

# **ANA-MARIA PENEASU**

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## **What is your role in the Inner Life Working Group?**

My task is to collect information about life imprisonment around the world. This helps us to create the first Life Database and at the same time to understand various aspects of this problem. The main aim of our research group is to inform people of the conditions of lifers. At the same time, we present countries that already abolished life imprisonment. This work has the purpose to underline that it is possible to punish people without being inhuman and violating everybody's dignity.

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

One year ago, I asked Professor Galliani to be the supervisor of my Bachelor Thesis. The interest in these topics pushed me to write a thesis on the power of pardon, analyzing the situation both in Italy and in Germany since I spent nine months in Konstanz thanks to the Erasmus project. After finishing my period of study abroad, Professor Galliani told me about this group of research which I decided to join. I think that this topic is very interesting and can help me to develop my knowledge as for the public law. I really appreciate this initiative because the group is trying to inform about the inhumane conditions and to drive people to realize the uselessness of life imprisonment.

## **Why did you decide to work for the lifers cause?**

I was always fighting for human rights because I am convinced our society has the task of protecting them since other people lost their life in order to obtain and keep them safe. The possibility to hope is another human right. The existence of life imprisonment in many democratic countries violates the possibility of having a better life and keeping the human dignity.

My ideas together with the engaging explanations of Professor Galliani pushed me to become a member of this research group. I consider that every state, especially the democratic ones, should face this problem with more awareness, trying to rehabilitate prisoners because everybody has the opportunity to a second chance. It is very easy to condemn people leaving them without hope and future, rather than reeducate.

## **What do you do besides working at the ILWoG?**

Currently I am searching a Master degree in European studies abroad. Coming from a multicultural context, I always try to find out new cultures and countries so that to learn every day something new and different. I also like reading especially classics and learning new languages.

## **What are you reading right now?**

I am reading a very interesting book "Per chi suona la campana" written by Hemingway.

The book describes the brutality of the Spanish civil war. All is told through the protagonist, Robert Jordan, an American in the International Brigades who travels to Spain to fight for the Republic in opposition of Francisco Franco's fascist forces. He is ordered by a Soviet general to destroy a bridge with the aid of a band of local anti-fascist guerrillas, in order to prevent enemy troops from responding to an upcoming offensive.

In the camp, Jordan encounters Maria, a young Spanish woman whose life had been shattered by her parents' execution and her rape at the hands of the Falangist's (part of the fascist coalition) at the outbreak of the war. When another band of anti-fascist guerrillas, led by El Sordo, is surrounded and killed, Pablo, member of the group, steals the dynamite caps, hoping to prevent the demolition and thereby avoid fascist reprisals. In the end, Jordan improvises a way to detonate his dynamite and destroy the bridge. Pablo regrets abandoning his comrades and returns to assist in the operation.

After Pablo loses the dynamite caps, Jordan and Anselmo coordinate an alternative method to destroy the bridge, which is much more dangerous because of the men's proximity to the explosives. While Pablo, Pilar, and Maria create a distraction for Jordan and Anselmo, the two men set and detonate the explosives, costing Anselmo his life when he is hit in the face by a piece of shrapnel. While escaping, Jordan is maimed when a tank shoots his horse out from under him. He refuses an offer from another fighter to shoot him and lies in agony, hoping to kill an enemy officer and a few soldiers, and delay their pursuit of his comrades before dying or being killed. The narration ends before Jordan launches his ambush.

**How would you sum up life imprisonment in three words?**

Unfair, cruel and hopeless.