

CINEMA



The project "Cinema stories" is dedicated to the memory of Adriano Tomasi.

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Any school, regardless its level and location (urban or suburban), tackles the issues of migration and social inclusion daily as students have become more and more multicultural over the years.

Analysing the school context has shown that schools need to have the chance of meeting people who share information about their backgrounds and knowledge. This can lead to fruitful debates and thus benefit the whole community. The films selected by this project convey messages of openness toward "different" cultures and living conditions.

Students can meet different cultures both through frontal training and various forms of art. Art is not only a learning tool but also a mean of re-elaborating students' perceptions on immigration and social marginalisation.

This learning kit is addressed to the classes taking part in the project "Cinema stories", created by the International Cooperation Centre in collaboration with the most active bodies on migration in the Province of Trento (Atas onlus, Centro Astalli, Centro EDA Trento, Centro Ecumenico Diocesano, Cinformi, Comune di Trento - Area inclusione sociale, Cooperativa Arianna, Il Gioco degli Specchi, Provincia autonoma di Trento, Religion Today Filmfestival).

The project is divided into five phases:

- · with the participating schools, defining the issues to be studied through film screening;
- training the migrants. Migrants are going to discuss their migration backgrounds with small working groups to explain their experiences to the students;
- training the teachers on the use of movies as didactic tools;
- projecting movies in the schools and debating the topics with the migrants;
- arranging a film festival open to the public.

In order to create a debate among the students after watching the films, we have suggested the involved teachers three main topics to reflect on, i.e.: migration and work, stereotypes and prejudices, racism and media.

On the following pages, teachers will find general advice on how to use films for their lessons. The Italian version of this handbook contains three thematic sections made of film description, topic presentation, a role-playing game, outlines and suggestions for Italian writing tests and class debates, a bibliography and a list of websites for further research.



This publication is an excerpt from the original learning kit, which was developed during the first edition of the project "Cinema stories". The introduction and section 2 are available in English.

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The video that tells and triggers stories

Using films is the main feature of the project "Cinema stories". Movies are not a mere entertaining tool showing captivating plots, but they also prepare students to trigger their autobiographic stories and experiences, thus shaping and sharing memories.

"Cinema offers various occasions to stumble on stories, places and situations. It evokes sensations, questions and thoughts on one's inner and outer world. Cinema gives spectators a myriad of stories to discover, understand and interpret. It can help build one's identity and recognise emotions. It can affect people's world perceptions and make them explore, feel and look anew at near and faraway situations Therefore, travelling through and with cinema and looking with one's eyes and heart might become a new travelling and educational experience." (P. Canova, Visioni in Viaggi nelle Storie, 2009, p. 23).

Travelling through and with cinema becomes a particularly rich experience which enables the audience to meet different interpretations of the complex world and discuss interculturalism and plural identities. Cinema shows a reality which is filtered through a certain culture (all films are culture-bound). This opens to dialogue and reflections on -one's or others'- world perceptions and on how people interpret reality.

Films activate many senses. Words are accompanied by images, non-verbal languages, sounds, frames and camera movements. The audience's gaze decodes such complexity at once.

Such complexity, when used as a teaching tool, emphasises some aspects of the motion pictures:

- Heterogeneity Videos are a constant element in people's daily life: on the internet, in TV ads and in cinema. Video communicative power exists not only in art films, but also in daily messages and language.
- Freedom. Videos offer spectators and students manifold interpretations. There are no right or wrong answers as such. One can foster the relation between emotional involvement and logical arguments.
- Elicitation. Screening a film might become a way of encouraging students to tell an experience. They might be inspired by or take distance from a key episode of the film. Listening to and watching other people's stories leads students to tell their own.
- Spectator-director. Nowadays, any mobile phone has a camera. Creating, editing and sharing videos or mixing files is available to everybody to many teenagers, too. Users watch, create, imagine and reflect on videos.

Insights for collective or individual film analysis

from *Percorsi di lettura dei film* by Patrizia Canova

Collective activities after watching the film

1. Along the memories...

In order to remember the feelings provoked by the film and focus on the most impressive scenes, students can write a sort of short story and read it to their classmates. By doing this, each student analyses the film through their viewpoint and each student's memory will contribute to rebuilding the film "shape". This will be useful to the successive activities. The short story might contain some of the following prompts: a character I'd like to meet in the world of films is..../ a colour I was impressed by..../ a place I remember.../ an important sentence.../ a gesture I (dis) liked.../ a positive feeling I had..../ a negative feeling I had..../ a personal opinion on the film..../.

2. Comments on the spur of the moment: collective brainstorming after watching the film

The first aspect to consider in a film is one's attitude towards it. What did we experienced during the film? What has the film left in our eyes, hearts, minds? What are the elements which we have been mostly impressed by? What are the scenes we can easily and quickly remember and why? In order to answer these questions, the teachers can collect all impressions, sensations and ideas evoked by the movie though a brainstorm on large sheets or on a overhead projector and, if available, on an interactive whiteboard.

The moderator writes and circle the film title, right in the middle. Each student is then invited to say freely and on the spur of the moment all associations springing to mind when thinking of the film. The ideas might be emotions, sensations, topics, mental associations, characters, places, objects, sounds and/or meaningful lines...

Each student should try to express their ideas in a key word only, or at least in a couple of words. The moderator writes everything down, linking logically the words to the film title or other keywords by an arrow.

Once finished, the brainstorming can lead to the subsequent activities:

- opening and sparking a debate and a more detailed reflection thanks to the key words;
- developing concept maps on some of the mentioned key words.

Individual activities after watching the film

After an initial collective work phase, it is important to assess the students' thematic and content comprehension individually or in small groups. In this phase, as for the film characteristics, the

focus of analysis should be thematic and content-related and should also consider aesthetic and linguistic features. Notably, students should focus on who acts (character typology), how they act (characters' behaviour, attitude and emotions), why they act (reasons), where they act (place typology and function), when they act (chronological order of events).

1. Narrative and thematic analysis of the film

It is of utmost importance to assess the level of internalisation and comprehension of the narrative units and the meaning given by the students to each of them.

To avoid the common and pedantic synopsis, it might be interesting to propose activities which intertwine plot analysis with the identification of the film main themes.

Some suggestions:

Film streets

On a large sheet, each group draws the "metaphorical streets" followed by the film characters, indicates the fundamental narrative phases (beginning of the film, crucial moments, ending) and writes down the meaningful events for each phase. It might be interesting to encourage the students to draw streets of different shapes and sizes and name them after feelings and emotions (courage street, defeat street, solitude square, melancholy boulevard, fear lane, new horizons crossroads, meetings square...).

A film to listen to

Sounds are fundamental in films, but they are a factor that is easily neglected by students. Teenagers are used to watching rather than listening. They are attracted to the images projected by the screen to their eyes, therefore they retain a limited percentage of film sounds. Thus, it is important to invite student to focus on sounds by proposing careful listening activities in order to help students analyse and understand the film. By depriving the film of its images, one will listen to it carefully. This can trigger further discussions and reflections on topics, ideas, opinions and messages hinted by the film. One can do this by listening again to the soundtrack of some of the most meaningful scenes while covering the screen with a black cloth and asking the students to identify the scenes through verbal comments.

Mixed frames

Instead of using the frames to reconstruct the previously watched events, they help invent a new story, completely different from the original.

Confront with all students the works carried out by the single groups.

It might end differently...

Students should invent a different film ending in groups and then discuss the various ideas all together.

After "The End"!...

Students should imagine what might happen if the story carried on after "The End" How would it evolve? What events or situations might be filmed?

A leap into space... A leap into time

Encourage the students to rewrite the story by changing places and times of narration. Compare the different ideas produced by each group. Transfer the film narration into a different space or time

2. Character analysis

A group or individual reflection on film characters might be carried out through some games as the following ones.

Characters' ID cards

Provide each group or student with an "ID" template to fill or make each group create an original ID template.

At the end of the activity, discussing the results would be beneficial. IDs might contain any kind of information (physical appearance, temperament, behaviour, lifestyle, role in the film, dreams, wishes, fears, ambitions...)

I put myself in's shoes

Prompt the students to embody one of the film characters and introduce themselves to the class in the first person. This activity is particularly useful as decentralisation exercise and to take on the others' viewpoints

From's viewpoint

Trying to introduce the characters from various points of view is also important. (E.g. character A told and described from B's or C's, D's viewpoints).

Relationship circle

Analysing the relationships among film characters may be interesting as well. In this case, each group is provided with a sheet where a character's name is written in the middle and all the others' are written around it in a circle. The task is defining the relations among the various protagonists of the story. (E.g. trust, affection, tolerance, care, friendship, respect, indifference, carelessness, malice, fear, courage, contempt, help, protection, incommunicability, need for love...).

Character impersonation. How the video camera works

The different ways of filming a character are crucial for the message that one wants to convey to the audience. The shooting angle, the distance between the camera and the object, the light shed on it, the chromatism around it are all linguistic tools used to describe the characters as individuals or as people having a relationship with others. Therefore, it is fundamental to emphasise the descriptive methods by going back to particularly meaningful situations or analysing some film frames. When analysing this, students should be guided through a series of prompt questions, such as: what moment does this frame refer to? Who's the filmed subject? Where is the video camera situated? How would you define this kind of framing? Why do you think this character was filmed in this manner? What did this type of scene intend to convey? What effect does this framing provoke?

3. Analysing the object and place system of the film

The way objects are filmed and spatially situated is a vital element to many films. Objects and places might be symbols/ metaphors for something else. In these cases, an in-depth analysis of them and their meaning is necessary. When analysing the environments, a focus on their typologies is required.

Place representation. How the video camera works

The different manners in which a director films a certain environment are of utmost importance for the message they want to convey to the audience. Lights and colours depicting different places, the way in which the camera describes and uncovers them to the spectators (such as field

size, tilt, angle, camera movement) are subtle director's choices that create a particular meaning. In this activity, students will be able to focus on descriptive methods by going back to particularly meaningful situations or analysing some film frames.

When analysing this, students should be guided through a series of prompt questions, such as: what moment does this frame refer to? What place is this? Where is the video camera situated? How is the scene illumination? What are the main colours in this scene? Why do you think this environment was filmed in this manner? How would you define this kind of framing? What did this type of scene intend to convey? What effect does this framing provoke?

Objects and details

Often films show objects with a high narrative meaning. To make such objects remarkable and able to draw spectators' attention, these are often filmed in detail and closed to the camera, so that they fill the whole scene. In order to analyse their functions and meanings, students may be invited to remember and explain when the objects enter the scene and what their functions are.

4. Off and on line critics...

Once the collective and group analysis is carried out, students can be asked to express value judgement on what they have just watched by writing critical reviews.

Film report card

Collectively establish some evaluation symbols for the film (such as stars, happy or grumpy smileys) and invite students to express their grades.

I think this film...

Expressing a judgement on the film using as many adjectives as possible.

Off and on reviews

Invite students to write reviews on the film they have just watched. Such reviews might be collected in a "self-produced magazine". It could also be interesting to decide the graphics and the name of the magazine masthead and produce, for each watched film, a special number to show to the other school students, on the school website or on other websites on discussion forums.

STEREOTYPES and PREJUDICES

Iilm description:

Almanya

Welcome to Germany

Film protagonist is the Yilmaz family, who emigrated to Germany from Turkey in the Sixties. Today, its members are the third generation. After living a life of sacrifice, patriarch Hüseyin has finally fulfilled his dream: buying a house in Turkey. Now, he would like to go there with his children and grandchildren and refurbish the house. Despite an initial scepticism, the whole family embarks on this venture. The new adventure in the homeland intertwines with the tragicomic memories of the first years in Germany (Almanya in Turkish), when the new homeland seemed an absurd place to live in. During their journey, several past and present secrets come to the surface and the whole family must face the hardest challenge: remaining united.



STEREOTYPES

A stereotype is a belief or a series of beliefs according to which a group of people identifies another group of people with certain characteristics. Stereotypes are thus very similar to thought patterns. By using stereotype to judge a person, one supposes that someone belonging to a certain category might as well feature their category traits. This is a sort of mental short-cut.

Men are stronger than women.

Like the negative connotation of a stereotype, prejudice is a preconceived opinion on facts or people which is not verified by precise and direct knowledge, but rather on rumours and public opinion. However, there is a difference between misconception and prejudice: a thought becomes a prejudice only when it does not change in the light of new knowledge.

Italians are Mafiosi.

Introduction to the topic

GOALS

- Becoming aware of the stereotypes that sometimes shape our ideas
- Becoming aware that stereotypes hinder the true knowledge of reality
- Comparing clichés with data and information

In our culture, the terms *prejudice* and *stereotype* have a strong negative meaning, so it is rare to meet someone who explicitly acknowledges of thinking and acting according to those concepts. The most common phenomenon is hostility towards different ethnic groups or minorities of various kind. It is in this field that prejudice has reached its worse significance, leading to serious episodes of racism and discrimination. Often people use prejudices and stereotypes without even noticing. In Italian, some common phrases still show traces of them (translated literally: "working like a nigger", "stingy like a Jew", "cheap like a Scot"). The same occurs in comic strips and even in children's games ("who's afraid of the black man?"). One finds such expressions in the mass media and even in textbooks used at school. Not all stereotypes have necessarily a negative sense. Some of them simply tend to generalise certain behaviours. E.g. "All Germans eat potatoes and drink beer", "Italians only eat pasta or pizza", "All Brazilians are dancers". Other stereotypes are more negative than the previous: "All Russians are alcoholics", "Muslims don't respect women", "Africans don't want to work"). Stereotypes are not solely about ethnic groups. They can also refer to gender - there are many examples on women - or on professions ("All politicians are thieves", "Public administration employees are lazy").

The first exercise might help to pin down stereotypes, without judging them, but only reflecting on why people reason in this way.

What do we mean by stereotype and prejudice? The term stereotype could have a broad definition: all characteristics associated to a certain subject category. Otherwise, more specific definitions limit the field to social groups and negative stereotypes. In this case, stereotype is considered as a coherent and rather rigid series of beliefs that a certain group shares towards a different group or social category.

On an etymological viewpoint, the term prejudice stands foår a judgement conceived before experience, that is a judgement expressed without sufficient data. When social sciences started to study prejudice, this had already incorporated the extra meaning of "misconception hindering true knowledge" (Bacon, Galileo, Spinoza and Vico wrote extensively about this). Social disciplines added two further specifications: prejudice does not really refer to events, but rather to social groups. moreover, prejudice is usually unfavourable, meaning that such misjudgement penalizes (rather than favours) the prejudice target. Stereotype is mostly analysed as a form of cognitive

categorisation and as a generalisation when analysing reality. Unlikely, prejudice is considered as a form of social attitude. As such, it entails thee aspects:

- 1. the cognitive aspect (the opinion one has on a certain social category, which is often stereotypical);
- 2. the emotional aspect (the feeling one has when they are close to a person of a certain social category, being it annoyance or worry);
- 3. the behavioural aspect (the actions one carries out if they are in a situation with people of certain social categories. This can lead to explicit forms of racism).

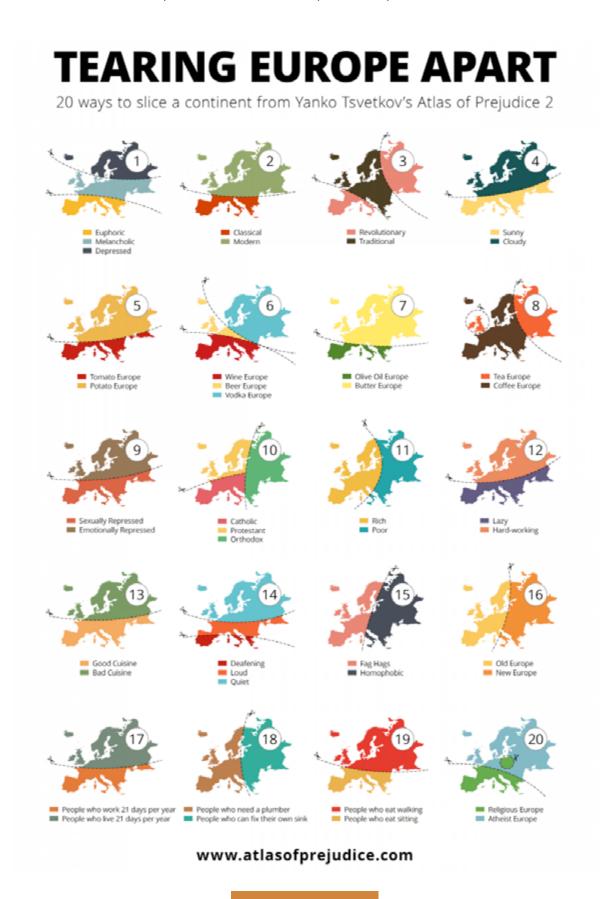
Why are prejudices and stereotypes so common? What are the processes which create, spread and maintain prejudices and stereotypes unchanged over time? What is their function?

Asking these questions is fundamental not only to gain insight into such phenomena, but also to be able to tackle them. Many explanations have been given by philosophical, psychological and sociological disciplines. All of them consider the above-mentioned phenomena as "ordinary" and at one time "extraordinary". In other words, stereotypes and prejudices may be considered as normal processes, which are typical of human nature, or else abnormal phenomena, as a consequence of pathological conditions or deficits on an individual or collective level. In this case, they need to be fought.

"Accepting clichés, non-verified knowledge and preconceived judgements is a thought pattern which causes a dreary heart" warns Bruno Mazzara. Stereotypes belong to a categorisation and generalisation process, which may be a *modus operandi* that the human mind implements in order to reduce the complexity of reality. If this is the case, then one needs to become aware of this in order to open their minds to encounters and changes. If one turns their back to the others because they are convinced of "knowing everything already", they risk overlooking the manifold differences that enrich and lead to human progress.

GLOSSARY The term stereotype (from Greek stereos= firm, solid and topos= impression) is used in typography to describe the reproduction of printed images by means of fixed shapes. The term was used for the first time by Walter Lippmann while researching on the processes on the construction of public opinion (1922). According to Lippmann, the cognitive relation with the external reality is not direct. It is filtered by the mental images of everyone's own reality. Such images (i. Stereotype e. stereotypes) are merely coarse and rather rigid generalisations created by our minds as "short-cuts" for grasping the endless complexity of the external world. This generalisation process and its outcome are not caused by a random individual decision. They derive from attitudes which the group had culturally established. Because stereotypes are built through social filters, they socially defend the group identity that had established them, so that such stereotypes can maintain the (social) system they were generated by. Etymologically, the term prejudice stands for a judgement conceived before experience, that is a judgement expressed without sufficient data. Social disciplines added two further specifications: On the one hand, prejudice refers to social minority groups. On the other hand, it is identified as unfavourable, meaning that such misjudgement penalizes (rather than favours) the collective or individual prejudice **Prejudice** target. According to this definition, prejudice might mean a predisposition to perceive, judge and act unfavourably towards groups which are different from one's own. The main feature of prejudice is guiding practical actions. Here, prejudice is intended both in its broader meaning of judgement preceding experience and in its sociological meaning of unfavourable attitude towards different groups.

The following maps show some of the stereotypes that use generalisation. By doing this, they divide Europe in areas assumed to be homogeneous. Stereotypes tend to erase individual characteristics, different personal experiences and the various moments everybody spends daily in their life. By reading the maps, one can reflect on how stereotypical categorisations neglect substantial individual differences (for instance, is a Spanish person necessarily euphoric?) If one comes from Northern Europe, does this mean they are surely rich?





From Arte di ascoltare e mondi possibili, by Marianella Sclavi

This game aims at reflecting on the trend of generalising and categorising people on the basis of little available information. Classifying people on the basis of their origins, professions, religious beliefs or else, means evening out the complexity which makes everyone different. Stereotype and prejudice originate from such generalisations.

Initial scene: On the earth, nature is almost incapable of guaranteeing human survival on the long term. For years, space agencies from all over the world have been trying to open up new colonisation chances. You have been selected to take part in a space mission carrying out experiments for the human life on Mars. You will have to land on the "red planet" in order to start a new colony from which a prosperous society will thrive. Only 6 further people can enter the spaceship. Time to choose is running out. Not everyone available for the interview could be summoned. The European Space Agency has received the CVs of the following candidates:

ARCHITECT

ATHLET

ACTIVIST

BLIND PERSON

COOK

AMERICAN LEADER

HOMOSEXUAL

ARMED POLICE OFFICER

PROSTITUTE

PREGNANT YOUNG WOMAN

PRIEST

LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENT

You have been summoned to pick 6 people you would like to work with during your mission to Mars and 7 you would like to discard. The journey is highly dangerous and you will need 6 useful people for your small colony to survive.

You will need to be very convincing when arguing why each of the 6 people are beneficial and 7 are not. Students pick 6 participants and explain their reasons. They can write their choices on the board

3... 2... 1... Take off! On the space ship there are 6 chosen people. Meanwhile, the space agency has managed to retrieve new information on the candidates:

Architect: Silvia, 22 years old, has just graduated in garden design with a dissertation on the function of evergreen hedges in the gardens of Versailles.

Athlete: Maria, 86, won a 100 m crawl gold medal during 1956 Melbourn Olympics.

Activist: Luca, 23, is a far-right neo-nazi. He is unemployed and spends his time either in the gym or in the stadium as a hooligan.

Blind person: John, 29, has become blind after and accident and is a Physics professor at Boston MIT. He has great problem-solving skills.

Cook: Sandra, 26, used to work in a hospital canteen before going to jail on charges of poisoning three patients.

American leader: Marcelo 37, head of a Mexican drug smuggling organisation. He is engaged in money laundering for financial speculations and is a drug addict.

Homosexual: Sarah, 32, graduated in agronomy, specialised in water supply and nutrition technologies in desert areas. She recently had a baby thanks to artificial insemination with her partner Laura.

Police officer: Giacomo, 58. He works for the Tax Police office. He received his weapon when he started his job but currently, 30 years on, he has no idea on how to use it.

Prostitute: Luciana, 48, has just a couple of established customers, so she spends her time cooking, which is her biggest passion. She is always cheerful and can play the guitar.

Pregnant young woman: Giada, 24. Drug addict. She has got AIDS. 7 month pregnant.

Priest: Jack, 35, actually prefers to be called "the chosen". He is the minister of a satanic sect which preaches hatred and violence.

Lower secondary school student: Edoardo, 13, IT genius. He received his first laptop when he was 5. He collaborates with a software business in the Silicon Valley. He is sturdy and athletic.

Reflections:

How did the mission go?

What did you learn from this game?

Do you think that you daily need to take decisions based on stereotypes?

How do you act?



Outline suggestion - Short Essay

Starting from the following quote, students can develop a coherent text taking guidance from the suggested question:

"I think the worst injustice is the complete lack of trust in people. When I consider the others natural delinquents, I call them idiots just at the sight of them, I despise them just because they are women, I wish to kill them as they are drug addicts, I reject them because they are French or German, then this is prejudice. Prejudice is an offending preconception as it destroys or replaces reason"

Ersilio Tonini

- Why does Tonini point out that prejudice destroys or replaces reason?
- Have you ever been victim of prejudices?
- How do you think stereotypes and prejudices can be eliminated?
- Have there been times when you felt that your prejudices were dissolving?
- After this thematic class work, what reflections did you come up with?

iscussion guidelines

The research patronised by Forum Trentino per la pace e i diritti umani (Trentino's forum for peace and human rights) sheds light on youth's perception on some current topics. The complete research is available at: http://www.forumpace.it/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/dirittiallapace_PDF-light.pdf

The research involved a sample of 1000 students attending the fourth year at high school. Students may be asked the same questions and their replies have to be compared with those collected by the research. Students are invited to read the text by Vincenzo Passerini. The author does not go through facts and figures into details, but rather reflects on the general research outcomes.

Were the students interested in statistics on the foreign presence in Trentino, they can download the PDF yearly statistical report (or request the paper version) on immigration in Trentino from Cinformi website: http://www.cinformi.it/index.php/it/servizi_e_attivita/attivita_di_studio_e_ricerca/immigrazione_in_trentino/rapporto_annuale_2015

Table 1 - Attitudes towards immigration. Answers to the question "The immigration topic is often the subject of public and political debates. You will go through a series of statements about this topic. Please say to what extent you agree (row %; 1,026 interwiewed people)

	Agree strongly	Agree modera- tely	Disagree a little	Strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree / Do not give an answer
Immigration as a threat					
The state favours immigrants rather than Italians in terms of welfare, social housing and health care services	36,1	27,2	19	12,9	4,8
Immigrants steal jobs from Italian unemployed people	24,8	26,9	30,3	16,6	1,4
Most immigrants in our country carry out criminal or illegal activities	18,7	31	33	10,3	7
The high number of foreigners threaten Italy's cultural identity and traditions	22,7	26	29,6	18,6	3,1
We should oversee our coastlines and send migrants back to their countries	23,1	21,6	25,5	26,1	3,7
The duty of receiving migrants					
Many people flee wars and leave their homelands. We have the duty to receive them in our country	18,9	35,8	27,5	13,5	4,3
Immigrants have difficult life conditions and we have to help them as we can	12,7	40,8	30,4	14,8	1,3
Immigrants living in Italy contribute to enrich the culture of our country	13	27,3	30,7	25,5	3,5
Rights of foreigners					
Foreigners who have lived legally in Italy for years and pay taxes, should have the right to obtain the Italian citizenship	46,2	35,2	10,7	6,1	1,8
If one is born in Italy, they have the right to obtain the Italian citizenship	40,5	29,6	17,7	9,6	2,6
Legal migrants should have the right to vote in the local elections	18,3	31,6	21,4	20,6	8,1

Source: Diritti alla Pace, Forum Trentino per la Pace e i Diritti Umani, p. 33 (adapted and translated by TCIC)

Table 2 - Attitudes towards immigration. Answers to the question "The immigration topic is often the subject of public and political debates. You will go through a series of statements about this topic. Please say to what extent you agree. (row %; 1,026 interwiewed people)

	Agree strongly / Agree modera- tely	Disagree a little/ Strongly disa- gree	Neither agree nor disagree / Do not give an answer
Foreigners who have lived legally in Italy for years and pay taxes, should have the right to obtain the Italian citizenship	81,4	16,8	2
If one is born in Italy, they have the right to obtain the Italian citizenship	70,1	27,3	3
The state favours immigrants rather than Italians in terms of welfare, social housing and health care services	63,3	31,9	5
Many people flee wars and leave their homelands. We have the duty to receive them in our country	54,7	41	4
Immigrants have difficult life conditions and we have to help them as we can	53,5	45,2	1
Immigrants steal jobs from Italian unemployed people	51,7	46,9	1
Legal migrants should have the right to vote in the local elections	49,9	42	8
Most immigrants in our country carry out criminal or illegal activities	49,7	43,3	7
The high number of foreigners threaten Italy's cultural identity and traditions	48,7	48,2	3
We should oversee our coastlines and send migrants back to their countries	44,7	51,6	4
Immigrants living in Italy contribute to enrich the culture of our country	40,3	56,2	4

Source: Diritti alla Pace, Forum Trentino per la Pace e i Diritti Umani, p. 34 (adapted and translated by TCIC)

REMEMBER YOU HAVE BEEN A FOREIGNER, TOO

by Vincenzo Passerini

From January to May 2015, while the research patronised by Forum per la pace e i diritti umani was carried out, refugees experienced hard times, trying to reach the Italian shorelines after fleeing wars and persecutions. 300 people died in a shipwreck around the Libyan coasts at the beginning of February. 250 further deaths occurred in the sea at the start of April. On 19th April, an appalling tragedy took place: about 900 people drowned. 120 further people died two days after: one bloodbath after the other. Ten thousands refugees have been rescued by the navy. There have been moving and terrible scenes. The first half of 2015 will remain one of the most painful, glorious and shameful chapters in recent history. Nevertheless, this dreadful tragedy does not seem to have affected our school as it should have. As if it were a faraway war. As if it did not deserve attention or a sound analysis of the phenomenon causes. Nowadays, this is what schools and students should be expected to do. If it is not the school's responsibility, whose then? The Forum research shows that students are not particularly aware of what was going on. Roughly the half of them would have sent the refugees back. Where to? Did the students know where those people were coming from, what countries they were leaving and why? They did not. Perhaps nobody have explained them. Perhaps. Perhaps students have been left alone with their fear and hostility. I can not but stand up against the school's silence on such a momentous tragedy, which has shocked the whole world. I admit being biased as I am too involved in this matter. For years I have defended the weak and protected migrants and refugees. I often felt they were completely alone. I hope readers and the Forum will forgive me for being partisan. On the issues of refugees and immigrants, students reveal themselves as stuck in prejudices they are aware of, but they can not get rid of them. It is the case of more or less half of them. All students (94%) perceive that racism against immigrants is common in Italy. They feel it everywhere: in their families, on the internet, among their friends. Words against immigrants are strong and brutal. People laugh, sneer, insult. People share the latest fierce propagandist's joke everywhere. For a while, one thinks their fears have been dispelled. If they get rid of those invaders, their future would be brighter. And yet, one feels something is wrong. This might not be completely true. 94% of students perceive there is "racism". They perceive that racism is against immigrants.

What is racism?

"A way of behaving or thinking that shows one is intolerant, despises, marginalises and commits acts of violence towards people who belong to ethnic and cultural communities that are different from their own" (Treccani Italian dictionary)

"Attitudes or episodes of intolerance based on social prejudices" (Sabatini Coletti Italian dictionary)

What is prejudice?

"Opinion conceived based on personal convictions and general bias, without direct knowledge of facts, people and things" (Treccani Italian dictionary)

All students who have filled the questionnaire are aware that immigrants experience attitudes of intolerance based on opinions without direct knowledge of facts, people and things. Nevertheless, only half of them get rid of such racist attitude. This half of the students, after some questions, tends to shrink rather than grow. Although those advocating prejudices make concessions, some students still persevere. Some are stuck in prejudice. They can not break their mental chains holding them prisoners. They struggle to express different opinions from those of the internet, their groups and families. During the focus activity, they say: "One is led to think that immigrants steal, are dangerous and untrustworthy", "Foreigners are victims of prejudice: one has been convinced

to fear them". As evidence, 49.7% of the students agree (strongly or fairly) with those stating that "most immigrants in Italy carry out criminal or illegal activities". 43.3% do not agree and 7% do not know or do not answer. This opinion is not based on direct knowledge of facts, people and things. Here, prejudice is noteworthy. Racism is evident. Accordingly, one should think that 30,000 or 40,000 (that is the majority) out of the 50,000 immigrants living in Trentino carry out criminal or illegal activities. Right? Students understand that it is nonsense. It can not be true. During the focus activity, they point out that "media underline criminals' nationality only when foreign" and that "on facebook, MP Salvini posts any case of theft when done by foreigners (even if 1 out of 10), in order to cast them in a bad light." At any rate, students end up accepting prejudice. ("5 out of 100 people are decent"). They do not question prejudice and discard ideas such as "This can not be true. This is sheer racism". As a result, most of them agree that "most immigrants in Italy carry out criminal or illegal activities". 63.3% chime with the statement: "the State favours immigrants rather than Italians when guaranteeing welfare benefits, social housing and health care services". If asked which direct knowledge of facts, people and things their opinions are based on, students would answer vaguely, stating they "have heard so". They repeat such statements during focus activities. "Only immigrants are granted social housing". "Many politicians favour immigrants, by giving them housing and leaving out Italians in need, consequently forced to live under bridges". And yet, students ignore that only 14 out of the 135 Trentino's public social houses have been allocated to non-EU citizens in 2013. Disinformation and propaganda rule. As for people living under bridges, those who assist migrants are the very people who also assist the homeless. Do students know that until recently (i.e. until a couple of months ago), before racist acts were committed against immigrants, they were committed against the homeless? Do students know that when don Dante Clauser opened Punto d'Incontro in Trento, an association for the homeless and people in need, he had to fight against hostility and rejection? Nowadays, some people express the same hostility and rejection towards who welcomes refugees. Do students know that this is exactly the same racism and prejudice, expressed by the same kind of people and political and cultural environments? As the human mind creates prejudice and racism, they become thought patterns through which reality is filtered and deformed. One points their finger at who is different, unhappy, purposeless or who has failed. It can be a drug addict, a homeless, someone with AIDS, a refugee, an immigrant... Those pointing their fingers are not compassionate, do not share the same frail humanity - as everyone is frail, often different, unhappy, purposeless and often fails. They point their finger to condemn, to reject, to blame, to threaten and to disgrace the others. At the same time, they feel better, healthier, more adequate. Getting rid of racism and prejudice means resetting one's inner gaze. Even towards oneself, not only towards the others. Realising that everyone is frail, purposeless and needs to be accepted. Everyone has been and might be a foreigner. Once school is over, some students might go abroad. In 2013, 80,000 Italians went abroad. In the hosting country, former students might face people saying: "Most Italians coming to our country carry out criminal or illegal activities". You will struggle to explain that it is not true as it is a mere racist prejudice. You will argue that some Italian delinquents surely exist but it is not your case, your friends' or your acquaintances' in that foreign city. They are just working in a pizzeria or in a firm of architects, at University, or in a factory. You will maintain that nobody can state that Italians abroad are mostly delinquents. You might face those claiming that immigrants steal jobs from locals. It will be then difficult to explain that it is not true as you have obtained your job because you won a competition or that locals did not want to or could not do your job. If they had accepted that position, you would not be there. You are ready to make sacrifices that locals do not want to. You are there because you feel strong and make the hardest things that require a bright mind (maybe only yours), industrious hands, (maybe only yours) and a special willpower (maybe only yours). You will be mad at the political propagandists of that city, who are trying to gain votes by insulting Italian immigrants. As they think targeting foreigners on a political level is a fun sport. You will be mad when a foreigner gets into trouble and hits the headline straight away. You will be mad at the news and TV programmes looking for the guilty migrant who did wrong. He will be insulted and made fun of. You will be mad at all the rubbish circulating on the internet. You will find out that such rubbish against migrants -against Italian migrants like you-is revolting. You will feel hurt and ashamed. You will recognise the inhuman injustice of those accusations against your fellow citizens - against you. Against (your) migrant category. I am not a mafioso nor a criminal. I do not steal jobs, I am not privileged, I just want to live my life. You will tell this to yourself and out loud.

Source: Diritti alla Pace, Forum Trentino per la Pace e i Diritti Umani, p. 35-37 (translated by TCIC)

Below are three texts to be analysed with the students. The first illustrates some figures and, on this base, offers a reflection on immigration clichés. The second text presents the outcomes of an interesting IPSOS research. It shows that out of 14 countries, Italy ranks last as it spreads wrong and strongly stereotypical information. The third text shows the stereotypes on Italians still existing abroad. The data derive from a research conducted in Italian institutes of culture in several cities in the world. This text may be used to analyse and reflect on how, after a long time and thanks to various exchanges among populations, stereotypes and prejudices tend to evolve or dissolve.

1. PREJUDICES ON FOREIGNERS ARE FALSE. HERE ARE THE REASONS.

www.inchiostronline.it

Periodical paper by the Journalism School managed by Paolo Mieli of the University of Suor Orsola Benincasa, Naples.

Face to face with stereotypes.

"If all records told the same tale — then the lie passed into history and became truth". George Orwell, "1984". Nowadays, the English writer would write the same things if he heard what Italians say about immigrants: "They come here and steal jobs from Italians", "they are criminals" and "rape our girls". It seems that every migrant should, in every moment of their life, atone for their guilt of being the social and cultural category – and not the individual – they have chosen or received. Those who speak of immigrants' actions in general, do this because they need to rationalise a given situation or justify to themselves and the others their hostility towards immigrants. Yet, it is not a mindful path which helps understand reality. Stereotype becomes a powerful brainwashing weapon when, incited by the press, fascinates the public opinion, who then states "I have heard so...". Stereotype can be found in an article very easy to read and on a straightforward painting. It is instant knowledge of things. Stereotype simplifies reality, enabling everyone to understand it. Stereotype spreads like a virus and eliminates all contradicting information on its way. In order to understand where stereotypes derive form, how they evolve and why they are difficult to eradicate, here are some examples.

Are immigrants criminal?

Foreigners commit less lucrative yet more visible crimes, aiming at obtaining an immediate economic advantage. Most criminality committed by foreigners is widespread. It occurs in the streets, in public places or in the open. Because of difficult economic situations, migrants mostly live in such contexts. Moreover, foreigners are subjected to a stricter police control and this leads to a higher number of people reported and/or incarcerated. As for crime typology, according to 2013 Caritas- Migrantes report, economic crimes prevail (24.8%) among total prison population. It follows drug trafficking (18.3%), crimes against people, violation of law relating to weapons. Among foreigners, drug crimes (26.6%) prevail slightly on economic crimes (25.1%). It follows crimes against people and those against Public Administration.

Do immigrant steal Italians' jobs?

According to Enar Report, the European network against racism, immigration is not part of the problem, but rather part of the solution to the economic recovery of the European Union. According to the research called "Hidden talents, wasted talents", Europe wastes tens of billion of euro every year as it does not fully invest in immigrants' talents. To give some examples, in Italy hundreds of thousands of elderly people would be left without assistance, if caregivers would not exist. From 2005 to 2007, a quarter of the migrants who obtained regular work contracts in Italy was hired in the family care service sector. These are almost 260,000 people.

Migrants are everywhere. Are they too many? Is this an invasion?

Europe and Asia count more than 70 million migrants each and are the continents receiving the higher number of migrants, almost two thirds of the world's total amount. On 1st January 2011, there were 33.3 million people, that is 6.6% of EU-27 population. More than one third (12.8 million people in total) counted citizens from an other EU Member State. In absolute terms, the highest number of foreigners living in the EU is in Germany (7.2 millions), thus not in Italy. It follows Spain (5.6 millions), Italy (4.6 millions), the United Kingdom (4.5 millions) and France (3.8 millions) Foreigners living in these 5 Member States are 77.3% of the total number of foreigners in EU-27. In relative terms, the EU Member State with the highest foreigner rate is Luxembourg, where foreigners were 43.1% of the total population in 2011.

Migrants are a burden for the State.

In 2011, the revenues obtained by foreign nationals were 13.3 billion euro, whereas their expenses were 11.9 billion euro, leading to a 1.4 billion surplus for the country. Therefore, the state benefits from immigrants. This is what the 2013 Statistic Dossier, implemented by the National Office Against Racist Discriminations and the Centre for Studies and Research Idos maintains.

Back to your countries. Is this a convenient formula?

If immigrants had gone back to their countries, then Italians abroad would not be 4 millions now, that is 6.9% of the national population. They would not have enabled their family members back home to build a house, provide schooling for their children and have a better life. According to the International Policy Observatory, during the Economic Miracle years (1958–1963), the increasing remittances sent home from abroad were an extraordinary source of resources, vital for the economic growth. 2011 is a remarkable year as remittances grew more than GDP. Remittances are not only a bailout but they also guarantee a greater stability. If foreign countries would not accept migrants, what would youth unemployment rate be in Italy, which today reaches 42.2%?

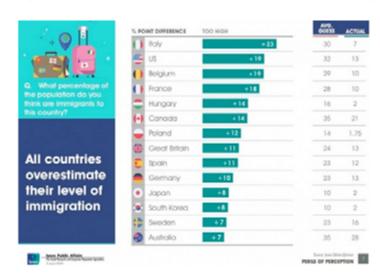
Lisa D'Ignazio

2. IPSOS: ITALIANS, IGNORANCE AND PREJUDICE

di Alice Pilia Drago | 22 2015 http://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/

What is your national unemployment rate? What is the percentage of Muslims in your country? Are homicides increasing in your country? Last year, the research company Ipsos Mori asked these questions in 14 countries and Italians proved to be the most ignorant.

When the report was published in 2014, we Italians took offence. Nobody likes being called an



ignorant. Still, our world perception is often far from the truth. We are defined "ignorant", as we often ignore fundamental data and facts on hot topics.

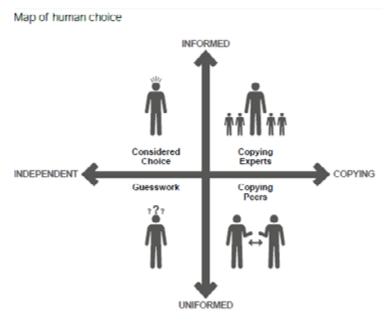
Similarly, yet less evidently, this happens also in countries which are better informed, according to the report. For instance, Germans and Swedes impressively overestimate the number of emigrates and underage mothers in their countries. However, according to Ipsos, Italians -more than others- tend to filter the information they receive through preconceptions. They simplify information until they create mental short-cuts based on the prevailing and widespread narrative. Such narrative might be accepted or considered as acceptable by family members, colleagues or friends. Referring to behavioural sciences, Ipsos explains that one tends to seek certain facts where they are hard to find, i.e. in complex or new situations. One uses opinions without making sure they are trustworthy and jumps to simplistic conclusions on complicated matters. These are short-cuts one uses to filter information and decide quickly whether to take it on board. By doing so, one mistakes misconceptions for indisputable facts.

For instance, the media underline that Italy has a low birth rate and an ageing population. This is certainly true. However, when Ipsos inquired on the over-65 rate in Italy in order to quantify the ageing population figure, many answered that half of the population is already reaching retirement age. Italians have generalised facts and took them to the extreme. They have drawn a picture of

a hopeless country, where half of the population is over 65 years old and the other half is unemployed. It is catastrophic.

Italians believe that 1 out of 6 teenagers gets pregnant before being able to drive, whereas Italian underage mothers are 0.5% -not 17%. They also believe that a sort of Islamic invasion is going on, whereas 4% -not 20%- is the percentage of Muslims in Italy.

The gap between world perception and actual facts is worrying. It has a huge impact on people's economic, personal and political choices and can influence political debates and national economy. It is interesting to observe that this year Ipsos report on 14 countries shows the source of



Key: x-axis describes independent to socially-shaped; y-axis describes uninformed to informed⁴⁸

Source: Map of Human Choice, adapted from Bentley, Earls and O'Brien's book, //I Have What She's Having, MIT Press (2011)

some people's ignorance. Human beings in general and, it seems, Italians in particular tend to interpret reality through preconceptions or other people's opinions.

According to Ipsos, this phenomenon derives from a simple survival strategy: every day, people receive so much information that they need to filter and interpret it under the "guidance of convictions". This situation becomes problematic, when mental short-cuts overwhelm critical thinking. This hinders learning and the elaboration of new data and information. New information is essential as we continuously adapt to new situations and so we survive. For this reason, people might find it hard to question established opinions just through actual data. Once the filter exists, people become hard to penetrate with evidence and facts undermining established opinions, even though the sources are reliable.

One of the reasons for the gap between survey outcomes and reality is people's general unfamiliarity with figures. Percentages and high figures are too abstract. Therefore, for the

interviewed people it might be easy to estimate the number of their aquaintances' second houses but doing the same on a 60 million inhabitant basis might become rather obscure.

Italians tend to overestimate unprecedented phenomena -such as mass migration to Italyor problematic ones -such as the Islamic presence in the country. This is because the basis of people's perception are emotions rather than factual information. According to Ipsos research, many people are afraid of nuclear or chemical attacks and 60% think that an Ebola epidemics. in Italy might as well easily occur. Nevertheless, few fear high cholesterol although ischemic heart disease is the first cause of death in Italy (75,098 cases).

Ipsos indicates that Italians risk becoming less and less able to distinguish perceptions from reality, thus becoming sceptical, discouraged and defensive. People tend to apply a sombre filter when thinking of their country. In this way, information and stimuli are distorted by apathy and disappointment. Eventually, Italians are in danger of having a generally negative attitude towards life and future, thus becoming unable to imagine and conceive solutions to their problems.

According to Ipsos report, schools ought to help young students gain familiarity with facts and figures and teach them research methods and critical thinking. This will enable students to distinguish perceptions from facts. Learning to compare one's emotional response with rational analysis seem to be the best way of finding a balanced perception. In fact, Italians' perception of their country and its problems is sometimes too negative. Problematic situations do exist. Deep changes should not be underestimated but people could understand and tackle them thanks to a higher collective awareness towards the country.

Media are partly responsible for certain misconceptions as sometimes they pander to scaremongering. Politicians in their turn spread panic among the population who is particularly receptive during economic or stability crises.

It might sound banal, but everyone has some responsibility. People are individually responsible when they share a link from an unreliable source, believe what they hear without verifying it or dismiss facts and data which are against their preconceptions.

Italians should try to keep this in mind and be less "ignorant" next time they are interviewed by Ipsos researchers.

3. "HOW FOREIGNERS SEE US: WHITE PAPER ON ITALIANS' IMAGES AND IDENTITIES:

DATA FROM THE ITALIAN INSTITUTES OF CULTURE" Centro Studi stampa romana Francesco De Sanctis, 2002, Monograph http://www.fondazionefoedus.it/

Stereotypes still rule. This is certain. Macho, spaghetti, mafia is still a successful and well-established trio. At least, on a popular level. Of course, it also influences the image of Italians described by the various institutes of culture scattered all around the world. Surely, the ambassadors of the Italian culture abroad usually deal with public associations and private citizens which can shape a more truthful image of Italy because of their interest on its art, language and culture.

The feedback for this white paper of some of the Italian Institutes of Culture (IIC) were rather concise and stereotypical as for the impact of the Italian culture in the different countries surveyed. Nevertheless, some of them offered a more complex picture. They managed to clearly distinguish clichés (good for jokes) from the modern idea. the various foreign countries are developing on Italians. It is the result of the meetings and cultural and commercial occasions which have increased over the last 50 years. Moreover, it derives from closer relations and greater integration among the EU member states.

An excellent example is the picture drawn by the Italian institute of culture in Berlin, Germany.

The idea Germans have on Italian is full of clichés. It also entails different and contradictory aspects. It shows even jealousy towards Italian lifestyle. The report from Berlin states: "The perception of Italy in Germany is twofold. On the level of cultural élites, there has always been strong esteem because of Italy's cultural and artistic heritage. So this is a very positive image of Italy. On a popular level, the image of Italy among Germans was developed on the numerous Italian emigrants who came to Germany from the '50s on'.

They carried and conveyed a culture and an image of the country which surely was incomplete. Such image is slowly changing. "In more recent time, thanks to mass tourism and to increased cultural and economic relations between the two countries, Germans have acquired a more complete and deep knowledge of Italy."

As Berlin's IIC indicates, the perception of Italy that Germans have is close to that of most European countries.

Among Italy's EU partners, one can generally state that nowadays the public opinion has a positive perception of Italy, although it entails a remarkable degree of scepticism. The German report underlines that "certain stereotypes have been apparently eradicated. Yet they sometimes arise, for instance in critical situations." Germans appreciate Italy's natural and artistic beauty, fantasy, flexibility, good taste and lifestyle. They describe Italians with such idealised qualities. However, Germans are sceptical as for Italy's model of social and political organisation. What the world envies is Italian lifestyle. Tokio's report points out: "Especially from the early '80s on, Italy has gained a more and more favourable opinion among the Japanese public opinion and the media". The Japanese public opinion was positively impressed by a balanced lifestyle, good taste and wise living. These qualities compensate some of the traditional excesses of the Japanese culture, which is linked to old life schemes that do no longer keep up with the young generations born during the so called bubble economy. The previous generations were satisfied with Japan's production achievements, whereas today's generation is more interested in how to use such productive achievements to improve their lifestyle. Therefore, Japanese people have started to discover Italian fashion, design, cultural holidays and the art of good food. Italy stands for a supreme model of a wise pursuit of a good quality of life".

An interesting aspect is that the trait of Italy which has charmed the world the most is not (only) the traditional and natural side of it promoted by its immigrants. The report of Vancouver's IIC maintains that "long story short, Italy is fashionable. This is due to a greater awareness towards Italian achievements in many production sectors, such as fashion, industrial design (also machine tools), craftsmanship and goldworking, footwear and leather industries, etc. Moreover, there is an increasing interest for the Italian language as it is becoming a vehicular language for business relations in those sectors".

One of the prejudices that Italians have managed to eradicate through facts is that of being lazy. Melbourne IIC institute in Australia writes: "Australians often see Italians as tough and hard-working people. A creative feature in certain situations is often recognised as distinctly and undeniably Italian. Although gastronomy still plays an important role, it is certainly not the sole prerogative of the Italian community. In the world of construction companies, Italians living in Australia have an undisputed fame and one must acknowledge that Italians have a certain ingenuity and ability to find artistic solutions."

Most classical stereotypes such as those related to mafia and criminality are gradually disappearing everywhere. However, some prejudices still exist. "Melbourn's public opinion depicts Italians living in Australia as an important ethnic group able to gain the locals' esteem and good reputation thanks to their hard work and perseverance. In doing so, several stereotypes and clichés that were common in the '80s have almost completely dissolved. Still, some subtle

episodes of prejudice occasionally persist.

However, foreign countries have noticed some flaws. Prague's IIC highlights an unflattering image of the Italian society. "Who had the chance of staying in Italy for business reasons, has noticed slow and approximative public services and unreliable business relations. Public opinion and media consider Italy as one of the economically strong EU states, but emphasise its political instability, the economic gap between North and South and the scourge of unemployment.

At least at European level, integration among Member States has helped Italy eradicate stereotypes in favour of a more truthful image over the last years. Finnish IIC explains that "since Finland joined the EU, the economic and social image of Italy has improved. Some factors are nevertheless perceived as contradictions, such as frequent strikes, sometimes a wild finance, a makeshift management of economy and obscure business and relational rules.



VIDEO

The danger of a single story

from TED, duration: 18 min. 49 sec.

The danger of a single story, from TED, duration: 18 min. 49 sec. https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=it

The suggested video features an interesting reflection on what the author, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, has defined "single story", that is considering only a single aspect of ethnic groups and cultures far from our own.

Her reflection starts from the idea that there are populations close to ours, about whom we know many stories and voices. (How many stories do we know about Americans? How much do our media talk about them? What images do films and TV convey about them? The same is true for Germans, Spaniards, English people. About some populations however, the media convey a single image. What do we know about Afghans? And about Iraqis? Mexicans? As for peoples such as Jews, history has covered the subject extensively, but the result is still a "single story").

In class, it would be interesting to collect information students have on the inhabitants of certain States, such as Spain, the USA, England, Japan and compare it with their knowledge on Colombia, Mali, Pakistan, Bolivia). Knowledge is the first step to defeat stereotypes.

The video ends with the words: "when we reject the single story, when we realize that there is never a single story about any place, we regain a kind of paradise".

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http://www.lastampa.it/2015/06/10/italia/cronache/tra-pregiudizi-e-luoghi-comuni-quanto-ne-sai-davvero-sugli-stranieri-in-italia-scoprilo-con-il-quiz-EeBwbiVe1llHt4Tg4m0UQL/pagina.html

Per smentire qualche stereotipo, qualche testo che propone dei dati sull'immigrazione:

http://www.ilpost.it/2011/10/17/cose-da-non-credere-dalla-zuanna-weber/

http://www.ambitocaratebrianza.it/upload/caratebrianza/gestionedocumentale/luoghi_comuni%20 e%20percezione%202010_784_2339.pdf

Qualche dato e vignetta su come gli italiani fossero vittima di stereotipi: http://www.orda.it/rizzoli/stella/home.htm

Un video che presenta alcuni stereotipi e comportamenti nei confronti degli stranieri in modo simpatico e umoristico:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0ojA6U_t9U

Un video divertente su italiani – europei attraverso degli stereotipi: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tzQuuoKXVqO



