

# *Research frontiers in Economic Sociology and Labour Studies (ResFron ESLS)*

Seminar

## ***Mafia organizations: strategy, structure, and the use of violence***

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Room A, h. 13.00-14.30

Graduate School in Social and Political Sciences  
via Pace 10 - Milan

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Mafia organizations take many different forms. In this talk I analyze three Italian mafia organizations (Cosa Nostra, Camorra, and 'Ndrangheta) and apply an organizational approach to the understanding of violence in mafia organizations, by studying the relationship between mafias' organizational orders and their criminal behavior. I identify two different organizational orders, *vertical* and *horizontal*, and demonstrate that Italian mafias, although operating in similar environments, can greatly differ from each other, and over time, in terms of their organizational model. Findings show that mafias with a vertical organizational order, due to the presence of higher levels of coordination, (1) have greater control over conflict, as proved by the lower number of 'ordinary' murders; and (2) have greater capacity to fight state repression, as testified by the higher number of 'high-profile' assassinations (e.g. politicians, magistrates, and other institutional members) that they carry out. Evidence is provided using a mixed-methods approach that combines a qualitative, organizational analysis of historical and judiciary sources, in order to reconstruct the organizational models and their evolution over time, with a quantitative analysis of assassination trends, in order to relate organizational orders to the use of violence.

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