

Adoption and Pedophilia, a Chilling Affair

Translated from Italian. Original publication: L'Espresso, 12 January 2013

Raped in the orphanage. Photographed and filmed. The shocking tale of three Bulgarian children adopted in Italy. And their parents accusations were ignored. The lights in the Windows of the orphanage tonight go out later than usual. The half moon illuminates the clean air which is fifteen degrees below zero and shines on the shapes of the hungry foxes who come in looking for something to bite. This is the worse time. The time at which resonate the barking of stray dogs. And one in which "D" enters in the rooms of younger children. It happens almost every night in this remote snowy countryside Institute of Bulgaria. And if it is not him, there is always someone his age who wants to have sex at this time. They are only twelve or thirteen years old. No older. Other victims, are puppies. Three, five or 7 years old. At most ten. Nor is it the fault of "D". He simply repeats what larger guests had done to him. And not only the guests. The violence often would be by some employees of the Institute. At least seven men and four women.

They make the prostitute of the children in a nightclub. Taking photographs. Sometimes films of the sexual attacks. Perhaps they resell the film. Here, on the edge of the European Union, between the barks and the foxes that you turn around, it is a secret guarded for years. And yet, if it would still be secret if the last three children just adopted in Italy had not had the courage to break the silence. Right now they are free, they want to save others kids, almost sixty, who still live in the orphanage. And, above all, save themselves from a childhood far too cruel. It's a chilling account. Seven pages sent a few weeks ago to the President of the Commission for international adoptions, Minister Andrea Riccardi.

Once it has been exposed, foster parents have complained about the lack of any action to stop the abuses, by the group that mediated the adoption, the Aibi. One of the major legally recognized groups that brought 249 children brought to Italy in 2011, declared income 8 million to 761 thousand euros and a capital of nearly 4 million. The President of Aibi, Marco Griffini, was informed of the violence by phone calls and emails since 12 October. "We immediately reported the matter to the CAI [sic: Italian Central Authority], the Committee argues. When? "I don't remember the date ' Griffini replies: "but it is the obligation of the CAI to warn the Bulgarian central authority. And then we have only this case. Child abuse are very frequent. From what is said in the paper, "L'Espresso", however, the CAI has informed the Government Committee only few days ago. Long after the first report of the adoptive parents. A silence that has delayed more than two months of investigating of a possible organization of pedophiles.

Fifteen babies are grow up in the same Bulgarian Institute and now adopted in Italy. But their new families do not know anything. A troubling gap in records which should accompany the children of international adoption. To ensure adequate care for children these horrible experiences, if they are not stopped, will not stop the spread of the horrors. If this happens in a country like Bulgaria, which is part of the EU and ratified the Hague Convention on the protection of minors, you can easily imagine what happen elsewhere. Only three adoptive children, arrived in 2012, have revealed the secret to parents.

Two boys, 10 and 11 years. And a daughter, who has just under 9 years. A team of psychotherapists has heard them according to adoptive family therapy centres. The sessions were filmed and the children were able to reconstruct the violence with the help of patterns, colours and anatomical dolls. «Tales of children seem to be totally reliable and free from inductions in the manifestation of your thoughts, "concludes the psychological report annexed to the complaint:"

There is no reason to believe that the early and repeated experiences, made when the children were in the Institute in Bulgaria, still exist as normal behaviour or are otherwise permitted». Shortly before midnight, in front of the orphanage and throughout the country, to save energy, they turn off the streetlights along the streets. With clouds in front of the moon, now the darkness is complete. The only way to get out of this Institute, once we're inside, are the holidays. The call it just that. A journey of less than two hours to a hotel in the middle of the Woods. The girl who now lives in Italy and her companions, however, soon learn that this is not a vacation. «To me no, only a handful of abusers, "says the girl during a session of psychotherapy. She tells of a particularly traumatic experience. «In a disco ", is written in the report," where she and other girls present at the Institute were taken. Initially we danced and we enjoyed then, usually after the cake, we were held in rooms in which some men were "playing" with them ". She also reveals that a man put his hands around the neck and mouth of a girl to keep her from crying. At that point they raped her in front of her sister. The details are too precise for their age, in addition to the survey method, and convince the psychotherapists that the three children have truly experienced this.

Also they speak of adults who are outside the Organization of the orphanage and who attend the nightclub. Another child tells of being beaten by "D" and other naked men while trying desperately to protect his little sister. She knew what was going to happen, because she had already been raped. He was punched in the face. They then assaulted the sister. According to three, the abuses did not have pity even for a 9 year old epileptic child who would be forced to have sexual intercourse during an seizure.

Even a baby adopted in Italy had suffered violence from the same Institute: «I saw M and B. that had sex with the baby as I did with "S"». The children seem to have experienced everything as a game, write the psychotherapists, «not connecting it as a negative experience». A normal game for her. Also, the world of abusive adults around this orphanage is a bottomless abyss. And the rest of stories that these children tell: There are obviously positive examples, affectionate educators. Volunteers in the district

that you give parties and afterschool shows. How to prepare schoolboys to be at pensioners in the country just a little before Christmas.

The memories, however, mean nothing with the silence of the wardens on duty when the night comes and the abusers come to sleep in their (children's) rooms without ever intervening. And in wounds left by men and by women that the three children identify as maintenance workers, cooks, and hairdresser and the friends who are pedophiles. The same people that, during vacations, accompany them to the hotel that has the nightclub. They would be required to spend the afternoon in homes in exchange for a tablet a chocolate snack, an animated tv carton. At this point it's easier to convince them or force them. They tell of the abuse of a child of three years. And when girls and children are forced to watch sex movies and forced to endure all depravity imaginable and that's exactly what "D" and his henchmen of the evening repeat on smaller scale. Or describe the times when the most violent men take them to the bathroom and force them to endure gruesome practices, and then punish the children with severe beatings.

It sucks to just imagine all this. But it's worth reading it. To consider that the silence of those in Bulgaria who turned their backs to the courage of the three small children. And in Italy, the call for help of their adoptive parents. Other Bulgarian orphanages already knew about the crimes of pedophilia.

And are not only national stories. Depraved English, Germans and Italians are perhaps involved in looking for small children to victimise. In 2006 in Veliko Tarnovo, the former capital in the North, police stopped a procurer of young prostitutes who recruited girls between 11 and 14 years from the city's orphanage. Their compensation: 10, lev 20 euros. Are educators of the Institute to denounce the pedophile? The sentences for this offence should does create much fear, though. The men negotiated a sentence of a year of imprisonment and 153 euros fine. Last Spring, also in Veliko Tarnovo, English man of 63 years is accused of having abused two brothers of ten and eleven years. In March 2008 in Tran close to border with Serbia, a Bulgarian pedophile 67 years, before committing suicide, admitted to having shot the witness who years before accused him. The victim was a 15 year old girl, Lilyana Todorova, resident of the local orphanage, was abused with other two companions of the Institute aged 12 and 15 years.

It shouldn't be a surprise especially given the history of the orphanage. «Our children», have been ordered by the Director, before departure for Italy, not to reiterate the sexual acts or tell what was seen or known to have happened in of the Institute. Because otherwise, (if they told) the family that might have taken them in would refused and report it immediately in Bulgaria».

In the frosty darkness rises a cry which, from the windows of the orphanage, reached the street. A sound stronger than the barking of dogs. A childish voice. Maybe it's only a bad dream. The girl, the smallest of the three that have broken silence, while living here is sometimes managed to slip through the grasp of those big hands great that were holding her. But there were prolonged and unbearable shouts. Screaming as she could, crying loud, while "D" was beating her, as revealed in one of the sessions that was trying to heal the scars in her psyche. Because even though she now is safe, and has a beautiful family and is good at school, the nightmares of the past and that deafening scream yet return.

The story of children, places, people, names, disco, says it all. With contacts, through Internet, help arrives in Italy. It takes just a few days in Bulgaria to verify this. Sofia is nearby. The night still long. Before returning, only one thing remains to do. Warn the Bulgarian police. In the morning, the 'special' Office does not admit to knowing anything. It's been two and a half months from first the report by the adoptive parents. Two and a half months where, who knows how many other times, sixty children in the solitude of their rooms have refrained from shouting.