

Jews), and in Italy anti-Semitism was consistently practiced and preached—for instance, through state-funded research that could support racial legislation. It would have also been useful for the authors to look at archives beyond those of Fermi's papers in Chicago, especially in light of the scientist's reluctance to write about his political and other nonscientific opinions. In particular, drawing on the papers of some of his closest collaborators, such as Emilio Segrè and Edoardo Amaldi, would have helped to cast new light on Fermi's views.

To sum up, there is no doubt that this book advances our understanding of Enrico Fermi as a historic figure, allowing us to better appreciate his prominent role in the shaping of science and technology in the twentieth century. But, in spite of its "blessed" title, the volume works no miracles: The pope of physics remains a mystifying character in the history of the atomic age.

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'Ndrangheta: The Glocal Dimensions of the Most Powerful Italian Mafia.

By Anna Sergi and Anita Lavorgna.
New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.
122 pages.

The Two Mafias: A Transatlantic History, 1888–2008.

By Salvatore Lupo.
New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.
236 pages.

The Godfather was published in 1969 and became one of the best-selling novels ever published. The subsequent film trilogy ranks among the most successful movies of all time. Millions of readers and viewers came to believe they were witnessing an accurate account of organized crime rather than masterful works of fiction. Since even a great story does not always make for good history, the

result has been a chronic inability in popular culture to separate the myth from the reality of organized crime (Albanese 2015; Smith 1975). While modern news stories continue to reinforce this trend, scholarly treatments have emerged to distinguish actual Mafia-controlled activities from pejorative uses of the term.¹

The two books under review here offer empirical, historical accounts of two varieties of organized crime in Italy and throughout Europe and the United States. They are both refreshingly well written and insightful in their approach, both as revealing histories and as analyses of how and why Italian organized crime has developed and changed over time and across locations.

'Ndrangheta is the story of organized crime as it has developed in Calabria. Whereas the Sicilian Cosa Nostra has received the bulk of political, popular, and scholarly attention, in 2010 Italian law recognized the *'Ndrangheta* as a Mafia group of major concern. Calabria's organized-crime network, with deep historical roots, has come to be considered the richest, most powerful, and far-reaching of Italy's traditional criminal organizations.

Relying on interviews with police officials, experts inside and outside Italy, judicial records of the district anti-Mafia directorates, and an analysis of the group's geopolitical and economic fragmentation, Anna Sergi and Anita Lavorgna offer a wide-ranging perspective on the *'Ndrangheta*, including its structure, method of operation, and "glocal" reach (as the *'Ndrangheta* operates both locally and internationally). The *'Ndrangheta* has a greater presence outside its home base than do other mafias, and its structure is more flexible and fragmented than that of other Mafia groups. As a result, the authors talk in terms of *'Ndrangheta* clans or *'ndrine*, a basic unit or cell, to outline the network's overall operation, rather than describing the actions of a singular, unified organization.

These clans, based on blood ties, pursue two primary objectives: control over territory and the pursuit of illicit activities. The origins of the *'Ndrangheta* are traced to around the time of the unification of Italy in 1861. The authors chronicle the involvement of the *'Ndrangheta* in many aspects of Italian life since then, from participating in political corruption and control of economic and business sectors to kidnappings, cigarette and drug smuggling, crimes against the environment, and money laundering.

Similar to Cosa Nostra groups, *'Ndrangheta* clans are family based, rather than only territory based. The strength of *'Ndrangheta* clans is legendary, enabling them to organize at distant locations because the multiple extended family connections that define the *'ndrine* can be (and have been) transplanted to other Italian cities and regions and to other countries. The presence of *'Ndrangheta* clans outside of Calabria has been detected only in recent years, however, due to better information gained from more sophisticated

investigations and electronic surveillance. The clans' diffusion is also due to the relocation of some *'ndrine* who were sent to prisons in Central and Northern Italy to break their criminal ties; the effort failed, resulting instead in clans becoming established in new locations. There are many important insights provided in this account of the 'Ndrangheta. The links among 'Ndrangheta clans and the cases of bribery and extortion of government officials highlight the overlapping interests of the private economy, from small firms to large corporations, legal and other professionals, politicians, and organized criminals. The authors detail the ways in which the 'Ndrangheta takes over legitimate businesses outside Calabria, especially in large cities like Rome and Milan, and how 'Ndrangheta is increasingly involved in a range of criminal schemes around the world.

Nevertheless, the authors find no link between the migration of millions of Calabrians and the presence of the 'Ndrangheta abroad. Instead, they argue that the internal cohesion of the group and its ability to capitalize on criminal opportunities explain it better. The authors observe that "it seems more plausible that—when the need to invest and enter in certain illegal sectors has arisen—the structure of the *'ndrine* in Calabria was strong enough and well-equipped, in terms of money and human capital, to gain access also through the exploitation of ethnic brotherhood and the use of a consolidated 'Ndranghetist behavior" (61).

The Two Mafias: A Transatlantic History, 1888–2008, originally published in Italy as *Quando la mafia trovò l'America. Storia di un intreccio intercontinentale, 1888–2008*, offers an effective balance between historical detail and a clear, readable narrative that examines the connections between mafias in Sicily and the United States. As Sergi and Lavorgna discovered about the 'Ndrangheta, Salvatore Lupo also finds "the Mafia is neither as bureaucratically structured nor as powerful as many people have reported" (6). Lupo seeks to separate myths from facts on a number of important historical points. For example, the term *Cosa Nostra* was not found anywhere (in Italy or the United States) until informant Joe Valachi used it in his televised testimony to a U.S. Senate committee in 1963. Another is the myth that "the Mafia does not threaten; it protects" (9).

The book is organized into seven chapters that explore Mafia connections at each stage of Italian American history, from the height of large-scale migration at the turn of the twentieth century through the 1920s and Prohibition, World War II, and on to the present day. It has been a common belief that the Mafia was imported into the United States as a "residue of an archaic culture" (9) by massive Sicilian immigration, but the author describes a more transnational dynamic: "People and information traveled in both directions. We know cases of Sicilian bosses whose influence arrived on the other side of the Atlantic, and

cases of islanders returning home from America, who—full of dollars and innovative experiences—directed the top level of the mob in their villages” (28).

Lupo successfully incorporates a wide range of primary and secondary sources, including newspapers and other archival material, into a well-crafted and economical narrative that re-examines key events. These include the intended and unintended impacts of Prohibition on organized crime, the facts behind the so-called Castellammarese War, the pervasive role of political corruption in empowering organized crime throughout U.S. history, the role of Mafia figures during World War II, and the Kefauver Senate Committee hearings of 1950. Lupo also does a very good job of linking notorious individuals to Mafia-related activities and groups on both sides of the Atlantic.

Perhaps the greatest strength of the book lies in the author’s ability to connect the lives of individual Mafia figures to the larger historical narrative. For example, Lupo notes that such prominent figures in the history of organized crime as Stefano Magaddino, Carlo Gambino, Giuseppe “Joe” Profaci, Albert Anastasia, and Joseph Bonanno were all between eighteen and twenty-five years old when they arrived in New York (Salvatore Maranzano was thirty-nine) and that all of them were “linked to Mafia networks before their departure” (49). Examining these individual life histories, he argues that these Mafia leaders “went to America to complete the process, not because they were poor and desperate men, as the stereotype associated with both the Mafia and migration would have it” (57). Lupo’s account offers a thought-provoking perspective, one that suggests it would be interesting to evaluate why many of the offspring of Mafia leaders continued in the illicit “family business” rather than pursuing careers in noncriminal sectors when they had opportunities to do so.

Lupo concludes, “Italian gangsterism in New York derived from an overlapping of different components, including regional origins, generational difference, the degree of Americanization, and connections with other ethnic mobs or the Sicilian Mafia.” (44). A similar case could be made for the ‘Ndrangheta, and both books under discussion here share several similarities. Both rely, in part, on the framework offered by social historian Alan Block (1983), which categorizes organized crime into two types: “enterprise syndicates,” which focus on providing illicit goods and services; and “power syndicates,” which rely on extortion to protect the group and its territory. Block argued that organized-crime groups can display both characteristics, and this appears to be the case for all the mafias considered here, whether in Calabria, Sicily, or the United States. It can be argued that any crime group must engage in both—as an enterprise (to make money illicitly) and as a power syndicate (to protect itself from competition and law enforcement).

Materials from these two books overlap in a chart of the leading Italian gangsters in New York from the 1920s to the 1950s (41): Most of them were

Sicilians, but Calabrians were also well represented. These books offer revisionist perspectives on the history of organized crime by taking on widely held beliefs and using new evidence to re-evaluate long-standing interpretations. Lupo uses newly available official Italian documents from the 1920s and 1930s to conduct an exhaustive re-examination of the conclusions of previous scholarly historical investigations. Sergi and Lavorgna's book joins the judicial work of the district anti-Mafia directorates with an analysis of ways in which geography, political weakness, and local economies combined to develop the dynamic nature of 'Ndrangheta clans. In addition, as time passes and older generations of 'Ndrangheta and Mafia are incarcerated or die, it becomes easier to examine the complexities of organized-crime history in fresher perspective.

In Lupo's book, "the two Mafias evolved in an ongoing process of interconnection and hybridization within an intercontinental network that linked individuals, interests, ideas and places" (2). Much the same nuanced approach marks Sergi and Lavorgna's work on the 'Ndrangheta. As a result, *The Two Mafias* and *'Ndrangheta*, by developing new evidence and fresh arguments, are effective guides for taking another look at a distinctive chapter of Italian and Italian American history and for understanding the persistence of organized criminal networks around the world.

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Note

1. For example, Indonesian police are investigating a "Chili Mafia," which is actually a group of wholesalers alleged to manipulate the price of Indonesia's favorite spice (Salna, 2017).

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