

## **Time and Truth Don't Unveil the Reason**

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This work is created from a digital copy of the painting "The Truth Unveiled by Time" by Baroque master Giambattista Tiepolo. It has been partly covered by stickers which alter the interpretation of its iconographic symbolism.

"Time and Truth Don't Unveil the Reason" concerns censorship and political consent. It suggests that time and truth alone are not sufficient for finding illumination by the light of reason, a position ever obfuscated by control over people's imaginations and perception of reality.

The painting "The Truth Unveiled by Time" has been used as the backdrop for press conferences given by Silvio Berlusconi's Italian government. The Prime Minister altered the painting, hiding the nipple of the woman (allegorically the truth) in order not to offend a modest public who might have seen the press coverage in magazines and on television.

Berlusconi is the owner of the main Italian TV stations and newspapers, and is also the most powerful politician in Italy. He created his empire through TV variety shows full of half-naked showgirls and some of his ministers have even been former strippers from his shows. The biggest controversies surrounding him are the well-known accusations of corruption and the several sex scandals in which he has been involved.

In conceptual terms, the covering up of a symbol that depicts 'truth' in the official press room of a government becomes a direct declaration of the supremacy of its hypocrisy. The symbolic exploitation of this painting is paradigmatic of large-scale censorship and the building of consent in a modern democracy, where mass media dominates the mindset of electors in its quest to elicit votes.

Through his use of the media, Berlusconi has seduced and manipulated people's minds. He has controlled how ethics in politics are perceived, always placing himself in the centre of attention as the lead role in a spectacles that mimic the format of his most successful TV fictions. He conveys the content of political discourse by shaping the end of his big shows, attracting the public with naked girls, funny wisecracks and tasty gossip about his private life.

Power, hate and sex can seduce much more than truth and reason revealed over time. The prime's minister's attack has been very much semiological in nature – distorting reason through reappropriating and altering its meaning, even to the extent of making it illogical.

Berlusconi's campaign constitutes the most pervasive alienation of human beings in the history of mass-media misuse. His political model reaches the zenith of 'spectacularization' in politics through an immense utilization of mass-media – the largest in the history of modern society.