



An ode to Paola Monzini (1965-2017)

Cristina Talens*

* Cristina Talens, Business Supply Chains Risk Assessment Department at the Wilberforce Institute for the Study of Slavery and Emancipation, University of Hull, UK.

PAOLA MONZINI

Paola, a very dear friend of mine, was an incredibly talented and inspirational woman on many fronts. I was blessed to have had the gift of her friendship, and very lucky to have had the opportunity to work alongside her for almost 20 years.

She was a greatly respected and world acclaimed sociologist who started her working life at the Italian Government's Anti-Mafia Investigation Directorate (DIA *Direzione Investigativa Antimafia*). Her strategic thinking and negotiating skills were recognised at international level and she became one of the leading experts of the "Global Programme Against Trafficking in Human Beings" at the UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) in Italy, where she became one of the main authors of *the UN Protocol Against Trafficking and Smuggling of Human Beings*, also known as "the Palermo Protocol". This regulatory framework was used to develop national legislation across Europe and more recently in the UK through the Modern Slavery Act.

During her years at UNICRI, Paola developed and implemented numerous multinational and bilateral intergovernmental projects across Europe, Africa and Asia with the aim of improving cooperation to facilitate police intervention, prosecution of criminals, and especially the protection of victims of trafficking and smuggling. She was a passionate advocate for the human rights of migrants and refugees in Italy, and last year was one of the first researchers to interview Syrian men and women arriving into Italy, trying to identify the mechanics of exploitation for organised criminal networks in an attempt to protect refugees during their journeys to Europe.

Paola's energy and commitment were unwavering. Whilst bringing up her two beautiful children, Ondina and Tito, Paola managed to write several books—one on criminal groups in Naples and Marseilles and, more recently, one on the sex market and the experiences of women victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation—and also worked on various European research projects for the Gruppo Abele, looking at illicit waste disposal and trafficking, and at synthetic drugs production and distribution in Europe. She coordinated research projects on the exploitation of migrants for the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), where she spent her last 3 years tracing the routes of migrants, refugees and identifying smuggling and trafficking practices in the Mediterranean area.

More recently, she worked on gang masters and modern slavery within the agricultural industry in Italy and her research recently led to the first meeting between trade unions, the Italian ministry of labour, NGOs and industry representatives in Salerno in June 2017.

Those are only a few examples of the admirable work she did. Paola was a strategic thinker and a finely tuned negotiator. She was able to disarm those she came into contact with her warm charm, calm and easy manner and had the unique ability to bring people together to achieve the impossible as a result of her diplomatic skills.

She was absolutely fearless emotionally and intellectually, which meant that she could touch the lives of the most vulnerable whilst being able to work alongside the government institutions to deliver change.

Paola, you were my own personal hero, and continue to inspire me in my work. You taught me to be positive and relentless. It is on my behalf and that of all the men, women and children whom you helped to protect that we say *“thank you Paola, we will miss you deeply”*.

Some Other Memories

Paola's exciting research on organised crime in Naples and Marseille, her groundbreaking enquiry on human trafficking, and the moving story she wrote of a sex worker in Italy, are part of her work that will remain with us. The evenings spent with her in Trastevere, Tuscany and London will never be forgotten. I will miss her intelligence and gentle humanity, and I am not the only one.

Vincenzo Ruggiero, University of Middlesex, UK

I met Paola Monzini at the end of the 1990s while she was working on an original and important piece of research on criminal groups active in Naples and Marseille since the end of the 19 Century. We became friends discussing those topics and remained so afterwards, even if more recently occasion to meet and talk had become rarer. A great thinker completely uninterested in academic recognition even if she would have had it but also an extraordinary woman with a free spirit and generous heart. A rare intellectual and human figure, whom we will very much miss.

Giovanni Melillo, Judge, Italy

Clever, open-minded, innovative, independent, sensitive. These are few of the many qualities of researcher Paola Monzini who gave an extraordinary contribution to the understanding of organised crime, illegal immigration, human beings trafficking. We will miss her *sguardo sul mondo*.

Ombretta Ingrassi, University of Milan, Italy

I did not know Paola personally although our paths crossed once or twice a long time ago. But I know her publications, those on Marseille and Naples in particular. Her book on Naples and Marseille is a book of great quality, work and erudition, one of the only pieces of work to engage thoroughly with the long history, despite the difficulty to access reliable sources, of the question of organised crime in France in its various dimensions, historical, social and political. A book that also highlights the importance of an "Italian lens" looking at France (for a long time, blind to these phenomenon). I am sad for Paola, her family and friends, as well as for all those of us who have shared with her an interest in the hidden faces of democratic societies.

Jean-Louis Briquet, Université de Paris I, France

My father, Percy Allum, was one of Paola's external PhD examiners at the European University Institute in Florence where her supervisor was Alessandro Pizzorno. She had elaborated an extensive comparative analysis of organised crime groups in two of the busiest, most chaotic and beautiful European harbour cities, Naples and Marseille, in a period when organised crime was not a fashionable subject and when it was very difficult to access reliable and concrete material. As a PhD student myself at the time, I recall hearing my father's admiration for this young woman who not only had been able to collect enough material to recount the rise of Carmine Alfieri's in Campania and that of the Guérini brothers in Marseille but also the way she had managed to defend her thesis in front of a panel of eminent European political scientists.

Paola will be sadly missed by us all but for personal reasons, I feel her disappearance even more now that I start a new research project about human trafficking and the plights of young women coming to Europe, I know that Paola would have been able to explain this in such a clear, concise and coherent manner. Not only that, but as the UK starts to tackle and engage with human trafficking on all fronts, Paola with all her experience and knowledge would have been an inspiration and a fountain of information and a guide for us all.

Felia Allum, University of Bath, UK.

Paola Monzini was, as I used to say, a researcher who studied mafia or, more generally, crime. She wanted to view and to touch the problems, not to image them. I understood this when I met Paola, almost thirty years ago, as a young history student. After that meeting, she contributed to the magazine "Società Civile" that I directed, and I think we became good friends, despite our age difference. Many years later, I included her two books as basic reading for my university courses. I will remember her with tenderness and nostalgia.

Nando Dalla Chiesa, Milan University, Italy.

It was raining cats and dogs. Paola and I were in a Jeep together with other people parked in a road at the edge of a wood. We were travelling towards a village, east of Benin (Edo state, Nigeria) where a well had been built with money from an Italian cooperative/money. We arrived all wet in the house of the king of the village, welcomed by his advisers. He was not there. All asked why he was taking so long. In the

waiting room at the back of the king's house, there lingered the smell of fried chicken. It had gone one in the morning and everyone was very hungry but nobody gave signs of impatience. The king finally arrived on a mopped, all wet despite his plastic coat and army made helmet. They presented us to the king. He embraced us: first Paola, then me. He was happy that we had visited him. He made us eat and gave us two cola nuts. Then leaving us, he said that not in 85 years, his age, had anyone built a well in his village. As he said this, he started to cry. Both Paola and I also swelled up with tears of joy.

Francesco Carchedi, University of La Sapienza, Rome

Selected Publications by Paola Monzini

- Breines, M., Collyer, M., Lutterbeck, D., Mainwaring, C., Mainwaring, D. and Monzini P (2015) A Study on smuggling of migrants: characteristics, responses and cooperation with third countries. Case Study 2: Ethiopia–Libya–Malta/Italy.
- Monzini P (2015) Exploitation of Nigerian and West African Workers and Forced Labour in Italy: Main Features and Institutional Responses. In Coluccello R and Massey S (eds.) *Eurafrican Migration: Legal, Economic and Social Responses to Irregular Migration*. Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- Aziz NA, Monzini P and Pastore F (2015) *The changing dynamics of cross-border human smuggling and trafficking in the Mediterranean*. Rome: IAI.
- Pastore F, Monzini P and Sciortino G (2006) Schengen's soft underbelly? Irregular migration and human smuggling across land and sea borders to Italy. *International Migration* 44(4): 95-119.
- Monzini P (2005) *Sex traffic: prostitution, crime and exploitation*. London: Zed Books.
- Massari M and Monzini P (2004) Dirty businesses in Italy: a case-study of illegal trafficking in hazardous waste. *Global crime* 6(3-4): 285-304.
- Monzini P (2007) Sea-border crossings: The organization of irregular migration to Italy. *Mediterranean Politics* 12(2): 163-184.
- Monzini P, Pastore F and Sciortino G (2004) L'Italia promessa. Geopolitica e dinamiche organizzative del traffico di migranti verso l'Italia. Centro Studi di Politica Internazionale (CeSPI), Working Papers, (9).
<http://www.cespi.it/it/ricerche/litalia-promessa-geopolitica-e-dinamiche-organizzative-del-traffico-di-migranti-verso>
- Monzini P. (2004) Migrant smuggling via Maritime routes. Rome: CeSPI.
- Monzini P (1999) *Gruppi criminali a Napoli e Marsiglia: la delinquenza organizzata nella storia di due città: 1820-1990*. Catanzaro: Meridiana libri.