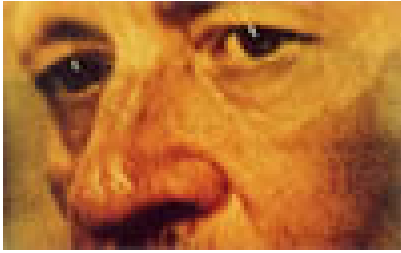


Paolo Borsellino - The hidden interview

Scritto da Fabrizio Calvi e Jean Pierre Moscardo (traduz. di Christina Pacella)
Martedì 05 Gennaio 2010 16:04



5 Jan. 2010. The editorial staff of the Italian daily newspaper [Il Fatto Quotidiano](#) is happy to present the original version of the interview to the judge

Paolo Borsellino

which was realized on the 21st of May 1992 from the two French journalists

Fabrizio Calvi

and

Jean Pierre Moscardo

. The interview was done in Palermo in the flat of Paolo Borsellino. The judge describes some of the channels used by the criminal enterprise Cosa Nostra to put black money into the economic lung of Northern Italy, the city of Milan, and tells what he knows concerning the man of honor

Vittorio Mangano

, one of the leading characters of Cosa Nostra acting in Milan from the early 70's.

On the 19th of July 1992, fifty-seven days after this interview, Paolo Borsellino was killed in a car-bombing in Palermo

together with five policemen: Emanuela Loi, Agostino Catalano, Vincenzo Li Muli, Walter Eddie Cosina e Claudio Traina.

The interview has been translated by Christina Pacella from the [original Italian version](#) .

Paolo Borsellino - The hidden interview

Fabrizio Calvi (FC): Ok, let's begin. You worked on the maxi trial of Palermo. What was your role in the maxi trial of Palermo Judge Borsellino?

Paolo Borsellino (PB): Well, I was one of the investigating magistrates, at the beginning there were four of us who collected the testimonies of the justice collaborators who were used during this trial. Mainly Buscetta but we also listened to many other minor collaborators. They contributed from a strictly judicial point of view and their help was not less consistent than Buscetta's. Then I wrote, in the summer of '85. I drew up the concluding judiciary order of the trial which serves as an order of the Court, a maxi order. It was then on the basis of this maxi order that the trial in first degree took place.

FC: Do you know the defendants well?

PB: Well, nearly all the defendants.

FC: How many were there?

PB: Well, there were about 800 defendants in the maxi trial. 475 of them were indicted.

FC: Among these 475 defendants there is one who interests us, a certain Vittorio Mangano. Do you know him? Did you have anything to do with him?

PB: Yes, I met Vittorio Mangano even before the maxi trial, precisely between 1975 and 1980. I remember drawing up a judiciary order which concerned one of the extortions inflicted on a certain number of private clinics in Palermo.

{A telephone call comes in: Oh, hello, hello, hello...could we suspend for a moment. Hello Nino, listen I wanted to know how things went this morning...yes...yes...}

FC: Among the hundreds of defendants there is one who is of interest to us, a certain Vittorio Mangano. Did you meet him?

PB: Yes, I met Vittorio Mangano even before the maxi trial. Between '74 and '75 Vittorio Mangano was involved in another investigation which had to do with extortions inflicted on a number of private clinics. The extortions presented a few peculiar characteristics. Cardboard boxes containing chopped off dog heads were sent to the owners of the clinics. Investigators were fortunate because through the brand name of the boxes as well as through a series of numbers printed on the boxes by the production firm they were able to identify the purchasers. An inspection carried out in the backyard of a deli shop, a shop which resulted to be one of the buyers of the cardboard boxes, revealed the presence of the bodies of the dogs whose heads had been chopped off. Vittorio Mangano was involved in this inquiry because at the time he had been a guest, or something along those lines, my memories have faded a little, with this family. I believe their name was Guddo who had...they had been the material authors of the extortions. He was put on trial, I don't remember how the trial turned out, however this had been my first judiciary encounter with Vittorio Mangano. He then reappeared in the maxi trial because Buscetta and Contorno identified him as a man of honor who belonged to Cosa Nostra.

FC: A man of honor from which family?

PB: A man of honor from Pippo Calò's family, the character who was the head of the family from Portanuova, originally Buscetta had also been part of that family. It was ascertained that Vittorio Mangano, but this had already been verified during a former proceeding drawn up by myself as well as during the course of a proceeding called "Spatola" drawn up by Falcone in the years immediately preceding the maxi trial, that Mangano lived in Milan. Numerous telephone interceptions revealed that the city of Milan was a terminal for drug trafficking, trafficking which was controlled by families in Palermo.

FC: And this Mangano Vittorio did drug trafficking in Milan?

PB: If we limit ourselves to the probationary emergencies, the most important ones, Mangano...Vittorio Mangano, turns out to be one of the speakers of a telephone call which took place between Milan and Palermo. During the call, as he was speaking to another person from one of the families in Palermo Mangano gives notice, or negotiates, the arrival of a shipment of heroin, which, in conventional telephone interceptive language is referred to as "t-shirts or horses". Mangano then underwent trial and was sentenced for this drug trafficking. I don't believe he was sentenced for mafia association, but only for simple association. He was sentenced in first degree to thirteen years and four months of imprisonment.

FC: What year was it? What year does this sentence go back to?

PB: This first degree sentence was pronounced in nineteen...at the beginning of 1988. He had served a fair part of this sentence and, in appeal, as far as I know, his punishment was reduced considerably.

FC: Therefore, when Mangano spoke of drugs on the telephone he used the word horses?

PB: Sometimes he said horses and other times t-shirts.

FC: Because, if I recall correctly, in the San Valentino inquiry there is a telephone interception between Mangano and Marcello Dell'Utri in which horses are mentioned...

PB: Yes, and it's been used other times. Probably, I don't know if we're talking about the same interception, let me check a moment... No, the interception that mentions horses is between Mangano and a man from the Inzerillo family.

FC: But there is another one from the San Valentino inquiry between him and Dell'Utri.

PB: Yes, the San Valentino trial. I handled the case for a few months. It was assigned to me in

Palermo because Roman judges declared themselves incompetent and handed it over to us. I raised the issue of my conflict of competency before the Supreme Court. The conflict of competency was approved and the case was sent back to Rome or Milan, at the moment I don't remember where. Therefore I don't know this trial in all its details because I didn't look after it, I declared myself incompetent.

FC: However, as an expert, can you state that when Mangano talks about horses on the telephone he means drugs?

PB: Yes, this theory about horses meaning drugs is a theory which was supported within our investigative order. It was then approved during the hearing. Actually, Mangano was sentenced for drug trafficking during the maxi trial hearing... he was sentenced exactly to 13 years, four months of imprisonment plus he had to pay a fine of seventy thousand lire...seventy million lire. The court of appeal's sentence confirmed this decision in first degree even though, as far as I can see from the documentation provided, there had been a substantial reduction of the penalty.

FC: And Dell'Utri has nothing to do with all this?

PB: I don't recall Dell'Utri being a defendant in the maxi trial. I know there are investigations open which concern him as well as Mangano together.

FC: In Palermo?

PB: Yes, I believe there is an investigation being carried out in Palermo, according to the old trial ritual. It's assigned to the investigative judge but I don't know the details.

FC: Dell'Utri, Marcello Dell' Utri or Alberto Dell'Utri?

PB: I don't know the details, let me take a look through my notes... ok, we're talking about both Dell'Utri Marcello and Alberto.

FC: The ones from Publitalia to be clear?

PB: Yes.

FC: Going back to Mangano... what is the connection between Mangano and Dell'Utri?

PB: This concerns trial proceedings which I did not handle personally, therefore, I can't report anything that would be based on actual knowledge of the facts. What I can say is that following

the maxi trial or at least following the draw up of the maxi trial, Calderone also spoke of this Vittorio Mangano. He confirmed him as being a man of honor. Calderone spoke of a meeting he had with Mangano at Michele Greco's villa... at his countryside estate. He had gone there right after having committed a murder, at least this is what Calderone and Rosario Riccobono declare. A minor justice collaborator, who has recently passed away, a certain Calzetta spoke a great deal of Mangano. He spoke of the relation between Mangano and one of the families from Corso dei Mille, the Zanca family. The members of that family all underwent trial... all of them were defendants in the maxi trial.

FC: When was the first time you saw him?

PB: The first time I saw him... I saw him, even though I don't remember what he looked like, I saw him between '70 and '75.

FC: For questioning?

PB: Yes, for questioning.

FC: And then he was arrested?

PB: He was arrested between '70 and '75. I don't recall the moment in which I saw him physically during the maxi trial because I don't even remember questioning him personally. However, these are memories which are beginning to fade considering the fact that ten years have passed, nearly ten years.

FC: In Palermo?

PB: Yes, yes, in Palermo. The first time was surely in Palermo.

FC: When?

PB: Between '70 and '75 and later... so to say between '75 and '80. it was probably half way between '75 and '80.

FC: But he already lived in Milan?

PB: Well, he definitely resided in Milan even though investigations showed... and he himself admitted... that he often moved between milan and Palermo.

FC: What did he do... are you aware of what he was doing in Milan?

PB: I think he affirmed that he ran a horse bidding agency in Milan, something like that anyhow. He actually did have a passion for horses, this is true because during the trial, the one which concerned the extortions that I spoke to you about, horses did come up. Real horses, not horses meant as something to hide drug trafficking.

FC: Yes, but how about the conversation with Dell'Utri, could they have been speaking of horses?

PB: Well, in the conversation heard during the maxi trial, if I'm not wrong, they talk of horses being shipped to a hotel... I don't think they could actually be talking about real horses. Should somebody send me horses they would send them to a racetrack or to a horse ring for me, certainly not to a hotel.

FC: In a hotel where?

PB: My memories are vague, however its probably the Plaza or something along those lines, yes.

FC: Of which city?

PB: Milan.

FC: Oh, really!

PB: Yes.

FC: And, with regards to Milan isn't there any other information about his life, about what he did?

PB: Look, if I had the possibility to review the documents of the legal proceedings of the time I would remember many other events. Right now much of the things I recall are faded because so many years have gone by.

FC: It seems he worked for Berlusconi...

PB: I can't be of much help on this matter although... I must say that as a magistrate I feel uncomfortable talking about events which I am not sure of,... especially since investigations are still being carried out on this matter. I don't know the type of information which can be revealed

and which part should remain secret. The issue concerning his relationship with Berlusconi, whether I remember or not, doesn't belong to me. I'm not the magistrate who is looking after it therefore I don't feel authorized to say anything at all.

FC: But there's an inquiry still open?

PB: I think there's an inquiry still open.

FC: Is it about Mangano and Berlusconi? In Palermo?

PB: I'm quite sure about the one on Mangano, nonetheless there are investigations which concern police reports that involve Mangano as well. Guarnotta has this part of the information, he's the one you should ask for it. I'm not certain if these issues can be discussed at the moment.

FC: He was a man of honor of the 1970's though, wasn't he?

PB: Well, according to Buscetta. Buscetta had already met him as a man of honor during a period of time they spent in jail together in Palermo. A period of time preceding the 1980's. I believe Buscetta refers exactly to the time in which Mangano was in jail in Palermo because of the extortions concerning the trial which dealt with the dogs whose heads had been chopped off. The one I was talking about before.

FC: But how can Buscetta say that Mangano was a man of honor?

PB: Obviously Buscetta clarifies himself each and every time he speaks of a person as a man of honor, he explains the manner by which the person was presented to him. He does this on a general level when he is releasing statements. He then goes into specifics when referring to each single individual who is being accused. In other words, the presence of a third man of honor guarantees for the quality of both the people who are meeting one another. The third man introduces one to the other.

FC: Is it a ritual?

PB: Precisely, it's a ritual, not only described by Buscetta, it was described by Contorno, it was described by all justice collaborators. Calderone described it, but so did other minor collaborators. Men of honor can't introduce themselves to one another unless there is a third man of honor who has already been presented to both. The third man of honor testifies the validity of the title as men of honor to both parties involved. It's a Cosa Nostra ritual. We've had dozens and dozens of people confirm this.

FC: Do you have the exact date of Mangano's arrest in the 1970's somewhere in your papers?

PB: Look, I don't have the exact date of Mangano's arrest because I don't have that particular document here with me. However Buscetta talks about a meeting they had in jail... with Mangano ,in jail, in Palermo. A meeting which took place in 1977. At first Mangano denied the possibility of an encounter between Buscetta and himself. Evidence proved that both Mangano and Buscetta had been in prison together at Ucciardone in 1977. They were most likely together a few years before 1977 or for a few years after 1977.

FC: '77... means that it was after Mangano had started working for Berlusconi?

(Paolo Borsellino nods his head claiming that he does not know or cannot give the answer)

FC: As far as we know he started working in '75.

PB: What I can tell you is that both Mangano and Buscetta... ehm both Buscetta and Contorno do not give any further details as to when Mangano became a man of honor.

FC: Do you know how Mangano and Dell'Utri met?

PB: No. I don't know because I wasn't responsible of taking care of this part of the investigations concerning Mangano's relationships. All I know is what's written in the newspapers or from other sources of information. I don't have professional knowledge of these events and I don't recall anything on the matter.

FC: They're both from Palermo aren't they?

PB: This consideration does not lead to any type of conclusion. As opposed to Catania where mafia families counted no more than about thirty members, at least originally, Palermo is a city in which, according to Calderone for example, there were, officially, nearly two thousand men of honor. So, the fact that both men were from Palermo does not mean they knew one another.

FC: A certain Filippo Rapisarda, a partner of Dell'Utri, says that he met Dell'Utri through someone from the Stefano Bontade family.

PB: Mangano was from the Porta Nuova family, Calo's family. However, considering that Cosa Nostra is...

(Mrs. Borsellino politely interrupts the interview because of a car in front of the building that

needs to be moved)

FC: I'll ask the question again: a certain Filippo Rapisarda, who is one of Marcello Dell'Utri's partners, claims, that this Marcello Dell'Utri was introduced to him through someone from the Stefano Bontade family.

PB: Well, considering that Mangano belonged to Pippo Calo's family, although it's not likely that Mangano was responsible for the introductions... perhaps it was someone from... I can't imagine who could have introduced him. Nevertheless, keep in mind that Palermo is the Sicilian city where mafia families counted a very large number of members... there were times in which it was easy to count two thousand men of honor with large families themselves. In certain periods of time the Stefano Bontade family counted, at least, two hundred members. These families all belonged to one organization: Cosa Nostra. The members of the organization all knew one another, therefore, what Rapisarda reports is presumably true.

FC: Did you ever hear anything about Rapisarda?

PB: Rapisarda, I know of the existence of Rapisarda but I never dealt with the matter personally.

FC: Is there a judge in Palermo who dealt with the issue?

PB: Should there be an investigation open on him, at the moment, I believe it's being handled by an investigating magistrate, a colleague, his name is Guarnotta. He's from the antimafia pool. Guarnotta is the last judge who still works in that office and deals with trials which still operate according to the old code of criminal procedure.

FC: It appears as though Rapisarda and Dell'Utri were in business with Ciancimino through a man named Alamia.

PB: I know that Alamia was in business with Ciancimino and I believe this information turns up in some of the trials which have already taken place. As for Dell'Utri and Rapisarda I'm not able to give specific details. As I said before, I didn't deal with the investigations myself.

FC: This Ciancimino, former mayor of Palermo, is he a mafioso?

PB: Ciancimino was hit with an arrest warrant when I still worked in Palermo's investigative office. The warrant was issued because he supposedly belonged to Cosa Nostra. The debate hearing took place recently and he was convicted. His affiliation to Cosa Nostra was then confirmed judicially in first degree.

FC: What was his sentence?

PB: I don't remember exactly. The sentence goes back a few months and I don't remember... I remember the conviction but I don't recall how many years he was sentenced to. It's clear that when we're talking about Cosa Nostra from the Italian penal judiciary system's point of view, it's not always necessary for the person to be considered a man of honor just because the mafia's judiciary system works in a certain way. In Italy one can be convicted on the basis of a law called 416 bis, which entails a sentence for mafia association. This type of conviction can be inflicted even on people who have not been initiated ritually by Cosa Nostra... we could call them mafia trainees or interns. Even though these young killers ,recruited by Cosa Nostra, haven't been officially introduced into the organization, State law still considers them as part of the criminal structure.

FC: As a man, not as a magistrate, how would you judge the fusion taking place between business men above suspicion like Berlusconi or Dell'Utri and men of honor from Cosa Nostra. How is it that Cosa Nostra has taken an interest in business?

PB: Well, I don't have enough elements to be able to give a personal opinion apart about the people you just mentioned. But, if we look at the facts in a general context we could notice how up until the '70's , up until the beginning of the '70's the mafia organizations' interests were primarily agricultural or, at the most they tried to exploit suitable building areas. From the beginning of the '70's on, Cosa Nostra itself started to become a business... a business in the sense that the organization's infiltration in drug trafficking became so deep that we could define it a monopoly... Cosa Nostra started to manage a huge mass of capital. Such a huge mass of capital obviously needed to flow into something. Some of the money was exported or deposited abroad. This, for example, could explain ties between Cosa Nostra's men and men from the financial world whose job it was to take care of this moving capital. At the same time Cosa Nostra began making licit or close to licit investments of capital. For this reason their activities became parallel to those of the business world, even up north. They geared toward the business world to be able to use the entrepreneurial skills business had to offer. The end to all this was to make the money they had earned through drug trafficking as productive as possible.

FC: So, what you're saying is that it's normal for Cosa Nostra to take interest in Berlusconi?

PB: Whoever owns large sums of money must look for a way to use that money either by laundering it or by making his money become productive. Such needs and necessities which the criminal organization found itself confronting, naturally brought them to search for the commercial and industrial tools which would allow them to pursue their financial objectives. It wouldn't surprise me at all if, at a certain point, Cosa Nostra found itself in contact with the business environment.

FC: Could someone like Mangano be responsible for connecting these two worlds?

PB: Well, you see, Mangano was already working in Milan. He had been there for some two decades already. In one way or another he was running a commercial activity. It's clear that he was one of the people, I dare say one of the few people, who were able to manage these kind of relationships.

FC: But he was a drug trafficker and kidnapper as well.

PB: During those years, around the end of the '60's and the early '70's , all the mafiosi who came to Milan, even Luciano Liggio, tried to make money to invest in drug trafficking through kidnappings. Luciano Liggio himself was involved in a number of sensational trials which dealt with kidnappings. I don't remember whether he was part of the kidnappings of Rossi or Montelera. Most likely it was one of these as well as a number of other characters who are still present on the mafia scene. In Milan they devoted themselves to this type of activity ,whereas in Sicily, as a rule, Cosa Nostra decided to give up kidnappings in that region.

FC: An investigator told us that when Mangano worked for Berlusconi a kidnapping had taken place, not at Berlusconi's house though. Apparently the person was a guest leaving Berlusconi's home.

PB: I am not aware of such an event.

FC: A certain Pietro Vernengo was responsible for this kidnapping.

PB: I believe the person in question could be the same mafioso who has been in newspapers quite often lately because of a number of incidents which involve him... it must be this Pietro Vernengo, because I don't know anyone else by that name. He belongs to the mafia family called Santa Maria di Gesu'. He was sentenced to life during the maxi trial and the sentence was confirmed during his appeal trial for having... he was accused of having committed 99 murders. He was sentenced for a few of these murders. Pietro Vernengo was surely one of the most important defendants during the maxi trial. At first he was involved in tobacco trafficking abroad, he then started drug trafficking as well. Actually, I think that someone close to Pietro Vernengo, a man called Di Salvo owned one of the drug refineries discovered in Palermo, right in Palermo, in the Romagnolo Acqua dei Corsari area. The refinery was still operating when it was discovered.

FC: You mentioned the maxi trial... was Vernengo tried along with Mangano?

PB: Vernengo was tried during the maxi trial with Mangano.

FC: Did the two know each other?

PB: Mangano is more of a “pilot fish”. I can't think of a better way to describe him. He's an avant-garde. What I can say is that he was one of the leading characters of the mafia organization in Milan. There were a few of these men but not many, at least among those identified. Another personality who resided in Milan belonged to the Bono's. I believe it was Alfredo Bono. Even though he was the boss of the Bolognetta family, which is a town near Palermo, he lived in Milan. I must say, that during the maxi trial, Mangano doesn't appear as one of the key defendants. However, there's no doubt, at least within the maxi trial, that he stirred up a lot of interest. His role withing the criminal organization was a little different than the one which connected him strictly to the military-like part of the mafia, even though Calderone depicts him as a man who was also fond of the military portion of his role in the organization. If my memory doesn't fail me, Calderone speaks of an encounter with Mangano in one of Stefano Bontade's bases, where Mangano and Rosario Riccobono, who arrive during this meeting, tell of the blood operation they had just taken part in. Anyhow, the story went something like that. Another thing I must add is that Calderone's statements, during the trial, had a poor turn out; with regards to the defendants' convictions. From a judiciary point of view little remained of his declarations. Very little remained probably because Calderone's statements coincided with an incredible decision of the Supreme Court which ceased to recognize Cosa Nostra as a unitary criminal organization. The Supreme Court supported the thesis that Cosa Nostra was made up of a multitude of families or of a multitude of organizations. Each one of these families or organizations apparently occupied and headed a certain portion of territory. On the basis of this decision the information provided during Calderone's judicial procedure was divided into ten or twelve parts. Very few of these parts are still considered valid. I believe that none of them have resulted in a satisfactory turn out for prosecution.

FC: Therefore, Mangano was capable of participating in military action?

PB: According to Calderone's statements yes, he was.

FC: Does anyone know to which military actions?

PB: Well, as I said before... Calderone talks about a meeting with this Mangano in one of Bontade's bases. Mangano and Rosario Riccobono tell of a blood operation they had just taken part in.

FC: When?

PB: This happened just before the Di Cristina murder, so it would be before 1978.

FC: Right after he was released from jail?

PB: I can't be more precise, I would have to consult the documentation. This event is written in Arlacchi's book. He only talks about it once in this book... oh, he says 1976. A day during 1976, I remembered it as '77. [Paolo reads: I was at the Favarella estate with Pippo. We were sitting down discussing with Michele Greco]. Ok, it's wasn't Bontade, it was Michele Greco. [... discussing with Michele Greco as Rosario Riccobono and Vittorio Mangano, man of honor of Pippo Calò, whom I had already met in Milan walked in. They came to inform Greco of an operation which had just been completed. The two had just eliminated someone who had been responsible for the kidnapping of a woman. They had released the hostage as well]. I think I remember the crime Calderone is referring to. At that time, a certain Gabriella or Graziella Mandala' had been kidnapped in Monreale. A few days later, eight days later she reappeared. She had been released. Immediately following this incident a series of extremely grotesque crimes took place. A man, who was probably suspected of having participated in the kidnapping, was found along the edge of the road in a bag made of [interruption]... referring to his encounter with Mangano.

FC: It was carried out by Mangano?

PB: This is what Calderone leads us to believe. At least from the statements which I see written in Arlacchi's book. Actually, Calderone mentions the fact, exactly the one that made me remember...[interruption]...two murders committed by Liggio. Two women, one was raped and killed. The other one, a young girl of about 14 or 15 years of age was raped and murdered immediately following the first woman. It's the same crime by which, this morning, a man was... [interruption].

There's a series of notes, of reports and computers which should be consulted to acquire the documentation to these events, some of which can probably be shown since they were part of the maxi trial and, by now, the maxi trial is well known, it's public. However, there is still material which cannot be exhibited because it deals with investigations that aren't over yet. Guarnotta would have to take a look at them in order to...

FC: I wasn't only talking about the computer files.

PB: Yes, I know, but some of the files have to do with the Dell'Utri and Berlusconi matter. I don't know to what extent they can be shown... I'll give them to you, the important thing is that you don't tell anyone that you got them from me... they're only... you see, this computer is organized like this, what you are looking at is substantially something like an index. Through these indications we look for "Vittorio Mangano"; the computer then shows all the indexes of the documents where we know Vittorio Mangano's name turns up. But these are not the documents. These are the indications on how to look for the documents. Trials are all put on film. If there's something there, you have to search for it inside the film and take it out of there. This isn't always easy to do. The number of films has become incredibly high.

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Scritto da Fabrizio Calvi e Jean Pierre Moscardo (traduz. di Christina Pacella)

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