

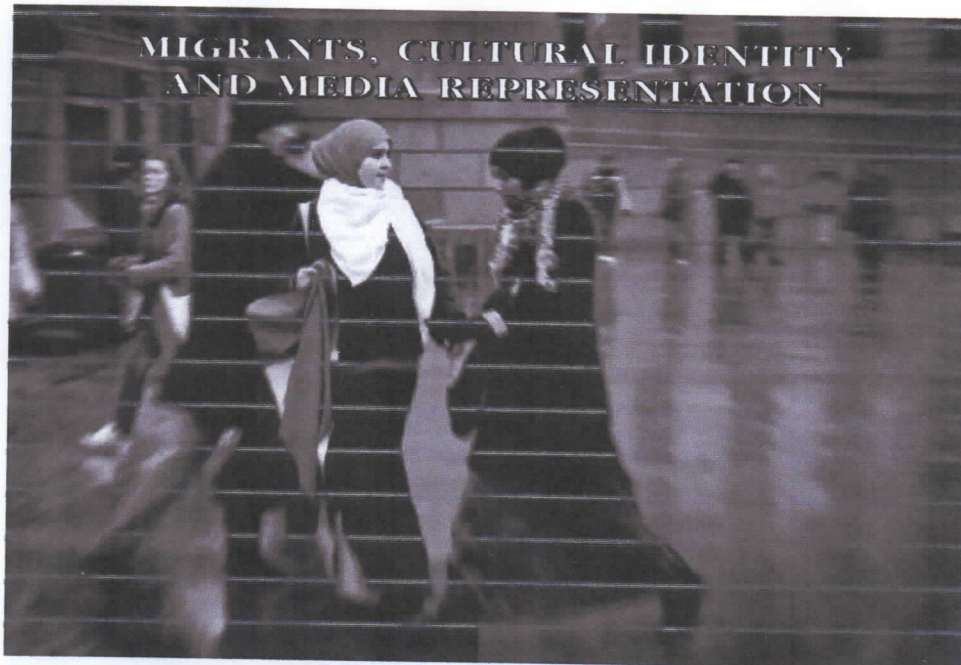


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AURELIO ANGELINI

Qanat



MIGRANTS, CULTURAL IDENTITY AND MEDIA REPRESENTATION
EDITED BY AURELIO ANGELINI

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Aurelio Angelini
Preface

Annamaria Amitrano
The analysis of migration flows between anthropological and educational processes

Vito Campo
Respect for human rights as an unavoidable requirement for migration flows

Gioia Panzarella
Italian migrant literature on the Internet: accessibility and democracy

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Gypsies in the media

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The application of the January 9, 2006 law on FGM in the Region of Lombardy

Marilena Macaluso and Giuseppina Tumminelli
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Ana Afonso Rodriguez
Peace journalism through an experience of non-formal learning

Anna Re
Images of otherness in literature: from imagology to cultural stereotypes

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Editoria & Arti visive

Sede legale: Via Silvano Franzolin 9 • 90147 Palermo

Uffici: Viale Piemonte 12 • 90144 Palermo

tel / fax 091.342613 • Mobile 334.6227878

www.qanat.it • info@qanat.it

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MIGRANTS,
CULTURAL IDENTITY
AND MEDIA REPRESENTATION



Preface

by Aurelio Angelini

This work, which has been conceived in a user-and-environmentally friendly digital format, focuses on the issue of migrants and refugees from the perspectives of both media representation and cultural identity. This theme is undeniably central because of the high influence of media representations and collective perceptions on migration policies. In these times of global risk, political decisions repeatedly comply with highly popular opinions, which are predominant within a given society. This is where the role of media becomes crucial, as they not only mediate the relationships between societies and migrants' problems, but they also maneuver them.

Some of the greatest living sociologists concur in considering risk as a key element in the structuring and modifying of *praxis*, which refers to our communities' political and daily life. Antony Giddens identifies in the "risk culture" one of the main factors to understand the phenomena at the basis of our current age. Ulrich Beck even goes as far defining our modern society as the "risk society", considering that communities decide their political, social and economic actions according to what might happen in the future.

Media therefore play a crucial role in shaping the collective perception with regards to the risks linked to migrations. Unfortunately, media representations often lead to generating a feeling of fear which unquestionably stops the possibility of taking rational and effective decisions, as well as “fences in” all individuals, leaving no room for the strengthening of social capital as trust, sharing and exchanges.

As a result of this, if fear is spread and amplified by the tools of information, societies have increasingly greater difficulties in finding rational ways to direct their *praxis*. The difficulties media have in communicating the risk factor stem from their inclination to catastrophe. Hence such social tragedies as extreme migrations are often recounted with pride and vigor when facing victory; on the other hand, shame and remorse will be predominant when reporting “defeat”. As a consequence, a strange and paradoxical role-play can be observed, whereby on one hand catastrophism is preferred to risk representation and, conversely, it is regarded as a deforming way to represent reality. The resulting accounts often dramatize phenomena, rather than describing them, by focusing on the aspects which have been actually disclosed, in other words on what has already occurred, therefore failing to consider what could happen in the future, namely the risk dimension, which is the only element engendering a political guidance aimed at effectively resolving conflicts and overcoming current difficult issues within societies. In other words, as in Balzaretti’s suggestive metaphor, it seems that media are not capable to convey the risk dimension related to problems involving migrants and refugees (as well as environmental and economical problems), which is exactly what happened to Jonah

and Cassandra, two mythical figures. In fact, as Jonah prophesies the destruction of the city of Nineveh, which is subsequently saved by God's mercy, they risk to be proven wrong by future occurrences governed by superior forces, making them unpredictable and fallacious; on the other hand, they risk not to be believed, as Troy's diviner, who was granted by Apollo both the gift of prophecy and the curse of not to be believed.

This volume focuses on the analysis of migrants' and refugees' issues by thoroughly scrutinizing a series of aspects linked to both media representations and cultural identities, including, above all, the following features:

- Migrants' stereotypes as depicted by media
- Representations of cultural differences
- Race and immigration within the media community
- Media, migrants and religion
- Migrants and religion in the digital age

This volume starts with a paper by Annamaria Amitrano, where the issue of migratory flows is mainly approached under an anthropological point of view; the author also focuses on pedagogical and educational implications, hence broadening her study towards the multi-faceted world of education.

Vito Campo's analysis focuses on human rights by stressing their importance when devising policies aimed at managing, directing or limiting migratory flows. His study essentially deals with the main juridical aspects related to immigration as stated in international laws.

Gioia Panzarella's main focus is on the aspects linked to the world of media and communication, especially on the literature which can be found on the

Internet, such as on-line journals. Her analysis is linked to such central issues as accessibility and democracy.

Elisabetta di Giovanni focuses her attention on gypsies as depicted by media representations. Her paper describes an interesting case whereby prejudices and fears often linked to the world of gypsies have been overcome thanks to a positive approach.

Marilena Macaluso and Giuseppina Tumminelli evaluate the possibility of involving migrants in the e-consultation, which is regarded as a basic tool for the acknowledgement of political rights as well as cultural identities.

Antonella Elisa Castronovo analyses the recent and highly debated case of the emergency in Lampedusa as seen under the light of media and political representations, within the context of a deeper analysis on the connection between information tools and political questions.

Anna Varfolomeeva's study focuses on the relation among migrants' representations, collective perceptions and policies. In particular, her analysis evaluates the influence of December 2010 Moscovite conflicts on migrants' representation on the Russian press.

Parivash Safaie tackles the issue of the psychological consequences linked to emigration by highlighting the issue of dissociation within female migrants and refugees.

Ana Afonso Rodriguez's case study revolves around an episode of informal education within the broader issue of peace journalism.

Giancarlo Fontana illustrates the issue of Female Genital Mutilation and the ways in which, as a result of past and present migration flows, is addressed in the regional social and cultural contexts, referring to a

series of documents developed at international and national level.

Finally, Anna Re conducts a literary analysis of the representation of diversity, considering a wide range of perspectives, from imagology to cultural stereotypes.