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group of the European
Consortium for Political
Research.
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Theme: Organised crime in South-East Europe

Word of Welcome

We are very pleased to present to you the first issue of this year's newsletter. When we took on our task as new editors we decided that a complete new format would contribute to the group's aims. This new format is made up of two parts: 1) online we will maintain a 'blog' to provide you with timely information about new books, conferences, calls for papers and other announcements. 2) the tri-annual newsletter will come in a PDF-document with original contributions and will as usual have a specific theme. The theme selected for this January's issue is "Organised Crime in South-Eastern Europe".

In the last few years, there have been numerous international and local publications analysing the organised crime situation in South Eastern Europe (SEE). The Centre for the Study of Democracy in Bulgaria, which is one of the most active regional NGO's working on the topic, has argued that the spread of organised crime and its manipulation of corrupt practices are among the strongest impediments to the development of SEE. Regional instability in the past fifteen years has undermined effective law enforcement throughout the region. It has raised considerably the cost of regional trade, which consequently has promoted smuggling and other illegal activities on a regional scale.

Organised crime, particularly the type that relates to trafficking, has turned into one of the most important mechanism for unlawful redistribution of national wealth. Accordingly, this has been slowing down economic growth and has been causing social deprivation. Furthermore, corruption and organised crime have been disrupting the transition to a market economy by destroying fair competition. Criminal networks have been endangering the stability of democratic institutions by taming government through systemic corruption. One of the most dangerous forms of corruption in SEE identified by experts has been the symbiosis between organised crime and representatives from the security sector in the Balkans (Sofia, 2003).

In this respect, during the Lancaster House Ministerial Conference in London in 2002 on 'Defeating Organised Crime in South Eastern Europe' the following statement was made: 'the rule of law is the foundation for democracy, prosperity and long-term stability. Organised crime threatens all of this. Today we therefore place this at the top of our agenda and agree on a strategic partnership - for freedom, security and justice. In the past, organised crime has been more organised than national and international efforts to defeat it. We now undertake to shift the balance' (London, November 2002).

The recent Europol '2005 EU Organised Crime Situation Report' adds that OC groups from SEE are becoming very active and they pose a serious threat to the EU. Therefore, joint efforts are needed to combat these groups. Some of these groups have managed to transform themselves from being simple service providers to other OC gangs to becoming members of the elite international OC. The report continues highlighting the role these OC groups, play in stockpiling of heroin, trafficking in human beings, smuggling of people, production of false euro notes, firearms trafficking and vice trade (The Hague, 25 October 2005). In contrast, the Europol '2002 EU OC Situation Report' makes just a few references to SEE OC. This shows how SEE OC has become an important question for the EU (as it is in its own back yard) and an interesting area for researchers and explains why we have chosen this theme for our current newsletter.

For this issue we collected a number of short contributions from young researchers devoting their time to this specific field. Daniela Irrera (University of Messina and Palermo) focuses on 'crime, corruption and politics' She analyses the difficult task Albania is having in dealing with institutional change and modernisation of civil society life. For Panos Kostakos (University of Bath) the Balkans represent a challenge for the student of organised and transnational crime. He uses the region as empirical testing ground for some hypotheses on the effectiveness of international instruments in their fight against OC. Christos Marazopoulos (University of Bath) using the theory of Regional Security Complex looks at OC as one of the factors of regional instability in the Western Balkans. Christopher Holbrook (George Mason University) investigates in his comparative research on the Italian mafia and the Balkan mafie the effect globalisation and inverse devolution to the supra-national level and asks whether this has facilitated inter-mafie cooperation, what he interestingly calls the 'Europeanisation of the mafia'.

We would like to express our gratitude to these contributors and to Klaus von Lampe for his book review. Also special thanks for Felia Allum for her support. Finally we would like to introduce the theme for the next issue of the newsletter in May, "Organised Crime and Terrorism". Accordingly, we would like to encourage all members to share with us their thoughts and ideas and to send us articles, announcements, book reviews and other relevant materials. Enjoy reading our first newsletter and let us know what you think!

The editors
Jana Arsovska
Ludo Block

Thank You

Thank you Sayaka!
Thank you Francesco!

The Standing group would like to thank Sayaka and Francesco for all their work, energy and enthusiasm in launching the Standing group's newsletter back in 2002: they transformed an idea discussed in a small seminar room in Grenoble and turned it into reality. This newsletter has been important, as it has given the SG a concrete identity. In particular, we would like to thank Sayaka who put some much time, care and thought into the newsletter while getting to grips with her PhD, which could not have been easy.

The newsletter is all the healthier thanks to her. Ludo and Jana will no doubt make it just as successful. We thank them in advance for all their work and appreciate them taking on this arduous task.

SGOC Co-convenors
Felia Allum
Fabio Armao

CALL FOR PANEL CHAIRS

Proposed ECPR section: Comparing Organised crime between new and old threats

The ECPR will be organising its 4th General Conference in Pisa, Italy in September 2007. The ECPR Standing group would like to be present and organise a section dedicated to organised crime. The standing group has developed extensively since its last conference in Marburg, Germany, in 2003 and this would be the ideal opportunity to have an in-depth discussion about organised crime and for the group to meet.

Therefore, the standing group would like to organise a section on the general topic of 'Comparing Organised crime between new and old threats'. The idea behind this section is to encourage discussions about how organised crime seeks to imitate civil society, the economy and political systems in which it develops in order to better infiltrate, penetrate and coerce them.

Thus, while terrorism is the 'new evil' and main policy priority for governments, organised crime carries on undeterred in a forever-changing environment and this is what we would like to analyse. In particular, we would like panels, which seek to investigate organised crime in a comparative mode and address its new characteristics. But we welcome all proposals.

Each section is made up of 10 separate panels each with their own theme. Each panel is made up of a chair, 3 paper givers and a discussant (who makes comments on the papers in order to forge a discussion). At this stage, we would like to ask people who are interested in organising a panel to come forward with an abstract of the topic they would like to propose and possible speakers who could be approached. If they have no potential speakers, we could then circulate a general call for papers after February and see who responds.

Please email your suggestions to:

Felia Allum (mlsfsa@bath.ac.uk) or Fabio Armao (fabio.armao@unito.it) **before the 24th of February 2006.**

We will then organise a call for papers. The Standing group's proposal needs to be ready for September 2006.

Crime and Corruption in Albania

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The break-up of Yugoslavia, in 1992, contributed to the escalation of trouble in the whole region that was linked to the slow democratic and economic transition processes. The 'new' countries had to deal with a thorough institutional change, a transformation from a centrally planned economy to a market oriented system and a modernisation of civil society life. This hard task had to be performed by traditional government leaderships, which were linked to the past and to the old management.

The South-eastern countries, in particular, found it very difficult to escape from their endemic ethnic problems, which led to long and bloody civil wars. The struggles contributed to the deterioration of the economy, by creating an illicit market, in which guerrilla groups, paramilitaries and sometimes even official armies sold and bought weapons. The same networks played a role in the illicit immigration towards Western Europe. In other words, the Balkan region - mostly the Western part - had to face in its transition process simultaneously old and new problems. Weak institutions and inefficient bureaucracies had to manage depressed economies and to satisfy a very disgruntled population. In this difficult context, a variety of groups used the conflicts as a means to benefit from illicit activities, like trafficking weapons and migrants but also nuclear materials, cigarettes and, above all, drugs.

The fall of communism, the disintegration of the old ethnic balance, the civil wars and the lack of a real US-EU intervention - favoured the rise of criminal activity. Everywhere, in South-eastern countries, Serbian, Macedonian, Kosovar and Albanian clans established solid network, by creating drug routes and by managing good relationships with local police officers, civil servants, businessmen and former intelligence officers. Politicians - at local, federal and national levels - were not excluded: the government leadership turned to this implemented illicit economic system and used it to maintain personal power.

What happened - and is still happening - in the developing countries in the Balkan region, and in the South-Eastern part in particular, shows very clearly how and to what extent organised crime and political institutions can establish mutual relationships. These relationships that spread over all aspects of

the State system lead to a high level of corruption and weaken the rule of law.

This is why several political scientists, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, used to quote the expression 'balkanisation of politics' referring to such situation. This issue seen in a broader context can be linked to the debate around the relationship between the rise of non-State actors (as organised crime sadly can be considered) and the crisis of State sovereignty. Moreover, it offers the possibility to make some reflections about the development of what Ethan Nadelmann (1993) defines as 'institutionalised corruption' and the use that criminal organisations are able to make of it.

Although this is a general phenomenon in the region, Albania seems to be one of the most affected countries. This country suffered in the past a very conservative and oppressive communist regime and now is trying to face its political and economic change. In 1992 a class of politicians was elected who no experience and with Albania's strategic geographical position as only potential economic resource. In the same period several clans, located in the north near the Kosovo border, used the Balkan wars to increase illicit activities. In few years, these Albanian clans moved into independent operations, established a solid network and managed to consolidate their leadership on illegal markets. They have been able to create a strong system of complicity by involving all local and national institutional bodies. Organised crime and corruption affects every aspect of public life and has a significant incidence on political stability, rule of law, legality and on social and economic development. In their reports, Interpol and UN Agencies pointed to the rising of Albanian clans network everywhere in Europe and on the spread of corruption in the country.

Nowadays, Albanian criminal clans seemed to be even stronger than in the past: according to the Narcotics Control Strategy Report for 2001, they are divided in small groups and their structure varies depending on the kind of illegal activity they have to manage. It is very important to be part of the same tribe: this sense of identity dominated the clans and no external members are accepted.

Meanwhile criminal activities and corruption have a negative influence on the economic situation in the country and on its development: the 50% of Albanian GDP is made of illegal incomes - drug, stolen cars, cigarettes, prostitution - public housing runs only thanks to money laundering, the banking system, after the pyramid schemes, is still informal.

The most damaging effects are visible in politics: deterioration of party representation, disaffection among people towards their leaders and regression in the rule of law are evident. Every institution seems to be affected: not only the government, but also the judiciary system, armies and public administration.

On January 31st, 2003, the European Commission started preliminary negotiations with Albania on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement, asking to the President Moisiu, the Prime Minister Nano and DP leader Sali Berisha to assure commitments to human rights and democracy, economic reforms to reach free trade and a reliable fight against crime and corruption. It was demonstrated in several reports of research institutes and European agencies, that corruption is increasing in all sectors of Albanian life, damaging the policy-making institutional system.

In order to start reforms the Albanian government received from the EU a three-year assistance program worth €144 million, which should be used to promote democracy and stability through judiciary and public administration equipment reform. These are considered as basic conditions to strengthening government at local and central levels. However these fundamental pre-conditions set by Brussels are unlikely to be achieved without a total political commitment.

Political corruption is one of the most important problems in the country and is able to seriously influence its international position. The competent organisations agree on this assumption: on its Corruption Perceptions Index for 2004, Transparency International gives to Albania a value of 2.5, on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 10 (highly clean). Compared to the 145 assessed countries Albania is listed 108th. Nevertheless, it is not so easy to measure the level of corruption, especially not in a transition country where there is a lack of transparency and information. There are no official polls and data collection is limited. It is very hard to conduct a survey on such issues not in the least because few people have a correct understanding of what corruption is and, consequently, are able to answer.

In order to prepare our case study on Albania, we analysed several reports, based on survey research and we chose to focus on a detailed work, made by the Southeast European Legal Development Initiative. It is a comparative analysis, showing the key findings of the Regional Corruption Monitoring in seven countries of South Eastern Europe - Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bul-

garia, Macedonia, Romania, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), and Croatia. Of, course, we considered only values referring to Albania, in order to understand if corruption is perceived as a problem by people and how much it had been able to penetrate into the various elements of civil society. The sample is composed of 1037 Albanian people aged 18+ and was carried out in the period between January 3rd, 2002 and February 8th, 2002, using face-to-face interviews.

First of all, it was necessary to identify which problems are considered as most important and serious. According to the Report, although economic and social issues - unemployment, low incomes - are considered quite relevant, most worrying are the problems related to the political system. According to a great majority of the respondents, corruption is a sort of plague and seen as the cause of political instability.

Nevertheless it became clear that although corrupt practices are recognised that doesn't mean that they are denounced. According to the index on acceptability on principles, which tends to measure how much they are tolerated within the value system, Albania has the highest value (2.4). This seems to affirm that citizens are easily inclined to accept the existence of corrupt practices in their society. And that probably their inclination to compromise on their values under the pressure of practical circumstances will be high, too. It is, in fact, 4.5 in the index on susceptibility.

According to the report moral denunciation of corruption as a negative phenomenon can co-exist with the efficiency of corrupt practices in everyday life. In cases of conflict between them, many citizens tend to compromise on their principles to achieve their ends.

This happens, in particular in the public sectors where employees tend to pressure directly or indirectly citizens in order to obtain money, gifts or favours. The value of the index of corruption pressure in Albania is high, 3.4: mechanisms of private interests, practical necessity, and personal choice are becoming a custom. 51,78% of people said that doctors are amongst those able to pressure for bribes. In the last ten years partly due to the privatisation process bribery has become a common means in the medical services. Illegal payments are so expensive that many people have been forced to go abroad for medical treatment, losing all their savings.

Corruption practices are connected to the daily services a citizen commonly requires in his/her life (health, public administration, taxes, etc.), which is

why such practices are becoming so usual in Albania. The report states that, according to common perception, the origin of corruption is associated with the social and economic problems and to interaction with government, especially in a transition country.

The inefficacy and inefficiency - and sometimes the complete lack - of the crucial levels of social control on the legislative, the judicial and the administrative actors are very important factors. This is why, in several cases the fact that a public servant tries to make up his/her salary with a bribe is a common behaviour: it is justified as a personal necessity. Due to the above-mentioned remarks, the customs, tax officials, the municipal administrations and the judicial system appear as the core of the spread of corruption in Albania. Nevertheless, corruption is not always 'necessity-driven' and the index studying the spread of corruption among institutions is a good example.

The Presidency, the Government, the Parliament, as well as the police and customs are the key institutions, with the task of promoting democracy, rule of law and economic development. But, at the same time in Albania they are considered as the leading networks of institutional corruption. In the whole country, from north to the south, criminal clans work with the complicity of police and customs officials, being helped by the protection of high-ranking politicians. Corruption seems to be an endemic problem and continues to strongly influence the country's future international position. The EU repeated again that the country must do more to fight organised crime, corruption and trafficking if its leaders want to realise eventual membership.

Like other former communist countries, Albania has experienced its transition process and had to impose some measures to reach political, economic and social progress. The political context is characterised by the difficult dialogue between Fatos Nano and Sali Berisha, with a consensual president and initial negotiations with the EU. The general performance of the economy has remained quite satisfactory, political and commercial links with all its neighbours has been strengthened and the country's image has been revised, providing a key factor in regional stability. A little more than a decade after the collapse of the communist one-party state system, much has been achieved, at least in public declarations and party manifestos.

What has not changed is the attitude of Albania's political class. Since several decades, it suffered a chronic lack of cohesion between the most important parts represented by the Socialist Party and the Democratic Party and their leaders, Nano and

Berisha. Neither of them had been able to manage new problems coming from the transition process. Instead they preferred to exploit the strategic position of the country along the Balkan Route.

Meanwhile corruption is everywhere; from the highest level, affecting institutions, judges, public officers, customs, to the lowest, obliging citizens to renounce basic services unless they are able to pay a bribe. In the last years, the government had to work on its international image and promised to the EU to combat corruption. Nevertheless, every institution is affected by organized crime, condemning democracy and economic development; any attempts to change the situation passes through European Union and its programmes.

The first results coming from the EU initiatives on Albania should help in testing their efficacy. Corruption is, in fact, a big problem which affects several countries, therefore any discussion about this issue should be part of a broader reflection about stability and security not only in Europe but also in the Mediterranean region.

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Theories and International Cooperation against Transnational Organized Crime in the Balkans

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The aim of the work reported here is to assess the suitability and appropriateness of theories in combating transnational crime through international and global formal institutions. This assessment will be empirically tested in the traditionally marginalised and under-researched geographical region of the Balkans. Our aim is to assess the appropriateness and success of theories and international institutions in the real world.

A review of the literature on organised crime will traditionally begin by taking on board a handful of well known and established schools thought. Since President Hoover's 1929 Volstead Act the hierarchy, networks and markets paradigms began slowly and methodically to dominate the debate on organised crime (Standing 2003: 25). A great deal of work has also been done to show that organised crime groups perform not only economic function but have cultural and social dimensions (Xhudo 1996; Allum & Sands 2004). This approach is known as the Clans model (Paoli 1998 and 2002). Many scholars subscribe to the belief that it is notoriously difficult to produce a single definition of organised crime (Mueller 1998: 13; Levi 1998, Kvl homepage). Each of the aforementioned paradigms for instance, defines organised crime differently (Standing 2003). Subsequently, the existence of many definitions implies that there are different types of criminal organisations that are understood to have different internal structures and modus operandi (Williams 1994, 1998; Williams & Godson 2002).

From within this plurality of ideas, definitions and concepts, IGOs like the United Nations, Interpol and more recently some of Europe's police instruments raise their concern for the need to combat transnational crime. Transnational crime and terrorism have replaced the old Soviet threat with a new global "uncivilised" threat to the "civilised" society of states (Annan 2000).

A question that emerges is that, if there is no clear definition and understanding of the threat how can we assess the effectiveness of international instruments in their fight against this threat?

A way to tackle this is to consider the formal institutions that exist and have been put in place by the international community. Conceptual and theoretical discussions are also relevant, but lack concreteness. Our approach consists of a move away from the issue of defining organised crime towards a more empirical discussion, with all the problems that this change may encompass for the student of organised crime.

To guide our efforts we have developed two hypotheses, which we plan to test. The first is that high international cooperation reduces the rates of transnational crime. The second hypothesis is that the internal structures of criminal organisations affect the organisations' effectiveness against international cooperation. Both hypotheses will be empirically tested within the geographical region of the Balkan Peninsula. Our empirical work will assess the relationships between three variables:

- i) the rate of transnational crime
- ii) the degree of international cooperation (external structures/environment)
- iii) the internal structures of criminal organisations.

Our work will improve our understanding in two main respects. The first contribution is related to the effectiveness of international institutions, and has direct relevance to how we perceive the threat of organised crime and consequently what our responses are to eliminate this threat. Our work will identify key structures (e.g. mafia, loose transactional networks, and local gangs) and then relate policies with criminals and their structures. Additionally, we will offer an assessment as to whether or not a global approach is suitable for combating transnational crime, and suggest the types of crime and criminal organisations a global approach can successfully combat.

A second contribution lies in that our hypotheses will be tested in a traditionally under-researched geographical region. Most research focuses on large transnational criminal organisations usually attached to ethnic tags. However the Balkans present a challenge for the student of organised and transnational crime for a number of reasons. The Balkans are a major transit point for both legal and illegal trade from all around the world. It is a destination point and a wider manufacturing, production and consumption arena of illegal goods and services (Graham 2000; Koppel & Szekely 2002; 131-2; Raufer & Quiri 2000; Stefanova 2004). It has also recently become a storage place especially for heroin. Other groups from Turkey, Bulgaria, FYR of Macedonia, Italy, Romania, China and Russia may also operate in the region.

Considering the Balkans as a geographical entity rather than a sub-complex, we note its diversity of modernisation, globalisation, liberalisation, international cooperation and westernisation. It is a natural laboratory whereupon we can test our hypotheses in a comparative manner. In addition, the Balkans presents a unique case for studying the relationship between organised crime and terrorism in the face of the KLA birth, operations and development. In a period where the democratisation of many "Balkanised" and pariah regions and states has become a priority for the major international players we need "the Balkans experience" in our analytical toolbox to help us minimise the gaps and peculiarities that arise from one region to another.

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Europeanization of the Mafia

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As the former British Home Secretary David Blunkett said in 2002, "the Balkans have become the gateway to Europe for organized criminals." Organized crime in this region involves a wide and varied range of activities including drug trafficking, arms smuggling, prostitution/human trafficking, money laundering and illicit transfers of money connected to terrorist organizations. Thus, instead of looking at these activities as nothing more than organized crime-large-scale and well coordinated, but focused primarily on economic goals-it is better to consider the massive scale of the illegal activities as strategic crime.

These activities should be viewed as strategic because organized crime in the Balkans presents a serious threat both to national and European security. I argue these criminal outfits, both individually and collectively, have the potential to create parallel economic structures and of hampering the transition process. The Romanian researcher Lucia Vreja notes strategic crime has the potential to weaken the states concerned and feed festering ethno-nationalist tensions.

For example, drug trafficking has become so beneficial to the cause of Albanian separatism that certain towns populated by Albanians have become known as the "new Medellins" of the Balkans. One estimate made by the Centre for Peace in the Balkans puts the value of drugs shipped via the Balkan route (from towns such as Veliki Trnovac and Blastica in Serbia, Vratnica and Gostivar in FYRO Macedonia and Shkodër and Durrës in Albania) at \$400 billion per year.

The stated goal of all the countries of South-eastern Europe is membership in the European Union, and as a recent issue of *The Economist* states-in regards to Macedonia but applicable to basically the entire former Yugoslavia-it "is a test of whether the EU can keep the Balkans from exploding." In order to fulfil their aspirations, a functioning market economy and a stable and democratic government and a dynamic civil society are paramount. The rise of organized crime in South-eastern Europe over the past dozen-plus years has undermined the aforementioned processes of integration. Of particular importance is the level of collusion, as in southern Italy, between the mafia and legitimate political actors.

By eliminating many of the barriers to the movement of goods and people the EU has created a great many opportunities for trade and development on the licit level. Additionally, the EU imposes certain criteria which must be met for states to be considered for membership. I argue that organized crime in South-eastern Europe seriously inhibits these developments and retards state building. Support for this hypothesis is found in the work done by Amra Festi_ and Adrian Rausche. Furthermore, the inverse devolution at the supra- and transnational levels brought about by via the EU means a diminution of the barriers to the movement of goods and people on the licit level. It is my contention that this openness serves equally well as a facilitator of mafia growth on the illicit level. An area in which I am conducting further research is to what extent the various European mafie are using this Europeanization to expand their criminal activities.

A key part of this expansion consists of the rise of transnational organized crime. Significant transnational cooperation exists already between the Italian mafie, especially the Sacra Corona Unità, and the Balkan mafia and the research conducted by Aida Hozi_ and Marko Hajdinjak demonstrate this linkage. This exploitation of the dark underbelly of political and economic cooperation by mafie necessitates a great deal of inter-mafia cooperation. My premise is that European mafie subvert transference of decision making to the EU, open markets, and globalization in order to capture a greater share of the black economy.

In my future work I will seek to prove that high levels of collaboration exist between European mafie, and technological advances and the dissolution of politico-economic boundaries have substantially exacerbated the problem. What I call the Europeanization of the mafia.

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CALL FOR PAPERS

Global Crime is a peer-reviewed journal published by Routledge that presents high-calibre scholarship on serious and organized crime. Its coverage is not just on organized crime in the strict sense, but on a wide range of criminal activities, from corruption, illegal market transactions, state crime and terrorism. This focus is deliberately broad and multi-disciplinary, its first aim being to make the best scholarship available to specialists and non-specialists alike. It endorses no particular orthodoxy and draws on authors from a variety of disciplines, including history, sociology, economics, political science, anthropology and area studies.

The webpage of the journal is at:

<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/17440572.asp>

During 2006, Federico Varese and Carlo Morselli will be co-editing a special issue on the application of social network analysis to the study of criminal groups. This issue seeks to advance applications of social network analysis in the study of crime, security, and related areas of research. We invite contributors to send both empirical and theoretical papers.

The deadline for submitting abstracts is March 1, 2006. We expect to receive the papers by October 1, 2006. The special issue will be published in 2007. Authors will receive 50 off-prints and a free copy of the issue.

Submit abstracts to Federico Varese at Federico.varese@law.ox.ac.uk by March 1, 2006.

Submit papers to Federico Varese by October 1, 2006.

Book Review

Alfred W. McCoy

The Politics of Heroin: CIA Complicity in the Global Drug Trade, Afghanistan, Southeast Asia, Central America

Chicago: Lawrence Hill, 2003, 710 p.

ISBN 1-55652-483-8

Reviewed by: Klaus von Lampe, Berlin, Germany

At first glance this book might be mistaken for just another post-9/11 conspiracy theory, which finds the U.S. government and its agencies behind every evil doing on the planet. But this impression could not be further from the truth. To begin with, "The Politics of Heroin: CIA complicity in the global drug trade" is the third, revised and expanded, edition of the 1972 classic "The Politics of Heroin in South-east Asia".

Moreover, the author, Alfred McCoy, is a diligent researcher who looks at the broad picture, carefully weighing the evidence, including interviews with some of the key figures, and who arrives at conclusions that are more cautious than the book title implies. Finally, the title of the book is misleading insofar as the role of the CIA is not always at the centre of the events that McCoy recounts.

The book falls into four main parts. Following a preface that illuminates the fascinating story behind the story and a brief introduction on the history of heroin, the first part deals mainly with the involvement of Italian and Corsican syndicates in the cross-Atlantic heroin trade from the 1940s through 1970s. The second part, taking up some 300 out of 530 pages (not counting the notes), describes in great detail the development of the Asian opium trade from colonial times up to the end of the Vietnam War. In the third section McCoy critically reviews the U.S. wars on drug from Nixon to Clinton, while the fourth part specifically addresses CIA involvement in drug trafficking in the context of covert warfare in Afghanistan and Nicaragua during the 1980s and 1990s.

Opium had become a major commodity in world trade before it was outlawed early in the 20th century as a result of increased medical awareness of addiction and a global temperance movement. Prohibition drove opium into an illicit economy eventually controlled by upland drug lords and urban crime syndicates. By the late 1990s, 180 million people, or 4.2 percent of the world's adult population, were using illicit drugs worldwide, including 13.5 million for opiates and 14 million for cocaine.

These figures, Alfred McCoy suggests, are the outcome of a long process of ill-fated political intervention, starting with the promotion of opium use in China and among the Chinese Diaspora in South-east Asia by European colonial powers.

In the 1940s, McCoy claims, the United States spoiled a unique opportunity to eliminate heroin addiction as a major social problem when "radical pragmatism" led its intelligence agencies to form an anti-Communist alliance with the "Sicilian American Mafia" and the Corsican underworld of Marseille. This alliance "put the Corsicans in a powerful enough position to establish Marseille as the post-war heroin capital of the Western world and" cemented "a long-term partnership with Mafia drug distributors" (p. 47).

Half way around the globe, in Burma, the CIA was guided by the same anti-Communist rationale when it provided support to Kuomintang (KMT) forces that had retreated from China. The KMT encouraged the production of opium and centralized its marketing, selling the opium primarily to a Thai police general and CIA client. In neighbouring Laos, the CIA secured the loyalty of poppy growing hill tribes by using its airline, Air America, to fly opium to facilities operated and controlled by "the CIA's covert action assets" who, McCoy notes, "had become the leading heroin dealers in Laos" (p. 289). Similarly, the U.S. long tolerated the involvement of South Vietnamese political and military figures in the opium and heroin trade.

This involvement went so far that "elements of the Vietnamese army managed much of the distribution and sale of heroin to GIs inside South Vietnam" (p. 229). Summing up the CIA's role in the Southeast Asian heroin trade, McCoy states that it "involved indirect complicity rather than direct culpability" (p. 385).

When U.S. troops withdrew from Vietnam, the Southeast Asian drugs followed and also found new markets in Europe after American pressure had "forced Turkey to eradicate its opium fields and France to close its heroin laboratories" (p. 388). McCoy concludes that Nixon's war on drugs, while in the short term successful, merely resulted in an increased complexity of the global heroin trade. The same mechanisms of localized suppression transforming into global stimulus, McCoy argues, could be observed in Latin America during the 1990s. Despite massive eradication efforts, the overall Andes coca harvest doubled, parallel to the introduction of poppy cultivation in Colombia which supplied 65 percent of the U.S. heroin market by

1999. Likewise, the pattern of CIA complicity repeated itself with the support of cocaine trafficking Contras in Nicaragua and opium trafficking mujaheddin in Afghanistan. To attain its operational goals, McCoy notes, the CIA tolerated and concealed the drug dealing by its local assets.

Despite the seeming weight of the evidence, at the end of his book Alfred McCoy is hesitant to arrive at a definite judgment regarding the CIA's responsibility for the global drug trade. However, what he repeatedly suggests is that had the CIA adopted a rigorous anti-drugs policy and had the war on drugs focused more on demand reduction, then the drug problem could have been less severe by the year 2000.

McCoy writes in the tradition of a historiography that focuses on individual actors, often two antagonists pitted against each other, rather than on broad socio-economic structures and processes, although these aspects are not ignored. This approach is most convincing where he can draw on first hand information obtained from key players such as veterans of French and American covert operations in Indochina, but shows a certain affinity to stereotypical imagery when relying on conventional sources, as in the discussion of drug trafficking in the U.S.

In contrast, the chapters on the war on drugs and the CIA operations in Nicaragua and Afghanistan that have been written since the publication of the first edition reemphasize McCoy's critical perspective, adding further insights while underscoring his scathing assessment of the nexus between drugs and politics.

CALL FOR PAPERS

2nd Annual Workshop on Criminology and the Economics of Crime June 5-6, Wye Plantation, Wye Maryland.

The workshop is scheduled for June 5-6, 2006 at the Wye River Conference Centre facility about 50 miles from both Baltimore and Washington. We are seeking proposals for papers and sessions.

Papers can be on any crime topic that is likely to be of interest to both criminologists and economists, such as illegal markets, cost benefit analysis and desistance from crime. Visit the website at: <http://www.popcenter.umd.edu/criminologyandeconomics/news/> of the Program on the Economics of Crime and Justice Policy for further information.

Deadline for proposals by February 1, 2006.

CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENTS

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The next conference, **Understanding Crime: Structural and Developmental Dimensions, and their Implications for Policy**, will be organised in **Tübingen, Germany , 26-29 August, 2006**. For more information on deadlines for submitting papers and on how to participate please see the conference website.:

<http://www.eurocrim2006.org/>

ERCES

The **2nd International Conference of the European and International Research Group on Crime, Ethics and Social Philosophy ERCES** will be organized in **Borovets (Bulgaria) 3 – 6 May 2006**.

Theme: Crime, Culture and Crime Culture. The Balkan, Europe and the World. Cross-cultural approaches to Crime, Criminal Justice and Social Control: interdisciplinary perspectives.

For more information on deadlines for submitting papers and on how to participate please see the conference website.

<http://www.erces.com/conf2.htm>

Securitising Organised Crime in the Western Balkans: An Approach through Regional Security Complex Theory

By: Christos Marazopoulos
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In international literature until the end of the Cold War, the main focus of research and analysis was primarily centred on the great powers and their role in the international politics as well as the local actors' perspective. Additionally, the notion of security was limited exclusively in the military-political realm.

Since the 1990s, there is a shift in these perceptions, exactly because important shifts have taken place in the world. The 'Copenhagen School of Security Studies', mainly through the projects of Barry Buzan, tried to direct the attention on the regional sphere of security politics, without writing off the other level of analysis. It is an effort to complement the global and national level and not to draw segregation lines. Regarding the concept of security, a serious attempt is taking place to widen the elements that define security.

In their book "Security: A New Framework for Analysis", Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde tried to include in the context of security the military, the political, the economic, the societal and the environmental sectors, thus mapping the security territory. This approach takes the perception of security away from materialist-realist ones and builds the theory of Regional Security Complex (RSC) to a great extent on constructivist views. This text is using, as a case study, the Western Balkans, meaning the former Yugoslavia minus Slovenia plus Albania. The Western Balkans are considered to be a sub-complex of the wider European complex, as the their major security perceptions and concerns are so interlinked that their national security problems cannot reasonably be analysed or resolved apart from another (Buzan et al, 1998: 12).

Taking RSC as an organising tool, it is claimed that organised crime with its extensions reaching terrorism, illegal trade and trafficking, has become in today's parlance a securitising factor for the region. Arms traffickers and manufacturers in republics of the former Yugoslavia and Albania are active suppliers of terrorist groups in Western Europe and elsewhere. Weapons proliferation tends to be a multi-stage process; once abandoned by a primary user such as the Bosnian Serbs of the mid-1990s,

arms return to circulation and 'migrate' to new users such as ETA freedom fighters (Curtis and Karacan, 2002: 1).

It is worth referring that the European Security Strategy, adopted by the European Council in 2003, recognises five key threats, among which the three are terrorism, state failure and organised crime; the fourth element is regional conflicts. It is obvious that this mixture of threat easily can be applied on the Western Balkans. Organised crime connected with corruption and economic deprivation tends to become a part of the notion of the Balkan identity, a process that is linked with the previously mentioned societal sector, a component of the concept of security. The region is marked also with ethno-territorial conflicts that lie on both societal and political sector. The more the conflicts and the lack of cross-border control, the higher the levels of criminal activity taking place.

In conclusion, both the local actors and the international community, increasingly securitize mainly transnational phenomena like organised crime. This challenge is supported by and in sequence intensifies the probability of conflicts; weak state structures, and several cracks and clashes within societies. An important question for the future is how the overall constellation will be influenced if these developments increasingly become the main object of securitisation either in the region or from outside (Buzan et al, 2003:385).

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Ongoing PhD Research on Organised Crime in South-East Europe

Name: ARSOVSKA, Jana

Institution: Katholieke Universiteit Leuven

Supervisor: Prof. Frank Verbruggen

Country: Belgium

PhD topic: Understanding a culture of violence and crime - the role of the Code of Honour in the rise of the ethnic Albanian OC groups

PhD research overview:

The ethnic Albanian OC groups have been identified as one of the most violent OC groups operating in Europe. 'Western Europeans' have readily associated Albania and ethnic Albanians with problems of international security. They have been combining the recent evolution of the OC activities with the historical stereotypes of Albanians as bloodthirsty tribesman, concluding that individual interests, revengeful nature and lack of laws (culture) are the explanation for such 'ferocious' behaviour.

However, what many Westerners have failed to elaborate on is the degree to which the social construction of right and wrong across the broad social, historical and cultural landscape can shape the definitions of and responses to 'deviant and violent' behaviour. This PhD research will endeavour to clarify a nexus between an existing ancient instrument associated with 'extreme violence', the 15th century Albanian legal code known as the Kanun of Lek Dukagjini, and the behaviour of the contemporary Albanian OC groups. It will explore from an historical and cultural perspective why Albanian OC groups have come to be regarded as 'ultra-violent' actors.

Name: KOSTAKOS A., Panos

Institution: University of Bath

Supervisors: Professor Stefan Wolff and Dr Felia Allum

Country: United Kingdom

PhD topic: Assessing the effectiveness of organized crime theories and international cooperation in the Balkans

PhD research overview:

The research aims to assess the effectiveness of law and policy making institutions in combating transnational crime. We propose to develop a framework that incorporates three variables: a) the rate of transnational crime (external reality to our problem) b) international cooperation (internal reality of states) and c) criminal's modus operandi (internal reality of criminals).

We are interested in understanding the transformation of the level of transnational crime.

The assumption is that the external reality affects the internal realities/structures of the actors and these internal realities/structures in turn affect the external reality. The model will be comparatively tested by applying it to Balkan countries both in transition and more advanced.

Name: MARAZOPOULOS, Christos

Institution: University of Bath

Supervisors: Professor Stefan Wolff and Dr Felia Allum

Country: United Kingdom

PhD topic: Testing the Impact of Regional Instability on the Outbreak of Conflict - Approaching the Western Balkans through Regional Security Complex Theory

PhD research overview:

The purpose of this research is to arrive at a more precise understanding of the ways in which specific factors of regional instability in the Western Balkans reverberate throughout the region to produce regional conflict.

Conceptualising the territory of the Western Balkans as a sub-complex of the wider European regional complex, this study investigates which factors of regional instability condition the outbreak of conflict and how these issues, such as organised crime and corruption, security of borderlands, regional ethnic geography and a highly organised informal economy are interrelated.

Three central questions will be addressed: Where can we identify cores of countries in the region as they form on the basis of issue-proximity and how are they best analysed? How is instability transmitted within the region between core and core as well as core and periphery? What are the linkages between factors of regional instability, their internal transmission and the outbreak of regional conflict?

This study draws on a triangular combination of both quantitative and qualitative research methods to produce findings, identify patterns and provide theoretical propositions.

Name: HOLBROOK, Christopher

Institution: George Mason University, Fairfax Virginia.

Supervisor: Dr. Janine Wedel

Country: USA

PhD Topic: Europeanization of the Mafia: Old and New *Mafie* and Transnational Organized Crime

PhD Research Overview:

My proposed area of study as a doctoral candidate will focus on transnational organized crime throughout Europe.

Specifically, my research will consist of three sections: (1) A brief discussion of the legacy of European mafie with particular attention paid to the southern Italian examples, and the resulting retardation of civil society and rule of law in these areas; (2) Using the available research on southern Italy as a template, I will examine the effects of the vacuum created in Southeast Europe by the communist legacy, transition to a free market economy, and the instability and conflicts marking the region since the early 1990s on the rise of organized crime groups.

I will examine to what extent the volatility created over the past decade-plus serves as an ideal environment in which mafie flourish. This growth has already begun to severely hamper these countries' economic and political transitions, and frustrate efforts to establish western European levels of functioning; and (3) The effect globalization and inverse devolution to the supra-national level have had in facilitating inter-mafie cooperation, what I call the Europeanization of the mafia. In summary, my research will examine to what extent the openings of Europe have and will have on creating an environment which allows the "strategic crime" in Southeast Europe to insinuate itself throughout Western Europe.

Name: IRRERA, Daniela

Institution: University of Messina

Supervisor: Prof. Fulvio Attinà

Country: Italy

PhD topic: "The criminal States: a possible model" (in Italian, finished 2005)

PhD research overview:

The PhD dissertation (which is going to be published by the Giuffrè) tries to explore a new category - the Criminal State - which can include all different forms of the State sovereignty crisis facing non-State actors. Even if it studies - in the first part - this issue through the most important IR theories, it is mainly focused on the rising of transnational organised crime and its impact on State.

By using some case studies (Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, Colombia), the author tries to explain the basic conditions (political and economic ones), internal and external variables (illegal behaviours, clans, corruption, geopolitical positions) and the main building process of the criminalisation of the State. In order to identify Criminal States within the global system and to face the dangerous threats they are posing.

Name: XENAKIS, Sappho

Institution: Oxford University

Supervisor: Dr Philip Robins

Country: UK

PhD topic: International norm diffusion and the development of policy against organised crime in the Balkans, 1989-2001, the case of Greece

PhD research overview:

The thesis considers the reasons for the development of policy against organised crime in Greece between 1989-2001. Threat assessments of the nature of the threat posed by organised crime are found to have very weak empirical bases. It is argued that a combination of domestic and international levels of analysis needs to be employed in order to explain the emergence of Greek policy against organised crime. Furthermore, the significance of policy against organised crime in Greece cannot be fully appreciated without taking into account both the controversial history of law-making on organised crime and the commonplace ambiguities between licit and illicit activities in Greece.

Name: GACHEVSKA, Katerina

Institution: University of Wolverhampton

Country: UK

PhD topic: Crime, Terror and Soft Security in South-Eastern and Western Europe Relations Neighbourhood Policy"

PhD research overview:

The aim of the research is to answer the question how the new understanding of security influences the relations between Western and Eastern Europe with regards to EU enlargement. The theoretical paradigm is the emerging concept of emerging notion of "soft security" (economic stability, transborder crime and environmental threats, movement of refugees, etc.) as opposed to the "hard security" problems, traditionally linked to military defence of a state. The research focuses on the process of internationalisation and securitization of soft security issues and aims at developing a possible model for understanding the complex of interaction and interdependence among the key actors on a national and international level in Europe. The research is confined empirically and geographically in South-Eastern Europe and its relations with Western Europe.

Name: IVANOV, Kalin

Institution: University of Oxford

Supervisor: Prof. Jan Zielonka

Country: UK

PhD Topic: The effect of anti-corruption on the quality of democracy in Bulgaria since 1997.

Reading List Organised Crime in Southeast Europe

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CONTRIBUTIONS

For both the blog and the newsletter we are looking for:

- Book reviews of approximately 500-900 words, original books in language of your choice but reviews should be written in English. Indicate the language of the book.
- Conference reports of about 1000 words in English. Share your experience at conferences with those who are unable to attend them;
- Information on Calls for Papers, coming conferences and any other interesting material for our readers;

For the newsletter we are looking for short original articles (1000-2000 words) on the themes of the newsletters. You are also invited to propose a theme. The theme for coming issue of May is "Organised Crime and Terrorism".

The deadline for the May issue is 1 May 2006.

Please send your (ideas for) contributions to: oceditor@lycos.co.uk

Disclaimer: While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of information contained in this newsletter, neither the Editors nor the ECPR can accept responsibility for any errors.