



Camila Zapata Besso

YEAR OF CALL: 2016



Camila specialises in immigration, asylum and public law. She joined Chambers as a tenant in July 2019, having completed her training in the civil liberties and immigration teams.

If you would like to get in touch with Camila please contact the clerking team:

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IMMIGRATION: ASYLUM AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Camila is regularly instructed to appear in the First-tier and Upper Tribunals in complex asylum, human rights and deport appeals, for vulnerable adults and children. She has particular experience in representing victims of human trafficking, torture, domestic and sexual violence, unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors, individuals with mental health needs and those who lack capacity.

Camila's experience of the range of immigration matters also includes issues relating to revocation of refugee status, 'first countries of asylum' and the Immigration Rules (including entry clearance).

ADMINISTRATIVE AND PUBLIC LAW

Camila represents clients in judicial review claims, including on an urgent basis, in the Upper Tribunal and Administrative Court, including challenges to decisions relating to fresh claims, certification, immigration detention, removal and trafficking.

CIVIL LIBERTIES

Camila benefits from comprehensive drafting experience in the field of criminal justice related civil actions, which she acquired during pupillage under the supervision of Maya Sikand. She regularly assisted in advising claimants in civil damages claims against the police and prisons, including false imprisonment, assault, malicious prosecution, misfeasance in public office and claims under the Human Rights Act 1998. She also worked on statutory criminal appeals against conviction for victims of human trafficking (including *R v L; R v N* [2017] EWCA Crim 2129), and drafted grounds of referral to the Criminal Cases Review Commission. She drafted advice and submissions on the applicability of Article 2 ECHR to inquests, and attended the Under-Cover Policing and Grenfell Inquiries. Under the supervision of Keir Monteith QC, Camila also appeared in the Crown, Magistrates and Youth courts for trials, bail hearings, sentencing, contested Proceeds of Crime Act proceedings and Criminal Behaviour Order hearings.

She was recently instructed by Hodge Jones and Allen, led by Una Morris, for the claimant in *TPKN v Ministry of Defence* [2019] EWHC 1488 (QB). The issue was whether the Ministry of Defence could be held vicariously liable for the rape of the claimant by a fellow soldier on base, following a social event. The claimant successfully appealed against summary judgment/strike out.

PRO BONO

Camila regularly accepts instructions from Bail for Immigration Detainees and other NGOs, including Advocate (formerly the Bar Pro Bono Unit), in respect of bail, deport appeals and asylum support appeals.

Camila is currently assisting [Marc Willers QC](#) of Garden Court Chambers in the 'Latin Village' case.

BACKGROUND

Prior to pupillage, Camila worked with Grenfell Legal Support, a voluntary liaison service between victims, the emergency services and legal representatives in the immediate aftermath and months following the fire.

Camila was a volunteer advocate at the Free Representation Unit, where she appeared in the Employment Tribunal in an unfair dismissal claim against a large food corporation. She also taught at the United Migrant Workers Education Project.

Camila continues to develop her interest in Latin American human rights issues, particularly the rights of indigenous peoples. Before coming to the Bar, she volunteered at the Colombian Consultancy for Human Rights and Displacement in Bogota and interned at Survival International. In 2017, she completed her LLM thesis on the protection of indigenous culture under international human rights and cultural heritage law, supervised by Professor Roger O'Keefe (distinction). As a member of the Colombian Caravana, she has drafted correspondence to the Colombian government and held a discussion with the Ambassador of Honduras on the Day of the Endangered Lawyer. She has been selected by the Bar Council to speak on current human rights issues at 'English Law Week' conference in Mexico and Colombia in September 2019.

As a Latinx individual from a non-traditional background, Camila is a keen social mobility advocate. She has appealed for academic bursary funding at venues including the V&A museum. In 2018 she was invited by the Human Rights Lawyers Association to speak on 'Forging a Sustainable Human Rights Career' at King's College, University of London.

PUBLICATIONS

['Ministry of Defence can be vicariously liable for rape committed on base'](#) (2019)

['Hill Immunity Revisited: The Beginning of the End?'](#) (2018)

['The right of refugee-receiving states to compensation: a 'general framework' under the international law of state responsibility'](#) (Gray's Inn Student Law Journal 2018)

['Colombia's human rights warriors are marginalized and stigmatised'](#) (Solicitors Journal, 2016)

AWARDS

- Ann Felicity Goddard Scholarship, Gray's Inn (2018)
- Prize for best individual oralist and best written pleadings in the UK, Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot (2017)
- Inderpal Rahal Memorial Trust Award (2016)
- Lord Justice Holker Scholarship, Gray's Inn (2015)
- GDL Scholarship, Gray's Inn (2014)
- Sloane Robinson Scholarship (2010)

EDUCATION

- LLM in International Law, UCL (Distinction, top of the year in international refugee law and international humanitarian law) [2016-17]
- Bar Professional Training Course, City Law School (Very Competent) [2015-16]
- Graduate Diploma in Law [2014-15]
- BA (Hons) English, University of Bristol [2010-13]

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

- Liberty
- Justice
- Colombian Caravana
- Police Action Lawyers Group
- Administrative Law Bar Association

LANGUAGES

- Spanish (fluent)

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