

Obituary: Gérard Marcou

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929 Marcou, G.

On October 25, 2016 Gérard Marcou unexpectedly passed away in the midst of a lecture at an international conference held in Bogota, Columbia. His sudden and untimely passing has deeply shocked and evoked profound grief among his colleagues and friends throughout the international scientific community. We all mourn the loss of a colleague, a scholar of international renown, as well as a man of great charm personal attraction, wit and humanity.

Gérard Marcou was born in 1947 and went on to study law. In 1987 he became Secretary General of the Nord-Pas-de-Calais Section of the French Institute of Administrative Sciences. He started his academic career at the *Université Lille (II)*, where he became a full professor of public law in 1994 and directed the National Centre for Scientific Research (*Centre de Recherche CNRS*) from 1994 to 1998. In 1998 he was appointed full professor at the *Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne* and headed the national research consortium GRALE (*Groupement de Recherche sur l'Administration Locale en Europe*) from 1998 to 2016. He retired from active university life in July 2016. Sadly, he was only able to briefly enjoy his retirement.

He was an exceptionally creative and productive scholar in the field of public and constitutional law, encompassing European law as well as public and constitutional law of many other countries. In these fields and beyond he possessed truly encyclopaedic erudition and knowledge. In addition, he was a true polyglot (besides his mother tongue, French, he had a perfect command of German, Spanish, Italian, and Russian), so not only did he have direct language access to the literature of the countries concerned, he also lectured and published in these languages.

In the course of his academic career he produced many books and innumerable articles in the wide field of his research interests, mostly with a broad, internationally comparative perspective. Out of a great number

of influential publications particular mention (with an eye on the readers of the CCPA) should be made of “New trends of local government in eastern and western Europe” (in 1993), which Gérard Marcou co-authored with Imre Verebely and which was the first comparative book to encompass western European as well as central and eastern European (“transformation”) countries. Another important publication is the “First Global Report” on “Decentralization and local democracy in the world”, published by “United Cities and Local Governments” (UCLG) in 2009 and in which Marcou played a crucial role as the scientific director of this momentous work as well as co-author of the chapter on Europe. Finally, mention should be made of the volume “Public and social services in Europe”, which was published in 2016 by Palgrave Macmillan and to which Gerard Marcou contributed greatly both as co-editor and the author of two valuable chapters.

The many contacts and networks which Gérard Marcou maintained with colleagues and academic institutions all over the world were reflected in his status as member of various relevant international associations and committees and editorial board member of influential national and international journals.

In addition to his prolific publishing output, he was engaged in a wide range of applied research and consulting activities. His advice and expertise was sought by many national and international, governmental, and other agencies such as the Council of Europe, UNDP, and OECD (particularly SIGMA). Recently he was closely involved in consulting the Ukraine government on constitutional matters.

By virtue of his publications, his teaching, his consulting work as well as his personality, Gérard Marcou has left us an intellectual, academic and human treasure and legacy which will remain influential and will not be forgotten for a very long time to come.

*Hellmut Wollmann**

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