



Pathology Biology Section – 2007

G77 'Ndrangheta' Homicide (Executions)!

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After attending this presentation, attendees will learn about 'Ndrangheta,' one of the famous "four mafias" a criminal organization from the southern part of Italy. A unique case of 'ndrangheta'-related homicide/double execution is presented. A detailed scene investigation and a complete postmortem examination were performed; the surface aspects of gunshot wounds were also analyzed by means of confocal laser scanning microscopy.

This presentation will impact the forensic community and/or humanity by demonstrating the rarity of the modalities of this execution makes it peculiar and a complete pathologic investigation (death scene investigation, autopsy performing, and toxicological screening) is strongly recommended to completely investigate this type of homicide.

This unique case of double simultaneous "ndrangheta"-related homicide, or execution was discovered in the Tuscan countryside. In the morning of April 10, a farmer noted the presence of bloodstains near the road on his property. The bloodstain course ended in a wooded area where a gun case was detected. He immediately alerted the authorities. An unusual arrangement of the leaves next to the road caught the attention of those searching the area. A few centimeters under these leaves and soil, hands and feet surfaced; at the end of excavations, 160 cm underground, two lifeless bodies were present. They were found kneeling, beside each other. The two bodies were covered with burnt lime, which was cautiously removed. They were dressed only underpants and wore a pair of gloves. Clothes belonging to the deceased were found next to the bodies. Core temperature of the remains, measured by means of bulbous thermometer, was 14°C. The external temperature was 17°C. Rigor mortis was partially present and livor mortis was represented by fixed reddish-purple coloration localized on anterior part of the bodies. At external examination the caustic effect of burnt lime on the face and the trunk was observed. A round wound on the left occipital region was detected on each body. A second round wound on the right dorsal region was observed in one of the deceased. Forty-eight hours after discovery, a complete autopsy was performed. A total body CT study confirmed in one case the presence of a metallic foreign body in the first cervical segment while in the second case foreign metallic bodies were observed in the right orbital region and at the mandibular angle. Postmortem examination of the spinal cord was performed according to the Adam's technique and the deformed bullets

were recovered. A complete histological study was performed. Cutaneous gunshot wounds were also studied by means of confocal laser scanning microscopy. Few days after the examination, a positive identification was made by fingerprint comparison. The victims were two brothers belonging to the criminal association 'ndrangheta' under probation in Tuscan countryside. It is well known all over the world of the existence of the "four Italian mafias" that are referred to the "Cosa Nostra" in Sicily, the "Camorra" in Campania, the "Sacra Corona Unita" in Puglia and the 'Ndrangheta' in Calabria. The last one is estimated to be Italy's most powerful organized crime association, surpassing the Sicilian Mafia. Their moneymaking schemes include racketeering, extortion, loan sharking, illegal immigration, money laundering, cigarette smuggling, and arms and narcotic trafficking. In homicides committed by criminal organization the method employed as well as the positioning of the body follow a macabre ritual laden with significance and intending to be a warning to others who interfere with the activities of these organizations.

Ndrangheta Homicide Execution, Burnt Lime, Confocal Microscopy