

Sunday, 4 oct. 2009

Times of Malta

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Pino Arlacchi, a well-known scholar on organised crime, money laundering and drug trafficking, will visit Malta this week at the invitation of the University's Faculty of Arts to present his highly controversial book *L'Inganno e la Paura. Il Mito del Caos Globale*, published earlier this year.

His lecture, reflecting his latest publication on the problems and myths surrounding terrorism and organised crime, is entitled 'The Great Deception. We have never been more secure; yet never more vulnerable.' It will be held at the Aula Magna, Old University Building, St Paul's Street, Valletta, on Friday at 6 p.m. The lecture will be delivered in English.

In the introductory chapter of your latest book you argue that we have been deceived into thinking that we are living in an era of ever-increasing chaos. You go on to say that such a deception consolidates our fears and anxieties. Can you elaborate on the twin concepts of deception and fear and on how they give rise to the myth of global chaos?

In effect, I was a victim of the myth, because I initially supported the Kosovo war in 1999. I believed in the official truth about the war, that stated that it was a necessary one, because the armed attack by Nato was aimed at stopping a genocide against the Albanian population of Kosovo.

But the information that my position as UN Under-Secretary General allowed me to gather gradually ended up showing me a very different picture. There was no genocide, but a civil war lasting 10 years, with casualties on both sides, even if the Albanians were more victimised than the Serbs. That civil war, and the 2,000 casualties in 10 years, could not justify the terrible aerial bombing, the civilian victims and the destruction of half of the infrastructures of the former Yugoslavia. The idea of 'The Fear and the Deception' started at that time.

In what ways has the tragedy of the Twin Towers nourished the myth of global chaos?

The Bush administration was looking for something that could trigger a massive programme of rearmament and foreign military adventuring. Bin Laden played into American hands, generating the usual outcome of terrorist actions: the strengthening of the enemy. The Twin Towers tragedy was not the beginning of World War III, but the instrument for expanding the myth of the global chaos inducted by Al Qaeda and its associates. This myth created fear and the demand for protection that oblige governments to spend more on security.

To support your thesis that human nature is not genetically inclined to perpetuate violence, you draw on an impressive array of disciplines ranging from anthropology and sociology to criminology and philosophy. Would I be right in assuming that it is, however, Immanuel Kant's influence that constitutes the inspiring philosophical thread running throughout your work?

Yes. Kant is the most modern philosopher, because he fully understood the great power of peace, and the declining potency of war. Originally, I intended to name the book *The Great Force of Peace*. Then my publisher opted for a more attractive one.

I would now like to turn to the 2007 edition of your seminal 1983 work *La Mafia Imprenditrice. Dalla Calabria al Centro dell'Inferno*. In it, you describe the way in which your book marked a turning point in your life because it obliged you to become "a man of action" who not only "wrote" his ideas but who also "lived" them. Can you tell us more about this turning point and how it came into being?

I wanted to be an intellectual, a scholar, since my early years. My dream was to be a university professor. Then, circumstances obliged me to become a man of action, a politician and a public figure who is struggling for justice and equality.

I became known as somebody who was fighting the Mafia, along with judge Rocco Chinnici, Giovanni Falcone and other great prosecutors. Unfortunately, they have been killed, and I had no other choice but to continue their commitment for a more decent country.

I entered active politics at 43, rather late, because of Falcone's assassination in 1992. For 13 years I was under close protection, with bodyguards round the clock, and I survived an assassination attempt. I consider myself, therefore, a very lucky person.

Your writings on the Mafia have been a source of inspiration not only for scholars studying the phenomenon of organised crime but also for "men of action", including Judge Falcone. In a series of interviews conducted by Marcelle Pado-vani in 1991, Falcone praised your work for having shed light on the Mafia's transformation into a modern business. Since Falcone's interview, has the Mafia undergone any further transformations?

No. Cosa Nostra is basically the same. It changed only its way of being present in the public discourse, and in society. After 1992, it became less visible, and it abandoned the idea of challenging the State head-on. The Mafia uses violence much less today, and this is true not only in Italy, but all over the world. The Mafia does more business, it is more connected with politics than in the past, and it is socially more pervasive.

At the same time, Cosa Nostra lost its appeal, its prestige and its supremacy. This is a very positive change, and I am proud to say that it is the major result of our efforts.

In a recent interview with Francesco La Licata, you said the Italian government could have eradicated the Mafia after the assassination of Judges Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino. Why is it more difficult to fight the Mafia now than it was in the years immediately following Capaci and via D'Amelio?

The Italian Mafia now has a government that is functional to its interests. The current Italian government is headed by somebody who is surrounded by Mafiosi like Marcello Dell'Utri, who was convicted to nine years jail for Mafia conspiracy. Dell'Utri is sitting in parliament and is one of the closest advisers and a personal friend of our Prime Minister. What more can I say?

Last June, you were elected as a member of the European Parliament within the ranks of Italia dei Valori. How will you continue your fight against illegality in which you were so

deeply involved when you were head of the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention?

In the European Parliament I deal with the most wide-ranging effects of global crime: entire countries like Afghanistan destabilised by the deadly mixture of political corruption, organised crime and money laundering. And I deal with forms of violence and threats that are even more wide-ranging than Cosa Nostra.

I try to do my best, and continue to fight. And as I get older, I become more, not less, optimistic. My experience at the head of the UN taught me that problems that man has created, and that man himself cannot solve, do not exist.

Prof. Lauri-Lucente is professor of Italian and deputy dean of the University's Faculty of Arts.

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<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20091004/education/more-secure-more-vulnerable>