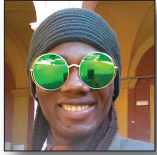


Globalization and me: an international citizen



LEONARDO QUARENTA

My name is Leonardo Quarenta (Pai Do Romantismo Rei), I am an Angolan and I have been living in Rome for almost 6 years. I know many cultures and I have lived in different countries of the world, but what has amazed me and makes me smile in Italy is that Italians do not live without pizza and coffee. Sure all over the world pizza and coffee are loved but here it is almost a religious cult, where if you do not drink 3 coffees a day and do not eat at least one pizza a week you're a "weirdo". This is to explain that when you know a culture from far away it is totally different from when you live that culture by staying in the country which created it. When you live in a new country, you learn amazing things.

In my country I was working as a singer, poet, composer and as a fashion consultant, but after finishing secondary school I stayed two years without studying because I had to work to help my family. I am and I feel like an artist, art is very important to me, but I feel I must do more to help build a better world. Art can do it but in a limited way and that's why I'm thinking about a political career. I came to Italy to study. After two years without studying, thanks to my older brother who at the time was studying law in Rome, I managed to get to Italy.

At the beginning it was not easy to acclimatize, Italian culture is so different from mine and I was struggling to integrate into the society. Plus there was the language problem. Think of a person who loves to speak in public, who has the dream of transmitting messages that can change the world in a positive way and that, suddenly, can not even order a coffee. It was not easy, but when you want something deeply, you find the way and after six months I already spoke Italian and I could also do formal speeches.

Once the language was learned it was easier to understand the culture. The big difference be-

tween Brazil, where I grew up, and Italy, at least the part of Italy I know, therefore, Rome, is that it is not easy to make friends. People here are very closed and above all, if you are a foreigner they are sceptical. This difference made me very much appreciate the simplicity of human relationships in Brazil and Angola. There you can meet people everywhere and immediately make friends, exchange telephone or social contacts in the cinema, at the pub, at the sports center, but also on the street, at the station or in any other place. Here it is a bit 'difficult to be accepted.

One of the most positive aspects of globalization is that situations like this will happen less and less. When a person, like me, moves from his country to go and live in another, he learns a new culture and social rules and adapts himself to it, but at the same time, influences the local culture, just by telling of his own. Let's take an example, returning to the difficulty of relationships, I bring with me the Angolan and Brazilian culture and my willingness to meet new people, in some way, can influence the culture of anyone I meet. What I do in my circle, American films or International musicians do it on the masses at a bigger level. Take as an example Rihanna, Just Bieber, Drake, Eros Ramazzotti, Beyonce, Emma, Alessandra Amoroso, Entics, Vasco Rossi, SoMo, Biagio Antonacci, Lucca Mengoni, Dj Khaled, Link Park, Westlife, Backstreet Boys, Luan Santana, Alessandro Pires, all these artists have the power to influence our behavior and way of living. Today thanks to the internet we know all about them and what they do, their character and their culture influence all of us who follow them. This is globalization.

My experience in Italy is contributing to my personal development at all levels: cultural, social and academic. I am an international citizen and I like to know different realities, above all, I always

try to assimilate the positive part of the local culture, but keeping my culture and tradition. I have a heterogeneous cultural identity. I am an Angolan, but it is funny to see how people never understand where I come from, they think it can be American, French or English. During activities, events, conferences, international conferences, gala dinners, people have the impression that I am American, perhaps, for my way of dressing, for the lifestyle, the dynamics and the strength of my words, my energy, the desire to entertain everyone. When they say so I ironically reply “globalization and me, me and globalization”.

Surely, when I return to my country, my people, friends, family and acquaintances will say that I am no longer the same person, because I will come back different, enriched by a new culture. I will always be the same Angolan boy who left years before, funny, lively, dynamic and with big dreams but I will be full of new habits and different concepts that I will be happy to share with anyone who wants to know more about my

and find our way, even cultural. I take great care not to alter my being. I love to know new things and different societies, but I remain myself and this will never change. I like singing, writing novels, romantic poems, songs, love stories, this is part of me, it's a gift, a talent I was born with, even if I love politics more, but this gift will always remain with me, standing on the stage or not, is something that will pursue me to the end.

For me, migration is a positive thing, many countries like America, South Africa and Brazil have developed thanks to it. I am respectful of the local rules and I try to be kind to everyone, this behaviour serves all those who want to live in a different country. If you travel, if you migrate, if you decide to know other cultures at some point you no longer feel the differences. It seems like a whole country and this is beautiful. I feel part of a unique world, not of one country or another and I don't feel anymore the differences in race, religion and culture. I wish it was the same for all, I would like everyone to feel good wherever



experience in Italy. Nowadays nobody is born and dies the same, it is impossible. Thanks to all that has been said so far, each one of us, even without ever leaving our country but only listening to foreign songs or watching movies or flipping through social media posts is influenced and gets to change.

In this welter of intercultural influences it is very important, however, to remain true to yourself. Globalization helps spreading new and positive thoughts, but not always. Sometimes negative things also are spread out. We should constantly look inside ourselves, we must understand who we are beyond what goes around us

they go. Of course it is not always easy, we must overcome the closure of many, but the important thing is to keep being positive and with an open mind.

Yes, I am a child of globalization and you know, I like it. I'm not afraid of the different, in fact, I think I need it to improve. Italy is a wonderful country, the cradle of an ancient culture and I am proud to be for a piece even Italian now. I am Italian, Angolan, Portuguese, Brazilian, American and much more. I am a modern man, a man full of experiences, a globalized man.