

SESSION 2. WOMEN. EVOLUTIONS.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN.

A fundamental, yet secondary role. “The woman never has, and never will be affiliated, but she has always had a fundamental role” (Suraci 9, Graziosi, Pieroni, Giannini 16).

Let’s talk. Because the children get indoctrinated from a young age with what is just and what is wrong under the principles and values mafiosi, alienated from the civil society that surrounds them, to what extent are they responsible for their actions? When is it that these young individuals realize (if ever) that what they are doing is inhumane?

Are these women always conscious of the role they are playing and are they aware of their options and ability to denounce or change life? What could be the main obstacles inhibiting the women and children from denouncing and changing life?

What role can and should the State have in informing mafiosi on their options and guarantee them protection if they decide to denounce and collaborate with the law?

An evolving role. While it is true that a woman will never be accepted as being an affiliate of the mafia, with years, women have become ever so important within the *cosca*, and have taken on more active roles, to the point that they have become the brains of the husbands’ and sons’ actions (Suraci 8, 18, Pieroni, Saviano 158, 163).

Angela Russo. An important component of *cosa nostra*, she got renamed “Nonna eroina”, heroine grandmother, as she played an important role in narcotrafficking (Suraci 19).



Anna Mazza. She was an important component of the camorra. When her husband Gennaro Moccia dies, she takes over his clan and gets renamed “vedova nera”, black widow. She tries to fund the first matriarchy of the camorra (Suraci 20, Saviano 154-158).

Figure 3. Di Caterino, Marco. “Anna Mazza, la “vedova nera” più temuta dai clan”. *Il Mattino*, 2017.

Maria Serraino. She belonged to a traditional family mafiosa of the ‘ndrangheta, in Calabria. She took over the drug market of Milan and became rebaptised as “Mamma eroina”, mother heroine, or “La signora”, the madame.

Women that have challenged the mafia. Not all women have become submissive towards the men, the tradition and the values mafiosi. Some have challenged their role and their predetermined destiny and the ones of their children (Graziosi, Suraci 40).



Letizia Battaglia. Born in 1935, in Palermo, she soon decides to dedicate her life to photojournalism through which she denounces the mafia. She starts to photograph cosa nostra in 1974, receiving death threats. She would go to “every major crime scene in the city” and report for Palermo’s left-wing daily newspaper L’Ora, until the 1990s (Hulme).

Figure 4. “Letizia Battaglia dirige il nuovo centro dedicato allo studio e alla promozione della fotografia”. Palermoviva, 2018.

Recommendation. Here is the link to the trailer of her documentary “Shooting the Mafia”.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bYoMqyOdR1g&ab_channel=MovieclipsIndie

EVOLUTIONS.

Various associations mafiose. Within Italy there are actually many different associations mafiosi that even though seek the same ends - power and profit -, they function and have developed in different ways.

Camorra. Like cosa nostra, the camorra, develops in the 1800s in an socioeconomic condition of vulnerability. It develops in Campania, but unlike in Sicily, it is born within the urban sphere (Giannini 10, Del Priore 8, Migliaccio, “Che cos’è”, Veltri). This rapid expansion and enormous power and profit the camorra has gained over the years is thought to have been facilitated by its fluid and horizontal structure, unlike cosa nostra’s rigid hierarchical structure, that allows more infiltrations and profit

production (Migliaccio 2008, Maugeri).

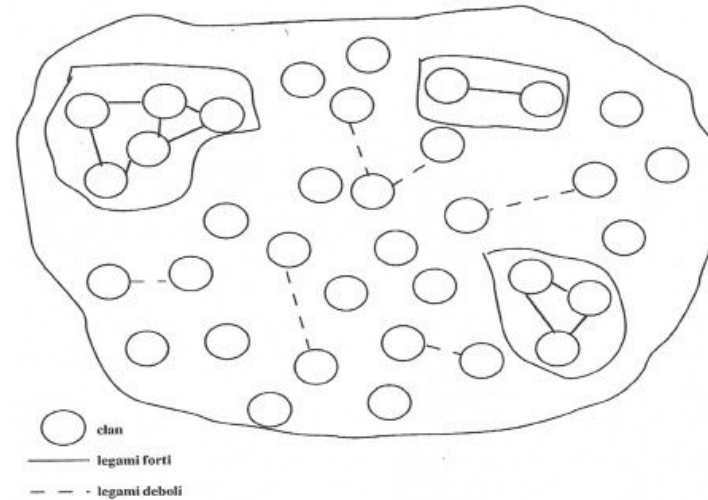


Figure 5. Catino, Maurizio. “La mafia come fenomeno organizzativo”. *Quaderni di Sociologia*, 14, 1997.

‘Ndrangheta. Similarly to cosa nostra, la ‘ndrangheta has agrarian origins. It develops in Calabria during the years of the unification of Italy, in the 1860s, as a consolidation of the already existing small delinquent groups and poor living conditions (Cilione, Rossetti 22, Iadeluca 2,4, Giannini 10, Sulli). As the ‘ndrangheta evolved, it became ever so strong, based on its organization and rigid social codes and rituals (Veltri, Rossetti 75, 115, Giannini 11, Gribaudo 184). The ‘ndrangheta, unlike cosa nostra or the camorra, is solely organized based on parental affiliation, hence the very few *pentiti* that have collaborated with the law and the continued the “invisibility” of the ‘ndrangheta, as shown from the graph in figure 6 (Iadeluca 6, Rossetti 66, Catino, Soraci, “Analisi criminologica”, Maugeri).

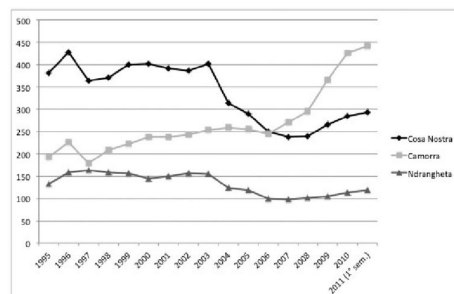
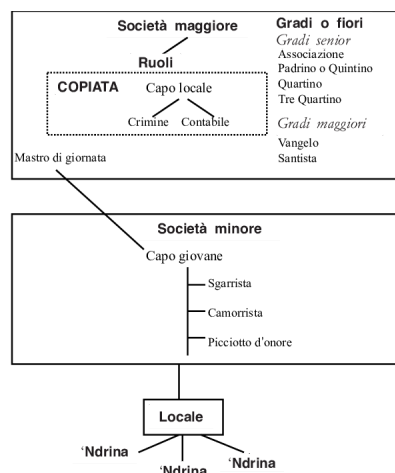


Figure 6 and 7. Catino, Maurizio. “L’organizzazione del segreto nelle associazioni mafiose”. *Researchgate*, January 2014.

The legend mafiosa. The legend says that cosa nostra, the camorra and the 'ndrangheta were born in the 15th century. The story recounts that it was three Spanish knights Osso, Mastrosso and Carcagnosso, members of the “Guarduña” that founded them (Iadeluca 2, Cilione).



Figure 8. De Biase, Antonello. “Osso, Mastrosso e Carcagnosso. I tre fratelli che fondarono la malavita”. *Napoli più*, 1 July 2017.

- To what extent do you think this legend could have served the associations mafiosi as a source of legitimacy?

- As Giannini points out in his study, the mafia has a strategy of delegitimizing, in which the only possible identity is the one of the association mafiosa (Giannini 43). But by delegitimizing other narratives or identities, is their identity legitimized?

The XXIst century; from WWII to the anni di piombo, years of lead. In the period following the second world war, in Italy, from 1958 to 1963, there is an economic boom (Zanelli 11, 18). It might be precisely because of this unprecedented prosperity that a very bloody conflict emerges between 1962 and 1963 in which the cosca La Barbera and Greco enter into a war, la prima guerra di mafia, the first war of the mafia (Coco 39, Herold). While the war allegedly ended in 1963 with the arrest of many mafiosi, the conflict is thought to have ended in 1969 with the massacre of viale Lazio where five people died, including Michele Cavataio, in figure 8, which facilitated the hold and the increase of power in the hands of the cosca of the corleonesi (Herold).



Figure 9. Herold, Fabio. “Prima guerra di mafia”. *Lo sbuffo*, 3 July 2018. The economic prosperity, however, is not homogenous, and while the north gets immediately absorbed into the global market, the south moves

at a slower pace. This leads to the internal displacement of unemployed from the south to the north where they are discriminated against (Zanelli 14,16). The economic changes followed by the demographic one enacted various political responses, which brought about tensions (Zanelli 20, 35). The tensions led, from 1968 to 1973 to manifestations and protests, first started by university students and then by the worker, but eventually involved the whole society (Zanelli 22, Hjelde 4). While these manifestations and protests started peacefully, they soon escalated to violence (Zannelli 25, Hjelde 5).



Figure 10. “Il 1968 e Sociologia: moda, cambiamento, reazioni”. DNA Trentino.



Figure 11. Alfonso, Donatella. “Il '68 in ritardo delle femministe genovesi”. *la Repubblica*, 2018.

Starting from 12 december 1969, the first bomb exploded in the Bank of Agriculture, in Milan (Zannelli 41, Hjelde 6). It marked the beginning of long years marked by political terrorism, ages known in Italy as anni di piombo, years of lead, by, on one hand, the neo fascists and the servizi deviati - secret services that decided to part from the State -, most commonly referred to as brigate nere, and on the other hand, the communists, also called brigate rosse (Zanelli 41, Hjelde 7-8). In the midst of this political terror, from 1981 to 1982 we also see the seconda guerra di mafia, the second war of the mafia, started with the killing of Stefano Bontade. The war, however, rather than being an armed conflict, was the “systematic elimination of the adversary by part of the cosca of the corleonesi” (Coco 45-56). It is precisely this war that brought about, in 1982, the first legal milestone with law n. 646, or better known as the law Rognoni - La Torre, previously mentioned (La legislazione”, Ortega 24-26).

It is however only in 1988, a year before the fall of the Berlin wall, that the political terror, devastating the whole of Italy, ends, but in the meantime, from 1969 to 1988 there were 14,591 acts of violence that were politically motivated causing a total of 419 deaths and 1,181 wounded (Schaerf et. al. 15, Fasanella 21).



Figure 12. Leone, Roberto. “Trent'anni fa l'assassinio di Bontade, , così iniziò la guerra di mafia”. *la Repubblica*, 2011.



Figure 13. Baudino, Stefano. “La seconda guerra di mafia - La mattanza”. *Antimafia Duemila*, 2020.



Figure 14. Vasta, Giorgio. “Tra memoria e finzione: gli anni di piombo nella letteratura”. *Minima & Moralia*, 2011.

It is in fact, precisely in these years that we see the creation and evolvement of various small criminal groups into associations mafiosi. In the mid 1970s, Felice Maniero creates the association mafioso known as the Mala del Brenta, in Veneto (Zuddas). In the late 1970s we see the

creation of what some consider an association mafiosa, in Rome, the **Banda della Magliana** (Martone 23).

- How can there be accountability if there is a lack of clarity on the events that took place and its actors? How can clarity be brought upon such events?

Sacra Corona Unita. Also known as the quarta mafia, fourth mafia, it is an association mafiosa that originates in Puglia. It officially dates back to 1983, from within prisons, (Giannini 10, 13, Massari 243, Adorno 105, Veltri). Attracted by the ritualistic aspect of the 'ndrangheta, the sacra corona unita, similarly, created rigid codes and rituals in its establishment (Massari 243-245, Adorno 105-108, Veltri). It also structured itself similarly to the 'ndrangheta with both a horizontal and a vertical levels, made eight rigid hierarchical positions (Adorno 109, Massari 245-6).

La stidda. Sometimes referred to as the quinta mafia, fifth mafia, the stidda is another association mafiosa in Sicily. It was created soon after the sacra corona unita, in the 1980s, by a group of individuals expelled from cosa nostra who decided to rebel and form their own association (Caccamo, Veltri). They have trained kids, under 15, to become pitiless killers (Nuccitelli). They can often be recognized by their tattoo (Caccamo, Veltri, Nuccitelli).

The XXIst century; from the anni di piombo to the trattativa Stato-mafia. Immediately after the end of the seconda guerra di mafia, while the political terror gets fiercer and fiercer between the brigate nere and brigate rosse, Rocco Chinnici decides to create a pool antimafia, a

group of magistrati, magistrates, and judges that will work together to condemn mafiosi (Giannini 10, Corsino). In 1985, there is the establishment of the maxiprocesso of which the trial will start on 10 february 1986 and end on the 30 of january 1992. There will be 707 people investigated and that will, in the end, be condemned to the ergastolo, life sentence. Precisely because this maxiprocesso is a hard hit for the mafia, cosa nostra responds using a strategia straggista, carrying out various acts of terror, of which a series of bombs and homicides (Corsino). It is precisely in those years, between 1992 and 1994 there is the alleged trattativa Stato-mafia in which the political institutions, transitioning from the first to the second republic, presumably made deals with the cosche granting them some benefits as to stop with this strategia straggista (Fasanella 16).



Figure 15. Cannatà, Angelo. “La trattativa Stato-mafia: sentenza, fatti e interpretazioni”. *MicroMega*, 2018.

The XXIst century: from the trattativa to Mafia Capitale. Mafia capitale started to be under investigation in 2010 and brought about the accusations of being an association mafiosa in 2015, with the operation in 2014 “mondo di mezzo”, the world in between, as in fact it creates a bridge between the high world of politics and the lower world of criminality (Martone 21, 27, Zuffada 3). At the Tribunale of Rome, in 2017, the accusations of Mafia capitale being an association mafiosa were rejected even though the various crimes that were mentioned were in fact proven to have been committed (Zuffada 7) .

- This is particularly interesting as it brings us back to the question of how do we define the mafia?

Recommendation. Here is the link to a documovie that sheds some light on the *trattativa Stato-mafia*.

“La trattativa”, directed by Guzzanti, Sabina. Filmed in 2014.

<https://www.raiplay.it/programmi/latrattativa>

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