

OLYMPIC BOXING

Khelif-Carini: Worldwide violence disguised as sport

WORLD

02_08_2024



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The premises for a disaster (the umpteenth, of these wretched Olympics), were all there. We are talking about the fight between Imane Khelif and Angela Carini.

The Algerian boxer who claims to be female holds all 'the cards' (the testosterone

levels allowed by the IOC to fight against girls), public opinion, the media. After all, is she or is she not part of a discriminated minority? Is he or she entitled or not entitled to every possible concession to be compensated? Are we in 2024 or in the dark ages? Do we or do we not want to leave behind these old social constructs such as bone strength, speed, testosterone... all the things that science has proven to be absolutely irrelevant?

And then, the brave, beautiful, tear-jerking message from Angela Carini (25-year-old) on Instagram: 'My father always told me to fight with honour, with loyalty and above all to always trust in God. That's how I grew up, the last time I stepped into the Olympic ring my father was dying. Today I retrace that path, today I am here, but he is with me and I am not afraid of anything. I am here for myself, I am here for my father and I will fight like a warrior until the end like he taught me'. Only the usual homophobes, the usual exploitative politicians can demand that the meeting be cancelled. Even feminists, who all year round keep up the alarm about violence against women, are silent.

This violence, in mondovision and disguised as sport, isn't a problem. So, the fight must take place. Guaranteed defeat, a probable massacre, with a young and beautiful girl risking, if not her life, permanent damage. Eh, but remember the rights...

The fight took place and lasted only a few seconds. Carini, after receiving a few blows, went to the corner to have her helmet fixed. The reason is technically strange; but clear, observing the look the girl gave her trainer Emanuele Renzini. If you get a chance, take note of the boxer's expression. Nonetheless, she went back into the ring; briefly. Then she returned to the corner and said something to her trainer. Match (thank God) over.

The commentators - the same ones who at the sound of the gong chuckled 'all hell breaks loose' - chimed in: 'this is very... very likely... I don't know. I think the best solution is to go and ask him'. Yeah, who knows what happened. 'It looks more like a contested abandonment'. Meanwhile the cameras were framing the girl who insisted: "It hurts so much!". The two commentators continued: 'Of all the endings, this is the last one we could have expected'. Next: "But I can't understand, this is something quite... it seems to be a stance, of contestation, that I don't understand, I don't understand. [The girl] is being controversial with Renzini, I don't know what they are saying to each other but it doesn't give a good impression, no. Absolutely, absolutely'. The girl, in front of everyone, bursts into tears. And the two: 'Now the crying seems even more strange. No, I dissociate myself. Let's move on without being able to discuss obviously what happened...'. No empathy, for the girl: only disapproval and indignation.

On Italian national TV, this is the comment: 'A few minutes after the start of the match between Angela Carini and Imane Khelif, the unexpected happens: the Italian girl stops. The reasons for the choice will be understood later'.

What can we make of this ugly episode? Did Angela Carini do well to enter the ring, did she show courage? Sorry to say, but no she didn't. I would not call that courage, but recklessness. She should not have presented herself, nor should the other girls who will have to face Khelif. I understand the years of preparation, sweat, pain that Angela Carini had to endure; I also understand the posthumous satisfaction for her father who followed her apprehensively on her way to Paris; but no. The only way to stop this plague of biologically male athletes monopolising women's (including combat) sports can only end if girls refuse to compete. After all, the spirit of sportsmanship demands that we face each other 'on equal terms'.

What amazed me was Emanuele Renzini, the coach. He was entrusted with a 25-year-old girl who had lost her father: did he not even consider protecting her? Did he not think to take responsibility for cancelling the match, preserving Angela Carini from this episode that will stay with her for the rest of her life?

Well, I'd say that from the cloaca of modernity, at least for today, that's it. And it can only get worse. We will have to resign ourselves: with the collapse of the Berlin Wall, not only did the Soviet world end. The Greco-Roman-Christian world in which we grew up and which we do not resign ourselves to considering dead is also over. We cannot stop it, certainly. What we can do, as Solženitsyn said in the 1970s, is refuse to participate personally in the lies and hypocrisy. Not in my name.