

Mafia principle, criminal enterprise and lawful "organised crime"

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When we are confronted with the syntagma »organised crime«, it makes us think of one or another type of mafia, i.e. larger or smaller (traditional or more recent) illegal business structures, earning their money (and gaining power) by selling illicit goods, extorting payments in exchange for safety/security, borrowing (and laundering) "dirty" money, plundering or robbing and a range of other criminal activities. However, it should not be forgotten that the "conventional" mafia is only one of the possible - although certainly most exploited by the media and ideology - types of organised crime. If we consider the enormous and varied damage resulting from organised criminal (and even worse, lawful!) activity of legal entities (for example economic, political, religious etc.), we can hardly agree (probably only with a great deal of hypocrisy) with the appraisal that only "classical" (local, regional, national or "trans-national") mafias - together with Islamic terrorism - represent the most startling danger in the post-modern world (or a threat *par excellence* to "the most civilized manner of socialised life").

Furthermore, the "mafia principle" (or *modus operandi*) has a crucial role in the rise (i.e. initial accumulation of capital) and development of the world capitalist system, in particular in the frame of imperialistic/imperial plundering, coercion and extortion, i.e. exploitative and repressive practices which were performed (and still are) by the most powerful (and therefore inevitably also by culturally more superior) global ("pan-European" or western) forces, which applies to private companies (in the past, for example *East India Company* and *South Africa Company*) as well as to states (under the control and in the interest of capital) and in the recent times, also to supra-national government mechanisms.

Key words: organized crime, damage, capitalism, unlawful business

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