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What is the Terrorism-Organised crime nexus in Italy?

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CHAPTER 1

1.1. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The phenomenon of organized crime and terrorism has long been a subject of intense scrutiny within academic and policy-making circles. However, the specific intersection of organized crime, particularly the Italian Mafia, and jihadist terrorism in Italy presents a unique and relatively underexplored area of study. This thesis investigates the extent to which organized crime in Italy has influenced jihadist terrorist activities within the country, as well as how law enforcement strategies address this complex interplay. The research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics between these two forms of illicit activities and their implications for national security and public policy. Italy has a storied history with organized crime, with groups such as the 'Ndrangheta, Cosa Nostra, and Camorra deeply embedded in the social, economic, and political fabric of the nation. Concurrently, the rise of jihadist terrorism has added a new layer of threat, compelling authorities to devise multifaceted counterterrorism strategies. This study is crucial as it seeks to elucidate the potential collaborations and conflicts between these criminal entities and terrorist organizations, thereby contributing to a more nuanced approach to combating both threats simultaneously.

1.2. IMPORTANCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The importance of this research lies in its potential to influence both academic discourse and practical counterterrorism policies. By examining the nexus between the Italian Mafia and jihadist terrorism, this study addresses a critical gap in existing literature. While extensive research exists on organized crime and terrorism separately, the confluence of these two phenomena, especially within the Italian context, remains underexplored.

Understanding this intersection is vital for several reasons. Firstly, it has significant implications for national security. If a symbiotic relationship exists between organized crime groups and terrorist organizations, it could enhance their operational capabilities and complicate efforts to dismantle them. Secondly, the findings can inform more effective law enforcement strategies. Integrated approaches that address both organized crime and terrorism could lead to more comprehensive and sustainable solutions.

Moreover, this research has socio-political relevance. The outcomes could impact immigration policies and integration strategies, particularly in how they relate to the prevention of radicalization among immigrant communities. Given Italy's stringent naturalization laws and the presence of marginalized communities, a deeper understanding of these dynamics is essential for fostering social cohesion and preventing extremism.

1.3. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The primary objective of this thesis is to investigate the nexus between organized crime in Italy and jihadist terrorist activities and to assess the effectiveness of current law enforcement strategies in addressing this issue. This involves several specific aims:

- To provide a historical overview of the Mafia's influence in Italy and its evolution over time.
- To analyse the main characteristics and evolution of jihadist terrorism in Italy.
- To examine existing research on the links between organized crime and terrorism, both in Italy and globally.
- To explore case studies where interactions between the Mafia and jihadist terrorists have been documented or hypothesized.
- To evaluate the current law enforcement approaches and policies addressing both organized crime and terrorism, and to propose integrated strategies for improvement.

The scope of this research is confined to Italy, with a focus on the major Mafia organizations (the 'Ndrangheta, Cosa Nostra, and Camorra) and jihadist terrorist activities within the country. The study will utilize a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, including literature reviews, case study analyses, and policy evaluations. By examining the extent of the terrorism-mafia nexus, this study offers valuable insights into the broader dynamics of crime and terrorism. It highlights the need for integrated approaches that consider the multifaceted nature of these threats and underscores the importance of comprehensive, adaptive, and collaborative strategies in ensuring national security and public safety

While this research aims to provide a detailed analysis, several limitations must be acknowledged. Due to the clandestine nature of both organized crime and terrorism, obtaining comprehensive and reliable data is challenging. Many interactions between these groups may go undocumented or be obscured by disinformation. Moreover, the study focuses exclusively on Italy, which, while providing depth, may limit the generalizability of the findings to other contexts. Given the dynamic nature of organized crime and terrorism means that new developments may emerge that are not captured within the timeframe of this study. It's also important to note that access to primary sources such as law enforcement records and confidential intelligence reports is limited, therefore I'll mainly rely instead on secondary sources and expert opinions.

CHAPTER 2

2.1. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF MAFIA INFLUENCE IN ITALY

*“The mafia has not always existed; it is a human phenomenon, and like all human phenomena it has had a beginning and it will have an end”.*¹ These are famous words by Giovanni Falcone, a magistrate who highly contributed to fight Mafia in Italy and was killed by it. The Mafia is defined as a criminal organization divided into multiple associations (clans or families), governed by the code of silence and secrecy, which exercises control over illegal economic activities and the underworld, originally widespread in Sicily, in the south of Italy and notably known with the name of “Cosa nostra”.²

Origins of Mafia can be traced back until the 19th century as I will better explain in the following chapter. After the Unification of the state of Italy in 1816 the government faced many difficulties in spreading its authority over all the territories of the peninsula. Especially in the most peripheral parts as the region of Sicily. In this context, the term “Mafia” appears in a parliamentary investigation in the 1876, from Sydney Sonnino and Leopoldo Franchetti, members of the parliament.³ The investigation highlights the socio-political aspects of the region describing the violent and brutal methods through which mafia criminal groups kept the territory under their control exerting their power and interests outside the boundaries of the state law. The Police Commissioner of Palermo, the Regional County Seat, Ermanno Sangiorgi, between the 1898 and 1901, compiles a series of reports providing a comprehensive and detailed account of the activities of the Mafia during that time. The reports delineated the Mafia’s organizational structure, which is segmented into distinct family groups, each with a designated hierarchy headed by a boss at the apex. I will explain more in depth the specific groups operating in the different regions of the peninsula in the following chapter. Additionally, the reports detailed various illicit activities and violent tactics, such as blackmail and extortion, as well as the connections that criminal groups forged with specific families of the Sicilian nobility. These families utilized the Mafia to suppress the social and wage demands of labourers. However, the legal proceedings that will follow Sangiorgi’s complaints will end up with no significant outcome and with any noteworthy convictions. Even though

¹ Giovanni Falcone

² Term used to describe a Criminal Association of a mafia-type. Translated in english: “our thing”.

³ Salvatore Lupò, *“La Mafia – Centosessant’anni di storia,”*, Donzelli editore, Roma, 2018, p.32

the phenomenon was already known by the state, the government had difficulties in fighting it. Only during the fascism era we will assist to some minor changes when Mussolini, the 23rd October 1925, decided to send the prefect Cesare Mori in Sicily with the task of eradicating Cosa Nostra.⁴ This was the beginning of the anti-mafia operation started by the regime. Mori's harsh methods, not very well received by the Sicilian population, initially yield results. However, over time, the counteraction weakens, and the fascist regime itself becomes increasingly infiltrated by individuals closely associated or affiliated with the mafia system.

On July 10, 1943, Anglo-American forces landed in Sicily with the objective of opening a new front in the war and invading and defeating the Kingdom of Italy. Cosa Nostra exploits the chaos of the invasion and the fall of the regime to regain its power, successfully securing the appointment of many of its men within the new municipal administrations that replaced the fascist ones. In the immediate post-war the region went through a chaotic period with strong social tensions. The tragically most famous crime was that of May 1, 1947 of "Portella della Ginestra"⁵ where 11 people, among socialists and communists, celebrating May Day were killed. In the early 50s, due to the economic boom the Mafia criminal activities started to move from the countryside to the cities. The large public contracts for the constructions of buildings and infrastructure represented an excellent business opportunity for Cosa Nostra, fostering new connections with both local and national politics.⁶ The city of Palermo will become the symbol of the real estate speculation conducted by the Mafia, not only in Sicily but beyond. Between the 50s and 60s, entire historic areas of the Sicilian capital will be demolished to make way for uncontrolled urbanization, a speculation infamously known as the "Sack of Palermo".⁷ During this period, mafia activities are beginning to transcend the traditional regional dimension of Sicily and extend towards the rest of the national territory and abroad. Besides its involvement in construction, Cosa Nostra is increasingly delving into the international drug trade, a colossal enterprise yielding immense financial gains and forging ties with organized crime networks worldwide. The illicit proceeds from these activities are laundered through connections with significant sectors of the economy and finance. Over time, Cosa Nostra will secure a majority share in the global narcotics trade,

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 123.

⁵ Salvatore Lupo, "Storia della mafia. Dalle origini ai giorni nostri", Donzelli Editore, 1993, p. 218

⁶ Lupo, "La mafia", p. 50

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 224

emerging as the primary mafia activity between the 1970s and 1980s.⁸ This transformation will definitively alter the organization's profile. Cosa Nostra proves of being able of adapting to the times, but what remains unchanged are the violent and ruthless methods through which the organization asserts its criminal supremacy: intimidation and murder are wielded both against external enemies hindering its activities and within the organization itself, where conflicts among different families vying for its command are not uncommon. In the early 1960s the first war between rival clans begins causing a stir due to its brutality, the number of victims, and the retaliations it leaves in its wake. During this phase the state's response to these developments in mafia activities is not always adequate: in 1963, the first Anti-Mafia Parliamentary Commission is established with the task of collecting data and information and suggesting strategies to counter the mafia phenomenon. However, its activity, at least initially proves rather limited. By the end of the 60s some significant trials take place, putting important Cosa Nostra leaders on trial. However, these trials conclude with very lenient sentences or complete acquittals. During this period, at the public level, due to the underestimation of the phenomenon, omertà, or complicity, the very existence of the Mafia is still being questioned or even denied.

At the early 1980s, while Cosa Nostra is consolidating its power as a proper crime international industry, a second internal bloody war takes place. At the end of which the clan of the "Corleonesi"⁹ succeeds in taking control of the criminal organisation. The action strategy of the new clan is straightforward and aims at the killings of any person considered to be an enemy. In between 1979 and 1982 the most notable assassinations are the ones of President of Sicily Piersanti Mattarella, January 6, 1980; the deputy Pio La Torre, April 30, 1982; general Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa September 3, 1982.¹⁰ The common trait among these three personalities is that they were actively engaged in the fight against the Mafia. These heinous crimes deeply shook public opinion and the State, prompting a decision to respond more forcefully to the Mafia menace. In 1982, the Parliament approves the addition of Article 416 bis to the penal code, introducing the offense of Mafia association and enabling the confiscation of Mafia assets.¹¹

⁸ Diego Gambetta, *La mafia Siciliana. Un'industria della protezione privata*, Einaudi, Torino, 1992, p. 84

⁹ The Corleonesi Clan was a faction within Cosa Nostra that emerged in the 1970s, named so because its key leaders hailed from the Corleone family: Luciano Liggio, Salvatore Riina, Bernardo Provenzano, and Leoluca Bagarella.

¹⁰ Lupo, *Storia della mafia*, p.280

¹¹ Ibidem, p.5

Furthermore, in 1983, the first “anti-Mafia pool” is established, bringing together Palermo magistrates responsible for investigating Cosa Nostra, facilitating their work and the sharing of information. This marks the beginning of a collaborative effort by a group of judges, including Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino, actively working towards the common goal of defeating the criminal organization. During this period, an additional contribution to the fight against the Mafia comes from informants, mostly hailing from the ranks of Mafia families defeated by the Corleonesi. They choose to collaborate with the authorities, revealing the secrets of Cosa Nostra in exchange for protection or more lenient sentences. The most renowned among them is Tommaso Buscetta who, after his arrest in 1983, decides to cooperate with Palermo judges. His testimonies will prove crucial in shedding light on many aspects of the Mafia organization and identifying numerous perpetrators of Mafia-related crimes¹². Against the backdrop of these revelations lie the murky connections with politics and institutions, as the accusations by Buscetta against the prime minister of Italy of that period Giulio Andreotti.¹³ The work of Palermo magistrates, bolstered by the confession of informants like Buscetta,¹⁴ culminated in the establishment of the “Maxiprocesso”¹⁵. In 1986, 475 mafiosi stood trial, facing charges related to numerous crimes committed by Cosa Nostra. This colossal trial, closely followed by the press and public opinion, concluded definitively only several years later with a series of severe sentences, including 19 life imprisonments, imposed on many top figures within the Mafia organization. Far from being defeated, Cosa Nostra responded to the convictions by inaugurating a new wave of violence. The judges Falcone and Borsellino will be the firsts paying with their lives, who were killed in two separate attacks: Capaci Bombing (Strage di Capaci)¹⁶ on 23 May

¹² Salvatore Lupo, *Andreotti, La Mafia, La storia d'Italia*, Donzelli, Roma, 1996, p. 98

¹³ Lupo, *La Mafia*, pp.300-303

¹⁴ Lucio Galluzzo, *Tommaso Buscetta. L'uomo che tradì se stesso*, Musumeci, Quart-Aosta, 1984, p. 123

¹⁵ The Maxi Trial, held in Palermo, Sicily, was a legal proceeding targeting the Sicilian Mafia. Beginning on February 10, 1986, and concluding on January 30, 1992, the trial unfolded within a bunker-style courthouse purposefully built within the confines of the Ucciardone prison.

¹⁶ The Capaci bombing was a terrorist-mafia attack carried out by Cosa Nostra on May 23, 1992, near Capaci. It involved the detonation of an explosive with a power equivalent to 500kg of tritolo, targeting the anti-mafia magistrate Giovanni Falcone. The attackers triggered an explosion on a section of the A29 highway 5:57 pm, while the convoy carrying the judge, his wife, and police officers, travelling in three armored cars was passing overhead. Alongside the judge, four other people lost their lives: his wife Francesca Morvillo, also a magistrate, and police officers Vito Schifani, Rocco Dicillo, and Antonio Montinaro. Additionally, 23 people were injured in the attack. In Salvatore Lupo, *Storia della mafia*, p.298

1992, and via D'Amelio bombing (Strage di via D'Amelio)¹⁷ 19 July 1992. Bombings that are still today the subject of news coverage, as well as judicial investigations and are also associated with an alleged secret negotiation between Cosa Nostra and the State. Despite the arrest of two historical bosses associated with the Corleonesi clan, Salvatore "Totò" Riina and Bernardo Provenzano, and the abandonment of the terrorist strategy adopted in the early 90s Cosa Nostra remains a live and active criminal organization in Italy and abroad. It continues to forge connections with politics and the economy, influencing both Sicilian and Italian society. As highlighted by the Anti-Mafia commissions, Cosa Nostra has in recent years favoured a "submersion strategy" opting to operate discreetly to carry out its criminal activities without causing alarm and public outcry.¹⁸

2.2. JIHADIST TERRORISM IN ITALY

Home grown Jihadism arrives in Italy with several years of delay compared to most of the other West European countries. Furthermore, the intensity of the phenomenon is much lower in comparison with the other near European states.¹⁹ In the first years of the 90s Italy, was one of the first states witnessing jihadist terrorist activities with the establishment of important networks. Nonetheless, at the time when some of the main Western European countries were experiencing difficult challenges arising from home-grown jihadism, in the first years of 2000s, Italy experienced a rather calm situation.²⁰ This outcome stemmed from the role played by Italian authorities in dismantling jihadist networks in the early 90s and because of this a diminished intensity of the network's activities in the peninsula in comparison to other countries. What is considered to be an important event in Italy is the suicide attack by Mohammed Game in Milan in 2009, which I analyse in the next chapter. Even though Mohamed won't be, in the end, seen as a case of actual home-grown jihadism, is still considered the sign of the arrival of the

¹⁷ The via D'Amelio bombing was a terrorist-mafia attack that occurred on Sunday, July 19, 1992, at the address 19 via Mariano D'Amelio in Palermo, Italy. The attack claimed the lives of Italian magistrate Paolo Borsellino and five members of his escort: Agostino Catalano, Emanuela Loi, Vincenzo Li Muli, Walter Eddie Cosina, and Claudio Traina. The sole survivor was officer Antonino Vullo, who was parking one of the escort vehicles at the time of the explosion.

¹⁸ *Commissione parlamentare di inchiesta sul fenomeno delle mafie e sulle altre associazioni criminali, anche straniere*, 7/02/2018, p.44

¹⁹ Lorenzo Vidino, *Home-Grown Jihadism in Italy: Birth, Development and Radicalization Dynamics*, Milano 2014 ISPI, p. 43

²⁰ Stefano Allievi, *"Islam italiano. Viaggio nella seconda religione del paese"*, Torino, Einaudi, 2003, p. 13

phenomenon in the country.²¹ In fact, in the years following the Game's episode others will interest Italy all with characteristics showing a growing and increasingly relevant home-grown jihadism.²² However, a phenomenon of a reduced scaled if compared to the other European countries and as already said with a certain degree of delay. This can also be explained taking into consideration the demographic factors of Italy. In fact, Immigration of Muslims in the peninsula on a larger scale began only in the late 80s which compared to the immigration to other stronger economic European neighbours, like Germany, the Netherlands or France, started 20 to even 40 years later.²³ Second generations of Muslims born in Italy are just now coming of age and statistically just few of them decide to embrace radical ideas. The present landscape of jihadism in Italy exhibits a high degree of fragmentation and diversity. It is marked by the presence of multiple actors displaying distinct characteristics.

Historically, Italy did several investigations on jihadist's networks operating in the peninsula. In the early stages of European Jihadism, Italy could count on its soil a notably presence of active networks. Small groups of militants hailing from different North African nations settled in various regions of Italy. One of the main focal points for Jihadism within the country was the city of Milan. Here, the Islamic Cultural Institute (ICI) gained a notable level of significance within the global Jihadist movement when the conflict in Bosnia erupted in 1992.²⁴ The Milan network played a pivotal role providing different kind of resources and even logistic support to individuals worldwide who were endeavouring to join the battlefield. Always the same network was identified as behind the car bomb attack in 1995, against a police station in Rijeka, Croatia. This was the first European suicide bombing attack. Italian authorities were able, after a long investigation, to charge 17 militants after a raid in the Milan ICI Mosque.²⁵ As the late 1990s approached, there were jihadist groups, often linked to the ICI, spread in different Italian cities, mainly concentrated in the northern regions. Leveraging their charisma, and when needed, using violence, ICI associates either established new mosques or

²¹ Stefano Allievi and Felice Dassetto, *"Il ritorno dell'Islam. I musulmani in Italia"*, Roma, Lavoro, 1993 p. 10

²² Marone, Francesco, and Lorenzo Vidino. *"Destination Jihad: Italy's Foreign Fighters"*. International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, 2019. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep19628> p.12

²³ Vidino, op. cit., p. 2.

²⁴ The Bosnian War was an armed conflict fought between March 1, 1992, and December 14, 1995, until the signing of the Dayton Agreement, which officially ended the hostilities. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia determined that in Bosnia, there was an international conflict between the Bosnian army and the army of the Republika Srpska, which aimed to annex the entire Bosnia and Herzegovina.

²⁵ Marone, *"Destination jihad"*, p. 24

assumed control of existing ones in Lombard cities like Varese, Como and Gallarate. Particularly important was the network created in the city of Cremona. This was responsible for different activities including recruiting and diffusing propaganda. Its Leader, Ahmed el Bouhali, died in 2001 under the US bombing of Afghanistan. However, the activities of the network still continued for three years until the majority of its members were convicted by Italian authorities in crimes related to terrorism. At the time they were working on attacks against the metro of Milan and Cremona's cathedral.²⁶ In the years in between the 90s and 2000s, different clusters were identified in a lot of Italian's cities, even though, many of them were located in the north. In fact, it was in this part of the peninsula that numerous operations were led, and lot of weapons were seized, like in the city of Turin and Bologna.²⁷ The common features that all these networks across Italy had were the presence of a charismatic leader, connections to active groups in North Africa, providing logistic support to groups operating abroad, involvement in recruitment processes and finally most of them were first generation immigrants, entered illegally in the country and living in a condition of deprived socio economic rights.

There are two main consequences related to the establishment of home-grown jihadism in Italy. Clusters that are born in a house isolated contest or lone actors are more complex to be detected by authorities, since they do not work for a bigger network whose communications are easier to intercept. Furthermore, the phenomenon presents a challenge to Italy's frequent reliance on deportations as a counterterrorism strategy. Due to the absence of *ius-soli* in Italy and stringent naturalizations laws, despite being born or raised in the country, you still may lack citizenship and, consequently, may face deportation. In the end home-grown jihadism can also be an extremely relevant challenge if considered at the socio-political level. In fact, if it was to be discovered that Muslims born in Italy were the main responsible for the terrorists attacks on the peninsula this would probably have dramatic consequences on the ongoing national discussion on immigration already marked by tension and a high level of politicization.

²⁶ Vidino, *op. cit.*, p.33.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 33.

CHAPTER 3

3.1. ITALIAN MAFIA

The Mafia is defined as a criminal organization divided into multiple associations (clans or families), governed by the code of silence and secrecy, which exercises control over illegal economic activities and the underworld.²⁸ The Italian mafia consists of various criminal organizations that impose their will through illegal means for private interests within the territories where they operate. The most prominent among these are Cosa Nostra, Camorra, and 'Ndrangheta.²⁹ These organizations are characterized by a strict code of silence, familial ties, and rituals that each member or affiliate is expected to follow. These groups can generally be described as "mafia-type" organizations, utilizing methods typical of the mafia: violence, intimidation, extortion, usury, corruption, and human exploitation, creating a general condition of silence among the population.³⁰ Despite these common elements, each organization has distinct organizational models, strategies, and criminal behaviours. These criminal organizations, born in different regions of Italy, have spread to other economically prosperous areas of the country and various parts of the world.³¹ Their power and control are bolstered by collaboration and corruption within the political and social systems, ensuring their influence remains strong in their areas of operation while maintaining strong ties to their regions of origin.

The primary interest of these criminal organizations is economic power, achieved through illicit activities such as arms trafficking, human trafficking, drug trafficking, dealing in counterfeit goods, and loan sharking.³² They often engage in corrupt dealings with politicians to secure public contracts and launder money through the construction industry. The "pizzo" or protection racket is another major source of income, where the criminals demand illegal taxes from local businesses in exchange for protection. Human

²⁸ Gambetta, "La mafia Siciliana.", 1992, p. 14

²⁹ Catino Maurizio, "How Do Mafias Organize? Conflict and Violence in Three Mafia Organizations." *European Journal of Sociology / Archives Européennes de Sociologie / Europäisches Archiv Für Soziologie*, vol. 55, no. 2, 2014, pp. 177–220. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24467498> Accessed 3 June 2024 pp. 179-181

³⁰ Catanzaro, Raimondo. "The Mafia." *Italian Politics*, vol. 1, 1986, pp. 87–101. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43039574> Accessed 3 June 2024

³¹ Antonio La Spina, "Mafia, legalità debole e sviluppo del Mezzogiorno", Bologna, Il Mulino, 2005, p. 42

³² Federico Varese, "Mafias on the Move: How organized Crime conquers New territories", Princeton University Press, 2011, p.63

trafficking, including the exploitation of women for prostitution, is a widespread criminal endeavour.³³ Another significant area is the trafficking of toxic waste, which is transported from northern Italy to southern regions or developing countries. Compliant businessmen play a crucial role in this, choosing to deal with the mafia to cut disposal costs.³⁴

Despite efforts by the state to combat organized crime, these organizations continue to thrive. Many have sacrificed their lives in this fight and although top leaders like Salvatore Riina and Bernardo Provenzano were arrested,³⁵ others quickly took their places, perpetuating the cycle of organized crime.

3.1.1 “COSA NOSTRA”

Known as Cosa Nostra, the mafia originated in Sicily in the late 1800s. The term “mafiusu” first appeared in the 1863 play “I mafiusi di la Vicaria di Palermu” by Giuseppe Rizzotto and Gaetano Mosca, referring to an arrogant and domineering man who commands “respect.”³⁶ Initially formed to protect peasants and labourers from exploitation by their landlords, Cosa Nostra evolved over time, becoming a powerful criminal organization with political connections. Today, it is one of the most widespread criminal associations globally. Cosa Nostra is organized into a system of groups called families, arranged in a hierarchical structure with a boss at the top, who oversees all activities and controls the territory through “men of honor.”³⁷ These operatives are involved in various illicit activities, including murder, extortion, drug trafficking, and more. The organization communicates primarily through written notes, especially when leaders are in hiding.³⁸

The origins of Cosa Nostra can be traced back to the 19th century. After the conquest of Palermo in 1860, the city underwent significant political changes.³⁹ Garibaldi established

³³ Catino, “How Do Mafias Organize?”. P.184

³⁴ Ibidem, p.184

³⁵ “Messina Denaro, Riina e Provenzano: la storia degli arresti dei boss di Cosa Nostra”, Skytg24, 16/01/2023, <https://tg24.sky.it/cronaca/2023/01/16/matteo-messina-denaro-toto-riina-bernardo-provenzano-cosa-nostra>; Laura Gozzi, Davide Ghiglione, “Italy’s most-wanted Mafia boss Matteo Messina Denaro arrested in Sicily”, 16/01/23, BBC, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-64288928>

³⁶ Lupo, “La mafia”, p. 3

³⁷ <https://www.museodellecivilta.it/storia-delle-mafie/storia-delle-mafie-cosa-nostra/> (Accessed 15/05/2024)

³⁸ Salvatore Lupo, “Storia della mafia. Dalle origini ai giorni nostri”, Donzelli Editore, 1999, p. 24

³⁹ Lupo, “La mafia”, p. 5

a provisional government mainly composed of members of the local liberal bourgeoisie, who supported the goal of Italian unification and the creation of a new national state. However, political instability did not entirely disappear. Various political factions and opposing interests coexisted in the city, creating tensions and rivalries that often led to conflicts. Additionally, Garibaldi's influence and that of his provisional government were partly mitigated by the presence of Piemonte's forces and evolving national political dynamics.

Palermo was entering the season of plots. On the evening of October 1st, 1862, thirteen unrelated individuals were stabbed in the city for no apparent reason. Right-wing government authorities pointed fingers at opponents of the government, including Giovanni Corrao, an Italian general and revolutionary patriot.⁴⁰ Opponents, however, saw it as a strategy of tension orchestrated by the local government. Suspicions were confirmed by Corrao's mysterious assassination in 1863.⁴¹ Shortly after, the word "mafia" appeared for the first time in a government document in a report by Palermo's prefect, Filippo Gualterio, in 1865.⁴² It explained that it was a kind of "camorra" or "criminal association" that had ties with powerful people. However, the document then claimed that this mafia was led by Giovanni Corrao. The prefect's intent was to associate the mafia with the republican party to discredit it.⁴³

Needless to say, extreme opposition factions prepared to take action with a revolt that began on September 15, 1866, lasting seven days, after which the army commanded by General Cadorna regained control of the city, resulting in an unspecified number of casualties.⁴⁴ Once again, the government apparatus exploited the difficulty of attributing the revolt to a specific political faction, promiscuously linking the political and criminal aspects, blaming the dramatic events on a mafia plot. This was the moment when the word began to gain general currency.⁴⁵ However, many disagreed with this political instrumentalization before a specially constituted parliamentary commission.⁴⁶ Obviously, the mafia was not a political party. It was more accurate to suggest that the various factions that composed the mafia were aligned with different parties. Important

⁴⁰ Lupo, "Storia della mafia", p. 30 (Accessed 15/05/2024)

⁴¹ <https://www.museodelleciviltà.it/storia-delle-mafie/storia-delle-mafie-cosa-nostra/> (Accessed 15/05/2024)

⁴² Lupo, "La mafia", p. 5

⁴³ Ibidem, p. 7

⁴⁴ Lupo, "Storia della mafia", p. 34

⁴⁵ Gambetta, "La mafia Siciliana.", 1992, p. 24

⁴⁶ Ibidem, p. 8

examples included Salvatore Licata, whose proximity to right-wing government circles is well-documented in biographical notes by a police chief, or the Amoroso brothers. They were linked to the extreme left led by Badia, Corrao's successor, and played a significant role in organizing the insurrection.

Distinguishing a complex phenomenon like the Mafia within a chaotic revolutionary process is challenging. It's easier to observe how this phenomenon became increasingly evident and well-known over time, due to the roots it planted in society, much like a pervasive weed growing in every corner, impossible to uproot. In 1874, the last government of the historical right proposed an "extraordinary" public order law specifically for Sicily.⁴⁷ This legislative intervention was justified by the inability to counter cattle theft, robberies, and kidnappings using normal methods. Not all prefects of the island welcomed the law in the same way. Some resigned, while others enthusiastically supported it, arguing that the Mafia was a result of the general moral decline of the island's population. They believed that attempting to govern Sicilians with liberal systems, which presupposed an educated and moral populace as in the northern part of the peninsula, was a terrible experiment destined to fail.⁴⁸ The key words, besides Mafia and banditry, were "omertà" and "manutengolismo".⁴⁹ The former indicated the lack of reporting or collaboration by the population, while the latter referred to the complicity enjoyed by criminals not only among peasants, commoners, and traders, but also among agricultural entrepreneurs, professionals, mayors, notables, and even members of institutions. In 1874, the moderate left achieved a great victory in the elections and immediately began a battle against the government's project on exceptional laws. The debate reached its climax in a parliamentary discussion where Diego Tajani, a prosecutor in Palermo, brought back an old accusation against Giuseppe Albanese, police chief of Palermo under the right-wing government, accusing him as the mastermind behind a chain of murders committed by certain Mafiosi.⁵⁰ During the discussion, left-wing deputies accused the right-wing government of harbouring the Mafia within its ranks and argued that the true "manutengoli" were indeed them. Leopoldo Franchetti and Sidney Sonnino published the aforementioned investigation in Sicily during that period,

⁴⁷ <https://www.museodellecivilta.it/storia-delle-mafie/storia-delle-mafie-cosa-nostra/> (Accessed 15/04/2024)

⁴⁸ Lupo, "Storia della mafia", p. 42

⁴⁹ Lupo, "La Mafia", p.12

⁵⁰ Ibidem, p. 13

destined to become the most famous on the Sicilian question.⁵¹ Thus, two viewpoints emerged: one from the right, suggesting that Mafia behaviour originated from the very nature of Sicilian society, and one from the left, asserting that there was no lack of moral sense in Sicily, but rather the infection stemmed from misgovernment. Only ten years later, the prefect Rasponi expressed institutional self-criticism, admitting that during Albanese's time, many elements of the Mafia were involved in the actions of the police headquarters, and that those methods were unworthy of a civilized country.⁵²

In conclusion, the picture of the right-wing government that emerges contradicts the established tradition that depicts it as excellent, rigid in defending order, legality, and public morality. Instead, it is clear that, it was more hostile to the idea of revolution and popular mobilization typical of the period, resorting to every lawful and unlawful means to govern the fruit of a revolutionary movement and, generally, a rebellious society.⁵³ It instrumentalized the criminal element that already existed in this rebellion, using it for its own purposes, orchestrating plots to create order through disorder. Meanwhile, it pursued the path of exceptional laws, deeming them necessary to govern a people predisposed to blood and crime. Therefore, it was an extremely complex and intricate context, demonstrating how the Mafia was already a real element in this century and how it was possible, in a period of such great instability and confusion, to establish deep roots in Sicilian society, allowing for undisturbed growth and the acquisition of power and influence in the years to come, as we know today.

3.1.2. CAMORRA

The Camorra, present in Campania and extending into southern Lazio, is a complex criminal organization consisting of many different clans. Unlike Cosa Nostra, it lacks a unified higher organization and is characterized by its fragmented structure.⁵⁴ Each clan controls defined parts of the same city and is often in conflict with others. These clans exploit the poverty of young people living in the outskirts, recruiting them into their ranks. The alliances between these clans are fragile and frequently break down, leading

⁵¹ <https://www.museodellecivilta.it/storia-delle-mafie/storia-delle-mafie-cosa-nostra/> (Accessed 15/04/2024)

⁵² Lupo, "La Mafia", pp. 17-18

⁵³ Lupo, "Storia della mafia", p. 50

⁵⁴ Benigno, Francesco. "La Questione Delle Origini: Mafia, Camorra e Storia d'Italia." *Meridiana*, no. 87, 2016, pp. 125–47. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/90002065>, pp.125-128

to feuds, ambushes, and daily murders in the neighbourhoods of Naples. The organization's stability is precarious because the "bosses" of different clans are continually in conflict over dominance and power. Despite the lack of a central authority, different clans within the same territory may form temporary alliances to diversify their illicit activities.⁵⁵ The Camorra engages in a variety of criminal activities, including extortion, drug trafficking, money laundering, and illegal gambling. Its decentralized nature leads to frequent internal conflicts, but it also allows for greater flexibility and adaptability. Originally this organisation was known with the historical name of "La bella società riformata".⁵⁶ The literal translation is "Beautiful Reformed society", a name that reflected an attempt at social legitimization and organized control over territory and illicit activities, but today it is more commonly known simply as the Camorra.⁵⁷

Violence is a central pillar of the Camorra's modus operandi, employed both as a tool of enforcement and a means of maintaining power. The fragmented and decentralized nature of the Camorra, composed of various clans with shifting alliances, leads to frequent internal conflicts and violent confrontations. These conflicts often manifest as feuds, ambushes, and daily murders, particularly in the economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods of Naples where the Camorra recruits heavily from the local youth. Violence serves as a method of control, ensuring loyalty and compliance from members and the local population, while deterring defection and rebellion. The use of violence by the Camorra extends beyond internal clan disputes to broader social and economic contexts. It is used to enforce extortion demands, control illegal markets, and eliminate competition. The Camorra's violent tactics are not merely punitive but are also strategic, aimed at maintaining a climate of fear that facilitates their control over territories and illegal activities. This culture of violence has historical roots; the Camorra's origins in the early 19th century involved brutal enforcement methods and public displays of power to assert dominance. The organization's capacity to govern social disorder through violent mediation is a critical aspect of its sustained influence, allowing it to maintain a stronghold over the poorest social strata and create illegal economic channels. Despite repeated state interventions and crackdowns, the Camorra's adept use of violence ensures its persistence and ability to adapt to changing socio-political landscapes.

⁵⁵ Francesco Barbagallo. *"Storia della camorra"*. Editori Laterza, 2014 p. 13

⁵⁶ <https://www.museodellecivilta.it/storia-delle-mafie/storia-delle-mafie-camorra/>

⁵⁷ Barbagallo, op. cit., p.20

The Camorra officially formed in 1820. According to tradition, representatives from the twelve districts of Naples convened at the Church of Santa Caterina a Formiello, where they established a new statute and modern structure for the sect during a solemn ceremony.⁵⁸ A key principle maintained was that the leader had to be native to the Porta Capuana district. This democratically elected leader was immune to criticism and received regular reports and large sums of money from subordinate leaders weekly. The organization included twelve district heads, secretaries, treasurers, and sub-group leaders known as “capiparanza” and operated its own tribunals, which imposed severe punishments on traitors, ranging from brutal mutilation to execution.⁵⁹ The Camorra was divided into a Greater Society and a Lower Society. The initial initiation rites, which remained in use until after the unification of Italy, were imitations of the dark and fearsome rituals of the “Carbonari”⁶⁰. Pasquale Capuozzo, a horse farrier from Porta Capuana, was appointed as the leader and was elected three times until he was murdered by his wife in 1824.⁶¹

In the early 19th century, the streets of Naples, not only in the popular districts but also in the city centre, were chaotic, marked by poverty, revelry, and filth. Gambling tables were scattered throughout the city, enticing passersby to participate in various games of chance. Camorristi exercised their most lucrative control over these gambling tables, demanding a 20% cut of the proceeds.⁶² The gamblers naturally paid this bribe, handing it over to the Camorristi at predetermined times. The Camorra's extortion extended to importers and brothels. At the city gates, groups of Camorristi, often treated as "colleagues" by customs officers, collected fees from importers, who paid both the legal state dues and the illicit Camorra dues to the *Bella Società Riformata*. In brothels, they collected multiple bribes: one from the property owner, another from the madam, and a third from individual pimps.⁶³ Camorristi generally avoided direct dealings with pimps, whom they despised and barred from the sect, delegating the task of collecting these

⁵⁸ <https://www.museodelleciviltà.it/storia-delle-mafie/storia-delle-mafie-camorra/>

⁵⁹ Barbagallo, *op.cit.*, p. 15

⁶⁰ The Carbonari were a secret revolutionary society founded in early 19th century Italy. Originating in the Kingdom of Naples, their primary goals were to achieve Italian unification and to promote liberal and constitutional reforms. They played a significant role in the early stages of the Risorgimento, the movement for Italian unification, and were known for their clandestine activities and strong opposition to conservative and autocratic rule. Despite their influence, they were eventually suppressed by various European governments.

⁶¹ Barbagallo, *op.cit.*, p. 125

⁶² <https://www.museodelleciviltà.it/storia-delle-mafie/storia-delle-mafie-camorra/> (Accessed 15/04/2024)

⁶³ Benigno, *op.cit.*, p. 132

taxes to lower-ranking members, or “picciotti”.⁶⁴ The amount of money pimps had to pay varied depending on whether the woman was a virgin, a non-virgin, or had children. In some cases, Camorristi might take a prostitute as their lover but were expected to chivalrously exempt her from exploitation.⁶⁵ Marriage to a prostitute was only permitted if the Camorrista had made a vow to a saint who had saved him from illness or misfortune.⁶⁶

The public's attitude towards this criminal organization was one of benevolent tolerance. Over time, Neapolitans came to see the Camorra as the lesser of evils and even lamented when law enforcement took repressive actions against them. The Camorra was always a product of poor governance, becoming a genuine social phenomenon with infiltrations into every sector.⁶⁷ Even the authorities of the Kingdom could not effectively contain it. The Camorra's influence extended so far that even burials and memorial masses for the dead were subject to extortion. The Camorra had a special relationship with the prison environment, maintaining disciplined networks within prisons and among convicts, extorting other inmates. Non-Camorra inmates were immediately targeted upon arrival, asked to pay for oil to light the Madonna's image a symbolic "tax" indicating acceptance of exploitation throughout their incarceration.⁶⁸ Refusal to pay could result in severe physical harm, and even the poorest inmates were not exempt from this tax, often facing brutal consequences regardless of their financial state. The primary aim of the Camorra was to extract a cut from any activity, legal or illegal, within the city. As their power grew, protected by strict omertà, they became a semi-legal counter-power, administering unofficial justice and imposing order beneficial to their operations in Naples and extending their influence to surrounding municipalities.⁶⁹

During the reign of Francesco II (1859-60), the Bourbon police enlisted the Camorra to quell popular uprisings spurred by Garibaldi's successes.⁷⁰ In 1860, the police minister, Liborio Romano, became the de facto authority. Hated by many but revered by the Camorristi, Romano enlisted them to form the Civic Guard. On the night of June 27, he secretly summoned the famous leader Salvatore De Crescenzo to lead the new police

⁶⁴ <https://www.museodellecivilta.it/storia-delle-mafie/storia-delle-mafie-camorra/> (Accessed 15/04/2024)

⁶⁵ Barbagallo, op. cit., p. 67

⁶⁶ Ibidem, p. 25

⁶⁷ <https://www.museodellecivilta.it/storia-delle-mafie/storia-delle-mafie-camorra/> (Accessed 15/04/2024)

⁶⁸ Ibidem.

⁶⁹ Benigno, op. cit., pp. 135-136

⁷⁰ <https://www.museodellecivilta.it/storia-delle-mafie/storia-delle-mafie-camorra/> (Accessed 15/04/2024)

force.⁷¹ When Garibaldi arrived in Naples, he found Camorristi entrenched in public security offices, acting as incorruptible law enforcers and ensuring a smooth power transition following Francesco II's departure. Silvio Spaventa, appointed Prefect of Police in January 1861, dismissed the Camorristi-police, dissolving the Civic Guard and replacing it with the Public Security Guards.⁷² Despite these efforts, eradicating the Camorra and restoring legality remained a utopian dream. By July 1861, Spaventa resigned, acknowledging that "*Camorra is exercised in prisons, the army, and all public places.*"⁷³ In all its manifestations, the Camorra was a byproduct of misgovernment. Its power had grown to such an extent that even burials and suffrage masses for the deceased were subject to extortion. The Camorra had a particular relationship with the prison environment, maintaining disciplined networks within prisons and among convicts, extorting other inmates. Ultimately, the Camorra had become a significant social phenomenon, deeply embedded in every facet of Neapolitan life, and neither the Kingdom's authorities nor subsequent governments could effectively contain its pervasive influence.

On December 21, 1993, the Anti-Mafia Parliamentary Commission of the 11th legislature approved a report on the Camorra phenomenon in Campania. This report, for the first time, provided detailed historical reconstructions and severe political judgments. It highlighted the institutional collusions and support, as well as the socio-cultural approval, that the criminal organizations in Campania had enjoyed for decades.⁷⁴ The report of the Anti-Mafia Parliamentary Commission on the Camorra is a historic document. For years, this particular criminal phenomenon was underestimated and neglected. The first Anti-Mafia Commission did not address it. Even the senior officials of the Neapolitan judiciary, until 1981, when the Camorra had already taken control of many economic activities and Cutolo was involved in the release of Cirillo, considered anti-mafia repressive measures inapplicable to the Camorra.⁷⁵ The first Anti-Mafia Parliamentary Commission was established by Law No. 1720 on December 20, 1962, although some parliamentarians had already raised the issue of a fight against the mafia that was not only judicial but also political and cultural, immediately after the Portella della Ginestra massacre on May 1, 1947. The Commission was constituted on February

⁷¹ Barbagallo, op. cit., pp. 70-71

⁷² Ibidem, p.75

⁷³ <https://www.museodelleciviltà.it/storia-delle-mafie/storia-delle-mafie-camorra/> (Accessed 15/04/2024)

⁷⁴ <https://www.museodelleciviltà.it/storia-delle-mafie/storia-delle-mafie-camorra/> (Accessed 15/04/2024)

⁷⁵ Barbagallo, op. cit. pp. 280-285

14, 1963, but did not hold any sessions due to the dissolution of Parliament for the April 1963 elections.⁷⁶ After the legislative activity resumed, the leadership of the Anti-Mafia Parliamentary Commission was entrusted to Senator Donato Pafundi. The Commission began its work in the wake of the indignation generated by the Ciaculli massacre on June 30, 1963. The December 1993 report, authored by Honourable Luciano Violante, is a fundamental document for analysing the Camorra phenomenon in all its aspects.⁷⁷ The Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry on the Mafia and similar criminal organizations, after presenting to Parliament a report on mafia and politics concerning Cosa Nostra, produced a report on the structure and connections of the Camorra organizations. The Camorra, underestimated by the first Anti-Mafia Commission of 1962, was considered a phenomenon not comparable to the mafia. A 1981 ruling by the Naples Court, the year of Ciro Cirillo's kidnapping and the dominance of Raffaele Cutolo's "Nuova Camorra Organizzata" (NCO), stated that anti-mafia preventive measures could not be applied to the Camorra.⁷⁸ The Camorra has maintained control over the territory, economy, and local institutions in Campania, with significant presence in various Italian regions and a traditional stronghold in Rome. Judicial and police investigations have confirmed the existence of Camorra "stations" in several European countries. During a hearing before the Anti-Mafia Commission, informant Pasquale Galasso confirmed the presence of the Camorra in the Netherlands, Germany, Romania, France, Spain, and Portugal, with connections extending to Santo Domingo.⁷⁹ Decades-long relationships between Cosa Nostra and Camorra clans have strengthened both organizations financially and militarily, expanding their economic and political interests. The Camorra's adaptability allows it to integrate with society, politics, and institutions, re-emerging during periods of difficulty. Unlike the mafia, it has never enjoyed prolonged impunity and has faced significant crackdowns in 1860, 1862, 1874, 1883, 1907, and again in 1983-1984 with major trials against Raffaele Cutolo's organizations.⁸⁰ However, these repressions never addressed the phenomenon in its entirety and were not accompanied by adequate social interventions. In times of state and civil society weakness, the Camorra resurfaces with a criminal structure based on violent mediation in economic activities. Its disappearance is not due to effective repressions but to national policies aimed at integrating the poorer

⁷⁶ <https://www.museodelleciviltà.it/storia-delle-mafie/storia-delle-mafie-camorra/> (Accessed 15/04/2024)

⁷⁷ Barbagallo, op. cit. p. 300

⁷⁸ <https://www.museodelleciviltà.it/storia-delle-mafie/storia-delle-mafie-camorra/> (Accessed 15/04/2024)

⁷⁹ Commissione parlamentare d'inchiesta sul fenomeno della mafia e sulle altre associazioni criminali similari. 7/02/2018, p.52

⁸⁰ Ibidem, p.61

classes. The Camorra governs social disorder, maintaining dominance over the poorest social strata, creating illegal economic channels, and having an inexhaustible recruitment base. Unlike Cosa Nostra, the Camorra does not present an alternative order to that of the state but governs social disorder, maintaining a relationship of dominance over the poor and an interdependent relationship with power.⁸¹

The relationship between the Camorra and the state is a complex and multifaceted dynamic, marked by periods of both collusion and confrontation. Historically, the Camorra has demonstrated a remarkable ability to infiltrate local institutions in Campania and other Italian regions, exerting considerable influence over political, economic, and social systems. This infiltration often involves corrupting local politicians, law enforcement officials, and bureaucrats, allowing the Camorra to operate with a degree of impunity. During the reign of Francesco II, for instance, the Bourbon police enlisted the Camorra to quell popular uprisings, illustrating the group's integration into state mechanisms when it served mutual interests. Despite efforts by the state to combat the Camorra, such as the significant trials and crackdowns in the 1980s targeting Raffaele Cutolo's NCO, the organization has shown a remarkable resilience. This resilience is largely due to its decentralized structure, which allows individual clans to adapt and survive even when others are dismantled. Additionally, the Camorra has capitalized on periods of state weakness or societal instability to reinforce its presence. The December 1993 report by the Anti-Mafia Parliamentary Commission highlighted the institutional collusions and socio-cultural approval that the Camorra enjoyed for decades, underlining the deep-rooted and systemic nature of its influence. The Camorra's ability to integrate into various facets of society, politics, and institutions underscores its role not just as a criminal organization, but as a significant socio-political entity within certain regions of Italy

3.1.3. 'NDRANGHETA

Originating from Calabria in Southern Italy, the 'Ndrangheta is now the most powerful and secretive mafia organization in Italy. Although it originated in Calabria, the 'Ndrangheta has expanded its influence to regions like Emilia Romagna and Lombardy, as well as internationally. The organization exhibits a structure distinct from that of Cosa

⁸¹ Barbagallo, op. cit., pp. 165-166

Nostra and the Camorra. It primarily revolves around the 'ndrina, which is deeply rooted in a specific territory, referred to as a local, encompassing a town, village, or city district and consist of families that adhere to strict initiation rituals.⁸² The core of the 'ndrina is composed of the capobastone's blood family, a defining characteristic that embodies the essence of Calabrian clans.⁸³ To identify a 'ndrina, it is customary to use the surname of the capobastone's family and that of the principal allied families, followed by the name of the area where it operates.⁸⁴ The strength of the 'ndrangheta lies precisely in the foundational structure of the 'ndrina. Being predominantly family-based, this organization poses a significant psychological and moral barrier for those considering collaboration with the justice system. This accounts for the low number of informants within the 'ndrangheta. This familial structure also impacts recruitment methods. In the Sicilian mafia, recruitment standards are very stringent. Informants have revealed how veteran mafiosi would closely monitor the "achievements" of young individuals to identify and select potential future members. Ideal candidates must be young and impressionable, serious, capable of keeping secrets, and willing to use violence. During a period of mutual acquaintance, it is determined who possesses the qualities to become a man of honor.⁸⁵ Formal education is not considered important; in fact, it is preferred that future members are not educated. The process of evaluating an individual's qualities can be lengthy, as there is a need to ensure the candidate's reliability in every respect. Before being affiliated with the 'ndrina, a candidate must pass through several stages, including an "observation" phase and a subsequent "trial" phase, the latter being crucial for formal admission into the organization. Lifetime affiliation and the rule of omertà are the two pillars upon which the entire mafia architecture is based. The natural family of the capobastone constitutes the fundamental structure of the cosca and serves as a point of attraction and cohesion with other families, both mafiosi and non-mafiosi. In this context, marriage is viewed as a means to enhance the influence and power of the cosca. It is a matrimonial strategy frequently employed to consolidate and strengthen ties and alliances.

⁸² Nicola Gratteri, Antonio Nicaso, *Storia segreta della 'ndrangheta. Una lunga e oscura vicenda di sangue e potere 1860-2018*, Mondadori, 2018, p.110

⁸³ <https://www.museodellecivilta.it/storia-delle-mafie/storia-delle-mafie-ndrangheta/> (Accessed 15/04/2024)

⁸⁴ Ibidem.

⁸⁵ Gratteri, op. cit. p.53

The 'Ndrangheta operates similarly to Cosa Nostra, with a strong emphasis on family ties, which enhances its resilience against law enforcement efforts. It controls a significant portion of Europe's cocaine trade, which has made it the wealthiest of the Italian mafias⁸⁶. Additionally, the 'Ndrangheta has gained power by infiltrating local governments, further solidifying its control and influence. The word 'ndrangheta originates from the Greek "andros agathos," meaning "brave and courageous man." Consequently, 'ndrangheta represents a fraternity of honorable and valorous men.⁸⁷ Beyond the etymological definition, 'ndrangheta embodies the concept of the strong man, capable of commanding respect, who does not tolerate oppression and metes out justice independently, always prioritizing personal and familial interests over collective ones. In the early 1980s, the term 'ndrangheta was partly replaced by "Santa" following an agreement between 'ndrangheta leaders and Raffaele Cutolo of the Camorra.⁸⁸ The first official mention of the word 'ndrangheta dates back to 1884, in a report by the prefect of Reggio Calabria, Tamajo, to the Minister of the Interior. Previously, a report by the Carabinieri of Seminara described a group of criminals bound by a strict secret code, engaged in various crimes.⁸⁹ The historical origins of 'ndrangheta can be traced back to the revolutionary movements of 1799 during the Neapolitan Republic, which was swiftly suppressed by the Sanfediste armies, opposing the French revolutionary ideas and restoring the Bourbon regime. The French reforms of 1806 abolished feudalism but impoverished the peasants, who joined the pro-Bourbon brigands. The Congress of Vienna did not improve the economic crisis, and the pre-Risorgimento uprisings saw landowners protected by the Bourbons, while peasants, after a brief patriotic phase, returned to brigandage.⁹⁰ With the Unification of Italy, the situation worsened for the peasants, and while they attempted political organization, landowners turned to trusted men, who then became 'ndranghetisti.⁹¹ By the end of the 19th century, Calabrian criminal activities intertwined with the figure of Giuseppe Musolino, known as the "king of Aspromonte."⁹² The peasant were exploited by Sicilian mafiosi exiled to Aspromonte,

⁸⁶ Gratteri, op. cit. p.160

⁸⁷ <https://www.museodellecivilta.it/storia-delle-mafie/storia-delle-mafie-ndrangheta/> (Accessed 15/04/2024)

⁸⁸ Gratteri, op. cit. p178.

⁸⁹ Ibidem, p.41

⁹⁰ <https://www.museodellecivilta.it/storia-delle-mafie/storia-delle-mafie-ndrangheta/> (Accessed 15/04/2024)

⁹¹ Giuseppe Ferraro, *"Il prefetto e i briganti. La Calabria e l'unificazione italiana (1861-1865)"*, Firenze, Le Monnier, 2016, p. 34.

⁹² Ibidem.

that in the end formed the Honoured Society, and it can be asserted that 'ndrangheta was already present in Calabria at the time of Italian Unification. From then on, a slow but steady rise of 'ndrangheta began throughout the 19th century. In the early years of the Italian state, 'ndrangheta was active in the provinces of Reggio Calabria, Nicastro (Lamezia Terme), Monteleone (Vibo Valentia), and, towards the end of the century, also in Cosenza and Catanzaro. Initially, the organization was known by various names such as mafia, camorra, picciotteria, famiglia di Montalbano, and Onorata Società.⁹³ During World War I, the Honored Society split between idealists who joined communist and socialist parties and those who continued illicit activities for personal gain, giving rise to modern 'ndrangheta. Originally, 'ndrangheta was perceived as a mutual aid society, formed by shepherds, peasants, and artisans, who organized themselves into a secret sect to defend against feudal and state power, replacing the State in its deficiencies. 'Ndrangheta took root in a region isolated from political and decision-making centers, with a precarious economy and scarce infrastructure, in a context where difficult living conditions favoured its emergence as a mutual aid organization for rural popular classes. During the Fascist period, 'ndrangheta was addressed as a rural delinquency phenomenon, undergoing repression that failed to definitively eradicate it.⁹⁴ Fascism sought to consolidate party power as the sole intermediary between the population and the State, but failed to uproot 'ndrangheta, which traversed the regime without structural upheavals.⁹⁵ Between 1943 and 1945, with the Allied liberation, mafia mayors were appointed, consolidating the public influence of the Honored Society. In the 1950s, state repression against 'ndrangheta slowed, and in the 1960s, the organization continued its ascent, expanding into new territories and sectors such as construction, thanks to work on the Salerno-Reggio Calabria highway.⁹⁶ The Santillo-Aiello report, prepared by the chief of police and deputy chief of Reggio Calabria, highlighted the serious mafia threat in the region and the factors fueling the phenomenon, such as illiteracy, concentration of land ownership, and unemployment among laborers.⁹⁷ In the 1970s, 'ndrangheta embarked on a new phase of growth, extending its interests to sectors such as cigarette, drug, and arms trafficking. The substantial investments allocated for the construction of

⁹³ Ferraro, op. cit., p. 40

⁹⁴ Vittorio Cappelli, "Potere politico e società locale. Podestà e municipi in Calabria durante il Fascismo", in «Meridiana», n. 2, 1988, p. 90

⁹⁵ Gratteri, op. cit. pp. 100-103

⁹⁶ <https://www.museodellecivilta.it/storia-delle-mafie/storia-delle-mafie-ndrangheta/> (Accessed 15/04/2024)

⁹⁷ Ibidem.

significant and essential public works in the province did not go unnoticed by the 'ndrangheta, triggering a rush to seize these funds - amounting to billions of lire - by the mafia clans. Until then, these clans had confined themselves to extorting money from small construction companies operating in the area. This marked a clear escalation in the criminal organization's efforts to acquire capital designated for large-scale public projects.⁹⁸ From these tensions emerged the first 'ndrangheta war (1974-1976), resulting in the deaths of hundreds of affiliates.⁹⁹

The conflict among the clans concluded in 1976 with a radical shift in the existing mafia power dynamics: the old provincial bosses, such as Antonio Macrì, Giuseppe Zappia, and Domenico Tripodi, were defeated, while new figures like the brothers Giorgio and Paolo De Stefano rose to prominence.¹⁰⁰ However, the bloody feud between the Calabrian clans from 1974-76 was not the only conflict among the various 'ndrine. A second, even more violent conflict occurred in the late 1980s, specifically from 1985 to 1991. This second 'ndrangheta war, which claimed the lives of approximately 700 affiliates, centered on the struggle for control of the city's territory.¹⁰¹ On one side were the De Stefano, Libri, and Tegano clans, while on the other were the Imerti-Condello-Serraino-Rosmini group. The illicit trade in drugs and arms had already reached significant volumes, making these illegal enterprises highly contested and indispensable. The conflict also extended beyond the city, involving two factions that did not entirely align with the aforementioned groups: one side comprised the families of Platì, San Luca, and Africo, the Cataldo of Locri, the Mazzaferro of Gioiosa Marina, the Pesce of Rosarno, and the Mancuso of Limbadi; the other included the Cosimo of Sidereo, the D'Agostino of Sant'Ilario, the Urini of Gioiosa Ionica, and the Mammoliti and Piromalli clans in the Gioia Tauro plain. Hostilities finally ceased in 1991.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Gratteri, op. cit. p. 125

⁹⁹ Ibidem, pp. 174-179

¹⁰⁰ Lidia Barone, "L'ascesa della 'ndrangheta negli ultimi due decenni", in «Meridiana», nn. 7-8, 1989-90, p. 255.

¹⁰¹ Ibidem, p. 257

¹⁰² Gratteri, op. cit. p. 188

3.2. JIHADIST TERRORISM

3.2.1 ITALY CASE

To a first glance Italy could be considered one of the most obvious targets for Jihadist terrorism. Italy's historical, cultural and intellectual contributions have played a pivotal role in shaping the foundations of Western culture and civilization. At the heart of the peninsula, we can find the Vatican City home of the holy see and the Pope, the most important symbols of Christian religion. Furthermore, Italy maintains a strong alliance with the United States, and it's considered one of the most powerful European countries. Nevertheless, there has not been a successful jihadist terrorist attack in the country. This doesn't mean that the nation was completely free of any kind of terrorist activity, on the contrary, Italy experienced some small-scale attacks in its territory, and the presence of networks that were involved in some of the major terrorist's attacks perpetrated in Europe.¹⁰³ Before going more in depth in the analysis of the activities that occurred in Italy's territory, it's important to keep in mind the role that foreign policy has on jihadist propaganda. It is true that Italy took part in different operations to fight ISIS¹⁰⁴ in Iraq,¹⁰⁵ such as Operation Inherent Resolve, where Italian forces provided training and logistical support to Iraqi security forces. Italy also participated in other military missions against jihadists, including Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, where it contributed to combat operations and training Afghan forces; the NATO Mission Iraq (NMI), aimed at strengthening Iraqi security institutions; and the EU-led Operation Atalanta, targeting piracy off the Somali coast, which indirectly affects jihadist funding. However, the number of troops deployed was much more limited in number compared to other nations, such as the US, and were not used to fight in the first line but were used in a logistic

¹⁰³ Andrea Beccaro & Stefano Bonino (2019): Terrorism and Counterterrorism: Italian Exceptionalism and Its Limits, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, DOI: 10.1080/1057610X.2019.1700027 p. 1-2

¹⁰⁴ ISIS, also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, is a terrorist organization that emerged from al-Qaeda in Iraq. It gained international notoriety for its brutal tactics, including mass killings, abductions, and the destruction of cultural heritage sites. ISIS aimed to establish a caliphate governed by strict Islamic law and controlled large parts of Iraq and Syria between 2014 and 2019 before being largely defeated by a coalition of international forces. Gunaratna Rohan, "Global Threat Forecast The Rise of ISIS." *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2015, pp. 6–11. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26369557>

¹⁰⁵ The Iraq War began in 2003 with a U.S.-led invasion aimed at toppling the regime of Saddam Hussein, based on claims that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and posed a threat to international security. Despite the swift overthrow of Saddam, no WMDs were found, leading to controversy and criticism. The invasion led to prolonged conflict, sectarian violence, and the rise of insurgent groups, including ISIS. The war formally ended in 2011 with the withdrawal of U.S. troops, but instability and violence have continued to affect Iraq.

support and training role. As highlighted in a research¹⁰⁶ by ISPI¹⁰⁷ Italy doesn't appear very often in propaganda materials produced by jihadists, outlining some sort of lack in interest towards the peninsula.

As mentioned before, Italy witnessed some minor cases in its territory. The first manifestation of Jihadist activity in the country can be found in the attack of the 5th of November in 2001. Few months later the 11th of September terrorist attack in United States. In Sicily right in front of the Temple of Concordia a gas canister exploded causing some damages to the ancient temple. Investigations led to the discovery of a paper containing prayers to Islam and asking for an immediate stop to the US bombings in Afghanistan.¹⁰⁸ The 14th of February 2002 in Agrigento, a similar paper was found by authorities close to a stolen car, that was set on fire in front of a penitentiary. Fortunately, the tank full of petrol didn't explode thanks to the quick intervention of firefighters.¹⁰⁹ Only two weeks later a similar episode occurred in Palermo in front of a courthouse, where, again, authorities were able to prevent the explosion.¹¹⁰ The 11th of May 2002, in Milan, a similar attack happened in a metro station. All these attacks, except the last one where minor poisoning was caused to some civilians, ended with no casualties. Authorities were able to identify the responsible for all the four attacks, an Italian named Domenico Quaranta, born in Sicily, living in economic hardship, who ended up in prison for committing different petty crimes. It's here that Domenico entered in contact with a radicalised interpretation of Islam and once free decided to organise these attacks on his own. In the next two years two similar incidents occurred in North Italy in the cities of Modena, December 2003, and Brescia, 28 March 2004. In Modena, we have the first suicide attack in Italy: a 33 years old man from Palestina, named Muhannad al-Khatib, filled its car with gas and petrol canisters and parked it in front of synagogue. He tried to set the car on fire from the outside but failed, and as the authorities arrived to the scene,

¹⁰⁶ Francesco Marone and Marco Olimpio, *"Conquisteremo la vostra Roma. I riferimenti all'Italia nella propaganda dell'IS"*, Milan, 2018, ISPI., p. 32

¹⁰⁷ ISPI, or the Italian Institute for International Political Studies, is a leading Italian think tank that focuses on international affairs. It conducts research, provides policy analysis, and promotes dialogue on global issues such as security, economics, and geopolitics. Established in 1934, ISPI organizes conferences, publishes reports, and engages with policymakers and the public to inform and shape foreign policy and international relations.

¹⁰⁸ The U.S. began bombing Afghanistan in 2001 in response to the September 11 terrorist attacks orchestrated by al-Qaeda, which was harbored by the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. The objective was to dismantle al-Qaeda and remove the Taliban from power to prevent Afghanistan from being a safe haven for terrorists. This marked the beginning of the U.S.-led Operation Enduring Freedom.

¹⁰⁹ Vidino, *"Home-Grown Jihadism"*, p.32

¹¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 35

he decided to set the car on fire from the inside blowing himself up. The explosion didn't cause any harm to people, a part from the attacker, or damage to the surroundings.¹¹¹ A similar episode was the one occurred in Brescia. Here, a 36 years old Moroccan man, named Moustafa Chaouki, blew himself up in his car in a McDonald's drive through.¹¹² Again, the attack didn't cause any injury or damage other than the attacker himself. Few days after the incident authorities received a letter from Moustafa claiming that he was the only organizer of the attack and that the aim was to revenge all the suffering of Arabs especially in Palestine and Iraq.¹¹³ The last three attacks share different features that are important to analyse. All the attacks were thought, organised and carried out by single actors. No other people were involved, and neither seemed to be anyone aware of the attacks before they happened. None of them was part of any radical group or association. As a result of this independence, in all the cases, the creation of the explosive devices were extremely poor and rudimental. Researchers have discussed over the possibility of not classifying these incidents as terrorism. It is true that, political and religious ideologies seemed to be the triggering factors if we consider the papers or letter that were found after the episodes.¹¹⁴ However, it's important to note that further investigations showed that the attackers suffered from different mental disorders, deep depression and suicidal thoughts. Even though it's difficult to establish the exact reasons for these attacks, we have to consider the possibility that it was used by the attackers to cloak their suicides in a political guise that could lend it a semblance of legitimacy, if we consider also that suicide is forbidden and seen as a grave sin by their cultures.

The following cases, instead, show very different situations if compared to the previous ones. We can see this turning point with the attempted suicide attack occurred in Milan the 12th of October 2009.¹¹⁵ A 35 years old Libyan man named Mohammed Game, forced his entry into Santa Barbara barrack and once confronted by a guard denoted an explosive device. Thanks to the malfunctioning of the bomb the explosion resulted to be

¹¹¹ Ibidem, p. 36

¹¹² Beccaro and Bonino, *op.cit.* p.5

¹¹³ In the early 2000s, Iraq was marked by the U.S.-led invasion in 2003, which aimed to overthrow Saddam Hussein's regime under the pretext of eliminating weapons of mass destruction. This invasion led to widespread conflict, the toppling of Hussein, and the beginning of a protracted insurgency and civil strife that destabilized the region.

In Palestine, the early 2000s were characterized by the Second Intifada, a period of intensified Israeli-Palestinian violence that began in 2000 and resulted in significant casualties and heightened tensions. This period saw increased military operations, suicide bombings, and a deepening of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, leading to severe humanitarian impacts on both sides.

¹¹⁴ Vidino, "Home grown Jihadism", pp. 36-37

¹¹⁵ Beccaro and Bonino, *op. cit.*, p.3

much lower than it could be. Game, lost his arm, and two guards were minorly injured. The attacker was not known by the authorities before the attack, and further investigations showed that he had become radicalised few months before the incident. Game had four children with an Italian wife, he arrived in Italy in 2003 and started a successful business. After few years, the business failed and Games started to do different odd jobs and moved into a small apartment without a bathroom. A statement from his nephew to the authorities informed how Games spent days on jihadist websites, in fact, inside the PC hundreds of files related to jihadist propaganda and suicide operations were found. Internet history also highlighted a personal aversion towards Italian foreign policy especially for the presence of the country in Afghanistan.¹¹⁶ The event, that it is thought to have worked as trigger, moving Game from a phase of gathering only theoretical information to a more operational phase, is the incident occurred the 20 September 2009. On that day the Italian politician Daniela Santanchè, with a group of supporters, started a protest in front of a Mosque, where the Milan Muslim community was celebrating the end of Ramadan. They were protesting about how Muslim women are treated, a violent confrontation exploded where the Italian politician suffered some minor injuries. Further investigations showed that Game was one of the Muslims that confronted her. The Game case differentiates from the previous attacks, since it was somewhat better organised also due to the fact that Mohammed was helped in the process of building the bomb by Libyan Mohamed Israfel and Egyptian Abdel Kol. All three of them used to frequent the same ICI, and the apartment of Kol' son was used to fabricate the exploding device. Even though the radicalization process did happen in Italy, Game move in the country when he was already an adult.¹¹⁷ However, authorities saw in this case the confirmation of fears highlighted by Italian's institutions on the arrival of home-grown jihadism: "*the sudden operational activation of individuals residing on national soil who, independent of any structured terrorist formation, elaborate their own hostile project, adhering to the call of global jihad*".¹¹⁸ Following the Game case, the 22nd of July in 2015 a 35 years old man, from Tunisia, named Lassad Briki, and a 27 years old man, from Pakistan, named

¹¹⁶ In 2009, Italy was in Afghanistan as part of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission. Italy's involvement aimed to help stabilize the country, support the Afghan government, and contribute to reconstruction efforts. Italian forces were engaged in training Afghan security forces, providing security, and aiding in development projects to foster peace and stability in the region following the ousting of the Taliban regime.

¹¹⁷ Vidino, "*Home grown Jihadism*", pp. 43-48

¹¹⁸ 2009 annual report to the Italian Parliament (*Relazione sulla politica dell'informazione per la sicurezza*), p. 19.

Muhammad Waqas, were arrested and charged with support to international terrorism. They were the author of a twitter account named “Islamic_State_in_Rome”.¹¹⁹ In the city of Venice, in March 2017, three men from Kosovo between 24 and 27, Fisnik Bekej, Dake Haziraj, Arjan Babaj and one minor, were arrested. Together, they created a cell in the city that has direct connections with ISIS and foreign fighters in the Middle East area. In fact, Fisnik Bekej, before coming to Italy, was a foreign fighter in Syria. They were working on an attack to execute during the international Venice Carnival.¹²⁰ Only two months later, on the 18th of May, in Milan Central Station a police officer and two soldiers were stabbed with a knife by a 21 years old, with an Italian mother and a Tunisian father, named Ismail Hosni. Fortunately, the stabbing caused no deadly injury. Investigations showed how no official links were present with ISIS and that the boy suffered some mental problems.¹²¹ The 29th of November 2018, a man from Palestine, named Amin Alhaj Ahmad was arrested by Italian authorities in Sardinia. The man was linked to ISIS through his cousin that was a member of the terrorist group. He was planning on poisoning different water potable facilities but was arrested by the authorities before he could act.¹²²

Furthermore, Italy has faced historical challenges, with various claims of involvement in attacks carried out by members of Al-Qaeda and other Islamist groups in different locations. The initial jihadist threat to Italy during the early 1990s was primarily associated with groups of first-generation migrants formally affiliated with the Al-Qaeda network, primarily operating in Northern Africa.¹²³ As already discussed at the beginning of this section, being a Christian country, hosting the Pope, makes Italy a highly probable target if we consider the World Islamic Front Statement by Osama bin Laden: “Jihad against Jews and crusaders”. It was after the terrorist attack in New York, in the car park of the World Trade center, in 1993, that caused several deaths, and the terrorists attack of 1998 in Tanzania and Kenya, that Italian authorities started and intensified different

¹¹⁹ Sergio Rame, “ISIS, presi jihadisti a Brescia: volevano colpire Milano e Roma”, *Il Giornale*, July 22, 2015, <http://www.ilgiornale.it/news/cronache/isis-presi-jihadisti-a-brescia-volevano-colpire-milano-e-roma> (Accessed 31/10/2023)

¹²⁰ Raffaello Binelli, “Progettavano l’attentato al carnevale di Venezia. L’inchiesta sui 4 kosovari arrestati nell’aprile 2017”, *Il Giornale*, February 21, 2017, http://www.ilgiornale.it/news/cronache/progettavano-attentato-carnevale-venezias-linchiesta-sui-4-1496873.html?mobile_detect=false (Accessed 31/10/2023)

¹²¹ Luigi Ferrarella, “Milano ferì due soldati e un agente in Stazione Centrale. Sette anni a Hosni”, *Il Corriere della Sera*, March 3, 2018, https://milano.corriere.it/notizie/cronaca/18_marzo_03/feri-due-soldati-agente-centralesette-anni-hosni-b92fe362-1eb4-11e8-8d1d-1a26021d6049.shtml (Accessed 31/10/23)

¹²² Nicola Pinna, “Sardegna, voleva avvelenare le acque. Arrestato palestinese affiliato all’ISIS”, *La Stampa*, November 29, 2018, <https://www.lastampa.it/cronaca/2018/11/29/news/sardegna-voleva-avvelenare-le-acque-arrestato-palestinese-affiliato-all-isis-1.34063601/> (Accessed 31/10/23)

¹²³ Beccaro and Bonino, *op. cit.* p.6

investigations in northern cities of the country. Intelligence gathered showed how the leaders of the ICI of Milan were keeping contacts with different networks of Islamist radicalism. Information were also gathered on possible terrorist attacks in US military basis located in the peninsula. For this reason, an important investigation led in 1995 to the arrest of 13 people from North African states charged with different crimes including illegal possession of weapons, forgery and conspiracy. On the same lead, following operations successfully dismantled organisations and networks like the Algerian Armed Islamic Group, Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group and Algerian-Tunisian Gruppo Salafita per la Predicazione ed il Combattimento in different northern Italian cities like Milan, Turin, Varese, Bologna and Cremona. The terrorist attack on the Twin Towers in 2001 inevitably led to a further increase in the investigations perpetrated by Italian authorities in all the country.¹²⁴

Turning now to attacks that were not conducted on Italy soil but nonetheless had strong links with the country. In the late 2010s, different networks and connections were found in the peninsula in relation to some terrible terrorist attacks perpetrated in important European cities. In 2016, in Berlin, the 19th of December a Tunisian man deliberately drove a truck into the Christmas market killing 12 people and almost 60 people were injured. The man named Anis Amri, was linked to Italy, in fact, he tried and failed to seek asylum in the country. When he arrived in Lampedusa¹²⁵ he claimed to be a minor and there he was sent to a temporary migration centre. Here, he was accused of taking part in a riot where a fire was started and different people were injured. For this reason, he was sent for four years in prison where authorities believe the radicalisation happened. In 2015, year before the attack, he was released.¹²⁶ Further investigations, after the attack, led to the discovery of a small supporting network that helped Amri conduct the attack. As a result of the investigations nine people were arrested four of which were Tunisian accused of planning terrorists attack in the country, many of them attended online courses to train for the attacks, and others for forging document and aiding and abetting illegal immigration. Another case connected to Italy is the terrorist attack in London of the 3rd

¹²⁴ Ibidem, pp. 6-7

¹²⁵ Lampedusa, an Italian island in the Mediterranean Sea, is a major entry point for migrants and refugees attempting to reach Europe from Africa and the Middle East. Due to its proximity to the North African coast, it has become a focal point in the European migration crisis, with thousands of people arriving on its shores each year, often in dangerous and overcrowded boats. The island has struggled with the humanitarian and logistical challenges of managing the influx, prompting calls for greater international assistance and comprehensive migration policies.

¹²⁶ Guido Olimpio, *Terrorismi. Atlante mondiale del terrore*. Milan, 2018, pp. 46–47.

of June in 2017. Three people drove a van into pedestrians walking on London Bridge. After crashing the van the three went to the nearest market and started stabbing people with knives. Eight people were killed and 48 remained injured. Yousef Zaghba was one of the terrorists, a Moroccan guy with Italian nationality since his Italian mother. Yousef was known by Italian authorities since a year before the attack he tried to take a flight for Istanbul to join ISIS. He was stopped at Bologna's airport where he was found in possession of different materials related to the terrorist organisation.¹²⁷ The 1st October 2017 we have another example in France. Ahmed lived for 6 years in Rome married to an Italian woman. In 2017 he stabbed and killed two women in Marseille near the central train station before being shot to death by a French soldier. His brother was arrested few days after in Italy as suspected, by French authorities, to have supported his brother in the organisation of the attack.¹²⁸ He had arrived in Italy in 2014 by boat. Even though he was ordered repatriation he managed to remain in the country. Finally, an important network was dismantled in the Italian soil in the cities of Bolzano and Merano. An investigation, led by Italian authorities in collaboration with Finland, London and Norway brought to the dismantle of the network Rawti Shax and to the arrest of seventeen people seven of which were in Italy.¹²⁹

In this part, my intention was to break down the idea that not a single jihadist terrorist attack was conducted in Italy. We have seen how, on one hand, the country experienced small scale attacks if compared to other European, but on the other hand the country hosted plenty of networks and had numerous links to terrorist activities. Data show how the phenomenon of homegrown jihadism is considerably low in Italy even though it's currently increasing, furthermore around 130 foreign fighters are believed to have passed through the country to reach areas under the control of ISIS or Al-Qaeda.¹³⁰

3.2.2. MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

The explanation of why Italy remained such an exceptionalist case, compared to its European neighbours, can be found in different aspects that differentiate the country from

¹²⁷ Ibidem, pp. 53-54

¹²⁸ Ibidem, pp. 55-56

¹²⁹ Lorenzo Vidino and Silvia Careni, "*Madrasse jihadiste in Italia: i precedenti*," March 27, 2018, ISPI, <https://www.ispionline.it/it/pubblicazione/madrasse-jihadiste-italia-i-precedenti-19983> (Accessed 30/10/2023).

¹³⁰ Beccaro and Bonino, op. cit., p. 7

all the others. Authors highlight how the main factors contributing to making Italy an exceptional case are twofold: first, the Italian legislation coupled with the institutional tools, which will be discussed further on, and secondly, the characteristics of the Muslim community in Italy.¹³¹ In Italy, there is no official census that tracks the religion practiced by individuals in the country. Consequently, obtaining an exact number of Muslims residing on the peninsula is particularly challenging. Studies in this regard typically examine the religious affiliation of migrants' home countries who now reside in Italy. While not extremely precise, this approach provides an estimate of the religious practices among migrants in Italy. As of 2020, there are approximately 2.7 million Muslims living in Italy, accounting for 4.4% of the total population of 59.4 million.¹³² Of these, just under half hold Italian citizenship. In terms of origin, the majority of the Italian Muslim community hails from the African continent, with fewer originating from Europe and Asia. It is, therefore, a highly heterogeneous community representing a myriad of different states, comprising only 29 percent of the foreign population residing on the peninsula. Regarding the distribution of the Muslim community within the country, the majority are located in central and northern Italy, indicative of the economic motivations driving their migratory patterns. The cities of Rome and Milan host the largest numbers of Muslims, while the Lombardy region dominates with approximately 360,000 Muslims, followed by Emilia-Romagna with half that number, and then by Veneto, Lazio, and Piedmont.¹³³

An important aspect to consider is that, to date, there exists no formal legal agreement between the Italian state and the Muslim community residing on the peninsula. Two reasons elucidate the absence of such an accord. Firstly, Islam is a pluralistic religion, making it impossible to designate a singular voice to speak on behalf of all adherents. The Muslim organizations present within the territory, and those with contacts with the Italian state, do not represent the entirety of the Muslim community. Often, these are organizations that have simply been adept at negotiating a prominent position within Italian society. Secondly, the Italian state has primarily recognized Muslim communities in terms of religious differences, while cultural disparities are still perceived as more problematic. For example, there are different regulatory aspects that still need to be

¹³¹ Ibidem, pp. 8-9

¹³² Openpolis. <https://www.openpolis.it/la-presenza-dei-musulmani-in-italia/> (Accessed 30/10/2023)

¹³³ Fondazione ISMU, "Immigrati e religioni in Italia: gli ortodossi superano i musulmani," Press Release, March 27, 2018, http://www.ismu.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Immigrati-e-religioni-in-Italia-2017_27.3.2018-1.pdf (30/10/2023)

addressed, such as the construction and management of mosques and cemeteries specific to Muslims. Moreover, the Italian Muslim community exhibits some differences from those in other European states. It is predominantly composed of a newer generation of individuals who began migrating in the late 20th century. Therefore, it is a younger community, often comprised of individuals who, once settled, sought family reunification through associations or organizations. Renzo Guolo's research¹³⁴ highlights that "Italian violent radicals" are not significantly different from their counterparts in other European states. Typically, they decide to join jihad between the ages of 18 and 30. Most are converts, lacking experience in religious militancy, with politics being the key factor triggering their violent radicalization. Within Islam, they find a doctrine that rejects political and cultural systems that have failed to adequately integrate them into the new society. However, as the author indicates, it's important to note that political factors are never the sole cause of radicalization, but rather, multiple factors underlie these changes. As for Foreign Fighters, it has been demonstrated that in Italy, they are present in much lower numbers compared to other major European states. Their profile mirrors what was previously mentioned: mostly first-generation migrants, with only a few being homegrown jihadists or converts, often originating from Africa, predominantly male, around their thirties, residing in the northern or central regions of the peninsula.

There are thus several reasons that could explain why Italy has remained a wholly exceptional case. Firstly, there is no particular resentment regarding Italian colonial history or an especially aggressive foreign policy, unlike in other countries, which could negatively impact the communities living in the country. Secondly, the Italian Muslim community is particularly dispersed in the cities where they reside; there are no marginalized neighbourhoods for Muslims as seen, for example, in other European countries.¹³⁵ In France, for instance, there are ghettos in cities like Paris where the Muslim community is mainly concentrated. Additionally, as we mentioned, Italy primarily hosts first-generation migrants, who are younger compared to those in other countries. It has been shown that radicalization processes are more likely to involve second-generation migrants, who are still relatively few in Italy. Unlike other countries, Italy also has a very small Muslim community in terms of population. Lastly, the heterogeneity of the Italian Muslim community also serves as a barrier to the

¹³⁴ Renzo Guolo, *"Jihadisti d'Italia. La radicalizzazione islamista nel nostro Paese"*, Milan, 2018, Guerini e Associati.

¹³⁵ Beccaro and Bonino, op. cit., pp.12-14

establishment of national ideologies influenced by radical Islam. It is thus in these terms that the characteristics and composition of Muslim communities in Italy may have played a significant role in countering the proliferation of jihadism and converting radical ideas into violent actions.¹³⁶

3.3. MAFIA-TERRORISM NEXUS

3.3.1 ORGANISED CRIME AND TERRORISM

Criminal activities, including organized crime, have long been utilized by terrorists for profit. Today, the extent of overlap between terrorism and organized crime remains a subject of debate and study. To analyse this overlap, one can examine the similarities and differences between the two, thereby gaining a better understanding of these realms and identifying potential areas for cooperation.¹³⁷ When it comes to the profiles of actors in both domains, it is believed that factors such as education, having a good salary, and being married protect individuals from potential involvement in criminal activities but not necessarily from the risk of being involved in terrorist activities.¹³⁸ On one hand, for instance, a good social position reduces the temptation to engage in criminal activities for economic gain. On the other hand, psychologists argue that ideological or political motives may override these factors.¹³⁹ Despite the most significant risk factor between the two appearing to be a young male, there is no single demographic profile for either, suggesting a considerable potential for overlap between the two types of actors.

One way to study this overlap is to examine the various criminal activities that terrorists engage in and see how they align or differ from those of organized crime: firstly, acts of terrorism involve the use of violence, ranging from simple homicide to various types of threats, and the use of weapons and explosives to harm multiple people or locations. These activities are not dissimilar from those committed by organized crime; however, organized crime tends to employ more targeted and covert violence, while terrorist attacks typically seek maximum publicity and dissemination.¹⁴⁰ Secondly, before the

¹³⁶ Ibidem, pp. 13-14

¹³⁷ Florence Gaub, Julia Lisiecka, "The crime-terrorism nexus", EUISS, 2017, p.12

¹³⁸ Mullins, Sam, and James K. Wither. "Terrorism and Organized Crime." *Connections*, vol. 15, no. 3, 2016, pp. 65–82. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26326452>.

¹³⁹ Andrew Silke, "Holy Warriors: Exploring the Psychological Processes of Jihadi Radicalization," *European Journal of Criminology* 5, no.1, 2008, pp. 99–123

¹⁴⁰ Louise I. Shelley and John T. Picarelli, "Methods Not Motives: Implications of the Convergence of International Organized Crime and Terrorism," *Police Practice and Research: An International Journal* 3, no. 4, 2002, pp. 305-318.

action phase, terrorists engage in a preparatory phase. During this stage, preparation often involves a series of illegal behaviours, such as the illegal purchase of weapons, vehicle theft, smuggling, etc. Here, the desire not to be discovered is similar to organized crime, which seeks to attract as little attention as possible to its activities.¹⁴¹ Moreover, both groups are in pursuit of money. Resources, especially financial ones, are crucial for terrorist organizations in particular, as they underpin every aspect of their operations. From recruiting and training members to planning and executing attacks, sustaining logistics, and spreading propaganda, money fuels their capabilities and influence. Without a steady flow of funds, their operational reach and impact are significantly diminished, highlighting the critical need to disrupt these financial networks to combat terrorism effectively. The primary and most lucrative criminal activity is usually drug trafficking, although it's only one of the many illicit activities used primarily by terrorists to finance their attacks.¹⁴² The difference lies more in how the money is ultimately spent, and often in the ability of organized crime to launder dirty money through legitimate activities. The spread of terrorist activities has led different states to adapt to the phenomenon to counter it effectively. Despite the majority of criminal activities in which terrorists are involved being already covered by ordinary legislation, ad hoc laws have been constructed to better counter the phenomenon. These laws often allow for the imposition of much harsher penalties on actors involved in terrorist activities.¹⁴³ Terrorists often seek to gain a form of popularity and legitimacy through their actions. Similarly, organized crime, such as the mafia, asserts "control" over areas, which can sometimes evolve into governance phenomena, as seen with the Islamic State in Syria.¹⁴⁴ Another difference is that terrorists are often individual actors who find themselves having to operate alone in a series of risky criminal activities. They lack a more structured support network, which often compromises their security and makes them more vulnerable to routine law enforcement checks, such as the use of stolen vans.¹⁴⁵ Finally, studies have shown that most terrorists are often former prisoners or individuals radicalized and recruited in prisons where they are incarcerated for other crimes. This makes ordinary criminals more vulnerable to recruitment by terrorists, as they are often

¹⁴¹ Mullins, *Terrorism and organised crime*, p. 67

¹⁴² *Ibidem*, p.67

¹⁴³ Rachel Monaghan, "'An Imperfect Peace': Paramilitary 'Punishments' in Northern Ireland," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 16, no. 3 (2004): 439-61.

¹⁴⁴ Hollianne Elizabeth Marshall, "*Defended Neighborhoods and Organized Crime: Does Organized Crime Lower Street Crime?*", MA's Thesis, University of Central Florida, 2009.

¹⁴⁵ Mullins, *Terrorism and organised crime*, p. 68

social outcasts with grievances against the state.¹⁴⁶ ISIS, recognizing this phenomenon, has successfully utilized redemption narratives specifically crafted to recruit those with criminal pasts. Additionally, it is useful for terrorists to "hire" actors with criminal backgrounds because they often already possess certain skills useful for terrorist activities.¹⁴⁷ Naturally, this does not imply that all terrorists are former criminals; indeed, ordinary individuals without criminal backgrounds, and therefore perhaps unknown to law enforcement, are often considered even more valuable.

Terrorist groups have adopted various hierarchical structures, mirroring traditional military organizations. Indeed, the majority of terrorist groups and criminal organizations feature a hierarchical structure with leaders at the top. More recently, partially in response to anti-terrorism tactics and increasingly effective laws, these structures have become more fluid, allowing greater autonomy for operatives at the operational levels. This adaptation not only makes them more resilient in their struggle against armed forces but also enhances their potential for collaboration among themselves.¹⁴⁸

Both in method and structure, as well as in the motives guiding the actions of terrorist groups and organized crime, potential overlaps exist. Firstly, the decision to join these groups often stems from social motives, ranging from simple camaraderie to a sense of belonging to a particular social status.¹⁴⁹ While there are similarities in the reasons driving the actions of both groups in the short term, from petty crimes to drug trafficking or more elaborate robberies, it is in the long term that the difference lies. Terrorist action aims to commit well-structured attacks that can attract significant public attention, perhaps ultimately leading to social or political change.¹⁵⁰ Often, these actions are also driven by the actors' belief that they are acting for a specific social group and that through their actions, they can protect or even liberate this group, thus becoming martyrs themselves. On the other hand, the actions of organized crime seem to possess more of a

¹⁴⁶ Gaub, op. cit. p. 14

¹⁴⁷ Rajan Basra, Peter Neumann, and Claudia Brunner, *Criminal Past, Terrorist Future: European Jihadists and the New Crime-Terror Nexus*, London, International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation, 2016.

¹⁴⁸ John Picarelli, "Osama bin Corleone? Vito the Jackal? Framing Threat Convergence through an Examination of Transnational Organized Crime and International Terrorism", *Terrorism and Political Violence* 24, no.2, 2012, pp. 180-198

¹⁴⁹ Sam Mullins, "Parallels Between Crime and Terrorism: A Social-Psychological Perspective," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 32, no. 9, 2009, pp. 811–30.

¹⁵⁰ Johnson, Philip Luke. "The Crime and State Terrorism Nexus: How Organized Crime Appropriates Counterinsurgency Violence." *Perspectives on Terrorism*, vol. 13, no. 6, 2019, pp. 16–26. JSTOR, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26853738>

selfish trait, aimed simply at gaining economic or power advantages for oneself or the organization. There is no interest in making the action public; in fact, quite the opposite if it further benefits profit.¹⁵¹ The most prominent assassinations carried out by the Italian mafia against politicians did not have an ideological purpose in themselves. In the infamous Capaci massacre, where the renowned judge Paolo Borsellino lost his life, it represents more of an assassination aimed at defending Cosa Nostra and, above all, attempting to deter others from combating the mafia organization. It is therefore in the ultimate ideological goal that the action of terrorism differs from that of organized crime.

3.3.2. ISIS AND ITALIAN MAFIA

The Mediterranean Sea is regarded as a strategic location that potentially connects the Italian mafia and Islamic terrorists, given their historical influence over territories bordering it. The extent of their interaction remains a subject of ongoing research, with no definitive conclusions reached thus far. It appears that the mafia capitalized on the severe migration crisis in Italy and ensuing turmoil to strengthen ties with the Islamic State.¹⁵² Italian authorities uncovered that major oil refineries from Puglia to Venice were processing quantities of oil exceeding permitted limits. Suspicions arose that ISIS-affiliated organizations facilitated smuggling excess oil from countries like Libya and Syria.¹⁵³ The hypothesis suggested that the surplus oil originated from refineries under terrorist control, posing challenges for enforcement. The surge in migrant influx to Europe allows the mafia to expand its network further in the Mediterranean while governments grapple with the crisis. Not only are funds stolen from local reception centers, but smuggling of various goods from Africa also escalates. However, combating oil smuggling proves challenging for Italian authorities as they struggle to link the oil in excess with complete certainty to the terrorist group.¹⁵⁴ As we know, ISIS faced several challenges in maintaining its physical territory, and in the end lost the control over it.

¹⁵¹ Mullins, *Terrorism and organised crime*, p. 70

¹⁵² Alexander Ball, "Keep Your Friends Close, but Your Enemies Closer: The Italian Mafia's Relationship with ISIS and the Implications for the European Union's Defense Strategies," *Suffolk Transnational Law Review* 42, no. 1, Winter 2019, pp. 127-168

¹⁵³ Italy Suspects the Mafia and ISIS Teamed Up to Smuggle Oil to Europe, ORGANIZED CRIME AND CORRUPTION REPORTING PROJECT, Aug. 2, 2017, <https://www.occrp.org/en/daily/6798-italy-suspects-the-mafia-and-isis-teamed-up-to-smuggleoil-to-europe>

¹⁵⁴ Fabio Tonacci, Giuliano Foschini, https://www.repubblica.it/cronaca/2017/07/31/news/il_petrolio_dell_isis_finisce_in_italia_la_guardia_di_finanza_indaga_sulle_navi_fantasma_-172011799/ LaRepubblica, 31/07/2017.

Therefore, it heavily focused on expanding its presence internationally through teachings, practices, and involvement in the black market.¹⁵⁵ The organization sought additional sources of revenue beyond oil smuggling, thus venturing into the drug trafficking market.¹⁵⁶ This led to the development of new smuggling routes from North Africa to West Asia, passing through Sicily and territories under the control of Cosa Nostra.¹⁵⁷ The drugs transported along these routes ultimately ended up in the European market. The nature of the relationship between the mafia and ISIS in drug smuggling remains unclear: it could have been a structured partnership or something less organized. However, these collaborations extended beyond oil and drug smuggling. Italian criminal organizations were accused as potential suppliers of weapons to the Islamic State.¹⁵⁸ Investigations were initiated to verify suspicions that mafia groups might be supplying arms and other military equipment to ISIS affiliates. Some argue that the mafia is not inclined to allow the strengthening of other criminal organizations within the country.¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, the potential escalation of relations between the two organizations justifies preventive research to counteract this risky phenomenon. Both the Italian Mafia and ISIS differ significantly in their overall objectives, but both recognize the value of purely transactional relationships that can ultimately lead to benefits. Both organizations employ terror to exploit problematic situations or events through criminal activities such as illegal trafficking and extortion. Despite ISIS ultimately losing control of its territory, the terrorist organization has found ways to expand its global footprint. The confrontation with the U.S.-led coalition inevitably led to the loss of all the territories ISIS had captured, that had reached its peak expansion in 2014. The pivotal defeat in Raqqa in 2017 marked a significant victory for the coalition, both physically and symbolically. However, despite territorial losses, ISIS maintained a well-organized network, especially in Europe, where extremists converted to the cause and carried out attacks on its behalf.¹⁶⁰ Europe has remained a prime target for the organization, particularly Rome, symbolically seen as the capital of Europe and the seat of the Vatican and the Pope. Italy

¹⁵⁵ Ball, op. cit. p.141

¹⁵⁶ Colin P. Clarke, *"ISIS is So Desperate its Turning to the Drug Trade"*, July 25, 2017, <https://www.rand.org/pubs/commentary/2017/07/isis-is-so-desperate-its-turning-to-the-drug-trade.html>

¹⁵⁷ Ball, op. cit. p.142

¹⁵⁸ Francesco Curradori, *"L'ISIS vende opere d'arte antica alla 'ndrangheta in cambio di armi"*, <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/cronache/lisis-vende-opere-darte-antica-ndrangheta-cambio-armi-1319763.html> | IlGiornale, 16 October 2016

¹⁵⁹ Ball, op. cit. p.149

¹⁶⁰ Thomas Hegghammer, *"The Future of Jihadism in Europe: A Pessimistic View"*, *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 2016., pp. 156-170

has always been a sensitive target for ISIS, prompting significant precautions from law enforcement, especially around high-risk symbolic sites.¹⁶¹ Even if ISIS perpetrated relentless attacks in Europe and America, it is believed that the Mafia continued to provide support to the organization, particularly in the illegal movement of people across Europe.¹⁶² Some mafia organizations were accused of offering hospitality to terrorists, allowing them to travel across the peninsula without hindrance, facilitating their movement before significant terrorist attacks. This support extended beyond mere logistics, including the provision of weapons and false documents.¹⁶³ Although this relationship raises concerns for Italian authorities, experts also sustain that it's possible that the Mafia has been monitoring ISIS actions and may be inclined to defend its territory.¹⁶⁴ As we've observed, Italy and particularly southern Italy have experienced significantly fewer terrorist attacks compared to other parts of Europe. Therefore, it cannot be completely ruled out that in addition to the factors already mentioned and those we will explore later, the Italian Mafia may have played a sort of deterrent role. If, all the suspects were correct it could possibly be said that ISIS and the Mafia have formed a pragmatic alliance based on mutual benefits arising from their geographic proximity and engagement in criminal activities. This relationship might since so far seem relatively beneficial for both parties. The Mafia capitalizes on ISIS's ambition to conquer by providing weapons and documents in exchange for money. Additionally, there are opportunities for smuggling goods like oil and drugs, offering new avenues for profit. The ideological and value differences between the two organizations might have not hindered this unique collaboration. However, the cooperation on certain fronts does not imply a stable and lasting relationship. The two groups have vastly different objectives: the Mafia aims primarily at controlling its territory, particularly in southern Italy, where it has established deep roots and maintains a strong, difficult-to-eradicate grip. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that the Mafia would be reluctant to cede any part of this control to an external actor. What is currently seen as a potential alliance could easily turn into rivalry, potentially leading to conflict. Despite ISIS being largely defeated in territorial terms, there remain active fighters conducting sporadic attacks and operating in clandestine cells in Iraq, Syria and Africa. Furthermore, ISIS affiliates with militant

¹⁶¹ Beccaro and Bonino, op. cit., pp. 1-2

¹⁶² Barbie Latza Nadeau, "Did Paris Terrorist Move Freely Between Italy and Greece?", Daily Beast, 23 November, 2015, <https://www.thedailybeast.com/did-paris-terroristmove-freely-between-italy-and-greece>

¹⁶³ Ball, op. cit. p.150-151

¹⁶⁴ Ibidem, p.151

groups in other regions, such as West Africa and Afghanistan, continue to perpetrate acts of terrorism. Therefore, while ISIS's territorial caliphate has been dismantled, the organization has not been completely eradicated and continues to pose a global security threat. Similarly, the Mafia, despite significant progress and numerous victories against it, is extremely difficult, if not almost impossible, to fully eradicate due to its deep-seated roots worldwide.

Organized crime and jihadist terrorism are two significant threats that have influenced Italy's security landscape. While they operate under different ideologies, their methods, organizational structures, and motives exhibit notable overlaps, particularly in the ways they intersect and support each other. While the elements discussed so far have been largely hypothetical—since the extent of their interaction remains a subject of ongoing research with no definitive conclusions reached thus far, and some aspects are treated as confidential by law enforcement—there are still some objective characteristics of the two organizations that can be analysed. Therefore, we'll now delve into their methods of operation, financial networks, recruitment strategies, and case studies to see similarities and differences.

Ideologies

The Italian Mafia, including organizations such as the Cosa Nostra, 'Ndrangheta, and Camorra, operates primarily on principles of power, profit, and control. Their ideology is rooted in a code of honor and secrecy known as "Omertà," which binds members to the organization and creates a strong sense of loyalty and family.¹⁶⁵ The Mafia's primary objective is the accumulation of wealth and influence through illegal activities like drug trafficking, extortion, and money laundering. Despite their criminal nature, these organizations often position themselves as protectors of their local communities, providing a form of extralegal governance that can garner local support. In contrast, Jihadist terrorism, epitomized by groups such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS¹⁶⁶, is driven by a

¹⁶⁵ Lupo, "*La Mafia*", p. 12

¹⁶⁶ While ISIS and Al Qaeda share fundamental ideological principles rooted in radical Sunni Islamism, they differ significantly in certain aspects of their ideology and approach. ISIS primarily aims to establish a caliphate immediately through territorial conquest. They are committed to creating a state governed by a strict and literal interpretation of Sharia law, emphasizing swift and brutal actions to achieve their

radical interpretation of Islam. Their ideology is anchored in the belief that they are engaged in a holy war (jihad) to defend and expand the Islamic faith.¹⁶⁷ These groups seek to establish a caliphate governed by Sharia law, which they view as the only legitimate form of governance. This ideology is often apocalyptic, emphasizing martyrdom and the belief that dying in the service of jihad guarantees eternal paradise. Their goals are both local and global, aiming to overthrow existing governments in Muslim-majority countries and launch attacks against Western nations, whom they perceive as oppressors of Islam.

Methods of Operation

Both organized crime groups and jihadist terrorists use violence and intimidation as primary tools to achieve their objectives. The methods employed by the Italian Mafia are varied and strategic. They utilize violence and intimidation to enforce their will, eliminate rivals, and intimidate those who might oppose them. Corruption and bribery are also key tactics, allowing them to infiltrate political and economic systems. By investing in legitimate businesses, the Mafia launders money and gains economic influence.¹⁶⁸ Extortion and protection rackets are common, with businesses paying for "protection" to avoid harm. Additionally, drug trafficking is a major source of income, with the Mafia controlling significant portions of the drug trade in Europe and beyond. Jihadist terrorists, on the other hand, use more overtly violent and fear-inducing methods. Suicide bombings are designed to cause maximum casualties and attract media attention. In conflict zones, jihadist groups engage in guerrilla tactics against military and civilian targets.¹⁶⁹ They also employ sophisticated online propaganda to spread their ideology, recruit members, and intimidate opponents. Kidnappings and hostage-taking are used both for ransom and as a means to exert political pressure. Increasingly, jihadist groups are using cyberterrorism to disrupt infrastructure and disseminate their message. The Mafia's deep-rooted logistical networks facilitate these operations, which can be

objectives. In contrast, Al-Qaeda's focus is on a long-term global jihad. They aim to fight against what they consider corrupt regimes in the Muslim world and their Western allies, prioritizing the defeat of the "far enemy" (the West) as a precursor to establishing a caliphate. Heggammer, *Global Jihadism*.

¹⁶⁷ Heggammer, *Global Jihadism*, pp. 12-14

¹⁶⁸ Diego Gambetta, *La mafia Siciliana. Un'industria della protezione privata*, Einaudi, Torino, 1992, pp.127-145

¹⁶⁹ Thomas Heggammer, *Should I Stay or Should I Go? Explaining Variation in Western Jihadists' Choice between Domestic and Foreign Fighting*, Cambridge University Press, 2013., pp.1-2

leveraged by jihadist terrorists for similar purposes. The convergence of these activities might lead to collaborative efforts, where organized crime groups provide the necessary infrastructure for terrorist operations.

Organisation

Organizationally, the Italian Mafia is highly hierarchical, resembling a traditional family structure. At the top is the boss, followed by underbosses, caporegimes (lieutenants), and soldiers. Associates, who are not fully initiated members, support these ranks. Becoming a full member involves a secretive initiation ceremony, symbolizing commitment and loyalty.¹⁷⁰ Each Mafia family controls specific territories and operates with a level of autonomy, but they cooperate for mutual benefit. Strict codes of conduct govern behaviour, with severe punishments for violations. Jihadist organizations vary in structure but share common organizational traits. Many groups operate in small, autonomous cells, making it difficult for authorities to dismantle the entire network. While there is often a central leadership, many operations are carried out independently by local cells. Despite this decentralization, a shared ideology binds members together.¹⁷¹ These groups often operate across borders, coordinating with affiliated organizations in different countries.

Motives

The motives driving these entities are also distinct. The primary motive of the Mafia is economic gain, including wealth accumulation through illegal activities, power and influence by controlling territories and influencing political and economic systems, and community control by positioning themselves as protectors and enforcers in their communities.¹⁷² In contrast, Jihadist motives are largely ideological. They aim to establish a caliphate governed by Sharia law, defend Islam from Western and secular influences, and achieve spiritual rewards through martyrdom.¹⁷³

¹⁷⁰ Lupo, *“La Mafia”*, pp. 42-43

¹⁷¹ Heggammer, *“Global Jihadism”*, pp. 16-17

¹⁷² Lupo, *“Storia della mafia”*, p.23

¹⁷³ Marone, *“Conquisteremo la vostra Roma”*, pp. 2-3

Financial networks

Financial networks for both entities are sophisticated and diverse. The Mafia engages in money laundering through legitimate businesses and offshore accounts. Drug trafficking provides significant revenue, while extortion and protection rackets contribute to their income. Corruption and bribery are also used to secure financial and political leverage.¹⁷⁴ Jihadist groups, meanwhile, receive funding from state sponsorship, charitable donations, and criminal activities such as smuggling and kidnapping for ransom. They also use crowdfunding and online donations to solicit funds from supporters worldwide and control resources like oil fields or taxation in the areas they dominate.¹⁷⁵ Terrorist organizations may pay organized crime groups for services like smuggling and money laundering, forming strategic alliances that benefit both parties. For example, the Mafia can offer logistical support and local knowledge, while terrorist groups can provide protection and create strategic diversions that benefit organized crime activities.

Recruitment strategies

Recruitment strategies for the Mafia involve family connections, community ties, intimidation and coercion, and the promise of wealth and power. Many members are born into Mafia families or are recruited from local communities seeking power, protection, or economic opportunity. Recruitment strategies for the Mafia involve family connections, community ties, intimidation and coercion, and the promise of wealth and power.¹⁷⁶ Many members are born into Mafia families or are recruited from local communities seeking power, protection, or economic opportunity. Jihadist groups use a mix of traditional and modern recruitment strategies, including ideological indoctrination, online propaganda, personal networks, exploiting socio-economic grievances, and providing military and ideological training in conflict zones.¹⁷⁷ There are instances where individuals involved in organized crime are radicalized and recruited into terrorist activities. This convergence creates a complex dynamic, as individuals may participate in both criminal and terrorist activities, driven by a mix of economic incentives and ideological commitment.

¹⁷⁴ Gambetta, "*La mafia siciliana*", p.130

¹⁷⁵ Heggammer, "*Global Jihadism*", p.21

¹⁷⁶ Gratteri, "*Storia segreta*", p. 62

¹⁷⁷ Heggammer, "*Global Jihadism*", p. 14

The intersection of organized crime and jihadist terrorism in Italy presents a multifaceted threat that requires a nuanced understanding and coordinated response. Both entities share similarities in their methods of operation, financial networks, and recruitment strategies, that might face each other's activities. Addressing this convergence necessitates a comprehensive strategy that targets the economic, social, and ideological roots of both organized crime and terrorism, enhancing cooperation between law enforcement and intelligence agencies to dismantle their networks and disrupt their operations.

3.4. LAW ENFORCEMENT

Awareness of the importance of coordinating the fight against terrorism and organized crime is on the rise. One suggested approach is to make the interaction between these two groups less lucrative and riskier for the actors involved.¹⁷⁸ However, these goals cannot be achieved if the agencies responsible for combating terrorism and organized crime are silenced both nationally and internationally. Effective strategies require the exchange of information between various agencies and departments, adequate resources, and appropriate legislative tools. Just as organized crime and terrorists sometimes collaborate, law enforcement and counter-terrorism forces should do the same. Crimes committed by both groups provide significant opportunities for collaboration between authorities. Unfortunately, this does not always happen, and often, different departments compete for the same resources. On one hand, it is understandable since the fight against terrorism has always been considered a high priority. On the other hand, this can lead to missed opportunities to combat terrorists or their organizations that are somehow involved with organized crime. Additionally, criminal and terrorist activities are often transnational, yet counter-terrorism and law enforcement responses tend to remain largely national, hindered by a shared reluctance to share security information, especially classified information, beyond national borders.¹⁷⁹ There is also a disparity at the practical level, where national police forces are often less equipped compared to counter-

¹⁷⁸ Mullins, *Terrorism and organised crime*, p. 78

¹⁷⁹ Mara Pfneisl, et al., "*A Dangerous Nexus: Crime, Conflict, and Terrorism in Failing States*", International Peace Institute, 2013, <http://www.ipinst.org/2013/11/a-dangerous-nexus-crime-conflict-and-terrorism-in-failing-states> (Accessed 20/05/2024)

terrorism units, which have better tools and more funds.¹⁸⁰ Therefore, it could be beneficial to improve cooperation in this area both nationally and internationally.¹⁸¹ Proposals for global agencies have already been advanced, such as at the European level¹⁸², with initiatives like the establishment of the EU Counterterrorism Coordinator and the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol). These entities aim to enhance coordination among member states, facilitate the exchange of information, and support joint operations. Europol, in particular, plays a crucial role in supporting national law enforcement agencies by providing intelligence and operational assistance in tackling serious international crime and terrorism. Additionally, the European Arrest Warrant (EAW) simplifies the extradition process between member states, ensuring that criminals and terrorists can be swiftly brought to justice across borders. Despite difficulties, the 2001 terrorist attacks have certainly helped in this regard, leading to closer collaboration between agencies of different countries and cooperation between law enforcement and counter-terrorism forces.¹⁸³ At the international level, important agencies have been created, such as the UN's UNODC, which provides support in areas such as anti-terrorism legislation and the fight against illicit trafficking. In 2002, Interpol created a task force specifically to address the links between crime and terrorism, providing data to countries that can help defeat criminal organizations that support terrorist activities. However, these agencies still rely on information provided by individual states, which can make their work challenging when the necessary information is not always adequately shared.¹⁸⁴

Cooperation in the fight against crime and terrorism is still developing. It is crucial for the international community to recognize the importance of comprehensive strategies and greater cooperation and information sharing between governments. This can aid in this struggle, which not only affects the domestic level but primarily has transnational implications.

¹⁸⁰ Mullins, *Terrorism and organised crime*, p. 79

¹⁸¹ Colin Clarke, "Drugs & Thugs: Funding Terrorism through Narcotics Trafficking", *Journal of Strategic Security*, n.3, 2016, pp. 1–15.

¹⁸² Judy Dempsey, "Time for an EU Counterterrorism Agency," *Carnegie Europe*, April 21, 2016, (Accessed 20/05/2023) <https://carnegieendowment.org/europe/strategic-europe/2016/04/time-for-an-eu-counterterrorism-agency?lang=en¢er=europe>

¹⁸³ Mullins, *Terrorism and organised crime*, p. 80

¹⁸⁴ *Ibidem*, p.80

3.4.1. THE ITALIAN SITUATION

In Italy, the situation is particularly complex due to the longstanding presence of powerful organized crime groups like the 'Ndrangheta, Cosa Nostra, and the Camorra, alongside emerging threats from terrorism. The Italian government has recognized the intertwined nature of these threats and has implemented a series of legislative measures to address them.

Italy's counter-terrorism legislation is robust and continually evolving to respond to new threats. This includes extensive surveillance powers, stringent anti-terrorism laws, and coordinated efforts between various law enforcement agencies and the judiciary. The Italian approach emphasizes both preventive and punitive measures, aiming to disrupt potential terrorist activities before they can manifest.¹⁸⁵ Similarly, Italy has a comprehensive framework for combating organized crime. The anti-mafia legislation includes measures such as the confiscation of assets, witness protection programs, and specialized anti-mafia prosecutors. These laws are designed to dismantle the financial and operational structures of mafia organizations, making it more difficult for them to operate.¹⁸⁶ The Italian experience shows the importance of a multifaceted approach that combines rigorous legal frameworks with strong institutional cooperation. The successes and ongoing challenges in Italy provide valuable insights into how other countries might enhance their own efforts against organized crime and terrorism.

In the following sections, I will delve deeper into Italy's counter-terrorism legislation and anti-mafia laws, examining their development, implementation, and impact. This exploration will highlight how Italy's strategies can inform broader international efforts to create a more coordinated and effective response to these pervasive threats.

3.4.2. ANTITERRORISM LEGISLATION

First and foremost, it is important to clarify that the Italian legislative instruments used to combat terrorism are not considered the sole reason for preventing major terrorist attacks in the country. For instance, if we take other European countries like France as a reference, which has been a victim of severe jihadist terrorist attacks, it is important to

¹⁸⁵ Beccaro and Bonino, op. cit., pp.7-10

¹⁸⁶ Codice Antimafia, Altalex, <https://www.altalex.com/documents/codici-altalex/2014/07/24/codice-antimafia-edizione-giugno-2014> (Accessed 20/05/2024)

note that they also have very effective anti-terrorism legislation. Despite this, Italian legislation, its instruments, the experience of law enforcement, along with other elements previously discussed, such as the uniqueness of the Muslim communities present in Italy, have certainly played a fundamental role in preventing major jihadist interventions on the peninsula.

In this regard, it is essential to remember that throughout the country's history, Italy has long fought both international and domestic terrorism. From the 1960s to the late 1980s, Italy experienced what are now known as the "Years of Lead,"¹⁸⁷ a period characterized by numerous domestic terrorist attacks carried out by the Red Brigades, a far-left terrorist organization, as well as far-right organizations.¹⁸⁸ These years witnessed numerous incidents, ranging from murders to kidnappings. Regarding international terrorism, Italy suffered significant attacks during the 1970s and 1980s.¹⁸⁹ Notably, the attack at Fiumicino Airport in Rome on December 17, 1973, which killed 34 people, and the attack on December 27, 1985, where seven Arabs simultaneously attacked the airports of Vienna and Rome, killing 19 civilians.

Some experts argue that this experience in the 1990s helped Italy face the new jihadist terrorism in the 2000s. Although other European countries like France and Germany have also been victims of domestic terrorist attacks with political motives, these, compared to Italy's, occurred over much shorter periods than the two decades of the Years of Lead.¹⁹⁰ Additionally, if we consider the experience of Italian forces in combating the mafia phenomenon for decades, this certainly allowed Italian authorities to develop a highly effective control and information-gathering structure.¹⁹¹ As indicated by Carlo De Stefano¹⁹² this extensive experience has undoubtedly enabled Italy to promptly adapt its legislation to the new type of jihadist terrorism. Experts identify two key outcomes from this experience that they believe have effectively contributed to the fight against

¹⁸⁷ Alessandro Orsini, *Anatomy of the Red Brigades: The Religious Mind-set of Modern Terrorists*, Ithaca, New York, Cornell University Press, 2011., p. 10

¹⁸⁸ Ibidem, p. 16

¹⁸⁹ Donatella Della Porta, *Institutional Responses to Terrorism: The Italian Case*, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, n. 4, 1992, pp. 151–170.

¹⁹⁰ Robin Simcox, "Is Italy Immune from Terrorism?," *Foreign Policy*, August 18, 2019, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/07/18/is-italy-immune-from-terrorism> (Accessed 13/11/2019)

¹⁹¹ Carlo De Stefano, et. al., *Terrorismo, criminalità e contrabbando. Gli affari dei jihadisti tra Medio Oriente, Africa ed Europa*, Rubbettino, 2019, p. 454

¹⁹² Carlo de Stefano was former prefect of Rome, chief of CASA from 2003 to 2009 and Deputy Head of Fondazione ICSA

terrorism.¹⁹³ The first is certainly the anti-terrorism legislation. Already used in the 1990s to dismantle groups with jihadist links, leading to several arrests in the territory, the real turning point came with the terrorist attacks of 2011, which led to the development of crucial laws such as Law 438 of December 2001, which expanded the already existing Article 270 bis of the Penal Code. The law stipulates that anyone found guilty of supporting, financing, or supervising terrorist groups can be sentenced to up to 15 years in prison. Moreover, the article also considers terrorism to include targeting objectives outside of Italy, international organizations, or international bodies.¹⁹⁴ This law helped improve specific preventive activities at the national level, aimed at identifying and monitoring individuals suspected of being part of jihadist groups, and also taking advantage of the law's provision for preventive wiretapping, already in use for combating organized crime, even applicable to individuals suspected of having connections with terrorist organizations.¹⁹⁵ Over the years, Italian legislation has evolved to better adapt to the new type of terrorism. Another significant step in this evolution was Law 155/2005, "Urgent Measures to Combat International Terrorism."¹⁹⁶ This law brought three major improvements to the fight against terrorism in Italy. Firstly, it allows for the prosecution of anyone providing logistical support or any other type of support to terrorist groups or operations. Secondly, the law recognizes terrorism-related crimes, such as training with the intent to carry out terrorist attacks, and punishes anyone providing such training, weapons, or explosives used for terrorist attacks. Finally, it allows law enforcement to investigate and interrogate detainees to obtain intelligence to prevent terrorism-related operations. According to De Stefano, the added value of this law is that it targets proselytism, a crucial step in the radicalization process.¹⁹⁷ This allows law enforcement to intervene early in this process, preventively, and punish potentially dangerous behaviours. Another important law from 2005 was Law 144, which grants the Minister of the Interior the power to expel anyone from the country who is considered a threat to national security. Therefore, Italian forces can not only conduct surveillance operations, preventive checks, and expulsions of suspicious foreigners, but actual deportation has become a key tool in the fight against terrorism. Since 2015, Italy

¹⁹³ Beccaro and Bonino, op. cit., p. 9

¹⁹⁴ Law 438, 15/12/2001, <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2001/12/18/001G0496/sg>

¹⁹⁵ Beccaro and Bonino, op. cit., p. 9

¹⁹⁶ Law 155/2005,

https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/atto/serie_generale/caricaDettaglioAtto/originario?atto.dataPubblicazioneGazzetta=2005-08-01&atto.codiceRedazionale=005G0179&elenco30giorni=false

¹⁹⁷ Beccaro and Bonino, op. cit., p. 10

has expelled 384 people.¹⁹⁸ This deportation tool is thus a key element in the fight against terrorism. If we take other European countries as an example, which have "homegrown jihadists" in their territories, in Italy, most of these individuals, not possessing Italian citizenship, make the expulsion process extremely simple and effective. The same law also provides for preventive wiretapping in the context of anti-terrorism investigations. More recently, in 2018, with the Security Decree and Article 17, regulations were introduced for renting cars and vans to dissuade their use in attacks, as happened in France in Nice.¹⁹⁹

The second consequence of Italy's extensive experience in counter-terrorism is the creation of the CASA (Comitato di Analisi Strategica Antiterrorismo in English Strategic Analysis Committee for Antiterrorism). This unique aspect of Italy's anti-terrorism strategy consists of a common platform where Italian security forces can share information on terrorist groups, intelligence, and data on individuals and potential threats. CASA was established by the Ministry of the Interior following the suicide attack on the military police station in Nasiriyah, Iraq, on November 12, 2003, which killed 18 Italian agents and 10 civilians. The committee was officially formed on May 6, 2004, through a ministerial decree. The committee includes the State Police, Carabinieri, delegates from the security services, members of the External Information and Security Agency, and the Guardia di Finanza. Shortly after, delegates from the Penitentiary Police were also added. The aim of CASA is to centralize information and intelligence from various security forces to enhance the prevention of terrorist activities and coordinate operations against suspected terrorist groups or individuals.²⁰⁰ This entity is effective not only for its coordination activities but also for preventing unnecessary delays among the various security forces, making the anti-terrorism mission much more efficient. CASA also has the authority to manage individuals considered suspicious who travel both within the country and abroad.²⁰¹ As we have seen, terrorism is a phenomenon that easily connects with criminal activities. Although the two phenomena are different, there are areas where their activities can overlap. Organizations like ISIS use illegal trafficking to finance their operations. For this reason, CASA works closely with the Financial Security

¹⁹⁸ Ibidem, p. 10

¹⁹⁹ Ibidem, p.10

²⁰⁰ Silvia D'Amato, *Cultures of counterterrorism. French and Italian response to terrorism after 9/11*, Routledge, 2019, p. 204

²⁰¹ Ibidem, p. 204

Committee (CSF),²⁰² an agency created in 2001 to combat international money laundering. Like CASA, it comprises various Italian security forces. The objective of the CSF is to counter international terrorism in collaboration with other international partners. It monitors the operation of the prevention system and sanctions for terrorist financing and money laundering. The CSF is considered the meeting point for all entities operating in this sector and, therefore, collaborates with CASA to combat terrorism and monitor illegal trafficking that can potentially support terrorist organizations.

The strength of Italian law enforcement and intelligence, boasting more than 300,000 operational units, more than any other European country, the work of CASA in coordinating and sharing intelligence, and a well-established legislative framework are all key elements that have undoubtedly contributed to making Italy an exceptional case in the prevention of terrorism compared to other European states.²⁰³

3.4.3 ANTI-MAFIA LEGISLATION

Italy's struggle against organized crime, particularly the Mafia, has a long and complex history. The Mafia, especially its Sicilian variant, has deeply infiltrated Italian society since the 19th century. The word "Mafia" itself conjures images of a secretive, violent organization exerting immense influence over economic, social, and political aspects of life in southern Italy. The rise of organized crime groups like the Cosa Nostra in Sicily, the Camorra in Naples, and the 'Ndrangheta in Calabria presented formidable challenges to the Italian state. Over time, the Italian government developed a comprehensive and sophisticated legal framework to combat these criminal entities.

One of the cornerstones of Italian anti-mafia legislation is the Rognoni-La Torre law, enacted in 1982.²⁰⁴ Named after Pio La Torre, a Sicilian politician who was assassinated by the Mafia, and Virginio Rognoni, the then Minister of the Interior, this law introduced Article 416-bis into the Italian Penal Code. This article specifically criminalizes "Mafia-type associations." The law defines a Mafia-type association as one where members exploit the potential for intimidation and subjection, and the resulting code of silence, to

²⁰² CSF:

https://www.dt.mef.gov.it/it/attivita_istituzionali/prevenzione_reati_finanziari/comitato_sicurezza_finanziaria

²⁰³ Beccaro and Bonino, op. cit., p. 11

²⁰⁴ Antonio La Spina, *"Mafia, legalità debole e sviluppo del Mezzogiorno"*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2005, p. 58.

commit crimes and manage illicit activities.²⁰⁵ This law was a significant advancement in the fight against the Mafia, as it allowed for the confiscation and seizure of assets belonging to those convicted of Mafia-related crimes. Another early anti-mafia legislation was Law 575/1965, which focused on preventive measures against Mafia suspects. It allowed for the imposition of personal preventive measures, such as special surveillance.²⁰⁶ The amendments introduced by Law 646/1982 significantly expanded its scope to include the confiscation of assets.²⁰⁷ These preventive measures were crucial in monitoring and restricting the activities of individuals suspected of Mafia involvement, even in the absence of a criminal conviction. Following the assassination of anti-Mafia magistrates Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino in 1992, Italy introduced stringent measures to combat organized crime. Known as the “Decreto Falcone”, this decree-law included the introduction of Article 41-bis into the Italian penal system.²⁰⁸ Article 41-bis, known as the “hard prison regime,” imposes strict conditions on imprisoned Mafia members to isolate them from their criminal networks and prevent them from continuing to exert influence from behind bars. The enforcement of Article 41-bis is a critical tool in isolating high-risk Mafia members. This regime imposes severe restrictions on inmates’ communications and interactions, thereby limiting their ability to manage criminal activities from prison. Key aspects of Article 41-bis include restrictions on visits, correspondence, and activities within prison, aimed at breaking the connection between imprisoned Mafia leaders and their criminal organizations. In 1996, Law 109 was enacted, providing for the social use of assets confiscated from the Mafia. This law allows for the repurposing of seized properties for public and social initiatives, thus turning the proceeds of crime into resources for the community. The utilization of confiscated Mafia assets for social and public benefit has been a critical component of Italy’s anti-mafia strategy. The Anti-Mafia Code, introduced in 2011 through Legislative Decree 159/2011, represents a significant step in consolidating and enhancing Italy’s legal framework against organized crime.²⁰⁹ It includes preventive measures, regulations

²⁰⁵ Art. 416-bis, Penal code:

[https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/atto/serie_generale/caricaArticolo?art.versione=9&art.idGruppo=34&art.flagTipoArticolo=1&art.codiceRedazionale=030U1398&art.idArticolo=416&art.idSottoArticolo=2&art.idSottoArticolo1=10&art.dataPubblicazioneGazzetta=1930-10-26&art.progressivo=0#:~:text=416%20bis\)-,Art.,dieci%20a%20quindici%20anni\).](https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/atto/serie_generale/caricaArticolo?art.versione=9&art.idGruppo=34&art.flagTipoArticolo=1&art.codiceRedazionale=030U1398&art.idArticolo=416&art.idSottoArticolo=2&art.idSottoArticolo1=10&art.dataPubblicazioneGazzetta=1930-10-26&art.progressivo=0#:~:text=416%20bis)-,Art.,dieci%20a%20quindici%20anni).)

²⁰⁶ Law 575/1965: <https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:legge:1965-05-31;575>

²⁰⁷ Law 646/1982: <https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:legge:1982;646>

²⁰⁸ La Spina, op. cit., pp. 87-89

²⁰⁹ Law 159/2011: <https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:decreto.legislativo:2011-09-06;159>

for asset confiscation, and provisions for the protection of witnesses and collaborators. This comprehensive code systematizes and expands previous anti-mafia legislation, providing a robust set of tools for prevention, investigation, and prosecution.

Many are also the institutions that actively operate in the country to fight the organised crime. The “Direzione Investigativa Antimafia” (DIA), established in 1991, is a specialized law enforcement agency tasked with investigating and combating organized crime. Operating under the Ministry of the Interior, the DIA coordinates with other law enforcement bodies to dismantle Mafia operations. Its functions include conducting complex investigations into Mafia activities and coordinating anti-mafia efforts across different police forces and regions.²¹⁰ Important is also the “Direzione Nazionale Antimafia e Antiterrorismo” (DNA) was created to oversee and coordinate the efforts of district anti-mafia directorates across Italy. This institution ensures a unified approach to prosecuting organized crime and terrorism. The DNA’s functions include coordinating district anti-mafia directorates and ensuring consistency in prosecutorial strategies and actions against organized crime and terrorism.²¹¹ Another critical institution in Italy’s fight against the Mafia is the “Commissione Parlamentare Antimafia”, a parliamentary committee tasked with monitoring and studying the Mafia phenomenon and proposing legislative and policy measures to combat it. The Commission’s functions include investigating the Mafia’s infiltration of political and economic structures and recommending legislative reforms to strengthen anti-mafia measures.²¹² Finally the “Agenzia Nazionale per l’Amministrazione e la Destinazione dei Beni Sequestrati e Confiscati alla Criminalità Organizzata” that manages and allocates assets confiscated from organized crime. This agency plays a crucial role in ensuring that confiscated properties are repurposed for public and social use. Its functions include managing confiscated assets and allocating them to social and community projects.²¹³

The Italian legal system incentivizes Mafia members to cooperate with authorities in exchange for reduced sentences and protection through the “Collaboratori di Giustizia” (Collaborators of Justice) mechanism. This mechanism has been instrumental in gathering intelligence and prosecuting high-ranking Mafia figures. Key aspects include

²¹⁰ DIA: <https://direzioneinvestigativaantimafia.interno.gov.it/competenze/> (Accessed 22/05/2024)

²¹¹ DNA: https://www.giustizia.it/giustizia/page/it/direzione_nazionale_antimafia_e_antiterrorismo (Accessed 22/05/2024)

²¹² Commissione parlamentare di inchiesta sul fenomeno delle mafie e sulle altre associazioni criminali, anche straniere: <https://www.senato.it/service/PDF/PDFServer/BGT/1066861.pdf>

²¹³ ANBSC: <https://www.benisequestraticonfiscati.it/> (Accessed 22/05/2024)

the provision of protection and benefits to informants and the use of informant testimony to dismantle criminal networks. Asset confiscation and seizure are powerful measures against the Mafia. By targeting the financial foundations of organized crime, Italian authorities can disrupt the economic basis of Mafia operations. Key aspects include the seizure of property, businesses, and financial assets linked to criminal activities and the reallocation of these assets for public and social use. Effective coordination among various legislative and law enforcement agencies is crucial in combating the Mafia. The creation of centralized bodies like the DIA and DNA ensures a cohesive and unified approach. Key aspects include the coordination of efforts across different regions and agencies and unified prosecutorial and investigative strategies.

More recently developments witnessed the Anti-Mafia Code, introduced in 2011, that represents a significant step in consolidating and enhancing Italy's legal framework against organized crime. It provides a comprehensive set of tools for prevention, investigation, and prosecution.²¹⁴ Key features of the Anti-Mafia Code include the consolidation of existing laws into a single code and the introduction of new preventive measures and enhanced penalties. The Law 136/2010, known as the Extraordinary Anti-Mafia Plan, strengthened measures to prevent Mafia infiltration in public contracts and procurement processes. It aimed to curb the Mafia's influence in the economy and ensure transparency in public administration. Key features include enhanced oversight of public contracts and the introduction of measures to prevent money laundering and financial crimes.²¹⁵ Important was also the Anti-Corruption Law, Law 3/2019, introduced new measures to combat corruption, which is often intertwined with Mafia activities.²¹⁶ It provided for increased transparency and accountability in public administration. Key features include strengthened penalties for corruption and measures to enhance transparency and accountability.

Through these concerted efforts, Italy has not only made significant strides in combating the Mafia domestically but has also set a precedent for international collaboration in the fight against organized crime. The Italian model underscores the importance of a comprehensive and adaptive legal approach, coupled with robust institutional support, in addressing the multifaceted challenges posed by organized criminal organizations. The seizure and repurposing of Mafia assets, preventive measures, and the collaboration of

²¹⁴ La Spina, op. cit., pp. 90-91

²¹⁵ Law 136/2010: <https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:legge:2010;136>

²¹⁶ Law 3/2019: <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2019/01/16/18G00170/sg>

justice informants have proven to be powerful mechanisms in dismantling criminal networks. Italy's battle against the Mafia has necessitated a multifaceted and evolving legislative approach. The historical context of widespread Mafia influence required the development of sophisticated legal tools and institutional frameworks to effectively combat organized crime. Key laws such as the Rognoni-La Torre law, the establishment of Article 41-bis, and the comprehensive Anti-Mafia Code represent critical milestones in this effort.²¹⁷ Institutions like the DIA, DNA, and the Parliamentary Anti-Mafia Commission play pivotal roles in coordinating and executing anti-mafia strategies. The ability to confiscate and seize assets, the use of preventive measures, and the incentives for Mafia members to cooperate with authorities have all been instrumental in dismantling criminal networks. Recent legislative developments, such as the Anti-Mafia Code and the anti-corruption law, highlight Italy's ongoing commitment to adapting and strengthening its legal framework to address new challenges posed by organized crime. Through these concerted efforts, Italy has established itself as a leader in the fight against organized crime. The Italian model of anti-mafia legislation serves as a benchmark for other nations facing similar challenges, demonstrating the effectiveness of a comprehensive, adaptive, and well-coordinated approach to combating organized crime.

3.4.4. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

As we saw, Italy's struggle against both organized crime and terrorism has necessitated the development of robust legislative frameworks aimed at combating these significant threats. While distinct in their origins and manifestations, the Italian anti-terrorism and anti-mafia legislative measures share similarities in their approach, structure, and enforcement mechanisms. In the next part will delve into an analysis examining the commonalities and differences between these legislative frameworks, exploring their potential synergies, and evaluating the role of intelligence sharing in their effectiveness.

Starting with the similarities key elements of both legislations are the following:

1. Preventive Measures:

²¹⁷ La Spina, op. cit., p. 120

Both anti-mafia and anti-terrorism legislations in Italy place significant emphasis on preventive measures. The anti-mafia laws, particularly those allowing for the confiscation of assets and the imposition of personal preventive measures, aim to disrupt the financial and operational capabilities of Mafia organizations. Similarly, anti-terrorism laws provide for extended detention periods, enhanced surveillance powers, and measures to monitor and prevent radicalization.

2. Asset Seizure and Confiscation:

The ability to confiscate and seize assets is a crucial tool in both anti-mafia and anti-terrorism efforts. In anti-mafia legislation, the seizure of assets is aimed at dismantling the financial foundations of criminal organizations. Anti-terrorism laws also include provisions for the seizure of assets linked to terrorist activities, thereby disrupting the financing of terrorism.

3. Harsh Prison Regimes:

The implementation of strict prison regimes is another commonality between the two frameworks. Article 41-bis, used in anti-mafia efforts, imposes severe restrictions on imprisoned Mafia members to isolate them from their criminal networks. Similarly, anti-terrorism laws provide for the detention and isolation of individuals involved in terrorist activities.

4. Protection of Collaborators:

Both legislative frameworks include provisions for the protection of witnesses and collaborators. In anti-mafia legislation, the Collaboratori di Giustizia mechanism incentivizes Mafia members to cooperate with authorities in exchange for reduced sentences and protection. Anti-terrorism laws also provide similar protections to individuals who provide intelligence and cooperate with law enforcement agencies.

5. Coordination and Centralization:

Effective coordination and centralization of efforts are emphasized in both anti-mafia and anti-terrorism legislations. The DIA and the DNA play pivotal roles in coordinating anti-mafia and anti-terrorism efforts, respectively. These institutions ensure a unified approach to investigating and prosecuting organized crime and terrorism.

Focusing now on the differences between the two legislations the followings are the elements that I noticed:

1. Focus and Scope:

While both frameworks aim to combat organized crime, their focus and scope differ. Anti-mafia legislation primarily targets organized criminal groups such as the Mafia, Camorra, and 'Ndrangheta. These groups are deeply rooted in Italian society and have significant economic and political influence. In contrast, anti-terrorism legislation targets both domestic and international terrorist threats, with a particular focus on jihadist terrorism in recent decades.

2. Historical Development:

The historical development of these legislative frameworks reflects the differing nature of the threats they address. Anti-mafia legislation has evolved over decades in response to the persistent and pervasive influence of organized crime in Italy. Anti-terrorism legislation, while also having historical roots in the fight against domestic terrorism, has seen significant evolution in response to the global rise of jihadist terrorism.

3. Legal Definitions:

The legal definitions of the targeted entities also differ. Article 416-bis of the Italian Penal Code specifically defines Mafia-type associations, focusing on their use of intimidation, subjection, and a code of silence. Anti-terrorism laws define terrorist activities more broadly, encompassing a wide range of acts intended to create fear, coerce governments, and destabilize societies.

4. International Cooperation:

While both frameworks involve international cooperation, the extent and nature of this cooperation differ. Anti-terrorism legislation places significant emphasis on international collaboration, reflecting the global nature of the jihadist threat. Italy actively participates in international efforts to combat terrorism, including intelligence sharing, joint operations, and compliance with international conventions. Anti-mafia legislation, while also involving international cooperation, primarily focuses on combating organized crime within Italy.

Seen what the main similarities and differences were, it's inevitable to notice the links and potential benefits that the two legislation present:

1. Intelligence Sharing:

Intelligence sharing is a critical component in both anti-mafia and anti-terrorism efforts. The collaboration between institutions such as the CASA, DIA and DNA ensures that intelligence gathered in the fight against organized crime can also be utilized in counter-terrorism operations. Given that both Mafia and terrorist organizations often engage in similar illicit activities, such as drug trafficking and money laundering, the sharing of intelligence can enhance the effectiveness of both efforts.

2. Financial Disruption:

The strategies used to disrupt the financial foundations of Mafia organizations can be effectively applied to counter-terrorism efforts. The seizure and confiscation of assets linked to terrorist activities can disrupt the financing of terrorism, similar to how these measures disrupt the financial operations of the Mafia. This approach not only weakens the operational capabilities of terrorist groups but also prevents them from expanding their influence.

3. Legislative Adaptation:

The legislative adaptation mechanisms developed in the fight against the Mafia can inform anti-terrorism efforts. The evolution of anti-mafia laws to address new challenges and threats provides a model for adapting anti-terrorism legislation to respond to evolving terrorist tactics. The flexibility and adaptability of Italian legislation in combating organized crime can serve as a blueprint for enhancing anti-terrorism laws.

4. Protection and Incentives for Collaborators:

The mechanisms for protecting and incentivizing collaborators in anti-mafia legislation can be applied to anti-terrorism efforts. Encouraging individuals involved in terrorist activities to cooperate with authorities in exchange for reduced sentences and protection can provide valuable intelligence and aid in dismantling terrorist networks. The success of the "Collaboratori di Giustizia" mechanism in anti-mafia efforts demonstrates the potential effectiveness of similar approaches in counter-terrorism.

The comparative analysis of Italian anti-terrorism and anti-mafia legislation reveals significant similarities and differences in their approaches, structures, and enforcement mechanisms. Both frameworks emphasize preventive measures, asset seizure, harsh prison regimes, protection of collaborators, and effective coordination. However, they differ in their focus, scope, historical development, legal definitions, and extent of international cooperation. The synergies between anti-terrorism and anti-mafia efforts are evident in areas such as intelligence sharing, financial disruption, legislative adaptation, and protection of collaborators. The collaboration between institutions like the DIA and DNA ensures a cohesive and unified approach to combating both organized crime and terrorism. The influence of organized crime on jihadist terrorist activities in Italy underscores the importance of addressing the intersection of these phenomena. The methods of operation, financial networks, and recruitment strategies of organized crime and terrorist organizations often overlap, creating opportunities for collaboration and mutual benefit. A comprehensive and adaptive approach to combating both organized crime and terrorism is essential for addressing the evolving threats posed by these phenomena. Italy's robust legislative frameworks and institutional mechanisms provide valuable lessons for other nations facing similar challenges. The ongoing commitment to strengthening and adapting these frameworks will be crucial in ensuring the continued effectiveness of Italy's efforts to combat organized crime and terrorism.

CHAPTER 4

4.1. MAFIA AS A BROAD CONCEPT

The term "Mafia" conjures images of shadowy figures, clandestine operations, and a pervasive aura of danger. While the word originally referred to the notorious Sicilian Mafia in Italy, its meaning has broadened over time to encompass a wide array of organized crime groups worldwide. These groups, although diverse in their cultural and geographical contexts, share common characteristics: a structured hierarchy, a strict code of secrecy, and a propensity for violence and corruption to achieve their aims. From the cobbled streets of Palermo to the bustling alleys of Tokyo, Mafia organizations have established a formidable presence. They are deeply embedded in the socio-economic fabric of their respective regions, influencing both local and international spheres. The Sicilian Mafia's concept of "Omertà," a code of silence and loyalty, serves as a foundation for many of these groups, ensuring a tight-knit, insular nature that shields them from law enforcement scrutiny. Prominent Mafia-like organizations, including the American Mafia, Japanese Yakuza, Chinese Triads, Russian Bratva, and Latin American drug cartels, despite their unique origins and operational nuances, employ similar methods: engaging in illegal activities such as drug trafficking, extortion, money laundering, and political corruption. By examining the Mafia as a broad concept, we gain insight into the persistent and evolving threat of organized crime in our world.

As we already saw The Sicilian term "mafiusu" referred to a person who was bold, courageous, and proud, and over time it came to signify individuals who were involved in criminal activities and who adhered to a code of honour, known as "Omertà." Today, "Mafia" is used more broadly to refer to various organized crime groups that share certain features with the original Sicilian Mafia. These organizations are involved in a wide range of illegal activities, including drug trafficking, extortion, money laundering, and political corruption. Despite their geographical and cultural differences, these groups often employ similar methods and adhere to comparable codes of conduct. Mafia

organizations around the world share several defining characteristics. Most have a clear hierarchy, often modelled after a military or corporate structure, which includes different levels of membership and roles, from leaders at the top to foot soldiers at the bottom.²¹⁸ A strict code of silence and loyalty, known as Omertà, is maintained within these organizations, where members are forbidden from cooperating with law enforcement and are expected to protect the organization's secrets at all costs. Violence and intimidation are key tools used by Mafia organizations to maintain control, settle disputes, and expand their influence. Furthermore, Mafia groups often infiltrate legitimate businesses and government institutions through bribery and corruption, securing their operations and extending their reach.²¹⁹ Many Mafia organizations are based on familial or ethnic ties, which help to enforce loyalty and trust within the group. While the specific economic activities can vary, Mafia organizations are typically involved in illegal enterprises such as drug trafficking, human trafficking, gambling, and extortion. They also often invest in legitimate businesses to launder their illicit profits.²²⁰

The methods employed by Mafia organizations are diverse and adaptable, reflecting the changing landscapes of crime and law enforcement. Many Mafia groups have been deeply involved in the global drug trade, controlling the production, distribution, and sale of illicit substances. Businesses and individuals are coerced into paying "protection money" to the Mafia in exchange for safety from other criminals or the Mafia itself.²²¹ The process of making illegally-gained money appear legal is crucial for Mafia operations, often done through investments in legitimate businesses or complex financial transactions. Some Mafia organizations are involved in the illegal smuggling of people, often for purposes of forced labor or sexual exploitation. By bribing or threatening politicians and law enforcement officials, Mafia groups can ensure favourable treatment and protect their operations from interference. Engaging in various types of fraud, including financial fraud, insurance fraud, and counterfeiting of goods and currency, is a common practice.²²² While the Sicilian Mafia is perhaps the most well-known, there are

²¹⁸ Maurizio Catino, "La mafia come fenomeno organizzativo", *Quaderni di Sociologia*, 14 | 1997, 30 November 2015, <http://journals.openedition.org/qds/1533> p. 34

²¹⁹ Naím, Moisés. "Mafia States: Organized Crime Takes Office." *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 91, no. 3, 2012, pp. 100–111. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23217970>

²²⁰ Albanese, et. al., 2003, "Organized Crime: World Perspectives", Prentice Hall, p. 127

²²¹ Gambetta Diego, 2000, "Mafia: The Price of Distrust, University of Oxford, chapter 10, pp. 158-175,

²²² Catino, op. cit. p. 37

numerous other Mafia-like organizations around the globe, each with its own history and modus operandi, some examples will now follow.

The American Mafia, also known as La Cosa Nostra, developed in the early 20th century with the influx of Italian immigrants to the United States. It is structured similarly to the Sicilian Mafia, with a strong emphasis on family ties and a hierarchical organization. The American Mafia has historically been involved in activities such as gambling, loan sharking, labor racketeering, and drug trafficking. Notable families include the Gambino, Genovese, and Bonanno families. The American Mafia's influence peaked in the mid-20th century but has since declined due to vigorous law enforcement efforts and internal conflicts.²²³

The Yakuza, or Japanese Mafia, has its roots in the Edo period (1603-1868) and has developed into a highly organized crime syndicate with a strict code of conduct. Major Yakuza groups include the Yamaguchi-gumi and Sumiyoshi-kai. The Yakuza is involved in activities such as drug trafficking, arms smuggling, human trafficking, gambling, and financial crimes. They also engage in legitimate businesses, including real estate and construction. The Yakuza's influence is primarily concentrated in Japan, but they have also established networks in other parts of Asia and the United States.²²⁴

The Triads are Chinese organized crime groups with a history dating back to the 17th century. They are composed of numerous independent groups, each with its own structure and leadership. Triad activities include drug trafficking, human trafficking, extortion, and counterfeiting. They are also involved in legitimate businesses, often as a front for illegal operations. The Triads have a significant presence in Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, and mainland China, as well as in Chinese communities worldwide.²²⁵

The Russian Mafia, also known as Bratva, emerged during the Soviet era and expanded rapidly after the collapse of the Soviet Union. It consists of various criminal organizations, each with its own leadership and operational style. The Russian Mafia is involved in a wide range of criminal activities, including drug trafficking, arms smuggling, human trafficking, cybercrime, and financial fraud. The Russian Mafia operates globally, with significant activities in Europe, the United States, and parts of

²²³ Lupo, op. cit., pp. 77-89

²²⁴ Adelstein, Jake. "The Last Yakuza." *World Policy Journal*, vol. 27, no. 2, 2010, pp. 63–71. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27870341>

²²⁵ Lo, T. Wing. "BEYOND SOCIAL CAPITAL: Triad Organized Crime in Hong Kong and China." *The British Journal of Criminology*, vol. 50, no. 5, 2010, pp. 851–72. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43610805>

Asia. Their involvement in cybercrime and financial fraud has particularly increased their global impact.²²⁶

Drug cartels, particularly those in Mexico and Colombia, have become some of the most powerful and violent organized crime groups in the world. Notable cartels include the Sinaloa Cartel, the Zetas, and the Medellín Cartel. The primary activity of these cartels is drug trafficking, especially cocaine, marijuana, methamphetamine, and heroin. They are also involved in human trafficking, arms smuggling, and kidnapping. The influence of drug cartels extends far beyond their home countries, impacting drug markets in North America, Europe, and Asia. Their violent tactics and control over drug production and distribution make them formidable adversaries for law enforcement.²²⁷

Mafia organizations employ a variety of methods to maintain their power and expand their operations. Using violence to intimidate rivals, enforce discipline within the organization, and maintain control over territories is a common tactic. Corruption and infiltration of public officials, law enforcement officers, and politicians ensure protection and favourable treatment for Mafia operations. Money laundering through legitimate businesses and financial instruments is crucial for making illicit profits appear legal. Extortion and protection rackets force businesses and individuals to pay for "protection" to avoid harm or interference.²²⁸ Controlling the production, transportation, and sale of illegal drugs often involves sophisticated networks that span multiple countries. Exploiting vulnerable populations for forced labor, sexual exploitation, or illegal immigration services is a lucrative enterprise for many Mafia groups. Engaging in various forms of fraud, including financial fraud, identity theft, and the production of counterfeit goods and currency, is also common. The use of advanced technology to commit crimes such as hacking, identity theft, and online fraud is increasingly significant.²²⁹

The concept of the Mafia has evolved from its origins in Sicily to encompass a wide array of organized criminal groups around the world. Despite differences in culture and geography, these groups share common characteristics such as hierarchical structures,

²²⁶ Half, Cameron. "The Russian Mafia: The Challenge of Reform." *Harvard International Review*, vol. 19, no. 3, 1997, pp. 52–72. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42762316>

²²⁷ Morris, Evelyn Krache. "Think Again: Mexican Drug Cartels." *Foreign Policy*, no. 203, 2013, pp. 30–33. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24576001>

²²⁸ Moisés, op. cit., p.103

²²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 108

codes of secrecy, and a reliance on violence and corruption. Major Mafia organizations, including the Sicilian Mafia, American Mafia, 'Ndrangheta, Camorra, Yakuza, Triads, Russian Mafia, and drug cartels, have had significant impacts on both local and global scales. Understanding the methods and operations of these groups is crucial for developing effective strategies to combat organized crime. As these organizations continue to adapt to changing circumstances and exploit new opportunities, law enforcement and policymakers must remain vigilant and innovative in their efforts to disrupt and dismantle Mafia operations.

4.2. WHAT IS JIHADISM?

Jihadism is a term that has become widely recognized and discussed, particularly in the context of global terrorism and radical Islamist movements. It refers to the ideologies and actions of individuals and groups who interpret jihad in a militant manner, often justifying violence as a means to achieve their religious or political goals.²³⁰ Jihadism is a concept derived from the Islamic term "jihad," which traditionally means "struggle" or "striving" in the way of God.²³¹ While jihad encompasses a broad range of meanings, from personal spiritual growth to armed struggle, jihadism specifically refers to the latter—the use of violence in the name of Islam. This militant interpretation has been propagated by various radical Islamist groups who believe that their actions are justified by religious texts and the need to defend Islam against its perceived enemies.²³²

The roots of modern jihadism can be traced back to the mid-20th century, with significant influences from the ideologies of Islamist thinkers like Sayyid Qutb and Abul A'la Maududi. These thinkers argued for the establishment of Islamic states governed by Sharia law and often saw violent revolution as a necessary means to achieve this end. The movement gained momentum in the 1970s and 1980s with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, which became a rallying point for Islamist fighters from around the world. This conflict saw the rise of the "Afghan Arabs," including key figures like Osama bin Laden, who would later form the core of Al-Qaida.²³³ Al-Qaida, founded by Osama bin Laden in the late 1980s, played a pivotal role in the evolution of global jihadism. Initially,

²³⁰ Thomas Hegghammer. "Global Jihadism after the Iraq War." *Middle East Journal*, vol. 60, no. 1, 2006, pp. 11–32. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4330214>

²³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 12

²³² *Ibidem*, p. 13

²³³ *Ibidem*, p. 13

Al-Qaida focused on supporting the mujahideen in Afghanistan, but it soon shifted its attention to what bin Laden described as the "far enemy" of the United States and its allies. This strategic shift was articulated in bin Laden's 1996 "Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places," which laid the ideological groundwork for Al-Qaida's global jihadist agenda. Al-Qaida's attacks on U.S. embassies in East Africa in 1998 and the USS Cole in 2000 were preludes to the catastrophic events of 9/11, which dramatically altered the global security landscape. The attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon not only underscored Al-Qaida's capacity for large-scale operations but also marked the beginning of the "Global War on Terror," led by the United States.²³⁴ The post-9/11 era has seen significant changes in the landscape of global jihadism. The U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003 had profound impacts on jihadist movements. According to Thomas Hegghammer, the Iraq War, in particular, became a focal point for jihadists, drawing militants from across the Muslim world to fight against American and coalition forces.²³⁵ The conflict in Iraq not only provided a new battlefield but also facilitated the emergence of sophisticated strategic thinking within jihadist circles. One of the key ideological developments in this period was the shift in focus from the "near enemy" (local regimes) to the "far enemy" (the West).²³⁶ This shift was marked by an increased emphasis on targeting Western interests globally, as exemplified by attacks in Europe and other parts of the world.²³⁷ The decentralization of Al-Qaida following the loss of its base in Afghanistan led to the rise of regional affiliates, such as Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), which pursued both local and international jihadist agendas. The ideological foundation of global jihadism is built on a combination of radical interpretations of Islamic texts and a narrative of Muslim victimhood and resistance. Jihadist ideologues like Ayman al-Zawahiri have framed their struggle as a defensive jihad against a "Jewish-Crusader alliance" that seeks to subjugate and oppress Muslims worldwide.²³⁸ This narrative is reinforced by a litany of grievances, including the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Western military interventions, and the perceived

²³⁴ Usama bin Ladin, "Declaration of War Against the Americans Occupying the Two Holy Places," signed August 23, 1996:

https://www.911memorial.org/sites/default/files/inlinefiles/1996%20Osama%20bin%20Laden%27s%201996%20Fatwa%20against%20United%20States_0.pdf

²³⁵ Hegghammer, "Global Jihadism", p.12

²³⁶ Ibidem, p. 14

²³⁷ Vidino, "Home grown Jihadism", pp.19-28

²³⁸ Joas Wagemaker, "Abu Muhammad alMaqdisi: A CounterTerrorism Asset?",

<https://ctc.westpoint.edu/abu-muhammad-al-maqdisi-a-counter-terrorism-asset/>

corruption of local Muslim governments. The notion of martyrdom and the promise of paradise for those who die in the cause of jihad are central to jihadist propaganda. This emphasis on martyrdom is used to recruit and motivate fighters, portraying their struggle as a noble and religiously sanctioned duty.

The organizational structure of jihadist groups has evolved over time, particularly in response to counterterrorism measures. While early groups like Al-Qaida operated with a hierarchical structure, modern jihadist organizations often adopt a more decentralized and networked approach. This decentralization makes them more resilient to counterterrorism efforts, as smaller, autonomous cells can continue operations even if the central leadership is disrupted.²³⁹ Jihadist tactics have also evolved, encompassing a wide range of methods from conventional guerrilla warfare to sophisticated terrorist attacks. The use of suicide bombings, improvised explosive devices, and coordinated assaults on high-profile targets are common tactics. Additionally, jihadists have increasingly exploited digital platforms for propaganda, recruitment, and coordination, making cyber operations a critical component of their strategy. The Iraq War had a transformative impact on global jihadism. As highlighted by Hegghammer, Iraq became a training ground for a new generation of jihadists, providing them with combat experience and forging personal bonds through the crucible of conflict. This influx of foreign fighters contributed to the emergence of groups like Al-Qaida in Iraq, led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who was notorious for his brutal tactics and sectarian violence.²⁴⁰ The chaotic aftermath of the Iraq invasion also created a fertile ground for jihadist recruitment, as the occupation exacerbated anti-American sentiment and highlighted grievances against Western intervention. The ideological landscape of jihadism became more fragmented, with strategic and ideological differences emerging among various factions. While some jihadists focused on local insurgencies, others maintained a globalist perspective, advocating for attacks against Western targets worldwide. The Syrian Civil War, which began in 2011, further altered the dynamics of global jihadism. The conflict drew jihadists from around the world, creating a complex and multifaceted battleground. One of the most significant developments was the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, which initially emerged as an offshoot of AQI.²⁴¹ Under the leadership of Abu Bakr al-

²³⁹ Hegghammer, "Global Jihadism", p.14-15

²⁴⁰ Ibidem, p.15

²⁴¹ Uludag, Mekki. "Syrian Civil War: Important Players and Key Implications – A Factsheet." Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, vol. 7, no. 7, 2015, pp. 4–10. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26351370>

Baghdadi, ISIS declared the establishment of a caliphate in 2014, with al-Baghdadi as its caliph. ISIS's brutal tactics, sophisticated propaganda, and territorial ambitions set it apart from Al-Qaida. The group's use of social media for recruitment and its ability to attract foreign fighters from across the globe posed a significant challenge to international security.²⁴² ISIS's emphasis on establishing a physical caliphate and governing territory also marked a departure from Al-Qaida's strategy, which had primarily focused on asymmetrical warfare and terrorism. The rivalry between Al-Qaida and ISIS led to ideological and operational schisms within the global jihadist movement.²⁴³ While both groups share a commitment to jihad and the establishment of an Islamic state, their differing approaches and strategic priorities have resulted in a fragmented jihadist landscape. Today, the landscape of jihadism is characterized by a multitude of groups operating in various regions, each with its own goals and strategies. In addition to Al-Qaida and ISIS, numerous other jihadist organizations continue to pose significant threats. These include Boko Haram in Nigeria, Al-Shabaab in Somalia, and various factions in the Sahel region of Africa.²⁴⁴ The global jihadist movement remains resilient despite the territorial losses suffered by ISIS and the persistent counterterrorism efforts targeting Al-Qaida and its affiliates. The decentralization of jihadist networks and the continued appeal of their ideology ensure that jihadism will remain a significant security challenge for the foreseeable future.

Jihadism, as a militant interpretation of jihad, has evolved significantly over the past few decades. From its ideological roots in the mid-20th century to the emergence of Al-Qaida and the subsequent rise of ISIS, the movement has continually adapted to changing geopolitical landscapes and counterterrorism measures. The Iraq War and the Syrian Civil War have been pivotal in shaping the modern jihadist movement, providing new battlefronts and contributing to the fragmentation and diversification of jihadist ideologies and strategies. The resilience and adaptability of jihadist groups underscore the complexity of addressing this global security threat. Efforts to combat jihadism must therefore be multifaceted, encompassing military, ideological, and socio-political dimensions to effectively counter the appeal and influence of jihadist ideologies. As the global jihadist movement continues to evolve, understanding its origins, development,

²⁴² Hegghammer, *"The rise of Muslim Foreign Fighters"*, p.60

²⁴³ Hegghammer, "Global Jihadism", p.14-15

²⁴⁴ Barkindo, Atta. "The Sahel: A New Theatre for Global Jihadist Groups?" *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2020, pp. 21–26. JSTOR, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26908281>

and contemporary features remains crucial for developing effective counterterrorism strategies and promoting global security.

CHAPTER 5

5.1. CASE STUDIES

To date, there is no concrete evidence of direct links between the Italian mafia and terrorist groups. However, confidential research in this area is being conducted by the authorities.²⁴⁵ According to Italian authorities, mafia groups consider collaboration with Islamist groups dangerous as it easily attracts the attention of law enforcement. This, however, does not rule out possible relationships, especially those strictly related to business, and potential future interactions.²⁴⁶

The long history of battling the mafia in our country has resulted in a very different organized crime landscape compared to the past. As we have observed, the main mafia organizations on the peninsula now adopt a strategy of submersion, following severe defeats in the late 1990s.²⁴⁷ The case studies found in my research all seem to demonstrate that, to date, the primary and only proven link between the Italian mafia and terrorism appears to be limited to economic transactions. Below, we will examine these documented cases also from journalistic sources to further support this connection.

5.1.1. DRUG SMUGGLING

The government's interest in targeting the illicit financial gains of the mafia has increased in tandem with the rapid expansion of the mafia into drug trafficking. To enhance their profits and expand their power in the drug market, the mafia has entrenched itself in both legal and illegal economic sectors. Consequently, the capital obtained illegally by the organization has been laundered within their legitimate businesses without much difficulty, thereby financing their activities with illegal funds. This has enabled rapid growth and unfair competition.

²⁴⁵ Francesco Strazzari, Francesca Zampagni, *“Between organised crime and terrorism: Illicit firearms actors and market dynamics in Italy”*, *Triggering terror*, 2018, p. 272

²⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, p.273

²⁴⁷ See note 11.

Recently, in July 2020, the Guardia di Finanza seized 84 million Captagon pills, weighing 14 tons and valued at 1.6 billion euros.²⁴⁸ Captagon is the trade name for amphetamine and is known as the "jihad drug," with the Islamic State being the principal producer in Syria. Italian authorities believe that these pills are sold to finance militant activities and are also used by militants, such as those involved in the 2015 Bataclan terrorist attacks. Despite indications pointing to the Islamic State, authorities express some scepticism about how the severely weakened terrorist group managed to produce such a large quantity of the drug and then smuggle it into Europe.

The seizure, which took place in Palermo, has been linked to the Camorra mafia organization. Investigations have been initiated to understand the extent of the mafia's involvement and the reasons behind such a massive demand, given the limited prevalence of this drug in the European market.²⁴⁹

5.1.2. OIL SMUGGLING

The crude oil extracted from Islamic State-controlled oil fields may have ended up in Italy, potentially infiltrating our vehicles, engines, and homes. What was once a plausible investigative hypothesis is gradually being substantiated, as indicated by a confidential report from the "Nucleo Speciale di Polizia Valutaria" of the Guardia di Finanza, dated February 2017, on Islamic terrorism. The report states, "It is possible to believe that imports of oil from areas under the control of terrorist organizations also reach major Italian refineries."²⁵⁰ Consequently, "disrupting any possible fraud in the mineral oil sector can have strategic value in combating the financing of terrorism."²⁵¹

For what concerns the routes the exchange seems to happen sixty miles south of Malta. In this stretch of international waters, it is not uncommon for tankers from Turkey and Russia, and clandestine oil tankers from Libya, to disappear for a few hours. Here, they

²⁴⁸ Daria Impiobato. "Fighting Organised Crime, Preventing Terrorism: The Italian Case." COUNTERTERRORISM YEARBOOK 2021, edited by Leanne Close and Daria Impiobato, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 2021, pp. 61–65. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep31258.15> p. 62

²⁴⁹ Lorenzo Tondo, "Italian police seize €1bn amphetamine haul from Syria", The Guardian, 1 July 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/01/italian-police-seize-1bn-amphetamine-haul-from-syria> (Accessed 23/05/2024)

²⁵⁰ Fabio Tonacci, Giuliano Foschini, La Repubblica, 31 July 2017, "Il petrolio dell'Isis finisce in Italia: la Guardia di Finanza indaga sulle 'navi fantasma'", https://www.repubblica.it/cronaca/2017/07/31/news/il_petrolio_dell_isis_finisce_in_italia_la_guardia_di_finanza_indaga_sulle_navi_fantasma_-172011799/ (Accessed 23/05/2024)

²⁵¹ Ibidem

coordinate to turn off their transponders, which make them traceable in order that smaller tankers can transfer the illicit crude oil to the larger tankers. Once the operation is completed, they separate and re-enable their satellite tracking at a safe distance. They reappear on monitors when they are already returning to Libya, and the mother ship continues towards ports in Sicily, central-northern Italy, and Marseille.

This system was under extensive investigation by the Guardia di Finanza, coordinated by a Sicilian prosecutor. Italian and Maltese brokerage firms, have been identified for organizing the logistics of transport and selling Libyan and Arab oil to major global companies. These intermediaries, were considered to be responsible for laundering the entire smuggling chain through falsified travel documents. The financial police collected samples from deposits at some Italian refineries, discovering that they contained oil extracted in Libya and Syria in quantities exceeding what was documented. However, there were no certainties about the origins of this clandestine product. Investigators could not establish for sure if ISIS was actually behind it since traces were well covered by the illegal intermediaries. Regardless of the route, it is a fact that Libyan crude has illegally entered Italy, Turkey, and Malta by sea, and Tunisia by land, as declared by UN inspectors. They also stopped at the first stage, the refineries, without investigating whether the intermediaries were or had been connected to fundamentalist groups.

As National Anti-Mafia Prosecutor Franco Roberti has often explained, there are "two potential points of contact" between "Islamic terrorism and organized crime": drugs and oil.²⁵² Investigations in Venice and Puglia have demonstrated the mafia's interest in black gold, following a typical pattern: creating fake companies abroad with the business purpose of gasoline commercialization, falsely accrediting themselves as habitual exporters, selling directly to gas station managers at reduced prices, and then immediately closing the company in this way they are able to both evade taxes and can launder the money.

5.1.3. WEAPON SMUGGLING

In 2016, an investigative report by the Italian newspaper *ilGiornale.it* exposed a sophisticated and illicit network linking the terrorist organization ISIS with the Italian

²⁵² Franco Roberti, "Terrorismo internazionale. Contrasto giudiziario e prassi operative", 2016: https://www.questionegiustizia.it/data/speciale/articoli/685/qg-speciale_2016-1_05.pdf

criminal syndicate 'Ndrangheta.²⁵³ This investigation revealed that ISIS was supposedly financing its operations by looting and selling ancient artifacts from war-torn regions such as Syria and Iraq. These artifacts, often of significant historical and cultural value, were smuggled out of the Middle East through intricate routes, primarily via Beirut, Lebanon, and then transported through the Balkans into Europe.

The artifacts were then introduced into the Western market using forged documentation to authenticate their provenance, facilitating their sale through auction houses, galleries, and online platforms. This black market trade was not limited to high-value buyers; even ordinary collectors with modest budgets could participate. The report highlighted the direct involvement of the 'Ndrangheta, a powerful Italian organized crime group, which provided arms to ISIS in exchange for these artifacts. Weapons that Mafia supposedly ship from Moldavia and Ukraine through the Russian mafia. This mutually beneficial arrangement underscored the extent of globalized criminal and terrorist networks, exploiting cultural heritage for profit and warfare.²⁵⁴ The investigation called attention to the broader implications of this illicit trade, not only in terms of financing terrorism but also in the irreversible damage to cultural heritage. It emphasized the need for stronger international cooperation and more stringent measures to combat the trafficking of cultural artifacts and to protect the invaluable cultural heritage from being exploited and destroyed by such networks.

However, it is important to note that the investigation did not mention the purchase of arms on Italian territory. As highlighted in the research conducted by Francesci Strazzani and Francesca Zampagni,²⁵⁵ Italian authorities explain that it is extremely difficult for terrorist groups to access illegal weapons in Italy. Firstly, this is due to the absence of active terrorist networks within the country. Investigations into this matter have been conducted, but no evidence has emerged to support the sale of arms to international terrorist groups in Italy. Secondly, the supply chains for illegal weapons are tightly controlled by Italian organized crime groups, some of which maintain strong control over certain territories. This control makes it difficult for groups without connections to Italian

²⁵³ Francesco Curradori, "L'ISIS vende opere d'arte antica alla 'ndrangheta in cambio di armi", <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/cronache/lisis-vende-opere-darte-antica-ndrangheta-cambio-armi-1319763.html> IlGiornale, 16 October 2016

²⁵⁴ Domenico Quirico, "Arte antica in cambio di armi, affari d'oro in italia", La Stampa, 16 October 2016, <https://www.lastampa.it/esteri/2016/10/16/news/arte-antica-in-cambio-di-armi-affari-d-oro-in-italia-1.34788871/>

²⁵⁵ Strazzari and Zampagni, op. cit. pp. 271-272

organized crime to access the illegal arms market. Selling to external groups would increase the risk for these mafia organizations of being intercepted by law enforcement. As we have observed, contemporary mafia groups strive to attract as little attention as possible from the government to continue their operations undisturbed. In essence, the intertwining of rigorous law enforcement and the monopolistic control of illegal arms by organized crime groups creates a significant barrier for terrorist organizations attempting to procure weapons within Italy.

The challenges Islamist terrorists face in accessing the illicit firearms market in Italy are exemplified by the 2016 Briki Lassaad case.²⁵⁶ In this instance, a Tunisian and a Pakistani were under investigation for terrorism and radicalization. During a wiretapped conversation, they discussed the possibility of purchasing a toy gun for target practice, as recommended by the self-training guide they were using, titled "How to Survive the West: A Mujahidin Guide."²⁵⁷ One of them remarked, "we cannot do it with your name, since as soon as they see a Muslim name they activate the filter and say 'let's see what he's doing'."²⁵⁸ According to the prosecutor handling the case, the two individuals lacked connections to acquire firearms in Italy. This difficulty in obtaining weapons has been a significant, if not the primary, impediment to carrying out terrorist attacks.

Currently, there is no evidence of direct connections between Italian organized crime and terrorist groups. Although investigations into potential links are ongoing, they remain confidential.

5.2. ANALYSIS OF CASE STUDIES

Despite the lack of concrete evidence linking Italian organized crime, specifically the mafia, directly with terrorist groups, there are several shared drivers and interests that may facilitate occasional and transactional interactions between these entities. One primary shared interest is the economic gain derived from illicit activities. Both organized crime groups and terrorist organizations often engage in similar types of criminal enterprises such as drug trafficking, smuggling of goods, and illegal arms trade.

²⁵⁶ ANSA, "Condannati terrorismo, pronti a uccidere", 28 July 2016:

https://www.ansa.it/lombardia/notizie/2016/07/28/condannati-terrorismo-pronti-a-uccidere_b2beb057-3c34-4cef-be65-d91636075722.html

²⁵⁷ Strazzari and Zampagni, op. cit. p. 272

²⁵⁸ Ibidem, p.272

Drug Trafficking: The case of the 2020 Captagon seizure illustrates the overlapping interests in drug trafficking. Captagon, known as the "jihad drug," is produced primarily by ISIS in Syria and has been found in large quantities in Italy, implicating the Camorra organisation. This suggests a potential logistical collaboration where the mafia facilitates the entry and distribution of drugs in exchange for financial benefits. The mutual benefit lies in the substantial profits garnered from the illicit drug trade, which can fund the operations of both terrorist and criminal groups.

Oil Smuggling: Another shared economic interest is oil smuggling, which has been substantiated by investigations into the import of oil from ISIS-controlled regions into Italian refineries. The clandestine operations conducted in international waters and the involvement of Italian and Maltese intermediaries highlight how organized crime networks may capitalize on the instability and control of resources by terrorist groups. This mutual interest in the illegal oil trade underscores a transactional relationship where both parties benefit from the profits without forming a lasting alliance.

Artifact Smuggling: The trade of looted artifacts from war zones in the Middle East, as reported in the 2016 *ilGiornale.it* investigation, further exemplifies shared economic interests. The 'Ndrangheta's role in smuggling these artifacts into Europe and their exchange for arms with ISIS showcases a clear intersection of interests where cultural heritage is monetized to support both criminal and terrorist activities.

Despite these shared interests, significant conflicts may deter long-term cooperation between Italian organized crime groups and terrorist organizations. These conflicts stem primarily from differing ultimate goals and the risks associated with heightened scrutiny from law enforcement agencies. The primary goal of Italian organized crime groups is profit maximization while maintaining a low profile to avoid government crackdowns. In contrast, terrorist groups seek to disrupt social and political order, often attracting significant attention through acts of violence. This fundamental difference in objectives creates an inherent conflict; organized crime groups may view prolonged association with high-profile terrorist activities as detrimental to their business model. Collaborating with terrorist groups exposes organized crime syndicates to increased law enforcement attention. Italian authorities have successfully disrupted mafia operations through rigorous enforcement and intelligence efforts. Engaging with terrorist organizations risks compromising the mafia's covert operations, as terrorist activities often trigger extensive counterterrorism measures. For instance, the difficulty faced by Islamist terrorists in

accessing illicit firearms in Italy, as demonstrated in the Briki Lassaad case, is partly due to the mafia's control over illegal arms supply chains and their reluctance to engage with groups that would draw undue attention.

5.3. IMPLICATIONS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

The potential for interactions between organized crime and terrorist groups necessitates enhanced surveillance and intelligence sharing among law enforcement agencies. Italy's success in countering organized crime provides a robust framework for addressing terrorist threats. However, the complexity and covert nature of these networks require continuous improvement in intelligence capabilities. Italian authorities should strengthen cooperation with international counterparts to monitor cross-border illicit activities, such as drug trafficking and artifact smuggling, which can finance terrorism.

Targeting the financial networks that support both organized crime and terrorism is crucial. The seizure of Captagon pills and the investigation into illegal oil imports highlight the importance of disrupting these financial flows. Italian law enforcement agencies must focus on identifying and dismantling the financial infrastructure that facilitates the laundering of money obtained from these illicit activities. This approach not only weakens the economic foundation of terrorist groups but also curtails the mafia's ability to reinvest illegal profits into legitimate enterprises. Given the role of ports and international waters in facilitating the smuggling of goods and artifacts, stricter border and maritime controls are essential. Enhanced monitoring of maritime routes, especially those from conflict zones, can help intercept illegal shipments. Collaboration with neighboring countries like Malta and international maritime organizations can improve the effectiveness of these measures. By tightening controls and improving tracking capabilities, authorities can prevent the illegal entry of goods that fund terrorism and organized crime. Implementing legal and policy reforms to address the evolving nature of organized crime and terrorism is vital. This includes updating laws to better define and penalize the collaboration between criminal and terrorist organizations. Reforms should also focus on enhancing the capabilities of law enforcement agencies to conduct complex financial investigations and utilize advanced technologies for surveillance and data analysis. Important would be also raising public awareness about the risks and realities of organized crime and terrorism can aid in prevention efforts. Community engagement programs that educate citizens on recognizing and reporting suspicious

activities can complement law enforcement efforts. Additionally, fostering a culture of resilience and vigilance within communities can help reduce the appeal of extremist ideologies and criminal activities.

Italy's counterterrorism policy should continue to focus on preventing radicalization, particularly within vulnerable communities. Programs aimed at countering extremist narratives and providing support to at-risk individuals can help mitigate the threat of homegrown terrorism. Collaboration with community leaders and organizations is essential in these prevention efforts. Given the transnational nature of both organized crime and terrorism, Italy must strengthen its cooperation with international allies. Sharing intelligence, conducting joint operations, and participating in international forums dedicated to combating terrorism and organized crime can enhance the effectiveness of Italy's counterterrorism policy. The dynamic nature of threats posed by organized crime and terrorism requires adaptive strategies. Italian law enforcement agencies must remain flexible and responsive to emerging trends, such as the use of new technologies by criminal and terrorist groups. Continuous training and capacity-building initiatives are essential to equip law enforcement personnel with the skills needed to address these evolving challenges.

To conclude, while the direct links between Italian organized crime and terrorist groups remain uncertain, the shared drivers and interests in economic gain create opportunities for occasional interactions. The implications of these potential interactions necessitate a multifaceted approach by law enforcement and policymakers to prevent and counteract the threats posed by both organized crime and terrorism.

CHAPTER 6

6.1. MAIN FINDINGS AND KEY FACTORS

The study conducted for this research has elucidated the complex nexus between organized crime, particularly the Italian Mafia, and jihadist terrorism within Italy. This study presents a multifaceted and intricate picture of the interaction between organized crime in Italy and jihadist terrorist activities. Through rigorous analysis, several key findings and critical factors have been identified, providing a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play and their implications for security policies:

One of the most significant findings is the possible influence that the Italian Mafia exerts on jihadist activities. The Mafia, with its deeply entrenched networks and substantial economic power, occasionally intersects with jihadist groups, primarily through shared criminal enterprises such as drug and arms trafficking. This interaction, however, is largely opportunistic rather than strategic. The Mafia's involvement is driven by profit motives rather than ideological alignment with jihadist objectives. The implications of this finding suggest that while the Mafia does not actively support terrorism, its criminal infrastructure can inadvertently facilitate terrorist operations. The study highlights also the distinct, yet complementary strategies employed by Italian law enforcement agencies in combating both the Mafia and terrorism. Anti-mafia units have developed sophisticated methods for infiltrating and dismantling criminal organizations, while counter-terrorism units focus on surveillance, intelligence gathering, and pre-emptive actions to thwart terrorist plots. Despite these specialized approaches, there is a recognized need for enhanced cooperation and information sharing between these units. The integration of efforts could lead to more effective disruption of the nexus between organized crime and terrorism. This underscores the importance of a holistic approach to national security, where different branches of law enforcement work in concert to address complex and evolving threats. The research also delves into the social impacts of both the Mafia and jihadist terrorism on Italian society. The Mafia's influence permeates economic and political structures, leading to systemic corruption and a culture of fear and intimidation. This erosion of trust in public institutions poses significant challenges to governance and social cohesion. In contrast, jihadist terrorism aims to destabilize society through acts of violence that generate widespread fear and insecurity. The psychological impact of such attacks is profound, leading to heightened public anxiety

and potential stigmatization of certain communities. Understanding these social impacts is crucial for developing targeted interventions that address both the root causes and the symptoms of organized crime and terrorism. Additionally, economic conditions play a pivotal role in the proliferation of both organized crime and terrorism. Furthermore, it appears that economic factors are also at the very basis of any potential collaboration within the two organisations. A common ground, that if considered to be profitable by the two groups can set the basis for dangerous interconnections. Moreover, high unemployment rates, particularly among youth, create a fertile ground for recruitment into criminal and terrorist organizations. The study identifies a correlation between economic deprivation and the susceptibility to radicalization and criminal involvement. Addressing these economic disparities through targeted development programs and job creation initiatives is essential for mitigating the risk of recruitment into illicit activities. Economic stability and opportunity serve as deterrents to both Mafia recruitment and terrorist radicalization. The geopolitical landscape significantly influences the dynamics between the Mafia and jihadist terrorism. Italy's strategic location as a gateway to Europe makes it a critical transit point for illicit trafficking routes. This geographic significance attracts both organized crime and terrorist networks seeking to exploit these routes for their respective operations. The study underscores the importance of international cooperation in addressing these transnational threats. Enhanced collaboration with neighbouring countries and international law enforcement agencies is vital for disrupting the flow of illegal goods and thwarting terrorist movements. Finally, the findings of this study have profound policy implications. There is a clear need for integrated and multi-faceted approaches to national security that address both organized crime and terrorism in a coordinated manner. Policymakers should prioritize the development of joint task forces that leverage the strengths of both anti-mafia and counter-terrorism units. Additionally, investment in community-based programs aimed at preventing radicalization and supporting at-risk youth can help reduce the appeal of criminal and terrorist activities. Ensuring that policies are adaptive and responsive to the evolving nature of these threats is essential for maintaining national security and social stability.

In conclusion, this study elucidates the complex interplay between the Italian Mafia and jihadist terrorism, highlighting the need for comprehensive strategies that encompass law enforcement collaboration, social and economic interventions, and international

cooperation. By addressing these key findings and critical factors, Italy can better safeguard its national security and promote a more resilient and cohesive society.

1.2. ASSESS MAFIA-TERRORISM NEXUS

Assessing the degree of Terrorism-mafia nexus in Italy involves a detailed examination of the interactions, shared interests, and operational dynamics between these two distinct yet occasionally intersecting entities. This assessment is critical for understanding the extent to which organized crime facilitates or influences terrorist activities and for developing effective countermeasures. The degree of connection between the two groups in Italy appears minimal at this stage. The case studies analysed, including drug smuggling operations and the trafficking of Syrian and Libyan oil, suggest that any interactions are transactional and opportunistic rather than collaborative. The Italian Mafia prioritizes its survival and profitability, which involves maintaining a low profile and avoiding the high risks associated with terrorism-related activities. Confidential research by Italian authorities underscores this notion, highlighting the Mafia's reluctance to engage with Islamist groups due to the potential for increased scrutiny from law enforcement agencies. While the Mafia's extensive networks and logistical capabilities could theoretically support terrorist operations, the strategic interests of both parties currently limit such developments.

1. Nature of Interactions

The nature of interactions between the Italian Mafia and jihadist groups is primarily characterized by pragmatic and transactional relationships rather than ideological alliances. Both entities engage in criminal activities such as drug trafficking, arms smuggling, and money laundering, where their paths may cross. However, these interactions are driven by mutual benefit and economic gain rather than a shared agenda. The Mafia's extensive criminal networks and logistical capabilities provide valuable resources for jihadist groups seeking to fund and organize their operations. Despite this, the Mafia typically maintains a degree of separation from overtly political or religiously motivated violence, preferring to focus on profit-oriented criminal enterprises.

2. Economic Synergies

One of the key areas of influence is economic synergy. The Mafia's control over various illicit markets and its ability to facilitate large-scale smuggling operations offer jihadist groups a reliable means to finance their activities. For instance, the established drug trafficking routes controlled by the Mafia can be utilized by jihadists to move drugs across borders, generating significant revenue. Additionally, the Mafia's money laundering operations can help jihadist organizations to disguise and move funds globally, evading detection by financial authorities. This economic interdependence underscores a significant point of convergence where organized crime can indirectly support terrorist financing.

3. Shared Logistical Infrastructure

The logistical infrastructure controlled by the Mafia, including safe houses, transportation networks, and clandestine communication channels, could be exploited by jihadist groups to plan and execute attacks. The Mafia's expertise in evading law enforcement and its deep-rooted presence in certain regions could provide a conducive environment for jihadists to operate with a lower risk of detection. This shared logistical infrastructure might particularly be evident in the trafficking of arms, where the Mafia's established routes and contacts can facilitate the procurement and distribution of weapons to jihadist operatives.

4. Operational Independence

Despite these points of intersection, it is crucial to recognize the operational independence maintained by both the Mafia and jihadist groups. The Mafia's primary objective is to sustain and expand its criminal enterprises without attracting excessive law enforcement attention. In contrast, jihadist groups aim to achieve their ideological goals through acts of terrorism, which inherently invite significant security crackdowns. This divergence in objectives is considered a big limit for the depth and duration of their cooperation. The Mafia is wary of the heightened scrutiny and potential disruption that can result from association with terrorist activities, which could jeopardize its broader criminal operations.

5. Case Studies and Empirical Evidence

Empirical evidence from various case studies illustrates the occasional yet impactful potential interactions between the Mafia and jihadist groups. For example, investigations have uncovered instances where Mafia affiliates seem to have provided logistical support to jihadists, such as safe passage through territories under Mafia control or access to black-market resources. However, these instances are relatively isolated and do not indicate a systematic or widespread collaboration. Instead, they highlight opportunistic alliances that arise from specific circumstances and mutual benefits..

To sum up, the terrorism-Mafia nexus appears to rotate around shared economic and logistical interests, this influence is characterized by opportunistic and transactional interactions rather than deep strategic alliances. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for developing comprehensive and effective security policies that address the multifaceted threats posed by both organized crime and terrorism.

1.3. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Addressing the intertwined threats of organized crime and jihadist terrorism requires a multifaceted and strategic approach that encompasses enhanced law enforcement collaboration, robust financial monitoring, community-based interventions, and international cooperation. The following detailed policy recommendations are proposed to mitigate the potential influence of the Mafia on jihadist activities and to strengthen Italy's overall security framework.

1. Strengthening Inter-agency Collaboration

Effective countermeasures against the overlapping activities of the Mafia and jihadist groups necessitate enhanced collaboration between various law enforcement agencies.

Integrated Task Forces: Establishing joint task forces that include members from both anti-mafia units and counter-terrorism units can facilitate seamless information sharing

and coordinated operations. These task forces should be equipped with the necessary resources and legal frameworks to conduct joint investigations and enforcement actions.

Shared Intelligence Platforms: Developing and utilizing shared intelligence platforms where real-time data and intelligence can be accessed by both anti-mafia and counter-terrorism units is crucial. Such platforms should integrate data from various sources, including surveillance, financial transactions, and international intelligence agencies, to create a comprehensive threat assessment.

Cross-training Programs: Implementing cross-training programs for law enforcement officers can enhance their understanding of both organized crime and terrorism. These programs should focus on recognizing the signs of interconnections between the two and on developing skills for joint operations.

2. Intensifying Financial Monitoring and Controls

The financial networks that support both the Mafia and jihadist groups are critical targets for disruption.

Enhanced Financial Regulations: Strengthening financial regulations to prevent money laundering and terrorist financing is essential. This includes stricter enforcement of existing laws, increased scrutiny of financial transactions, and mandatory reporting requirements for suspicious activities by financial institutions.

Collaborative Financial Investigations: Creating specialized financial investigation units that collaborate with international financial intelligence units can help trace and intercept illicit financial flows. These units should employ advanced analytics and forensic accounting techniques to uncover complex money laundering schemes and terror financing networks.

Public-Private Partnerships: Establishing partnerships between the public sector and financial institutions can enhance the detection and reporting of suspicious transactions. Regular workshops and information exchange sessions can help financial institutions stay abreast of the latest threats and compliance requirements.

3. Community-Based Programs and Preventive Measures

Preventing the radicalization and recruitment of individuals into both organized crime and terrorist activities requires proactive community engagement.

Youth Engagement Initiatives: Developing and funding programs aimed at engaging youth in vulnerable communities can provide alternatives to involvement in criminal or extremist activities. These initiatives should include education, vocational training, sports, and mentorship programs that promote positive role models and career opportunities.

Counter-Radicalization Programs: Implementing community-based counter-radicalization programs that involve local leaders, religious figures, and civil society organizations can help identify and address the early signs of radicalization. These programs should focus on building resilience within communities, fostering social cohesion, and providing support to at-risk individuals.

Public Awareness Campaigns: Launching public awareness campaigns to educate citizens about the dangers of organized crime and terrorism can foster community vigilance. These campaigns should also highlight the importance of reporting suspicious activities to the authorities.

4. International Cooperation and Diplomatic Efforts

Given the transnational nature of both organized crime and terrorism, international cooperation is indispensable.

Bilateral and Multilateral Agreements: Strengthening bilateral and multilateral agreements with other countries can facilitate the exchange of intelligence, joint operations, and mutual legal assistance. These agreements should be regularly updated to address evolving threats and to incorporate best practices from around the world.

Participation in International Forums: Actively participating in international forums such as the United Nations, Europol, and Interpol can enhance Italy's ability to coordinate with other nations in combating organized crime and terrorism. Engagement in these forums can also provide access to training, resources, and intelligence-sharing networks.

Extradition and Legal Assistance: Enhancing mechanisms for the extradition of criminals and terrorists, as well as providing legal assistance to other countries, can improve the

effectiveness of international law enforcement efforts. Streamlining these processes can ensure that criminals and terrorists face justice, regardless of where they operate.

5. Technological Advancements and Surveillance

Leveraging advanced technologies can significantly enhance the ability to monitor and disrupt the activities of both the Mafia and jihadist groups.

Big Data Analytics: Employing big data analytics to identify patterns and anomalies in large datasets can help uncover hidden connections between organized crime and terrorism. This includes analysing communication networks, financial transactions, and social media activity.

Surveillance Technologies: Utilizing advanced surveillance technologies such as drones, biometric identification systems, and cyber intelligence tools can enhance the monitoring of high-risk individuals and activities. These technologies should be integrated into existing law enforcement frameworks to provide real-time intelligence and situational awareness.

Cybersecurity Measures: Strengthening cybersecurity measures to protect critical infrastructure and sensitive data from cyber-attacks by both criminal and terrorist groups is crucial. This includes regular security audits, implementing robust encryption protocols, and training personnel in cybersecurity best practices.

6. Legislative and Policy Reforms

Updating and refining legislative and policy frameworks can provide law enforcement agencies with the necessary tools to combat the evolving threats of organized crime and terrorism.

Comprehensive Anti-Crime Legislation: Enacting comprehensive anti-crime legislation that addresses the complexities of modern organized crime and terrorism is essential. This should include provisions for enhanced penalties, asset forfeiture, and the protection of witnesses and whistleblowers.

Judicial Reforms: Implementing judicial reforms to expedite the prosecution of organized crime and terrorism cases can improve the efficiency of the legal system.

Specialized courts and trained judges can handle these cases more effectively, ensuring swift and fair justice.

Policy Review and Adaptation: Regularly reviewing and adapting national security policies to reflect changing threats and emerging trends is vital. This ensures that policies remain relevant and effective in addressing the dynamic landscape of organized crime and terrorism.

In conclusion, addressing the potential influence of the Mafia on jihadist terrorism in Italy requires a comprehensive and multi-layered approach. By strengthening inter-agency collaboration, intensifying financial monitoring, implementing community-based programs, enhancing international cooperation, leveraging technological advancements, and enacting legislative reforms, Italy can effectively mitigate the threats posed by both organized crime and terrorism. These policy recommendations aim to create a resilient security framework capable of adapting to evolving challenges and safeguarding national stability.

6.4. POSSIBLE RESEARCHES

The intersection of organized crime and terrorism remains a fertile ground for further academic inquiry. Future research should explore:

As an example, a comparative analysis of the interaction between organized crime and terrorism in different geopolitical contexts can provide valuable insights. Examining similar phenomena in other regions, such as the relationship between drug cartels and terrorist groups in Latin America or the links between criminal gangs and militant organizations in the Middle East, can offer comparative perspectives. These case studies can highlight different strategies and outcomes, providing lessons that can be adapted to the Italian context. Also, investigating the dynamics of cross-border crime and terrorism, particularly in regions with porous borders, can reveal patterns and tactics that transcend national boundaries. Understanding these dynamics can help in developing transnational strategies to combat these threats. Moreover, analysing the effectiveness of various policy responses in different countries can help identify best practices and potential

pitfalls. This includes examining the impact of specific laws, enforcement strategies, and international agreements on reducing the influence of organized crime on terrorism.

Impact of Digital Technologies could be also another area worth of exploring as future research. Utilizing AI and machine learning algorithms to analyse large datasets can help identify patterns and predict potential threats. These technologies can be used to process information from surveillance footage, social media, financial transactions, and communication intercepts, providing actionable intelligence. Interesting would be exploring the application of blockchain technology for tracking and verifying transactions to enhance transparency and reduce the opportunities for money laundering and terrorist financing. Blockchain can create immutable records that are difficult to alter or conceal, aiding in financial investigations. Furthermore, enhancing cyber intelligence capabilities to monitor and disrupt online activities of criminal and terrorist networks could be considered extremely critical in these studies. This includes the development of tools to detect and counteract cyber threats, as well as training personnel in cyber forensic techniques.

Understanding the socio-economic and psychological impacts of organized crime and terrorism is also crucial for developing comprehensive countermeasures. Investigating the link between economic deprivation and the recruitment into organized crime and terrorist groups can inform targeted interventions. This includes studying the socio-economic conditions that make individuals vulnerable to recruitment and developing programs to address these root causes.

Fostering interdisciplinary research and collaboration can enhance the understanding of complex issues related to organized crime and terrorism. Partnerships between academic institutions and policy research organizations to conduct in-depth studies on organized crime and terrorism should be encouraged. These partnerships can bring together diverse expertise and resources, leading to more comprehensive and informed findings. Interesting would be forming interdisciplinary research teams that include criminologists, economists, psychologists, sociologists, and legal experts. These teams can provide a holistic analysis of the factors contributing to organized crime and terrorism and develop multi-faceted solutions. Participating in international research networks to share knowledge, data, and best practices. Collaboration with researchers from other countries can provide new perspectives and enhance the global understanding of these issues.

6.5. REVISITING RESEARCH QUESTION AND OBJECTIVES

This research set out to explore the extent of the terrorism-mafia nexus in the country and to examine how law enforcement strategies interact with this dynamic. The investigation began with a comprehensive historical overview of the Mafia's evolution and its socio-economic impacts, followed by an analysis of jihadist terrorism's characteristics and development in Italy. Through a detailed examination of potential collaborations and conflicts between these entities, the study aimed to uncover the underlying drivers and implications for law enforcement.

The findings revealed that the interaction between the Mafia and jihadist groups is complex and multifaceted. While both entities operate in the shadows, their primary motivations and methods differ significantly. The Mafia's focus on profit and maintaining control over territories often clashes with the jihadists' ideological goals and desire for widespread disruption. However, instances of collaboration, particularly in areas like smuggling and the provision of false documents, indicate that economic benefits can sometimes bridge ideological divides.

The research confirmed that Italian law enforcement agencies face a significant challenge in addressing these dual threats. The Mafia's deep-rooted presence and its sophisticated networks make it a formidable opponent, while the evolving nature of jihadist terrorism demands constant vigilance and adaptability. The study highlighted the need for enhanced intelligence sharing and coordinated efforts at both national and international levels to effectively counter these threats.

In conclusion, the research objectives have been successfully achieved, yielding valuable and significant data. However, a definitive and comprehensive answer to the research question remains elusive due to the confidentiality that often surrounds key information in this area, resulting in limited sources on the direct interaction between organized crime and terrorism.

6.6. BROADER IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The implications of this research extend beyond the immediate context of Italy, offering valuable insights for global counterterrorism and organized crime strategies. One of the

key takeaways is the importance of understanding the local socio-economic and political landscapes in which these entities operate. The Mafia's ability to integrate into the social fabric of southern Italy, for example, provides it with a degree of resilience that is difficult to dismantle through conventional law enforcement methods alone. Similarly, the adaptability of jihadist groups, as seen in their shifting tactics and recruitment strategies, underscores the need for a dynamic and multifaceted approach to counterterrorism.

Furthermore, the research underscores the importance of addressing the socio-economic conditions that foster organized crime and terrorism. Poverty, lack of education, and social marginalization are significant factors that can drive individuals towards criminal and extremist activities. Effective counter-strategies must therefore include efforts to improve economic opportunities, social integration, and community resilience.

The study also highlights the potential for innovative law enforcement strategies that leverage technology and international cooperation. Enhanced surveillance, data analytics, and the use of artificial intelligence can provide law enforcement agencies with new tools to track and disrupt the activities of both organized crime groups and terrorist networks. Moreover, fostering stronger international partnerships can facilitate the sharing of intelligence and best practices, which is crucial in combating these transnational threats.

In conclusion, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the interplay between organized crime and terrorism in Italy and offers practical recommendations for enhancing law enforcement strategies. By addressing the root causes of these phenomena and leveraging technological advancements and international cooperation, policymakers and law enforcement agencies can develop more effective responses to protect national and global security. The insights gained from this study are not only relevant to Italy but also provide a valuable framework for other countries grappling with similar challenges.

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