PUTTING ORGANIZED CRIME IN ITS PLACE
. . . WITHIN POLITICAL SCIENCE

> "Power . . . has under the gobalizing conditions of the present escaped from politics, shaken off the constraints of politically constituted governments, been rendered fugitive" (Loader, 2002: 139).

By

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Political Science has long had a reputation as a useless discipline. "What," students often ask, "can you do with (a degree in) political science?" It is, of course, difficult to convince them of the discipline's direct, practical applicability to the real world outside the university campus. This is especially so when hardly ever does anyone from the world of real politics ask us professional political scientists for advice. Growing out of my studies of post-communist transition processes, however, especially those in Russia, and to a lesser extent in Ukraine and Eastern Europe generally, I have a suggestion that should make political science more practical and the employment prospects of its graduates more profitable. It requires adding to our discipline a subject too long ignored: organized crime. The trouble is, we do not know where exactly it fits. Certainly, David Easton's classic notion of "the political system" does not and surely could not accommodate it, simply because organized crime is illegitimate and therefore by definition does not belong to the sphere of "authoritative allocation of values for a society" (Easton, 1953: 128-9, and chap. 5 *passim*; 1965: 48-50; 1979: 21-2). Looking at the indexes of textbooks in political science you cannot find it, either, although occasionally there is an entry for "crime," "corruption," and "mafia" or "oligarch." Maybe "political science" as a whole needs to be rethought.

Here let me try to put forward the case that: (1) "organized crime" *does have* a place in political science, and it is *not* only of concern to sociologists, criminologists and law enforcement officers, (2) it deserves to be incorporated into the discipline of political science so as to give a proper, fuller and more realistic (and therefore less idealistic) understanding of today's world—a world awash in guns, drugs, people and body parts for sale, pirated CDs, and stolen cars—and (3) it properly fits and can be accommodated within many sub-fields of the discipline: Canadian and American politics, democratic transitions, comparative politics, advanced industrial democracies, developing countries, international relations, and even political theory (empirical and normative). I am suggesting that we lift the carpet, and along with the world of legitimate power which has been in our usual field of vision we should take a look at and account of the world where illegitimate power holds sway. The two are not only complementary; they are connected.

When Stephen Handelman wrote his book, *Comrade Criminal* (1995), we all (myself included) woke up to the fact that, along with the transition to democracy and transformation of the economy from planning to market, there was in Russia an insidious criminalization process engulfing politics and economics. This process threatened the very survival, let alone achievement, of democracy and of stability. It threatened openness of competition, legitimacy of democratic institutions, rule of law, avoidance of conflict of interest, freedom of participation and information, establishment of clear procedures, the sanctity of property ownership and contracts, accountability, the state's monopoly on the means of violence, and clear demarcation between legitimate and illegitimate activity. Since then, I have been trying to learn more about, and to comprehend:

1. Ordinary crime in Russia, crime-fighting measures, and the links between ordinary and organized crime;
2. Organized crime in Russia and elsewhere;
3. Corruption as a correlate of organized crime;
4. Measures to combat organized crime and corruption;
5. The connection between organized crime and politics, its uniqueness to Russia (it is not), whether it is a danger to democracy (apparently not, because no one generally—either practitioner or political scientist—draws attention to the link between organized crime and politics, or regards it as dangerous, so it must be benign).

Without wanting to be either a Chicken Little or an ostrich, it must be admitted that there are some "blank spots," some "terrae incognitae" on the map of the world we've been following all this time. We have tended to "leave sleeping dogs lie"; perhaps that's the explanation for our neglect of this subject of organized crime. I believe there *is* seriously something missing in the field of vision of political science: if we are indeed students of power, then surely we need to look not only at its legitimate forms, sites, and uses, but *also* at *il*legitimate power. The more so—not just because they are forms of power *per se*—but because, *the two are connected and are interdependent*. Organized crime, properly understood, is *attached to* political institutions, personnel, and processes. Organized crime thrives because some lucrative activities are prohibited, and because in

the pursuit of this lucre it has the protection or sponsorship of politicians, officials, and policemen—it uses them, and they use it.

Let me first discuss the concept of organized crime, and try to show why political scientists should be paying much more attention to the phenomenon than they have been. Then I want to mention a few randomly selected studies which may offer the outlines of a model of the connection between organized crime and politics, and the dynamics between the two. It is a formidable challenge to convey, on the one hand, the complexity without getting overwhelmed by a great number of factors, and, on the other hand, also to avoid oversimplification.

Concepts and Theories of Organized Crime

There are almost as many definitions of organized crime as there are people studying it: in law enforcement agencies, criminology and sociology departments, the criminal world itself, and economists (for a compendium, see Von Lampe, 2002). It is remarkable that political scientists are absent from this list. Naturally, it is essential to recognize the contested nature of the concept, meaning that the user fashions it to suit that particular person's purposes. As a British criminologist has rightly said, "the nature of 'organised crime' remains deeply contested terrain, at least in academic circles and in those countries who are more worried about loss of independence and civil liberties than they are about subservience to organised crime" (Levi, 1998: 337). Nevertheless, even if the fight against organized crime is often a rationalization for increased resources for the police, it is a phenomenon quite independent of that or any other particular usage and which deserves serious study by social scientists, especially by political scientists. "To explain the bureaucratic and ideological *functions* of the term 'organised crime,'" as Michael Levi (1998: 337) puts it, "does not by itself demonstrate that the term is inappropriate, nor does it 'prove' that there are no long-term groups of criminals who commit serious offences or even begin to constitute the State."

A very broad definition, emerging out of the American context of organized crime, refers to it as "a loose confederation of ethnic and regional crime groups, bound by economic and political necessity" (Bequai, 1979: 6). Strictly speaking, organized crime embraces three different types of criminal activity. They are: (1) professional crime engaged in by professional criminals; (2) the operation of crime syndicates engaged in

the pursuit of illegal financial gain and enjoying protection from corrupt officials; and (3) "that type of white-collar crime whereby persons . . . exploit all legal instruments . . . in the secret and illegal expansion of their assets, to the detriment of [others]" (Fijnaut, 1990: 322-3). For present purposes, we are concerned with the second of these. A fuller definition of organized crime, therefore, of this second type has been formulated as follows:

> the planned [commission] of criminal offences, motivated by the pursuit of profit and the striving for power, which have substantial relevance individually or in their entirety if more than two parties collaborate in a division of labour over a longer or indefinite period
>
> a) using commercial or businesslike structures,
>
> b) using violence or other means likely to intimidate, or
>
> c) exerting influence on politics, media, public administration, the judiciary or the economy (Feiler, 1997: 177).

This definition is based on that of the German federal police and in spite of shortcomings is generally accepted in Europe (Levi, 1998: 335). Organized crime, in short, is ongoing illegal business or other activity accompanied by intimidation and linked to politics.

Various analogs are invoked to understand organized crime, including such disparate notions as the business corporation and feudalism. An organized crime group is seen sometimes as simply engaged in illegal business in a manner parallel to its legal counterpart.[1] Other observers have noted the primordial nature of the ties binding an organized criminal group's members, which thus distinguishes it from a modern, impersonal business corporation.[2] Various conditions for the genesis of organized crime have also been identified, including political, geographic, legal, and sociological factors. It is, by reason of providing protection, even said to be a substitute for the state (Skaperdas, 2001: 174 and 180-4).[3]

Approaches to the study of organized crime are as varied as the different emphases available to researchers from the various key features of the phenomenon: organization, criminal activity, conspiracy, violence, and political connections. Some degree of order can be introduced into this diversity. Basically, as Donald Liddick (1999: 191) explains, "theories of organized crime . . . may be grouped into three major

theoretical paradigms: the alien-conspiracy/bureaucracy paradigm; the enterprise approach; and the patron-client relations perspective." The paradigm or perspective dictates the approach. Thus, if one assumes that the chief characteristic of organized crime is its hierarchical organization, then one looks for coordination and conspiracy. This is the dominant approach of law enforcement in North America, which has been spectacularly unsuccessful in understanding and therefore also in dealing with the phenomenon of organized crime (Liddick, 1999: 198; Geary, 2002). It assumes that disabling the leadership of organized crime groups will end criminal activity, but it never does. Knock off the kingpin, the organization falls apart, and the criminal activity ceases. Would that it were so simple. On the other hand, the enterprise approach focuses on illegal markets. It views organized crime as servicing such markets, very much like legitimate business enterprises. Unfortunately, that analogy is not entirely apt, either, because: (1) there is a fundamental difference between legal and illegal business; (2) it ignores totally the fact that power and violence are part of organized crime; and (3) what is characteristic of illegal business is, in fact, a natural tendency towards fragmentation rather than concentration or monopoly (Liddick, 1999: 205-14 and 224-32). Each approach admittedly identifies an important aspect of organized crime: it is, indeed, "organized" in some sense, and it does operate to a certain extent in illegal markets, meeting a significant demand or providing a necessary service. Yet it is neither entirely like a normal bureaucracy nor a business corporation. Consequently, Liddick advocates the patron-client relations paradigm as the most fruitful approach for studying organized crime.

Conceived in this way, as alliances based on unequal power relationships, organized crime consists of networks that have some element of hierarchy but cannot be completely so characterized. These networks involve reciprocity (rather than subordination and superordination), they engage in activities beyond purely economic (offering “protection” and enforcement of agreements), and they extend (through their patron-client links) into the worlds of legitimate government and business (Liddick, 1999: 199-205 and 232-3; cf. Paoli, 2002a). This approach is somewhat broader and yet more specific than the other two. It fills in the lacunae. Clearly, "patrons . . . may not involve themselves in illegal entrepreneurship, political office, or union positions.

Instead they focus solely on the distribution and brokerage of *informal power*, completely independent of institutional or formal authority. Among organized criminals it is power and the occasional use of private violence and coercion . . . through which organized crime mediators channel the distribution of resources" (Liddick, 1999: 205. Original emphasis). Furthermore, patron-client ties can embrace legitimate businessmen, politicians, and consumers, all in symbiotic relationships, as active participants rather than as passive victims of organized crime.[4] The patron-client perspective also more adequately accounts for the "feudal" and "ethnic" coloration of organized crime than do other approaches, since protection is an aspect of the unequal power relationship, and kinship (real or symbolic) is the strongest bonding agent.[5]

We need to de-emphasize the word "organized" in thinking about "organized crime," or at least not to think of organization in hierarchical terms exclusively, if we are to avoid being thrown off the track at the very outset. Michael Woodiwiss (2001: 3) expresses it well when he opens his book on organized crime in the United States with the simple statement that for him "organized crime is systematic criminal activity for money or power." It is the systematic, or ongoing, rather than the "organized" nature of the activity, that is important; it is the activity itself, not the organized or not-so-organized character of the group, that counts; and it is involvement with power, politics, and society that makes it what it is—a thoroughly "political" phenomenon.

Organized Crime and Politics

By reviewing the experience of a number of countries with an outstanding historical record or notoriety in respect to organized crime and politics we may be able to sketch the relationship. What factors bring the two into contact? How extensive are these contacts in time and space? What effect, if any, does their coming together have on government, especially democratic government? Is the intrusion of organized crime into democratic politics anomalous or normal? Is the relationship parasitic or symbiotic? Is it damaging to democracy? Is it transitory or permanent?

We could begin with Canada, but my impression is that the literature on the subject never connects organized crime with politics (for example, Charbonneau, 1976; Simpson, 1988; Robinson, 1999) or *vice versa*. The research has yet to be done. We turn of necessity to the United States.

In his massive study, *Organized Crime and American Power*, British historian Michael Woodiwiss (2001) presents exhaustive evidence convincingly demonstrating the persistence of a close link between organized crime and politics from well before United States independence to the present time. While he offers no specific explanation, presumably because he is an historian and not a social scientist (his implicit explanation seems to boil down to a capitalist conspiracy), one important lesson from the U.S. experience is that such an historical pattern once established evidently cannot be broken. Woodiwiss, contrary to the conventional view, does not see the nineteenth-century "robber-barons" as having been transformed at all into "respectable" law-abiding businessmen. For him they are the antecedents of modern organized crime. From the Yazoo land fraud of the 1790s to the Savings and Loan scandals of the 1980s, "organized crime" in America has involved "respectable" people. It is a social phenomenon, an integral part of American life, and, paradoxically, not at all a threat to the existing order.[6] If America, the beacon of liberty and democracy, can live with its "organized crime"—for all its moralistic crusades against alcohol, drugs, prostitution, and "organized crime" itself—then perhaps other countries, including Russia, can, too. A second lesson is that the Prohibition—and any prohibition of economic activity will have this same effect—provided organized crime with a golden opportunity to penetrate the legitimate economy. Woodiwiss is also going against the current when he refers to criminal groups as "networks" (170, 202, and 381). The partnerships even of America's most famous criminal, Al Capone, he correctly points out, were not hierarchical; gangsters are hustlers, not bureaucrats (Woodiwiss, 2001: 196). Once installed in the political system and the economy, by whatever means, organized crime is impossible to extract: it becomes institutionalized.[7]

Apart from such blanket historical treatments of its permanence and pervasiveness as that of Michael Woodiwiss, neither the extent of the political links of organized crime nor its effect on American democracy have never been studied systematically or directly. This suggests the operation, perhaps domination, of ideology over political science in the United States. Some episodic information, and occasional admission of ignorance, is available. Herbert Alexander (1985: 93), for instance, has acknowledged that "clearly too little is known of political-criminal relationships, the incidences, the levels, the

geographic areas, the impacts they have." Even a landmark study of the reduction of organized crime's influence on major industries in New York City drew a blank regarding politics, with the authors admitting that such connections had never been examined (Jacobs et al., 1999: 127). Nevertheless, the New York study did hint at two further factors which might have made organized crime's incursions into politics tolerable, and which dovetail with this paper's concerns: the public affected did not mind these intrusions (they were legitimate), and it acted like a government (it had authority) (Jacobs et al., 1999: 122-4). A study of organized crime in other American cities, meanwhile, showed not only that what it called "the 'triple alliance' of politicians, police, and organized crime" was still alive and well, but that the initiative in the relationship came from the politicians. It was by no means a situation of organized crime "intruding into" politics, but of politicians reaching out to control and co-opt the criminals and their activities (Jenkins and Potter, 1987: 476-8). Furthermore, the criminal-political nexus exists not only in America's major cities, which receive the lion's share of attention, but also on the national level. Perhaps it is because of the contingent nature of the relationships between politicians and organized crime figures that they are so difficult to focus on and to study. Nonetheless, as an investigation into U.S. national politicians and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters during the Reagan presidency put it, "Serious organized crime in American society is always political even though its most lurid manifestations are the private use of violence" (Block and Griffin, 1997: 1).

As compared to the United States, Mexico offers a more instructive case for thinking about the connection between organized crime and politics, as well as the transition to democracy. In Mexican politics, relations between politicians and organized criminals may be modeled according to which of the two is dominant, and which way influence flows. Either the politicians are using the criminals and discarding them when no longer useful, or else the initiative comes from the criminal side so the politicians are being used for the criminals' protection and enrichment (Bailey and Godson, 2000: 3-6 and 15-21; Pimentel, 2000: 33-57). The latter, or "stage-evolutionary model," is the normal or more usual form of the relationship (Pimentel, 2000: 39-40 and 56-7; this, incidentally, ties in well with Jacobs et al., 1999). Under the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), Mexico's situation corresponded to the alternative, or "elite-exploitation,"

model of organized crime. This model features politicians' being able to control organized crime from the top, and to exploit it like a "cash cow"--a source of hard currency, investment and development funds, campaign financing, and personal enrichment. In the aftermath of the setback for the PRI in 1997, Mexico's situation has been thrown into confusion and the continued ability of politicians to control organized crime is now in some doubt (Pimentel, 2000: 52). The well-established pattern of patron-clientelism in Mexican politics makes its criminalization understandable; patron-clientelism of any sort is threatened by democracy.

A useful way to think about the impact of this on democracy is to say that the political-criminal nexus affects five aspects of government (Bailey and Godson, 2000: 8-9). These are: (1) monopoly of coercion; (2) administration of justice; (3) administrative capacity; (4) provision of minimum public goods; and (5) conflict management. Altogether, the five criteria would be have to be applied in assessing the effects of the political-criminal nexus on democracy, particularly in a country supposedly undergoing a transition to democracy, such as Mexico or Russia.

In other parts of the world, the relationship between politics and organized crime is quite variable, possibly reflecting cultural peculiarities. Colombia represents an extreme case of perpetual war between the legitimate authorities and drug lords. The war developed out of weakness of political institutions, was sustained by the economic benefits accruing to each side, and is being perpetuated by the failure of one to gain superiority over the other. Hence, the impossibility now of distinguishing political violence from criminal, criminal acts from political, and rebel strongholds from regular government (Richani, 1997; Chernick, 1996; Rubio, 1998; Gutiérrez Sanín, 2000). In Taiwan, from its time on the mainland the Kuomintang (KMT) inherited a tradition of corruption and links to organized crime, but the influence of the latter has been curtailed.[8] Following the collapse of Yugoslavia, organized crime's emergence in Serbia was expedited by civil war and economic sanctions (Lane, 1992). The assassination of Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic in March 2003 only served to remind us of its continued presence (*Globe andMail*, 13-18 March 2003). India, whence terms like "goon" and "thug" originate, has seen the criminalization of politics as a chronic and growing phenomenon, particularly in some northern states. The evidence is found in the election

to state assemblies of MPs with criminal records, and in the apparent connections between party politicians and organized criminals. The linkages form due to parties' financial needs, as well as on account of the relatively high degree of state control of the economy (a legacy of India's experiments with socialism) (Hardgrave and Kochanek, 1999: 115-16, 225-7, and 342-6). Japan's postwar politics have also been marked by the presence of organized crime groups in parties and movements, as well as by a substantial degree of acceptance by the authorities of the accompanying violence. Some of this is linked to the official suppression of Japanese nationalism by way of an underground reaction; some, a legacy of the wartime black market (Szymkowiak and Steinhoff, 1995). Membership in organized crime groups has declined from its peak in 1963, but the *yakuza* are still a well-entrenched feature of Japan's economy and society (Shigeru, 1998). Overall, openings for the entry of organized crime into the realm of politics are provided principally by the weakness of political institutions, as well as the cupidity of party politicians seeking and holding onto office, but the degree of penetration can also be controlled by those same politicians--with public support.

Political cultures that feature patron-clientelism, apparently, are more likely to host criminal-political connections. This may stem from the coincidence that organized crime groups are themselves arranged as associations of patrons and clients (Paoli, 1995, 2001a). That, of course, has certain advantages and disadvantages tied to the nature of the activities pursued by the criminal-political nexus in question.

The Italian mafia, prototype for our entire topic, must be mentioned. Although "mafia" has become synonymous with "organized crime," the term is much more complicated and dynamic (Paoli, 1999; Jamieson, 1989, 1990, 1994, 2001a; *Economist*, 7 July 2001; Luttwack, 1993; Sabetti, 1992; Farell, 1997; Lilla, 1994; Hooper, 1998; Aloise, 2001). In Italy, "mafia" is a generic term covering mainly four regionally-based organized crime networks or brotherhoods: in Sicily, the Cosa Nostra; in Campania, the Camorra; in Calabria, the ‘Ndrangheta; and in Apulia, the Sacra Corona Unita. Since these are all concentrated in the south, and have distinct life-histories, it is very imprecise to speak of the Italian mafia as though it were a uniform and nation-wide entity. In spite of their diversity and regional specificity, however, Italian mafia groups have had a

remarkably long-lasting relationship with Italian politicians at all levels, giving rise to the stereotypical image.

Several features concerning origins and development deserve attention from a comparative perspective. Mafia groups arose in the nineteenth century in Southern Italy to compensate for the weaknesses of the newly unified state. Their creation was facilitated by the survival of feudalism, in spirit if not in form, and accompanied by the development of an ideology which significantly included a code of personal and family honour, but lacking an element of loyalty to the state. Mafia and state power developed therefore in parallel, their relationship becoming complementary and collaborative rather than competitive. The *mafiosi* provided services for their political patrons, and obtained favours in return. This alliance (one of equals, it should be stressed, and not, strictly speaking, at the point of contact between the two bodies a relationship of patron-clientelism) was underlain by a system of values shared equally by the politicians and *mafiosi*. The mafia's intrusion into politics, however, was not uniform across time and space, nor was it for inherent reasons stable. No single organizational formula was applicable to the Italian mafia groups. While Cosa Nostra in Sicily has been highly structured, the same is not been true in the other three provinces, and even within Sicily there have been variations (for the organizational structure of Sicily's Cosa Nostra in its heyday, see Jamieson, 1989: 3-4, and 2000: 5). Overall, the most appropriate designation for all the mafia as organizations is "consortia," which de-emphasizes hierarchy and coordinative leadership, and emphasizes organizational looseness. Mafia groups, of course, are more than merely economic enterprises; they are an intrinsic part of their society.[9]

Italian mafia groups have also experienced a great deal of change, particularly in the last half of the twentieth century. Hence, a static view of this (or any other) organized crime formation would not be accurate. In terms of organization, the more rigidly structured Cosa Nostra has mutated towards the "consortium" model of the 'Ndrangheta; the Camora is not vertically structured at all. The long association between the Cosa Nostra and the Christian Democratic (DC) party has broken down; mafias now support various political parties. The culture of honour has faded; the pursuit of wealth and personal enrichment brings more prestige. The subculture once shared by politicians and

mafiosi is dissolving. Having turned to illegal business, the *mafiosi* are not as dependent on politicians for favours. More critical for them is to seek reliable ways to launder their ill-gotten money. Through mutual need (for financial management and for protection, respectively) organized crime and financial crime cooperate (Paoli, 1995: 346-7 and 353-7).[10] Whereas formerly *mafiosi* could get away with murder by influencing judges through their political patrons, the megatrials of the 1980s signified a major change in the relationship. Consorting with *mafiosi* became a liability for politicians; the *mafiosi* lost respect for the politicians and the "political class" as a whole. Far from being allies, the 1990s saw the killing of numerous politicians and judges by the *mafiosi*, which only deepened popular disgust with all of them. A further complication has been the appearance of Freemasonry as a mediator between the political and criminal worlds, which draws an extra veil of secrecy over the connections. Greatly weakened, but given the laws of social inertia, the Italian mafia, and the political-criminal nexus, both persist.

The mutuality of the mafia's relationship to politics in the Italian case has been modified, therefore, which again suggests that to view this connection—in any context—as unchanging is unwise. The criminal-political nexus is a living, evolving one. Sources of change, as suggested by the Italian experience, have been cultural, political, economic, generational, and international. International factors, specifically the role of the United States liberation forces, were responsible for drawing the mafia in to support the DC and for providing great opportunities in the black market in the 1940s, during and after the war. The granting of autonomy to the regions of Italy in 1946, not only solidified mafia support for the DC, but also gave the Sicilian Cosa Nostra new opportunities to benefit from governmental development programmes and funding. Italy's subsequent modernization, extending as it did even to the *mezzogiorno*, contributed to a change in values by which the mafia lost respect and status. New opportunities for enrichment have been opened up by the drug traffic, which not only altered relations between the *mafiosi* and politicians (they—*mafiosi*—were no longer so dependent on their politician friends for contacts and contracts). It also opened up divisions within the mafia, between those flaunting the new wealth and the more traditional "men of honour." A new generation of *mafioso*—more willing to live and let live, as far as politicians are concerned, and not seeking either confrontation or collaboration—arose. The killing spree of the 1990s, in

the wake of the maxi-trials begun in the previous decade, was judged a failure; indeed, it was more than that—no longer signifying strength but weakness. The collapse of communism removed the props from the DC and the Socialists, simultaneously wrecking their clientelistic links with mafia groups. The extraordinary wealth derived from the drug business led the mafia to seek alliances with financial criminals instead of, or at the very least in addition to, politicians. The two now had complementary needs for financial services (money laundering) and for protection (enforcement). Politicians lost respect in the eyes of the *mafiosi* by reason of the anti-mafia campaign, among other things. In any case, the adaptability of organized crime to changed circumstances should never be underestimated.

By its very nature, organized crime—because it is engaged in ongoing and systematic illegal activity—inevitably intrudes into the political realm. It originates as a complement to a weak or weakened state--whether that be in the United States (where the founding fathers bound the national executive with unbreakable bonds of checks and balances), in Japan emerging from World War Two (and General MacArthur being careful not to recreate its war-like state), or in newly-unified Italy in the nineteenth century. The connecting tissue is corruption (Vannucci, 1997; Della Porta and Mény, 1997). Organized crime latches onto, or is itself latched onto by, politicians in a clientelistic relationship, receiving protection from the law in exchange for votes or support or a cut of the proceeds (or all three). This is even more likely to happen within the context of a political culture that emphasizes reciprocity and kinship (real or symbolic) over formal, contractual relationships based on legality. Once established, the political-criminal nexus does not go away. It receives encouragement when the state has a significant part to play in the operation of the economy, as well as when certain activities (alcohol, tobacco, drugs, prostitution, trade in human organs) are prohibited or restricted. Either the politicians or the organized criminals may be in the dominant position, or there may be a standoff, as in Colombia. In any case, organized crime does not attempt to displace the state, even if it is at war with it. In this respect it is not the same as a terrorist group which does seek to take over political power (Bassiouni and Vetere, 1998: xl-xlii). It exists side-by-side with the state, in a relationship variously referred to as complementary, collusive, symbiotic, or parasitic: they are “two

sovereignties" (Cretin, 1997: 159-62; Paoli, 1999: 15 and 20-1; Jamieson, 1994: 15, 2000: xxi; Vannucci, 1997: 51).

The Russian case, incidentally, appears to belong to the extreme end of the spectrum, where not only is corruption perceived to be excessive, but also where the connection between organized crime and politics is so tight that there is no longer any practical distinction between the two (Khokhriakov, 2002). They have become fused and are no longer "two sovereignties" but instead are one. The roles of politicians, businessmen, and organized criminals are becoming indistinguishable. Russia is therefore an exemplar for a new type of criminal-political nexus apparent in several small states (Moran, 2001: 385-6), the "criminal state." Not everyone agrees with such an assessment. Naylor (1999: chap. 6), for example, dismisses out of hand any notion that Russia is becoming criminalized. He puts the post-Communist trauma down simply to greed and capitalism. Indeed, some studies of Soviet and Russian anti-corruption campaigns have concluded that such campaigns are as much about leadership infighting as they may be aimed at eradicating corruption *per se* (Holmes, 1993: 148-54, 210-11, and 220-31; Clark and Jos, 2000). But the degree of closeness of the criminal-political nexus is in any case a matter of empirical investigation, quite apart from what some outsiders may believe and what Russian politicians may be saying to rationalize their actions. Many scholars are deeply pessimistic about the effects of the criminalization of its politics on Russian democracy and economy.[11]

Transnational Organized Crime

Since the end of the Cold War, and perhaps as a substitute for it, greater attention is being paid to global or transnational crime. Paralleling the globalization of the world's economy there has been an extension of links between criminal groups across national boundaries. Economic and political power are drifting away from governments into the hands of transnational business corporations and transnational organized crime (Shelley, 1995: 463-73; Strange, 1995: 305-7; Bassioiuni and Vetere, 1998: xxxi-xxxiii; Mittelman and Johnson, 1999; Williams and Vlasis, eds., 2001; Edwards and Gill, 2002). In brief, "technology and a world market in drugs and in money together have caused states to fail to protect society against crime and criminals" (Strange, 1995: 307). This new situation is a threat both to established democracies and to those being established.[12] This recently-

discovered danger is of interest now not only to law enforcement and security agencies, but to military planners as well (Turbiville, 1994; Turbiville et al., 1997). For purposes of the present paper its significance is that investigating domestic sources of organized crime must be augmented by taking into account the international aspect. Russia today, for example, is an exporter of organized crime (Shelley, 2002)[13] as well as being extensively criminalized internally.[14] Obviously, Russia is affected by, and is affecting, the phenomenon of transnational organized crime, although in some cases there is doubt as to whether the criminal activity in question is genuinely "organized" in the conventional sense of the term (Finckenauer, 2001; Paoli, 2001b; Berryman, 2000). There is particular concern regarding trafficking in illegal drugs, even as it affects the United States.[15]

Countering Organized Crime

Can the threat from organized crime--ultimately, criminalization of the economy and of the polity--be countered? One study of organized crime cases in the Netherlands suggests a positive, but complex and fairly undramatic, answer (Van Duyne, 1996-97). It requires abandoning certain notions: that organized crime has the objective of assuming political power; that organized crime has a strategy of investing its laundered money in the legitimate economy thus influencing its development; that organized crime instigates and initiates corruption; and that organized criminal groups are the alien "they" as opposed to "us." Measures that can be effective in holding organized crime in check are: (1) strict law enforcement, auditing procedures, and codes of conduct for lawyers; and (2) wide public expectations of probity in politicians--which requires an acknowledgement that "the seeds of corruption and organized crime are not situated 'outside' but inside the house of democracy" (Van Duyne, 1996-97: 233). Of course, they cannot be expected to eradicate it altogether.[16] In addition, the policing of organized crime has to be reoriented to its anticipation and prevention, as well as targetting especially vulnerable sectors of the economy for particular attention. Obviously, an American-style "war on crime," with all its military hardware, is not the answer. For Russia, it may be altogether too late to consider measures to counter organized crime, but that is a story for another time.

Conclusions

A full picture, in my estimation, of the "political system" has to include both illegitimate as well as legitimate activity. Perhaps invoking the old phrase, "the grass is greener on the other side of the fence," is not the most appropriate in the circumstances, but we have fenced ourselves in unduly by concentrating attention on legitimate political behaviour. The basis for breaking out of these self-imposed bounds, from the Eastonian mindset, has been provided for us a long time ago by Harry Eckstein. Eckstein (1973) defined "politics" as "authority patterns," where "authority" was in turn defined as "a structure in which activities, roles, and instruments evoke legitimacy sentiments, *positive or negative*" (1973: 1153; original emphasis). So, of course, organized crime, along with insurgency, banditry, terrorism and civil war, belongs within political science.

My suggestion to fellow students of political science is therefore to pay more attention to the following topics, as is being done by colleagues in other disciplines. These themes are: (1) power—legitimate and illegitimate, and their interconnections; (2) corruption (Collier, 2002; Sung, 2002); (3) money—its laundering and flow into political campaigns (see Liddick, 2000); (4) the means of coercion, again legitimate and illegitimate (Volkov, 2002); (5) policing and law enforcement (for example, Loader, 2002; Lemieux, 2001; Beck and Lee, 2002); (6) illegal markets (Paoli, 2002b); (7) networks, not just hierarchies (see, for example, Coles, 2001; Lippens, 2001); (8) patron-clientelism, within and beyond the realm of legitimate politics (see again Liddick, 2000); (9) organized crime and the functions of government (i.e., corruption of the public service, illicit provision of public goods, and the extralegal adjudication of disputes); and (10) public expectations regarding the honesty and probity of politicians. Organized crime will never go away, because it is protected by political patrons and it meets a demand for particular goods or services not otherwise available. Political scientists ought to recognize that organized crime is intrinsic to their discipline, to include it in their studies of politics, and to try to determine which "criminal" activities are truly harmful to society. And who are the "criminals"—the illegal entrepreneurs, or their customers? Maybe there is no need for alarm, maybe organized crime is harmless since everyone ignores it, and maybe "what you don't know won't hurt you."

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[1] According to Fijnaut (1990: 325), "research that has been conducted . . . has revealed that the organizational structures of crime syndicates and legitimate corporations have countless major aspects in common: . . . the only difference is that between companies whose business is legal and those whose business is crime. Crime . . . will naturally give a characteristic dimension to certain issues, . . . but these issues do not fundamentally differ from those faced by every normal business corporation. More recent studies . . . have once more underlined the accuracy of this representation."

[2] August Bequai (1979) has written in this vein that: "Organized crime more closely resembles the feudal bands of the Middle Ages; it is a confederation of criminal groups that come together because of economic and political need. It resembles the groups that existed before the nation-state epoch" (3). "In many respects organized crime resembles the feudal system of medieval Europe. It is a system of alliances and joint ventures, based in part on kinship ties and in large part on the dictates of necessity" (6). "The South [of Italy] . . . remained feudal and agrarian well into the nineteenth century. . . . Loyalty was given to one's relatives, friends, and associates rather than to the state. The state was constantly rocked by rebellions, and its authority was at best unstable" (12). "The gangster [in twentieth-century America] is neither a reformer nor a revolutionary. He is in many respects a caricature of the robber barons of the late nineteenth century; his mentality and outlook are those of an industrial feudalist" (184). In other words, the modern gangster is not out to destroy capitalism.

[3] "The defining economic activity of organized crime is the provision of *protection* or its more respectable variation, *security*." Hence, "the peculiarity of protection . . . makes gangs and mafias less akin to firms and more similar to the traditional provider of protection, the state. In particular, . . . organized crime groups are more similar in their structure and economic impact to pre-modern forms of predatory states" (Skaperdas, 2001: 174). Emphasis in the original.

[4] "A major strength of the patron-client perspective is how it explains the role of public officials and otherwise 'legitimate' businessmen. From other organized crime viewpoints, these important players are seen as being peripheral to actual criminal organizations. Politicians are 'corrupted,' and businesses are 'infiltrated.' Their participation is characterized as passive. From a patron-client viewpoint, no distinction is made between criminals on the street selling illegal goods and services and criminals in city hall pocketing their share and deciding generally how resources will be distributed. Public officials . . . are not perceived as being somehow peripheral to criminal *organizations*, but are recognized as active participants in the *processes* that organize crime" (Liddick, 1999: 205. Original emphasis).

[5] There may, therefore, be more than scapegoating in the conventional view that Russian criminal gangs are organized on the basis of ethnic affiliation, and there may be more to the frequent characterization of Russia and the Soviet Union as fundamentally feudal in terms of social organization. The patron-client approach is also endorsed by Albini et al. (1997: 160-1; on patron-clientelism generally, see Eisenstadt and Roniger, 1984).

[6] "As has been shown throughout this book," Michael Woodiwiss (2001: 388) concludes his story, "organized criminal *activity* was never a serious threat to established or evolving economic and political power structures in the United States but more often a fluid, variable, and open-ended phenomenon that complemented those structures."

[7] "Both Italy and Colombia have discovered that once organized crime penetrates the state, the latter will not be able to dissociate itself from the former--even with the investment of significant human and economic resources, the application of intense repression and the sacrifice of many well-meaning individuals" (Shelley, 1995: 469-70).

[8] "Although organised crime has links to politicians, it does not have an autonomous political role. It is the politicians that have support groups that are criminal rather than organised crime that has a political front" (Maguire, 1997: 84).

[9] Alison Jamieson (2000: 1) makes the point about entrepreneurship forcefully. She writes that "Another term sometimes applied to organized crime is *enterprise* crime because participants are usually engaged in the provision of illicit goods and services, or licit goods that have been acquired through illicit means such as theft or fraud. Yet

'enterprise crime' is inadequate in that it does not convey organized crime's inherent violence—a capital resource always available to it and the primary means by which contractual agreements within illicit business are enforced." Original emphasis.

[10] For a discussion of the provisions in Italian law dealing with business crime generally, and organized crime and the mafia specifically, see Di Amato (2001: 31 and 142-4).), especially 31 and 142-4.

[11] "A democratic capitalist economy may be no more than a pipe dream in the post-Soviet states where Mafias are deeply entrenched; more likely, a parasitic politics, a type of political clientelism that cripples local markets in capital, commodities, industrial, and consumer goods, seems like a natural consequence of a subculture of extortion and intimidation where criminal groups have deeply penetrated the institutional structure of the society" (Kelly et al., 1997: 183). "By its scale, global reach, and devastating potential, the Great Criminal Revolution not only poses a menace to what remains of economic and political reforms in Russia and other former Soviet republics but also presents a strategic threat to the interests of the United States and the other industrialized democracies" (Waller and Yasman, 1997: 190).

[12] "International organized crime is detrimental to existing democracies and to societies in transition to democracy. Transnational crime undermines the rule of law and the legitimacy of democratic government through its corruption of individuals and the judicial process. Organized crime groups often supplant the state in societies undergoing a transition to democracy, as their representatives assume key positions in the incipient legislatures, which are responsible for crafting the new legal framework for the society. Their presence within legitimate state institutions undermines political stability because their goals are to further their own criminal interests (illicit profits), not the interests of the populace at large" (Shelley, 1995: 468).

[13] "Crime-exporting states--for example, Russia, China, and Mexico--flush out their marginalized population. Moreover, as states adopt neoliberal policies, marginalized people are further driven into underground economies. What warrants more attention than it has received so far is the criminalization of the state" (Mittelman and Johnston, 1999: 114).

[14] "While it is premature to classify any of the successor states to the Soviet Union as mafia-run governments, some regions of Russia as well as other newly independent states have already fallen under the influence of criminal organizations. The consequences of penetration by organized crime into the state sector are devastating because the penetration effectively prohibits the state from combatting these groups in their home territories, thereby undermining democracy" (Shelley, 1995: 470).

[15] Joseph D. Douglass (1996: 4), for example, worries about "the systemic corruption that is spreading throughout our social, political, and economic fabric. This corruption now encompasses a wide variety of illegal operations in addition to drug trafficking. The common threads are enormous amounts of money, the need to launder that money, *and the symbiotic relationship between these illegal activities and the political structure that makes it all possible*." Original emphasis.

[16] This is conceded even in the Netherlands. "It may be a sad and sobering conclusion that there are no indications that less crime-money is being generated because of these anti money-laundering constraints," writes Van Duyne (1996-97: 226). "The demand market of drugs is too strong to be influenced by such inconveniences and only adaptations in the form of new cross-border flows of cash can be observed, reflecting the adage of Adam Smith: do not fight the market." For a comprehensive summary of the organized crime situation in The Netherlands, see Fijnaut et al. (1998).

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