

## Mafia and historiography. Cultural preliminary remarks and new outlooks



*Mafias del Mundo: Ndrangheta* by Eneas De Troya on Flickr (CC BY 2.0)

During these last decades, the debate about mafia phenomenon is under discussion, and it has had a huge vitality. Since the second half of nineteenth century, historians as Salvatore Lupo, Rosario Mangiameli and Paolo Pezzino have played a major role and introduced significant innovations in historical field. Indeed, thanks to the deconstruction of the cultural paradigm, they inserted mafia among modernity's pathologies, in order to promote innovative interpretations and points of view about the phenomenon. Moreover, apart from this typology of researches, new historiographical tendencies were developed. An example could be the World History which encouraged historians such as Giuseppe Carlo Marino who browsed his analysis in a transnational perspective (*Globamafia*, 2011), Salvatore Lupo, who pinpointed the strong link between specific Cosa Nostra's features and the movement of ideas and people from Europe to America, (*Quando la Mafia trovò l'America*, 2008) and like Umberto Santino, who

fostered a sociological approach to mafia studies (*Dalla mafia alle mafie: scienze sociali e crimine organizzato*, 2006). In addition, the importance of Gender Studies should not be underestimated: this point of view has led several historians, both men and women, to investigate women's role in mafia organizations and narrations. Therefore, all these novelties led to a change in panorama of the researches as well as in interpretative lines of the phenomenon.

What was the role of international organisms and institutional agencies in mafia criminality history? And what is, nowadays, the significance of the amount of stored documentation for the construction of a mafia phenomenology?

In the light of the studies and researches carried on during the last thirty years, how did mafias, politics and institutional environment scheme relationships influenced each other in the different national backgrounds?

How did media's world face mafia phenomenon and its evolution during the years? And by which criteria did culture, broadly speaking, set and evaluate mafia dynamics looking at its sociological and anthropological features in local, national and supranational contexts?

What is Italy's current position on the most important illegal trade routes of mafia organizations? What is the role played by the globalization in the diffusion of crime linked to the increase of migrant flows and the environmental and public resources exploitation?

Could the death of sicilian "Cosa Nostra" be a valuable hypothesis to be taken under consideration at the moment or maybe we should talk about its transformation? And in this last case, do analogies with the evolution of other criminal groups exist? Could be now conceivable an "international mafia power" having the role of merging all criminal groups grown beyond Cosa Nostra?

These mentioned are just some of the possible questions which, starting by stabilized preconditions in dedicated debates and literacy, may introduce crucial issues for the understanding of contemporary reality, not only in Italy but also all over the world. In this sense, lots of new detailed studies are still feasible and encouraged. Moreover, it is evident that the historical research needs a deeper analysis concerning this phenomenon which is so strongly connected with politics, economy, society and anthropology.

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- international organizations' role and action to contrast mafias;
- role and documentation of parliamentary committees against mafia;
- relationship between mafia, political class and institutional context;
- culture and media universe's interest, analysis and representation of mafia phenomenon;
- mafia organizations' international links, transnational trades and "global economies";
- gender perspectives: femininity, woman's influence and role in mafia organizations;
- migrations' exploitation, eco – mafias and felonies against patrimony.

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