DIACRONIE
Studi di Storia Contemporanea

ACTORS UNUSUALS

Forms and effects of the informal action in the Caribbean, between legality and illegality (XVII-XXI century)

What is the role of informal institutions in the evolution of the economic, political and social aspects of Caribbean basin? Diacronie will analyze the economic and social development of the area, focusing on the role played by informal actors, namely the ones moving between legality and illegality, that were able (or are able) to give the individual (no matter if a customer, consumer or merchant) what the laws prohibit.

The objective is to examine both contemporary phenomena and phenomena which, although related to the early modern age, have generated long-term consequences in the history of the regions related to it. In fact, books such as Sanjay Subrahmanyam's *European commercial expansion in early modern Asia*[1], Wim Klooster's *Illicit Riches*[2], Alan Karras's[3] and Linda Rupert's *Creolization and Contraband*[4], that analyze ultra secular phenomena, demonstrated the existing continuity among economic and social events both local and transnational. In these studies, the informal actor (the pirate, the smuggler, the drug trafficker) acquires an active role in socio-economic development of the colonial and post-colonial society to which it belongs, contributing on its lasting mechanisms.

We will deal with commercial networks, around which economic and social phenomena are produced, such as smuggling, piracy or drug trafficking, in different shapes and sizes, in a region – the Caribbean – characterized by a deep interpenetration between informal and formal institutions, often complementary to each other.

Following the recent publications related to the economic and social history of the region, from Peter Coclanis' *The Atlantic Economy during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*[5] to Tom Farer's *Transnational crime in the Americas: an inter-American*

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[1] SUBRAHMANYAM, Sanjay, *Merchant networks in the early modern world*, Aldershot-Brookfield, Variorum, 1996.
[2] KLOOSTER, Wim, *Illicit riches. Dutch trade in the Caribbean, 1648-1795*, Leiden, KITLV, 1998.
[3] KARRAS, Alan L., *Smuggling. Contraband and Corruption in World History*, Lanham, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010.
[4] RUPERT, Linda, *Creolization and Contraband: Curaçao in the Early Modern Atlantic World*, Athens, University of Georgia Press, 2012.
[5] COCLANIS, Peter (edited by), *The Atlantic Economy during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: organization, operation, practice, and personnel*, Columbia, University of South Carolina Press, 2005.

dialogue book [6], this approach involves modern and contemporary historians in analyzing these phenomena, in order to examine the role of informality in periods in which key economic and political institutions emerged and consolidated in this area.

The Call for Papers is therefore addressed in particular to research that deal with:

- Creation of informal economic networks, and their impact on local societies;
- Smuggling, piracy and drug trafficking, from the seventeenth to the twenty-first century: forms and structures;
- Informal actors in the region: origin and development;
- Informal networks as a transnational mechanism, which opposes or complement national monopolies.
- Informal groups' role and socio-economic importance in the Central American-Caribbean basin communities, and in the areas connected through trade.

How to send an article

The authors interested in this CFP can submit their article in Italian, English, French or Spanish (30.000-40.000 characters, including spaces, footnotes and bibliographies) at **redazione.diacronie[at]hotmail.it**.
Please refer to http://www.studistorici.com/proposte-di-contributi/) at: for style and templates requirements.

Please notify as soon as possible, by contacting the editors, of your intention to participate with an article. The deadline for the proposal abstract (1.500 characters) is 30th November 2012. Final submission must be sent by 15th February 2013.

[6] FARER, Tom (editor), *Transnational crime in the Americas: an inter-American dialogue book*, New York, Routledge, 1999.