

SO NICE TO BE BACK IN SICILY (*)

It's so nice to be back in Sicily
where the mafia controls the bee's,
the flowers, the rivers and the streams
and which birds may nest in which tree's.

The mafia controls the sunshine
the stars and, when it can rain,
the mafia controls mount Etna
Madonie daisies it keeps in chains.)

At night the Gangi nightingale sings
just to keep the mafia peace
the ants, and butterflies and porcupines
are all pay-rolled "mafia police".

The mafia controls the wind
up high, and Geraci Siculo's water
the mafia controls, controls, controls
in precisely the way that it oughta!

If you sleep in peace under a bright starry sky
it's 'cos the mafia has taken a cut
you can't even eat a "mafia-free"
lowly Etna pistacchio nut.

"Certain pistacchio's" have always supported ^{I M} "the mob"
with their ears very close to the ground
and tentacle-like branches exquisitely scheming "up"
then "down" and around and around.

So it really is great to be back in Sicily
where the mafia controls
the flowers, the birds and the sun
and that is the way things have always been
ever since time begun!
EVER SINCE TIME BEGUN!

(*) I wrote the poem "So nice to be back in Sicily" in Gangi in June 2003 after over 15 years of solo walking holidays in Sicily, mostly in the Madonie countryside but also in the Nebrodi. I was very disappointed because godfather-mafia-obsessed English travel journalists seemed never to be able to write about Sicily without making lazy forbidding references to Sicily-and-the-mafia and never mentioning the Madonie or Nebrodi regions. Whatever serious problems there are with crime they are not the whole story. Some people, intoxicated by the cinema and silly repetitive journalism said my solo walking holidays could be dangerous and that I might end up dead inside a mafia violin case. Instead I truly enjoyed Gangi nightingales, Geraci waters, clever circumnavigating pistacchio tree's and starry skies, none of which were available in inner-city London where there is also plenty of organized and disorganized crime and now also bombs after the criminal war against Iraq. This poem re-cycles stupid journalistic obsessions.

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