

La Mafia uccide solo d'estate

1h 30m
Italian
English Subtitles

Arturo, a young boy whose obsession with the Mafia's casual presence in his city surpasses even his passion for Flora, the beautiful schoolmate who remains his main love interest until adulthood. Pif uses Arturo's unrequited love story as the vehicle to narrate the most tragic events in Italy's recent history.

Preface

One day, for the first time since leaving school long ago, I was awarded a prize. But this time the prize, for my book *La Fable cinématographique*, was awarded in Italy. The conjunction seemed to me to say something about my relationship with cinema: for in various ways, that country had been instrumental in educating me in the seventh art. There was Rossellini of course, and that winter evening in 1964 when I had been overwhelmed by *Europa '51*, while experiencing an equally strong resistance to that tale of the bourgeoisie acceding to sanctity through the working class. There were the books and magazines that a cinephile Italianist friend used to send me in those days, from which I tried simultaneously to learn cinema theory, Marxism and the Italian language. And then there was the strange back room in a Neapolitan pub where, on a sort of badly hung sheet, I watched James Cagney and John Derek speaking Italian in a dubbed monochrome version of a Nicholas Ray film called *A l'ombra del piatibolo*, better known to movie purists as *Run for Cover*.

If these memories surged back when I received that unexpected prize, it was not for simple circumstantial reasons, and if I mention them today, it is not out of misty-eyed nostalgia for years gone by. It is because they outline quite accurately the particular nature of my approach to cinema. Cinema is not an object on which I could have leaned as a philosopher or critic. My relationship with it is a play of encounters and distances which can be discerned through these three

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memories. They summarize the three types of distance through which I have tried to talk about cinema: between cinema and art, cinema and politics, cinema and theory.

The first of these divergences, symbolized by the wayside backroom theatre showing Nicholas Ray, is that of *cinephilia*, or the love of cinema. Cinephilia is a relationship with cinema governed by passion rather than theory. It is well known that passion lacks discrimination. Cinephilia was a jumbling of the accepted criteria. A jumbling of venues: a zigzag line between the cinémathèques where the memory of an art was preserved and the old movie theatres in remote parts of town showing derided Hollywood movies of all kinds, where cinephiles sought and unearthed their treasure in the intensity of a Western cavalcade, a bank raid or child's smile. Cinephilia was a link between the worship of art and the democracy of entertainment and emotion, challenging the criteria through which cinema was gaining acceptance as high culture. It affirmed that the greatness of cinema lay not in the metaphysical high-mindedness of its subjects or the visual impact of its plastic effects, but in an imperceptible difference in the ways of putting traditional stories and emotions into images. It called that difference *mise en scène* – staging, direction, production – without being too sure what it meant. Not knowing what it is that one loves and why one loves it is, they say, a characteristic of passion. It is also the path to a certain kind of wisdom. Cinephilia used to discuss the objects of its passion in terms of a rather rough-and-ready phenomenology of *mise en scène* seen as establishing a 'relation to the world'. But in the process, it questioned the dominant categories that existed for thinking about art. Twentieth-century art is often described in terms of the modernist paradigm: identification of the modern artistic revolution with the concentration of each art on its own medium, in contrast to the mercantile aestheticization of images from life. That sort of modernity appeared to

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crumble during the 1960s under the combined effects of political suspicion focused on artistic autonomy and the ever-growing avalanche of commercial and advertising forms. But this view – that modernist purity succumbed to the post-modern 'anything goes' – ignores the fact that such blurring of dividing lines developed in a more complex way in other settings, including cinema. Cinephilia questioned the categories of artistic modernism not by deriding high art but by restoring a closer and less obvious linkage between the types of art, the emotions of the narrative, and by discovering the splendour that the most commonplace objects could acquire on a lighted screen in a dark auditorium: a hand lifting a curtain or fumbling with a door handle, a head leaning out of a window, a fire or car headlights in the night, drinking glasses glittering on a bar ... it introduced us to a positive understanding, in no way ironic or disillusioned, of the impurity of art.

Probably it did so because of the difficulty in reconciling the sense, the rationale behind its emotions with the reasoning needed to navigate politically through the world's conflicts. The smile and gaze of the young John Mohune in *Moonfleet* establish a form of equality with the scheming of his false friend Jeremy Fox; but how was a student discovering Marxism in the early 1960s to relate that to the struggle against social inequality? The obsessional quest for justice by the hero of *Winchester '73* hunting the murdering brother, the joined hands of the outlaw Wes McQueen and the wild girl Colorado on the rock where they are cornered by the forces of order in *Colorado Territory* – what relation did they have to the struggle of the new workers' world against the world of exploitation? To bring them together one needed to postulate a mysterious equivalence between the historical materialism underlying the workers' struggle and the implicit materialism of the cinematic relation of bodies to their environment. It is at this very point that the vision conveyed by *Europa '51*

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introduces a problem. Irena's progression from bourgeois apartment to working-class suburban tower block and the factory floor seemed at first to connect the two materialisms perfectly. The physical advance of the heroine, venturing gradually into unfamiliar zones, made the progress of the plot and the camera work coincide with the progressive uncovering of the world of labour and oppression. Unhappily, the fine straight materialist line broke when Irena went up a flight of stairs leading to a church and then descended towards a consumptive prostitute, charitable good works and the spiritual itinerary of sainthood.

To deal with that, one had to say the materialism of the mise en scène had been deflected by the filmmaker's personal ideology, a re-run of the old Marxist argument praising Balzac for showing the realities of capitalist society despite holding reactionary views. But the uncertainties of the Marxist aesthetic then redoubled those of the cinephile aesthetic, by suggesting the only true materialists are materialists unintentionally. This paradox seemed to be confirmed, in the same period, by my appalled viewing of *The General Line*, whose multitudes of piglets suckling from an ecstatic sow amid torrents of milk I had found repellent, in a sniggering audience most of whose members nevertheless, like me, must have had communist sympathies and believed in the merits of collectivized agriculture. It is often said militant films preach only to the converted. But what is one to say when the quintessential communist film produces a negative effect on the converted themselves? The gap between cinephilia and communism could apparently only be narrowed where the aesthetic principles and social relations depicted were fairly remote from our own, as in that final sequence from Mizoguchi's *Shin Heike Monogatari*, when the rebellious son passes with his companions in arms above the plain where his frivolous mother is enjoying the pleasures of her class and

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gives the closing lines of the film: 'Enjoy yourselves, rich ones! Tomorrow belongs to us.' Doubtless the charm of this sequence stems from the way it showed us the visual delights of the doomed old world along with the aural delight of the words announcing the new one.

The problem of how to narrow that gap, how to engineer an equivalence between the pleasure derived from shadows projected on a screen and the intelligence proper to an art or a worldview, led to the thought that some sort of cinema theory might be needed. But no combination of classical Marxist theory and classical thought on cinema enabled me to decide whether the ascent or descent of a staircase was idealist or materialist, progressive or reactionary. No combination would ever make it possible to identify the criteria distinguishing what was art in cinema from what was not, or to read the political message carried by the placing of bodies in a shot or a sequential linkage between two shots.

So, perhaps the thing to do would be to approach the matter from the other direction, to examine that apparent unity between an art, a form of feeling and a coherent worldview, and call the study 'cinema theory'. To wonder whether cinema exists only as a set of irreducible gaps between things that have the same name without being members of a single body. Cinema in effect is a multitude of things. It is the material place where we go to be entertained by the spectacle of shadows, even though the shadows touch our emotions in a deep and secret way not expressed in the condescending term 'entertainment'. It is also the residue of those presences that accumulates and settles in us as their reality fades and alters over time: that other cinema reconstituted by our memories and our words, which can be distinctly different from what had been projected on screen. Cinema is also an ideological apparatus producing images that circulate in society and in which society recognizes its modern stereotypes, its legends

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from the past and its imagined futures. Then again it is the concept of an art, a problematic dividing line that isolates those works meriting consideration as high art from the merely competent output of an industry. But cinema is also a utopia: the scripture of a movement celebrated in the 1920s as the great universal symphony, the exemplary manifestation of an energy inhabiting all art, labour and society. And cinema, lastly, can be a philosophical concept, a theory of the actual movement of things and of thought, exemplified by Gilles Deleuze whose two books *Cinema 1: The Movement Image* and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* mention films and their processes on every page while being neither a theory nor a philosophy of cinema, but more a metaphysics.

That multiplicity, proof against any unitary theory, elicits a variety of reactions. Some try to separate the wheat from the chaff; to distinguish what relates to cinema as art from the output of the entertainment and propaganda industries; or the film itself, the aggregate of prints, shots and camera movements one studies in the monitor, from the deforming memories or added statements. Perhaps such rigour is shortsighted. To restrict oneself to art is to forget that art itself exists only as an unstable frontier which, to exist, needs to be crossed incessantly. Cinema belongs to the aesthetic art regime where the old standards of representation for distinguishing the fine arts from the mechanical arts and setting everything in its place no longer exist. It belongs to an art regime in which the purity of new forms is often derived from pantomime, circus acts or commercial graphics. To consider only the shots and processes that compose a film is to forget that cinema is an art as well as a world to itself, that those shots and effects that vanish in the moment of projection need to be extended, to be transformed by the memory and words that make cinema exist as a shared world far beyond the material reality of its projections.

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Writing on cinema, for me, means assuming two apparently contradictory positions. The first is that there is no concept that covers all forms of cinema, no theory that unifies all the problems they pose. Between the word *Cinema* that unites Gilles Deleuze's two volumes and the old-time large auditorium lined with red plush seats showing in succession a newsreel, a documentary and a feature, separated by intermissions with ice cream, the only link is the homonym. The other position holds on the contrary that where there is homonymy there must exist a common thought environment, that cinematic thought is what circulates in that environment, working from inside the separations and trying to determine this or that tangle between different cinemas or 'problems of cinema'. This position could be called an amateur's position. I have never taught film, film theory or aesthetics. I have encountered cinema at different moments in my life: during the cinephile enthusiasm of the 1960s; the examination of relations between cinema and history in the 1970s; or the 1990s effort to map the aesthetic paradigms underlying thought on the seventh art. But the amateur's position is not that of an eclectic supporting the wealth of empirical diversity against the colourless rigour of theory. Amateurism is also a theoretical and political position, one that sidelines the authority of specialists by re-examining the way the frontiers of their domains are drawn at the points where experience and knowledge intersect. Amateur politics asserts that cinema belongs to all those who have travelled, in one way or another, through the system of gaps and distances contained in its name, and that everyone has the right to trace, between any two points in that topography, an individual route that adds to cinema treated as a world, and adds to our understanding of it.

That is why I have spoken elsewhere of 'cinematic fable' and not of cinema theory. I wanted to position myself in a universe without hierarchy where the films recomposed by

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our perceptions, feelings and words count for as much as the ones printed on the film itself; where cinema theories and aesthetics are themselves seen as stories, as singular adventures of thought generated by the multiple character of cinema. For forty of fifty years, while continuing to discover new films or new discourses on cinema, I have also retained memories of films, shots and snatches of dialogue that are more or less deformed compared to the original. At various moments I have confronted my memories with the reality of the films, or reconsidered their interpretation. I watched Nicholas Ray's *They Live by Night* to relive the dazzling impression of the moment when Bowie encounters Keechie in a garage door-way. I did not find this shot since it does not exist. But I tried to understand the singular power of the suspension of narrative that I had condensed into that imaginary shot. Twice I returned to *Europa '51*: once to overturn my first interpretation, and validate the sidestep taken by Irena, leaving the topography of the working-class world arranged for her by her cousin, a Communist journalist, to move to the other side where the spectacles of the social world can no longer be imprisoned in the modes of thought elaborated by government, media or social sciences; and a second time to re-examine the all too-easy contrasting of the representation's social schemes with the unrepresentable in art. I watched Anthony Mann's westerns again to understand why I had been so fascinated by them. It was not simply the childish pleasure of cavalcades across great landscapes or the adolescent pleasure of perverting the received standards of art, but also the perfection of balance between two things: the Aristotelian rigour of the plot which, by way of realizations and vicissitudes, gives every character their due happiness or misfortune, and the way the body of the heroes played by James Stewart extracted itself, through the fine detail of its movements, from the ethical universe which gave meaning to that rigour in the

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action. I saw *The General Line* again and understood why I had been so repelled by it thirty years earlier. It was not its ideological content but its form – cinematography conceived as the direct expression of thought in a specific language of the visible. To appreciate it one had to understand that those torrents of milk and platoons of piglets were not in fact torrents of milk or piglets but the dreamed-of ideograms of a new language. Belief in that language had perished before the belief in agrarian collectivization. That is why, by 1960, that film was physically unbearable; and why, perhaps, we had to wait to grasp its beauty until all we could see in it was the splendid utopia of a language, surviving the catastrophic collapse of a social system.

From these meanderings and returns it was possible to pinpoint the hard kernel signified by the expression ‘cinematic fable’. In the first place this term signifies the tension that underlies the gaps in cinema, the tension between art and history. Cinema was born in an age of great suspicion where stories were concerned, a time when it was thought that a new art was being born that no longer told stories, no longer described the spectacle of things, no longer disclosed the emotional states of characters but inscribed the product of thought directly into the movement of changing forms. It seemed the art most likely to fulfil that dream. ‘Cinema is truth. A story is a lie,’ Jean Epstein said. This truth could be understood in different ways. Jean Epstein saw it as writing with light, inscribing on film not images of things but vibrations in a palpable material reduced to immaterial energy; Eisenstein saw cinema as a language of ideograms expressing thought directly as palpable stimuli tilling the soil of Soviet consciousness like a tractor; and Vertov saw cinema as the thread stretched between all the acts that were building the palpable reality of communism. The ‘theory’ of cinema had first been its utopia, the idea of a scripture of movement, in

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keeping with a new age in which the rational reorganization of the palpable world would coincide with the movement of that world's energies.

That promise seemed to have been broken when Soviet artists were required to produce positive images of the new man and German film directors went to cast their own light and shadows on the formatted stories of the Hollywood industry. Cinema, supposed to be the new anti-representational art, seemed to be doing the opposite: restoring action sequences, psychological plotting and codes of expression that the other arts had striven to break up. The montage which had been the dream of a new world seemed in Hollywood to have reverted to the traditional functions of narrative art: slickly cut action sequences and intensified emotions to encourage audience identification with tales of love and bloodshed. This development elicited various sceptical responses: disenchantment with a fallen art or alternatively, ironic revision of the dream of a new language. It also contributed in different ways to the dream of a cinema reverting to its true vocation: Bresson saw it as the reassertion of a radical split between the spiritual montage and automatism specific to the cinematograph and the theatrical games of the cinema. For Rossellini or André Bazin, it was the other way round, assertion of cinema primarily as a window opened on the world: a way of deciphering it or making it reveal its inner reality even in its surface appearances.

I thought it necessary to go back over these phases and these contrasts. Although cinema has not lived up to the promise of a new anti-representational art, it is not because of any capitulation to the rule of commerce. Rather, there was always something contradictory in the very wish to identify with a language of sensation. Cinema was being asked to fulfil the dream of a century of literature: to replace yesterday's stories and characters with the impersonal deployment of signs

written on things, restoring the speeds and intensities of the real world. Literature had been able to carry that dream because its discourse on things and their intensities stayed written in the double game of words, which hide from the eye the palpable richness which shimmers in the mind. Cinema just shows what it shows. It could only take up the dream of literature at the cost of making it a pleonasm: piglets cannot be both piglets and words at the same time. The art of cinema cannot only be the deployment of the specific powers of its machine. It exists through the play of gaps and improprieties. This book attempts to analyse some of its aspects in terms of a triple relationship. Firstly cinema with literature, from which film draws its narrative models and from which it seeks to emancipate itself; and also its relationship with two extremes in which art is often said to lose its way: where it applies its powers to the service of mere entertainment; and where it tries on the contrary to exceed those powers to transmit thought and teach political lessons.

The relationship between cinema and literature is illustrated here by two examples taken from very different poetics: Hitchcock's classical narrative cinema, a detective thriller plot containing the plan for a sequence of operations to create and then dissipate an illusion; and Bresson's modernist cinematography, constructing a film based on a literary text to demonstrate the specificity of a language of images. The two attempts experience the resistance of their object in different ways, however. In two scenes from *Vertigo*, the ability of the 'master of suspense' to make the narrative of an intellectual machination coincide with the presentation of visual charm becomes deficient. There is nothing accidental about this deficiency which touches on the relationship between showing and telling. The virtuoso filmmaker becomes clumsy when he gets close to the 'literary' heart of the work he is adapting. The detective thriller in effect is a double object. It is the presumed

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model of a narrative logic that dissipates appearances by conducting the evidence towards the truth. And, it is also bitten by its opposite: the logic of defection from causes and entropy of meaning, a virus that great literature has passed on to the ‘minor’ genres. For literature is not just a reservoir of stories or a way of telling them, it is a means of constructing the very world in which stories can occur, events link with one another in sequence, appearances arise. The proof of this is given in a different way when Bresson adapts a literary work descended from the great naturalist tradition: in *Mouchette*, the relationship between the language of images and the language of words is played out in reverse. Bresson’s tendency towards fragmentation, intended to drive out the peril of ‘representation’, and the care he takes to evacuate the literary burden from his images have the paradoxical effect of subjecting the movement of images to forms of narrative sequencing from which the art of words had been freed. So, it is the performance of speaking bodies that is left to restore its lost substance to the visible. But to do that, it has to reject the simplistic contrast made by the director between the cinematic ‘model’ and the actor in ‘filmed’ theatre. While Bresson symbolizes the vices of theatre with a representation of *Hamlet* in troubadour style, the power of elocution he gives his *Mouchette* discreetly joins the similar power bestowed by Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet, two directors influenced by Brechtian theatre, on the workers, peasants and shepherds borrowed from the dialogues of Pavese or Vittorini. The literary, the cinematic and the theatrical thus come to seem not the specific qualities of different arts but aesthetic forms, relationships between the power of words and that of the visible, between the sequences of stories and the movements of bodies, that cross the frontiers assigned to the arts.

Rossellini has the same problem – what body to use to transmit the power of a text? – when he presents the thought

of philosophers to a mass audience on television. The difficulty is not, as prevailing opinion suggests, that the flatness of the image crudely resists the depths of thought, but that the density specific to each makes it impossible to establish a simple relationship of cause and effect between them. So Rossellini has to give his philosophers very singular bodies to make one density perceptible in the forms of the other. This passage between two regimes of meaning is again in play when Minnelli stages – with songs – the relationship between art and entertainment. One might have thought the false problem of where the one ends and the other begins would disappear once the champions of artistic modernity had contrasted the perfect art of acrobats with the fusty emotion of stories. But the master of musical comedy shows us that all the labour of art – with or without the upercase – is to construct transitions between the two. Pure performance is the utopian horizon towards which, while unable to reach it, there strives the tension between the play of forms and the emotion of stories: the tension on which the cinematic art of shadows lives.

That utopian extreme was also what made cinema seem capable of eliminating the gap between art, life and politics. Vertov’s films offer the finished example of cinematic thought as real communism, identified with the very development of the links between all three movements. Such cinematic communism rejecting both narrative art and strategists’ Realpolitik could only repel experts in both disciplines. But it is still the radical gap that enables us to think about the unresolved tension between cinema and politics. Once the belief in a new language for a new life had faded, cinema politics became entangled in contradictions specific to the expectations of critical art. The gaze focused on the ambiguities of cinema is itself marked by the duplicity expected of it: that it should raise awareness by the clarity of a disclosure and

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arouse energy by presenting an oddity, that it should reveal at the same time all the ambiguity of the world and how to deal with that ambiguity. The obscurity of the relationship assumed to exist between clarity of vision and the energies of action is projected onto it. Cinema can illuminate action, but perhaps only by casting doubt on the obviousness of that relation. Straub and Huillet do it by giving two shepherds the task of arguing the aporiae of the law. Pedro Costa does it by reinventing the reality of a Cape Verdean stonemason's meandering progress, between an exploited past and unemployed present, between the garish alleys of the shantytown and the white cubes of the housing estate. Béla Tarr charts slowly the accelerated passage to death of a young girl, and in doing so he captures the deceitfulness of great hopes. Tariq Teguia in the West of Algeria crosses a land surveyor's meticulous measurements with the wandering course of migrants bound for the promised lands of prosperity. Cinema does not present a world others might have to transform. It combines in its own way the muteness of facts and the sequencing of actions, the rightness of the visible and its own simple identity. The political effectiveness of the forms of the art is something for politics to build into its own scenarios. The same cinema that speaks for the rebellious by saying 'Tomorrow belongs to us' also signals that it can offer no tomorrows other than its own. This is what Mizoguchi shows us in another of his films, *Sansho the Bailiff*. This one recounts the family history of a provincial governor who has been forced into exile because of the concern he showed for oppressed peasants. His wife is kidnapped and his children, Zushio and Anju, are sold into slavery. To enable her brother to escape, to rescue her captive mother and to fulfil her father's promise to liberate the slaves, Anju sinks slowly into the waters of a lake and commits suicide. But this completion of the logic of action is also its bifurcation. On the one hand cinema participates in the

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struggle for emancipation, on the other it is dissipated in circular ripples on a lake surface. Zushio is to take up this double logic on his own account at the end when he abandons his duty to seek out his blind mother on the island even after the slaves have been freed. All the gaps in cinema can be summed up by the film's closing panoramic shot, which signals a shift from the great battle for freedom we have been watching up to this point. With this shift we are being told: These are the limits of what I can do. The rest is up to you.



Sansho the Bailiff, Kenji Mizoguchi, Daiei Studios, 1955

The New Rules of Algorithmic Institutions

Stefano Harney

“Sorry, there’s nothing I can do. Those are the rules.” There was a time when a bureaucrat said this to you and you thought, “bullshit, I bet you could help me with one phone call, with one signature, or just by handing me the correct form.” Perhaps that bureaucrat facing you worked for the ministry of education, for the tax office, or for the city council. You may have been seeking permission, looking for an exception, or trying to get information. Your fear, as you approached the counter, was: “This guy is not going to help me.” He’s not going to explain, and probably doesn’t care. He could, if he wanted to, but he just doesn’t give a shit, or he doesn’t like your face, or you’ve somehow already pissed him off, or he’s just having a bad day.

Today, however, when we hear “sorry, I can’t help you, those are the rules,” we often experience the uncanny feeling that the bureaucrat with whom we are pleading is as helpless as we are. We may still hope this official can help us with a mere keystroke, but increasingly we suspect that we are hearing a disheartening new truth. These words tend to come to us these days over the phone when we call our insurance company, or across the desk when we talk to a bank officer, or to our inbox when we’ve written to our human resources department. Today’s bureaucracy is corporate, and our world is, to twist a phrase by

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Theodor Adorno, privately administered. And this administration not only runs on the proliferation of algorithms and enterprise planning tools, but, we might fear, is in fact run by such tools. Forty years ago we may have been dealing with fickle Western welfare state bureaucrats, or administrators of socialist republics, or new governments in postcolonial states. This was the administered world Adorno demanded. But we were certainly dealing with humans for whom bureaucracy was a government job, sometimes a good one. These humans had bosses, and behind all this bureaucracy was some idea, however attenuated, of the welfare state, or socialism, or national development.

One used to shout, "I pay your salary" at the final moment of defeat in a confrontation with such bureaucratic power. But this cry of defeat was also an appeal beyond that bureaucracy to this or that political party and to some kind of abstract governance, of which the offending bureaucrat was merely a servant. Of course, this was a moment of defeat precisely because this abstract governance was often nothing more than its workers hailed by its citizens, and its citizens hailed by its workers. But it revealed our cherished belief that a public bureaucracy might also need to seek legitimacy in the people, as much as our experience showed us otherwise.

Today, such appeals have not disappeared so much as they have been reversed. The contemporary image of the public bureaucrat is an armed one, an FBI agent, or other national equivalents, and the appeal is not so much one made to them, as made to you. This armed bureaucrat is more concerned that your actions line up with the ideology he represents than with listening to appeals from you about how he should line up. Disturbingly, today's public bureaucrat occupies a more sinister place than the stubborn clerk behind the desk ever did. Today, it is the armed bureaucrat who is planted most firmly in our imagination, or, perhaps better to say, in our nightmares. Certainly this is so in the Americas, from the mass disappearances of students in Mexico, to the murder of black children on the streets of the United States and Brazil, to the assassination of land activists in Guatemala. In the daily lives of many so-called citizens, it is these bureaucratic assassins, and not the airbrushed CSI agents, who are the faces of the public bureaucracy working for the only remaining official ideology, a "good business climate."

Next to this new model of the armed public bureaucrat, the private bureaucrats of this good business climate may seem like mild figures, but we nonetheless feel a kind of impunity in insurance agents, credit assessors, or national test administrators. Privately administered services seem disconnected even from an imagined political legitimacy. Indeed, privatization claims something higher than mere political legitimacy. It claims moral, or even evolutionary legitimacy. Privatization has been proposed as the solution to both the corruption and the arbitrary power said to congenitally afflict government bureaucracies. The idea is that a government service is just like a business and that a competitive

market in government services would improve quality, because only high quality would survive the competition. If we can get past the bizarre idea that providing a free lunch to children in schools is the same as providing mobile phone plans, we still face the problem that real businesses strive to eliminate competition precisely to create monopolies and rid themselves of markets. Even then, we would have to ignore the inability of privatization ideologies to recognize the difference between a simile and a metaphor. Services might benefit from competition as if there were a market, but that is completely different from sticking government services in the actual market. Free lunches are free because kids can't afford them, and those are facts on the ground that cannot be changed by a good business plan. But given that privatization also has presented itself as the apotheosis of services as businesses, the facts do not seem to matter.

Now, there are some who will say this new privately administered world means a responsive bureaucracy emphasizing customer service and competing for the chance to serve us. They will say that any remaining defects will be sorted out by better management systems. And they will say that whatever these defects, this privately administered world serves the public interest better than the publicly administered bureaucracies ever did. But, of course, this last claim depends on the idea that what is good for us is markets. Only then do agents of the market appear to be more obviously in the public interest. Because, in the end, private administrators administer not for publics, but for markets; indeed, they administer with the aim of replacing publics with markets, and then measure themselves by this success alone. Of course, for most of us, such potential political analysis degenerates in the face of our daily bureaucratic experiences of the actually existing private bureaucracy, as we continue to wait on hold, get transferred to another department, and referred yet again to the Frequently Asked Questions section.

Indeed, our experience as customers in this privately administered world is a series of self-serve airline kiosks, complete with airline agents who have to push the buttons for us. An algorithm created those kiosks, and it awaits other algorithms that will create us as customers who can actually figure out how to use them. We are caught between two algorithms in that line at the airport, one working on workers, and one working on customers, one retraining workers, one training us, one eliminating work, one putting us to work in the shells of the old staff. This combination of consumption and production articulated by the algorithm is where the privately administered world moves from the absurd to the sinister. It has been made for efficiency, for productivity, for a good business climate, which, algorithmically speaking, can always get better. The private bureaucrat is just there to input us into the algorithm, or to spit us out of one.

Private bureaucrats work not just on behalf of existing markets,

but in order to create ever-new ones through privatization. Algorithms

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never rest. They evolve to create more intense and extensive markets. And lest we forget, contrary to the ideologues of privatization, producing markets means producing more forms of monopoly over more aspects of the production of life, or to put it in more traditional critical language, the expansion and intensification of social production for private gain. Privatization uses the algorithm to generate monopoly power in a world where some are said to be in need of market discipline, incentives, or entrepreneurship, and others are ready to give it to them.

Or, to put this another way, most of us have only ourselves and each other to privatize. Our encounter with the institutions of this privately administered world is today precisely an exercise in the privatization of all we have left: ourselves. And worse, it is a felt compulsion to privatize any person or thing refusing improvement, resisting the algorithm. It is not so much that privatized bureaucracy has been improved to serve us as it is that we must be improved to serve it. Just like the armed clerks of today's public bureaucracies who demand we improve our vigilance, our obedience, and our compliance, these institutions of the privately administered world demand the continuous improvement of our productivity precisely in administering privatization. And privatizing ourselves means being subjected to an algorithm that will always demand more improvement, and always ensure the fruits of our labor become someone else's property, someone else's monopoly. But despite this gloomy forecast, what is interesting about this development is both the latent power and the apparent powerlessness that accompany the privately administered world. The powerlessness appears first and more vividly. Like the private bureaucrat to whom we appeal, we feel no agency, every day, we must compete all over again, account for ourselves all over again, for the job we are in, for the benefits we receive, for the grant we have been given. We know the private bureaucrat is in the same position. She too is powerless to challenge the algorithm. On the other hand, our power comes not from being the ones who operate the algorithm, but from being its raw material. It has nothing to privatize without us and nothing if it privatizes all of us. By now the careers of these algorithmic institutions tread a familiar and common path, whether they are museums, universities, hospitals, military forces, or childcare centers. First they privatize themselves and then everything and everybody around them. But the curious effect of all this is that many of us become the private bureaucrats—we administer this privatization. We're the ones who say "Sorry, I can't help you," and we mean it.

Imagine a museum of contemporary art in a European capital, perhaps a city that is undergoing an uneasy transition from its heritage as a classical bureaucratic polity to an economy driven by a new logistical capitalism. This new logistical capitalism emphasizes services, tourism, transport, finance, health industries, and culture. "Access plus speed" is the formula of logistics, and logistical capitalism, powered by algorithms

and their metrics, presses only these imperatives. With metrics, no one cares what you have achieved. They only want to compare it against what more you could—and will—achieve. For instance, both residents and visitors must have more access than whatever they have now, whenever and wherever they want it, whether to banking to shop hours to medical clinics to taxis. At the same time, shops and clinics collect big data, and the residents and visitors demanding access have access demanded of them. It seems like everyone in the city is beginning to participate in this privately administered world of access and speed, handheld devices at the ready. Culture, too, must be accessible and quickly available, and, in turn, audiences must be accessed through participation, outreach, and education. The city starts an all-night art festival, throwing open the doors of its museums, galleries, theaters, and palaces, including our museum of contemporary art, housed in a fine eighteenth-century building granted and refurbished by the state in the 1990s. The city believes its all-night art event is about presenting a more civilized and lively life. But the event is also a welcome party for logistical capitalism. And logistical capitalism is not optional. Those who fail to grant access at speed begin to look like obstacles to others. Soon we hear that the museum of contemporary art needs new leadership, leadership for an era of disruptive innovation. A new leader arrives, a former heritage minister from an Australian regional government. A new head curator also arrives, courtesy of a high-profile international search company. The curator is back in his home city after several years away in Manchester running the modern art museum there. The new leadership team sets about making the museum more algorithmic.

The leadership team hires consultants from KPMG, who are recommended to them by the international search company that facilitated their hiring. The consultants recommend an enterprise planning system, covering payroll and finance, human resources, purchasing, and maintenance and supply. Enterprise planning systems are based on algorithms. These algorithms calculate organizational efficiencies, and they automate management decisions. KPMG promises savings from efficiencies, and from phasing out decision-makers whose decisions are now made algorithmically; a whole layer of lower managers, who were once ordering supplies, calculating vacation time, or overseeing repairs, begin to vanish. Moreover, by calculating efficiencies, it soon becomes clear groundskeepers, janitors, and security guards have insufficient job spans and overlapping duties. They can be rationalized. The janitor can lock up. The security guard can also open up in the morning.

By now, some of the assistant curators are raising concerns about a favorite groundskeeper, who is being pushed into early retirement against his will. In response to this discontent, KPMG recommends an executive leadership course for the new head of the museum and her chief curator. The leadership course stresses empathy as the key leadership ingredient for an era of disruptive change. The management

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team subsequently begins weekly news blasts to all employees by e-mail. Featured prominently in the news blast is a high-definition photograph of the new head of the museum above a weekly column regularly expressing empathy. Next comes the café and restaurant. Here, KPMG tells the museum they must focus on core competencies as an organization, and they ask the management team to list what they regard as core skills at an away day. No one lists restaurateur. KPMG seizes on this. It's time to outsource the café and restaurant to those for whom the restaurant business is a core competency. This will mean a good deal of change in the café and many familiar faces may not make the transition. It will be helpful, therefore, to create some buzz about a celebrity chef who is interested in opening on the premises, and KPMG knows people who have contacts in the food and beverage industry.

It becomes clear to all who still work at the museum that they are being measured and evaluated in a new way, accessed in a new way, with new speed, not just by audiences and publics, but by management. New job coaching and mentoring schemes are set up and employees are asked to create a series of goals and objectives for themselves over the coming fiscal year. These will be revisited. The leadership is being encouraged to "create buzz." The new head of the museum gives interviews about exciting times at the museum, and the head curator attracts Siemens corporate funds for a major new exhibit on neglected conceptual women artists from Eastern Europe. The café reopens serving Peet's Coffee from Berkeley, California. It advertises longer hours. One curator whispers to another, "this coffee is better."

The disruptive innovation at the museum of modern art is so successful by the second year that even a 40 percent cut in funding from the regional government does not put the museum in the red. But the funding cut does begin the conversation about long-term institutional sustainability in the new fiscal reality. An algorithmic modeling of land values in the center of the city is introduced at a meeting of the leadership team on this new fiscal reality. Values have sky-rocketed since the city's business-friendly new mayor decided to spur investment in housing by introducing market rates for some renters and making Airbnb rentals legal. The museum building is a rapidly appreciating asset according to the model, and is now an asset against which any bank would be happy to lend. In fact, with a new addition, a model of leveraging the land and building presents itself as a solution to the short-term fiscal reality. Selling the back of the current museum garden, together with debt financing against the original museum building, could in fact fund the new education and outreach wing of the museum. The new education and outreach wing, including a members' private rooftop lounge, will also attract corporate funding and gifts from private donors, with consultants hired to shape a culture of giving—consultants recommended by KPMG. The celebrity chef caters a fundraising dinner for invited guests to kick off the campaign.

Education and outreach are identified as priorities—over, for instance, more gallery space—because the museum is also rethinking audiences. No longer can we assume that there is an audience out there for every contemporary exhibit. These audiences must be created. Through outreach, we gather new levels of information about potential audiences, and through education, we assemble these audiences. Obviously we will have to hire a social media specialist for these purposes, recommended by the fundraising consultants.

This museum is an invention, but such are the pressures of logistical capitalism today that I know anyone associated with a museum anywhere recognizes almost everything I have said, or will shortly. I could have told this story, with some variations, for hospitals, or schools, or universities. Algorithmic institutions fit a pattern, the pattern of logistical capitalism, access at speed—to our labor, to our mood, to our future. These institutions may be nominally public, but they are privately administered in every way, including the levels of leadership and ownership. Banks, investors, and donors effectively own these institutions, and leaders work only nominally for the state. They work for the owners.

But, now, let us consider the potentials opened by this dire situation. I want to do so by way of the work of an artist rebelling from within the algorithm, in the belly of logistical capitalism as it manifests itself in us as private administrators of our world. The artist is Jack Tan, a Londoner born in Singapore. In 2015, Tan produced a show at the Institute of Contemporary Arts at LASALLE College of the Arts in Singapore, entitled *How to Do Things With Rules*. His show enacts the privately administered world, and slows logistical capitalism down until it becomes playable and pliable. But, first, we should take note of an exhibition and residency by Tan that preceded the LASALLE exhibit. *Closure* was a series of activities in residency and a show created by Tan in 2012 to mark the winding down of the General Social Care Council, itself the evolution of the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work founded in 1970. With the dissolution of this Council, there would no longer be any specialist regulator of social workers in Britain. The Council was criticized for failures in regulation, and eliminated in the name of efficiency and fiscal restraint. Another public bureaucracy "unsettled." Shortly after this closure, the government announced it was going to marketize and privatize child protection as part of a wider move toward privately administered social care. Around the same time, perhaps not coincidentally, social workers in Greece and Spain began to emerge as leaders in the struggle against austerity, privatization, and public indebtedness. Britain too has a radical tradition in social work, from anti-racist and feminist social workers in the 1970s to the Social Work Action Network today operating in Britain and Ireland and active in solidarity actions with migrants. Tan allows these political stakes to form the backdrop of his work in *Closure*.

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Tan created a series of *kudurru* to mark the actual closure of the Council. *Kudurru* are stones that were used in Babylonia to mark boundaries of granted land. The original stones were kept in temples, and copies placed on the boundaries of the land itself. The stones were engraved with the contract granting the land from the king to his landowners, and also included engravings of the gods that protected the contract and who would curse those who broke it, as well as other illustrations. One set of two *kudurru* created by Tan is entitled *Travel Reimbursement Forms* (2012). These are ceramics that resemble melting desserts, with text from the actual forms scratched into their surface. Another set of short, rounded pillars, ceramic and acrylic, each in a different bright color, is called *Committee* (2012). They stand around as if waiting for a meeting to start. One column is slightly tilted at the top, suggesting a meeting gone on too long. The viewer is tempted to consider these objects from the perspective of a contract, especially given that Tan himself was a practicing human rights lawyer before turning to art. Certainly, it is possible to think of the stones as trying to prevent or at least mark a broken wage contract, and perhaps even mark a change in the social contract emblematic of a privately administered world. But just as Tan is more than his legal background, I think these objects are about more than contracts, even if one hopes the curse of a broken contract in these stones does indeed reach the conspirators who profit from privatization of publicly generated wealth.

It might be more interesting to look at them in terms of time and space, the time of walking from one ceramic to another, and the space thereby demarcated and named. The publicly administered world has been one of boundaries, marked by the high counter, the glass wicket, the closed office door. And not just of space, but also of time, of opening hours, waiting times, processing schedules. As much as these boundaries have frustrated us, Tan's work suggests that they also have protected us, or, more precisely, have given us something to protect. Time and space were divided into public and private. Public space was the space of work for the bureaucrat, and work had its clock. Private space was the place work was not supposed to go, and private time was just that. Even private space at work was protected. I remember the way post office clerks in downtown Manhattan had their booths covered in family photos, pictures of Malcolm X and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and union posters. This was work space, but it was private in the sense that it represented interests different from work. I should add, however, that this protection, as a defensive effort, was always limited, as those postal clerks knew. And, ultimately, it could not protect us from what was to come. The private, as we know, was in fact full of the work of social reproduction, and the public was not for everyone. Protecting the time and space of the public and private was already a rearguard action, given how much of our world was already privatized. But Tan's work helps us to see why the stakes of public bureaucracy have been so high: not

because of what was protected, but of what the protection feared, a world where administration and work knew no boundaries of time or space. When I returned to that Manhattan post office after the 11 September 2001 attack on the World Trade Center, all the pictures and posters were removed, and clerks sat in sterile booths. Any interest other than work had been expunged. *Closure* has marked this fear, but also the vindication of this fear.

On the other hand, *How to Do Things With Rules* is an equally resistant show, though rather than confronting a fear, it takes full advantage of our new position as administrators of a privatized world, raising the question of whether it is really a good idea to give us these responsibilities, loosed from the divisions of time and space. Scholars from Franco Berardi to Peter Flemming have illustrated in recent years a world where work and life appear coextensive in both time and space. There has been a strange collapse in the division of relative surplus labor and absolute surplus labor according to these scholars, as if work-time and work-place have dissolved as boundaries. Black radical and Italian autonomist feminists have long pointed to this social factory, and they have also noted how, as the walls of work have come down, new barbed wire fences, lined with armed bureaucrats, rise, and new zones within such fences reach through the social factory. In this privately administered world, with public muscle to back it up, we might imagine Tan's new work would stress the futility of our own administrative acts, and the power of algorithmic measures that perpetuate these acts.

Instead, Tan creates something remarkable: a workshop of rules. This "workshop" manages to retain both senses of the word, a place where something is made, and a place made to make something. And in this simple yet profound move, Tan gives us a way to sense ourselves as both makers of rules and conveners of those rules. In a more philosophical language, the seriality of following a rule made elsewhere in time and space, though nonetheless by human labor, gives way to a view of the practico-inert as an immediately present collective performance. This is no more evident than in Tan's 2015 work, *Karaoke Court*. Performed first in Singapore at the show *How To Do Things With Rules*, and subsequently in London, Tan explains the event this way:

Karaoke Court is a work that explores karaoke singing as a platform for resolving disputes. The work is a revival of the spirit of Central Arctic Eskimo Song Duels, where litigants presented their grievances to the entire Inuit community for judgment in the form of humorous and satirical song. Participants are invited to resolve their disputes by singing karaoke in front of an audience who will decide who wins. The processes and decision of the Karaoke Court are made legally binding via the participants' signing of an Arbitration Contract.

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I was part of the audience for this performance in Singapore, in which the audience was also the jury as, informally, audiences often are in karaoke bars in Singapore. Small claims courts are a popular venue of privatization. Property and family disputes are *worked out* through the law, and they are *worked on* by those who attend, and those who watch. Private interests predominate. There is no appeal to the nation here, or even in many cases to the abstraction of justice. Karaoke is another matter. Singers make grand appeals to emotion, to abstract ideals, and to something beyond themselves. The jury responds, displacing the judge who enforces privatization. Tan also wanted to show Singaporeans they could be part of a process of governance in a nation that tends to offer citizens spectator status at best on governmental matters. But by staging it against our global privately administered world, the work asks not whether Singaporeans could participate more in governance, but whether participation is any longer the right term, if it ever was. In a world where everyone makes the rules, and no one does, governance may not exist much longer.

Tan also gave life-coaching sessions in the gallery, by appointment, to artists and aspiring artists. Calling it *Art School Surgery*, Tan told me that he was soon fully booked, and that “clients” took the experience very seriously. This raises the question: What does it mean to take such therapy seriously, knowing that it has been set up as art? As with the performance artist Valentina Desideri’s *Political Therapy*—a form of “fake” therapy that often evokes highly serious and emotional conversations about politics between the artist and the client—*Art School Surgery* is not a case of clients forgetting themselves or being seduced into an act of art. Instead, the clients sense that therapy itself, what one might call the rules of well-being in the name of improvement, is being workshoped. The algorithm proposes itself as the only true maker of rules. This workshop on coaching, that is also a workshop of coaching, suspends the algorithm, and gives us a chance to ask what we might be able to do with rules.

Becoming part of Tan’s court, being coached by him, or holding a meeting at his conference table—complete with ping-pong balls for making decisions—we begin to realize we have convened ourselves, assembled to discuss the rules of assembly. We have started the meeting to make the rules, not with the rules. Very quickly we realize the condition of this privately administered world, and it takes us back to the leadership team of the museum for contemporary art. In the privately administered world, there are still people in charge, but there is no longer anyone in authority. Institutions no longer have rules based on the reason of their institutions, however maddening or partial those rules might have been. The rules now are algorithmic, and the algorithm is set only to privatization, to the accumulation of bodies and things for surplus profit and monopoly. What is a leader to say in such situations? Indeed, what is she to do except express empathy yet again? Armed bureaucrats

continue to run amok haranguing and shooting people from Ferguson, Missouri to Rio de Janeiro. But though they are said to take the law into their own hands, the opposite is the case. They are produced by the algorithms of policing, like the notorious “broken windows” algorithm made famous in New York. These algorithms, and not any higher leadership, make the deadly rules behind a good business environment. Rules have been emptied by these algorithms. What Jack Tan lets us do is to step in where this leadership used to be. The rest is up to us.

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Protocol no. 90/6

MASBEDO

2018

Site-specific video installation

Sala delle Capriate - Archivio di Stato di Palermo

Nota dell'artista

Abbiamo pensato di lavorare all'immagine di un pupo perché è un oggetto scultoreo capace di assorbire in sé le immagini di stati d'animo controllati, riuscendo così ad amplificare il proprio significato vivo per turberlo, restituendoci mistero ed emotività. Il pupo si muove qui in un pauroso video, collocato il ratto a modo di un'icona. Il pupo è la metafora di un artista. L'artista è un uomo che libera le cose anche quando è legato e controllato. La voce dell'artista non si ascolta, ma c'è, è come se fosse un rumore vivo, proprio come quello generato dai movimenti del pupo. Nello specifico, l'installazione allestita all'Archivio di Stato di Palermo, si ispira alle vicissitudini del regista Vittorio De Seta. Più volte nel corso della sua carriera professionale, De Seta subì il controllo delle Autorità. La sua arte lo voleva al mondo dei lavoratori più umili, pescatori, contadini e minatori, era sospettata di nascondere una sottile appartenenza alle società sovversive comuniste. Durante il periodo di sopralluoghi all'Archivio di Stato di Palermo, grazie all'esperienza unica dei

personale responsabile, abbiamo scoperto l'esistenza di un fallone molto particolare, Dated 1956, contiene numerose pratiche e denunce imputate ad artisti, registi, scrittori e giornalisti. Il documento, che ha attratto da subito la nostra attenzione, fu redatto dai carabinieri di Petralia Sottana, un piccolo paese nel Parco delle Madonie. Questa cartella è diventata per noi il simbolo di quanto la nostra videoinstallazione vorrebbe comunicare e abbiamo così deciso di esporla all'ingresso della Sala delle Capriate, luogo di assoluto mistero e silenzio deputato alla conservazione di una memoria non organizzabile, un archivio accatastato secondo le non regole del tempo e del caso. Migliaia e migliaia di documenti non catalogati che nel tempo ha trasformato in mestiere stratici, fossili di carta, polvere e inchiesto rattrappito.

Il pupo è animato da Mimmo Cuticchio ad è stato costruito appositamente per questa videoinstallazione della sua famiglia.

Artist's note

We decided to work on the image of a puppet because it is a sculptural object capable of absorbing images of controlled moods within itself, thus amplifying its own living and disturbing significance, conveying a sense of mystery and emotionality. The puppet moves here on a video stage, placed high up rather like an icon, behind a suspended curtain of cables and LED lights, the puppet is the metaphor of an artist. The artist is a man who freehings even when he himself tied up and controlled. The artist's voice is not heard, but it is there; it is like a live noise, just like that generated by the movements of the puppet. Specifically, the installation set up in the Archivio di Stato di Palermo (State Archives of Palermo) is inspired by the vicissitudes of the film director Vittorio De Seta. Several times, during his professional career, De Seta was subjected to the control of the authorities. His art, so close to the world of the humblest workers, fishermen, farmers and miners, was suspected of concealing a hidden agenda in favour of "communist" subversive societies. During the period of work undertaken

in the State Archives of Palermo, and thanks to the unique experience of the staff who work there, we discovered the existence of a very unusual folder. Dated 1956, it contains numerous dossiers and reports concerning artists, directors, writers and journalists. The document, which immediately attracted our attention, was compiled by the Carabinieri of Petralia Sottana, a small town in the Parco delle Madonie. For us, this dossier became the symbol of what our video installation sought to communicate and we decided to display it at the entrance to the Sala delle Capriate, a place of absolute mystery and silence dedicated to the preservation of a non-organisable memory, an archive arranged in accordance with the non-rules of time and chance. Thousands and thousands of un-catalogued documents that time has transformed into stratified matter, paper fossils, dust and faded ink.

The puppet is animated by Mimmo Cuticchio and was made specifically for this video installation by his family.

Masbedo, Videomobile Manifesta 12, Palermo, Italy 2018

The transformations of the sicilian mafia under postfordism

Vincenzo Scalia- Anglia Ruskin University

From the octopus to the spider's web: the transformations of the sicilian mafia under postfordism

To my father, a Sicilian who told his son about the mafia

Introduction

The fall of the Berlin wall marked a watershed for organised crime. New criminal groups, such as those groups from Russia, broke out onto the stage. New routes for illegal traffic, as well as new markets (nuclear weapons, human beings and organs) were created. New patterns of organisations took shape, more suited to the opportunities provided by globalisation.

The Italian criminal organisations, in particular the most famous of them, the Sicilian mafia, or Cosa Nostra (CN), were deeply affected by these changes. The current idea is that CN is undergoing a deep crisis (DIA, I semester 2008). Firstly, the arrests and the frequent cases of pentiti (turncoats) would have weakened its organisational fabric (DIA, II semester 2008), by dissolving the once-centralised organisation relying on the Cupola (Dome), or the executive body of CN and thus making room for a new, smaller, weaker local organisation. Secondly, both the attention of the media towards the mafia and the reaction of civil society would have caused a loss of criminal hegemony of the territory that CN once held firmly (La Spina, 2005). Thirdly, the attention of Italian public opinion in these later years has focused mainly both on the Neapolitan camorra and on the Calabrian 'ndrangheta, which, as well as their Apulian criminal fellows of the Sacra Corona Unita (Massari, 1995; Bucucci-Massari, 2001), would control the new international routes of drugs, human trafficking, weapon smuggling, and toxic waste dumping. Finally, the implementation of anti-mafia policies by the Italian government, mainly those focused on the confiscation by the State of the private properties of the Mafiosi, would make it difficult for Sicilian organised crime to run its business. Such an analysis is purported both by such institutional sources as the Parliamentary Commission on the Mafia (2008) and by such popular fictions as Gomorrah (2006) by the Neapolitan writer Roberto Saviano. It is also endorsed by the frequent police raids, which recently gave way to the arrests of some of the most prominent figure of the organisation, like Bernardo Binnu Provenzano and Salvatore Lo Piccolo. CN would be still a danger for Italian and Sicilian society, but it would have been ousted by other Italian mobs (DIA, II semester 2008).

This article rejects this view, and will try to demonstrate that, despite the fact that CN is no longer a leading organisation in many illegal markets, its force remain the same. My view is that the idea of a decline by CN is more related to the narrow-ranged theories used to interpret the phenomenon of Mafia, than to reality. In particular I will show how the most popular academic views are restricted either to the mere economic domain (Gambetta, 1993), or to the idea that mafia belongs to an archaic world, wherein primeval rituals and behaviours prevail, meaning that CN is a backward group (Paoli, 2000). Using the works of Umberto Santino (2006) and its paradigm of complexity and by the ideas put forward by Vincenzo Ruggiero (1996) about the dirty economies as the standpoints for a new theoretical approach, I will argue that CN must be analysed under the lens of Postfordism.

I will argue that CN must be interpreted as an organisation which has been active mainly in different domains, such as the economic, the political and financial, since its birth at the beginning of the 19th century. I will thus evidence how CN is a multi-faceted actor, strongly influencing culture and society. The changes it has undergone recently must be related to the Postfordist (Amin, 1994) transformations Western affecting societies since mid 1970s. As a Post-fordist organisation, CN has a more flexible structure, with less members (downsizing), and operates in a wide network wherein people who are not in its ranks are involved, in particular politicians, businessmen and State officers (Policemen, Civil Servants). I will show that CN has withdrawn from more risky businesses but its links to the territory are the basis for either a national or an international role, related to its political and cultural force that remains strong in Sicily. I will demonstrate that the accumulation of political, economic and financial power and knowledge were used to operate in activities other than the illegal ones. I will not argue that the latter ones no longer account among CN interests, but rather that their role has come to be increasingly marginal. I will by this token offer an alternative interpretation of the mafia. For this purpose, I will also use some interviews I conducted in Palermo.

Between industry and brotherhood: the short-range theories

There has always been massive disagreement between academics when the nature of CN was to be defined. This is for different reasons. Firstly, the existence of a criminal organisation was doubtful until the 30th of January 1992. In that date, the Italian Supreme Judicial Court (Corte di Cassazione) confirmed the sentence issued by the Court of Palermo at the end of the big trial against the mafia that followed the enquiry of judges Falcone and Borsellino and relied on the confessions of the former boss Tommaso Buscetta (AA.VV.1991). It was finally ascertained that there existed a criminal organisation, hierarchically organised, and actively involved in the pursuit of power and profit through the use of illegal means. This belated assertion is a consequence of the strong political influence CN has wielded over the Italian political balance of power since the country became independent (1860). Other authors, such as Leopoldo Franchetti (1876,1995), had already tried to stress the existence of the organisation, but their analysis was instrumentally neglected for more than a century.

Secondly, the uncertainty about the existence of a criminal organisation in Sicily, gave way to two different kinds of interpretations: the first one could be called nativist, and it relates to the explanation that Sicilian ruling classes gave of the phenomenon, both to justify the homicides and to hide the mafia from Italian public opinion. This interpretation (Santino,

1995), insisted on the mafia as the attitude of Sicilian people to put family, honour and friendship first, so that they did not develop civic virtues and tended, because of their Mediterranean genes, to over-react when conflicts broke out. Many Sicilian prominent intellectuals, such as Luigi Pirandello, Giovanni Verga and Luigi Capuana, shared this view. The second interpretation, that we could call colonialist, groups all the interpretations of Sicilian history and society elaborated by non-Sicilian intellectuals. Their views, as different as they could be, share the idea that Sicilians are a backward population, devoid of any civic virtue, which indulge either in the creation of rebel organisations (Hobsbawm, 1962) or of private groups defending their own honour (Hess, 1982). Only Anton Blok (1971) gave an original interpretation of the mafia when he portrayed the Mafiosi as a mediator between the local and the national community. The mistake he made consisted of his focusing on the mafia man as a single person, as at the time when the book was published it was not certain that a criminal organisation existed.

After 1992, most of the academics did not take the chance they had, so that the new theories that developed integrated the new knowledge about the mafia both with the colonialist and nativist approach. This is the case of Diego Gambetta (1992), whose work on the Sicilian mafia is considered to be influential by many authors, though it has indeed many flaws. Gambetta took advantage of the scientific vacuum about the mafia as an organisation, to propose a theory of organised crime mostly inspired by his rational choice background. Gambetta considers the mafia as an industry of private protection, whose birth and development should be related both to the lack of trust characterising Sicilian society and to the backward economic conditions of the island, which had never known the development of a real market economy. The need for private protection, according to Gambetta, derives from the lack of trust which has been affecting Sicilian society since the sixteenth century. This analysis, as fascinating as it has been for many academics, proves to be unsubstantial at the end of the day. Firstly because it draws on the stereotyped representations of Sicily, which is portrayed as a backward, underdeveloped and immobile society. This is just not the case, as market economy had developed in the Island since the end of the eighteenth century, and mafia developed in relation to the growth of capitalist transformations of Sicilian agriculture (Santino, 2000). These changes gave rise to manifold social and political movement who fought and lost their battle against the mafia from the end of the nineteenth century to early 1950s. Secondly, as Gambetta focuses on protection, he forgets that mafia mostly protects by itself (Catanzaro, 1987), as it is the Mafiosi who threaten ordinary citizens and extort entrepreneurs. By this token, protection, is not a mere product of the demand-supply cycle, but rather the consequence of the authoritarian and threatening power the Mafiosi wield over Sicily. Thirdly, as the many judicial enquiries prove, CN has acted as a crucial actor of Sicilian economy, both in its agricultural stage, and in its industrial and financial transformation, so that some scholars pointed at an entrepreneurial mafia in early 1980s (Arlacchi, 1982). Fourthly, if we consider protection as the core activity of CN, we remain entangled in an economy-centred analysis, thus neglecting all the other important aspect of the mafia hegemony, which also encompass politics and social relations. Finally, a monistic interpretation of the mafia, also relying on the assumption that it thrives on an immobile society, is flawed in as much as it ignores or misunderstands the dynamic aspects of CN, whose structure, members, aims, power, interests and value have survived across different changes occurring in the society, culture and politics.

On the trail of the interpretation of Gambetta, other authors (Varese, 2001) have used the concept of private protection to describe the rise of other criminal organisations in the domain of global criminal markets, taken for granted that the Sicilian mafia has lost his prominence as the main criminal organisation of the world. Although it is hardly possible to deny that globalisation has also affected organised crime, I have doubts that the latter can be portrayed as a uniform phenomenon, following the same trends and developing the same characteristics apart from the social and economic context wherein it grew. For example, if we compare the Sicilian CN to the USA one, we find remarkable differences that can be traced back to the spatial and temporal environment wherein the two different organisations develop. As Alan A. Block (1983; 2003) correctly argues, when we deal with organised crime we must address it as a fluid, changing and multifaceted reality. Schemes, as useful as they can be for social scientists, must be flexible and wide-ranging.

Letizia Paoli (2000; 2005) tries to give an alternative view of the Sicilian mafia, as she prefers to emphasise the cultural aspects underpinning its existence and reproduction. Paoli adopts the Weberian concept of status contract to analyse both the Sicilian and the Calabrian organised crime as brotherhoods whose members are tied together by the rituals and the secret, which provide them with a peculiar and exclusive identity. As both the mafia and 'ndrangheta members give importance to status, this shows they belong to a primeval and backward culture which is a product of the underdevelopment of Southern Italy. Status-oriented bonds yet tend to be overrun by modernisation and its stress on the individual as the main actor of contemporary society. As a consequence of this transformation, both the mafia and the 'ndrangheta are bound to face an irreversible decline, and more modern criminal organisations will take over.

Paoli shows to have drawn on what we called the nativist interpretations of the mafia, as she connects status to the social and cultural peculiarity of the Sicilian and Calabrian context. Also this interpretation of the mafia is in our opinion weak and unapt to both understand and analyse the mafia. Firstly, because Paoli makes a mistake similar to Gambetta when deciding to single out culture as the peculiar essence of the mafia. The sharing of this essentialist approach by social scientists, as well as being an obstacle to the understanding of the complexity of a phenomenon, also derives from the mistaken attempt to adapt reality to theories. What Gambetta did with the rational choice, Paoli does with her Weberian approach. A more accurate analysis of Sicilian and Calabrian organised crime, suggests how instrumental the values to the Mafiosi are. For example, judicial enquiries prove that killings of children, betrayal of friends and relatives are common among the members of organisations who claim to have family and friendship as their capital values. Secondly, Paoli makes an even bigger mistake when she insists on the primeval aspect of the mafia identity, which makes her doubt about the survival of the two organisations after the fast changes brought about by modernity. Nowadays 'Ndrangheta is considered as an organisation on the rise (Carlucci-Caruso, 2009), and CN, as we will see in the next paragraphs, has proven to be capable of both intercepting and using modernity for its own purposes. Finally, both Gambetta and Paoli commit a decisive mistake: they isolate CN from "legal" society, politics and economy in order to focus on its nature as a criminal organisation. By doing this, it is consequential to think that the Sicilian mafia is declining, as its relational skills are neglected and an emphasis is posed over a criminal hard-core which, as well as being often out of focus (such as in the case of private protection) proves to be reductive if we want to see the complexity of mafia.

The third group of advocates of the decline of CN come from the institutional sources, such as the Direzione Investigativa Antimafia (DIA; www.mininterno.it/dia), an investigation task force set up by the Italian Ministry of the Interior in 1992 under the pressures made by the judge Giovanni Falcone. The analysis of DIA is accurate to the extent that they reflect the repressive work of the Police on the territory: the number of arrests, reports and violent crimes occurring every year in the regions of Southern Italy wherein criminal organisations are based. As important as these figures might be, they are insufficient to understand the mafia because they neglect all those crimes which would require deeper enquiries, such as money laundering, loansharking, the perception of mafia by the local population and the network of relationships linking the mafia to politics. Judicial enquiries, but also a more accurate observation of territorial dynamics are absent from the DIA analyses. All these academic and institutional interpretations of the mafia are insufficient or even inadequate toolkits to describe and analyse the mafia, let alone to understand its transformations, either because they focus on just one aspect of Sicilian organised crime, or because they just look at the latter with a wrong perspective. What we need is hence a different theoretical and methodological approach, allowing both to describe mafia as a complex social phenomenon and to achieve an articulated

analysis of it, as well as a closer link between the theory and the aspect of reality it refers to. In the next paragraph, I will demonstrate that it is possible to reach this aim by using the concept of Postfordism.

A way out: paradigm of complexity, dirty economies and Post Fordism

Two interpretations of organised crime and of mafia in particular, seem to be particularly fit to readdress our topic. The first is the paradigm of complexity, worked out by the Sicilian sociologist and anti-mafia activist Umberto Santino (1995; p.131). He defines mafia as a cluster of criminal organisations, the most important of which, though not the only one, is CN. Such organisations operate within a wide and articulate relational context, shaping a system of violence and illegality aimed at accumulating capital and gaining power, through the use of a cultural code and the enjoyment of social consent. The approach of Santino is more wide ranged, both because it encloses the political and cultural dimensions other authors neglect, and because he refers to the relational dimensions, such as that of social context, thus not making the mistake of isolating CN from the rest of reality.

The Sicilian mafia, as historians have proved (Cancila, 1989, Lupo, 1995), developed as an informal structure of political and economic management of big estates (*latifondo*) belonging to absentee landlords. It evolved later into an "industry of violence" owned by middle class members (Franchetti, 1876, 1995), which proved to play a capital role in the passage of Sicily from the Bourbon monarchy to the Italian state. As episodes such as the Notarbartolo affair prove (Lupo, 1995; Dickie, 2005), CN could embed into the Sicilian and Italian society thanks both to its political connection and to its entrepreneurial role as Sicily grew to be an important corn-exporting area (Santino, 2000).

At the same time, the political and economic hegemony of the mafia, made it possible for the organisation to interact with the local society (Chubb, 1982; J. and P. Schneider, 1989), and to manipulate such typical Sicilian values as friendship, honour and respect to consolidate its power. Had it been isolated from the social and cultural network, or devoid of any political and economic support of the so-called "mafiosa bourgeoisie" (Mineo, 1955), CN would have remained a local mob. The argument put forward by Vincenzo Ruggiero (1996) proves by this token to be correct when underscoring how "dirty economies" are not isolated from the rest of society, both because their organisation reproduces that of legal enterprises and because the borders between legal and illegal markets are quite blurred. Ruggiero provides us with the second toolkit to analyse the complexity of mafia. As economics-oriented as his theory can be, it is yet grounded on a relational approach that keeps the social context into account, rather than isolating organised crime from the official and legal society.

The analyses of Santino and Ruggiero, are the basis for a new focus on CN. My view is that it is possible to merge the paradigmatic approaches set forth by these two authors to develop the concept of Postfordist mafia. If the Sicilian mafia is part of a wider economic, political, and cultural context, wherein the borders between legal and illegal are uncertain, then CN is not in crisis, but rather followed the wider social transformations of the last 30 years to evolve into a post-fordist organisation. I am not using this concept to theorise that since contemporary society is characterised by post-fordism, therefore also CN followed this path. It would be too naive a statement, as well as devoid of any empirical basis. My point is rather that post-fordism, as different authors have demonstrated (Harvey, 1992, Amin, 1994), in reshaping the relations of production of contemporary capitalism, has deeply influenced society. Flexible accumulation, network structures, the emphasis on relational aspects rather than on the instrumental ones, the outsourcing of economic activities and the downsizing of the personnel, as key instrument to understand contemporary social relations, prove to be a suitable toolkit also to understand the transformations of the Sicilian mafia.

It could be argued that the use of an economic category, at the end of the day, might engender a new interpretation of the mafia as an enterprise, thus making useless the effort we have been trying to make up to now, to reject one-sided approaches. It is not like this, because the entrepreneurial view put forward in particular by Gambetta relies on a rational-choice oriented approach, whereas I am proposing to adopt an analytical viewpoint based on relations of production who affect society as a whole (Harvey, 1992; Jameson, 1978). As Negri (2001) argued on the trails of Karl Marx's *Grundrisse*(1998), post-fordism is based on the general intellect of society, or the accumulation of social knowledge, cooperation and practices which are "put at work" to ensure profits and power. In the next paragraphs, I will demonstrate how post-fordism reflects the transformations of the Sicilian mafia with respect to structure, politics and economy.

Octopus or network? CN after the Cupola

The popular culture fuelled by the media tends to represent the mafia as an octopus, whose big head and tentacles hold a firm grasp over Sicily and Italy. Tommaso Buscetta (Biagi, 1987), when it was revealed that CN consisted of a hierarchical structure with an executive branch and manifold peripheral articulations, had endorsed this view, whose influence goes far behind public opinion. The arrests of such mafia leaders as Totò Riina, Binnu Provenzano and Salvatore Lo Piccolo, allowed journalists, scholars, policemen and politicians to speak of a beheaded Octopus, getting weaker and weaker day by day (DIA, I semestre 2008). A hierarchical structure, deprived of its summit, is hardly supposed to be as efficient as it was before these arrests.

If one looks back at the historical transformations CN underwent during its history, it will come to the fore that its organisation pattern has been dynamic, adapting the structure to the social changes occurring from the origins of the organisation, in early nineteenth century, until the present day. On the one hand, CN has always had a permanent, hierarchical configuration, ranging from the ordinary Mafioso, or soldato (soldier) to the capomandamento (county-chief) ruling over a plurality of "families" located on the territory. On the other hand, the executive committee or cupola it is just a recent creation (Biagi, 1987; Calderone, 1988), dating back to 1970's to govern the conflicts rising around the growing opportunities for business and profits both in the drug and in the construction sectors. The collegial structure of the cupola, in early 1980s, would have evolved into a de facto dictatorship of the Corleonesi led by Totò Riina.

From the 1990's onwards, other significant organisational changes occur. The arrests of the Riina and Provenzano, the growing number of turncoats, the rising of other criminal organisations, pave the way for radical changes in the articulation of CN. The recent enquiries Gotha and Grande Mandamento (www.bernardoprovenzano.net) show how the attempts to reconstruct the cupola carried out by the Palermo-based groups are indeed counterbalanced by a growing tendency towards a decentralised organisation, wherein charismatic young bosses of such as Matteo Messina Denaro, Gianni Nicchi and Mimmo Raccuglia are increasingly respected, but are far from acting as legitimised leaders of CN. A network of alliances, economic partnerships and political collaboration is still on, but a centralised direction no longer exists. These two enquiries show that the recruitment of new members is lower than in the past (downsizing), and that street activities such as extortions, are carried out by young mobs who are not Mafiosi, but whose activities are controlled by the mafia. An old retired lower rank mafia man stated:

"I am off. I spent twenty years in jail, I came back to my district and found out that things have changed. The youngest just want to make money, they ignore respect. And there is nothing one can do about it, if those who set the rules endorse it. OK, if they are arrested they won't tell much because they don't know, but we are also running the risk of losing respect. I don't want to hang out with this can'l mannara (meaning 'cattle dogs', a Palermitan insult)."

The changing of long-term rules seems to worry both the Mafiosi and their relational network, but they are at the same time accepted as the sign of changing times. The owner of a sportswear shop in the city of Palermo stated:

"I had never paid the "pizzo"(extortion money) in 50 years, thanks to my two Mafiosi brothers. Everybody knew who I was. Then, last week, two oldmen I have known for a long time came to me and said: we are sorry, mr C., we remember who you belong to, but guys just don't care, because they don't know and don't want to know. We just can offer you a little discount. Times change...yes, they do, unfortunately."

Younger generations of racket boys work independently. The mafia supervises them, receives the money they collect, but cannot help breaking the old traditions. Independent mobs have a cost, but this is the price to pay for the survival of the organisation. Rackets were once managed by mafia members only, but both the repressive action by the police and judges, and the growing attention of public opinion to this activity, have made CN change its organisational strategy, which involves the outsourcing of racket activities. In this way, the arrested will not be member of the mafia, and will not know enough of the organisation, its, structure, its business. Moreover, a downsizing of the membership, restricting to just a few and trustworthy members the knowledge of strategies and aims, also lowers the risk of turncoats.

The structural transformations of CN also result in the creation of different networks. As new criminal Italian and international groups grow, it is no longer possible to operate in such profitable illegal markets as drug trafficking, as an hegemonic organisation. For this reason, such Mafiosi as Messina Denaro and Laudani (DIA, II semester 2008), operate in partnership with camorra and ndrangheta, thus also lowering the risks of the enforcement of repression by the police and judges. The networks between the mafia and the legal world, such as politics and economics, are even more important, as the survival of CN depends precisely on the existence of these relationships.

Some leading historians (Renda, 1997), for instance, have analysed the role of mafia during the Fascist regime, as they strove to understand the reasons why, in spite of the ruthless repression Mussolini exercised over the organisation through the command of Cesare Mori, CN reappeared stronger than ever after the collapse of Fascism. The reason is that, as efficacious and harsh as repression can be, it will prove to be useless to the extent that it does not destroy the network of economic and political relationships which support and legitimise the existence of CN. In 1945 it was the persistence of absentee landlords, political patrons and exportation entrepreneurs, or the Mafioso bourgeoisie to embed CN in a network of mutual protection, exchange and partnership. Nowadays the Sicilian mafia is far from declining because it is enshrined in a powerful political and financial network whose influence reaches far beyond Sicily. The enquiry about the relationship between Berlusconi and CN through his manager Marcello Dell'Utri (www.repubblica.it, 2005) shows how it is not necessary to be a member of the mafia, but rather to develop an active and long lasting collaboration with the latter for the mafioso entrepreneurship and politics to develop and thrive. Giovanni Falcone (1989) called this network between mafia and elites as terzo livello. It was for this reason that the crime of concorso esterno in associazione mafiosa (external cooperation with the mafia) was created by the Italian legislators. It is not necessary either to swear an oath of allegiance or to kill someone to be part of the Mafioso block of power. The creation and development of partnerships suffices. In a global, postfordist society, the network is designed to be as lean, flexible and pervasive as possible, in order to exploit the opportunities provided by the new social pattern. CN seems to have learned the lesson well, as its organisation ranges from a local to a global context, also including pre-modern elements, such as the oath of allegiance and the pizzini Provenzano used to communicate with more sophisticated relationships and instruments.

Another enquiry, concerning the relationship between the former governor of Sicily, Salvatore Cuffaro, and some prominent mafia members follows the same patterns. I will analyse these enquiries more accurately in the following paragraphs, in which I will also analyse the economics and politics of postfordist CN. It is by now clear that the 'Octopus', if it existed at all, has given way to a network-like structure.

The economic network of Cosa Nostra

Economy is a crucial aspect in the existence of CN, though not the only one. In order to understand the relationship between the mafia and the economic sphere, it is necessary to unwind an articulate analytical approach, by which on the one hand it can be possible to see the transformation of the Mafioso economic activities and interests, on the other hand it becomes possible to expose the blurring borders between legal and illegal activities.

Under the first aspect, it is necessary to emphasise that CN did not start as an organisation involved in illegal markets. Unlike other criminal organisations, such as the camorra (Sales, 1987; Barbagallo, 1993) the Sicilian mafia was born, and developed as, an informal structure delegated by the absentee noblemen to run the agricultural economy based on the cultivation of big estates (Renda, 1997). At the same time, the military force, the control of the territory and the social consent the organisation enjoyed within the Sicilian context, facilitated the promotion of illegal business, such as receiving illegal goods, robbing, theft, homicide, and extortion. The connection with the legal world was never severed, resulting both in the running of legal business such as trade and industry, and in the development of strong political connections with politics, economy and finance. The homicide of the MP and former chief executive of the Bank of Sicily Emanuele Notarbartolo in 1893, and the role MP Raffaele Palizzolo played in the affair, tells us of a crime syndicate whose reach has gone far beyond the underworld to enter the white collar domain.

After World War II, CN moved to the city, organising the construction business that led to the "sack of Palermo", managing to control the flow of public expenditure through political patronage and, for the first time in its history, massively investing into a profitable illegal business such as drug trafficking. This flexible, dynamic and multi-layered entrepreneurship set the basis for the development of a "Mafioso enterprise" (Santino-La Fiura, 1989) which, taking advantages of the banking autonomy Sicily enjoyed because of its semi-independent status, entered the international financial circuits, also thanks to the work of such bankers as Michele Sindona (Stajano, 1990), and had its way to promote the birth and development of such modern enterprises as Italian private televisions (Travaglio, 2004) which were soon to wield a prominent influence over Italian politics. The financial role of CN is still prominent, mainly developed through the international network developed by the Sicilian born businessman Vito Palazzolo, who cannot be arrested and tried because he took Namibian citizenship. The judges of Palermo, yet, keep insisting that the "financial mafia" is the most dangerous nowadays (la Repubblica, 2008).

The second aspect, related to the border between legal and illegal activities, can now be developed more easily, in relationship with my proposed analytical frame of postfordism. As far as illegal markets are concerned, it is by now evident that CN has lost its prominent role in drugs, both because the judicial repression of the early 1990s and because of the rise of new criminal organisations. The consequence of this is not that the mafia is retiring from the drug market. Firstly, as the Old Bridge enquiry proves (la Repubblica, 2008), the new leading figures of CN have been trying to re-establish international connections with the USA branch of CN, and also they still rely on strong international links in Venezuela and Canada, where the Caruana and Cuntrera mafia groups are still operating in a prominent position. Secondly, because the already cited reports both by the DIA and by the Antimafia Parliamentary Committees (2006; 2008), describe CN as being still active in drug dealing, though in partnerships with other criminal organisations, mainly the camorra and the ndrangheta. On the basis of this information, we can assume that the Sicilian mafia has changed its working pattern in the most profitable illegal market. Both repression and competition provoked the end of 1957 agreement between the Sicilian and the American mafia, which gave CN the national and European monopoly over the drug market. But since drugs are still a profitable market, the Sicilian mafia has developed a postfordist strategy of partnership and networking. Being no more possible to act as a monopolist actor, joint ventures with other groups are signed, thus ensuring a lesser risk, as repression can destroy a piece of the network but not the whole

structure and the persistence of business. Moreover, the absence of an executive committee makes it difficult for the enforcers to implement as an efficacious repressive action as it had been between the 1980's and 1990's. Enquirers at the moment have evidence concerning the activities of groups from Trapani and Catania in the drug market, but it might be possible that also other "families" share the business.

The blurring of boundaries between legal and illegal activities, and their postfordist characteristics can be traced also in other sectors, such as money laundering and loansharking, as well as in extortion. Traditionally these activities consisted of the active involvement of mafia members, who became the owners of a legal business, or loaned personally money and extorted to claim the territorial lordship of their family. Both repression and the growth of the anti-mafia movement have made CN change its strategy, thus producing a new way to run business (La Spina, 2005b). As far as money laundering is concerned, the Mafiosi cannot appear anymore as the owner of legal business, because of the anti-mafia laws requiring a clean criminal record for an entrepreneur to start its business. The mafia has chosen to adopt another means, like that of creating partnerships with persons without a criminal record who officially act as the owner of the business, but who are indeed laundering the money of CN. A Palermo tradesman, in telling the story of a wholesale shoe shopkeeper, says:

"Do you remember Mr G? 10 years ago it seemed like he was on the verge of bankruptcy, and there was much concern about his shops closing down and more than 150 workers left unemployed. Now he is on track again, and his shops are thriving more and more. How would you explain this?"

The view of the tradesman is also endorsed by a policeman:

"Palermo relies on the mafia money. Take them away, and the economy will run more wrecked than it is now [...]. So one day a guy turns up and tells them: I know you are having problems, but if you want to do business with me, problems will be over at once. How could you refuse such an offer? Bankruptcy would mean the end of your activity, as well as a loss of status. You can't run this risks, too many people, too many things besides economy are involved."

Similar strategies are adopted in loansharking, an activity wherein CN has chosen to avoid the risks of losing the monies lent by taking over the activities, and also in the sector of public contracts, as well as in new emerging business such as the building of shopping malls and the creation of call centres. A prominent member of the Chamber of Commerce of Palermo says in this respect:

"Sure the mafia is active, but how can you prove it? [...] Now you need to be more intuitive, so you might wonder why there are so many call centres and shopping malls being built in Palermo, but especially you have to wonder why the contractor fragments its job into many subcontracts to be given to many small local sub-contractors, or you should wonder why these new activities are built in certain areas[...]."

These interviews tell us how CN has changed its modus operandi and developed new strategies. Like a postfordist corporation, the Sicilian mafia differentiates between a wide range of activities, either legal or illegal. It is in this way possible to face either sudden crisis of a market, or a police raid. The organisational and economic risks are also avoided by operating in legal markets through the legal actors, who are just circulating the monies CN provided them with. The mafia, like a major corporation organising the production of small scale enterprises on the territory, provides the financial engine designed either to start on new businesses, such as shopping malls and call centres, or to keep under control such economic sectors as public contracts. In both cases, the economic fabric of Palermo (and of many parts of Sicily) is shaped by the entrepreneurial strategies CN puts forward and by the money coming from financial investments whose roots can be traced far away from Sicily. The enhancement of financial activities is also another aspect making the Mafioso enterprise similar to a postfordist corporation. And finally, CN is part of a wide network of both legal and illegal activities, and its relationships rank from the local shopkeeper who launders the mafia money, to the financial broker investing in international markets. We are facing different levels of connections and responsibilities, different kind of members and accomplices, whose core is still the parasitic, violent and arrogant power of the mafia. These being the transformations, it is no longer necessary for CN to seek out for the monopoly of illegal markets, as its wide ranged interests cover different sectors, all of which can ensure conspicuous profits to the organisation. Such organisational and economic changes, which also prove the flexibility of CN and its adaptability to the new global economy without losing the grasp of the local territory, are also reflected in the development of new political strategies.

The new politics of mafia

The relationships between politics and the Mafia have always been close-knit. It was the political protection and support provided by the Sicilian noblemen and politicians to allow CN to survive under cover for many years (Franchetti, cit.; Santino, 2002). On the other hand, the administration by the mafia of the estates belonging to noblemen through a de facto political and military control of the territory (Cancila, 1988) granted the social and political order in Sicily.

As controversial as the role CN played to help the Allied forces landing in Sicily in 1943 (Lupo, 2008; Santino, 2006), it is yet certain that many Mafiosi were appointed majors by the Allied forces (Casarrubea, 2002) and that the mafia took advantage of its fierce anticomunism to become a strong political subject within the Italian power network. The Cold War years tell us of a politically active CN, either supporting those political forces (mainly the Christian Democrats) which promote its interests, or by repressing all those social movements who would like to change the power balances on the island. Moreover, the mass patronage Judith Chubb (1982) analysed deeply, constituted a source of the Mafioso political hegemony over Sicily. The bosses intervened to make a decision over the allocation of the public funds the Italian government sent to Sicily (Tranfaglia, 1992), or acted on behalf of their protégés, who ranged from the unemployed youth to the entrepreneur who wanted to win a contract.

The fall of the Berlin wall produced important changes in the Mafioso political pattern. Though losing its importance as an anticomunist bulwark, CN still relies on its economic and structural force, as well as on its political and military control of Sicily, whose strategic importance at the centre of the Mediterranean sea is far from declining (Limes, 2009). Moreover, CN has long-lasting relationships with important branches of state apparatus, such as the Carabinieri and the Secret Services. The most recent judicial enquiries show how we are no longer facing an organic connection between mafia and politics, but rather a flexible power network within which different interests converge.

The first enquiry is locally based, and involves the former governor of Sicily, Salvatore Cuffaro, who was tried, sentenced, and forced to resign. The private health tycoon Michele Aiello, at the beginning of 2000's, based his business on conspicuous public funding provided by the Sicilian regional government. He was also a business partner with the leading mafia boss Filippo Graviano, a doctor himself. When the police decided to put a few bugs in the offices of Aiello and Graviano, a general of the informed Cuffaro of this. The governor decided to inform his tycoon friend, since he was aware of Aiello's dangerous relationships. As the enquiry went on, despite the bugs, it became evident that Cuffaro and most of his leading party colleagues were perfectly aware of the fact they were part of a Mafioso network, which they deemed natural (www.repubblica.it, 2008). Neither Cuffaro nor Aiello were members of CN, but the former had nothing to say about his friend and business partner being in such close relationship with a mafioso. Moreover, Cuffaro accepted and looked for the political support of the Graviano family. That was later to prove to be crucial in the regional elections. Cuffaro also knew that Aiello

bribed two leading Carabinieri – that is, members of one of the two Italian police forces – to obtain information about possible enquiries against him. Finally, also the two policemen considered their behaviour as part of their job. This case demonstrates how CN does not intervene in politics directly, either by organising a party or by using its military force. It has grown to become the focal point of a network of political relationships involving politicians, professionals, entrepreneurs and policemen, who run their business in the Mafioso way and seem not to feel any ethical scruples about it. They do not kill or extort, neither do they adopt primeval ritual. They just make business together.

The enquiry about the relationship between the manager and politician Marcello Dell'Utri and CN also shows the multifaceted character of this organisation, as well as its skills to develop a network of alliances and partnership encompassing individuals and groups having different backgrounds. This enquiry is important because it focuses on the relationships between mafia, politics and economy from the 1970's to the present time, that is in the period when the postfordist transformation took over. Dell'Utri, a Sicilian bank clerk, in the early 1970's was invited by his former university colleague Silvio Berlusconi to join the new Fininvest group. He accepted the offer, and turned into the powerful manager of key branches of the new group. Thanks to his long term relationships with such bosses as Gaetano Cinà and Vittorio Mangano, Dell'Utri ensured the Fininvest group both the protection against other criminal groups, and a lasting business partnership that is supposed to have influenced the development of the largest Italian communication group, as well as the birth of the leading centre-right party Forza Italia. The first degree sentence of the Palermo court (2005) declared Dell'Utri guilty of concorso esterno, like Cuffaro. Despite this sentence, Dell'Utri is still a Senator of the Italian Republic, standing out as one of the leaders of the discontented South of Italy who is about to create a pro-Sicily to contrast the growing force of the Northern League within the currently ruling centre-right coalition. Given the relationships of Dell'Utri, we can assume that CN is abandoning Berlusconi.

This two cases, albeit briefly analysed, show how the Sicilian mafia has developed grassroots and long-lasting political relationships that, unlike the camorra and the ndrangheta, allow CN to behave as a political actor capable of influencing national politics. The political network, like economy, ranges from the local politicians to the prominent members of political parties and state apparatus (police, secret services). The post- cold war context might have changed the nature of relationships, but not their density. CN chooses its own political partners from time to time, and embeds them into a wide-ranging network involving other powerful actors. Its crisis is not a political one.

Conclusions

In this work I have offered an alternative view of the Sicilian mafia. I have argued that CN is not in crisis, both because it is everything but a backward organisation, and because it does not operate only in illegal markets, but also its activities are not restricted to economics. I tried to relate my thesis to practical examples, such as the judicial enquiries and the interviews I made. It would have been useful to have developed some aspects of this essay in more depth, but, for brevity's sake, it was necessary to summarise key points.

My concept of postfordist mafia can be a useful tool for social scientists, to the extent that they also decide to adopt a different and multifaceted approach to study such a complex social phenomenon. As postfordism relies on the existence of a network, this new conceptual tool will enable the scholars engaged in the study of mafia to analyse it through its connections both with the legal world and with economy, society and politics. If one keeps focusing either on culture or on economy, then the idea that the mafia is declining can follow, thus producing a mistaken understanding of the dynamics of CN. It would also be misleading to evaluate the trend of criminal organisations just by counting the numbers of crimes and arrests recorded by the official statistics, as in this way we fail to have a more accurate, deep and articulated analysis of organised crime. Postfordism therefore opens new conceptual and methodological chances for researching into organised crime. Under the former aspect, it will be possible to use the complexity of mafia as a social phenomenon as the starting point of any description and analysis of its crimes. Under the latter aspect, it must be pointed out that the empirical focus on complexity requires the adoption of a qualitative methodology, which must rely on the research on the field, in which the observation and interpretation of social phenomenon must prevail over the framing attitude.

If the mafia has adopted itself to postfordism, I think there are breaking consequences both for criminologists and for the enforcers. The former could get rid of the underworld analyses which keep the mafia in the ghetto of the illegal underworld. Their research and interpretation should focus more on the relationships with finance and politics. It would thus become possible for judges and policemen to enquire in a more efficient and efficacious way into the context of organised crime. Last but not least, the postfordist approach could give social scientists the chance to emphasise the growth and the development of the antimafia movement. Since 1980s, a network of antimafia associations, involving civil society, entrepreneurs and politicians have been active in Sicilian society. They operate in different domain, which range from the opposition to the pizzo to the antimafia communication and propaganda in schools and society. This is an important aspect to underscore, as it would finally show that Sicilian society has not accepted mafia passively.

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