



The voice of Maria Dolens

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Two Flags two States

We made reference to «Two Flags and Two States» over two years ago (see number 9 of the «Voice» published in July 2021) tracing the situation, topical at the time, of the time-worn conflict between Israel and Palestine. In the many decades of dispute there had certainly been no shortage of episodes of tension and open violence, but the brutal massacre of innocent civilians carried out by Hamas terrorists on 7 October and the reaction of Tzahal (the Israeli defence forces) without any doubt exceeding the limits permitted by humanitarian law (codified in the Geneva Conventions), have had a devastating multiplier effect on the collective feelings

of the two populations, which can now be classified – most unfortunately - as mutual, irreconcilable aversion.

With that appeal we intended to express the conviction that only the constitution of an independent Palestinian state would, over time, allow, if not the complete pacification of one of the most troubled geographical areas on the planet, at least the creation of a climate of an acceptable (also reluctant) cohabitation. Having said this, it would be hypocritical to deny that the objective of two States and two Flags is an extremely difficult objective to achieve, as it is held hostage by apparently insurmountable mutual vetoes.

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

True or false?

SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE
AT THE BLETCHLEY PARK AI SUMMIT

Even those who are not inclined towards anglicisms will be forced to learn the word 'deepfake'. Coined in 2017, this compound composed of 'deep' and 'fake' indicates a technique for the synthesis of the human image based on artificial intelligence. Essentially it is possible to create photos and videos that portray people who seem real but don't exist or create false images of celebrities or ordinary people doing things they never dreamed of doing. The technique is also being perfected for voices, but it is already possible

to reproduce the voice of anyone saying anything in a language of your choice. We cannot therefore rule out the short release of a "new" song by Elvis Presley singing an Italian song in Malayalam or a speech by US President Joe Biden regarding the offside in the VAR era. Obviously, the imagination of the most "astute" has already been deployed in the creation of fake videos depicting celebrities or ex-girlfriends in intimate moments they never had.

From satire to cyberbullying, from fake news to scams, from cybercrimes to hoaxes,

everything can pass through the deepfake filter, which does not make things true, but shows them as credible. And precisely to underline the need to define and recognize the boundary between authentic and false, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Marija Pejčinović Burić, participated in the Summit on the safety of artificial intelligence in Bletchley Park, in the United Kingdom. The Secretary General reiterated her intention to continue working with member and non-member states, as well as civil society and private sector organizations around the world, to overcome cross-border challenges and prevent discrimination. Marija Pejčinović Burić also highlighted the dangers arising from the use of deepfakes in political campaigns as a tool of manipulation and disinformation.





The meeting resulted in a Joint Declaration involving countries determined to collectively understand and manage potential risks through a joint global effort to ensure that artificial intelligence (AI) is developed and deployed safely and responsibly for the benefit of the global community. First, a strong emphasis was placed on promoting international cooperation to navigate the complex security landscape. The declaration also requires adherence to high safety standards in the design, development and implementation of AI systems. Participants then highlighted the importance of transparency and accountability in AI systems and the need to work in a climate of sharing research to accelerate global understanding and mitigation of risks. But the most important point, and at the same time the greatest difficulty, remains, as in everything, the moral compass that must guide humanity's actions. In essence, the absolute need for AI technologies to respect human rights, privacy and democratic values.

The same thing could be said of any creation of the human mind, from the wheel to the Shuttle. And as always happens there will be someone who wi-

shes to control the new discoveries or the invention of the moment. The clash has already begun and here is the most striking example: just as an AI laboratory is being created in Europe that seems to follow in the footsteps of OpenAI, the Californian company fired its CEO, Sam Altman on the spot. In 2015, OpenAI was one of many non-profit experiments around the world. Having become popular late last year after publicly releasing ChatGPT, a powerful and versatile natural language processing tool that uses advanced machine learning algorithms to generate human-like responses, the first cracks began to appear in the management of global success. Altman was removed on the grounds that he had not always been «candid in his communications with the board of directors, hindering his ability to exercise his responsibilities». Whatever happened, it is clear that managing such powerful tools is never simple.

Artificial intelligence will certainly be regulated, and sanctions will also be put in place for those who do not respect the agreements. The question that remains open, as in the case of Human Rights, is always the same: who will enforce the agreements?



HAPPENING AT THE UNITED NATIONS

Not everyone is protected

WORLD HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

Every year since 1950, World Human Rights Day has been celebrated on December 10th. This was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly by adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. The text, available in over 500 languages, is an epochal document, which establishes the inalienable rights that everyone possesses as human beings, without distinction of race, colour, religion, sex, language, origin, birth or opinion of any kind. A preamble and 30 articles written with the

collaboration of representatives of every religion and legal background, and globally accepted over time as a “contract” between governments and citizens of the world. In fact, each country has, sooner or later, formally accepted the Declaration, committing itself to protecting, implementing and guaranteeing human rights and the ability of its citizens to exercise them. Perhaps this last point is the weak element: the same governments that apply them should also monitor compliance with the rules. This doesn’t always work.

The 2022-2023 Report recently presented by Amnesty International reveals how double standards and inadequate responses to human rights violations around the world have fuelled impunity and instability. The text highlights, among other things, the failure of regional and international institutions in the face of thousands of killings in Ethiopia, Myanmar and Yemen. The reflection arises from the Russian invasion of Ukraine, considered by the general secretary of Amnesty International, Agnès Callamard, «a chilling example of what can happen when States believe they can circumvent international norms and violate human rights without consequences». In this case, she added, «the response was rapid: Western states imposed economic sanctions on Moscow and sent military assistance to Kyiv, the International Criminal Court opened an

investigation into war crimes in Ukraine and the General Assembly of the United Nations condemned the Russian invasion as an act of aggression. » However, she continued, «this robust and commendable approach has been in stark contrast to previous responses to massive human rights violations committed by Russia and other states and to the shameful response with regard to conflicts such as those in Ethiopia and Myanmar.» «If that system had worked to hold Russia to account for its crimes in Chechnya and Syria, thousands of lives could have been saved, in Ukraine and elsewhere. Instead, we have more suffering and more devastation», commented Callamard bitterly. According to the expert, «if the Russian war of aggression has demonstrated anything for the future of the world, it is the importance of an international order based on effective and consistently applied rules. All states must double their efforts toward a new rules-based order that benefits all people, everywhere.»



This issue, unfortunately, is not new, and relates to the interest that states have in intervening in crises that are not economically relevant to them. With the result that human rights are only partially defended.

MUKY'S "ANTI-CONFORMIST NATIVITY SCENES" AND THE ASYLUM EXHIBITION

Wanda Berasi, aka Muky, died last year. She was born in 1926 and for three decades she stopped to reflect, almost every December, on recent happenings and to summarize them in a nativity scene. The success was international also due to the tragic relevance of what it brought to everyone's attention, sublimating it into an artistic vision. *This is how Cambodia. Colours and the Trench* was born in 1989, in 1990 Kuwait. *My blood bleeds on blood*, in 1991 South Morocco. *Help me - I scream among the chrysanthemums* and, gradually spanning the decades, the very topical Earth's Crust. *Pollution / mechanical breath of Jesus* from 2000.

All on display at the Bell until the end of the holidays. The most current of all, however, is not on display at the Foundation but at the Chiesetta del Redentore in Rovereto, where the exhibition «Asylum, give seek offer find» curated by Roberto Ronca was inaugurated on 25 November. There, in addition to the nativity scene created in 1998 by Muky entitled *Arafat – Netanyahu. Peace negotiations in the Middle East. Truce in the manhunt* (in the photo), you may admire works by 16 other artists until January 7th. Asylum, explains the curator «is a reflection. A way to attract consciences that at this time of year seem to lose the meaning of things in favour of herd behaviour that has nothing to do with the real meaning of the moment.»



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On the Arab side, there is the persistence, not limited to the founding principles of Hamas but also well rooted in the doctrines of various states, of radical positions contemplating the pure and simple cancellation of the Jewish state from the face of the earth. From the Israeli side, the refusal to stop the settlement policies of their compatriots in those territories (particularly in the West Bank) destined to form the primary nucleus of an internationally recognized Palestine. From a few thousand people in the 1960s, the settlers have now exceeded 700,000, strengthening the most intolerant factions of the Tel Aviv government with their united vote.

While recognizing the difficulties, it is precisely the horrors we are witnessing on a daily basis, with the terrible images of the violated kibbutzim and massacred or kidnapped hostages alternating with those of the hospitals and refugee camps bombed by the Tel Aviv air force, that highlight the absolute need (not to mention urgency) to work in this direction. Once the fighting has stopped, the identification of a new geo-political order for the Middle Eastern area must follow, sufficiently shared so as not to be called into question with any change in government, both in the countries involved and in relation to their respective allies.

A virtuous development, such as the one described above, does not appear objectively achievable without a definitive eradication of Hamas terrorists and the radical movements that support it (primarily Hezbollah) and the parallel affirmation, in Gaza as in the rest of the Occupied Territories, of moderate political movements, that is, willing to collaborate with a State of Israel which in turn has been purified of the most intransigent and nationalist fringes.

With regard to its rulers, Benjamin Netanyahu and Mahmud Abbas / Abu Mazen (still in office, the latter, despite a mandate that expired in 2009) will have to be replaced, in Tel Aviv and Ramallah, by less compromised rulers, who put genuine commitment ahead of political agendas in order to spare future generations of Palestinians and Israelis from the destruction and massacres imposed on them today.

Moreover, at the beginning of the nineties with the Madrid Conference and the Oslo Peace Accords, ratified in Washington by Rabin and Arafat, Israel's aspiration to live in security and Palestine to obtain a homeland had seemed, like never before, close to realization. If, in history, it is not possible to turn back the hands of the clock, it is at least necessary to ensure that precedents - especially if of a positive nature - are not destined to oblivion but constitute a reason for reflection and inspiration for the future. The perverse spiral of the oppo-



The European Union could promote a wide-ranging diplomatic initiative

sition between anti-Semitism and Islamophobia which, often without a real reason, also sees large sectors of Western public opinion aligned, must be addressed with concrete perspectives and results, before the process becomes irreversible.

In this highly delicate geographical area, the European Union - an indispensable political point of reference for Israel and, at the same time, the primary provider of humanitarian aid to Palestine - could carve out a more significant space for itself than occurred during the Russian/Ukrainian conflict (conflict, it is highlighted here with dismay, which has suddenly disappeared from the radar of current media events and been demoted to a sort of no event).

By maintaining close contact with the United States, particularly active in this phase through Secretary of State Blinken, the 27 members of the European Union could thus become promoters of a wide-ranging diplomatic initiative, focused on the two intimately linked aspects of peace and security, organizing a conference to which the Arab countries of the area will obviously also be invited. In this context and under the necessary supervision of the United Nations Security Council, the creation of an international peace-keeping force, intended to monitor the situation on the ground for a certain number of years, appears to be a measure worthy of consideration.

Furthermore, a proactive attitude responds primarily to clear European interests. It is sufficient to consider the fact that with the continuation, practically at its gates, of a second, very serious front of conflict heavy with consequences also in relation to migration and finance, the European Union would inevitably find itself in a situation of extreme difficulty, not least in terms of its degree of internal cohesion.

In addition, stemming the ongoing wars also serves to prevent further outbreaks of tension from experiencing dangerous radicalisations. To remain on topic, the ongoing crisis between Serbia and Kosovo (candidate countries for membership of the Union) characterized by recurrent clashes on the ground and alarming declarations by the two leaders, can as a result only arouse marked concern, taking place in a region - the Western Balkans - located close to our borders.



Returning, in conclusion, to the main theme of our reflections, within its sphere of competence the Rovereto Peace Bell Foundation has long been a conscious interpreter of the needs of the two States, welcoming the Palestinian flag to Colle di Miravalle since 2000 (preceded by the Israeli flag by 25 years). In our case the dimension is, obviously, symbolic, of form, but it is desirable that the underlining of the equal dignity between the two territorial entities is reproduced with increasing frequency, even in political contexts, of substance. Fortunately, the two-state model is acquiring a growing number of supporters also within the international community.

Through this issue of the «Voice», the last of 2023, I would finally like to address the sincerest wishes of peaceful holidays to all our readers, aware that «Maria Dolens» (although forced to silence in this period due to technical reasons) will ideally be able to multiply them and spread them indiscriminately far and wide.

Reggente Marco Marsilli, Foundation President

FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS - P3

The little girl who understood

Carla Della Beffa is a name that should be remembered. She wasn't a heroine, rather she was a child who listened, reasoned and took initiative. In the early months of 1924 she was sitting at her desk at her school in Milan when the announcement arrived that Rovereto was looking for funds to construct the Bell of the Fallen. When she returned home, she discussed it with her parents and asked that the money in her piggy bank be paid towards the initiative. On July 17th that little girl died. She was seriously ill and perhaps she didn't know it, because that's how it was at the time. Don Rossaro elected her «Guardian Angel of the Bell of the Fallen» and dedicated the large room to her located under the Malipiero bastion of Rovereto Castle.

There may not have been much money, but little Carla's donation is among the most significant, perhaps more than that of Queen Margherita who, together

with a substantial contribution, offered Don Rossaro a short and intimate prayer for the fallen, or the funds collected by the «Legione delle Madrine» (Legion of Godmothers), made up of women of aristocratic origin or widows and mothers of those killed in war.

Everyone contributed generously, particularly the European governments who, in addition to donations, sent the nine cannons with which the Bell would then be cast. But that little girl understood before anyone else that, a symbol of peace is relevant to you even if you live far away from where it is created.

Don Rossaro's spirituality was not however immediately accepted by everyone. By May 20, 1921, the priest had made known to the management of the War Museum what he wanted to do. But from the minutes, however sparse, if you read between the lines, it is possible to deduce that not everyone was in favour.

The main issue to be resolved was that of the placement of the Bell. Don Rossaro had thought of the Malipiero bastion in the historic centre of Rovereto, since from there everyone could see it and hear its daily chimes. But this proposal encountered many difficulties. For some it would have disfigured the architectural line of the Venetian castle, for others it was too heavy, and its stability would be at risk, some members of the War Museum apparently feared a reduction in visitors due to competition. Others still suggested placing the Bell near the Ossuary of Dante Castle, which was built outside the city, where a war cemetery was located. But the central point was what little Carla had understood, that is Don Rossaro did not intend to limit the reference of the Bell only to the fallen Rovereto soldiers, but to make it a symbol of universal peace. For this reason, it had to be large, heavy, and positioned in a place where everyone could see it.

On 20 October 1923 the priest met in Trento with Superintendent of Fine Arts, Giuseppe Gerola. The brief account of the conversation written in his diary speaks volumes: «Gerola insistently recommends making the Bell smaller. I answer: You want it at Dante Castle at all costs - You want it smaller. It will go in the castle, in Rovereto - it will weigh 10 tonnes - like it or not.»

(continues)

