

Mirafiori Magazine

by Modern Language students, Lettere e Filosofia



Front page photo by Luna Proietti

Contents

Points of view: This month 3rd year students write about Xenophobia, Capital Punishment, Sex Workers, Débutantes, Vegetarians, Crucifixes and Breast Cancer (pp. 2-6)

Interview: Why donate blood? (p. 7)

Experiences abroad: An Erasmus experience in Spain; a study trip to Moscow; intercultural dialogue on the Youth in Action programme (pp. 8-10)

Culture wordles: Tea, coffee and luck (p. 11)

An Interactive Tale: Our 2nd instalment brings more suspense... (p. 12)

Horoscopes: Will page 13 bring you better luck this month?

Sapienza calling! The University's internet radio (p. 14)

Nightlife Tips: Something for everyone in the eternal city (p. 15)

Xenophobia and Aliens

By Paola Nurzia

While watching the news the other day, I was astounded to learn of yet another assault on a foreigner.

It is true that, nowadays, it is very difficult to become part of another country when you come from abroad: even if you yourself are Italian because you were born here, if your parents were not and they wish for you to be part of their culture, you might have problems because of this. I have heard of laws forbidding girls from Arab cultures from wearing their chador at school, even if they *want* to, and I have heard of people from Pakistan getting beaten up just because they don't understand the language.

The redundant question is "how come xenophobia is reaching this level, these days?": everyone is so shocked that usually foreigners are blamed for every single crime.

Where does all this hatred come from? The answer is to be found on TV itself. The idea of "not being alone in this vast universe" is very frequent.

Consider all the movies about aliens: we all remember *Independence Day*, *The War of the Worlds*, *Alien*, even *Transformers* as silly as it may seem. Think of it, has it ever occurred to you that none of these films has ever showed a peaceful alien? The history of good aliens is very short: we have the good *Transformers* and Superman. *Men in Black* shows peaceful aliens too. They want to live on our planet without being detected.

If we examine all the other movies about aliens, creatures from outer space are always represented as invaders. In most films, aliens come from space to conquer our planet and they

end up destroying the American metropolis. I find it a bit melodramatic since this comes from the same people who destroy Italian monuments when they represent how the world will end because humanity has destroyed the planet (see *The Day After Tomorrow* and *2012*).

One enjoyable alien movie is *District 9*, in which aliens are forced to stay on Earth because of a problem with their spaceship. Although they want to go home, they are kept here since humans (even if wary of them) want to find out the secret behind their powerful weapons. The aliens are despised and, when a human accidentally begins to turn into one of them, he is betrayed by all those he knew and loved.

Although I can't really say that I *loved* this film, I'm certain it will guarantee a pleasant afternoon for those who decide to watch it. I also think it provides an important message, which I will sum up with this quotation from the X-Men movie: "It is an historical fact, sharing the world has never been humanity's defining attribute." The source might be silly, but isn't it true that differences frighten humanity much more than other things?



Double-face painting (detail), Andro Grdinic, 2009

The EU vs the US on Capital Punishment

By Alessia Bianco

As *Wikipedia* puts it, capital punishment, or the death penalty, is the execution of a person as a punishment for an offence. Currently 95 countries have abolished capital punishment, 9 have done so for all offences except under special circumstances and 35 have not used it for at least 10 years. A further 58 countries have actively retained the death penalty. Obviously capital punishment varies in each country.

The debate on capital punishment is based in particular on the ethical issue. Does the death penalty violate the human right to life?

In Europe abolitionism prevails. The abolitionist argument is that the death penalty does not respect the inalienable human right to life. Human life is so valuable that even the worst murderers should not be deprived of their lives. By accepting the death penalty, the state loses its most important function, namely protecting its citizens in all circumstances.

Nowadays there are many organisations which try to fight capital punishment. AMNESTY, for example, is an international non-governmental organisation which deals not only with the abolition of capital punishment but also with the protection of children's and women's rights.

Article 2 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights confirms the abolitionist view, stating that:

1. Everyone has the right to life.
2. No one shall be condemned to the death penalty, or executed.

In the US, the situation is completely different because there the death penalty is legal. It varies by jurisdiction and is applied in particular for aggravated murder*. Currently only 15 states in the US have abolished it, while some states have not applied it since 1976. 32 states have retained it.

US surveys have shown a majority in favour of capital punishment, with about half of the American public saying that the death penalty is not imposed frequently enough. The justification given for this point of view is, first of all, that real justice requires people to suffer in a way appropriate for the crime. Criminals should get what their crime deserves, and in the case of a murderer what the crime deserves is death.

Second, capital punishment is often associated with revenge. This can explain the fact that a criminal is sometimes kept on death row for many years to make the punishment more severe. Two further arguments are used: deterrence and prevention of re-offending. In the first case, capital punishment is considered justifiable because executing a convicted murderer means that the person will be deterred from killing more people. The second argument is related to the certainty that people executed cannot commit further crimes.

It is important to remember that some innocent people have been executed. In the US, for example, Joseph O'Dell was convicted in 1986 for murder and rape but DNA blood evidence threw considerable doubts on his conviction in 1991. However he was executed in 1997.

Do we have really the right to kill an innocent person or decide on a murderer's life? Surely we do not. Our duty is simply to sentence criminals for the sake of justice but we should not deprive them of their lives because life is an inalienable right. Society can develop a sense of justice only when human rights are respected, otherwise we cannot describe our countries as civilized. In short, only by abolishing the death penalty can we take steps towards a truly civilized society.

* Defined as "a murder made more serious by its circumstances" on www.thefreedictionary.com.

Prostitution: to legalize or not?

By Marta Spallotta

The oldest job in the world is a widespread and controversial phenomenon which has been dividing public opinion since the start. In a society such as Italy, influenced by Catholicism and old prejudices, prostitution is usually considered disturbing and, above all, immoral.

Immorality and illegality have always been seen as the same thing, and if we consider the trafficking of young girls that lies behind prostitution nowadays, the discussion becomes more delicate. At the root of the phenomenon there are the pimps who manage prostitutes and live off their earnings, forcing them to sell their bodies and scrape by on a small percentage of their earnings.

In my opinion, it's the role of the pimps that makes prostitution illegal. I think that the sex slave trade involving young girls from poor countries is the unlawful side of the problem.

We should not think in moral terms: prostitution is such a widespread and old job that we have to face reality. In business and in politics many women are prepared to sell their bodies for gain, and on TV you often see semi-naked women shaking their bottoms.

I believe that, when you're not forced into it, prostitution is a personal choice: everyone is responsible for their own dignity and reputation. This is why Italy should legalize brothels; in this way women who actually *want* to be prostitutes would be able to do their job free of pimps and sexually-transmitted diseases. The problem of kerb-crawlers and disturbing scenes on the streets would also be reduced.

So why shouldn't brothels be legalized? Because of immorality? I think that the immorality view simply doesn't hold up.

“Common sense tells us that sex work ranges from outright slavery at the bottom end, where kidnapped foreign girls are kept drugged by ruthless pimps, to a delusional miasma at the top end, where supposedly high-toned escorts delude themselves that they are doing the using instead of being used.” (Clive James, in “The myth of the happy hooker”, BBC NEWS Magazine, 20/11/2009).

The Débutantes' Ball

By Denise Tiberia

On 23 October, the most awaited gala of the year took place in the ballrooms of the Brancaccio Palace in Rome: the Great Viennese Debutantes' Ball, organized in collaboration with the municipality of Vienna.

It may surprise some that the event went ahead at a time of economic crisis and in an age when the role of women in society still leads to heated discussion. It is also true, however, that the event had a charitable aim.

According to the organizers, 24 young girls were given the opportunity of achieving their dream of becoming princesses for one night, also meeting the highest officials of Italy and Austria.

All Italian girls were eligible, and were evaluated on the basis of their beauty, social origin and wealth. They had to enclose a full photograph with their application and indicate their parents' professions. All costs were included in the entrance fee, which (strangely!) wasn't indicated on the event's web site.

This year the girls received board and lodging for the week before the Ball, and had the opportunity of wearing an haute couture dress. They took dancing lessons and lessons about good manners, and on the night, they were made up and had their hair done by the best Italian hairdressers.

Some people think this kind of entertainment reserved for wealthy and powerful families is destined to disappear, but they're wrong! The first Viennese Debutantes' Ball took place in 1877 and now more and more countries are following the tradition, including the UK, Ireland, the USA, Russia, Australia, Japan, the Philippines and Mexico.

Maybe we should reflect more on this event: although every year in Austria hundreds of people demonstrate against the Ball, protesting that it discriminates against disadvantaged classes, many still consider it a display of the highest values of a civilized society and the best way to make a young person's dreams come true.

Should a vegetarian eat fish?

By Martina Santonico

There's a dispute going on among vegetarians these days: whether or not to eat fish.

As we know, a vegetarian is someone who doesn't eat animals that have been killed. So they don't eat meat, fish or poultry. There is another form of vegetarianism, namely veganism. A vegan follows a diet which excludes not only killed animals, but all animal products too, including eggs, honey and all kinds of dairy products.

An article entitled "The rise of the non veggie-vegetarian" (BBC NEWS site, 5/11/2009) explains the trend among some people who consider themselves semi-vegetarians - or pescetarians - to eat fish too. According to most, the feelings of a fish cannot be compared to those of a mammal: like human beings, mammals perceive "not just pain but also mental suffering, including fear, anticipation, foreboding, anxiety, stress and trauma", says Revd Prof Andrew Linzey, director of the Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics and author of *Why Animal Suffering Matters*.

Other semi-vegetarians explain that they eat fish because being real vegetarians could lead to health problems. It should be noted too that the UK government advises eating fish to fight heart disease. But the strangest form of semi-vegetarianism is flexitarianism, which is based on vegetarian food with occasional meat consumption.

I think that the positions of all forms of semi-vegetarians are untenable. For a start, you cannot really regard them as proper vegetarians. If their philosophy is to avoid eating the flesh of killed animals for religious reasons and because they are sensitive to the suffering of animals, they shouldn't eat fish either because fish are animals too. Moreover, I think you can't be a vegetarian only occasionally.

Neither is it true to say that the experience of fish isn't comparable to that of mammals, because fish also experience pain, anxiety and terror.

Have you ever thought about the way they are left to die and suffer for hours out of water?

Just another crucifix on the wall?

By Chiara Petrilli



The BBC NEWS site was among the UK media that reported the recent ruling by the European Court of Human Rights against the use of crucifixes in classrooms.

The reaction to the news was predictable: the Vatican was shocked; most of Italy's influential politicians, from Right to Left, said they will appeal against this decision, and defend the crucifix as a symbol of Italy's culture and tradition.

This symbolic value is partially true. For a long time, Italy's political and cultural history has been closely related to the Vatican. But everything was supposed to change in 1984, when Italy stopped being a catholic state and became a secular one.

Since then, the use of crucifix as a religious symbol in state-funded schools has therefore been inappropriate, particularly since these schools are attended by children of various religions or by those who profess no religion.

I hope this whole discussion doesn't end in a cloud of dust, for I would like the episode to show a new perspective of Italy, one in which Italy's celebrity politicians stop being hypocritical and sanctimonious, and start considering all those people in Italian society who do not believe in the God that the celebrity politicians want to impose through the crucifix.

I would also like to ask those politicians who defend the crucifix as a symbol of Italy's tradition, if they are aware of the fact that Italian history began before Fascism and the 1920s, when the crucifix was first imposed on the walls of Italian classrooms.

Want to tell us *your* views on any of the articles published in *Mirafiori Magazine*? You can email us your comments. See back page for contact details.

It was time to fight back... and mum, we won!

By Samanta Scalone

Have you ever wondered how you might react if, one day, during a checkup, your doctor diagnosed you with breast cancer? Yes, you heard right. Cancer. Not a simple cold, allergy or flu.

The first thing that comes to mind are the words THE END, as in a film. Your world collapses, you look at the doctor hoping that he'll say "Oh, sorry I've got the wrong person". But he doesn't. We think that bad things happen only to others. Not so. The terrible truth is that in a matter of seconds your whole life can flash past you, above all the best moments. In that hospital room, more than your whole life, what appears is like a list of film credits, ending with those two magic and terrifying words on the screen: THE END. It's impossible for everything to end this way, you think. Just a moment ago I was living my life in tranquillity, and now? There **must be** a solution!

My mother and I found a solution. We fought courageously against this invisible enemy which doesn't cause pain, which cannot be seen and that scared everybody to death. And by fighting, like many other courageous women, we won! So now, writing about my dreadful experience with more distance and clarity, I say to anyone who is experiencing something similar: Hang in there!

Moreover, everybody knows that "prevention is better than cure", so please believe it: with prevention we can save a life each day. It's true! Nowadays we can win the fight against cancer.

"Have a yearly scan starting from the age of 30, and from the age of 40 also a yearly mammogram"

Professor Veronesi's recommendation to women in the fight against breast cancer.

Many associations have been set up to combat cancer and to promote screening for prevention. The Italian Association for Cancer Research (AIRC) is one of them.

AIRC is a private non-profit association founded in 1965 thanks to researchers at the Cancer Institute in Milan, which funds projects aimed at fighting against cancer, and provides scholarships for young researchers to help them improve their knowledge and skills. The Association distributes funds to worthy research projects daily. Two of the associations responsible for fundraising are LILT (the Italian League For The Fight Against Cancer) and Nastro Rosa, which was founded with the goal of raising awareness among women about the need to undergo appropriate screening tests for breast cancer prevention purposes.

Professor Umberto Veronesi, doctor, surgeon and politician, is one of AIRC's founders. His research and clinical practice have for many decades focused on the treatment and prevention of cancer, particularly breast cancer, the leading cause of death from cancer among women. He was the first theorist of *quadrantectomy* in place of *mastectomy*, and showed that the survival rate remains the same. Mastectomy was a type of surgical treatment whereby surgeons removed the whole breast along with the cancerous cells. However, in this new type of surgical treatment known as quadrantectomy, surgeons take away only the cancer, with better results, both psychosexual and aesthetic, for the women concerned.

Why give blood? Interview with an AD SPEM* promoter By Maria Maddalena Petrocelli

Have you ever noticed the white AD SPEM van in Villa Mirafiori? Well, I saw it one day recently and asked promoter Vittoria Ciacci a few questions. Our short interview was held in Italian of course, but here's my translation.

How do you promote your campaign?

We promote our organization through the internet (www.adspem.org), we also have a group on Facebook, with leaflets and volunteers.

What are the advantages of giving blood?

Beyond the principal advantages like helping people who need medical care, our association offers gynaecologists for free examinations. Moreover, according to research, donors are healthier than other people because they receive constant check-ups. Last but not least, donors (their relatives and their friends) have to wait less time if they need blood for transfusions or surgical operations.

How many people are enrolled in your association?

Nearly 23,000, but in Lazio there are also other associations with a lot of members. In spite of all of these people, Lazio is not self-sufficient since lots of people from neighbouring regions come here because our hospitals have a good reputation, so we are obliged to buy additional blood too.

Why should we give blood?

Why not? By giving blood you can save the lives of 3 people. We also use blood also to produce medicines. Too many people don't give blood until they are obliged to, by circumstances.

What can we do before and what must we do after giving blood?

Actually you can have breakfast but only with coffee, tea, biscuits, honey and rusks. Afterwards, you should drink at least 1½ litres of water and eat (if you are hungry): in this way your blood plasma is renewed in 24 hours.

Ms Ciacci added that once a year the association holds a party (usually in April or May) to thank the donors and give them gadgets and gifts.

Ester is 24 years old, a medical student, and has been giving blood since she was 18. The first time she gave blood was at school. After moving to Rome, she started giving blood in hospitals or at the university. "I give blood because it doesn't cost me anything", she says. "Why give blood? The answer should be 'Why not?'". Ester also acts as a sort of promoter for the organization among her friends.

*Associazione Donatori Sangue Pazienti Ematologici

This month

Dan Brown has once again exploded into bookstores, this time with **The Lost Symbol**, the follow-up to *The Da Vinci Code* and *Angels and Demons*. This is his third novel featuring Robert Langdon, his most popular character. If you're a Dan Brown fan, or maybe just looking for a "good read", *The Lost Symbol* could be the book for you.

This is It: Michael Jackson is now a film.

20 years later: The world celebrates the **Fall of the Berlin Wall**.

Cioccolato extrafino is the title of young artist Andro Grdinic's first solo exhibition at the Elle Arte Contemporanea Gallery in piazza Merolli 41/42. Vernissage at 6 pm on 28 November. Open 28 November-5 December. Free event.



Double-face painting (detail),
Andro Grdinic, 2009

Experiences abroad

Making the most of an opportunity

By Daniele Solitano

Three years ago I would never have imagined having such an experience. I had always heard about Erasmus as a very restricted group of people whose good marks allow them to take advantage of the opportunity to study in a foreign country. That's not completely true. More or less anybody has a good chance of being chosen.

The fortunate ones are actually the students with the best average and the best knowledge of the foreign language, but as quite often happens, many of the places provided by the university are not assigned because of lack of applications.

Do you actually think that by studying as hard as possible in our faculty you will acquire the ability to speak a foreign language fluently? In my opinion this is unlikely. It is so important for us to live in a context which forces us to speak and learn from our mistakes so as to improve our language skills.

The main point is that you can achieve that goal by going to live in the country whose language you are studying. For example, through silly conversations with a mother tongue friend talking about your favourite interests or just listening everyday to your professors speaking at the university. What can help more than direct experience? So few opportunities are offered, why not exploit them?

On the other hand, it is really hard to do better or the same as in your own university. Language can be a difficult barrier to overcome, but this problem can be solved by attending classes.

I spent six months in Spain and, despite the fact that this has delayed my graduation, I have no regrets. I know I have a higher level of language skill than many of those who already have a degree in Spanish. But learning languages is why I chose a degree course in Modern Languages. Isn't it the same for you?

An Italian student in Moscow

By Silvia d'Ascanio

Moscow airport: 13 February 2009, 4.00 p.m., minus 15°C outdoors, a tragi-comic linguistic scenario. This was how my study experience in Moscow began. After studying Russian for three years, I took part in a cultural exchange between our University and the "Lomonosov" University of Moscow. It is not difficult to imagine my initial shock. Polar temperature, impenetrable language, a student residence almost as historic as the women who directed it. And three house mates: a Korean woman, a Japanese girl and an Italian student.

This was the tragic beginning of an unforgettable experience. Everything changed after a few days. I was greeted by a very helpful teacher who showed me how the courses were organized at university. She introduced me to students of Italian, and invited me to attend her translation lessons, from and into Italian. In this way I met many students with whom I spent my spare time. We visited museums, galleries, cinemas, theatres. We went to pubs, discos, traditional Russian restaurants and pizzerias, so with much effort I improved my Russian.

Moscow offers many opportunities for having fun and broadening your culture at the same time. The main difficulty I had was in dealing with cashiers in cinemas, theatres and so on, because they are not always very patient with customers. In these cases the best thing to do is... take it easy!

Life at the student residence was also very lively. I never felt lonely for I met many people from different countries and spent long hours with them, chatting and having dinners and parties together. Tasting a Korean dinner made by my house mate was not a great pleasure for me - but I learned that diplomacy is very useful in life! My greatest difficulty was coping with the weather! But...Moscow without ice and snow would be like Venice without gondolas!

Promozione della cittadinanza attiva e del dialogo interculturale fra i giovani: il Programma Gioventù in Azione

Federica Celestini, student at the Economics Faculty of La Sapienza

Il '900, definito dagli storici "il secolo breve", ha fatto conoscere al mondo le atrocità della guerra e dell'odio razziale. Dalle Guerre Mondiali e dalle dittature dei primi decenni alla guerra del Vietnam, dalla Guerra Fredda e dalla divisione in due blocchi contrapposti alla guerra del Golfo ed alle atrocità commesse in Africa ed in ex Jugoslavia, con qualche spiraglio di luce come la caduta del muro di Berlino di cui quest'anno ricorre il ventesimo anniversario.

I popoli delle cosiddette Nazioni Civili avevano quindi salutato con speranza l'alba del nuovo millennio come la rinascita degli ideali di libertà e democrazia. L'11 Settembre 2001 e tutto ciò che ne è conseguito ha dimostrato che esistono ancora questioni irrisolte che rendono instabile e precaria quella pace per cui tanto duramente hanno lottato i nostri padri. Sempre più è emersa la necessità di instaurare un dialogo costruttivo fra le nuove generazioni teso alla conoscenza ed alla comprensione reciproca, in un percorso di crescita culturale e personale mirata ad insegnare ai giovani a considerare le diversità che caratterizzano e "colorano" il genere umano come una ricchezza e non come qualcosa di cui aver paura.

In quest'ottica di promozione del dialogo interculturale e della cittadinanza attiva si inserisce il programma Gioventù in Azione, finanziato dalla Commissione Europea.

Lo scorso settembre ho avuto l'occasione di partecipare ad un progetto di questo tipo in Spagna con altri ragazzi provenienti da Paesi della zona euromediterranea. E' stata un'esperienza unica. Abbiamo, in primis, avuto modo di migliorare le nostre conoscenze dell'inglese, unica possibile lingua di comunicazione in un contesto simile.

Inoltre, la necessità di collaborare per la realizzazione delle attività previste, ci ha permesso

Promoting active citizenship and intercultural dialogue among young people: the Youth in Action programme

Translated by

Jennifer Romeo and Mariangela Vietri

The Twentieth Century, defined by historians as the "short century", has made people aware of both the atrocities of war and racial hatred. From the two World Wars and the dictatorships of the early decades of the century to the War in Vietnam; from the Cold War and the split into two separate blocs to the Gulf War and the cruelties committed in Africa and ex-Yugoslavia, with just a glimmer of hope arriving with the Fall of the Berlin Wall whose 20th anniversary has just been celebrated.

The citizens of the so called Civil Nations had then welcomed the dawn of the new millennium hoping for a rebirth of the principles of freedom and democracy. But 9/11 and its aftermath showed us that there are still unsolved problems which make the Peace our ancestors fought for unstable and uncertain. It has become increasingly necessary to establish constructive communication among new generations to promote mutual knowledge and understanding, encouraging a journey of cultural and personal development whose goal is to teach young people to look at the diversities which make up the human species and "colour" it, and consider them a resource rather than something to fear.

This perspective of promoting both intercultural communication and active citizenship provides the context for the Youth In Action Programme financed by the European Commission.

Last September, together with young people from other countries in Mediterranean Europe, I had the chance to take part in a project of this sort in Spain. It was an unforgettable experience. First of all, it was an opportunity to improve our knowledge of English, the only language possible for communicating in such situations.

Secondly, the need to work together in order to carry out the various activities on the programme

di sviluppare le nostre capacità relazionali e di imparare a gestire le problematiche e le conflittualità tipiche del lavoro di gruppo. Tramite la metodologia dell'educazione non formale e della peer education, abbiamo avuto modo di confrontarci e di immaginare possibili progetti futuri di cooperazione negli ambiti della promozione del rispetto dei diritti umani e del dialogo interculturale.

Giovani italiani, israeliani e palestinesi, spagnoli, marocchini, giordani e turchi. Cristiani cattolici ed ortodossi, musulmani ed ebrei. Un putpurri di culture, religioni, esperienze diverse. Eppure, aldilà di queste diversità che comunque caratterizzano profondamente la personalità di ogni individuo, incredibilmente ci siamo ritrovati ad avere le stesse paure e le stesse speranze, gli stessi timori e gli stessi sogni, ad essere prima di tutto, quindi, semplicemente ragazzi, che, per dirlo con le parole di un famoso poeta italiano, ritti sulla cima del mondo, hanno deciso una volta ancora, di scagliare la propria sfida alle stelle! E di sfida si tratta! Perché la costruzione di una pace solida e duratura e di una coesistenza armoniosa fra i popoli passa innanzitutto dalla lotta contro i pregiudizi.

Sono tornata a Roma con tanti nuovi amici e sempre più convinta che gli esseri umani condividono nel profondo tutti la medesima essenza, lo stesso soffio vitale, la stessa anima o in qualunque modo la si voglia chiamare ed hanno tutti pari diritti e dignità. Credo che le nuove generazioni, educate all'amore per il prossimo ed al rispetto reciproco, potranno avere un futuro più sereno e regalare al mondo giorni migliori di quelli che abbiamo vissuto noi ed un'Europa che voglia tornare a ricoprire il ruolo di ago della bilancia della politica mondiale non può prescindere dalla responsabilità di imparare a dialogare e mediare con tutte le differenti realtà che compongono oggi la comunità internazionale.

enabled us to develop our interpersonal skills and learn to handle the kinds of problems and conflicts that crop up when working in a group. By means of a non-formal educational approach and peer education, we had the chance to exchange views and come up with ideas for possible future cooperation projects aimed at promoting intercultural dialogue and respect for human rights.

There were young people from Italy and Spain, Israelis alongside Palestinians, Moroccans, Jordanians and Turks. Catholics and orthodox Christians, Muslims and Jews. In short, a mix of different cultures, religions and experiences. And yet, beyond all the differences that make one person so different from another, we were astounded to discover that we were simply guys all sharing the same hopes, fears and dreams, and, as Marinetti put it, "erect on the summit of the world, we decided once more to hurl our challenge to the stars!" And it is indeed a challenge, since building long-lasting peace and harmonious coexistence among peoples starts with the fight against prejudices.

Thanks to this experience, I met many people that I now consider my friends. I came back home even more firmly convinced that human beings share in their depths the same essence, the same vital breath, the same soul - call it what you will. I believe that everyone has the same rights and dignity, and that new generations, if taught to love and respect one another, can have a happier future and give the world better days than those we have seen. Moreover, I believe that if Europe wants to really count in world politics, it cannot disregard the fact that it must learn to dialogue and mediate with all the different worlds that are part of today's international community.

Want to send us your comments? See back page for contact details.

Culture wordles www.wordle.net

Coffee or tea? asks Mariangela Vietri

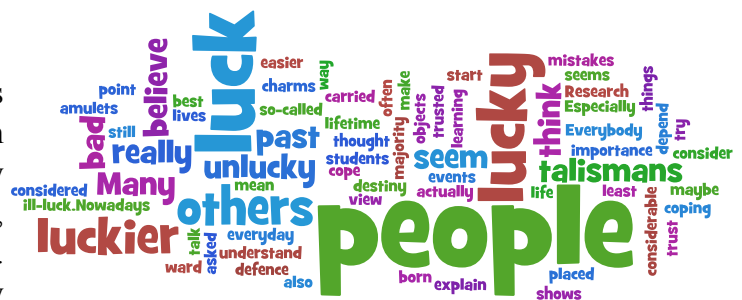
Cup of coffee? Cup of tea? Tea and coffee are two essential drinks, traditionally associated with two different cultures. *Wikipedia* tells us that the custom of tea-drinking started in England after the marriage between Catherine of Braganza and Charles II in 1661, when she brought from Portugal the practice of drinking tea in the afternoon. On the other hand, everybody knows the importance of coffee-drinking in Italy and how strong the habit is, above all in Naples. When visiting friends in England, you'll hear: Would you like a cup of tea? In the same situation in Italy, you'll hear: A cup of coffee? As the saying goes: *When in Rome, do as the Romans do*, even if it's *not exactly your cup of tea!*



Do you believe in luck? asks

Fabiana scacchi

Everybody at least once in their lifetime has considered themselves lucky or unlucky, but can we really talk about “luck” to explain everyday events? Many people just seem to be born lucky, others have to cope with so-called bad luck often. Research carried out to try to understand why some people seem to be luckier than others shows that people who consider themselves lucky actually have a luckier life than those who think they are unlucky. What does this mean? Does luck depend on our point of view? On our way of coping? Many people also think that objects such as talismans make their lives easier and luckier. Especially in the past, people really trusted such things and placed considerable importance on amulets to ward off ill-luck. Nowadays some people still believe in lucky charms, but maybe the best defence against bad luck is to start learning from past mistakes. I asked some students (about 20 people) what they thought about this and it seems that the majority don't believe in luck, while the others trust in destiny and talismans.



An Interactive Tale *part 2*

By Marcella Leo, Maria Covino and Martina Santonico
coordinated by Aurora Mazzoni, drawing by Martina Puglisi

...Sam made to move towards her, calling out her name. He wanted to explain who he was, but it was clear that she didn't recognize him. So much time had passed for him, and the hardships of war had changed his whole appearance. Now he had gone back into the past, to the point when the UK was ready to enter the war, and history was repeating itself: Marianne was running off, disappearing into the distance, just as she had done that summer long ago.

Those long-gone days drifted back into his mind again. He really couldn't even begin to understand her choice to betray her Country and become a spy. Nobody would save her, none of her friends would forgive her. He recalled the moment he had left her. Now he knew there would be redemption even for her, but on that sad day he had been forced into a difficult decision. Only now did he realise that he absolutely had to go back to his earlier self, the 40s Sam, and pass on to him all the information he now had about Marianne's future. Above all, he had to persuade his earlier self to forgive her... and help her to escape.

As Sam started to run towards her, a smell in the air sent his mind back to earlier times once again. His old house in Melbourne Avenue, the place where he had once lived with his family. And that noise, the noise of those stairs, that particular step, always creaking each time someone would step on it. His father had never bothered to fix it, and every time someone complained about the noise, his father would simply say "it's part of us.". At the time, Sam hadn't understand what his father meant. But the smell didn't only come from the stairs. His old writing-desk, the dining table, the hall-stand, the old sideboard, everything in the house was permeated with the smell of its yellow-oak furniture.

He recalled his youth, the day that Marianne had moved in to the house next door. But something wasn't quite right... he was just beginning to figure it out now. Who were those men dressed in black that he remembered seeing with Marianne and her parents...



Horoscope of the Month!



by Chiara Pietropaolo

ARIES: The harder you work, the livelier your love life! You'll have to make an important, life-changing choice. You are going to be pretty irritable: relax, and take every weekend with a smile!

TAURUS: Although everything is going as well as possible, but feeling frazzled could make you worry too much. Don't be paranoid or waste time: if you forget that this is not exactly your best month, the world will appear warm and comfortable.

GEMINI: This month will bring you lots of Luck, but you'll be so busy with work, family and friends that you won't find the time to be glad about this! Do a lot of sport, eat healthy things, and don't be afraid to fight for what you want.

CANCER: This is going to be your favorite month this year: everything moves under the sign of sex and love! You are going to meet someone who will make you feel as liquefied as an ice cream in August! What can I say? Enjoy!

LEO: You could face friction at work but the best thing to do is continue to find a way to escape from the routine. You will be a little bit anxious too, but at least your finances will improve. If I were you, I'd buy a new sofa for after-dinner relaxation.

VIRGO: Shine like a star, have lots of laughs, spend time with your best friend and sing along with your favorite singer: each of these steps will be good for work and social relationships. And in a period (by now we can say a long period!) in which love seems to be on hold, who needs romance if you have such special friends beside you?

LIBRA: You can't live another day of this rut you've fallen into. To broaden your horizons, use your talent for sniffing out a new career opportunity. But remember, just find a chance: this is not the time to actually move in new directions. Be patient, and your moment will arrive when you are not looking for it.

SCORPIO: Yesterday you thought that your next month would be totally boring: stop thinking like this! It will be lively, and busy, full of things to do. You will be very creative in whatever you do, and there will be a lucky and unexpected date with a guy who will cheer you up.

SAGITTARIUS: Give your body a break! You have worked a lot in the last few weeks so try to take a weekend off to relax, and maybe book a small hotel abroad somewhere! Everything fine at work, and plenty of romance with your partner.

CAPRICORN: A dreadful month for your finances. You can't stand your daily routine? Have lunch somewhere different, or wear something that you would not normally wear, and you'll feel better.

AQUARIUS: Spread your wings and fly: you will receive enjoyable news about money, love, friends and sex. Make a wish: this month everything you ever dreamed of is possible!

PISCES: Venus is your planet of the month: if you are looking for a partner, he or she will fall from a tree like an apple; if you are in a couple, your partner will surprise you with something... Your job is going great and you will soon receive new proposals.

A radio for students: Radio Sapienza

By Dario Fanara

Radio Sapienza started broadcasting in July 2007, thanks to the work of a group of undergraduates as well as graduates who trained in the first Masters degree course in Radio Communication, Production and Marketing, set up by the Communication Sciences Faculty in collaboration with RadioRai.

The collaboration goes on, headed by Faculty Dean Mario Morcellini, with the aim of broadening the project by covering a wide range of contents and developing new means of expression. Programme Director Ms Mihaela Gavrila leads a team of graduates and undergraduates, with regular contributions also from radio professionals.

At present located in the Communication Sciences building at via Salaria 113, Radio Sapienza internet radio aspires to become a landmark not only for thousands of “La Sapienza” University students but also for the people of Rome itself, with shows and events within and beyond the University.

Radio Sapienza connects tradition with innovation, and is not only a useful means for sharing information but also a forum and a meeting point during events. Reinforcing relations within and beyond the University is also high on the radio station’s agenda.

Our daily programming is quite varied. From Monday to Friday, 11 am to 1 pm, **Wake up Sapienza** goes on air. This is a radio show with many alternating voices, known in English as a **zoo format**, with a number of segments covering a wide range of topics, including books, travel, cinema, music and technologies, and with contributions from numerous studio guests. **Wake up Sapienza** opens with our news review feature, presented by editorial staff together with the participation of a different and well-known journalist every day.

The afternoon slot is dedicated to music, and from 6-7 pm we round off the evening with a number of shows on news and suggestions related to many different topics.

London Calling! is a familiar phrase in English. First heard in 1922 as the call sign of BBC Radio in London, in 1923 it was used as the title of a musical with songs by Noël Coward. During WWII, the words **“This is London calling”** signalled the start of BBC Radio broadcasts, listened to also in occupied countries. In 1979, British punk rock band The Clash gave their double album (and a single) the title **London Calling**. Nowadays, you will come across blogs and websites with this name.

From Monday to Friday the shows on air are:

Ogni Maledetto Lunedì
Aspettando.. Campus
Metropolis
Job On Air
Onde Radio
Soundz of Suburbia.

The Radio news also goes on air daily at 12 noon and again at 5.30 pm, with a roundup of the main news items, but also updates on “La Sapienza” events.

As well as our radio shows, we organize events outside of the University. You can also enjoy listening to Radio Sapienza speakers while having a drink or before a concert in one of your favourite clubs or pub.

How can you tune in to Radio Sapienza? It’s really easy! You can find us at www.radiosapienza.net. You can also interact with the speakers and other listeners by telephone, email or msn.

So, what are you waiting for? Come and join us: listen to Radio Sapienza!

Want to work in the media? Up for a new challenge? Then why not join us? There's always room for new talent, and Radio Sapienza aims to help listeners to cultivate their own passions, with opportunities every year for work placements in the editorial, speaker or technical areas.

NIGHTLIFE TIPS...HOW TO ENJOY YOUR ROMAN NIGHTS

By Ludovica Tranfaglia and Cinzia Bianco

Nightlife in Rome offers something to suit all tastes. You just have to do some research. There are also many sources to help you to choose where to spend an unforgettable night.

First of all, a good search engine gives you useful websites such as **2nigh.it**. Here you will find information about parties and nightspots. Secondly, you can find small guides such as the weekly **Roma c'è** at newsstands.

On weekdays we suggest live music in clubs: there are usually cover bands playing all over the city. At **Sotto casa di Andrea**, for example, a band named **White Queen** often plays in honour of the famous English band.

At **La locanda di Atlantide**, cover bands of Italian old singers - such as Rino Gaetano or Fabrizio De Andrè - play in very atmospheric surroundings.

Nearby is the **Circolo degli artisti**, with famous singers and live performances of electronic music.

For those who enjoy ethnic music, **Baba do Samba** and **Caruso** are perfect for listening to musicians from Cuba and Brasil.

Another two interesting places, although more sophisticated, are the **Casa del Jazz** and the **Big Mama**, respectively the most famous jazz and blues clubs, with international guests every week.

If you want a more relaxing evening you can go to the many theatres located in Rome to see ballets, dance performances or plays.

For an original evening try the **Teatro Tirso de Molina**, with its traditional Roman comedy shows in *romanesco* (the Roman dialect).

And for those who don't want to stay up too late, the **Micca Club** organises great happy hours every day of the week.

At the weekend, apart from all the places mentioned above, the most common choice is to go out for dinner with friends and then go dancing.

If you like ethnic food, try **Mille Cene nel Mondo**, which has Mexican, Arabic, Chinese, Pakistani and Indian food.

To enjoy a traditional Roman night and a good glass of wine, what is better than an *osteria*? They are mostly located in **Trastevere**, where you can dine to the notes of traditional Italian music.

The key area for discos is **Testaccio**, where you can dance to many different kinds of music. But in the city centre there are more fashionable discos where elegant attire is required.

On Friday nights, gay parties are the most entertaining way to enjoy yourself: for example, the **Muccassassina** party with drag queens, shows and music from gay icons.

For an alternative dancing night you can dance to the rhythm of *pizzica e taranta* (the old music from the South of Italy) at **Sotto casa di Andrea**.

However, lots of young people just spend their time hanging round squares with friends, in **San Lorenzo** or **Trastevere**, chatting, having a drink, meeting new people, making new friends.

So... enjoy this magic city with its unique atmosphere, which is more intense by night. Rome is a place where you can breathe history and eternity: by falling in love with it, enjoying it completely, you will feel part of this eternity.

STUDENT EDITORS - THIS ISSUE

Federica Pittori
Jennifer Romeo
Mariangela Vietri

STUDENT EDITORS - DECEMBER ISSUE

Cinzia Bianco ✉ cinziabi@supereva.it
Ludovica Tranfaglia ✉ ludos17@hotmail.it
Fabiana Scacchi ✉ lena.y@hotmail.it

BUDDING WRITERS AND ARTISTS!

Interested in contributing to future issues? Get in touch with one of the student editors or with your English language lecturer.

COPY DEADLINE FOR ISSUE NO. 3

Wednesday 16 December, 12.00.
For help with language, please see your English language lecturer well **before** this date.