

BIANCA MARIA PIRANI (1946-2020) - IN MEMORIAM



One year ago, on 20 November 2020 (we only learned about it a few weeks ago), Bianca Maria Pirani, who retired a few years ago after having been a researcher in Sociology at the Sapienza University of Rome, left us. She was born in Senigallia (Ancona) on 21 December 1946 and died in Civita Castellana (Viterbo), not far from her home in Poggio Mirteto (Rieti) and the ancient Abbey of Farfa, where from 22 to 24 March 2007 she organised a memorable international conference entitled 'The Rhythms of the Sacred: Time of the Monk, Time of the Tourist on the Global Scene', as part of ISA Working Group 03 'The Body in the Social Sciences' (that she chaired), under the patronage of the Italian Association of Sociology (AIS). About one hundred scholars from various continents took part and were visibly satisfied with the quality of the papers and the extraordinary hospitality of the Benedictine monks, who decided (with the permission of the conventual prior Dom Eugenio Gargiulo) to interrupt their seclusion in order to host and serve the conference participants. Thanks also to the considerable success of that initiative, Working Group 03 was later promoted to Research Committee, with the number 54.

It was precisely this structure of the International Sociological Association that was the brainchild of Bianca Maria Pirani, who founded and chaired it for decades, promoting initiatives all the way up to the eve of the Covid pandemic, also availing herself, from time to time, of the support of talented scholars such as first Ivan Varga and then Thomas Spence Smith, with whom she edited various publications that were echoed and appreciated internationally. Of particular note is the monographic issue of *Current Sociology* (vol. 53, issue 2, March 2005) on the sociology of the body, which she edited together with Ivan Varga. But her most significant legacy is in the conspicuous series of publications both in Italian and in English, among which special mention should be made of: Pirani B. M. (ed.), *L'abbaglio dell'Occidente. Per il diritto alla differenza culturale*, Bulzoni, Rome, 2000; Pirani B. M., Varga I. (eds.), *The New Boundaries between Bodies and Technologies*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle, 2008; Varga I., Pirani B. M. (eds.), *Acting Bodies and Social Networks. A Bridge between Technology and Working Memory*, University Press of America, Lanham, Maryland, 2010; Pirani B. M. (eds.), *Learning from Memory. Body, Memory and Technology in a Globalizing World*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Cambridge, 2011; Pirani B. M., *Beyond the Skin. The Boundary between Bodies and Technologies in the Spaces of the New "Mobilities"*, Franco Angeli, Milan, 2012; Pirani B. M., Smith T. S. (eds.), *Body and Time: Bodily Rhythms and Social Synchronism in the Digital Media Society*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Cambridge, 2013; Pirani B. M., *Beyond the Skin: The Boundaries between Bodies and Technologies in an Unequal World*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2014; Pirani B. M., Smith T. S. (edited by), *Embodiment and Cultural Differences*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Cambridge, 2016; Pirani B. M. (edited by), *The Borders of Integration: Empowered Bodies and Social Cohesion*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2018.

She was also a member of the editorial board of the International Sociological Association's Sage Studies in International Sociology. She has published widely, focusing in particular on the relationships between human bodies and technologies, analysing - within the debate on mind and body - action-space as composed and recomposed by individuals and collectivities.

The Italian Association of University Teachers remembered her in a mass celebrated by Monsignor Mauro Mantovani, Rector Emeritus of the Salesian Pontifical University, in the presence of the Rector Emeritus of Sapienza University of Rome, Professor Eugenio Gaudio.

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