby casting the local community and area into a static, marginal position.

In this chapter we focus on analysing the local context in order to delve more deeply into the relationship between the community, violence and the myth surrounding Cutolo. We adopt a long-term and wide-ranging historical perspective. By reconstructing the main events that have marked the history of Ottaviano since the late 19th century, we seek to investigate the elements underlying the genesis and development of violent powers in the local area, an area stretching eastward to the plain of Nola and to the west to include other Vesuvian towns, characterised by high criminal density and dominated by Ottaviano. We approached the local community not as an object of study but rather as a space in which we might locate ourselves (Geertz 1973) in order to investigate people's experiences of violence and their memory of the mafia war. Our methodology is inspired by community studies (Piselli and Arrighi 1985; Blok 1974; Gribaudo 1990; Schneider and Schneider 2003) and includes oral sources, grey literature, local history, literary texts, direct observation and

13 Community, Violence and Memory The Case of Ottaviano

Carolina Castellano and Anna Maria Zaccaria

Introduction

Ottaviano is a small city at the foot of Mount Vesuvius, in the province of Naples. Its name is associated with Raffaele Cutolo, who was born there in 1941. Cutolo, boss and founder of the Nuova Camorra Organizzata (NCO), established in 1970, played a central role in Italian crime in the 1970s. In 1963 he was incarcerated for a murder committed for trivial reasons and, once in jail, he built his career by recruiting numerous affiliates and meeting members of organised crime groups in Campania and the Calabrian 'Ndrangheta (Sciarrone 2009, p. 166 ff.). The NCO was modelled after the sectarian framework of the 19th-century Neapolitan Camorra and the 'Ndrangheta's organisational structure; it drew strength from sectarian symbols and rituals, highly effective for recruiting hundreds of young prisoners, and from connections with other criminal organisations (such as the 'Ndrangheta, and Sicilian and Milanese drug traffickers). Headed by a restricted group comprising Cutolo, his sister Rosetta and a few loyal bosses, in the late 1970s the NCO boasted fifteen *capizona* (local bosses) in Campania and controlled vast areas through systematic extortion (Brancaccio 2009; Colletti 2016). The growth of the NCO coincided with the expansion of illegal markets in Campania, primarily smuggling tobacco manufactured abroad, a bone of contention between clans in Marseilles and Sicily. Multiple factors fanned the flames of conflict, namely other mafias in the area, the fact that other groups from Campania were co-opted into the NCO, and the integration of narco-traffickers into the 1970s smuggling routes, given Naples' role as a key centre of drug trafficking (Castellano 2015). This conflict led to the formation of a wide-ranging alliance opposing Cutolo, i.e. the *Nuova Famiglia* (New Family, NF), supported by the Sicilian mafia. Between 1978 and 1983, the war between the NCO and the NF was responsible for over a thousand deaths in Campania, the same number of victims caused by the contemporaneous mafia war in eastern Sicily and more than those caused by political terrorism in the same period.

This explosion of violence drove the institutions to focus their attention on Campania and the NCO, an organisation which had proven itself to be multifaceted and brutal, capable of engaging with politics, finance and deviant sectors of the institutions (CPA 1985). In 1981 the ruling party (the Christian Democrats,

on-site surveys as well as judicial documents. Our main tool of investigation is collective memory, collected through in-depth interviews. Through the interpretation of narratives, memory reveals the cultural frameworks guiding social norms (Hallwachs 1996), preserves experiences consolidated in layers over time and highlights value judgments regarding the social and political history of the local area. Taking the conflict as our main analytical category, this research retraces the history of Ottaviano in a way that highlights the rifts running through it and uncovers points of tension in the spheres of politics, the socio-economic system and identity.

This in-depth approach shows that, in reality, the community does not acknowledge Cutolo's myth; rather, local people grant the figure of the boss and his criminal reputation less importance. In contrast to public representations, the local collective memory locates Cutolo's war "elsewhere", identifying it as a brief interlude in the history of the town. People do not speak spontaneously of their memories of the mafia war, nor of Cutolo himself and, even when solicited, these memories remain marginal. In the following pages, we show how people's accounts consistently set the Ottaviano community in the foreground, offering a reading of the local area and genesis of the Vesuvian Camorra from an alternative perspective, one that is much less "Cutolo-centric". We describe a community that boasts an "educated and entrepreneurial" identity, a socially cohesive identity distinct from that of surrounding municipalities. However, by reconstructing the rifts that have cut through the town's history, we also find instances of conflict that at times may take violent forms. Some of these conflicts have left traces in the local collective memory. Memories of the La Marca gang and its violence in the 1940s are more vivid than those of the epidemics and volcanic eruptions that struck the city. The accounts provided by interviewees always mention political mafia violence, embodied in the figure of Mayor Salvatore La Marca in the 1970s and the murders of two municipal councillors. Local memories of mafia violence also reveal subjects other than Cutolo, perceived as leaders of *another* Camorra with shadowy connections to Cutolo's organisation. On another level, the only time interviewees mention links between the local and national levels is when "village troubles" (Arpaia 2006) ignite political assassinations, propelling the local history of the city onto the stage of political violence as a national emergency.

In the memories we asked interviewees to recall, violence is recounted in an ambiguous and partial way. It marks the boundary between legal and illegal society: two worlds that the interviewees perceive as distinct, not coming into contact, and yet contiguous in social practices and spaces. The clearest expression of this perception that the two communities are wholly foreign to each other is the banalisation of death. As we will show, the landscape of multiple memories is characterised by the fact that there is no collective processing of violence, leaving it unexplained, unresolved and hidden. This unfinished process keeps two *parallel* communities alive, which do not recognise each other's respective histories and currently only appear to exist in a state of peace.

The Community

In the modern era the Medici family, still prominent in the 19th century, held Ottaviano as a fief, and up to the early 20th century the town comprised much of the territory of Mount Vesuvius and served as a crossroads for Vesuvian towns, the agricultural area surrounding Sarno (in the province of Salerno), the Caserta area and the plain of Nola, an important commercial hub. The town's contemporary administrative features date to between the 19th and 20th centuries, when a number of its districts achieved administrative autonomy (Cimmino 2010, p. 109).

Ottaviano residents identify the beginning of their history with the arrival of the Medici and locate their own "noble" origins within a mythical past. The Medici's nearly three-century-long rule over the fiefdom of Ottaviano began in 1567 when Bernarretto, the nephew of Lorenzo the Magnificent, bought the land. According to the community's self-representation, it is precisely the presence of the Medici family that granted Ottaviano cultural primacy over the other Vesuvian municipalities, and indeed this noble past makes up the first strong element of the city's identity. The Medici equipped the city with a road network, connecting it to the neighbouring municipalities; they introduced urban development and fuelled a thriving "court" economy, regulated by a pyramidal structure headed by the Prince. They invested in increasing the fertility of local land, nourished by volcanic eruptions, by planting extensive, high-quality vineyards that generated a variety of employment opportunities along the entire chain of wine production and sales. At the end of the 19th century, Ottaviano had two important railway stations built, thus facilitating connections with the Caserta hinterland and Naples. At the beginning of the 20th century, the town aimed to further develop its residents' entrepreneurial skills (working with textiles, pasta production, factories for processing plastic, etc.) based on a tradition of family-owned businesses. This intense level of production was linked to another identity-making trait, namely entrepreneurial talent, which interviewees always evoked to distinguish Ottaviano from the neighbouring town of San Giuseppe Vesuviano, the "city of commerce". In the memory of locals, the Medici Castle represents the "seat of power" in which relations of subjugation and social divisions were defined. Even the mythology surrounding the NCO and its rituals alludes to this memory of a feudal past and its chivalric repertoire: Cutolo, surrounded by "nine loyal knights", founded the NCO on the evening of 24 October (dedicated to San Raffaele) 1970 in this very castle, abandoned and crumbling, through a ritual evoking the local identity of the land (the wine used to toast), feudal culture (the term "knights") and religious traditions (Cutolo was the "Gospel") (Tisci 2014, pp. 20, 30).

All these elements granted Ottaviano a central position in the area north-east of Naples, making it an important commercial hub for the region: it is the setting-off point for the transportation of goods after the raw materials have been processed in local factories. Furthermore, the city is characterised

by a “distinct” identity, understood as an element of internal social cohesion that maintains a specific configuration, passed down over time and immune to social conflict.

However, as we will show, the social frameworks of memory (Halbwachs 1996) and their resulting representations end up clashing with the “written” history of the city.

Ottaviano currently has approximately 24,000 inhabitants, including over 6,000 residents in the district of San Gennarelo (which never succeeded in becoming independent). The population of the city has been growing steadily since the second half of the 20th century (CENSUS Istat 1951–2011). In the twenty years from 1991 to 2011, employment declined in the industrial sector (–9.8%) and artisanal sectors (–4.6%), whereas it increased in the service sector (+ 5.6%) and low-skilled occupations (+ 0.6%) (Istat 8milaCENSUS 1991–2011). There are also pockets of poverty, overlooked by official data and by the accounts collected through fieldwork. A doctor and former mayor of Ottaviano describes these conditions:

There are very serious pockets of poverty. Not only in the outlying areas, but here as well [*in the city centre, author's note*]. You must be careful when prescribing [*medicine*], choosing it from inside the cabinet and saying: “Okay, don't worry, I can give you this medicine.”

(Interview, former mayor)

In terms of urban planning, Ottaviano expanded to neighbouring municipalities between 1991 and 2011. The limitations the Ente Parco del Vesuvio (established in 1995 to protect Mount Vesuvius' environmental heritage) posed on over-building was more effective in curbing the expansion of construction in the urban centres than it was in the surrounding areas. This disparity was mainly a result of the fact that, due to political conflicts and personal agendas, the urban plans promoted by these municipalities display certain limits. As a result, it is difficult to use the local area in a sustainable manner (it is a “red zone” characterised by elevated hydrogeological and volcanic risk) and protect it from barely legal practices:

When I was a city councillor I found out that an architecture studio was supposed to draft the town's strategic plan 32 years ago! There wasn't one! Why? Because the administration kept changing! Needs changed. Then the Parco del Vesuvio, the red zone... Now there is a General Urban Plan, which must take into account the constraints of the local area. We have 4,000 houses waiting for amnesty! I myself asked for it as well, 30 years ago; I paid three times and I still haven't obtained it! Because these 4,000 include about 1,000 that cannot be granted amnesty, they belong to people to whom you cannot say, “I am sending bulldozers your way [*for demolition*]!”

(Interview, nuclear physicist)

There are a number of frictions, therefore, in this “pleasant”, “drowsy” and “educated” town. This was the story recounted by the inhabitants that Luca Rossi interviewed in the course of his stay in Ottaviano during the Cutolian war, and this is the story some witnesses tell today, highlighting the town's loss of commercial vitality. Selective memory strategies gloss over the conflicts and violent practices characterising Ottaviano's social history, offering a “mystified” reality. In essays by local historians or under the pressure of interviews, however, a different narrative emerges.

Although the interviewees had been informed that the objectives of our research focused in particular on memories of the mafia war, they rarely referred it spontaneously and, for the most part, only when explicitly requested to do so. And yet Ottaviano was devastated by the conflict between the NCO and NF, which led to 818 deaths in Campania between 1979 and 1981, with soaring peaks of violence coinciding with the earthquakes of 23 November 1980 and 14 February 1981, when Cutolo took advantage of the panic erupting in Poggioreale prison to order the massacre of prisoners who belonged to the NF (De Gregorio 1983). The formation of the NCO created severe ruptures throughout the vast area extending around Ottaviano. Between Nola and Mount Vesuvius, all the criminal groups sprouted from the same terrain, having developed in the 1950s and 1960s in legal and illegal markets, as attested to by the fact that the three main figures in the Camorra war were all geographically adjacent. Until the mid-1970s Carmine Alfieri, the boss of Nola, had supported Cutolo and hidden him when Cutolo was running from authorities. He resisted being co-opted by the NCO, however, and came into conflict with Cutolo over illegal gambling issues involving his brother Salvatore, who was killed by the NCO in 1981. Another figure who joined the NF was Mario Fabbrocino, born in Ottaviano but based in the adjacent municipality of San Gennaro Vesuviano; Fabbrocino had begun his criminal career trafficking foreign tobacco products and established ties with Cosa Nostra through the Zaza smugglers. The feud between Alfieri and Cutolo caused a breach in this criminal milieu and gave rise to fierce conflict. The criminal geography of the local landscape changed. An emblematic example of this shift can be seen in the Lauro Valley, approximately 17 km east of Ottaviano, in which the newly created NCO caused a rift in the “Quindiciari” group (from the town of Quindici), which united the Cava and Graziano families in an old-fashioned political–Camorra association. After 1980, when the Graziano family began supporting the NCO and the Cava family began sustaining Fabbrocino, a feud broke out in the valley that was never resolved (Zaccaria 2015).

Rifts

Local sources reveal stories of conflict and outbreaks of violence in regulating power and the markets. At times, events and practices gave rise to actual rifts in the life of a city, altering everyday life, accelerating or slowing down processes, and calling identities, cultures and relationships into question.

In 1834, during a meeting of the city council, the mayor of Ottaviano denounced the “Camorra dei bottàri” or coopers’ Camorra:

wine production is huge. (...) The cooper approaches smaller grape producers between February and March. He needs barrels for the September harvest (...) but has no money to pay for them right away. The cooper offers him credit for the barrels ...

(Interview, local historian)

on the condition that the grower sells his batch of wine to the cooper at a preferential price, obviously established by the cooper himself. The *sensali* (brokers) invested in the wine market as well, exercising a kind of commercial intermediation that often erupts into violence. The “guardians of the woods” imposed tolls in exchange for protection for the transit of goods (Cimmino 2003). At the end of the 19th century, the *camorra* made its way into positions of power: “One of the greatest mayors of Ottaviano in the 19th century, Giuseppe Bifulco, priest and landowner, was described in the confidential notes that the police transmitted to the prefecture around 1865 as a true Godfather” (ibid., p. 59).

It was in the 20th century, however, that community life was struck by the most significant rifts.

Beginning in 1943, meat and alcohol smuggling was managed by a number of families in daily contact with the Anglo-American allies, who were based in an airfield set up in a neighbourhood of Ottaviano; this smuggling soon flourished (ibid., p. 28). In the same period, the high costs of the reconstruction following the war and damage caused by the 1944 eruption of Mount Vesuvius brought the municipality to the brink of economic collapse. Above all, these conditions introduced conflict into political and administrative relations at a time when efforts were being made to build an inclusive DC, on the wave of its national support. The violence of the La Marca gang culminated between 1944 and 1946: “they seized industrialists, traders and rich landowners. Eight hundred policemen stopped them. Giuseppe La Marca was arrested.” The boss died in prison in 1956. “His funeral took place in grand style and with a large number of people flocking to San Gennaro Vesuviano, where he was buried” (Saviano 1988, p. 197). The people celebrated La Marca, “the executioner”, who punished unfair wealth by robbing the richest. Conflict even erupted between the Church and the municipal administration, up to that point united in exercising power (mayor-priests were frequently occurring figures in the 19th century). In 1947 the Christian Democrat mayor came into conflict with the Nolan archbishop and the priest of San Michele regarding the question of how the patron saint would be celebrated, claiming that he should prevail over the Church in relation to decisions concerning the community (Cimmino 2003, p. 23). This was the first of a series of clashes between the clergy and local administrators, clashes which were gradually defused over time thanks to an “apparent pacification” based on mutual indifference. This appearance of peace, however, obscures the ambiguous role played by some ecclesiastical figures in the years of the

Curolo war.² In this period, relations between the NCO and members of the local church were apparently secured thanks to the boss’ sister Rosa Domenica (Rosetta). The accounts we collected unanimously define her, in the past just as today, as “a church woman”.³ The narratives provided by our interviewees barely mention these events, with the exception of the way the La Marca band, at times mythologised, overwhelms memories of the 1910 smallpox epidemic, victims of the two world wars and the 1944 volcano eruption:

I was a child and I remember a photo depicting all the members of the La Marca gang, there were hundreds of them!

(Interview, Legambiente leader)

The La Marca banditry expressed a form of violence that not only struck the local area, it was also produced there; a violence which subverted the balance of power, affecting the community from within and making its way into the homes of “wealthy” residents to propose a new (and distorted) vision of social justice.

The 1970s represented a crucial turning point for Ottaviano against the background of the Italian economic crisis that began with the end of the Golden Age (Hobsbawm 1994) and the associated surge in prices. This was a season characterised by political violence and the emergence of a deprived and precarious social reality, as evidenced by the written memories of an Ottaviano resident who grew up in that period (Arpaia 2006).

The town’s collective memory converges around its most trenchant events and dynamics, often producing contrasting representations. During that period, Ottaviano preserved its cultural identity, nourished by the continued presence of a cultured liberal class (Cimmino 2005) and the fact that it hosted the only high school specialising in classical studies in the area until the 1970s: in people’s self-representations of Ottaviano’s identity, the fact of having attended Diaz high school is often held up as a distinctive trait. The town, on the other hand, lost its entrepreneurial identity as a result of the economic crisis and the unionisation of factory work at the end of the 1970s that put an end to the previously peaceful relations between entrepreneurs and workers. The market trend towards service-oriented sectors accelerated the decline of Ottaviano’s industrial tradition:

Seamstresses didn’t want to work any more, they wanted a permanent position! And it was the same for bricklayers as well, and the blacksmiths. ...

(Interview, merchant)

While in general this scenario reflected the crisis affecting the country as a whole, in Ottaviano it was conditioned by the outbreak of clan extortion,

initiating an extended network of taxation to the detriment of companies. The businesses that didn’t pay the extortion racket found themselves facing violence, TNT blasts shattering plants and warehouses.

(Tisci 2014, p. 18)

This was the complicated prelude to the moment in which the Camorra was able to infiltrate the local government, the prelude to a war which – according to some accounts – involved clashes between the NCO and NF that did not touch ordinary citizens:

when the Camorra came, they didn't touch us, it was a war between themselves; they did not rob people's apartments, it was a ruthless war between them or between people who had problems with them; they didn't fight the common citizen. I speak as a common citizen.

(Interview, female journalist-writer)

According to others, however, these clashes did affect Ottaviano, “forever marking” the life of two generations (interview, entrepreneur). The words of a police officer involved in the investigation at the time confirm the cruelty of Cutolo's people, not easily reconcilable with the myth of a boss who does not “touch” his fellow citizens and giving rise to detrimental effects for the NCO itself.

Cutolo's people are beasts! Insatiable! They kill entrepreneurs indiscriminately. Too much extortion, too much violence! That's why they lose support, that's why they are defeated. Cutolo's myth is one thing, the terror his people spread is another.

(Interview, policeman)

The most disruptive rift appeared at the political level. While the DC had governed the city with a consensus of approximately 65% from 1944 until the early 1960s, when the party faced a crisis the city was obliged to “recognise” a component capable of governing the local area through violence. The administrative mandate of Salvatore La Marca, elected mayor in 1975, represented a coming together of political and criminal power. The rift cut through multiple, interconnected levels: leadership, politics and resources for influencing opinion. La Marca was a building contractor and Cutolo adherent who was doing business with Pasquale Cutolo, the boss' brother, and his election broke with the tradition of rule by the educated liberal class. A candidate with the Italian Social Democratic Party (PSDI), La Marca interrupted the “reassuring [solidity] of the Christian Democratic power” (Cimmino 2005, p. 34) and asserted new resources for influencing opinion: his violent reputation, founded on his friendship and business relationship with Pasquale Cutolo, and his vaunted ties with national-level politicians, which qualified him for the position of broker, capable of draining public resources to redistribute locally.

La Marca had already attempted to climb the political ladder in the 1950s, but he took his first steps in the midst of deep political instability and compromises on the part of the ruling party. The stability of the Ottaviano DC was undermined by developments in the party at the national level: in the 1960s, it opened its doors to the socialists, thus launching a season of the centre left and

reforms but also conflicts within the party and subversive elements that led to the “strategy of tension” in 1969, a prelude to the political violence of the 1970s (Graetz 2016). The Ottaviano DC likewise opened its doors to the socialists, leaving the PCI (Partito Comunista Italiano) to act as the opposition. In 1965, La Marca was a candidate with the PSDI; his “Rinnovamento” (renewal) list of candidates garnered many votes and, in the administration led by Enrico Iervolino (DC), La Marca was made president of the municipal council. As his first act, he took for granted that his programme would be approved: “it will be fully implemented, and if the Communists like to vote for it, they can do so; or not, they are free to do as they like” (Cimmino 2005, p. 37). His agenda focused on augmenting the number of municipal staff, establishing a Technical Office and expanding the Building Commission, thereby creating new political resources for exerting political influence and coercing consensus. What followed was a period characterised by over-building in Ottaviano and a tug of war among La Marca, the Christian Democrats and especially the Communists about where to award city contracts. Political violence was rampant. The city was wounded by “execrable murders so numerous and brutal as to have never been seen before: not even during the brigandage period at the end of last century and in the years following 1943” (Saviano 1988, p. 220). On 13 September 1978, Pasquale Cappuccito, a lawyer and socialist municipality councillor who had opposed La Marca on public procurement issues, was killed. Convicted in the first instance trial for having been among those who ordered the murder, together with Pasquale Cutolo, La Marca was later fully acquitted on appeal. On 7 November 1980, Domenico Beneventano, a physician and city councillor elected with the PCI in 1975 and 1980, who had argued against the over-building plaguing the local area, was killed; this crime went unpunished as well.⁴ In addition, the people who ordered the February 1981 attacks against Morgini, the magistrate who had initiated investigations into the Cappuccito murder, and councillor La Pietra, secretary of the Ottaviano branch of the PCI, were likewise never caught. In June 1980, La Marca left the mayoral seat for that of provincial councillor, as part of a centre-left council. Targeted by an arrest warrant as part of the huge anti-Camorra blitz in 1983, he fled to Germany. Acquitted due to insufficient evidence, he returned to Ottaviano and invested in waste management by purchasing several landfills in Campania. He died in 1992.

Salvatore La Marca frequently appears in the collective memory of locals, albeit with mixed opinions. In the past, some people had claimed he had family ties with the leader of the La Marca gang (Rossi 1983, p. 24), almost as if to explain his violent power. Today, many remember him as “an excellent mayor” who “did a lot for the city”; someone capable of cultivating meaningful emotional relationships: “He loved me very much. I was the DC Secretary” (interview, local historian). At the same time, he was defined as a “*camorrista* in his own way”, a modern *guappo* who used his violent reputation to build consensus and put together alliances to oppose the rise of politicians who “were known to have supported Alfieri” (*ibid.*) when the NF began to prevail

in the Camorra war. While some interviewees recall the "fear of speaking out" that permeated the city council when La Marca represented Cutolo's "political wing" (interview, Legambiente leader), others argue that "there was no relationship between politics and crime in Ottaviano" as no financial investments had been made at the local level (interview, local historian). Good and evil merge in the collective memory surrounding this "disquieting" figure, driving the recognition of violence to a hidden level. One interviewee emblematically states:

Salvatore La Marca was a controversial figure [...] he was a good mayor and did a lot for the city, but he managed the landfills on the mountain. He extorted quarries from other entrepreneurs [...]. I know a person who told me that one morning his father's workers went to the quarry and found La Marca's workers holding guns and saying: "It was yours once, today, it's ours!" And then, there are many other little things, some could even have been right; perhaps he was the best mayor Ottaviano ever had, despite all the problems, but I speak of the city, as a clean city that was given constant maintenance. Ottaviano used to be really beautiful [...] when Salvatore La Marca was "THE" Mayor!

(Interview, journalist-writer)

Contradictions in collective memory appear during the turbulent years of the mafia war in which the administration operated on "two levels", a formally correct and lawful one, and an underlying one favouring illicit interests that were also tied to criminal groups (interview, auditor). This was a period of great political confusion during which even nationally significant figures had a hard time governing the city.⁵ After the DC-PCI compromise, an agreement among the PCI, PSI (the socialist party) and Salvatore La Marca's PSDI led to the downfall of the DC in Ottaviano, reflecting the end of the First Republic at the national level.⁶

The breach created by La Marca in 1975 opened the way for Mario Fabbrocino (currently still considered the leader of the Camorra in the Vesuvian area) to "interfere" in Ottaviano's administration. In 1993, the town elected Giovanni D'Ambrosio, representative of the "Rinnovamento Democratico Cattolico" (Catholic Democratic Renovation) list, as mayor: according to police investigations, his election occurred thanks to an almost plebiscite consensus built on agreements made with exponents of the Fabbrocino clan in exchange for illicit favours. Placing individuals connected to Fabbrocino in the bureaucratic structure served to sanction this criminal political pact. Of all policy sectors, the most besieged was urban planning; unauthorised building became widespread, especially in the mayor's birthplace and home, San Gennarello.

In 1997 the city council was dissolved due to mafia infiltration. In 1999 an external commissioner was brought in to administer the city because of rampant environmental and cultural degradation. These are events that the people, and even the current mayor, have removed from their memories; the mayor elected

in 2000 from the PCI list who replaced the Prefectural Commissioner remembers them quite well, however (interview, former mayor). This candidate, a paediatrician, defeated the centre-right candidates thanks to his alliance with a "leftist group" based in San Gennarello, a town which had always been a strategic basin of potential electoral support. In April 2003, a group of councillors resigned and this put an end to the doctor's mandate. This brief administrative interlude allowed the local government to make new demands for greater transparency, environmental protection and local development. The relocation of the Vesuvius National Park agency headquarters to Palazzo Mediceo can be recalled as one of the emblematic episodes of this period.

Memories of Violence

Interviewees often defined the Cutolo war as "Years of Lead", an expression used to refer to the period of political terrorism in the 1970s in Italian public discourse (Della Porta 1995): mafia violence hurled the town of Ottaviano onto the national stage of terrorist emergency and community dismay:

It's a bit like when Italy had to face the Red Brigades, in the end it happened at the same time (...): we were in dismay! That's what it was like for us. The Camorra and Mafia seemed to be something that was far away, in the areas of Naples or Sicily. But we hadn't realised that it was right before our eyes!

(Interview, journalist-writer)

The mafia war and its victims appear as "facts" disconnected from the community, making it hard for locals to acknowledge the political and administrative dimension of this violence. Homicides committed in urban areas emphasise the boundaries between two separate communities: a "criminal" one that kills and a "legal" one that looks the other way:

every single one of us has witnessed at least a couple of murders. I saw two with my own eyes. One on the street, another in a café: I was standing at the bar when they killed the person standing next to me, I was 18-19; they shot him and then told us: "Go away". The police arrived shortly afterwards. We had seen what had happened but we probably couldn't say that we had. We felt terrible!

(Interview, restorer)

Social divisions, and those between legal and illegal society, reveal parallel worlds. The first of these divisions can be seen in the sites of socialisation which are still active today and involve gender as well. To enter the VIP Circolo Scudieri, wealth is not enough: Salvatore La Marca, a "cagome violento" (violent boor) did not acquire the "right" to membership until he was elected mayor. Carmine Alfieri, Raffaele Cutolo and Mario Fabbrocino are still members of

the more democratic Circolo Diaz. In 1984, a group of female professionals founded the FIDAPA (Italian federation of women artists and professionals) chapter in Ottaviano for the "cultural promotion of women and struggle against gender bias" (interview, chairwoman of the FIDAPA). During Cutolo's war, FIDAPA activity adhered to the "educated" identity characteristic of Ottaviano, reclaiming the role of women almost as if seeking to redeem the image of women in the period in which Rosetta Cutolo led the criminal organisation.

The perception of the mafia war as foreign to the "legal" community is part and parcel of the trivialisation of death, especially when recounting Cutolo's career specifically: his first murder (the victim of which nobody remembers) is reduced to "an act of bravado", as illustrated by the testimony of a parish priest who stated that the NCO's criminal schemes were aimed at protecting the city from outsider criminal groups.

This separation between legal and violent society can also be seen in physical space. As mentioned above, the territories between Nola and Ottaviano comprise a single vast theatre of war with its own specific geography of violence. The "soldiers" of the war between Fabbrocino and the NCO were executed in the clan leaders' strongholds: "he died because he was a soldier, and at war you die!" (interview, police officer). The dense hazel groves nestled among the leaders' villas provide impenetrable spaces that are difficult to monitor using surveillance devices (ibid.).

In the city, the legal and criminal components share relational (squares, streets and cafés) and institutional (schools, the police headquarters and city council) spaces. In these hybrid spaces, it is difficult to glimpse or depend on institutional points of reference:

The daughter of Michele Alfieri [boss Carmine's cousin], who was in command before Raffaele Cutolo, was one of my pupils and in the '70s I had to save a colleague because this poor woman came from Naples to teach in San Gennaro (...). She had this girl in her class (... nobody had told her who she was.

The teacher often reproached the girl harshly for her poor school performance.

One evening, one of my pupils came to me and said: "Professo', Michele Alfieri would like to speak to you". He had been a fugitive for 22 years! He continued: "Professo', he wants to speak to you, at my house". In this pupil's home, I was scared! Two cars were parked in front of the house, he was inside. I said: "Sorry, but what's the problem? (*Scusatemi, ma o' problema qual è?*)" – "Professo', my daughter starts crying as soon as she sees me when I get home. She always speaks well of you, but that other professor ... My daughter cries," her mother (...) also cries. Whose head do I need to chop off? (*Ma io 'a capa a chi l'aggia tajà?*)" He said it [seriously]! I told him: "You don't need to cut anyone's head off. I'll deal with it [*No, no, la capa nu la avita tajà a nisciuno! Ci penso io!*]"

After resolving the issue with her colleague, Michele Alfieri – still a "fugitive" – offered the teacher his personal thanks in a café in front of the school "at half past eight in the morning, right in front of the police station [*cu i Carabinieri ccq!*]" (interview, local historian).

In general, the memories solicited by the interview show that violence is narrated only in part and on multiple levels. A seventy-year-old man relates the violence to the "negative tradition" deriving from the moral double standards of superficial, ritual religiousness (Dino 2008):

a lot of negative traditions have been maintained. The tradition that is acted out during processions (...) but what do I care [*Ma che me ne fotte!*]? If I go to the procession or mass I have to feel it, I do it with sacrifice. But I don't feel well and have reached a certain age, my sacrifice is useless! I want death: it's a bit like the early Christians who challenged the authority. And why do you challenge it? You must do it secretly, it's useless if you do it publicly. Because then they would send you to the Roman amphitheatre to fight with the lions, [*pecché po' ti mandano dinto all' anfiteatr!*]. And what do you get? It's better a bad Christian alive than a good Christian killed! [*Meglio nu malecristiano vivo che nu buono cristiano morto!*]

(Interview, tradesman)

Political violence, on the other hand, emerges more clearly. As the unsolved murders of Cappuccio and Beneventano reveal, violence is identified as a privileged instrument of political competition, a political resource. It is part of a decades-long period in which the NCO only represents a brief interlude. Violence has been reproduced in different ways over time, up to the present (interview, former mayor). The two murders are recounted as traumatic events even when the interviewees' ideological perspectives diverge. The leader of Legambiente and former Christian Democrat councillor both believe these murders extinguished the city's spirit and its practice of holding demonstrations and mobilising for political aims.

Nevertheless, the story of this violence unfolds in a non-linear and ambiguous manner. Immediately after the murders, the political roots of the crimes were concealed behind insinuations about personal motives, insinuations which are still painfully present in people's memories (interview, Beneventano's sister; Arpaia 2006, p. 254). The fact that there was no judicial resolution, moreover, has made it more difficult for civic society to re-appropriate the mourning process; instead, the memory of this violence is relegated to the sphere of intimacy, elusive and difficult for people to recount. Beneventano's sister and his friends from the time still have difficulty talking about the fact that it was only in 2012 that, thanks to a judicial verdict, *Mimmo* was finally recognised as a mafia victim. It was not until recently that a city council room was dedicated to Pasquale Cappuccio.

Murder has an unequivocal meaning in mafia careers and the construction of associative ties (Chinnici and Santino 1989). Cutolo's career also began

with a murder. It was the violence he inflicted on his main local adversaries, Mario Fabbrocino and Carmine Alfieri (he killed Alfieri's and Fabbrocino's brothers) that gave rise to the partnership between the two, a partnership characterised by mutual distrust (in fact, they dissolved the holding company after defeating Cutolo in 1983). If suffering violence creates strong alliances, committing violence allows aspiring bosses to climb the career ladder: Mario's son, Giovanni Fabbrocino, was never recognised as leader because he had never committed "bloody acts" (interview, police officer).

Collective memory also reveals another dimension of violence, one that affects the lives of the families of low-ranking soldiers, forcing them to maintain an "uncomfortable" state of complicity with criminal power. The story of this violence alters the narrative register: when remembering the murder of a close relative associated with Cutolo who was killed by the enemy clan, one of our witnesses went from describing places and people in detail to whispering the story through allusions. Losing a family member in the war between mafia groups means living on the edge between the two (legal and criminal) communities, and this state of in-betweenness prevents the grieving relative from fully processing the violence he or she has suffered and feeds the silence surrounding the Cutolo war. Survivors are therefore bound together by a veil of oblivion that becomes impenetrable.

Lastly, there is another dimension of violence that appears frequently in the accounts of interviewees who were youths/adolescents at the time: the violence of being deprived of personal freedom and seeing their city criminalised. During the Years of Lead, young people lost freedom in their relationships and use of public spaces. Just like in a real war, they were subjected to "curfews". Recognisable and thus "dangerous" contacts and places had to be avoided. The people of Ottaviano were targeted when they travelled outside the city, having their documents scrutinised at hotel reception desks or being targeted for "random checks" by police while on a school trip. This *intangible* violence "marked an entire generation, forever!" (interview, entrepreneur), regardless of gender.

Conclusion: Silence, Oblivion and the Marks of Ransom

Today, Ottaviano is undergoing a period of apparent reconciliation symbolised by the community's re-appropriation of identity-forming spaces. In 1985 "Cutolo's Castle" was seized from the boss (he had taken it over in 1980), and it now hosts the Vesuvius National Park agency. Having been given back its original name of Palazzo Mediceo, this shift testifies to the return of legality. Along the road leading from the Castle to the Town Hall square, the Memorial Garden, located inside a property that was seized from one of Fabbrocino's allies, is home to trees planted in remembrance of the victims of the Camorra and public rites commemorating them. Further down the road is Raffaele Cutolo's house, where his sister Rosetta, his wife Immacolata and his daughter live together with his brother Pasquale; his nephews' home is just a few steps away. At the

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end of the road stands Town Hall, in a 17th-century monastery. The conflicts of the past seem to have been reassembled in the space of only a few metres.

With this image that their criminal history has come to an end, the life of the Cutolo family has returned to a state of normality: Rosetta attends religious services, Immacolata leads a sober life and her daughter attends school; Pasquale's children "are good people and feel the burden of their surname" (interview, FIDAPA chairwoman). Furthermore, the inhabitants of Ottaviano seem to peacefully coexist with the myth of Cutolo who, held in prison, "does not speak". Nevertheless, lurking behind this image are a range of perceptions that do not always converge.

The interviewees' accounts do come together in granting less importance to the representation of Cutolo the "*camorrista*", as local collective memory relegates this image to the sidelines of individual and collective experiences of violence. People only talk about the boss in their stories if they are asked to do so. Some describe him as an ordinary man: "he's just a poor idiot like me [*è nu povero struzz 'comm'a me*]" (interview, tradesman), neutralising the myth and criminal status of the man, casting it as more the fruit of his mafia network than a personal prerogative.

In contrast, views regarding the foundations of the city's violent government remain ambiguous. The same witness refers to a consolidated system of patronage practices and presents Cutolo as the natural expression of this system:

that guy [Cutolo], in the end is just like anybody else. . . what do I mean? It's the system of this environment, where people help each other [*che uno da' 'na mano all'ate*], implicitly or explicitly (. . .). We are all stuck in the same situation [*Stamme tutte quante 'nchiavicate int' a sta situazione*]; we have not lost this mentality! (Ibid.)

This account does not consider that over time these practices took shape thanks to violence. Local historians, instead, driven by troubling questions about the origins of violence in their community (Cimmino 2003; Saviano 1988), observe an uptrend within the uninterrupted presence of pressure towards consensus and violent control of the market, recognising that politics and the mafia often overlap. In recent years, this overlap has degenerated into "a two-level system" of practices in the local government, with a first, formally correct level and a second one aimed at favouring illicit interests, some of which stem from criminal spheres. The fact that Ottaviano's city council was dissolved twice during the 1990s due to mafia infiltration is a clear demonstration of the existence of this "two-level system".

More broadly, this chapter has offered an interpretation of the local context through an in-depth historical-social lens which reveals that, in reality, violence goes beyond the events involving the NCO. Indeed, this represents just one of the rifts in Ottaviano's history. The first rift was created when the Medici family left the scene after three hundred years of rule. The most

significant turning points occurred during the 20th century, from the contraband and banditry of the post-war period, unionisation conflicts and the crisis of business in the 1970s to the collapse of the DC and the local government's degeneration into the violent politics of the mayor elected in 1975. The play between memory and oblivion situates all of these events in a multifaceted framework of actors, practices and perspectives that public discourses and those focused specifically on crime tend to overlook.

One of the main elements to emerge is the role of women and the ambiguity of gender relations. The memories collected as part of this research, almost all coming from men, convey the centrality of women in the production sector, in trade union conflicts and in culture as well as their participation in political protests in the 1970s, as outlined in Arpaia's written account (2006, p. 114), but without granting it any significance. On the other hand, women never appear in either Ottaviano's political history or in leading positions in local businesses. This exclusion of women from certain roles becomes explicit at the administrative level. The city council greeted the twenty-year-old female journalist who interviewed the mayor in the early 1980s by exclaiming "Let's hold on to such a pretty journalist!" This allusion to her femininity, in a threatening tone, immediately relegated her to an inferior position, causing her to physically tremble "for the first time in her life" (interview, journalist-writer).

Paradoxically, the figure of Rosetta Cutolo exemplifies these dynamics. In public and judicial representations, Rosetta Cutolo's important role in the NCO is demoted to that of spokesperson for her brother, but people in Ottaviano know that such representations are inaccurate ("it is said that she had a decisive role", interview, FIDAPA chairwoman). However, the community shares in the *myth*, thus supporting the negation of women's roles. A few decades ago, clan leaders likely used this type of representation to take advantage of gender stereotypes in mounting their legal defences (Ingrasci 2006, Fiandaca 2007). Today, this representation clashes with judicial and media perspectives that recognise the crucial role played by women in criminal organisations (Gribaudo 2010, Zaccaria 2010 and 2015). When the trials were over, Rosetta remained hidden, almost shielded by the community. Indeed, we were repeatedly denied the chance to meet with her despite the many figures who could have put us in contact (parish priests, activists and institutional officials).

To conclude, violence is represented in various ways in collective memory. The *intangibile* violence suffered by young people deprived of their freedom in a criminalised city protected by the police and faced with armed conflicts; the violence of the moral *double standard* that more senior residents perceive in a superficial form of religiosity that imposes ritual practices to ensure social approval; the violence that strikes the families of *low-ranking soldiers* and sinks deep into their memories, leaving unresolved their unsettling proximity to criminal powers. And, lastly, the political violence that is

part of a decades-long stretch of time in which the NCO represents only an interlude, a violence that local memory associates with the high-profile victims of the Cutolo war. One thread in particular runs through these many memories, uniting them: the lack of a collective act of processing violence. People speak about this violence in hushed tones, if asked to; it remains unexplained and unresolved. It takes shape in unexpressed grief for unsolved murders and reveals people's deeply uneasy distrust of institutions: "the greatest damage caused by the Cutolo experience" (interview, local historian) is one that still seems to put the community at risk "of seeing things that it would be better not to see" (Arpaia 2006: p. 308). There have been some positive developments, however. The traumatic Beneventano murder lost its initial state of isolation and was granted a resolution thanks to efforts coming from both institutions (with the ministry acknowledging him as a victim of the mafia) and the public (the Campania region network of mafia victims' family members), who set up a foundation named after him. On another front, a revival of associations committed to legality and those promoting local entrepreneurs suggests some degree of reconciliation. Underlying this, discussions of municipal governance are increasingly accompanied by a less conflictual and more transparent political climate.

Notes

- 1 His 1984 biography, written by journalist Joe Marrazzo (Marrazzo 1984), inspired Giuseppe Tomatore's film significantly entitled *Il Camorrista* (1986).
- 2 (...) [Within] the Church, some people were completely opposed, others instead played for time. Cutolo's people included a priest, who was arrested along with them. He was the spiritual father of Raffaele Cutolo. He really took a stand; he was actually part of the holding company. He died, killed in an ambush.
(interview, Legambiente leader)
- 3 When her mother died, Rosetta
... was a fugitive, but some people swear that she was also there to bid her last farewell to her (...) in the group of nuns (...) dressed as a nun. She was a church woman who had a school degree in theology and gave embroidery lessons to the novices.
(Tisci 2014, pp. 58–59)
- Regarding the relationship between the church and mafias, see: Dino, 2008; Sales 2016.
- 4 Sentenced in the first trial as an instigator, in 1987 Cutolo was acquitted on appeal for insufficient evidence.
- 5 Antonio Iervolino (DC) succeeded La Marca in 1980: he was mayor until 1985, after which he became a regional councillor and chairman and in the late 1990s was elected senator for the centre-right.
- 6 In this period the national DC, together with other historical parties, dissolved following the "*Mani pulite*" judicial investigations, which uncovered a widespread system of political corruption (Crainz 2016).

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