



Obituary: Giulio Jori, 1939–2014

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Giulio Jori – in admiration

Janet Bornman

The words of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, “*When a great man dies, for years the light he leaves behind him, lies on the paths of men*”, give some comfort as Giulio’s scientific community try to reconcile themselves to the passing of a valued friend, mentor, innovative and life-loving scientist. So few years have passed since the publication of the Editorial, A tribute to Giulio Jori on his 70th birthday¹ that the tragedy of the sudden loss has left a lasting mark of deep sadness and disbelief. With his unparalleled driving energy and enthusiasm for everything photochemical and photobiological, Giulio was an aspirational giant of his time. He did this with an astonishingly far-sighted perspective and vision of what science could achieve and how the different players from many scientific disciplines could come together to make a difference. From his ground roots in organic chemistry to practical applications of photodynamic therapy and environmental photobiology, Giulio’s capacity for and fascination in a wide range of subjects allowed him to move seamlessly among the disciplines of chemistry, biology and medicine, bringing intriguing novelty to science and its direct applications.

Among Giulio’s extensive contributions to photochemistry and photobiology, his role in helping to found the European Society for Photobiology (ESP), officially launched in 1986, stands out as one of the key initiatives that brought colleagues and students together as one

family. With nearly 30 years of active and passionate support for the ESP and its journals, Giulio has left us a sustainable legacy and a role model that will be difficult if not impossible to emulate. Although ESP had successfully established an official journal of the Society, as the years passed, many felt that a society-owned journal was a preferred choice. This was realised in 2002 with dedicated effort and negotiations by Giulio and close colleagues, who spent many devoted hours on the challenging task of starting a new journal. Today it ranks as one of the leading photochemical and photobiological journals.

Although there is the abyss left by Giulio scientifically, his exuberant and outgoing personality touched the lives of so many with whom he came in contact, making the loss a personal one. He was also steeped in the richness of history, art, languages, different cultures and philosophy of life. Our mission will be to take the baton that Giulio held for so long, and be guided by the way he unselfishly contributed as a warm, caring person, and outstanding scientist.

George Truscott

Of course, Giulio Jori was a very fine photochemist and photobiologist – but to me, more importantly, he was a dear friend. It is easy to list the scientific achievements of his research group in Padova but it is equally important, perhaps more important, to remember his contributions in assisting so many young photobiologists around the world, from Asia to the USA and throughout Europe, to achieve scientific maturity.

I had the great privilege to help him organise two NATO Advanced Study Institutes (ASI's) which illustrated this mentoring role extremely well. The first was a two-week ASI held in Bressanone (Italy) in September 1984. The young photochemists and photobiologists who benefited from this meeting came from most European countries and from as far afield as North America and China. Giulio and his co-organisers amassed a world famous group of tutors for this meeting which clearly benefited the many young scientists present. As had been implied in the preface to this first ASI, Giulio Jori and co-workers designed the meeting as a high-level course, characterised by an interdisciplinary approach to the problems associated with photobiology and phototherapy, bringing together experts from many different fields and specialisations. The tutorial nature of this ASI was reflected by the large number of younger scientists who took the opportunity Giulio and his co-workers gave them to give a lecture, many for the first time, in front of a zealous international audience from 15 countries including both the tutors and other younger scientists present. It was Giulio's efforts to insist on the integration of students from very different backgrounds and countries with each other, and with the tutors, which led to a most successful Institute.

The ASI led to a textbook, published by Plenum Press, in 1985.²

This 1984 ASI was organised, of course, before the establishment of the European Society of Photobiology (ESP) and Giulio, with his typical enthusiasm, took the opportunity to use the expert tutors, as well as the students present at the ASI, to further progress our efforts towards the establishment of ESP, including the initial steps for our first conference in Grenoble in 1986.

The second NATO ASI that Giulio Jori (and co-workers) organised was held near the Centre for Advanced Research in Photobiology (CARP) in Capo Caccia, Sardinia, Italy in 1993. This ASI was also characterised by a group of younger scientists from many countries in Asia, Europe and America. The meeting encompassed a wide range of topics,

from the underlying photophysics and photochemistry to the applied aspects associated with the deleterious and therapeutic aspects of light, with particular emphasis on the use of Photodynamic Therapy (PDT) to treat cancer and on viral and microbial infections – this latter topic, being, of course, where Giulio was a world-renowned expert.

This ASI also led to a textbook, published by Plenum Press, in 1994.³

I must conclude by emphasising Giulio's enormous efforts to establish the ESP – much of this began with informal meetings while he and other European scientists were attending the annual meetings of the American Society for Photobiology. Typical of his enthusiasm one such meeting was organized at the last moment while we were all at the airport returning from the USA! Of course, Giulio went on to be a President of ESP and the Founding Editor of the *Journal of Photochemistry and Photobiology, B: Biology*. Later, as an editor, I came to realise the enormous efforts, tenacity and vision that would have been needed to establish this, our first journal, from scratch!

The world of photoscience has lost a fine scientist, a superb teacher and a wonderful organiser. Like many others, I have lost a good friend who will be sorely missed.

Dietrich Averbach

As a former ESP president, I feel a deep sorrow to hear about the sudden death of Giulio Jori who was one of the founding members of ESP and one of the most eminent driving forces of research in photobiology in Europe. I got to know Giulio as an outstanding personality and scientist, friend and colleague.

For everything he did over the years for the Society and for photobiology, Giulio has always received a great deal of respect and admiration from everyone who got to know him. Consequently, he had many friends all over Europe and beyond. Giulio has been a great promoter of photobiology and helped to develop this research discipline into a modern, well recognized, wide ranging research field, particularly by his own

outstanding scientific contributions on photosensitization.

As the Founding Editor of the first official "green" journal of ESP, the *Journal of Photochemistry and Photobiology, B: Biology*, Giulio Jori took a great step forward in the promotion of photobiology in Europe. As a president of ESP, he managed to open up the society further and initiated effective collaborations with photobiology communities in Asia above the existing classical links between ESP and the American Society for Photobiology and many other photobiology societies. In addition, in 2002, Giulio launched the journal *Photochemical & Photobiological Sciences*, as the official ESP journal together with other international partners (European Photochemistry Association (EPA), the Asia and Oceanic Society for Photobiology (ASP) and the Korean Society for Photochemistry (KSP). Again, Giulio Jori opened up the Society and assured a great variety of future activities, nationally and internationally.

Giulio's editorial and organisational skills were outstanding and recognized all over the world. In his hands, the first "green" ESP journal, and in recent years *Photochemical and Photobiological Sciences*, became a competitive and scientifically sound instrument in international photobiology.

Giulio promoted the involvement of young scientists in all ESP activities (congresses, summer schools, workshops). In particular, he has been a great promoter of the participation of young scientists and also of the inclusion of scientists of the former Eastern block and other non-European countries in ESP congresses, by stimulating travel grants and awards. Indeed, the direct involvement of these younger generation scientists turned out to be extremely stimulating for advancing the science of photobiology and new ideas in Europe. Giulio was always a stabilizing element in ESP, acting as both a diplomat and strong advocate assuring the strength and continuity of ESP. In Executive Committee meetings, he always contributed clear thoughts, straightforward reasoning and a true vision, always combined with a good sense of humour. He was exceptionally

efficient in consensus building and reaching clear-cut decisions, even when negotiating contracts and/or financial matters with partners of diverse interests. A good example for this was the effective setting up and directorship of the Centre for Advanced Research in Photobiology (CARP) in Sardinia involving the collaboration between ESP, the Italian Society for Photobiology and the Laser Centre for Medical Application in Florence, a Division of the Consorzio Centro di Eccellenza Optronica. In such negotiations, he was unbeatable. With CARP, Giulio promoted photobiology schools, symposia and meetings as well as PhD courses.

Giulio played a prominent role in all photobiological congresses and the organisation of many meetings and photobiology summer schools, the most well-known being the very successful summer schools organized in Brixen since 1999.

Giulio was always very much open to new ideas and initiatives so that it was a real pleasure to work with him. In 1995 he fully supported the First European Inter-University Course using videoconference technology and connecting the video-studios of the University of Orléans (France) and the University of Utrecht (The Netherlands) with intermittent connections with the University of London and Erlangen (Germany). Giulio Jori came as an “ambassador” from Padova University to give 3 main lectures. The course involved 30 students from 3 countries, 5 European universities and 26 lecturers from 10 different countries (Poland, Great Britain, Germany, France, Italy, Austria, Canada, The Netherlands, Switzerland and Belgium).

His undoubted intellectual and pedagogic skills made him an excellent lecturer, always very much appreciated by students and the scientific community. So, generations of photobiology students and scientists from all over the world will remember him.

Giulio will stay in our memory both as a great character and a great scientist. We all will very much miss him and our thoughts are also directed to his family, his close friends and his many colleagues.

Stanley Brown

The untimely and sudden passing of Giulio Jori has been a great shock to all his friends and colleagues and a huge loss to photobiology, to which he devoted so much of his scientific career. He has been an international leader of photobiology development and arguably the leader in Europe. Others will pay tribute to his undoubted scientific leadership, skills and high standing but, for me, it was his power of communication, especially to younger scientists, which was so impressive. He worked prodigiously to promote photobiology in general and photodynamic therapy in particular, through organisation of conferences, production of book series and establishment of the European Society for Photobiology and its associated journals. Also, of course, he was instrumental in setting up numerous photobiology schools and workshops. This work has been so important in bringing forward the next generation of photobiologists. It was characteristic that Giulio organised these (and many conferences) in a manner which allowed them to be accessible to younger scientists, with reasonable registration fees, inexpensive accommodation and scholarships which would go a long way to meeting these costs.

Like others, I have very special personal memories of Giulio, both as one of the most enthusiastic scientists I have ever met as well as one of the most humorous, always great company and always concerned for others. We shall miss him greatly, but his wisdom and skill in promoting his science amongst younger colleagues will ensure that his legacy will last for many years to come.

Tom Dubbelman

Giulio was the driving force behind the start of the European Society for Photobiology. He talked about it with several European photobiologists and photochemists during several congresses, and together with Kurt Schaffner he invited a dozen scientists for a meeting in Mülheim in the Max Planck Institut für Kohlenforschung where Kurt was one of the directors. After ample discussion

about a possible connection between the European Photochemistry Association and the European photobiologists, it was decided to establish a separate European Society for Photobiology.

Key discussion points at this first meeting of the ESP founding group in Mülheim were the necessity both for a Society Journal and a dedicated congress every two years and Giulio was a driving force in getting both going. The first congress was in Grenoble and this was the occasion when the first ESP executive committee was elected.

The next congress was the next year in Padova in order not to clash with other photobiology congresses. I have very fond memories of the very many contacts I had with Giulio during the meetings of the founding fathers of the ESP and those early years of the Society as I headed an election committee that asked members whether they would stand for election for the Executive Committee, and I was also a member of the editorial board of the journal. Our scientific connection through photodynamic therapy led to memorable visits to Padova.

Giulio will be remembered as a warm personality, a prominent photobiologist and the driving force and father of the European Society for Photobiology.

Francesco Lenci



I met Giulio for the first time in 1972, in Bochum, at the ICP Congress. At that time I was working on proflavine-sensitized photoinduced free radical production in organic matrices and Giulio, with his good friend John Spikes, was already a renowned scientist for photodynamic reactions. I used the occasion

to gain knowledge for my work from him and he was, as usual, glad to listen and help.

Since then, for more than forty years, we had many occasions to discuss our research projects and plans for the future (the future, indeed, was in front of us). After the ICP Congress in Rome in 1976, we were together at the “Gruppo Italiano di Fotobiologia” (later “Società Italiana di Fotobiologia”), led by Amleto Castellani. In those years, Giulio was indefatigably committed to promoting photobiological research in Italy, organizing summer schools and courses for students and he was willing to pay attention to and to aid any friend and colleague. Years and years of wonderful occasions for learning, teaching, discussing and also enjoying being together, still with the future in front of us.

Within a couple of years of the foundation of ESP in 1986, Giulio, with his absolutely exceptional vision, embarked in the CARP (Center for Advanced Research in Photobiology) endeavour in Sardinia, organizing a couple of ESP Summer Schools and several meetings with local academic and political authorities. I had the privilege of working with him for all that period and sharing his enthusiasm and willingness for promoting photobiological sciences. In those years we also succeeded in organizing the first PhD course in photobiology in Italy. Once again the future was in front of us.

If I had the honour of being one the first members of ESP since its foundation and contributing to the Society, it is because Giulio was always behind me, with his friendship and intellectual wisdom. As a matter of fact, in 2001 we both were awarded the ESP Medal, a moving, but also a quite hilarious occasion: at the ceremony the two medals had not yet arrived to Lillehammer and - provisionally - we were awarded two small soaps. For more than forty years, whenever I had the benefit of staying with Giulio at a meeting, or dining together or joking about ourselves, discussing politics (quite often very deeply: Giulio was also a concerned scientist, seriously engaged in political and social activities) or planning activi-

ties or shedding tears for the death of common dear friends, I discovered something precious in my life.

In June 2012 I had the pleasant opportunity of spending some time with his wife Paola, talking about Giulio's commitments and our scientific careers, and again I wish to thank Paola for how she was always close to Giulio and supporting him in his courageous scientific and personal decisions. We all know that Giulio was the very special man he was also thanks to Paola.

Giulio's more-than-forty-year lasting friendship was a gift, a gift I have been enjoying with deep and sincere gratitude. After we both retired, the future was still in front of Giulio, who was, as always, concerned and committed for the hopes and the problems of young researchers, dedicated to ESP and its progress, thoughtfully enchanted by his new role of grandfather.

Now the time of our great expectations is over, Giulio, the future is no more in front of us. But I know you will be happy to know that our young colleagues keep the heritage of your dreams, your intellectual courage and your scientific severity.

The world of photobiology has lost a great scientist, leader and friend.

Janet F. Bornman, Former President of the European Society for Photobiology (2001–2003), Editor-in-Chief *Photochemical & Photobiological Sciences* (2004–2007)

George Truscott, Founding president of the European Society for Photobiology (1986–1989)

Dietrich Averbeck, Former president of the European Society for Photobiology (1993–1995)

Tom Dubbelman, Member of the founding committee of the European Society for Photobiology

Stanley Brown, Former president of the European Society for Photobiology (1993–1995)

Francesco Lenci, Former president of the European Society for Photobiology (2003–2005)

Compiled by Francesco Ghetti (Treasurer of the European Society for Photobiology, 1999–present) and Rex Tyrrell, (President-elect of the European Society

for Photobiology and Editor-in chief, *Photochemical and Photobiological Sciences*) and reviewed by Lesley Rhodes, ESP President, on behalf of the executive committee of the European Society for Photobiology, its membership and the wider photobiological community.



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