

In Naples, Camorra Clansmen Shoot Into the Crowds

Judith Harris (May 06, 2019)



In protest at the casual shooting of a four-year-old girl in a central piazza in Naples, hundreds turned out Sunday to protest the ongoing battles between rival Camorra clans. Meantime little Noemi remains in a coma, her life at risk.

Her grandmother was watching four-year-old Noemi at play in the crowded downtown Piazza Nazionale in Naples when a young Camorrista fired at a rival clansman. A stray bullet struck Noemi, penetrating her shoulder and a lung, another injured her grandmother. Despite an emergency operation that took hours, she remains in a coma, and her life at serious risk. In protest at this casual shooting (and at the others before this), hundreds assembled in that very piazza to protest on Sunday, May 5. "DisarmiAmo," said a huge, homemade banner, which translates more or less to Disarm&Love.

In 2018 Naples and its province were the scene of 21 murders, down from the 35 of the previous year. But shootings in public places between youngsters on scooters from rival [Camorra](#) [2] clans continue. In March rivals, quarreling over a proposed marriage which one of the clans disapproved, held a shoot-out heard by the police station at Naples' Piazza Trieste e Trento. On April 9, a Camorrista was shot and killed and his son injured, again by a rival clansman, in front of an



elementary school. And on April 19 a former convict was murdered in front of another preschool with the toddlers looking on.

"The problem of security in Naples is intolerable," said [Vincenzo De Luca](#) [3] of the Partito Democratico (PD), governor of the Campania Region. One who agreed was Antonio Piccirillo. The son of a notorious boss, he participated in Sunday's demonstration against the Neapolitan gang world and its casual shootings. Queried by journalists after he spoke to the crowd through a megaphone, Antonio said that, although he will always wish well to his father, who is in prison, he totally rejects the world of the Camorra. "For my father mine will never be total love," he said, "And he knows that, he understands. Indeed he says that only my position gives the errors of his life some sense. I don't want others to go through all this," Antonio adds. "I don't want others to come to the same end as so many have."

Antonio's attitude is of particular interest. Serious students of the Sicilian Mafia, the Neapolitan Camorra and the Calabrian n'Drangheta believe that, while an increased police presence is useful, as Deputy Premier [Luigi Di Maio](#) [4] of the Five Star Movement (M5S), immediately requested, and better intelligence is essential, the most important, albeit the most difficult, way to deal with the family traditions of the gang world is to address its cultural roots.

Neapolitan police say that young gangsters ride around on scooters to shoot their guns in public places in order to show their importance. In fact, although the number of murders attributable to the various criminal organizations in all of Italy is in decline, the presence of those mafia societies is actually on the rise, but in other ways. To quote the national statistics-gathering agency ISTAT, "Homicides decreased strongly since the nineties, especially those with male victims) in 1990 there was one woman killed for 5 men, now the proportion is of 1 woman for every 2 men. This is due to the decrease of mafia and organized crime homicides too (generally men are killed by the mafia)."

The mafias are simply busy elsewhere, and wherever money is involved. Only the latest political scandal involves a high government official close to Deputy Premier Matteo Salvini, head of the Lega. Undersecretary Armando Siri of the Lega is under investigation by Milan prosecutors for alleged corruption and illicit contacts that appear to lead directly into the Sicilian Mafia. Di Maio, who is Salvini's partner in government, has repeatedly demanded Senator Siri's resignation ("if these are the facts," he specifies) because the case "casts a shadow on the government." There is also talk of Siri's "mafia contacts," said Di Maio. Speaking at a political rally in the Campania region near Naples, Salvini responded that, "In a civilized country trials take place in a courtroom, where a judge, not a newspaper, determines guilt."

European elections are scheduled for May 26 in Italy. Will the daily revelations about political links to the mafias and the widespread corruption scandals that lead into mafia circles have an effect upon these elections? It would be nice, but the answer is that, despite heightened awareness, they most likely will not.

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[2] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camorra>

[3] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vincenzo_De_Luca

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