Umberto Santino
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by Umberto Santino

For those who are born in Sicily and choose a form of militancy to transform their own reality, the encounter with the phenomenon of mafia is arguably "natural." I was born in the inner Sicily, in the province of Palermo, but I can not remember any particular episode from the place where I lived my early childhood. My father used to tell me that some figures who had survived the Fascist internment were Mafiosi, but they did not look so active. The most powerful and bloody Mafia was in the nearby towns: in Alia, where two peasants were killed in 1946 by a bomb that was thrown to the Chamber of Work's Secretary's house, where the protagonists of the political struggles in those years used to meet; in Caccamo, where the mafia boss had a reserved seat in the council chamber, near the major's (but I learnt it later): in Sciara, where in 1955 trade unionist Salvatore Carnevale was murdered. However, people did not talk (a lot) about Mafia. When I moved to the city to keep on studying, I discovered Palermo. It exhibited its war ruins, while preparing itself for the great speculation that was going to overwhelm it. In the early 1960s there were the great killings mainly associated with the "sack of Palermo."

My interest towards studying mafia and fighting against it increasingly developed during my militancy within the New Left groups that were born at the end of the 1960s. In that period, the most significant figure was Mario Mineo, an economist who had been politically engaged since his early youth, firstly in the underground anti-Fascism and then in the Socialist Party and in the Communist Party. After being elected in the list of the so-called "Blocco del Popolo" (Bloc of the People) during

the first regional elections on April 20, 1947 (that was the first and only victory of the Left in Sicily, and after ten days the massacre of Portella della Ginestra took place), he presented the draft of a regional statute, which included the abolition of the provinces. After leaving the Communist Party, he had pursued his activities within extra-parliamentary groups. I met him at the end of the Sixties, when I was one of the leaders of the Lenin Circle, which joined the Manifest in 1970. In a paper, Mineo wrote about mafia as a "mafia-capitalistic bourgeoisie" which was widespread throughout Sicily [now in Mineo 1995]. On the basis of that paper, and through the rediscovery of Leopoldo Franchetti's work, I started developing my analysis of the system of relationships and the Mafia bourgeoisie [Santino 1994a]. Such analysis was not welcome within the national Manifest and was contested also by Sicilian militants. Some considered the Mafia to be dead, others claimed that in eastern Sicily a capitalistic bourgeoisie that had nothing to do with Mafia had imposed itself. Subsequently, we launched a popular initiative campaign for a regional law aimed at the expropriation of Mafia's properties: it was more than ten years before the anti-Mafia law, but the attempt was unsuccessful.

In 1977 I left politics and I founded the Sicilian Centre of Documentation (Centro siciliano di documentazione) together with a few others, among which Anna Puglisi: I had met her during the political militancy (both of us were active at the Zen, a public housing neighbourhood that had been occupied by homeless persons after the earthquake in January 1968) and we got married in 1972. The Centre's first initiative was the organization of the national meeting "Portella della Ginestra. A massacre for the centrism" ("Portella della Ginestra. Una strage per il centrismo"), which took place in the 30th anniversary of the massacre and was arguably a "heretical" initiative during the so-called historical compromise between the Communist Party (PCI) and the Christian Democracy (Democrazia Cristiana). On May, 9, 1978 Peppino Impastato, a militant of the New Left coming from a Mafia's family, was murdered. It represented a crucial event in our personal lives as well as in the life of the Centre. I was nine year older than Peppino, we were active within different and competing militant groups, and we had never had personal relationships. Everything began after his death. As soon as we heard about it, we rushed to Cinisi; people claimed it to be a terroristic attack or a suicide, but we immediately understood that he had been killed by the Mafia because of his decennial activity of denounce and counter-information. We put up a poster in Palermo which said: "Peppino Impastato was murdered by the Mafia", and we undersigned a petition in the Public Prosecutor's office. The following day we went to the funeral and we learned that only a few Cinisi citizens were there. On May 11, 1978, we organized a meeting at the University of Palermo in the morning, and in the afternoon we went back to Cinisi for the closing electoral meeting

that should have been held by Peppino. A leader of Democrazia Proletaria (Proletarian Democracy) who came from Milan was the official speaker, but the comrades of Cinisi, who knew my activity, asked me to talk. I accepted and, on the basis of their information, I named the name of mafia boss Badalamenti as the instigator of the murder. After a few days, breaking her ties with their mafia family, Peppino's mother sued for damaging in a civil proceeding. Thus a long battle began, a battle fought with Peppino's relatives and militant fellows in order to defend his memory and obtain justice. In 1979 we organized the first national manifestation against Mafia, in 1980 we named the Centre after Peppino Impastato and we started living years of isolation: he was unknown to many, for many others such as the magistrates of the Court House, with a very few exceptions such as investigating magistrate Rocco Chinnici, he was a terrorist who had committed suicide. The study of mafia and anti-mafia have since been at the core of my own activity as well as of the work of the Centre.

Stereotypes and Paradigms

My study, which was carried out mainly with Anna, aimed at developing a methodology. We started with an unsuited fund. I had a BA (laurea) in Law, with a thesis in Criminal Law, and after a brief experience as a voluntary assistant I wan an open competition to work as a regional official (while in the previous years many regional officials had entered thanks to internal calls), retiring early with the minimum wage. With a BA (laurea) in Mathematics, she used to teach in the Faculty of Science, and she too retired after a few years. Our research required other competences. My legal knowledge turned out to be useful, but we also started studying, with the enthusiasm and risks of the autodidacts, in order to widen our tool-kit. Anna focused on the role of women, doing press reviews and gathering life histories. The methodology I developed is not particularly original and it can be outlined as follows: 1) analysis of current ideas; 2) formulation of a defining hypothesis; 3) verification of the hypothesis through research, in a way that combined sociology and history (some would call it "socio-history") but remained open to insights from other disciplines. We clearly needed help from the outside: we asked for collaborations, but we could find only a very few of them.

When we started our research, the dominant ideas were based on stereotypes: mafia was considered a subculture involving the whole population living in Western Sicily (the most diffused book was Hess 1970, with the foreword by Leonardo Sciascia), and there was a distinction between "old mafia," which had the sense of honour and the respect for women, children, and men of the institutions, and the contem-

porary "new mafia," which was considered a sort of common delinquency and urban gangsterism without rules. Only after the murder of Dalla Chiesa on September 3, 1982, an anti-mafia law was approved, which codified mafia as a criminal association with peculiar characteristics. This brought to a turnabout in the field of study, which has always suffered from a strong polarization. Mafia was formerly "subculture without organization", then it became only "organization". I described such a turnabout as a shift from the "indigestion of the informal" with an amoebic, invertebrate mafia (in that period the most diffused scientific expressions were "disorganized crime" and "non corporate groups"), to an "overdose of the super-structured," with an hyper-organized, Cartesian mafia [Santino 1994b]. But in order to study complex phenomena (and mafia is clearly a complex, polymorphic phenomenon) polarizations, "aut-aut," turn out to be extremely misleading.

At the beginning, we assembled a collection of stereotypes and we classified under the label of paradigms all the ideas about mafia which were based on data and developed according to scientific criteria. Among the most strongly rooted stereotypes: mafia as "emergency" (mafia exists only when it kills, it becomes a relevant phenomenon only when it kills a lot of people, it becomes a national problem when it kills well-known figures) and as "anti-state" (mafia kills men of institutions therefore it can be considered to be against the State as a whole); among the paradigms: mafia as a typical criminal association and enterprise. Demystifying stereotypes and showing their scientific inconsistency would be quite easy, but they are diffused through the media and rooted in the common sense. Because of the usually rare media exposure of the academic works, especially of those made by politically independent scholars, it would be an unequal struggle. At best, the scholarly work would reach a few thousands people. Moreover, lawmakers themselves often follow and reinforce stereotypes, such as mafia as "emergency," as it is shown by the fact that all the anti-mafia laws in Italy were passed after famous murders: the anti-mafia law was made after the murder of Dalla Chiesa, the anti-racket law after the murder of entrepreneur Libero Grassi (August 29, 1991), the laws regulating the rewards for the supergrasses after the massacres in which magistrates Giovanni Falcone, Francesca Morvillo, Paolo Borsellino, and their bodyguards died (May 23 and July 19, 1992). Analogously, also the stereotype of mafia as "anti-state" comes to be diffused and re-launched every time a politician or institutional figure is murdered, without considering that the relationship between mafia and institutions is articulated and varying between conflict and interaction.

In order to integrate the existing paradigms, which deal exclusively with the criminal and economic dimensions, I formulated a defining hypothesis called "paradigm of complexity": from this perspective, mafia is the totality of criminal

groups acting within a system of relationships, carrying out illegal as well as formally legal activities aimed at the accumulation of capital and the acquisition and management of power positions, sharing a cultural code and benefiting from a certain degree of social consensus. On the historical dimension, in order to overcome the "old vs. new mafia" stereotype – which was re-proposed as "traditional vs. entrepreneurial mafia," where the former was competing for honour, while the latter for money – I formulated the "continuity-transformation paradigm": archaic aspects, linked to the original contexts, live together with modern ones, linked to ongoing changes.

Problems

When we started verifying these hypotheses we encountered several problems. The first one dealt with the concept of complexity itself, which requires a contamination among different disciplinary protocols: criminology, sociology, anthropology, law, economics, political studies, historiography, etc. We had multiple references. In criminology, Sutherland and the theorists of "critic criminology" (such as, in Italy, Baratta, and successively Melossi, Ruggiero); in sociology, mainly Weber, but also the scholars who had worked on mafia and organized crime, such as Franchetti, Colajanni, Hess, Alan Block, Daniel Bell, Dalla Chiesa, Arlacchi, Catanzaro; in anthropology, Anton Blok and the Schneiders; in economics, Schumpeter, Schelling, Sylos Labini; in law, Santi Romano and the magistrates of "Magistratura Democratica" (Democratic Magistracy); in political studies, Mosca and Bobbio; in history, Hobsbawm, E.P. Thompson, Wallerstein, Salvatore Francesco Romano, Renda, Ganci, Cancila, Marino, Lupo, Pezzino. The sources were another major problem, since mafia is a hidden association that usually does not leave written traces. Moreover, the situation was worsened by the fact that the research activities took place outside the academic circuits (I have had only a few contracts with a few universities), with a self-financed Centre (we vainly asked the Sicilian Region to promote a law to set objective standards for the allotment of money, which was given on the basis of patronage criteria and therefore we refused to accept), and with a strong specificity: the research was inserted in a wider activity, the fight against Mafia, especially after the murder of Impastato. The Centre worked in a borderland. For professional scholars, we were excessively politicized intruders; for politicians, starting from our ex-fellows of militancy, we were intellectuals to be considered suspiciously as we were unaffiliated. With such premises, one could bet we would close soon. On the contrary, we have been working for 35 years, we have developed many initiatives and we have carried out most of our project "Mafia and society" by doing research on: murders,

entrepreneurial activities, international drug trafficking, ideas of mafia, mafia and politics, history of mafia and anti-mafia, women's role. We have produced research reports and also more popular works. These activities have involved many members, but because of our lack of resources some of them could not go on working with the Centre and had to follow other paths.

I could offer a few examples to give an idea of the difficulties we encountered in carrying out our research. In our victimological research on murders in Palermo and its province [Chinnici and Santino 1989], we realized that, despite the frequency with which people talked about them, the literature on both mafia and generic murders was very scarce. We were surprised to find out that the country with the highest murder rate in Europe was Finland (mostly related to the excessive consumption of alcohol): in the 1970s, the murder rate in Finland reached 3 (every 100,000 individuals) while in Italy it was around 1.4, and in the US 9.3 (with the peak in the District of Columbia). We started working on the data collected by ISTAT (Italian National Statistical Institute), but they were aggregated according to the number of the Courts of Appeal, which included many provinces, and they were also based on a restricted set of variables concerning the suspect or sentenced murderers. Moreover, for the period we were investigating (1960-1966 and 1978-1984, the years of the "mafia wars") police data were full of gaps. Thus, we elaborated a surveying schedule that included many variables, and we used the local press as a major source, since it usually paid a great deal of attention to the murders in the surrounding areas.

In the same research on murders we addressed the problem of the mafia culture. In those years, which were still dominated by the subcultural approach, the mafia behavioural code was reduced to the model of honour and considered an archaic, residual element. More widely, mafia was conceived as the survival of a feudal heritage, the result of backwardness and non-modernization. Actually, such an approach did not realize that mafia had survived the disappearance of the feuds and it was operating (from its viewpoint, successfully) within profoundly changed contexts, which were very different from the original ones. Since the Nineteenth century, with its diffusion in the US, mafia had shown to be perfectly able to enter the metropolitan environment. I wrote a chapter on mafia cultural aspects, analysing the theories on "criminal subculture" – from the works on delinquency in Chicago to the approaches developed by Sutherland, Cohen, Merton, Wolfgang and Ferracuti and others – and using the term "transculture" to describe a transversal path in which archaic aspects, such as the territorial domination, and modern aspects, such as the financial activities, merged [see Chinnici and Santino 1989, 369 ff.]. In the 1970s and 1980s the drug trafficking found a fertile environment in those areas in which mafia territorial dominion was almost total and made it possible to set up refineries – which could

work undisturbed for years – for the creation of the final product. A paradigmatic case was the territory of the city of Cinisi, where the domination of mafia boss Badalamenti made it possible to produce heroin to be sent to the US from the airport of Punta Risi. That is the area in which Peppino Impastato was active and was killed.

The research on the trials for murder – which completed the research project on murders – had to start from the judicial sources [Aa.Vv. 1992]. And here came the problem of the use of such sources, not only for the problems of the access – which were solved by personal relationships with magistrates – but also, above all, for their nature. Investigators and judges's aims are different from the scholars's ones: the former aim at reconstructing and identifying the kind of crime as well as assessing personal responsibilities, the latter aim at reconstructing a wider picture and cannot only draw on the transcriptions of judicial data, which instead must be problematized, contextualized and critically interpreted. And this is even truer in the cases of the declarations made by mafia supergrasses, which are useful for the description of murders but misleading when they deal with historical reconstruction or more generic reflections.

In our research on the mafia enterprise [Santino and La Fiura 1990] the main source was the investigation carried out for putting into effect the anti-mafia law, which was reaping its first fruits in that period (late 1980s). For the construction of the theoretical framework, we found very useful a number of works by American scholars, which were mainly unknown in Italy at that time [such as Landesco 1929; Bell 1953; Block 1980; Schelling 1984]. The definition of mafia enterprise itself – which is based on three main elements: the entrepreneurial subject, the origin of the capitals, the use of intimidation and violence against the competitors – strongly draws on a comparison between the US and Italian legislation. The research results disproved the dominant thesis of the shift between "traditional" and "entrepreneurial" mafia in the 1970s [Arlacchi 1983]. In fact, significant entrepreneurial activities had been already registered in the previous years. In the US, the Kefauver report [Kefauver 1951] described quite a solid set of entrepreneurial activities going on already in the early 1950s.

The activities emerging from the judicial investigation were largely carried out by small and medium-size firms working mainly in the building sector, which mostly served as a front for the recycling of black money. Moreover, the relational system proved to be a highly fertile space to develop relationships with public administrators and institutional representatives. The research clearly showed the existence of an imbalance between the abilities shown in the accumulation of capital from illegal international trafficking and those shown in the investment of capital in entrepreneurial activities.

At this step of our work, which aimed at a systematic reconstruction of the different aspects of the mafia phenomenon, we needed to carried out a research on the financial mafia, on the dynamics and size of the contemporary illegal accumulation, not only at the local level. It was necessary to study the mafia holding, contextualizing it within what could be called "industrial-financial complex", and describing and analysing the process of "financialization" of the economy, with the increasing presence of the speculative economy. Without risking, at the same time, to analyse the international economy as indistinctly mafia-oriented. The research project, described in a paper published in "Contemporary Crises" [Santino 1988], was proposed also at the international level, but it could not be realized because of the lack of really interested interlocutors. I remember a meeting with a professor of Temple University in Philadelphia, which stranded when he asked me what kind of relationships I had with Andreotti. I could not avoid saying that I considered him to be connected with mafia environments. We were able to develop a research on the international drug trafficking as part of a European Union sponsored research project realized in a partnership with a few ONGs [Santino and La Fiura 1993]. For the Centre, that was the only research which was co-financed by a public institution.

For the research on mafia and politics, in order to reconstruct mafia's political subjectivity we used classic theories starting from Weber's reflection on political groups [Weber 1976]. This is a highly popular issue on news magazines, also following trial cases involving political figures such as Andreotti himself, but there is almost no scholarly research. Our research has only partly addressed it, with a theoretical essay on mafia as a political subject [Santino 1994c] as well as a historical paper that reconstructed some exemplar cases also on the basis of the Centre's dossiers on such an emblematic figure as Salvo Lima, which gave rise to a series of polemical exchanges until a few months before his murder, in March 1992 [Santino 1997].

For the research on the women, which was only partially carried out, we turned to oral sources, by collecting life histories. We closely met such women as Felicia Bartolotta – Peppino Impastato's mother, divided between a mafioso husband and a radically anti-mafia son [Bartolotta 1986] – who lived such traumatic experiences as the murder of a relative and were able to transform a private loss in a public event, to be narrated and proposed as a testimonial form of social commitment [Puglisi 1990; 2005; 2007]. This revolutionary fact had only one precedent, the oral narration made by Francesca Serio, trade unionist Salvatore Carnevale's mother, to Carlo Levi, who reported it in some of his most beautiful pages [Levi 1955]. This work on recent memory involved us emotionally, and pushed us to deepen and move our analysis towards more distant times, reconstructing the anti-mafia fights – in which women

play a crucial role – since the origin of the rural fights. The results of this research have been published in the book *Storia del movimento antimafia. Dalla lotta di classe all'impegno civile* (The history of the anti-mafia movement. From class war to civil commitment) [Santino 2000; Santino 2009].

This research highlighted different historiographical and theoretical problems. The book starts from the first social fights in Sicily in the last decade of the Nineteenth century, which were called "Fasci siciliani" (Sicilian Fasces). The history of these fights as well as of the following rural fights until the 1950s had already been narrated [Renda 1976; 1979], but we rewrote it from the different perspective of the fight against mafia. The problems we encountered were both old and new. An old problem dealt with the Fasces, a movement that was composite but had a socialistically connoted majority (in a phase in which the socialism was just born at the national level) and an anti-mafia vocation (explicitly declared in the statutes of some the Fasces), and that suffered a bloody repression concertedly carried out by mafia killers and the police. Even with an understandable degree of ambiguity, it was already a form of class war, as much as the following rural fights, with all the problems raised by the fragmented and divided peasant world against the Italian and European working class movement, between incomprehension and excommunication. Another problem dealt with the approach to develop to study the most recent fights. We solved it by using the theories on social movements and collective action. As a result, we started writing a history against stereotypes, from the amoral familism [Banfield 1958] to the lack of civic sense [Putnam 2004]. These theorizations were questionable, but they are still given a lot of credit.

I have never written a history of mafia. But I wrote a brief history of mafia and anti-mafia [Santino 2008; Santino 2011] where I collected the results of different researches, going back in time until what I called "pre-mafia phenomena": from the so-called "pizzo" (protection money), already documentable in the Sixteenth century, to cattle-stealing [Santino 2000]. We have analysed significant cases such as the so-called "Stuppagghieri" in the city of Monreale, in which the community of interest and the structured tendency to form associations merge [Crisantino 2000], as well as we have described the human and political careers of trade unionist Giovanni Orcel, who was murdered in 1920 [Abbagnato 2007], and communist leader Pio La Torre, murdered together with Rosario Di Salvo in 1982 [Burgio 2008]. We could not carried out a research in and on Palermo because of the unavailability of local sociologists. We have only reviewed the sociological literature on the city [Crisantino 1990] and analysed the city town budget [Rocca and Santino 1992]. Since we received favourable opinions and proposals, but we were also criticized, major Orlando cut off his relations with us.

Our research activities have evolved together with our commitment to have truth and justice for Peppino Impastato, which has obtained satisfactory – yet very late – results, such as the conviction of the instigators of the murder as well as the report of the Anti-mafia Parliamentary Commission on the sidetracking of the inquiry made by corrupted figures of the magistracy and the police [Commissione Antimafia 2001; Commissione Antimafia 2006]. That was a unique fact in the history of republican Italy. However, my proposal for the Anti-mafia Commission (I have been a consultant of the commission for two years, they never entrusted me with a task, so I resigned) or another bicameral commission to reconstruct other cases (the massacres that bathed Italy in blood, the mafia-political murders) on which there is almost no judicial truth remained unfulfilled.

Throughout our activities we have met many scholars and sometimes we had some disagreements with some of them. I consider even harsh critiques as a physiological element of a research activity. Somebody mistook them as personal offences. With other scholars we developed good relationships. Among them, I would like to recall E.P. Thompson, with whom we experienced the mobilizations for peace in the 1980s, Renate Siebert, the Schneiders, British historian John Dickie. Also with the doyen of Sicilian historiography Francesco Renda we had some polemic exchanges, but our friendly relationship was not affected by them. Among Italian social scientists, Marco Santoro closely followed our work, and he later invited me to take part to this symposium. But to give a better idea of the climate in which we have lived I could recall a few images, such as the nice friendship with Rocco Chinnici and the early morning phone call which announced the massacre on July 29, 1983; the last meeting with Giovanni Falcone, who took part in our book presentation of *Gabbie Vuote* [Aa.Vv. 1992], the pain for too many deaths. Giuseppe Borsellino – whose son Paolo, an entrepreneur, was murdered on April 21, 1992 – called me to ask if I could help him in his research on his son's murderers and on mafia in the territory around the city of Agrigento. I proposed him a meeting, but the murderers arrived first (he was killed on December 17 of the same year).

Our activities eventually turned out to have some influence on mainstream ideas. Nowadays many scholars talk about "territorial domination" and "mafia bourgeoisie." For many years, the latter expression was considered the result of an old style Marxist approach, to be abandoned together with any discourse on social classes. Today this expression is employed especially by the magistrates who are more actively engaged against mafia [see Grasso and La Volpe 2009], because they realized that the true power of the mafias is situated in the system of relationships involving professionals, entrepreneurs, administrators, politicians and other institutional figures. Without such relationships, even the most important mafia bosses could not do al-

most anything on crucial issues such as the public calls for tenders, the recycling of black money, the influence on administrative and institutional activities. Obviously, there is still a lot to do. About mafia, today the attention is still focused on the god-fathers, there are many biographies as well as movies and TV series, but the systems of relationships are still highly under-investigated (in this regard some commentators use the arguably more journalistic than scientific expression of "grey area"). About anti-mafia, there still is a profound lack of knowledge about older fights, which involved hundreds of thousands of people on the basis of a project of social and political change centred on the anti-mafia war. Many observers believe, on the one hand, that old history was made by a very few isolated heroes, who became icons also thanks to movies and TV series, and, on the other hand, that more recently everything started after the massacres in which Falcone and Borsellino died.

Despite many great collective manifestations, everyday activities – in the schools, together with the anti-racket associations, for the social use of confiscated goods – still involve only a minority of people. And instead of being focused on the collectively shared commitment and social fight, the dominant conception of anti-mafia still privileges the achievements and testimonies of the hero or the famous writer and media intellectual. Roberto Saviano represents an emblematic case. In the book *La parola contro la camorra* (Words against Gomorrah) he argued that the movie *I cento passi* (A 100 steps) reopened the trial for the murder of Peppino Impastato, whose memory before the movie was "preserved only by a few friends, his brother, his mother" [Saviano 2010, 7]. Actually, there were two trials, which began a lot earlier than the movie; there was the Anti-mafia Commision; and there was our more than twenty-year long everyday work, which comes to be ignored. We asked for the correction of that statement. Einaudi, the publisher, answered with a letter of threats, while Saviano took legal proceedings against the newspaper "Liberazione," which had taken up our request [Santino 2011].

Research on the Mafia and the Social Sciences

I believe that a serious research on mafia and anti-mafia could contribute to the re-definition of the nature and role of the social sciences in contemporary society. I raised this issue in the last pages of my review essay on mafias [published in Santino 1995 and republished in Santino 2006]. The crisis of the social sciences deals also with this question: does the professional social scientist produce theorizations to be spent only in the academic marketplace? Or does he/she carry out a socially useful work? Social usefulness can be measured in the ability to analyze and understand

such contemporary issues as mafia. Wright Mills [1962]'s "sociological imagination" recalled the ability to untie the knots of the modern society. For such a task, sociology alone is not enough, it clearly needs to be intertwined with other social sciences. But nowadays trans-disciplinarian approaches are more called for than actually practiced.

Today such expressions as "risk society" (Beck) and "liquid society" (Bauman) are increasingly heard, and arguably there is a sort of intellectual surrendering to complexity, which actually – I believe – could and should analyzed and managed. Globalization has run over old equilibriums and produced new problems that cannot be addressed only with old cognitive tools and political ideologies. In this scenario, a crucial role is played by such criminal phenomena and processes that combine "global" and "local" within a wider crisis of legality in a global phase in which people have to face conflicts and terrorism. Organized crime is not just a residual element of the past, it is a form of accumulation and a strategy of power, it works as a cushion against territorial gaps and rapidly increasing social imbalances, it follows as well as it determines the "financialization" of society [Santino 2007]. Addressing this scenario can be possible only by developing suitable cognitive – and sometimes value-oriented – strategies. This implies going against the trend of rigid disciplinary protocols and behavioural models based on competitiveness by any means, with the inevitable prevalence of the illegal ones, which aim at the individual achievement. Such a scenario clearly reminds Hobbes.

Research and Values

In our research, analysis and project as well as knowledge and inspirational values (at the basis of the development of operational strategies) have always been closely tied. Our interest on anti-mafia policies, and particularly on those dealing with the confiscation of mafia's properties, brought us to suggest to use such properties as a possible solution for the problem of the homeless in Palermo, and we gained some results. Our analysis of the territorial dominion of the mafia, and particularly of the "squeeze," which works as a parallel tax regulation, brought us to criticize theories that conceive mafia as "industry of private protection" [Gambetta 1992] and therefore represent a version of the economism paradigm, and to strongly support entrepreneur Libero Grassi as soon as he announced that he would not have accepted the squeeze request. We saw it as an act calling upon a collective liberation from a hateful oppression. We developed a solid friendship, which was punctually marked by the mafia reaction, favoured by the isolation of the industrial associations and the citizens. A brief book, which was published soon after his murder and re-published

in its 20th anniversary [AA.VV. 1991, 2011], bears witness to this. It collects the talks given at a public meeting with Grassi that took place in May 1991: it was supposed to be a supporting initiative but it turned out to show his isolation. That public meeting confirmed again the sectarianism of most current anti-mafia groups, strongly conditioned by their belongings and often aimed at auto-referential performances. Nowadays there are public manifestations in which each group or association forms a procession devoted to its own patron saint.

A proof of the sectarianism and myopia of certain anti-mafia groups was given when a few women of Palermo appeared as plaintiffs in the maxi-trial and in other trials against mafia. They were isolated by most anti-mafia associations, which make a cult of mafia victims classifiable as State servants and are unable to value the act of those women whose husbands were murdered by mafia but did not wear the uniform and were members of the working-classes somehow involved in activities collateral to the mafia universe. We described this paradigmatic case in the book *Sole contro la mafia* (Women alone against mafia) by Anna Puglisi [1990].

On the ground of inspirational values, the biggest issue deals with legality. After the massacres in 1992 and 1993 a ministerial memorandum invited all the Italian schools to develop educational programs on legality. Many initiatives started, but they were characterized by abstractness and improvisation on the basis of the content of the ministerial memorandum, which conceived mafia as a "special emergency" without taking into account its systematic implications at the institutional and social level. We had started working in the schools already in the early 1980s, on the basis of a law of the Sicilian region that was passed after the murder of the Region's president Piersanti Mattarella (January 6, 1980). We had realized that some teachers were willing but unprepared, therefore we tried to offer materials and suggestions for possible initiatives. After the ministerial memorandum, these initiatives were diffused throughout Italy, bringing to a scenario in which there were more good intentions than practices. In this context, with the coming of the Berlusconism, the national politics was increasingly inclining towards forms of legalization of illegality. Thus we had quite a paradoxical situation: people were increasingly talking about the respect of the laws while *ad personam* laws were increasing, clearly encroaching upon fundamental rights of the Constitution such as the equality of all citizens. Our work was mainly directed to the school teachers, trying to introduce teaching aids and tools such as the pamphlet *Oltre la legalità* (Beyond legality) [Santino 1997; Santino 2002], the book *A scuola di antimafia* (Anti-mafia lessons) [Cavadi 1994; Cavadi 2006], and *L'agenda dell'antimafia* (the yearly published Anti-mafia notebooks) [Puglisi e Santino 2007-2012], which provide information and suggestion for educational programs on democratic legality aimed at clarifying, instead of overshadowing, the con-

tradiction between political-institutional praxis and constitutional legality. We cannot say that our attempts were always welcomed by the teachers, who have been hit over the last few years by a reform with devastating effects on public schools.

Finally, it is important to note that the analysis of as well as the fight against mafia would need a much greater and organic collective commitment. Addressing the issue of the existence of a "scientific community" of Italian sociologists, Marco Santoro [2011] has recently wrote scathing words on the actual situation. I do not know if the problem deals only with sociologists and scholars. As this paper shows, our experiences of joint work have been disappointing. A last example can confirm this. In 1984 we proposed the creation of a Coordination among different associations and groups, but the collective effort stopped soon because of the fragility of the organizations involved and the prevailing of logics of belonging. For a few years we have worked together with Libera, the association of associations that was born in 1995, but there were problems of internal democracy caused by the charismatic-leader management. We are now working with anti-racket associations and we hope we will have better results. Over the last few years, a proposal has been advanced to create a Memorial of the fight against mafia which could be at the same time museum, library and video library, research institute, space for socialization. The Sicilian region created a committee for the constitution of a Museum of memory. As a member of such committee, I advanced our proposal, but so far there are not concrete prospects for its realization.

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Studying Mafias in Sicily

Abstract: The essay surveys the author's scholarly and political work as a historian and interpreter of the Mafia phenomenon in the last forty years. Santino's work has aimed at correcting stereotypes (against an emergential and anti-statist understanding of mafia), integrating paradigms (mafia as a *sui generis* kind of organized crime and economic firm), and veryfing through many diverse empirical studies a complexity-based paradigm. Mafia is understood as a peculiar outcome of the interaction between crime, economic accumulation, power, cultural codes, and consensus which produces an extended criminal association which also includes professionals, entrepreneurs, civil servants, and men from the institutions. The essay also surveys Santino's political and civil commitment as the custodian of the memory of Peppino Impastato and his collaboration with political and judicial actors in the pursuit of truth about the mafia.

Umberto Santino is the founder and chair of the Centro siciliano di documentazione, created in 1977 in Palermo and later named after Giuseppe Impastato. Among his many publications on the mafia, antimafia, and Sicily see *La violenza programmata. Omicidi e guerre di mafia a Palermo dagli anni '60 ad oggi* (1989, with G. Chinnici), *L'impresa mafiosa. Dall'Italia agli Stati Uniti* (1990, with G. La Fiura), and *Storia del movimento antimafia* (2nd ed. 2009)