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What is your role in the Inner Life Working Group (ILWG)?

As a member of the Inner Life Working Group, I'm collecting data from the Constitutions and the Penal Codes of different countries in order to create the first Life Database (an overview of Life Imprisonment situation). We focalize our research work on the States which have already abolished Life Imprisonment, so to give people a consultable instrument useful to understand the harmfulness of such penalty.

How did you get involved in the project "The Right to Hope"?

Four month ago I asked to Professor Davide Galliani to be the supervisor of my Bachelor Thesis. Because of I will be studying in Tromsø (Norway) next semester 2015, thanks to Erasmus + Programm, I would like to write a thesis concerning the Norwegian penal system. While we are discussing on my thesis, he talked me about this project. I was really excited: finally I have found other students who share my interests, finally a way to change the situation. On the 8th of April, 2015 we started our weekly meetings.

Why did you decide to work for the lifers cause?

I have been interested in the fundamental rights since I have memorial. When I was a child, my grandfather taught me the importance to fight for our rights and ideals. From my adolescence, I am following with passion Emma Bonino battles.

The first university course I have attended was the Public Law course of Professor

Davide Galliani. Once we have analyzed the Article 27 of the Italian Constitution, I started wondering about the real aim of the penalty. Is the life imprisonment a human penalty? How a lifer could really rehabilitate himself if he is condemned for the eternity? Is life imprisonment compatible with our Constitution? And which are lifers' rights?

I had the opportunity to attend a second course of Professor Davide Galliani, "Fundamental Rights". During his lessons, I found some the answers I was searching for. I decided to work for the lifers cause in order to give them a strong voice.

Dostoyevsky said "The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prison". It's true. I decided to fight for a prison system based on human rights and respect. If prisons give to all the detainees a meaningful life inside their walls and a possibility to go out, they can rehabilitate them-self and being reintegrated as soon as possible in society. The aim of a prison should be to prepare detainees for a life after they get out. But in Italian penal system yet includes the life imprisonment without parole: it means that some people will pass their lives in prison, until death. Which is the difference with death penalty? The article 27 of Italian Constitution says that the aim of penalty is rehabilitation, but how a person could rehabilitate his-self if he cannot neither see the world outside prison? The punishment is the taking away of freedom, but what about other rights? People generally prefer to ignore "this kind of problem", so I am fighting to spread knowledge on this matter. A State can't neither ignore citizens rights.

What is the most exciting project you

have been a part of while working in the Inner Life Working Group?

Through our work we have the opportunity to take part to different amazing project: we met and discuss with "Nessuno Tocchi Caino" Association, the CEDU judge Paulo Pinto De Albuquerque, the lawyer Maria Brucale. We had the opportunity to visit the Due Palazzi prison (Padua), where we have met the Ristretti Orizzonti editorial staff. We took part to the managing board of "Nessuno Tocchi Caino", where we heard talking different expert in life imprisonment.

But the most exciting project I have been a part while working in the Inner Life Working Group is probably the collection of the questionnaires filled by lifers where they write about their detention and their health conditions. Reading their report, you can realize several things: they are men with no hope, condemned to a penalty without end.

Moreover, life imprisonment have serious consequences on lifers health conditions: lots of them are depressed or suffer from claustrophobia (and so on), they have several sight/hearing problems because of the isolation...Some of the lifers who have answered to our questionnaire have also added their thoughts about their life in prison.

The datas collected will be used from Professor Davide Galliani, who will write a focus which will be published as appendix of the book written by Professor Andrea Pugiotto and Carmelo Musumeci, a lifer. One of these cases could be the one which can permit us to ask to the Italian Constitutional Court and to the CEDU

about the legitimacy of life imprisonment without parole.

What do you do besides working at the ILWG?

Currently, I am studying International Relations at Milan University. I have been always interested in other countries culture and national system and this is the reason why I have studied different languages, such as English, French and Chinese. In my opinion, everyone of us can learn from the others in order to create a better world. But to do this, we have to understand other countries mentality and traditions.

Travel is my biggest passion, I have already visited several countries, both for pleasure and studying. Next stop will be Norway! Another my big passion is photography. To finance my passions, I am occasionally working as hostess and translator in Exhibition events.

What are you reading right now?

I have just started reading the novel "Fuga dall'assassino dei sogni" by Alfredo Cosco and Carmelo Musumeci. Alfredo Cosco is one of the founder of "Le urla del silenzio", a blog on lifers and life imprisonment penalty. Carmelo Musumeci is a lifer and he is now in the prison of Padua. They had written together this novel, talking about the harsh prisons of Asinaria and Pianosa.

How would you sum up life imprisonment in three words?

Annihilation, inhuman, degrading.