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Racketeering in Campania: how clans have adapted and how the extortion phenomenon is perceived

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Institutional studies on the *Camorra* and its illegal activities are much more limited in comparison to the Sicilian Mafia. The study of its various aspects remains marginal, even though, through the first decade after the unification of Italy, the *Neapolitan Camorra*, as a form of organised crime and its associates, and not the Sicilian Mafia, raised initial concerns from the emerging national State. Illegal activities of the *Camorra* are developed on the illegal and legal market. This paper analyses the phenomenon of racketeering because it is not possible to understand the historical transformation of the essential traits of racketeering or the persistence of it if the birth, transformation and development of the *Camorra* are not reconstructed. Extortion is to the *Camorra* what territory is to the Mafia.

Keywords: Organised crime; racketeering; Mafia; legal and illegal market

1. Introduction

Institutional studies on the *Camorra* and its illegal activities are much more limited in comparison to the Sicilian Mafia. The central analytical body in social sciences assigned to the Sicilian Mafia studies the objective difficulties in finding a corpus of effective theories capable of outlining methods, tools and ways in which to deconstruct the foundations of the reproductive processes of diverse local crime.¹ The study of its various aspects remains marginal, even though, through the first decade after the unification of Italy, the *Neapolitan Camorra*, as a form of organised crime and its associates, and not the Sicilian Mafia, raised initial concerns from the emerging national State.² In fact, while in the last 40 years empirical analysis on the Mafia has been enriched by the use of different conceptual paradigms (structural, economic, rationalist, confrontational, constructivist) in order to increase the level of understanding of the phenomenon and its complexity and diversity, the same cannot be said of studies on the *Camorra*, which have been persistently subject to discontinuity, and a distinct lack of a systematic, long-term vision.³

2. A few findings on the recent debate about the Mafia

The Mafia historically reconstructed itself,⁴ and this was done with no little scholarly attention.⁵ The initial ‘culturalist’ approach focused on the traditional elements of the Mafia subculture and interpreted the regulation guidelines of its recruits.⁶ It was the first modern sociological interpretation of the modern Mafia, emphasising the organised cultural dimensions of mediation: the Mafia and its *members* are described as violent

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cultural mediators that bridge the communication gap between the State and the subordinate classes.⁷ During the 1980s, starting with Arrighi in Calabria, a different direction, of economic analysis, was developed with an emphasis on the economic and sociocultural preconditions of organised crime in the post-unitary period of Southern Italy.⁸ Members of the Mafia were seen as innovative and entrepreneurial, according to the more classical sense of Schumpeter thought, dedicated to the accumulation of wealth.⁹ In the same way, Catanzaro then defines the Mafia as violent protection racketeers as well as developers and regulators of protection and guarantors of trust in economic transactions which took place in various contexts of generalised distrust.¹⁰ All these characteristics mentioned, however, do not give an accurate account of the versatility of the Mafia. So much so, at the same time, other studies are directed to the relationships of power and the way in which Mafia groups infiltrate the political and institutional sphere.¹¹ Other contributions delve into the organisational dimension of Mafia business, stressing their capacity for interference in the functioning of the market and influence in local development.¹²

A more recent and renewed new cultural approach has paid more attention to social practices and cognitive patterns, the range of strategies, shared signals and hidden meanings, and it has followed this track in going over and re-reading the Mafia subculture in light of these new concepts.¹³ These approaches go hand in hand with new studies of a more historical nature interested in the genesis and extension of the Mafia, or criminal associations with similar characteristics, in other regions of Southern Italy to explain the reasons for their territorial roots.¹⁴

If, on the one hand, scientific research has produced controversial results, on the other, the fight against the Mafia has become over time a 'reversible destiny',¹⁵ substantiated both by blows inflicted on the 'cupola' (Mafia high command) and by the arrests of hundreds of fugitives. The Mafia has to a certain degree stepped back, and the outcomes of investigations have produced a new aspect to the issue of territorial organisation of the Mafia, so much so that it has put two theses in contrast: supporters of the idea that the Mafia network is fluid and unstable¹⁶ and those who believe that the Mafia is a unique organisation with a *hierarchical* structure and pyramidal command ('cupola' or 'Commission') which tends to incorporate all mandates and territorial gangs. This, in *certain* ways, confirms the 'Buscetta theory'. This last thesis has a foundation in the converging evidence of the *pentiti*,¹⁷ as well as the successes reported by law enforcement agencies over the last two decades which have led to talks of a real dismantling of the majority of the Cosa Nostra. However, the arrest of Bernardo Provenzano in 2006 undermines this unambiguous vision of the Mafia, boosting the theory of organisational diversity. Indeed, the increased willingness of Provenzano to mediate rather than the incisive action typical of Riina and Bagarella confirms the hypothesis of a different reorganisation by Mafia groups as a response to the effective counteraction rather than the behaviour of a unique social entity within a social context in which the Mafia sets up a sequence of exchanges with individuals, institutions in the field of politics, economics and society.¹⁸

Studies on the *Camorra*, however, cannot boast such a host of concepts. To understand some features of the *modus operandi* of the *Camorra*, its cognitive style, the reasons for its existence, the roles played by social classes, the interference and conditioning of the economy and administration, the direct and indirect connection between the system of illegal actions and the actions of criminals, the engagement and disengagement of civil society to set up a social and cultural opposition to the *Camorra*, the organisational patterns of criminal activity, the exchange between a corrupt and criminal interaction and

the organisational structure of the *Camorra*, it is necessary to compare it to the conceptual theses already mentioned.

The attention given by scholars to powerful criminals of the Mafia in order to interpret the processes of Mafia institutionalisation and the legitimacy it receives in direct and indirect forms from large sections of the 'Mafia bourgeoisie' is not found in studies on the *Camorra*. There is no radical and continuous interpretation similar to the one found in Mafia analysis.¹⁹ Even if this reticulated formation called the *Camorra* had already been mentioned by Monnier in 1862, who had long complained of the relationships between the 'noble city' and the 'plebeian city',²⁰ or Francesco Mastriani in 1863, who talked of an 'elegant Camorra',²¹ or even by Saredo, who spoke of a 'high Camorra created by astute and daring bourgeoisie' to delineate the permeability of the boundaries between a lawful city and an unlawful one. The *Camorra* is a reticulated formation which has not weakened in recent decades but has been strengthened by incorporating the party system, the dignitaries, politicians, administrative secretaries, the white-collar workers and sometimes even police officers and magistrates.²²

In the studies of the *Camorra* is not historical continuity, and there is a weak presence of economic and sociological research. This has made the interpretative framework even weaker.²³ However, some contributions with variable intensity and discontinuity help us to develop a reflection on various aspects of *Camorra* phenomenology. From a social aspect, the *Camorra* cannot be compared to other forms of international organised crime as it is an abnormal monster which enjoys exclusive features. There are also, of course, many traits that the *Camorra* shares with other contemporary modern forms of organised crime across the world. Another aspect: it is not possible to understand the historical transformation of the essential traits of racketeering or the persistence of it if the birth, transformation and development of the *Camorra* are not reconstructed. Extortion is to the *Camorra* what territory is to the Mafia.

It is necessary then to weave the analysis on racketeering and its changes with the most significant milestones in the secular history of the *Camorra* in Campania. We depart from here to present the results of research and the way in which witnesses (judges, representatives and law enforcement agents, victims of extortion-entrepreneurs and traders) consider the phenomenon of the protection racket and usury as its manifestation intertwines with the story of the *Camorra* and the modification of the organisational models of the clan.

3. Findings on the *Camorra*'s heritage

It could be said that there is a debate about the *Camorra* before and after Gomorrah.²⁴ What precedes the work of Saviano develops on two axes, sometimes intersected: the literary one and the historical one. It begins in nineteenth-century Naples and ends with the Cuocolo maxi trial (1907–1912). It resumes after the 1980 earthquake in Campania, when some sociological contributions and the first 'Anti-Mafia' Commission made the first tentative steps to go beyond the historical perspective. The debate following the publication of Gomorrah is more recent but has greater and prior scientific research.²⁵

The literature coincides with the work of Marc Monnier which recounts the daily routine of the *Camorra* in the nineteenth century.²⁶ He was among the first to define the extortion activity and to highlight an aspect that remains to this day, in its modern guise: the actions of the *Camorra* are facilitated by a widespread cultural and social illegality not only embedded in the poor, but also in areas of the middle classes. In the former, these tangible and illegal actions that take place on a daily basis are merely an act of survival. In

the latter, this illegality is expressed in terms of collusion, corruption and growth of private interest.²⁷ The susceptibility of the boundaries between legal and illegal and criminal is always a critical context point that has heavily influenced both the assertion of a *milieu* of institutional corruption and that of criminal activities. Relationships built by the *Camorra* with *velvet gloves*, to build-up partnerships and interweave interests with members of the upper classes, the middle classes, the bureaucratic, administrative and professional sectors, to be able to co-opt them on various crimes and illegal activities: the *Camorra* thus becomes the distributor of benefits to anyone, individuals or groups, who invest in these relationships. Illegal relationships which also demonstrate the inherent weakness of the State: the dominant aspect of post-unification. This precondition is documented by the writings of historians and politicians and explains the initial development of the *Camorra*: the weak structure of the State throughout the post-unification period.²⁸ The *Camorra* has developed on a criminal landscape (extortion) using logic, action and criminal means which are favoured by an original sense of lawlessness (*widespread Camorra*) in the various social strata which made the legal town inseparable from illegality: a link between past and present.

Certain contemporary historians²⁹ believe that this period coincides with the genesis and development of the old *Camorra* and have reported some key characteristics: (a) throughout the nineteenth century the *Camorra* was limited to the Neapolitan urban areas, with some offshoots in 'Terra di Lavoro' and the surrounding areas; (b) its sources, in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, were linked to the world of prisons, penitentiary colonies that the Bourbon Government built on the Tremiti Islands opposite the Gargano, and also in the army where they conscripted detained criminals; (c) its initial development started in Naples, mainly around economic activities and markets which initiated one of the typical activities of its criminal profile: extortion; and (d) there is a confused, fragile and indistinct boundary between the lawless population (the plebeian masses), thugs (thieves, fences, crooks), criminals (the *Camorra class*) and the *administrative Camorra* even if it is not possible to talk of stable groups and organisations; the first historical *Camorra*, the *Umirtà society*, already had an internal organisation with rites and rules.³⁰

Since its birth, the *Camorra* has exhibited a primary organisational articulation in order to develop various criminal activities (smuggling, clandestine operations) at the centre of which there is the protection racket. To the exploitation of detainees was also added a 'tax' on all commercial activities undertaken around the markets at the port and to any form of monetary transaction. The extortion activity was facilitated not only by the use of violence but also the availability of the plebeian masses, especially youth, desperate to serve a boss (Masto), keen to gain respect: young *lazzaroni* eager to use force to intimidate and to make money through crime. The *Camorra* offered in exchange money, social reputation, belonging, identity and a career. The other aspect was the connection between widespread illegal practices among the plebeian masses (*working poor crime*) and the need for them to avoid the attention of the State. The same happens today, the only difference is that it has spread to different areas of the social strata, in the sense that the activity originally revolved around illegal activities and then in certain economic activities. Racketeering is today practised on all legal, illegal and criminal activities.

There are two aspects related to each other which are useful in understanding racketeering: one is the organisational model of the criminal groups, the other is the configuration of the racketeering activity. Blok claimed that the Mafia had 'rural' origins.³¹ Their function of mediation between landowners and peasants, the art of intertwining and settling in the branches of capital activity in contact and competition with the dominant classes in Sicily was, in addition to the ability to deliver violence, the framework that gave

birth to the Mafia dynasties. Notable and successful barons and landowners (the ‘mafia in yellow gloves’) were also found to be involved in the same network of complicity.³² The Mafia originated in areas of relative economic development where there was intensive agricultural export.³³ And there is evidence that already in the nineteenth century ‘the Mafia had a criminal hierarchical organization’ where every town had its own Mafia, their own ‘band of Mafiosi, dependent on one or more “capi”, who were subordinate to a supreme head [...] and every municipal Mafia group was also subordinate to an intercity or provincial or interprovincial representative’.³⁴

If we compare this with the history of the Camorra and vice versa, we notice that except for the years during Italy’s Restoration period, during which the Camorra tried to attain a stable organisation built around a boss (*caposocietà*) – attempts which have been recorded even in recent years³⁵ – there is no trace of a history of federated clans governed by higher territorial levels up to a centralised or unique hierarchy. The history of *Camorra* coincides more closely with individual urban and family histories; it is a history made up of single groups (families) expanding on individual territories through illegal economic activity. The high density of single groups has a clear limit in terms of cohesive feasibility but at the same time is a factor that has moulded the racket activity. Despite the social functions analysed earlier (order, social control of the ‘down town’ area, collection of taxes, etc.), if we consider the entire period since the early post-unitary period to the first decade of the twentieth century, it can be seen that in that period the Camorra did not succeed in putting down roots in society due to severe and violent opposition and controversial relationships between the authorities and the Camorra, going from compromises, symbiotic relationships and tough repression.³⁶

Historically, *Camorra* racketeering was more an implementation of an accumulative primordial practice rather than a rational strategy for a stable organisation. In literature on the Mafia, everyone agrees on the *embedded* character of the Mafia which is expressed through far-reaching roots and territorial control. Some, in positions of power, even consider such extortionate activities by a group of specialists (mediators/entrepreneurs of violence) favourable, exploiting a condition depending on

- (a) a lack of reliability among individuals;
- (b) a lack of confidence in administrative and political justice;
- (c) the social control that certain groups have in exchange for opportunities for social mobility;
- (d) and finally, the discrepancy between the tasks and the State’s areas of intervention, and the real and effective management of these tasks.³⁷

A variant on the theory of protection is the analysis proposed by Gambetta on the theory of ‘trust’ which maintains that the Mafia groups specialise in introducing calculated doses of mistrusts as to set in motion and/or keep alive the issue of protection.³⁸ The activity that most distinguishes Mafia groups, then, is protection-extortion as this is what regulates the ‘territorial sovereignty’ of the Mafia.³⁹ In this context, the extortion is always bound to an organisational context and linked to a local level: ‘unlike other illegal activities the organization consists of a network of relationships rather than a wealth of knowledge and techniques of production or marketing, and often requires no initial financial resources’.⁴⁰

Both these theses give autonomy to acts of violence, the organisation’s illegal monopoly resulting from a territorial settlement which they want to control. The foundation of

this thesis, where there is a prevalence of offers or demands of trust, is expressed in what Block has called a *power syndicate*: extortion as an activity with the aim of controlling territory, which is distinguished from an *enterprise syndicate*, that is, where the primary characteristic of a Mafia organisation is concerned with organising and implementing illegal business and trafficking. These theses contradict another hypothesis founded on the premise that the racketeering activity does not necessarily need to be linked to a service (such as the 'safety guarantee' that Weber analysed or protection and the administration of justice).⁴¹ The coercive offer of protection, especially if it is of a monopolistic nature, would not need to provide a service, nor would there be a need for rigidity or organisational flexibility, nor should it be considered as a means to achieve other purposes (territorial power and control). Due to the illegal use of violence (threatened or put in use), the extortion activity becomes a parasitic payment practice forced on firms which are more easily subject to criminal control as they too are part of the criminal sphere.

The theses both assume the existence of the above-mentioned territorial embedding and offer an interpretation for a stable profile, not for the individual and the original criminal action, much less for extortion carried out in areas characterised by a strong instability of criminal groups (as in Naples). This consideration has validity not only because we are talking about the genesis of the Mafia but also its subsequent stabilisation.

However, the weak roots of certain clans and the uncertainty resulting from their high density are specific to the modern Camorra and give the extortion activity a peculiarity that does not exist in the Mafia. The two fundamental assumptions mentioned assume linear behaviour not found in empirical evidence.⁴² If it is assumed that the extortive practice, with its patterns and stable recurrence, is the means through which power and the 'full and absolute sovereignty on territory' of the Mafia are set,⁴³ and that the extortive practice is the essence of the organisation of those that wield power, then the Camorra cannot be considered as an organisation that controls the territory, but as a complex of criminal activities implemented and carried out on the territory. The extortion activity is, therefore, more of an enforced tax as it is the most basic and direct form of primitive accumulation of wealth. It can be described as a 'parasitic bribe', or as an 'intermediation', other times as 'hoarding or protection' or as a self-defence strategy, or even as a determinant factor in the 'monopolistic control' of an area, and finally, as a 'rigged service'.

The similar nature of concrete social data shows different profiles which are all creditable and not necessarily dependent on the exclusive method of organisation of the group or on the violence committed.⁴⁴

4. The Camorra family clans: how crime has modernised in Campania

After the Cuocolo trial, the Camorra started to decline, confirming its marginality and political subordination to the dominant powers of Italy which had no difficulty in ridding itself when it was no longer needed. This is where the cycle of an association with criminals ends. A criminal organisation considered too close (*guappi di sciammeria* and of *Camorra nouveau-riche*) to high society. The old Camorra disappeared during the *belle époque*,⁴⁵ and there were no significant signs of its existence until the period between the two world wars. This was due to two reasons: the lack of an extensive criminal network and the scarcity of resources to exchange with the political arena.⁴⁶ This did not mean that the *guappi* had disappeared, nor that there was less of a tendency to try to sneak in any kind of social or economic activity – typical of social contexts strongly dominated by the presence of huge marginal masses – and derive an appropriate profit.

Indeed, in the postwar period the continuity between the old Camorra and the one which developed around family clans (now defined as the traditional Camorra) focuses on a common characteristic of marginality and subordination which basically ends at the end of the 1950s and increased its discontinuity over the next decade. It is no coincidence that in the postwar period and up to the early 1960s in various contexts in the province of Naples and Caserta, Camorra individuals and mediators linked farmers with the urban vegetable markets.⁴⁷

In the urban area, criminal profiles linked to illegal trafficking and the black market stand out due to the influence of products originating from allied forces aimed at coping with the great depression and devastation caused by the war.⁴⁸ From this derives a circuit of activities associated with racketeering, and immediately in the following years the formation of a large local market, self-sufficient and illegal, where the State authority does nothing to thwart its development in the informal or semi-legal economy (with various productions and sales of clothing and textiles), illegal trafficking and the illegal economy (including cigarette smuggling at its centre) and in criminal activities (including *racketeering* and usury constituted the contact point with the traditional and old Camorra).⁴⁹

The creation of these economic and social areas in segmented form yet with fragile borders gives continuity to the interstitial nature (environment/organisation) which from the start has marked the presence of the *Camorra* in Naples and Campania.⁵⁰ The array of trafficking and illegal activities which would develop *en masse* in a climate of acceptance at the beginning of the 1960s would then be downgraded from the illegal to the illicit substitution of legal employment opportunities.

The first city-dwelling clans took up cigarette smuggling which saw Naples become one of the main black markets of the Mediterranean. In the provinces, however, dealing with the public markets was still the main activity of the clans. It is after the war that the continuity between the old Camorra and the one that started around family ties (now defined as the *traditional Camorra*) centred on a common character of marginality and subordination which ended towards the late 1950s, with its discontinuity increasing over the following decade. While still for a long period the *Camorra* oversaw all illegal activities that the new populace of the twentieth century produced (stolen property, theft, robbery, smuggling, prostitution, gambling, fraud, usury, the numbers racket, racketeering), it is also true that with the shift to smuggling as the central activity – first in a position of subordination to Marseilles and the Sicilian Mafia in the 1960s, and then acquiring an international and collaborative role with Cosa Nostra in the 1970s – a new organisational structure was founded, of which the family unit was its *core*. It expanded on criminal markets with a funding of capital and organisational capacity that was not comparable with the old Camorra. The basic organisational unit of the clan was the *family*. This was where their internal strength came from to oppose outside forces. Their strategy for clan expansion was through family relations and new parental inclusions (through marriage). This change was accompanied by three simultaneous, exogenous processes to the criminal sphere that would influence its growth in the following decades, and not only outline the connections within the organised crime sphere of the city, but the entire *hinterland* and the ‘Terra di lavoro’ (modern southern *Lazio* and northern *Campania*):

- (a) an increase in building density;
- (b) the start of a flow of public investments to enable processes of industrialisation;
- (c) the formation of a social group around which public resources and the role of political parties and public authorities would practice a strategic collection of consent based on the redistribution of patronage and control of resources, the role of mediation and political security.

These three processes would also influence the territorial phenomenology of the *Camorra*. An increase in building density done without an overall urban plan opens the doors to a market connected to building and brickwork whose effects, products from both public and private building, generate

- (a) city areas without identity, recognisable rules and hierarchies, accompanied in time, especially in the suburbs, by real urban alienation;
- (b) the formation of a vast economic market segment in which the activity of racketeering, intimidation and blackmail would find it easier to gain a foothold due to the semi-legal and illegal character of the majority of businesses.

Industries and firms in the metropolitan area would produce, in random fashion, a working-class presence which in many quarters of the city would work as a factor in the containment and control of criminal marginalisation and of the *Camorra*. In fact, the social group that would form around the management of public resources would become the focal point for the growth of various clans. An opportunity to form relationships of collaboration and collusion with different professional activities and local political and administrative leaders, to the point that the post-earthquake years in Campania of the 1980s represent the moment that for many clans of the *Camorra* was a further step in infiltrating themselves in the folds of management of *disaster economics*.⁵¹

In a little over 30 years, between 1950 and 1980, organised crime in Naples made three fundamental leaps: the passage from the management of illegal economic activities with a low yield (working poor crime) to the management, marketing and trafficking of goods with a higher profit margin (cigarette smuggling in the early 1960s, and a decade later, drug trafficking). This phase is accompanied by two strategic developments where family-based clans would lead the process: one concerned the overcoming of dependency from the Sicilian Mafia gangs which in fact would never reach full autonomy and furthermore was a source of conflict in the late 1970s between the *Nuova Camorra Organizzata* (NCO) family and the 'Nuova famiglia'.⁵² The other is the effect of *mafia-ization* (becoming similar to the Mafia) on the *Camorra* which would give rise to the formation of a real military power within the clans: the incorporation of affiliates with exclusive military tasks. The second leap coincided with the development of drug trafficking, when in the mid-1970s the most enterprising clans in Naples and Caserta (Ammaturo, Zaza, Nuvoletta Bardellino, Cutolo) showed strong business and organisational capability to expand their economic criminal initiatives to the world markets and at the same time to organise in a more regulated way their criminal activities (primarily extortion). The third leap is the transformation of many *Camorra* clans into vote collectors, territorial organisations capable of winning electoral support, political support for party leaders or parties in exchange for contract management, public services, which especially after the earthquake of the 1980s would bring the majority of business ventures over to many criminal organisations, and this would accelerate and extend the presence of the *Camorra* in the markets and in legal activities.

The time period and mutability indicated should not be interpreted on a traditional/modern linear axis split, which would jointly represent all the clans and all the land areas, as this would be an inadequate representation and distorts the very understanding of the *Camorra*, its activities and its trafficking. In fact, there have always been family clans which are much more extended, more influential, with a strong control of the territory, a

high social and criminal reputation that are more embedded in the criminal history of entire neighbourhoods or parts of cities and have advanced, due to organisational skills, use of techniques, methodologies and implementation strategies on trafficking, the same economic organisations present in regulated markets. Hierarchical leaders of these clans were not (and are not) strangers to a repertoire of knowledge, values, symbols, rules and social practices that would be attributable to an archaic culture and/or a traditional one. In contrast, there are smaller, weaker clans, occupied with limited, illegal, economic activities with subordinate roles, a much more clustered set, and also intermediate groups active on more illegal activities and with larger territories.

There is, in short, a degree of autonomy rather than a direct correlation between the development of criminal activities and trafficking due to the weak implementation of state sovereignty in the territory. Arguing that this latter factor explains the origin of the employment of violence and Camorra control of territories, at least for the profile of the Camorra, is insufficient. The extortion procedure, in fact, does not end in just extortion-type protection. This belongs more to the phenomenology of the Mafia. The offer of protection, in fact, is based on the ability to exercise violence, hence it follows that violence and security are inseparable. However, empirical evidence gathered on the Camorra, as indicated by historians, as well as the results of our research tells us that it is not so.

5. The process of differentiation in the criminal sphere and the modification of racketeering

The parliamentary anti-Mafia Commission, established in 1962, became aware of the Camorra only in 1993. While Sicily and Italy were shocked by the massacres in Capaci and Via D'Amelio, in Campania other wars were being perpetrated without a high-profile institutional study put in place to understand what was happening. We are referring of course to the wars between the Nuova Fratellanza (NF) and the NCO; the clashes between clans of Bardellino and Nuvoletta, respectively (1984–1988), and the war between the Casalesi and the Alfieri clan (1988–1991). Once again it could be said the State arrived late. However, it is just the confirmation of a general climate of underestimation. This demonstrates the organised criminal phenomenology of Campania emphasising the high density of criminal groups and a further (fourth) historical leap that the Camorra made after 1980: as an entrepreneurial, economic subject on the market of business procurement, subcontracting, direct services to businesses 'strong within its own corporate connotation, corporate organization and managerial mindset; with marketing experts, economic observers, legal offices, political relationships'.⁵³ The Commission found that the Camorra had, over time, built these and many, conniving and close trading relationships. It possessed an army, was the only one which had killed relatives of collaborators of justice, and so was considered a force equal to, if not more powerful, than the other Mafias Sacra Corona Unita, Ndrangheta. It outlined several illegal activities as sources of profit but was not focused on extortion. It spoke of a transversal activity, arguing that the criminal profile was of the Camorra if racketeering was involved.

A bigger and more distinct picture emerges of Campania criminal groups, and at the same time a concern materialises for the changing economic, national and international landscape which complicates the development of the south. The conditions needed for this are the creation of a safer environment, where market competition is not affected by the presence of aggressive capitalism typical of Mafia organisations that distort market rules to reorient them to their own purposes.

There is, on the other hand, an ambivalence in the growth of clans: if, on the one hand, it follows the growth of a territory (as in the case of Naples in recent years, again at the centre of trafficking and international trade), on the other hand, it does not mean that all homogeneous organised criminal groups that interact in it acquire a global profile. Indeed, while some organisations have combined the global/local element,⁵⁴ other clans have kept a lower, local profile, ‘an affiliation network’.⁵⁵ Also, confirming the tradition of a chaotic and anarchic city reflected in its local crime; gangs restricted to small territories, criminal cells which work on behalf of clans, groups operating exclusively in certain neighbourhoods, predatory criminal gangs who seek to be recognised as *Camorra*.⁵⁶ A process of organisational differentiation that stands along a continuum of connotative polarity: open/closed, weak/strong, safe/unsafe, local/global, vertical/horizontal, and cohesive/unstable a manifold network/a limited network. A higher density of groups that cause a differentiation of clans that is a precondition for the fragility of territorial peace and affect law enforcement efforts.⁵⁷

This differentiation is accompanied in any case by the appearance of a new generation of gangsters whose presence would not be felt until the late 1990s, and the new millennium would see a willingness and ability to deliver violence with a simplicity that would be shocking, a staggering cynicism, and business skills that would strengthen even more so the transnational character already expressed some decades before. It is no coincidence that this entrepreneurial ability was matched by an increase in the role of the Mafia in drug trafficking and, between the most qualified organisations, a strong entrepreneurial incisiveness in the regional areas of central northern Italy.⁵⁸

So what characteristics does the extortion activity have today and what continuity/discontinuity is there in relation to it being carried out by the old or traditional *Camorra*? In terms of continuity, as the old *Camorra* carried out ‘real police duties and social control in typical places of common “danger” subjecting all criminal activity to a “tax rate”, even today *Camorra* imposes a tax on all illegal activities practiced on the territory by common criminals (smuggling, gambling, prostitution, drug dealing, counterfeiting, stolen property, robbery, usury, etc.).’⁵⁹ Racketeering is almost always carried out directly by the clan or by members of the clan, but outsourcing the work is not disparaged.

Another element of continuity is the use of violence. It is an ingredient ever present over time. Even if the *Camorra* in the late 1950s and the decade of the 1960s behaved in a calmer, less aggressive manner, it was a more functional mobilisation and organisation of its resources to increase the return on illegal assets. The modern one, however, has resorted to more intense, decisive action, violent and unpredictable. If we look at the discontinuity, the first item regards the extension of the protection racket from illegal activities to a legal, economic area which falls within the territorial control of the clan. In certain municipalities in the province of Naples, in all of Caserta and throughout many neighbourhoods in the same city there is not a single business, company, firm, stall or space where the money which circulates does not undergo some form of extortion. It is a required tax in recognition of the authoritarian organisation on the territory. It is usually the type of extortion which takes the form of a sold commodity: protection. Another element of discontinuity is the presence, often, of the double extortion. That is, the business or trader pays twice because they are extorted by different clans. Then, the extortion no longer has the stable nature of a tax, whether it is a percentage or a one-off payment, and here is another discontinuity, in these forms it is associated with the imposition of supplies, products, services and also staff. A further distinction of the extortion is not only the handing over of money but also goods (which are then resold and imposed on other merchants). These

different forms are not mutually exclusive but in many cases coexist. The harassing and victimisation of economic operators makes the context of a clean, healthy and freely competitive economy, impractical. The protection racket is also often associated with the feeling of humiliation that the moneylender brings of the violence which a large part of the social fabric in this region experiences. Another form of extortion derives, in our opinion, from the fragility and fluidity of many clans that tend to assume a high criminal profile, but lack the strength and time, making this matter more discontinuous than in the past but also more complex: the presence of rackets, which are disorganised and even have a predatory character. It is disorganised due to the brief cycle of life/death of the minor clans which generates the phenomenon of the double predatory extortion. Typically, extortion can be used within a criminal group to build a criminal profile, to make their presence felt on the territory without a planning model, without inserting the activity into a criminal *timetable*. This extortionate behaviour reciprocates nothing.

6. The points of view of the courts, forces of order and victims: organisational models and forms of extortion

In this final section, we briefly recount the findings from in-depth interviews carried out with a large group of judges, investigators and victims.⁶⁰ Regarding the organisational model, the clans have become strongly differentiated over the course of half a century, although the basic unit remains the family clan. The absence of a centralised management in criminal activities requires a higher investment in organisation and human resources, both symbolic and military, making organisational crime in Campania weaker as it is fragmented into many small, medium and large groups. Resources are drained in conflicts between clans for areas, resulting in wars, feuds and military clashes. If there were a centrally regulated system, paradoxically the resources required would not be enough. A significant change is that today many illegal activities (drug trafficking, robberies, smuggling, and stolen goods, counterfeiting) are no longer handled directly by the strong clans of the metropolitan area but allow various 'criminal cells' to handle them, from which they agree a regular and predetermined percentage as a method of income. In the provinces, it is different as clans have a more rigid organisational model and the management of various activities and trafficking is more direct, as well as having a more intense infiltration in local government. In the province of Caserta, for example, the organisational model is much closer to the Mafia model, with a more centralised and hierarchical organisational structure. In the case of the 'Casalesi', we could even speak of a clan federation supported by a more centralised and hierarchical structure or it could be seen as a *federation of cluster clans* held together firmly by a centralised head. The alternating process of Neapolitan criminal groups is more intense, determined by alliances and separations, new formations of bands that in a short period of time split and shape territorial areas, the extermination of clans as a result of the outcome of feuds and divisions. This prevents strong, secure control of the territory (and hence the presence of predatory crime). In the provinces, the criminal set-up is more stable as the roots of the clan are generally historically older. The regulation of contracts is more effective and organisational rules are accepted by various criminal groups. Infiltration in production services and local government is more direct and clan elders generally develop good neighbourly relations with rival clans, knowing that any alteration or disrespect to territorial powers would cause a war.

The proceeds of racketeering are collected into a central safe of the clan and are generally used to pay salaries, legal fees for imprisoned clan members, families of prisoners: a share of the protection money also has a replacement function in terms of income for affiliate's criminal work. The protection racket is considered, in the criminal environment, the most direct manifestation of territorial operations, and therefore, a means of identifying clan jurisdiction in territories. Today, the power and strength of a clan derive not so much from territorial control through racketeering activities, but by drug-pushing (in so-called drug-squares), which is much more profitable.

The strongest clans, or rather the families which are most deeply embedded, and are dominant over large areas (such as the area of Torre Annunziata and the surrounding villages of the Gionta-Gallo-Limelli-Vangone clan), tend to outsource even their protection rackets, 'authorising' the activity to minor clans, with lesser military power. These superior clans offer protection to the subordinate clans and also collect dues from the various illegal activities permitted to them. They also control the organisational dynamics and the action strategies. This social dynamic of a vertical type (clan B subjected to the hegemonic clan A) does not set up a federated alliance between clans (perceiving themselves, i.e., families with an older criminal history, as more prestigious than the new associations), but only a proxy authorised to carry out illegal activities on the territory of which the handover reduces the costs and risks of clan hegemony which orientates its activities around three much more profitable areas and the activity of money laundering: drug trafficking, the interception of contract procurement and waste management. This organisational dimension is typical of the Camorra that 'runs like an enterprise' whose framework of strategic choices is not only to produce profits but to organise and govern intermediate levels of competence giving partial autonomy in some areas so that more targets are pursued (e.g. increasing territorial power and organisation at national and international levels; increased reliability for new transactions; joint ventures to co-invest, etc.). The Camorra's ability to camouflage itself is such that the boss himself becomes an entrepreneur.

This vertical relationship is different to the alliances, strategic cooperations and exchange relations that can occur between different clans (typically the strongest clans) in certain conditions of territorial tension (with cartel wars) or when important business turns up. Observing the fragmentation of the various groups, it is possible to understand why there is such a high rate of conflict and instability between criminal clans in Campania and especially in the metropolitan area of Naples. The first reason indicated is the fluidity and decomposition of alliances. The second lies in the presence of 'weak *Camorra* planning. In the majority of Camorra clans, the aim is to extract as much as possible on a day-to-day basis, everything, immediately'. What is offered on the fragmentation of the groups constitutes a structural conflict shared by almost all magistrates and powered by this distorted division (often even within the clan). A conflict that Dahrendorf would define as 'intense' where 'energy expenditure and the degree of involvement of the parties in conflict'⁶¹ generates in Campania cartel wars, feuds and divisions.⁶² The intensity is a homogeneous form of an expression of violence, in the sense that the recourse to arms is perceived as the only way to resolve such conflicts. Cartel wars constitute a 'juxtaposition of two composite groups over a vast territory, equal to at least the city and the first belt of peripheral municipalities'.⁶³ At stake are territorial and trading jurisdictions. Then there are the divisions and feuds, lower-scale wars and so the intensity decreases.⁶⁴

Observing the conflict, and as such the wars, not with regard to the intensity but the level of involvement, the conflict integrates endogenous and exogenous motivations and

causes which determine it, and the same phenomenal spectrum widens. The conflict can be of a horizontal type which extends when all criminal groups are involved. No one is excluded; in fact, it is even necessary to choose a side. This is what happened in the infamous clash between the NF and the NCO. During the management phase of the bloody conflict, it is possible to establish a direction or 'cupola' which decides military action strategies, but always returns to the fold at the end of the conflict. For the most part, it gives life to close relations between the allied governing clans, but it never assumes a permanent governing character. There are other forms of conflict that arise: partially horizontal, vertical, and oblique, and finally, internal.⁶⁵

The stability/instability of an organisation constitutes a determining factor in the realisation of racketeering. In some cases, the request for resources may become more intense, with larger quotients, and obviously more widespread. If a large clan is extended and has a large number of affiliates (e.g. the Sarno clan), the demand for organisation is high: resources should support the military side; ensure the welfare of families of detainees; pay lawyers; ensure solidarity, salaries, etc. There is a need, therefore, to extend the activity on the territory and expand into new territories. Hence, conflicts with neighbouring groups. At the same time, a deep trust is needed that controls the different levels of organisation, relationships with subordinate clans and the results of different activities (racketeering, usury, drug-squares, etc.). Therefore, there must be a proportional symmetry between the organisation's development, territorial expansion and redistribution of resources, which justifies the investment profits. If this development is asymmetrical, that is, if the economic resources are drained to below the mobilisation of human resources and the area of influence has not expanded, the organisation incurs a process of destabilisation. If this endogenous dynamic is associated with a process of exogenous contrast, effective enforcement in the organisation collapses.⁶⁶

Contrary to what most people think, there is a level of specialisation in racketeering: 'who does the intimidating; who researches the victim, who makes the approach; who manages the collection'. Compared to the handsome profits that the management of drug-producing, marketing and the distribution of drugs provide, 'racketeering is small fry and this is the reason why well rooted clans with long criminal histories tend to give the management of this activity to lower clans and to receive an agreed percentage. The costs and risks decrease for the strong clans and increase the benefits'. For the provincial areas and in Caserta itself, racketeering behaviours are different. There are municipalities in which the racket is unitary, with blanket coverage and exercised in the style of protection; in others, for example, 'Ercolano', it is easy to stumble upon the double extortion, the double victimisation: the trader or the entrepreneur pays two rival clans, and in return receives nothing. Racketeering also imposes a large range of relevant services on products, goods which may be taken without paying, supplies and many other forms that involve the provision of staff/workers, and partnerships/shareholders for a company, etc. For some clans, this activity is more marginal, for minor ones it is central, and for others it is extensive, but the greater profits always derive from drugs. In each case, the range varies between 15% and 20% up to a maximum of 40% of the turnover of a clan. Racketeering and usury are intrinsically linked: the former is liquidity for the clan, cash which can be immediately invested. Usury becomes an ideal form of investment in a cycle (the illegal loan) which in turn produces high profits.

Most of the investigators interviewed argue that if we observe the criminal act and the organisational model of the city-based clans with respect to their provincial counterparts it provides aims and a methodology of action and conduct of illegal activities. City-based groups working with objectives and methodologies of a predatory type, compared with

those of the province, adopt a more direct management and activity-oriented infiltration into the fabric of the social and economic context and the political-administrative sphere.

Almost all of the clans which operate in the Neapolitan area and which have control of their territory, says Dr Vittorio Pisani, chief of the Neapolitan mobile police team, 'do not directly manage the illegal activities (drug trafficking, robberies, smuggling, fencing, usury, counterfeiting), but empower small criminal groups or families with their running, receiving a monthly fee and participating in the financing of illicit activities. Only the racket remains the exclusive prerogative of the clan. The commission for such crime is decided by the organisation and by affiliates. The proceeds go to a central fund and no exception is allowed. The protection racket can only be put in place by the clan and in the name of the clan and this gives out a sign of the group with jurisdiction in the area'. Given the relationship between superior and minor clans and cells in the management of these activities, it is clearly always in a state of tension. This granting of work to lesser clans and cells demonstrates why alliances are so flexible and uncertain, and why the strongest clans protecting the weakest criminal groups in a continuous search to expand its territorial influence end up clashing.

In cities, there is a huge range of racketeering practices and none are as all-encompassing or thorough as in the construction industry. It is systematic racketeering affecting all small and large businesses. Indeed, a building contractor will often anticipate and calculate the cost of being 'set-up right' by the clan controlling the area, when building a house, a shop or an architectural area so as to take into account cost-effectiveness. Then there is the racket against traders: this takes various forms. It is a periodic request (Easter, Christmas and the Assumption), but in situations of crisis, such as legal resources for prisoners, etc. It is accompanied by intermittent requests. There is no business sector that eludes this extortionate activity even if its pervasiveness relies on the neighbourhood and the stability and strength of the clan. To this form of racketeering is increasingly added the supply of products or services. Another form of racketeering practised by smaller but violent gangs on circumscribed areas is the acquisition of products (in particular periods of the year) and the imposed resale to other traders. The 'pizzo' (protection money) is asked of all economic activities, and it ranges from 20 to 30 euros a week for a stand/stall or 50 euros for *posteggiatori* (people who keep an eye on parked cars for a tip). The more substantial figures relate to the systematic monthly demand (from 300 to 500 even 1000–2000 euros per month) and depends on the type of commercial operation, by area, by magnitude and by the activity's lifespan. An occasional 'pizzo' is also requested on traditional celebrations, but is usually linked to cash contingencies of the clan. Racketeering in the provinces has a more systematic, widespread nature, and there is greater recognition of the supremacy of the clan on the territory; a necessary tax. There is no economic activity that escapes: restaurants, delicatessens, launderettes, car washes, newsstands, everything is subjected to the tax. There is no enterprise or company that does not pay, that does not use imposed products, does not outsource services to firms listed by the clan or to take supplies from corporations indicated by the clan. In the construction sector, and thus the whole chain that characterises this activity (supply of materials, concrete, earth moving equipment, etc.), nothing is exempt from some form of extortion. Regarding public procurement, there is a direct intervention by the clans, who manage the contract and give it to 'friendly' firms on which they calculate the 'tax' percentage and also distribute among different companies the work required in the contract.

The last group that we interviewed was one which had been subjected to racketeering and against which has begun a counterattack through the associative anti-racket

movement. Thirty victims were interviewed (all traders and businessmen). The first item that emerges from the interviews tells us that in the vast majority of cases the clan making the request for protection money initially has an exploratory character, always starting from much higher figures and then dropping. Clearly, this strategy is aimed at promoting in the victims a sense of 'gratitude' towards their extortionists. The victims now appear beneficiaries to a discount. This strategy is also a way to get a 'feel' for the terrain, to check the potential capacity for resistance or the reaction of the victim. Second item: within the construction sector, the presence of racketeering is total, but the more a company is committed to corrupt building activities (e.g. unauthorised building) or has a strong informal if not illegal disposition (i.e. unregistered immigrant workers, tax evasion, undeclared workers, etc.), the greater the certainty that it will be subjected to extortion.

Alongside the construction sector, another sector totally subjected to racketeering is large-scale intermediate distribution, such as supermarkets which undergo two kinds of rackets: the supplies, which the strongest clan takes responsibility of, and the demand for money by smaller criminal groups (from whom the stronger clan take a share). Third item: the more a criminal group has no criminal history, or strong territorial control, is insecure, unaccustomed to the racketeering experience, the more violent it will be, unable to avoid immediately resorting to acts of intimidation, to gauge the effect of intimidation and the reaction that it may arouse in terms of alarm and warning to the judicial authority. The criminal group of this type has a high level of impatience, wanting to rapidly complete the extortion act, and this is the precondition that also generates 'large discounts'. The victim may use this insecurity to delay acquiescing, and instead ensure justice by cooperating with law enforcement agencies and turning in the offenders. Fourth item: that the reverse process just described also relates to the clan which is longstanding, controls the territory, protects economic operators who insist on it and has a criminal profile as such, that only one request is sufficient (furthermore, more affordable for entrepreneurs, craftsmen and tradesmen in the area) because the clan gets what it orders. In this case, the fifth item, racketeering, is almost always related to the activity of usury. Sixth item: the more the decision of the victim is shared early on among family members, discussed with them, also all the nearest relatives, the greater the strength of reaction that such a unity of purpose creates. In this case, in the vast majority of cases the victim decides to denounce the extortionists and collaborates with justice. Their anxiety, their fear will be shared among the various players and a greater lucidity in facing the situation. Seventh item: if when reporting the crime it is accompanied by a further decision to join an anti-racket association that renders the fight against the racketeering action more visible (logos and slogans for the association; participation in trials and law suits; support for procedures, requirements, anti-racket funds, etc.), the greater the distance the criminal gang or clan will put between themselves and the complainant.

The pattern of the findings to date deduced from interviews gives us an initial framework for interpreting the behaviours of criminal groups and those of the victims. A line of reasoning will be developed once transaction cost theory, which will relate to both the organisations (bureaucracy, markets, enterprises, criminal organisations), and also to offer clues as to how players would face fundamental dilemmas in different situations, is used. In this case, it would be: to pay the 'pizzo' or to denounce? In making the choice, would it be affected by which criminal group is making the extortive request?

Transaction cost theory assumes that once production conditions have developed on a global scale the same companies modify their organisational structures of production more and more by outsourcing to other companies the specific manufacture of its products. The

company can now no longer be considered as only being a function of production (typical of Taylor–Fordist mass production) but – as Williamson asserts – a governmental structure whose key function is to enter into contracts and to ensure reliability and efficiency. This means that the strategic decisions of the company no longer relate to what and how much to produce, but whether to focus internally on the production or whether to create a relatively stable network of suppliers and subcontractors for the necessary income and fulfilment of the economic purpose. The problem for the companies is how to manage the various relationships which they have with external producers: the unit of analysis in transaction cost theory is not the product or the production but the transaction, that is, the different forms of bonds or contracts which the business may make. Conceptual transposition when applied to criminal organisations affects the relationships that a clan initiates, the system of control for networks linked to the various illegal activities carried out, the measure of reliability of minor groups and the exchange that exists between them, the existence of fiduciary relationships, any emergence of forms of opportunism within the criminal organisation, and the direct or indirect management of activities. In addition, as we have seen, we are basically facing organisational options that range from a top-down, centralised configuration, as a network of stable relationships between clans who identify themselves as being part of the same network (e.g. the ‘casalesi’), and a more extensive option where strong clans operate by making use of minor clans, have relationships based on economic exchange with other criminal clan networks but at the same time remain highly autonomous with strong ties to its interior but weak ones outside of the boundaries of the criminal unit. This latter configuration eventually leads to the minor group becoming strongly dependent on the parent unit and begins operating as a franchise (working under their name in exchange for direct payments).

As Williamson notes,⁶⁷ in economic theory there are two types of costs: production costs and transaction costs. The first concerns the physical transformation processes of a given material from state A to state B: in our case, the transformation of the ability to intimidate and commit violence into economic resource (extortion tax); or the ability to exercise territorial authority offering a commodity or service (protection); finally, the ability to intimidate by relying on the victim’s own condition of lawlessness in which they operate (blackmail). The second group concerns the fulfilment and management of contracts, the obligations that parties develop and can be paid either before or after its completion. For example, a criminal organisation pays in advance certain transaction costs as it has to seek the victim, conduct negotiations, reach an agreement (monthly payment; quarterly; annual, one-off, supplies, etc.). They are paid afterwards as it is expected that the commitments are respected; if there are also collateral or additional forms of racketeering (e.g. supplies, services), there will be extra management costs that everything runs smoothly within the time frames and established procedures (‘safeguard costs’). Every kind of illegal activity includes transaction costs, and the cost varies depending on the type of asset (or activity). The requirement for clans is to reduce these costs. Besides the organisational aspect, transaction cost theory also affects the victim who, as a rational economic individual, must choose the best option for him/herself: denounce or pay?

There are external conditions to the victim that encourage from the start the decision to denounce especially if the criminal profile of the extortionists has little history or roots. In urban areas, this dynamic is widespread due to the intense and close-knit character of clans and their conflicts. Another condition which would favour reporting the crime is of being ‘associated’ with an anti-racket group. It is the condition wherein the expedient decision to join the ‘anti-racket’ movement (not necessarily to consolidate trustworthy

networks) facilitates the defence of their interests from the moment the extortionists take advantage of their situation believing themselves to be monopolists in the market of protection and aware of the limited number of those who have reneged on the transaction. If another party intervenes effectively in the protection market (e.g. the State), and if the number of defectors increases, then the number of players interested in the transaction also grows and with it the competition. The resulting effect is a block on racketeering requests or a possible reduction in their growth.⁶⁸ In general, the clan's strategy is to always make the request sustainable and to not put the victim in a position where defection is the best option. However, if it were so simple more economic players would be reporting these requests. But it is not so. Why?

The assumption is that the victim, being a rational individual, weighs up the costs against benefits for individual gain, in much the same way as the criminal organisation must decide whether to focus on a strategy of governing transactions (build a trustworthy network suppliers) or to intervene directly on the market illegally producing, inspecting and drawing profits straight from illegal activities (including racketeering). The micro dimension regards the manner in which the players (clans and victims) choose to operate. The choices are non-deterministic because the subjects have a margin of freedom (unpredictability) in their actions; the macro dimension follows the rules of the game dictated by the institutional framework of the criminal field. This is because transactions are not guided by abstract and universal criteria but are embedded in an institutional and environmental context which outlines the limitations and opportunities.

When conditions of uncertainty/complexity arise within environmental factors, linked to the difficult prediction of future events, the high rate of competitors (clans of equal strength and prestige), a fragile system of relationships between criminal clans, a large amount of strong and recognised leaders, a deficit of centralised trading and the absence or weak presence of a well-known broker between the parties, it is very likely and probable that the clan entrusts racketeering to minority groups, is interested only in taking the percentages agreed and maintaining a sustainable and negotiable request, and to be present on a broader range of illegal activities. The clan chooses to have little personnel available but must be an expert in the handling of the racket and knows that the minor group uses its name in order to increase the sense of inevitable subjugation. In these cases, the victims tend to select hybrid options: that is, if the warnings are followed by threats and damage to create a sense of insecurity and fear in the victim, but the request is sustainable, generally, the victim pays and the act of victimisation is considered a diseconomy. If instead, after warnings, threats and damage they persist to a non-negotiable demand, the victim will, if not immediately, take the decision to denounce, often moving swiftly in the initial stages of the victimisation. When, however, the network of criminal relationships is sure and strong, and there is a strong, recognised leadership, a branched, territorial control, a successful criminal brand, the organisation will opt for an internal solution within the racketeering organisation, and the same victim will rarely defect but will instead consider the extortive payment to be a normal act of recognition of the authority of the criminal group. Indeed, the victim may even look with suspicion upon the contractor or tradesman who rebelled because they consider them responsible for increases in the requests. Finally, a case in which the clan makes an intermediary decision: to progress through the professionalisation of personnel and organise stable working groups with representatives of other clans belonging to the criminal network and to produce a high-profile racketeering activity (as happened, e.g., in the case of the construction of the motorway Salerno-Reggio Calabria). In this case, the profitability of the extortion, the ability to intercept public spending resources justify the increase in

transaction costs which are compensated by profits and by new relationships that are typically built within economic enterprises in other areas, and from the acceptance and recognition of the criminal organisation. The decision of the victim, usually entrepreneurs, is almost always one of acceptance for the racketeering request as it is offset by the production of false invoices and tax evasion.

The decision to join the 'anti-racket' movement has reinforced the decisions of victims to denounce and has seen the initial concerns about the future of many victims repaid. There has been no victim who has not seen, by virtue of their association, their extortionists go to jail, having been found guilty, and also the development of a sense of trust strengthened between the victims and the judiciary institutions and law enforcement. The view on taking this path is almost unanimously positive, and indeed this method of collaboration, reporting and mobilisation is generally not considered the result of an inability to pay (it is, therefore, not an outcome of cost-effectiveness), but as the result of a process of liberation and the gaining of inner dignity for themselves and their family. A victim was quoted as saying, 'you feel like you have broken out of a prison and are free to contemplate your decision'.

7. Conclusions

Extortion is the oldest and primary illegal activity that the Camorra has produced and 'exported'. It is no coincidence that, in the second half of the nineteenth and throughout the twentieth century, the term 'mafia' was used in Naples to describe the taxation practised in prisons or of some illegal activity by groups of thugs or criminals who specialised in extortion in various areas and it was even known by different names. In the province of Reggio Calabria, in Catanzaro, Cosenza, even in the twentieth century, affirm 'I am Camorra' or say 'you must collect the Camorra' meant to indicate the practice extortion although the Mafia was the organisation. It is only after the unification of Italy that the term used in Naples was replaced by the word 'mafia' in Calabria and Sicily to indicate not only a more specific organisation, but also a limited set of social relationships and proven economic activities. How is it possible, then, that the extortion activity has survived for such a long period of time, and why is it so strongly exercised even today?

The answer can be found in the functions that the activity of extortion satisfies: (a) in the first place, as already mentioned, it is the primary form of accumulation of economic resources. If a Mafia family, a clan of the Camorra, has the immediate need to acquire resources, that is, for liquidity, they will resort to extortion. If a group of young people – one dedicated to predatory crimes, robberies and thefts – intends to cross the lines and develop a criminal profile mafia, the first activity they will carry out is extortion. (b) Secondly, extorting is the best way to ensure the domination of a territory, exercise power, and give a local practical idea of how big it is – so much more so if the clan also has an organised business. If a clan intends to capture a slice of territory and exert total control on it with an intent to develop subsequent illegal economic activities, it needs first to dominate in a systematic way all those who produce in this physical space and generate urban wealth, both in legal and illegal form. The reputation of a clan grows stronger as the ability to exercise sovereignty over the territory gets greater, and the longer they have been around, the less need there is for them to resort to violence. (c) Again, because it is a form of arbitrary taxation imposed on anyone who produces wealth, sells goods or performs an economic activity coming from outside an area considered 'private property', it becomes – in a form distorted, cognitive and symbolic – a compensation for all rights that are denied. (d) Fourth, extortion is a functionally designed 'cashier', primarily to pay

the lawyers, to support the families of detainees and provide the remuneration of soldiers. (e) Moreover, it constitutes a kind of 'dowry', a capital, a guaranteed annuity transmitted, especially in those clans that are rooted in a territory for a long time, from one generation to another and, similar to all skills, should be maintained and consolidated. (f) In addition, the exercise is selective and instrumental to a strategy of slow acquisition of assets, goods, and companies, whose purpose is, through money laundering from the same activity and other side effects (e.g. usury), the ouster of the victims from the control of economic activity and entry into the legal market. (g) Extortion It is an activity that is characterised by an increasingly entrepreneurial character, not only because there are clans that require products, services, goods and supplies, but also because it is expressed as a form of exchange of competitions, contracts, if they cannot be managed personally, they are subcontracted to consenting or colluding companies. (h) Extortion is an activity that generates segments of marginal social strata by a social consensus since the clan imposes employment of people, provides employment to local workers, and generates employment opportunities among the companies with which they undertake environmental agreements. (i) Finally, it is an activity which, in its extreme form, is a form of social organised crime and entry into it. A Rather, it is a kind of school, gym workout recruitment profile that is more markedly of mobster who must combine reliability, competence and silence. The extortion activity feeds cohesion within the group, ensures the stability of a group of people bound by delinquent activities and ensures consistency among members and loyalty to predefined objectives.

Based on these functions and exercise, then, the activity of extortion becomes a necessity, almost a requirement if you want to move from primary to secondary storage, based on the exercise of additional and separate illegal activities (e.g. usury, control of the streets of drug dealing, the marketing of narcotic substances). Even the clans, the gangs, the Mafia families that evolve and act in the economic sphere through 'mafia enterprise' do not give up extortion activities. And Moreover, because it is necessary, there is a close correlation and interdependence among environments, type of organisation and the form or mode which expresses extortion. Which means Does this then mean that extortionate activity is changed and you do not practice it in the same way in all territories, or does it assume a uniform character and not all local organised criminal groups in the place practice it according to a single type?

Extortion takes a direct nature when it is exercised in the form of lace. But when the predatory strategy is masked, it presents a milder form in order to make visible the idea that there is greater sensitivity and proximity of mafia families 'to the needs of business'. It appears, then, as an 'environmental cost' and is recognised as more bearable, which makes less convenient and discouraging the collaboration of entrepreneurs and traders with the police and magistrates. In so doing, the weight of extortion is attenuated and even the presence of crime is perceived as softer as it is based on a programme of persuasion and more devious tricks rather than violent intimidation and the related prototypical more gender-predatory extortion.

This research showed that the clan of the Camorra, unlike the mafia families, perform a typically wider repertoire of extortion, with a model of operation marked by two extremes, protection-predatory pure; however, the continuum is internally diversified into a range of forms not all attributable to all the clans and which may even be influenced by the environment in the organisation model of the clan.

The extortion activity in Campania is realised in different forms: the lace and the tangent are more direct forms, those that rely on the information capital acquired by the clans and are subject to the commercial sector, entrepreneurship, information of the area

which falls under that activity, size of business or commercial activity, the kind of illegal activity and the degree of vulnerability of the victim. Such extortion may have a very large time scale (monthly, periodic, one-off) and can be combined with other forms (multiple extortion). Then, there is extortion in disguise, namely that which is accomplished by purchasing an asset at a price that does not meet its real value. A family comes into possession of an asset acquired in the property through a nominee because, through this agreement, it provides permission to an investor, an entrepreneur, to accomplish their investment (or asset) – on which they can also slip in other benefits – and you derive a profit on the profit margin. It is a type of enlarged extortion that develops through the payment of invoices altered, the establishment of extra-budgetary funds. In this way the extortion activity is realised through the imposition of services, goods, products, supplies (coffee, mineral water, meat, slot machines, concrete, etc). It is in a sense also a disguised form of taxation but tends to make business out of the extortion because it is based on supply-taxation of goods or services that would, in any case, be acquired by the victims with the advantage, such as wherein, some cases, the price is better (though rarely) and in others the negotiations prevent slipping into a violent altercation. This form of extortion is practised with the collusion of entrepreneurs who are asked for the percentage of companies that are placed or through a direct offshoot of the clan. This is one opportunity that is between *black economy* and *grey economy*. Finally, there is extortion in its predatory form that is based on both the payment of a share of the equivalent in goods (sometimes accompanied), and often in these forms it is associated with the use or consumption of free assets owned by the victim.

The differentiation of the types of extortion extends smoothly due to the presence of different economic activities that can be easily blackmailed and profiles of this adaptable form extortion. However, not all the clans undertake all kinds of extortion; it depends on the organisational model of the clan, the local context, the behaviour of the victim, the degree of ‘professionalism’ and the competence of the members of the criminal organisation.

The extortionate activity is altered and increasingly assumes a physiognomy that is entrepreneurial rather than predatory. The advantages arising from this connotation are greater than the costs. It will be a slow process but is likely to take this address and a reason for this transformation lies, on the one hand, in the transformation of world capitalism, which is more and more aggressively polluted by finance that is immorally managed by strong liquidity from investments criminals. This violent and rapacious capitalism gives ground and reason for the criminal routine to occur. Moreover, extortion has been developing and involving more women as they are compatible in both management of racket activities and of illegal traffic. This is another new element. The Camorra first, then the Mafia, now also the ‘Ndrangheta’; in these organisations, women are increasingly holding positions of primary importance. Give women the same opportunities as men and see what they can do. This could be the beginning of a new job in the wake of the arguments already developed by Freda Adler in 1975 in her *Sisters in Crime*. There are, in fact, now several dozens of women of the clan that come from investigations and hearings in court with responsibility recorded accurately on extortion events: liability management, coordination, engagement, intimidation and investment profits.

The policies designed to combat racketeering, then, will have to take account of these changes and consider the season that has seen the emergence of laws 44 and 512 in 1999 as a preliminary step to look for new legal instruments capable of increasing the responsible participation of all citizens’ implementation of a more effective security. If combined in a new way for prevention – the original act, which in the complaint is

understood as a participatory event responsible for the construction of the security – and contrast, through the collaborative structure, the introduction of civil processes, and the removal and confiscation of assets accumulated by all the associates that constitute and complement the criminal network, there is a real risk to frustrate every effort and every investigative action by the prosecution. From here, then, the need is to reform the legislation towards a greater incentive for those who take to heart more responsibly the meaning of citizenship and give a harder sanctioning for those who are in the forms of subjugation and addiction of a way to carve advantages of any kind.

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Notes

1. Clearly we are talking about analytical tools offered up by social sciences and not from the vast literature of fiction or journalistic investigation that has developed from the Camorra.
2. An initial crackdown occurred first with the law on 15 August 1863 and then with the ‘Crispi law’ 17 May 1866 which mandated the government exceptional powers ‘to provide for the internal security of the State’, F. Barbagallo, *Storia della camorra*, 31).
3. The secondary sources are the ones that have most clarified the origin of criminal *Camorra*’s aggregation and its limited development, first in Naples and Caserta and then in other limited areas. This unfolded over the 1800s and up to the early decades of the 1900s. The historical axis is what has always provided the largest contribution, while studies of anthropological character and/or sociological are more recent. Marmo, “La camorra e lo Stato liberale.”
4. Romano, *Storia della mafia*; Novacco, *Inchiesta sulla mafia*.
5. Pantaleone, *Mafia e politica*.
6. Hesse, *Mafia*.
7. Block, *East Side-West Side*; Boissevain, *Friends of Friends*; Schneider and Schneider, *Culture and Political Economy*.
8. Arlacchi, *Mafia contadini e latifondo nella Calabria tradizionale*.
9. According to the author, three processes, which went unconsidered, outlined the entrepreneurial modern mafia profile in the late 1970s: (a) the acquisition of a rationality instrumental in economic policy; (b) the fact that Sicilian Mafia families characterised themselves as enterprises in the global system of drugs and illegal economy; and (c) the development of a significant political autonomy of mafia power, P. Arlacchi, *La mafia imprenditrice*.
10. Catanzaro, *Il delitto come impresa*; Catanzaro, “Il governo violento del mercato.”
11. Sabetti, *Political Authority*; Santino, “La mafia come soggetto politico.”; Santoro, “La mafia e la protezione”; Armao, *Il Sistema mafia*; Sciarrone, “Mafia e potere.”
12. Santino, and La Fiura, *L’impresa mafiosa*; Zamagni, ed, *Mercati illegali e mafie*; Centorrino, La Spina, and Signorino, *Il nodo gordiano*.
13. Siebert, *Le donne, la mafia*; Santoro, *La voce del padrino*; Dino, *Mutazioni*.
14. Lupo and Mangiameli, “Mafia di ieri, mafia di oggi”; Pezzino, *Una certa reciprocità di favori*; Tranfaglia, *La mafia come metodo*; Bevilacqua, “La mafia e la Spagna.”
15. Schneider and Schneider, *Un destino reversibile*.
16. It is their opinion that the mafia is made up of fluid and changing alliances, task-oriented, specialisations, that conceal contacts with the State and with corrupt members of the ruling class, relationships aimed at the accumulation of power and wealth, but do not have an organised form, nor a stable organisational structure, A. Blok, *The Mafia of Sicilian Village*.
17. Paoli, *The Pentiti’s Contribution*; Gruppo Abele, *Dalla mafia allo Stato*.
18. Catanzaro and Santoro, “Pizzo e pizzini.”
19. Franchetti, “Condizioni politiche e amministrative della Sicilia”; Santino, “Borghesia mafiosa.”
20. Monnier, *La camorra*.
21. Matriani, *I Vermì*.
22. Di Gennaro, “Mercati illegali e struttura di classe.”

23. It is not necessary to dwell on the reasons for this delay, but for a fundamental reconstruction of the reasons, refer to my contribution, G. Di Gennaro, "Mercati illegali e struttura di classe," 65–81.
24. Saviano, *Gomorra*.
25. Major studies have been: Aa.VV., *Chiesa, mafia e camorra*; Barbagallo, *Napoli fine Novecento*; Fiore, *La camorra e le sue storie*; Gribaudi, *Donne, uomini, famiglie*; Lamberti, *La camorra. Evoluzione e struttura della criminalità organizzata in Campania*; Esposito, *Uomini di camorra*; Sales, *La camorra, le camorre*.
26. It is associated with the parliamentary documentation which concurs with the various Committees of inquiry, reports of the prefects, the documented historical analysis as Villari (1878), intellectuals like Giustino Fortunato (1900) and Pasquale Turiello (1882). It is the season of denouncements of the dramatic social condition facing Naples and South Italy. Pasquale Villari will 'invent' the issues of Naples and of the *South*, which subsequently will bring together a host of scholars and intellectuals such as Leopoldo Franchetti, Sidney Sonnino, Giustino Fortunato, Pasquale Turiello and later Gaetano Salvemini and Antonio Gramsci. A long season of reflection around certain critical *points* (the weakness of the national State, the absence of infrastructure; misery; the need to industrialise the South; the extensive marginalised masses; poor education; the fragile *bourgeoisie* entrepreneurship characterising the underdevelopment of the South (albeit Naples) and in which, in a circular causal vision, is the explanation for the presence of the Camorra). This must support the substantial political, literary production and investigation that between the 1800s and the end of the first decade of the 1900s is the theme of the Camorra: Alongi, *La mafia*; De Blasio, *La malavita a Napoli*; De Cosa, *Malavita e polizia a Napoli*; Labriola, *Il segreto di Napoli e la leggenda della camorra*; Mario, *La miseria in Napoli*. Monnier analysed the Camorra as a sort of popular opposition which, on the one hand, victimised his peers, but, on the other hand, derived its strength from the contemporary capacity to extend more complex relationships with illegal government representatives and the local economic and professional world.
27. Monnier describes this continuous interference on any type of business or movement of money, stressing how widespread racketeering is and its use on many fields and its large-scale growth in a few years.
28. At the beginning of the century on the basis of the work done by the Commission of inquiry chaired by Saredo, there emerged a 'deteriorated political administration (. . .) that regarded not only Naples but was also interested in the relationship between the State and the South, and in particular the relationship between the central authorities, local authorities, peripheral administrations', F. Barbagallo, *Storia della Camorra*, 74).
29. Marmo, *Il coltello e il mercato*; Barbagallo, *Camorra e criminalità organizzata in Campania*.
30. Marmo, "La città camorrista e i suoi confini."
31. Blok, *The Mafia of a Sicilian Village*.
32. Other authors claimed that the mafia was a rural and urban phenomenon held together in Sicily by the tensions of the large estates whose requirements could be found only in the cities. For Franchetti, instead, the mafia was a typically urban phenomenon and this position was also shared by Alongi, Recupero, "Ceti medi e "homines novi"."
33. Piselli and Arrighi, "Parentela, clientela e comunità"; Lupo, *Storia della mafia dalle origini ai giorni nostri*; Sciarrone, *Mafie vecchie*.
34. Lo Schiavo, *Il reato di associazione per delinquere nelle province siciliane*, 137.
35. The reference is to the hegemonic attempt of Raffaele Cutolo between 1979 and 1983 with the *Nuova Camorra Organizzata* (Nco) cartel to centralise the Camorra.
36. Monzini identifies three fundamental stages in these relationships: the first coincides with the organisation of the Camorra (the *Honoured Society*), which enjoys a wide institutional tolerance, develops smuggling ties and is used to prevent manifestations of hostility towards liberal regime. The second stage, between 1862 and 1866, is marked by a first counter attack that *weakens* the oppositional character of the Camorra. The third is characterised by a lack of institutional interest, the Camorra is identified with the delinquent class and there are no warnings of the connections with the *high Camorra*. Monzini, "L'estorsione nei sistemi di criminalità organizzata."
37. Catanzaro, "Imprenditori della violenza e mediatori sociali."
38. Gambetta, "Mafia: i costi della sfiducia."

39. Santino, *La mafia interpretata*.
40. Monzini, "L'estorsione nei sistemi di criminalità organizzata," 134.
41. Santino, *Dalla mafia alle mafie*.
42. Definitions, although of an ideal type, have a dichotomous character that prevent taking advantage of overlapping, environmental conditions between the two types, as it is not possible to consider the ambiguous boundaries of extortion/protection: between intimidation and agreement, it is possible to generate an imbalance towards one of the two poles.
43. Dino, "Vita quotidiana di Cosa Nostra."
44. Studies of Marmo evoke various situations: that of extortion, the *guappo* of the neighbourhood whose activity is to safeguard profits and consolidate social credibility and reputation, the parasitic tangent type is more predatory and practised on any transfer of money. Different to the practised mediation in food markets or smuggling activities that differed again from protection rackets practised on the workforce in transport services; or the extortion of consortiums of porters used to defend the price of labour, or used in prisons or connected to the role of vigilante. Marmo, "La città camorrista e i suoi confini," 35–42.
45. Marmo, "Ordine e disordine."
46. Monzini, "L'estorsione nei sistemi di criminalità organizzata," 76–79.
47. He suggested that mediators were in the countryside, controlling prices and deciding the peasant work, carving out roles as protectors of farmers and traders in the chain that linked the wholesalers and dealers of the warehouses of wholesale fruit and vegetable market. The criminal model which already exists in the provincial areas and 'Terra di Lavoro' has more than one difference to the urban Camorra. It concerns only the more rigid hierarchical nature, but includes more organic and cohesive environmental *milieu* in which honour, conspiracy of silence, gender inequality, patriarchal, family loyalty and authoritarianism are properties that belong to the cognitive and symbolic universe of local populations.
48. It sold everything: cigarettes, flour, sugar, sweets, chocolate, canned food, clothes, gasoline, blankets, shoes, watches, liquor, drugs and later electronic and sports products. This activity was consistently employing the grass-roots masses distributed among fake, counterfeit, fraudulent operations *scartiloffi* (deception and/or confusion of goods), and receiving, retail sales. It was the smuggling of cigarettes that raised the awareness of the first large Neapolitan Camorra families (Giuliano di 'Forcella', the Nuvoletta of Marano, Zaza brothers). The centrality of this activity does not imply the absence of other trades: for example, extortion, usury, the buying and selling of gold, arms trafficking; or other illegal activities (illegal gambling, lotteries).
49. This process of differential economies and clandestine extrajudicial and informal manufacturing activities is a parallel composite universe concurrent with different standalone illegal profiles, but also with organised clans which generate a reorganisation of illegal territorial hierarchy. Many provincial *guappi* assumed the role of wholesalers (known as *carte* and *tresette* managing the work of *magliari* (sellers of fabrics and garments with fake brands); other provincial members of the Camorra undertook the supervision of the markets in fruit and vegetables and livestock; in some families of smugglers between alliances, agreements and feuds survived the selection that the war for the international control of TLE and drug trafficking had seen between the 'Cosa Nostra' and Marseilles. The complementary market, if it is true, will replace the income of the weak masses and marginal urban area; it is also true that it will innervate the social and economic fabric of a culture of lawlessness and a sense of self-sufficiency that not only have deleterious effects on the social and economic crisis, but will strengthen even more the spatial contiguity between 'illegal city' and 'legal city'.
50. Di Gennaro, "Estorsioni ed usura."
51. For effects and interconnections between transfers of public resources and criminal organisations, see: Becchi Collidà, *Napoli 'miliardaria'*; Di Gennaro, "Questione morale e questione criminale nel Mezzogiorno."
52. Between 1979 and 1983, Naples and Campania were the scene of a confrontation between the 'Nuova Camorra organizzata' (NCO) of Raffaele Cutolo and the 'Nuova famiglia' (NF: evolution of the New Brotherhood) combining clans and citizens of the province most linked to Cosa Nostra. According to investigators, the NCO had only 2000 affiliates, then climbed to 7000, Cpa, *Camorra e politica*, 41. At the end of this period, 900 were dead.
53. Cpa, *Camorra e politica*, 169.

54. Think, for example, of agreements concerning the market of big brands which were the architects in the late 1990s Pierino Licciardi, Eduardo Contini, Costantino Sarno, Paolo Di Lauro and Lo Russo brothers. In few years through the use of undeclared work from hundreds of factories producing clothing scattered across the territory of the Neapolitan hinterland and the willingness of dozens of local entrepreneurs, they flooded the markets selling major brands of counterfeit clothing but of good quality. And always the Secondigliano clan created and protected the marketing of fake brand Bosch drills by exporting also to the US.
55. Lupsha, "Transnational Organized Crime Versus the Nation-State."
56. In 2009, the DIA report painted a picture indicating there were only 35 clans in Naples and 5 minor clans; in the Neapolitan province, 41 clans and 14 minor groups; in Benevento province, 6 clans and 3 minor clans; in Avellinese, 4, and in the Salernitana province, 13. Finally, in the province of Caserta, 1 cartel, the so-called 'casales' around which gather various groups. A total of 112 clans plus 22 minor clans (not counting the affiliates of the Casalesi). DIA (Direzione Investigativa Antimafia), *Relazione del Ministro dell'Interno al Parlamento sull'attività svolta e sui risultati conseguiti*.
57. Between the late 1980s and early 1990s in the region of Campania, there was a smaller number of large clans (such as the Maisto, Mallardo clan of Giugliano, Moccia of Afragola; D'Alessandro in Castellammare di Stabia; the Gionta, Contini, Licciardi, Mazzarella, etc.), but they had already multiplied both inside the city and in the provinces. More autonomous clans allied through individual trades and especially through distributors and the dense network of the regional drug trade. In addition, the 'Casertani' faced problems in mid-1988 with the clash between the clan of Schiavone, De Falco and Francesco Bidognetti against Ernesto Bardellino. With the removal of the latter, the conflict actually developed between Schiavone and De Falco and ends with the split of the Casalesi clan that only at the end of 1992 would end with Schiavone, Bidognetti having the upper hand and control of the entire Casertano territory, lower Lazio, and many municipalities of Irpinia and Sannio.
58. DIA, *Relazione del Ministro dell'Interno al Parlamento sull'attività svolta e sui risultati conseguiti*, 11.
59. Monzini, *Gruppi criminali a Napoli e Marsiglia*, 4.
60. The interviewees were 45 judges, 20 investigators and 30 victims. We can say that our respondents represent how the phenomenon of racketeering is suffered and investigated.
61. Dahrendorf, *Class and Class Conflict*.
62. Brancaccio, "Guerre di camorra."
63. Ibid., 72.
64. Feuding begins between two clans and may be supported by the aid of another. It occurs due to the choice of whether to contend a specific territory or to go in search of another. The divisions are violent conflicts which explode within a clan and derive from the desire of a group to become autonomous.
65. Partial horizontal conflict coincides with feuds; clans which have equal respect (and strength), compete for territory or want to submit a third area. It is partial because it does not extend to other clans of other territories which, indeed, are interested in following the outcome of the conflict but do not intervene, if not for some special reason. The cases are numerous as well as the cyclicity of the conflict. See cases *Rinaldi v. Mazzarella* for control of territory of S. Giovanni area; the clash *Misso-Pirozzi v. Tolomelli-Vastarella* in the 'quarter of Sanità' check, etc.
66. It is exactly what happened to the Sarno clan, that after the arrest of Ciro in 1992 the 'collaboration' of the boss Giuseppe Sarno (captured in 2009) raised allegations against sons, brothers (even Vincenzo would caught in 2009) and grandchildren. This led to the breakup of the cupola of the organisation. The clan, fighting for control of the Vesuviana area between March 2004 and August 2006 with Panico-Perillo, suffered a serious blow by 79 orders for custody, involving also the other two clans.
67. Williamson, *I meccanismi del governo*.
68. What happened, for example, at Ercolano, the *double racket*, is a similar situation: the racketeering activity practised by competitors who have not reached trusting agreements, thus the victims found it more profitable to denounce than continue to pay.

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