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# Between Local and Global: the ‘Ndrangheta’s Drug Trafficking Route

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## Abstract

According to the last United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime report (2016), 247 million people aged between 15 and 64 years used drugs at least once in the past year, with cocaine being the best-selling of the goods from the ‘Ndrangheta. In this case, the drugs trade is 60% of the systemic gain due to illicit trafficking that allowed the spreading of the Calabrian criminal organization across five continents. Nevertheless, this sometimes little-known apparently harmless organization, which comes from the Aspromonte heartland in Calabria, was included by the United States in the blacklist of the 75 most dangerous drug-trafficking organizations only in 2008. Therefore, this investigative study, based on reference literature, aims to analyse what are the aspects that make the Calabrian criminal organization “local” and “global” at the same time as well as the strengths and weaknesses in combating ‘Ndrangheta’s drug trafficking.

**Keywords** drug trafficking; ‘Ndrangheta; local and global

## INTRODUCTION TO THE METHODOLOGY: AN ANALYSIS PERSPECTIVE

The field of study of the mafia should be considered as a fractal structure, in a spiral shape that is subject to continuous mirrorings and combinations of variables (Abbott 2004; Sciarrone 2009).

Based on this consideration, given the polymorphic and polyhedral nature of mafia organized crime, the methodological perspective adopted in this study aims at adapting itself in an isomorphic fashion to the subject of study.

To this purpose, the paper aims at offering an insight into the Calabrian crime syndicate known as ‘Ndrangheta, starting from the complex scenario defined by drugs trafficking activity.

In the last decades, in fact, this activity ensured the organization’s longevity and its affiliates’ well-being, favouring the strengthening of external networks and allowing its delocalization beyond its original territorial boundaries.

The paper aims to highlight the mirroring game and the interactions between the ‘Ndrangheta organization and the globalized civil and social context where it is positioned.

It is precisely in the inside/outside, inner/outer dialectic that the embedded<sup>1</sup> character of the 'Ndrangheta universe finds expression: a universe that becomes strengthened and fostered by the grey area of the white collars' economic criminality (Dino 2011; Ciconte 2013; Dalla Chiesa 2015).

For these reasons, there is the need to adopt a peculiar perspective that is able to shorten the gap between the symbolic-identitary<sup>2</sup> and the functional-behavioural<sup>3</sup> matrix of the 'Ndrangheta mafia organization.

In accordance with the polymorphic nature of the 'Ndrangheta and its tight bond with economic criminality and international power structures, the methodology adopted in the present study has taken a combinatorial and explorative nature.

This work has been carried out by first performing a bibliographical selection and by linking the explicative and cognitive frameworks of the literature related to the subject. The bibliographical analysis has been focusing mainly on the consultation of judicial documents (inquiries, judgments, operations led by police, eavesdropping extracted from public documents, thematic press reviews and journalistic investigations).

Then, an in-depth analysis of the criminal organization from the inside has been carried out. To this purpose, the recourse to life stories of people who lived the 'Ndrangheta as an affiliate first, and as a collaborator of justice<sup>4</sup> later, has been of paramount importance.

This contribution aims at offering a critical analysis with the goal of revisiting the knowledge of the internal socialization and external influence lattices on which 'Ndrangheta bases its undisputed hegemony (Armao 2000).

## ANATOMY OF THE COCAINE EMPIRE AND THE 'NDRANGHETA GLOBALIZED CRIMINAL NETWORK

Before introducing the dialectic relationship between local and global in which the largest most stable coalition of Italian mafia group in the world, namely 'Ndrangheta, finds expression it is fundamental to analyse the main characteristics that define the cocaine market, according to the latest United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime

<sup>1</sup>'Embeddedness' (Granovetter 1985) finds expression in the lack of differentiation and the complex bond that typically exists between the inside and the outside, between the organization and the social context. In this case, the difficulty of clearly identifying the boundaries between the organization and the external world is a direct consequence of the deep influential power that the bond between affiliates confers to the organization. Outgroup control usually takes the form of direct and intimidating coercion, or socially validated corruptive conduct normalization and diffusion behaviours, as well as manipulation of consensus processes by means of media control.

<sup>2</sup>The symbolic matrix allows the 'Ndrangheta to structure itself around shared organizational cultural models and common value dimensions (Schein 1985). These, in turn, constitute the glue and allow the shaping of the foundations of the organization and its external relationships.

<sup>3</sup>The theoretical insight offered by neo-institutionalist theories is of great importance to highlight the link between the external environment and the organizational field. Precisely because of its strategic, forecasting and adaptation abilities, the 'Ndrangheta represents a perfect example of strategy-based criminal organization. It is distinguished by a strong organizational culture (value-based criminal organization) and it is able to combine both the power syndicate and enterprise syndicate aspects in its structural essence (Block 1980:129; Gottschalk 2008; Busso and Storti 2011).

<sup>4</sup>One of the collected stories has been previously debated and submitted to an interpretative-phenomenological textual analysis (Calandra and Giorgi 2017).

report (2016). The aim is to clarify not only the market analysis by drug type related to cocaine or its consumption, but also the main flows by which cocaine is trafficked. Moreover, in order to deepen the secret of the internal duality that leads the 'Ndrangheta crime syndicate to establish itself as the undisputed giant in the exploitation of the cocaine market, the most contemporary antimafia operations as well as psychological, sociological and criminological perspectives will be dealt with.

As two famous Italian scholars phrased "the boundary of the 'Ndrangheta is the world, while its golden opportunity is globalisation" (Veltri and Laudati 2009:146). Undoubtedly, in fact, globalization and the celebration of capitalism have a key role in influencing the main illicit activities chosen and planned by criminal organizations. It is sufficient to say that the latest Eurispes report (2008) has estimated that 62% of the 44 billion euros gained by 'Ndrangheta through illicit activities is due to drug trafficking and specifically to the cocaine market,<sup>5</sup> while the total amount of the illegal profits represents a value of around 2.9% of the country of Italy's gross domestic product (GDP).

According to the cocaine market analysis provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2016) report<sup>6</sup> in fact, the number of cocaine users has increased, from some 14 million in 1998 to 18.3 million in 2016. In fact, it is also estimated that the global production of cocaine (pure cocaine – expressed at a purity of 100%) has increased by 38% compared with the latest period (i.e. 943 tons – using the new conversation ratio; and 746 tons using the old conversation ratio). This has happened even though the total area under coca bush cultivation is the second smallest since the late 1980s. The latest data estimated that in 2014 coca bush crops increased by 10% (around 132,300 ha) compared with the previous year, and that, despite everything, Colombia remains the single largest cultivator in the Andean regions,<sup>7</sup> compared with, for example, Peru and the plurinational states of Bolivia.

With regard to global seizure, it is well known that global cocaine interception (based on cocaine production estimates and quantities of cocaine) reached a level between 43% and 68% (655 tons), remaining stable in the last period. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime report (2016) has revealed not only the progressive spread of cocaine seizure across new countries<sup>8</sup> but it has also confirmed the existence of two main trafficking routes of cocaine: the first one from the Andean regions to North America, and the second one from the Andean regions to Europe.

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<sup>5</sup>According to the available data, the other illicit activities exploited by the Calabrian 'Ndrangheta, which have transformed this crime syndicate into an economic superpower, are public works infiltrations (13%), racket extortion and usury (11%), arms trafficking (7%) and prostitution (7%).

<sup>6</sup>The latest United Nations Office against Drugs and Crime report has estimated that 247 million people (one in 20 adults) aged between 15 and 64 years used at least one drug in the last year, including cocaine, the best-selling of goods by 'Ndrangheta.

<sup>7</sup>According to the latest United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) report (2015) more than 90% of cocaine trafficked to North America originates in Colombia (United States Drug Enforcement Administration 2015).

<sup>8</sup>Data have underlined that the number of countries involved in cocaine seizure are increasing. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2016) report, in fact, 153 countries reported cocaine seizures over the period between 2009 and 2014, demonstrating that the cocaine market is becoming wider and wider. Evidence of cocaine seizures is reported in Africa as well as in South-East and Middle-East Asia, where cocaine seizures tripled, or in Oceania, where seizures doubled.

The first main route is dominated by the presence of Mexicans, Dominicans, Colombians and Cuban-organized crime groups. According to data, usually Colombians have the monopoly of cocaine transport from Colombia to Mexico and from Colombia to Central America. In this case cocaine is transported by sea, while when it reaches Mexican borders is transported by Mexican crime syndicates by land towards the United States and Canada. In a U.S. study at least seven layers of actors have been identified between coca farmers in the Andean countries and final consumers in the United States.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, the European scenario is more heterogeneous since it is dominated by foreigner groups with different nationalities; this is because the 27 countries of the European Union as well as the four countries of the European Free Trade Association host the world's second largest cocaine market after North America. It is sufficient to say that more than 4.1 million of cocaine users are in these countries, while the main consumer countries are the UK, followed by Spain, Italy, Germany and France. Moreover, according to the data provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2016), most of the trafficking of cocaine to Europe is by sea, often in container shipments, though deliveries by air and by postal services can also occur. This evidence has underlined that most of the cocaine shipments to Europe are destined for one of two main regional hubs: Spain and Portugal in the South and the Netherlands and Belgium in the North. These European trafficking flows are chiefly dominated by West and North African groups, for example Nigerians and Ghanaians, and Balkan countries, especially Albanians and Serbs, UK local criminal groups and Latin American trafficking groups who prefer doing business with domestic Italian organized crime groups, particularly with 'Ndrangheta, since the Calabrian crime syndicate is perceived as reliable, solvent<sup>10</sup> and as the Italian criminal organized group with a lower number of collaborator of justice<sup>11</sup>. In this way 'Ndrangheta has made itself as the super-power in cocaine trafficking. Nowadays it is estimated that the Calabrian organized criminal group controls about 80% of Europe's cocaine traffic, achieving a gain around \$60 billion per year. The more recent investigative operations have focused, in fact, on the ability of the 'Ndrangheta to invest in construction projects in Italy, Belgium, the United States and Germany. Thanks to colonization<sup>12</sup> (Arlacchi 2010; Dalla Chiesa and Panzarasa 2012; Calandra

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<sup>9</sup>Firstly, Andean farmers sell the coca leaves or the coca paste to a cocaine base laboratory. These laboratories refine the drug further into a cocaine hydrochloride. After this the cocaine base is sold to a local trafficking organization which transports and sells the cocaine to a transnational drug trafficking organization. With another group, the transnational drug trafficking organization arranges the actual shipping. At this point, the cocaine is shipped to Mexican traffickers, who transport the drug across the U.S. border to the wholesalers. These sell cocaine to local-mid dealers or street dealers across the United States and in this way cocaine makes its way to the consumers.

<sup>10</sup>These aspects are confirmed by the Italian DNA (2015:14). In the report provided it has been revealed that the 'Ndrangheta clans are perceived by the foreigner criminal groups as the most reputable wholesalers in Italy and Europe.

<sup>11</sup>As reported by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2016), Colombian, Dominican and other Latin American trafficking groups working with domestic Italian organized crime groups, specifically the Calabrian 'Ndrangheta, largely use containerized shipments. After Turks (450 persons or 22%), the second largest nationality charged for cocaine trafficking is Italians (142 persons or 7% of all foreign cocaine traffickers), many of whom are associated with the 'Ndrangheta and other Italian mafia groups.

<sup>12</sup>The term 'colonization' refers to a strategy, which, thanks to the combination of gemmation and co-optation, makes 'Ndrangheta able to implant perfect copies of its essential structures in occupied

et al. 2017), as Gratteri and Nicaso (2015) noted, “the ‘Ndrangheta is the perfect example of a globalised criminal network”. According to these authors, in fact, the ‘Ndranghetisti already in the period following the Second World War have successfully exploited the Calabrian immigrants that headed to Germany, the United States, Australia, Belgium, Colombia and France, using family ties to create links and expand their influence worldwide (Gratteri and Nicaso 2008, 2009, 2010).

This scenario has also been confirmed by Demoskopika, an Italian think-tank, which has revealed both the entrepreneurial side of the ‘Ndrangheta as well as the inclination to expand itself around the world, from Calabria to Colombia and as far away as Australia (Mucci 2015).

### FROM KIDNAPPING TO COCAINE: JUDICIAL OPERATIONS AND THE INVESTIGATIVE SEASON

With the aim of deepening the way in which ‘Ndrangheta establishes itself as the most powerful criminal organization spread across five continents (Sergi and Lavorgna 2016b), it is fundamental to explore both the structural and the functional pillars on which this Calabrian organized crime syndicate has built its undisputable hegemony in cocaine trafficking.

Specifically, in order to analyse the functional characteristics that led ‘Ndrangheta in adopting specific and strategic patterns related to drug trafficking, a brief framework of the main judicial operations will be provided. The key investigative operations that will be taken into consideration started in the 1970s until the present time. The first law-enforcement operation lasted more than 30 years and concerned the period between 1970 and 2010, while the most recent judicial investigations took 5 years, from 2010 to 2015. In the 1970s the main judicial operations in which ‘Ndrangheta had been involved were focusing on kidnappings for ransom (Cingari 1982). The profits from this illicit activity allowed the ‘Ndrangheta to accumulate an initial conspicuous capital, which at the end of the 1980s was invested in drug trafficking, specifically first in heroin<sup>13</sup> and later in cocaine (Sergi 2015). This was the turning point that led the ‘Ndrangheta “to have more cash than they can possibly use” (Catozzella 2011).

The documentary evidence found by the Italian investigative reporter Catozzella (2011) about a conversation between two mobsters has demonstrated the limitless money liquidity available to the Calabrian crime syndicate, thanks to which ‘Ndrangheta has imposed itself as an economic power in the world drugs market. In this conversation one of these mobsters reported that while he was digging out a stash of money buried in a forest, he realized that “millions were rotten because of the humidity”, while the other mobster replied “just throw them away” (Catozzella

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territories as well as impose itself on the economic and social relationships of the civil society. Specifically, gemmation should be understood as the ability of the ‘Ndrangheta in territorial control and in the subjugation of communities in order to monopolize economic sources and obtaining social legitimization, while co-optation implies the ability to indirectly influence economics and politics with no use of violence.

<sup>13</sup>At the beginning, as the “operation Pizza connection II”, also known as “Calabria connection”, confirmed, ‘Ndrangheta was interested in cigarettes and heroin smuggling as much as Cosa Nostra, with which it was in a strict partnership. After, at the beginning of the 1990s there was a fundamental shift in the drugs market; there was a sharp drop in the demand for heroin and an equally sharp increase in rise in the demand for cocaine.

2011). In fact, even if at the beginning the 'Ndrangheta bought drugs from the pervasive Cosa Nostra, which already worked with the Colombian cartels, thanks to a strategic mistake<sup>14</sup> made by the Sicilian organized crime syndicate, the Calabrian organized crime group started its ascension.

In this way, already by the end of the 1990s, the 'Ndrangheta had a network of local representatives who took up residence in Colombia. Due to its flexibility and its ability to adapt itself to environmental changes, 'Ndrangheta made itself as an oligarchy<sup>15</sup> in the cocaine market, thanks to the introduction of an innovative *modus operandi*, consisting of the use of *brokers*, with the aim of directly controlling the cocaine supply chain in the producer countries, as well as in the planning of all the drug trafficking activities through consortia, which is a reunion of more Calabrian families, also known as *'ndrine*.

### OPERATIONS DECOLLO AND THE BEGINNING OF THE INVESTIGATIVE SEASON IN THE DRUGS TRADE

The anti-mafia operations preceding the launch of Operations Decollo I, II and III were Pizza Connection II and Operation Olympia (Gambino 1975; Sergi 1988, 1991). Both have demonstrated the key role of the Calabrian crime syndicate in the drugs trade, the presence of joint ventures between 'Ndrangheta and Cosa Nostra and the ability of the clans in cementing alliances in order to limit the unnecessary consumption of resources, time and men in mafia feuds (La Repubblica 1988; New York Times 1988). Specifically, the operation "Pizza Connection II" has revealed how Crotona was at that time the Calabrian epicentre in drugs trafficking and, at the same time, the ability of the 'Ndrangheta to use brokers, who travelled from Calabria to New York and based their affairs in the area of Reggio Calabria and Crotona (Sergi and Lavorgna 2016a). Operation Olympia<sup>16</sup> instead has proved the flexibility of the Calabrian criminal organization in rearranging itself to maintain supremacy in the drugs trafficking market.

Operations Decollo<sup>17</sup> deserve another discussion. All these operations established the consolidation and relevance of 'Ndrangheta in the global drugs trade, as well as the way how 'Ndrangheta families, belonging to the area of Vibo Valentia, keep themselves reliable among drug sellers and especially Latin American traffickers<sup>18</sup>. The most relevant discovery of the Operations Decollo in the period between 2001

<sup>14</sup>The strategic mistake attributed to Cosa Nostra concerned the mafia wars as well as the terrorist season that exploded during the years of the Maxi Trial, as a result of the statements provided by Tommaso Buscetta, the first collaborator of justice. At the end of the 1980s, in fact, Cosa Nostra embarked on an "anti-state" policy, culminating in the spectacular killings of top anti-mafia judges Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino in 1992.

<sup>15</sup>The idea that the ability of 'Ndrangheta to impose itself in the cocaine market could be compared with an "oligarchy" was introduced by the Antimafia District Prosecutor of Reggio Calabria (DDA 2015), according to whom 'Ndrangheta would represent the one of the big *sisters* involved in the world cocaine trafficking network.

<sup>16</sup>Operation Olympia, No 104/95 R.G.N.R. DDA + No. 85/96 R.G.G.I.P. DDA, Court of Assizes No. 15/98 R.G., Sentence No. 3/2001.

<sup>17</sup>Operation Decollo I, No. 1779-6541/2001 + 3164/2002 + 1429/2003 R.G.N.R. DDA + No. 2523-8748/2001 + 2085-2086/2003 R.G. GIP.

<sup>18</sup>Operation Decollo I, No. 1779-6541/2001 + 3164/2002 + 1429/2003 R.G.N.R. DDA + No. 2523-8748/2001 + 2085-2086/2003 R.G. GIP: p.33.

and 2010 is connected to the confirmation of the relevance of the 'Ndrangheta in the global drugs trade as well as its ability to rearrange itself on two different levels: the internal and the external ones.

The internal level, consisting of the acquisition of innovative ways to cooperate among themselves, in terms of drugs imports and cocaine handling, risk sharing and crisis management among the various clans (Sergi and Lavorgna 2016a:78). Moreover, it has been demonstrated that the control of the cocaine distribution channel from producer to consumer was ruled by the mediation role of the brokers in arbitrating the interests between buyers and sellers directly in the producer countries. The internal level has also underlined the presence of political networks in supporting the illicit activities promoted by Calabrian clans (Sergi and Lavorgna 2016a:78).

On the other side, the external level has underlined the success of the 'Ndrangheta *brand*, thanks to the "ndranghetization" of Calabrian clans abroad. This evidence finds expression in the presence of joint ventures between the wealthiest 'Ndrangheta families and other Italian criminal organizations and other foreigner criminal groups as well. These aspects have emerged thanks to Operation New Bridge and Operation Buongustaio. At the same time, the rearrangement of the external level also finds expression in the evolution of the brokers' role, which has been deepened thanks to Operations Columbus I and II, and Operation Solares II. The reorganization on this level of the Calabrian 'Ndrangheta was also strictly connected to the discover of the role of the Port of Gioia Tauro, which has been documented by Operation All Inside, Operation Buongustaio and Operation New Bridge (Sergi and Lavorgna 2016a:78).

### OPERATIONS BUONGUSTAIO, COLUMBUS AND SOLARES

Operation Buongustaio<sup>19</sup> was conducted between August 2012 and August 2013. According to this investigative operation it was possible to confirm the existence of international cooperation and to uncover the presence of a joint venture between the Calabrian 'ndrine Ietto-Cua-Picella from the Aspromonte area near Reggio Calabria, the Brazilian Rivera-Pereira group in Sao Paulo and the Dutch Radomam group in Holland. The value of this operation was also the confirmation of the flexibility in the roles of the Calabrian clans thanks to the uncovering of the functioning and the routes of drugs<sup>20</sup>. All these elements confirmed that 'Ndrangheta is the biggest investor in buying cocaine and the main recipient of the drugs shipments in Gioia Tauro as well (Senato della Repubblica 2015).

At the same time Operations Columbus I and II,<sup>21</sup> which lasted from May 2015 to 1 October 2015, and Operation Solares<sup>22</sup> that started in 2008<sup>23</sup> discovered both the presence of a Latin America/North America/Calabria axis and the involvement of

<sup>19</sup>Operation Buongustaio, No. 8354/2010 R.G.N.R. DDA + No. 5084/2011 R.G. GIP.

<sup>20</sup>The routes considered allowed 'Ndrangheta to obtain transport of the cocaine from Peru and Bolivia, also using the port Santos in Brazil to send the drug to various European destinations.

<sup>21</sup>Operation Columbus II, No. 2082/2014 R.G.N.R. DDA.

<sup>22</sup>Operation Solares is the Italian name for a 2008 anti-drug operation involving the United States, Mexico, Guatemala and Italy, involving a major Mexican drug cartel, the Gulf Cartel, and the 'Ndrangheta mafia from the Calabria region of Italy (BBC News 2008). In the operation, some 200 people were arrested in Italy and in the United States.

<sup>23</sup>Operation Solares II, No. 611/2008 R.G.N.R. DDA.

brokers directly operating to ease off partnerships with the Mexican groups (Sergi and Lavorgna 2016b)<sup>24</sup>.

Thanks to Operations Columbus I and II, there has been targeting of the drugs trafficking network across Costa Rica, New York and Calabria, with drugs seizures also in Delaware and in Pennsylvania; moreover, the existence of a drugs import network has been confirmed, especially cocaine, based in Calabria and operating across the world, mainly in Europe (Sergi and Lavorgna 2016b). Besides these aspects, these operations not only have confirmed the existence of a drugs import network, especially cocaine, based in Calabria and operating across the world, but also the crucial role of brokers for the Calabrian clans in Mexico, Costa Rica, Bolivia and Peru, and the existence of a family-run business model at the core of the network (together with Gregorio Gigliotti, in fact, the authorities in New York City have arrested his sons and wife). According to the available data, the use of an encrypted language has also been demonstrated<sup>25</sup> by the clans, reconfirming what was discovered during Operations Decollo, the existing of rolling contracts<sup>26</sup> for the supply of cocaine between Latin America and Calabrian clans. On the other side, due to Operation Solares II, it has been possible to discover that the international drugs ring scheme runs in partnerships between the Schirripa family clan in New York City and in the east coast of the province of Reggio Calabria, and the Gulf cartel in Mexico (Sergi and Lavorgna 2016b).

#### EXAMPLE OF TERRITORIAL CONTROL: THE PORT OF GIOIA TAURO AND ILLICIT INVESTMENTS

The central role of the Port of Gioia Tauro has been discovered due to Operation New Bridge,<sup>27</sup> which lasted two years, and started in 2012. According to this law enforcement operation, it was possible to observe the joint venture between the Gambino family and the 'Ndrangheta members belonging to the Ursino and Simonetta Clans, from the east coast of the Reggio Calabria province, as well as the success of the 'Ndrangheta "brand".<sup>28</sup> The relevance of the Port of Gioia Tauro was also confirmed in the operation All Inside, according to which Gioia Tauro has been

<sup>24</sup>Since 2008, together with the Schirripa Clan, the New York-based brokers had sought protection and support from the Cosa Nostra Genovese clan in New York City and to a lesser extent from the Lucchese and Gambino families, too. Moreover, among those indicated are three alleged leaders of the Gulf Cartel: Ezequiel Cardenas Guillen, Jorge Eduardo Costilla and Heriberto Lazcano, the leader of Los Zetas (El Universal 2008; United States Drug Enforcement Administration 2008). Among those detained from the 'Ndrangheta, there are 16 members of the Aquino-Coluccio clan – led by Giuseppe Coluccio – which dominates the Gioiosa Ionica area in the province of Reggio Calabria. They were identified and arrested in New York and Calabria (Corriere della Sera 2008).

<sup>25</sup>The encrypted language consists of the use of communication techniques behind this international trafficking, which include travels between Calabria and the United States and Costa Rica and, obviously, encrypted telephone conversations about food and even about paintings to deceive the listener.

<sup>26</sup>Thanks to these contracts, brokers have also been considered as wholesalers, since during the mediation they are virtually always in possession of the drug and therefore able to instantly resell it before a supply order is actually even made.

<sup>27</sup>Operation New Bridge, No. 3273/12 R.G.N.R. DDA.

<sup>28</sup>In 2014, the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI 2014) has demonstrated the connections between New York-based drug traffickers and Mexican drug cartels operating in Guayana that were supposed to send the drugs in shipments of frozen food. These shipments had been organized by the families in



the 'Ndrangheta port and the symbol of the territorial control of three local 'ndrine (Piromalli-Molè, Bellocco and Pesce),<sup>29</sup> who controlled the arrival of the containers, the price to use the port, and the transportation of the drugs by trucks (Sergi and Lavorgna 2016b).

Because of this operation three main routes were discovered in cocaine trafficking: the "California Express Route",<sup>30</sup> "Medusa"<sup>31</sup> and the route that connected Argentina to Gioia Tauro<sup>32</sup> (DNA 2016). Another important discovery made in this operation is the identification of the "rip-off" technique (Sergi 2015), which makes it very hard to prove the ownership of the cargo, since neither the sender nor the receiver company knows about the cocaine in the containers (Sergi and Lavorgna 2016a). The limitless financial liquidity due to the global cocaine trade has fostered the evergreen illegal activity of money laundering (The Guardian 2014). Since 'Ndrangheta has an operational strategy that is close to a corporation's one, that tries to progressively legalize its own activities in order to maximize its profits, the Italian fiscal police has confirmed how the Calabrian organized crime syndicate employs an incredibly sophisticated system in cleaning dirty money (Magliocco 2012).

It is sufficient to say that Banca D'Italia estimated in 2012 that the illegal economy represents 10% of the total Italian GDP (Ardizzi et al. 2012). In this sense, as Gottschalk (2009) and other scholars (Siegel and van De Bunt 2012) have asserted, "The entrepreneurial side of this criminal organization leads 'Ndranghetisti in accepting the risk associated to its activity in consideration of the higher profits". Money and power are the elements thanks to which 'Ndrangheta is willing to choose the risk. Besides money placement (integration of dirty money in the financial systems thanks to the banks) and the layering system (consisting of wire transferring funds between various offshore and onshore banks), the integration<sup>33</sup> occurs through investments in a variety of sectors, such as hotels, restaurants, import-export companies, food companies, tourist activities and services and real estate (Calderoni 2011, 2012; Calderoni et al. 2016; Sergi and Lavorgna 2016b).

## STRUCTURAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE 'NDRANGHETA IDENTITY

At the aim of introducing this issue, it is fundamental to underline how the understanding of this thematic field was complex. This specific aspect implies the need to resort to an heterogeneous epistemological lens that can be provided by the anthropological, the sociological and the psychological fields.

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New York but were then supposed to arrive at the port of Gioia Tauro which, the FBI wiretaps revealed, "would guarantee the safe arrival of container ships containing contraband".

<sup>29</sup>Operation All Inside, No. 4302/2006 R.G.N.R. DDA.

<sup>30</sup>In the California Express route, shipments from Northern America arrive in Panama through California and Mexico; from Panama, they collect smaller cargos arriving from Chile, Peru, Colombia and Northern Brazil before reaching the Port of Gioia Tauro (Sergi and Lavorgna 2016b).

<sup>31</sup>The Medusa route has been considered relevant in the transportation of cocaine since it made possible the connection between the Gulf of Mexico and the Bahamas. In this way, containerized shipments reached Valencia in Spain before arriving in Gioia Tauro.

<sup>32</sup>This last route allows the transport of cocaine from Argentina towards Montevideo and Southern Brazil before leaving for Gioia Tauro.

<sup>33</sup>Integration of funds transferred is possible through the purchasing of luxury assets, financial investments and commercial and industrial investments.

As Letizia Paoli (2003) has already explained in *Mafia Brotherhoods*, the identity of the Italian organized crime groups (referring specifically to Sicilian and Calabrian organized crime syndicates) is founded on four structural elements: the presence of a *status contract*, the recourse to *ruling bodies*, an attitude in *manipulating the civil society* and in infiltrating the social system, and the use of *secrecy and violence*. The combination of all these elements finds expression in two key concepts related to “Ndranghetaism and ‘Ndranghetization”, well described by Sergi and Lavorgna (2016b). According to these scholars, in fact, the term ‘Ndranghetaism implies the presence of a combination of cultural, social and structural elements in order to maintain the territorial control and to create a behavioural model and an anthropological *habitus* in which affiliates can recognize their own identity as a perfect overlapping with the organization’s one. In this perspective ‘Ndranghetization would coincide with the ability of the ‘Ndrangheta to replicate and diffuse this behavioural model abroad and across the world, making possible the colonization of new territories.

### THE “STATUS CONTRACT” AND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF THE AFFILIATION CEREMONIES

The status contract is the resultant of the mythological foundation of the origin of the *Honored Society* by three Spanish knights<sup>34</sup> and the recourse to affiliation ceremonies as well. Everything in the mafia world runs around the respect of the rules and the presence of the myth. It is sufficient to say that also the rites of passage, as for example baptism, pre-initiation and affiliation procedures, are ruled by specific norms. According to Saviano (2011) there are rules about how to live, how to die, how to betray and how to maintain honour. In this sense, rules are the pillar of this criminal organization because they legitimate the exercise of the power and any other form of violence as well as the spreading of the organized crime syndicate within and beyond their communities of settlements. The survival of the Calabrian ‘Ndrangheta is strictly connected with the exaltation of the rules that are “sacralized”, acquiring an institutional value, as Bourdieu (1991) has underlined. For this reason the affiliation ceremony is characterized by the presence of two distinctive elements. During the transition<sup>35</sup>, also known as “threshold”, the presence of religious elements reinforces the imperative character of the rite, making possible the “Pentecostal” routinization

<sup>34</sup>According to the myth, the honoured society was founded by Osso, Mastrosso and Carcagnosso, three Spanish knights who escaped from Spain in 1412 in order to avenge the honour of their sister. The knights took refuge in the caves of Favignana Island in Sicily for 25 years, where they wrote the honour society’s code.

<sup>35</sup>“Transition” is the intermediate level of a ritual, made up by the previous level of the “separation” and the final level of the “incorporation”, which allows the novice to become a member of the criminal organization.

While during the “separation”, the aspiring affiliates will have to forget the world known before, the “transition” level is articulated in three or more courage trials, that are introduced in the previous phase thanks to an exchange of cues between the chief of the organization and the novice. According to the sources related to judicial elements which appeared in wiretappings, allowing the arrest of dangerous criminals, the exchange of cues between the actors abovementioned starts when the chief addresses the novice asking “What are you looking for?” while the novice answers: “Blood and honour”.

This formula ends when the chief asks the novice: “Why don’t you have it?” and the novice replies: “I have to give and take” (Paoli 1998a).

of the charisma (Weber 1978) transmitted by the chiefs of the organization to the novices, while the presence of blood represent a “strong multivocality that will echo in the new identity gained by the aspiring affiliates” (Turner 1967, 1995). In this way the status contract is turned into a brotherhood contract, which is a “contract of fraternization” (Weber 1978) based on the exaltation and the generalization of the reciprocity and of the idea of exchange (Mauss 1990; Turner 1995),<sup>36</sup> as well as on a fictitious kinship that sometimes, as it happen in the Calabrian ‘Ndrangheta, can overlap with blood family ties. This establishes the birth of what Letizia Paoli (1998a, 1998b, 2002, 2003) has called “new permanent status” that sometimes is expressed in the statement released by a former affiliate with the common way of saying “he has been made into a man”.

Therefore, after affiliation ceremonies, an affiliate acquires a new “singular collective identity” (Paoli 1998b) that is perceived as a perfect overlapping with the affiliate’s identity and the identity of the criminal organization to which he belongs. From this moment the member’s identity overlaps perfectly with the organization’s subuniverse of meanings. The affiliation, in fact, deeply influences the way in which the affiliate perceives himself as well as the way in which the affiliate perceives the organization. In the case of the ‘Ndrangheta, an example of the strength of the tie between the organization and its members emerges in the language with which affiliates refer to the Calabrian organized crime syndicate.

The ‘Ndrangheta, in fact, is called and perceived by its members as a “mummy”, a “great mother” to whom respect and subordination is due (Di Forti 1982; Di Lorenzo

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At this point the novice will be introduced to several trials of courage and in the case of positive evaluation he will be admitted in the organization and he can cross the “threshold” during the transitional step of the ritual by swearing a blood oath consisting of staining the image of a saint with his blood before the image being burnt (Paoli 1998a).

The presence of a burnt image of S. Michele (the ‘Ndrangheta protector) in the wallet of one of the murdered young boys in the Duisburg Massacre in 2007 was sufficient to reveal that what happened was the results of a mafia feud between the Calabrian families Pelle-Vottari and Nirta-Strangio, started in the 1990s and that was stopped thanks to the intercession of the ‘Ndrangheta chiefs that recommended to the involved ‘ndrine to avoid struggling abroad, because they have to do business there.

A different ceremony of incorporation, know as baptism or *punciuta*, is prepared for ‘Ndrangheta’s descendants. A ‘Ndranghetista’s son, usually, receives a preinitiation that starts already in his early years, leading to the qualification of *giovane d’onore* (‘boy of honour’). A boy of honour, before his birth, is already designated as a part of the ‘Ndrangheta’s subuniverse of symbolic values. Specifically being a boy of honour implies not only a shorter procedure of affiliation, but also guarantees a faster career path within the ‘Ndrangheta (Asprea 1971:170–4; Tribunale di Milano 1994a:120, 1994b:151).

<sup>36</sup>Both generalized reciprocity, also known as “*reciprocanza*”, and generalized exchange imply for an affiliate the acquisition of rights and duties. Rights and duties are the direct resultant of the presence of a brotherhood tie or “contract of fraternization” which emerged after the initiation rite that, in this sense, could be considered, as Bourdieu (1991) phrased, a “rite of institution”. Specifically, the rights find expression in the *mutuality principle*. The application of this principle in ‘Ndrangheta is the “*bacinella*” (literally “basin”) that is a common fund used to support the families of the imprisoned or dead members, and, occasionally, to integrate monthly salaries (Paoli 2002). On the other hand, the observation of the duties overlaps with the mandatory commandment to maintain honour through force and physical violence if necessary (Schneider 1969; Hess 1973:46–8; Blok 1984). This commandment is well expressed in the importance to save women’s honour and to avoid family dishonour, which sometimes could mean killing sons or daughters in order to preserve the stability of the organization and to maintain territorial supremacy through violence.

1996). The life of the affiliates becomes automatically subordinated to their Mafia membership, a membership than can be deleted only with the death of the members.

The presence of this symbiotic tie (Di Lorenzo 1996:54) is well expressed in the language slang used by a collaborator of justice, who is the son of the chief of one of the most powerful 'ndrine of Reggio Calabria. According to his words "Ndrangheta is the family, but it's also a cannibal world" (Calandra and Giorgi 2017). After his choice to become a police informant, in fact, his father tries to kill him three times. Following these events, he starts to develop serious psychopathological diseases, for example dissociative symptoms, suicide attempts and other psychological manifestations attributable to a post-traumatic frame.<sup>37</sup> The choice of cooperating with justice led his family to perceive him as if he had died, as if he did not exist anymore.<sup>38</sup>

Therefore, especially in the Calabrian or Sicilian mafias, the identity of an affiliate who decides to leave his membership starts to disappear and to shrink, until it is completely deleted. Without the organization, the former affiliate is considered as "nobody mixed up with nothing", literally "*nuddu 'miscatu cu 'nenti*".

In the case of the Calabrian 'Ndrangheta the blood tie between the members and the organization finds a form of celebration also in the possibility for the affiliates to localize the criminal group in a specific and tangible place, that is the Aspromonte heartland, and specifically the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Polsi in San Luca, where once a year, during the celebration of the Feast in September, all the 'Ndrangheta chiefs meet in order to plan new illicit earnings or to restore peace between families. As the collaborator of justice previously mentioned phrased, in fact, "Calabria is the mom, the cradle, the vertex where the organization was born [...] It is like Jerusalem for Christians". In this sense, no one does anything without "Mummy" orders.<sup>39</sup> The imperativeness with which 'Ndrangheta imposes its control over the affiliates also permeates the way how the "blood-brothers" perceive the external outgroup as well as their membership. Just the feeling of "being part of a sect" (Weber 1978) implies a "double morality" determining the appearance of feelings of exclusiveness and segregation. In this way, people outside the organization are perceived as dehumanized. The presence of a dehumanization mechanism leads the affiliate to develop a radical form of emotional detachment<sup>40</sup> that finds expression in the normalization of the

<sup>37</sup>According to the interpretative and phenomenological analysis (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin 2009) of the interview released by this collaborator of justice, it also emerged that he was unable to recognize the image of his face in the mirror (Calandra and Giorgi 2017).

<sup>38</sup>The inclination for forgetting an affiliate who decides to collaborate with justice is notoriously related also to Sicilian Cosa Nostra. A case that involved the first collaborators of justice of the Sicilian mafia, for example the story of Leonardo Vitale or Rita Atria, was very famous. Leonardo Vitale was a victim of a defamation perpetrated on him by Cosa Nostra, after which he was closed in a judicial asylum since he was considered "mad" for the declarations released to police. The case of Rita Atria, instead, is tragically notorious, because after her death her mother went to the graveyard and started to hit her daughter's gravestone with an hammer.

<sup>39</sup>The case of Carmelo Novella, who was one of the chiefs of the 'Ndrangheta in Lombardy, is emblematic in this sense. According to documentary evidence, in fact, he was brutally murdered in 2008 when he proposed to make Milano an independent province from Calabria's control without consulting "Mummy" (Gratteri and Nicaso 2009, 2013).

<sup>40</sup>The aspect of the "emotional detachment" is well described through the story told by a former 'Ndranghetista (Calandra and Giorgi 2017).

violence as well as in the removal of the member's sense of responsibility for the offences committed (Siebert 1994).

Therefore, it is not surprising that even if a man of honour has blood and pieces of brain on his shoes, he is completely unable to experience any emotions. For a 'ndranghetista, in fact, a person is as an inanimate object, an entity deprived of any value; in short words, they are programmed just to execute orders and kill in cold blood as a soldier or a war machine.

This inclination is also the direct result of the obligation of obedience, since the respect of the code of honour implies for the affiliate the appearance of a form of elitist belonging to his criminal group. The presence of the double morality, that is a form of "ethical dualism", in this sense, makes possible the attitude of the 'Ndranghetisti to perceive themselves as "superior beings" and as belonging to the "perfect race", classifying humanity in categories as it has been revealed from the statements released by the former 'ndranghetista Antonio Zagari.

According to him "there are only three categories of men in this world: *men of honor, stivaglia* (which cover all state servants) and *infamous individuals*" (who range from police informers to any honest citizen who dares to report any injustice done by the *mafiosi* to state authorities) (Zagari 1992:21).

#### SECRECY AND VIOLENCE: SHAPING THE 'NDRANGHETA RULING BODIES AND EMBEDDING TO SOCIETY

Secrecy and violence have contributed during the years in shaping the ruling bodies of the 'Ndrangheta. There are three main directions according to which 'Ndrangheta has organized its structural elements, imposing its supremacy among the other criminal groups. The directions considered consist mainly of the simultaneous presence of three distinct systems that have been chronologically and progressively implemented. The first founding system is the horizontal one. At the beginning, in fact, the protection of 'Ndrangheta by external attacks was ensured by the use of a division mechanism between higher ranks, also known as "*Società Maggiore*" and lower ranks also called "*Società Minore*".

The presence of this sophisticated system made up by ranks, differentiated in specific roles, allows the Calabrian crime syndicate to link and divide through different degrees of secrecy the members belonging to the first and the second circle from members belonging to the third one. Respectively, this division consists of discriminating "boys of honour" and "honored contrast" members, affiliated through biological and ritual links,

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By recalling the memory of his first homicide, the collaborator of justice affirms: "I've seen the blood squirt, blood mixed with brain parts, but even though I had another person's brain on my shoes, I don't think I have felt any emotions, because I was psychologically prepared, I had been trained this way" (Calandra and Giorgi 2017:167).

The informant who speaks, in fact, is the son of the chief of an important Reggio Calabria 'ndrina, and since he was a "boy of honour", already in his childhood, he underwent a rigid training. According to his statements: "the training usually begins during the New Year's Eve, first by shooting at the shutters, then to bottles and finally by murdering someone". As the participant recalls: "when you start shooting to people, at the beginning you think it is the same thing". He continues: "the first training you receive is the psychological one [...] and maybe that is the hardest one, and it's the air you breathe everyday [...] your relatives continue to prepare you, to make you understand that blood needs to be taken [...], that vengeance is a need" (Calandra and Giorgi 2017:166).

from non-affiliate members who externally support the organization (as for example, robbers, money launderers, approachable politicians or public administrators) (Paoli 2003).

Even if this system guarantees the preservation of the organization from external dangers, it is not sufficient in preventing internal feuds between 'ndrine or families, that is the elementary units of which 'Ndrangheta is made up and that dominate and control specific territorial districts determined by specific territorial borders and blood kinships, also known as "*locali*".

Due to the inefficacy of the horizontal system in preventing internal conflicts, during the 1980s 'Ndrangheta introduced a vertical control system in order to face the second mafia war in which De Stefano and Imerti-Condello families were involved, and during which more than 500 persons were murdered. For this purpose "*Crimine*"<sup>41</sup> was born.

This organizational entity could be considered as a perfect example of what Weber (1978:276) calls "merger collegiality". It was a temporary organizational body created during the annual meeting in S. Luca and then removed. It had the aim of assuring peace between families, but since it was revealed to be inefficient in settling the war between the previously mentioned 'ndrine, it was soon substituted with the institution of a third organizational dimension: the centralized one, also known as "*Cosa Nuova*". This strategic body was created in the years between 1985 and 1991. The birth of the "chamber of control" or *camera di canalizzazione* ("canalization chamber") and of its permanent system of three lower collegial bodies makes possible the division of Calabria into three main "*mandamenti*" or provinces: the Ionic one, that is, the Calabrian east coast, the Tyrrhenian one, that is, the Calabrian west coast and the City, that is, the Reggio Calabria district. Each of these structural modifications has deeply modified the ability of the Calabrian crime syndicate to infiltrate and embed in the external civil society. It is sufficient to think that the introduction of the rank of "*Santa*", in the period between the 1960s and the 1970s, as a result of the murders of Don Antonio Macrì and Don Mico Tripodo, the ancient chiefs of the 'Ndrangheta who wanted to guarantee the respect of the traditional rules, made it finally possible the involvement of the Calabrian organized crime syndicate in illicit earnings that were not previously allowed (for example, kidnapping and drug trafficking) as well as the involvement of the organization in political and institutional world agreements.

In fact, due to the murders of the previously mentioned chiefs, the progressive chiefs De Stefano and Don Mommo Piromalli started to promote the idea of the importance of entering into contact with the civil society in order to enhance the authority of the organization and make the 'Ndrangheta richer and richer. As Forgione and Mondani (1994) have underlined, the introduction of the "*Santa*" made possible the entrance of the 'Ndrangheta into previously existing Masonic lodges (Forgione 2008). In short words, as well as the introduction of profitable activities previously prohibited, thanks to the "*Santa*", the 'Ndrangheta started to gain

<sup>41</sup>As Letizia Paoli (2003) has well described, the "*crimine*" includes differentiated positions and roles. Specifically, a "*crimine*" consists of the presence of a *mastro di giornata* (literally "day master"), who carries out functions similar to those of the *piciotto di giornata* in the lower group, a *contabile* (literally "accountant"), who corresponds to that of a *puntaio* in the *società minore*, *mastro di buon ordine* or *mastro generale* (literally "good order master"), who is a kind of peace judge, settling any disputes that break out among the affiliates, a *capo società* (literally "chief of the society"), who replaces the *capo locale* when necessary, being also the keeper of the arms belonging to the group, and eventually a *capo locale* (literally "family chief") who is the group leader and who is aided by the *capo società*.

impunity and invisibility as well as the possibility to enter into strict relations with social strata traditionally adhered to Freemasonry, as for example: members of the liberal professions (physicians, lawyers and notaries), entrepreneurs and politicians, representatives of government institutions, including judges, prosecutors and police officials (Paoli 2003).

At the same time, due to the introduction of the Ionic and Tyrrhenian bodies, and the central one, also known as Reggio city, including the Reggio Calabria families (Ministero dell'Interno 2001:101–2) the 'Ndrangheta extended its territorial control both on Italian and foreign areas (colonization), acquiring a growing importance in economic and political spheres.

### **HUMAN COSTS OF THE COCAINE MARKET: FUTURE PERSPECTIVES IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST 'NDRANGHETA AND ORGANIZED CRIME SYNDICATES**

The presence of the mafias, and specifically the presence of the 'Ndrangheta in the cocaine market, generates a series of dramatic consequences and drifts. One of these is undoubtedly the one related to the human cost both in the local community and in the whole society of consumers, followed by the environmental pollution and the appearance of weakness of the economic and judicial systems. In this sense, white cocaine stripes leave behind them a blood trail that finds expression first of all in the direct effects on the local population: a high dropout rate of high schools, since young men are taken away from the educational agencies to cultivate, produce and refine coca leaves, being constantly exposed to solvent poisoning risks, hand and feet burns risk, and drug addiction risk, as sometimes they are paid with cocaine scraps. Moreover, social exclusion, in combination with other risk factors and additional behavioural risks (HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C and other diseases) that are strictly connected to the probability of developing drugs use disorders and other mental diseases, is a plague that is often also extended to the rich occidental consumer countries.

Undoubtedly, as previously mentioned, cocaine powder production and the process of refining coca leaves are also responsible for the consolidation of environmental pollution. It is sufficient to say that the illicit coca crops have determined the diffusion of deforestation, the loss of species biodiversity and the increase in pollution in rural countries due to the disposal of the chemicals (i.e. bleach, kerosene) used in refinery processes. Moreover, the white powder of cocaine and its consumption also afflict the economic and the judicial systems of the civil societies involved. In 2011, two economists of the University of Bogota, Alejandro Gaviria and Daniel Mejia, underlined that due to a severe system of laws against money laundering, for Colombia, the cocaine market does not represent a real sources of profits.

Of the total amount of profits gained due to cocaine trafficking, in fact, only 2.6% remains for the producer countries; at the same time, the corrupt financial system of the West cocaine consumer countries absorbs more than 90% of the profits. Sometimes the main countries that are most involved in the money-laundering process, in fact, are more interested in cocaine seizure than in a serious reformation of the current system of anti-corruption laws. In this way, cocaine smuggling feeds low and high levels of corruption<sup>42</sup>.

<sup>42</sup>Corruption can be at a high or low level. Low-level or "petty" corruption often starts with street police or local politicians, who may be vulnerable to crime because of a lack of social legitimacy or because they come

On the other side, judicial costs often consist of the inability of transnational law systems to assure a sharing and common typification of mafia association crime that sometimes makes it impossible to guarantee the continuity of the law enforcement operations as well as an adequate recognition of the danger of the 'Ndrangheta criminal syndicate and the gravity of its impacts on local and foreign societies (Paoli 1994).

According to this idea, a multilevel intervention is requested and recommended (Calandra and Giorgi 2015:105, 2017:171). A multi-directional action could be useful to keep into consideration not only the organizational and behavioural elements, but also the anthropological and cultural bedrocks on which 'Ndrangheta is founded, too.

This means that besides the homologation of the countries' law systems in fighting against the Calabrian 'Ndrangheta and the other transnational organized crime syndicates, as well as the implementation of existing forms of international cooperation,<sup>43</sup> it is crucial to not forget the importance of the promotion of the role of educational agencies in supporting a cultural and social revolution addressed, first of all, to the communities. In this perspective, enhancing the social capital through the systematic use of the educational context (Coleman 1986, 2005; Matsueda 2006) would mean ensuring a decrease in the consequences related to mafia exposure. This would also mean providing individuals with relational, affective and cognitive tools at the aim of helping them to debunk the power of organized crime on territories. Another effect of this strategy would be the increase of the buffering and protection factors in the fight against crime, that would make people more empowered and resilient in front of the risk of a direct or indirect exposure to mafias.

In this regard, providing knowledge and encouraging critical thinking through education would allow younger generations to have an important weapon in the opposition to mafias (Bufalino 2001; Sciascia 2002), a powerful stimulus to break the vicious circle of denial and normalization of deviance. It would be impossible to overturn the implicit premises of the cognitive and social order (Goffman 1981; Treviño 2003) about the knowledge of the mafia phenomenon, without accountability for the individual conduct and active participation of the citizenry.

It would be impossible to promote a cultural revolution without the active involvement of the citizenry, through the systematic use of the educational context. It means that if the way to think and to understand this complex phenomenon remains distinguished from its complex characterization, not even the idea that "a primary school teachers' army will defeat organized crime groups" (Bufalino 2001) will work, remaining an utopia and losing all its innovative power. In this regard, only the use of the educational context allows a radical mutation of the external way of coping and of the internal way of making sense of this phenomenon and its consequences, representing at the same time, an aid in limiting the detrimental effects that mafias produce in the globalized world.<sup>44</sup>

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from the very same communities as members of criminal groups. As drug traffickers grow in power, they may also infiltrate police institutions to ensure the acquiescence of officials. On the other side, high-level or "grand" corruption, for its part, affects the highest ranks of power, such as police chiefs, national politicians and high-level law enforcement officials. The practice of corrupting officials to facilitate drug trafficking has been documented in all parts of the world (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 2016).

<sup>43</sup>Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 2009).

<sup>44</sup>The uncontrolled emergence of 'Ndrangheta does not depend only on its structural or functional features, because, to quote Falcone (1991), "Mafias are not a cancer that proliferated casually on a healthy tissue. It lives



Taking care of the interpersonal networks, through the valorization of the social capital, thanks to the educational context, could be the premise for an authentic change. Since Falcone (1991) has said “Mafia is not an invincible phenomenon at all; it’s a human fact and as all the human facts have an origin and an end”. So, the sensitization action proposed by educational contexts and socialization agencies should contribute to a radical change of the mindset, which would be capable of acting in a widespread manner, extending itself to all of the social coexistence (*cum-vivere*) contexts and to the social fabric.

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in a perfect symbiosis with the myriad of protectors, accomplices, informers, borrowers of any kind, great and little cantors, intimidated or blackmailed people belonging to all layers of society” (Falcone 1991).

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## TRANSLATED ABSTRACTS

**Sinopsis**

Según el último informe de la UNODC (2016), 247 millones de personas de entre 15 y 64 años consumieron drogas al menos una vez en el último año, con la cocaína siendo la mercancía más vendida de la 'Ndrangheta.

En este caso, el tráfico de drogas representa el 60% de la ganancia sistémica de este grupo criminal debido a los tráfico ilícitos que permitieron la difusión de la organización criminal de Calabria en los cinco continentes.

Sin embargo, esta organización aparentemente inofensiva y poco conocida, que proviene del corazón del Aspromonte en Calabria, fue incluida por los EE. UU en la lista negra de las 75 organizaciones de narcotraficantes más peligrosas solo en el 2008.

Por lo tanto, este estudio de investigación, basado sobre literatura de referencia, tiene como objetivo analizar cuáles son los aspectos que hacen que esta organización delictiva de Calabria sea "local" y "global" al mismo tiempo, así como los aspectos fuertes y débiles de la lucha contra el narcotráfico de la 'Ndrangheta.

**Palabras clave:** narcotráfico; 'Ndrangheta; local y global.

**Résumé**

Selon le dernier rapport de l'ONUDC (2016), 247 millions de personnes âgées de 15 à 64 ans ont consommé de la drogue au moins une fois au cours de l'année écoulée, la cocaïne étant la drogue la plus vendue par la 'Ndrangheta.

Dans ce cas, le commerce de la drogue représente 60% des gains générés par les trafics illicites de cette organisation criminelle Calabraise qui ont permis sa propagation sur les cinq continents.

Pourtant malgré son ampleur, cette organisation parfois méconnue, apparemment inoffensive, qui vient du cœur de l'Aspromonte dans le sud de l'Italie, n'a été incluse par les États-Unis dans la liste noire des 75 organisations de trafic de drogue les plus dangereuses qu'en 2008.

Cette enquête, basée sur des textes référencés, vise donc à analyser quels sont les aspects qui rendent cette organisation criminelle Calabraise à la fois «locale» et «mondiale» mais aussi la force et la faiblesse de la lutte contre le trafic de drogue de la 'Ndrangheta.

**Mots clés:** trafic de drogue; 'Ndrangheta; locale et mondiale

**摘要**

根据联合国毒品和犯罪问题办事处2016年发布的最近的报告, 年龄为15岁至64岁的人口中, 有2.47亿曾在上一年中至少使用过一次毒品, 而可卡因是“光荣会”黑社会组织非法交易最多的毒品。

在这种情况下, 毒品交易的非法收益占系统收益的60%, 导致卡拉布里亚犯罪组织在五大洲蔓延。

这个组织始发于阿斯普罗蒙特的核心地带, 似乎不为人知, 尚未造成明显的危害, 但2008年, 它在美国列出的“75个最危险的贩毒组织”的黑名单之上。

因此，本研究收集了相关的文献资料，对发源于阿斯普罗蒙特的犯罪组织的本土性和全球性进行了深入分析。此外，本研究提出了打击“光荣会”黑社会组织的优势和短板。

关键词: 毒品贩运；“光荣会”；本土化与全球化

#### ملخص

247 استخدم (2016) والجريمة بالمخدرات المعني المتحدة الأمم مكتب أعدته تقرير لآخر وفقاً، الماضي العام في الأقل على واحدة مرة ات المخدر عاما 64 و 15 بين أعمارهم تتراوح شخص مليون "ندرانغيتا" من مبيعا الأكثر هو الكوكايين كان بينما المشروع غير الاتجار بسبب النظامية المكاسب من 60% المخدرات تجارة شكلت الحالة هذه في الخمس القارات عبر كالأبريا إجرامية منظمة بانتشار سمح الذي غير يبدو ما على، أسبرومونتي قلب من تأتي والتي المعروفة غير المنظمة هذه فإن، ذلك ومع السبي السوداء القائمة في الأمريكية المتحدة الولايات أدرجتها الأحيان، وقد بعض في مؤذية وحده 2008 عام في خطورة للمخدرات تهريب منظمة 75 من أكثر تضم هي ما تحليل إلى تهدف مرجعية أدبيات إلى واستنادا، الاستقصائية الدراسة هذه فإن، ولذلك الوقت نفس في "العالمية" و "المحلية" الكالابري الإجرامي التنظيم من تجعل التي الجوانب بالمخدرات "ندرانغيتا" اتجار مكافحة في والضعف القوة عن فضلا

و.العالمية المحلية،ندرانغيتا،بالمخدرات الاتجار:الرئيسية الكلمات

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