

## Summary

The aim of my thesis is an analysis of the literary image of mafia in Leonardo Sciascia's works from the 60<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The literary techniques are documented using the examples of the concrete parts of the text in which the mafia operates. At the same time I give an account of the way Sciascia applies the genre rules of the detective story.

The subjects of study represent four novels (*The Day of the Owl*, *To Each His Own*, *Context and One Way or Another*) together with one drama *L'onorevole*. The above mentioned works have been interpreted and analyzed in terms of the structure, genre and language used while the findings of other scholars focused on Sciascia's work have been taken into account of as well.

Mafia constitutes one of the key motifs in the work of Leonardo Sciascia. His reoccurring interest stemmed from the fact that he was well acquainted with the phenomenon, partly due to his personal experience and partly due to his intensive study of the matter. Nevertheless he refused to attribute the existence of the mafia solely to Sicily. In his perception, mafia was only one manifestation of Power on which he critically reflected all his life. Sciascia perceived mafia as a result of the social conditions and as an integral part of the power system of Sicily, or consequently the entire country. He was strongly convinced that mafia is not retreating but on the rise to penetrate deeper into the society. He warned against its incredible vitality and ability to subvert the state which consciously tends to imitate the functioning of mafia and easily gives in to corruption. Sciascia considered thorough application of the law as the only viable way of combating organized crime and warned against introducing of the extraordinary measures which might disrupt democracy, the balance of power and citizen rights.

Sciascia pointed out that the rule of the organized crime does not concern just the area of south Italy, but expands through the political and ecclesiastical structures into the management of the whole economy and state itself. He strived for demystification of the social reality controlled by criminal structures and he fought for the overall social change and reform of the political system.

In his novel *The Day of the Owl* Sciascia focused on depiction of the Sicilian environment and conditions which give to rise to mafia. He also described the hierarchical structure

of the mafia, its violent way of doing business, as well as methods of gaining influence beyond the borders of Sicily. The reader has an opportunity to explore the Sicilian mentality and to comprehend the reasons why one becomes a member of the mafia. In case of the novel *To Each His Own* we observe the image of mafia already fully urbanized and rooted deeply in the political structures of the country. The mafia is represented by the family clan governing its subjected territory by means of sophisticated patchwork of personal, political and economical ties. Instead of description of the social background that leads to formation of mafia, the principles on which the criminal organization operates are exposed. The drama *L'onorevole* provides for an evidence on how easily can politics switch into criminal conspiracy. Sciascia also notices the interconnection and mutual support between mafia and corrupted political parties. The novel *Context* provides for deeper analysis of the power and warns against the ideological emptiness of the politics. Mafia is represented by corrupted state authority, which serves as an instrument of oppression and exploitation and which has to be completely abandoned. And finally in the novel *Todo modo* Sciascia expands more on the idea of the mafia as a corrupted power, in this case represented by the Roman Catholic Church, which constitutes a community which has forsaken long ago its original purpose and functions on personal contacts and unequal status of its members. Its power, likewise in the case of the mafia serves just for accumulation of profit and enhancing the influence which in effect undermines the functioning of a democratic society.

In description of the image of mafia Sciascia often employed the form of detective story. Nevertheless his novels often break the rules typical for this genre and his tendency to mock the rooted narrative practices gradually increased. The choice of the crime and its investigation as a main theme of his stories wasn't superficial and purposeless, but it served as the best channel to deliver the real author's intention which is to provide for true picture of the depicted reality. Apart from reader's entertainment Sciascia strived for his enlightenment as a first step on the way to heal the world.