



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



The So-called “Cancel Culture” Movement and its Direct Influence on Italian Culture and Language

Piermauro Catarinella, Mohd Ridzuan Abdul Malek, Muhammad Usamah Mohd Ridzuan, Suhardi Kram

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i5/13182> DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i5/13182

Received: 12 March 2022, **Revised:** 15 April 2022, **Accepted:** 29 April 2022

Published Online: 07 May 2022

In-Text Citation: (Catarinella et al., 2022)

To Cite this Article: Catarinella, P., Abdul Malek, M. R., Ridzuan, M. U. M., & Kram, S. (2022). The So-called “Cancel Culture” Movement and its Direct Influence on Italian Culture and Language. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*. 12(5), 1296 – 1309.

Copyright: © 2022 The Author(s)

Published by Human Resource Management Academic Research Society (www.hrmars.com)

This article is published under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) license. Anyone may reproduce, distribute, translate and create derivative works of this article (for both commercial and non-commercial purposes), subject to full attribution to the original publication and authors. The full terms of this license may be seen at: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode>

Vol. 12, No. 5, 2022, Pg. 1296 – 1309

<http://hrmars.com/index.php/pages/detail/IJARBSS>

JOURNAL HOMEPAGE

Full Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at
<http://hrmars.com/index.php/pages/detail/publication-ethics>



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



www.hrmar.com

ISSN: 2222-6990

The So-called “Cancel Culture” Movement and its Direct Influence on Italian Culture and Language

Piermauro Catarinella¹, Mohd Ridzuan Abdul Malek²,
Muhammad Usamah Mohd Ridzuan³, Suhardi Kram⁴

^{1,2}Academy of Language Studies, Shah Alam, UiTM, Malaysia, ³Academy of Language Studies, Pulau Pinang, UiTM, Malaysia, ⁴Faculty of Sports Science & Recreation, Samarahan, UiTM, Malaysia

Email: ¹piermauro@uitm.edu.my, ²mohdridzuan@uitm.edu.my, ³usamah@uitm.edu.my, ⁴suhardikram@uitm.edu.my

Abstract

The “cancel culture” (the cancellation of the past culture) is a movement created recently, specifically in the West (in particular in the United States) that has had (and still is having) a direct negative impact on Italian culture and language. The term “movement” (and not phenomenon) is used because it is not something born spontaneously and felt by the ordinary people, but, on the contrary, conceived and implemented by a rich, powerful, cultural and financial elite and with the specific purpose of shaping and transforming culture, language and behaviour of the Italian people. This paper intends to analyse how, when, why and by whom this movement was started, elaborated and then brought in Italy and in Europe by force, with the purpose of changing Italian society (and the western Europeans too). This “cancel culture” was studied and elaborated by a Western financial elite for western European countries for political and economic purposes. Asian countries, until now, have remained (fortunately) immune to it. This research will study and prove not only the harmful consequences - direct and indirect - that this movement has produced in the society, culture, lifestyle, Italian language, and who enjoyed the benefits of this transformation, but also is intended to be a constructive contribution to let people be free and use their own critical thinking to decide whether to keep their culture and language unchanged (or change them, if deemed right and necessary) without having to be subjugated by minority groups that tend to undermine their thinking and freedom of choice.

Keywords: Cancel, Culture, Italian, Society, Language

Introduction

The “cancel culture” came into the collective consciousness around 2017, after the idea of “cancelling” celebrities for problematic actions or statements became popular (Greenspan, 2020) and it is a movement created specifically by elitist ideological, political and cultural powers. The cancel culture, despite having its origin in the USA, has attracted many followers in Italy and the majority of other European countries. This research aims to study the political, economic, social consequences that the cancel culture will bring to the Italian society and also

to understand the goals that this movement hopes to achieve. This is precisely the tumult that this research will try to unfold, sifting through the lens of various Italian media. The following discussions seek to contribute to a more comprehensive view of the cancel culture and its repercussions in all the aspects of the western life and values (Italy fully belongs to the west). Moreover it attempts to apprise nonwestern communities that, until now, were not touched by (or had less experience with) the cancel culture to plan policies and other kinds of social measures. To deeply understand why Italy and the old continent were affected by it, it is necessary to focus on the massive migrations from Africa to Italy and on the dominant and decisive role of the Open Society Foundations (OSF) owned by billionaire tycoon George Soros, whose primary purpose is to tear down walls and borders between different countries. The OSF supports, politically and financially, mass migrations from Africa to Europe and Italy in particular because is the country that faces the Mediterranean and is located opposite to the African continent. If immigration to Italy were legal, managed according to pre-established flows and had regard to the real possibilities of reception of the host country, this phenomenon of the cancel culture would not have found ground in Western Europe and would have been branded as the usual "Americanism". The OSF finances political parties, cultural associations, legal groups, non-governmental organizations (NGO) that are in favour of mass and uncontrolled immigration from Africa to Europe (Italy) and all of them get economic benefits from this. The OSF argues that hundreds of thousands of African citizens, without identification documents, must have the right to come to Italy.

In almost all countries of the world, illegal entry and illegal stay is a crime. Anyone who wants to try to regulate the migratory phenomenon or put a stop to it is accused of being a "fascist", "hater" and "enemy". In recent years, the number of immigrants who arrived in Italy is frightening and nothing is known about them (personal data, age, past history from a judicial point of view). But they are able to pay the human traffickers a sum ranging from 3000 to 5000 US dollars for the crossing of the Mediterranean. Many have wondered Mr Soros' purpose: why does he want to flood Italy and Europe with hordes of immigrants? The answers are numerous and, among these, it is useful to mention the following: 1) there are those who believe that causing chaos in Europe will help increase the US market; 2) Soros sees himself as a missionary of globalization and uses his money, knowledge and power to influence politics and create both economic and social crises to further his purpose; 3) "to import" thousands of people from Africa so that multinationals can have low-cost workers, with no rights to enforce. Please note that the use of the term "import" refers to human beings (Provenzani, 2018). Whatever his motivations are, the fact is that, today, in Italy there are many African immigrants and only some of them will be able to obtain refugee status and legally live in the host country. How about the others? Many are engaged in criminal activities (the number of inmates of non-EU citizens is in fact impressive; in the two-year period 2018-2019 there were 20,324 foreign inmates in Italian prisons, that is 33.6% of the total number of inmates (Pesaresi, 2019); others live on the margins of the society with no chance of finding a regular job as they have no documents. However in Italy, it is very easy to obtain asylum: just declare yourself homosexual (you don't have to be a real one), point out that in the country you come from you risk some form of persecution and the asylum application is certainly accepted. The Italian Supreme Court (Corte Suprema di Cassazione) stated this with judgement no.11176, 23 April 2019 (Migranti, 2019). This clarification is necessary to understand the situation in Italy today. The huge number of African immigrants present in Italy (ready to do anything to stay, even resorting to the easy stratagem of declaring their homosexuality), the numerous political forces present in parliament and the various

associations all financed by the OSF, have ensured that the cancel culture, albeit extraneous to the Italian culture, entered it fully. As a result of these clashes of a cultural and ideological nature, some behavioral rules have been changed (until 2018, they were considered completely normal and welcomed by the entire population) and also the Italian language, both spoken and written, has been affected. But what exactly does this cancel culture consist of? Cancel culture means the cancellation of the pre-existing culture (and not, as some believe, the culture of cancellation). Erase the history, its characters, literary works, movies, statues, linguistic expressions of the past because what matters is only the present.

The past, if evaluated with the eyes and the feeling of the present, is wrong, because it is racist, homophobic and not inclusive. Therefore, it must be cancelled in its entirety. Of course values of past centuries such as respect for minorities, human rights, and the acknowledgement of the rights of LGBTQ people had not been elaborated or known and therefore, could not possibly be referred to. Hence, should this history be ignored and erased? The concept of "*historia magistra vitae*" must be preserved as it has great value. The present time and the evolution of history cannot be understood if the past is not studied. Is it right to erase past history, throw it in the trash and, therefore, remain ignorant? As it has rightly been observed, "ignorance has always been the majority on the planet, like stupidity; but it becomes disturbing when it is empowered, it expresses "the spirit of the time" and when it is not the poor illiterate people but the ruling classes who profess it (Veneziani, 2021). The cancel culture wants to impose its dogmas on everyone and wants the people with dark skin of African ethnicity and those belonging to the LGBTQ category, regardless of their actions and their behaviour, to be respected, loved and placed on a pedestal. Respect should be shown and given towards everyone, regardless of skin colour and sexual orientation, whether reciprocal and not unidirectional and any form of racism must be condemned without ifs or buts. However, the concepts of "meritocracy", "respect for the laws and culture of indigenous peoples", "free choice" must be defended and safeguarded. The cancel culture, on the other hand, imposes only a one-sided view, with its politically correct, established norms. Arbitrary and a priori, the cancel culture dictates what is possible to say, which words can be accepted, and which behaviours are right or wrong. But these are despotic forms that have nothing to do with democracy where everyone is (should be) free to express personal opinion, without incurring penalties of various kinds (social, regulatory). The truly paradoxical, bloody and devious thing is that the cancel culture, and the consequent political correctness, are supported and practised precisely in the name of democracy and human rights. But how is it possible to talk of democracy when an elitist and powerful party imposes its own dogmatic and relativistic dictatorship on others, pretending to be always right, without any possibility of refutation? Those who support and promote the cancel culture and the politically correct affirm that their use would be a social evolution, an expansion of rights, a total inclusion in the Italian society of this ethnic minority from Africa and LGBTQ people. In order to do this, it is necessary that certain books be withdrawn from universities and book stores, that some films be censored, monuments damaged or even destroyed, that some people with different ideas be pilloried. To massacre those who have different ideas from ours is a disturbing return of witch hunts, to repressive methods by the Tribunal of the Holy Inquisition (1184–1542) that have nothing to do with democracy and respect for everyone's rights. The cancel culture that, according to some progressive newspapers, does not even exist in Italy (Adragna, 2021) requires that no criticism and/or reproaches can be made against the subjects belonging to the two categories of people mentioned above (people of African ethnicity and LGBTQ). If so, someone can be immediately accused of "fascism", "racism",

"homophobia" and, as such, subjected to severe censorship and sanctions (disciplinary, dismissal from the workplace, violent attacks on social media). At the present time, a law proposal (known as the "Zan bill") is under discussion in the Senate of the Italian Republic which aims to punish even with prison those who commit offences or discrimination against an LGBT person (Figini, 2021). The cancel culture aims to boycott individuals, companies and groups of people who have expressed an opinion that is questionable or not acceptable. It is unclear who decides on what is questionable or not acceptable. It also remains unclear which political and cultural elite, or self-appointed supreme judge, can decide on what is correct to say and what is not, and where the "rule of the law" is.

Literature Review

The goals of the cancel culture are: to combat racism and discrimination in favour of people of African ethnicity and people LGBTQ. But the method used by the cancel culture's supporters to try to reach the mentioned goals is wrong. When someone (or a group) wants to silence others who do not agree with him, then there is no democracy. Nowadays the term cancel culture is heard saliently omnipresent especially in social media and the press but not within the academia sphere, albeit the latter is also one of the victims of the cancel culture. By the numerous examples of 'cancelled' celebrities, the cancel culture has led to several grave consequences to the victims where they were stripped of not only of their opinions but also of their profession. As mentioned above, the cancel culture has not been properly framed or studied yet by scholars – if not by a few – as an object of study. Only a few authors who attempt to set up a framework of analysis of the notion can be cited. On one hand, Patrick Deneen (2019) argues that the cancel culture stems from overachieved liberalism (Deneen, 2019, p.viii). On the other hand, Alan Dershowitz (2020) who puts forth the argument that the cancel culture is a continuation of Stalinism and McCarthyism with the main difference where the cancel culture is depersonalised, anonymous and not a proxy or a tool of a physical government. It should be specified that many of the writings are focused on examples in the United States. This is the reason why the present article tries to shift the perspective into a more heterogeneous analysis by including examples in a European context, in particular in Italy.

On July 7, 2020, Harper magazine published an open letter signed by 150 people (writers, publishers, academicians, political analysts, teachers, journalists), reminding that, a democracy is not allowed to silence anyone, and that all ideas can be expressed freely (the only limits are fixed by the penal code). After this letter was published, an international controversy was sparked. The letter received massive criticism. One of them came from Hamilton Nolan (Nolan, 2020). Freedom of speech cannot be invoked by a group of privileged rich people like the subscribers of the letter mentioned above. Only the underclass people, those who were victims of racial discrimination or other forms of institutionalized injustice can claim the right of "freedom of speech" because they never enjoyed such right. One thing is to blame, criticize, and boycott one product, one singer, one writer, one politician to report the reprehensible nature of an act or statement like the campaign against #MuteRKelly born to boycott a millionaire singer accused of sexual violence and paedophilia by overwhelming evidence; an evidently different thing is to press for authors with controversial theses to be deprived of their doctorate without robust academic confrontation (Stacey, 2019). The cancel culture wants to impose a single thought that everyone must conform to. If this must be the new norm, please do not use words like "democracy" or "human rights" (Law, 2019). This is the real point. If the goal is to combat racism and discrimination effectively, there is no need

violent or discriminatory acts of one group of people against another or to erase the past history (as the cancel culture teaches), but mutual respect and understanding each other. The cancel culture appears “fake”, tends to make you appear as “clean”, “modern” and “liberal” but only exteriorly and, moreover, it brings infighting, grudges and chaos inside the western nations. It is useful and also important to quote the words of Lewis (2020), “Beware splashy corporate gestures when they leave existing power structures intact”.

Methodology

This is a qualitative research based mainly on readings of current Italian newspaper articles (2020 -2021). The introduction focuses on the mass and uncontrolled immigration that has been affecting Italy in recent years. This immigration is made up of a small portion of people who truly fled from wars (e.g., the Syrian citizens) who certainly have the right to refugee status. However, the vast majority of immigrants entering Italy are "economical" immigrants, i.e., they leave their country not because there is a war in progress, but only because they yearn for more comfortable living conditions. The latter group is not entitled to any form of international protection and, according to the law, they should be repatriated. According to some extra-parliamentary groups, known as NO BORDERS, staunch supporters of cancel culture, the concept of immigrant should not exist and even those borders between countries should not exist also and hence should be demolished (Allred, 2003).

If there were no immoderate and unregulated immigration system, the cancel culture movement (and its consequences on Italian culture and language) would not have been introduced in Italy. The results and discussion section focus on the words, products, films, books, artistic representations and objects that are subjected to be “cancelled” because, as the solons of the single thought affirm, they contradict cancel culture and political correctness. Even the application of the law, sometimes, with all due respect to the rule of law, is distorted and not applied correctly, favouring the above dictates. In the conclusion section, the researchers’ points of view about the cancel culture movement will be presented and the following questions will be answered. Does this movement result in the advancement of Italian society in all its forms? Is it possible to give a positive or negative opinion about this movement? Is it proven to be a useful tool to combat racism and avoid discriminations?

Results and Discussion

The purpose of cancel culture is to break down all cultures of the past that are not in line with the respect and inclusion of immigrants from Africa and LGBTQ people. Everything that, in the past, had a racist trace should be cancelled outright. Idem, everything that takes place in the present time should conform to these precepts. All aspects of public and private life (ways of speaking and writing, art, culture, politics, satires, law enforcements, games for children, traditional food, etc.) should be cancelled with the aim that these rules are respected.

Books. There are many books that should be removed from schools, universities and libraries. It does not matter if they were written centuries ago or if they are modern. The mistake (and the greatest ignorance) of the cancel culture is that it criticizes the writings without considering the work within the historical context in which it was conceived and produced. For this purpose, the following books need to be mentioned:

- 1) The Divine Comedy, by Dante Alighieri. According to the cancel culture the author would show aversion towards sodomites and therefore the book is not acceptable nowadays. In reality, the author does not condemn all homosexuals, he showed

himself to be benevolent towards them as the poet considered carnal sins as less serious than moral ones (Noli, 2018).

- 2) *The Tempest*, by William Shakespeare, a literary and even theatrical work of 1611, is judged as racist as one of the protagonists is a black slave. Many other works by the same English writer and playwright (1564 - 1616) have been banned in Italy and in other European countries because, according to the cancel culture, "Shakespeare was a tool used to civilize blacks in the English Empire", hence racist.
- 3) *The Continent*, by Keira Drake, written in the year 2018, is called "Racist Trash". Currently, many writers, in order to avoid being accused of racism and not having their books published, rely on the so-called 'sensitive readers' who, for a fee, sift through a novel in search of "stereotypes" about race, minorities and gender. Now publishing houses use them to overcome the shear of political correctness (Meotti, 2019).
- 4) *Il buio oltre la siepe* (The dark beyond the hedge), by Harper Lee, written in 1960, tells the story about a gentleman-lawyer who believes in equality and defends an innocent black boy from racial segregation in Alabama (Redazione, 2020).
- 5) The list of "censored" books could go on indefinitely as cancel culture knows no boundaries. "The book industry has become a book burn," Kyle Smith wrote in the New York Post a few months ago. The books' burnings recall Nazism (Smith, 2021).

Monuments. The demolition of historical figure statues (Roman emperors, kings and queens, conquerors, colonialists, journalists) is a regular reaction for supporters of the cancel culture. In Italy, as in the rest of the Western world, hundreds of these monuments have been targeted because they represent racial hatred or slavery (Giardini, 2020). Once again, the issues raised by the cancel culture appear surreal. It purports to judge the history of past centuries with the moral canons of the 21st century. Julius Caesar (whose statue was destroyed in many EU countries) was a fighter, a leader and lived in a world where war and slavery were the order of the day (Sacchi, 2020). Cancel culture claims that a true *damnatio memoriae* must take place, as if the past had never existed. This is really dangerous and is a result of profound ignorance. The etymology of the word monument comes from Latin *memento* which means memory. By their nature, memories are not just positive or uplifting ones. There are also those that remind us of our slavery, colonial (past) and, in the Italian case, fascist. A sculpture seals specific moments of an era. This is why their presence in our cities is fundamental: we must know them, study them, challenge them, but not betray them nor demolish them (Virgilio, 2020).

Films, Cartoons, Theater and Opera, Songs, Languages, Politics, Laws, Children's Games, Products, Satire. Many artistic representations have had the same sad fate as books. The historical period in which these works were made is of no consequence as the cancel culture wants to judge and condemn (therefore, remove) the past with the eyes of the present.

Among the best-known films the following deserve to be mentioned: *Via col Vento* (Gone with the Wind), winner of eight Oscars in 1940, and eliminated from many platforms (including HBO); *Colazione da Tiffany* (Breakfast at Tiffany's) 1961, *Forrest Gump*, 1994. There are also several Italian comedy films: *Totò Truffa* (Totò Scam), featuring the famous actors Totò and Nino Taranto, 1962; *Vieni avanti cretino* (Come forward idiot) 1982, featuring Italian comic actor Lino Banfi. What were the accusations made against these films? As claimed by the supporters of the cancel culture, they display racism and disrespect for LGBTQ people.

Even children's animated cartoons have been subjected to censorship: *Lilli e Vagabondo* (Lilli and Wanderer); *Gli Aristogatti* (The Aristocats); *Il libro della giungla* (The Jungle Book); *Il re leone* (The Lion King) by Walt Disney and also The Simpsons. The accusations are always the same: racism in the conduct of the characters or in their voices (Lanzone, 2020). The fact that black characters in comics are voiced by white actors makes it really intolerable (Vivaldelli, 2021). In addition, *Cenerentola* (Cinderella) has also been called into question where the role of the Fairy Godmother is now a man, dark-skinned and homosexual. Indeed, the one who plays the role of the Fairy Godmother is Billy Porter, the famous black actor. As such, the producers stated (and in deference to the cancel culture) that the LGBTQ people will be seen in an "inclusive" way (Mag, 2021).

Even the theatre has not remained unscathed by the censorious rigour of the cancel culture. Giuseppe Verdi's operas *Aida* (1871) and *Otello* (1887) are considered racist as well as William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (1594-1596) and *The Merchant of Venice* (1596-1598). Also included is the *The Magic Flute*, an opera in two acts by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart which has been said to contain racist expressions (Vitali, 2018).

There are many songs, Italian or otherwise, that have been censored as they do not follow the dictates of this ideological movement. To cite just a few examples: *Che bambola* (What a Doll) by Fred Buscaglione, 1955; *I vatuzzi* (The Watusi) by Edoardo Vianello, 1963. Foreign musical bands that have made rock history also ended up in the crosshairs of the cancel culture, e.g, the Rolling Stones (*Some girls*, 1978); The Guns N' Roses ("*One in a Million*", 1988) (Giordano, 2021). Any justification for crimes or discriminations must be blocked and punished, without exception. Indeed, there are suitable laws in every part of the Western world and beyond. However, one thing is an official speech, whilst the other is a work of art. One is a political thought, while the other is a rock or pop song that is linked to its own time and should be evaluated with indicators of that time.

Even classical languages such as Latin and ancient Greek have been called into question by the frenzy of the cancel culture. Many universities have established that the study of the aforementioned languages will decline, only to "favour the proliferation and spread of a non-racist culture and diversity" (Freda, 2021). The classics (Homer, a Greek poet, author of *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the two greatest epic poems of Greek literature; Cicero, a philosopher, politician, orator and writer of the Roman Empire, lived from January 3, 106 BC to December 7, 43 BC; Seneca, a Roman philosopher, playwright and politician, lived from 4 BC to 65 AD; Plato, a Greek philosopher and writer in 427 BC) are subject to be removed from university programs because they are considered as greatly entangled in white supremacy that they are inseparable from it (Rampolla, 2021). The cancel culture claims that it is from them that the concept of "white culture", i.e., "white supremacist culture", progenitor of all brutal ideologies such as colonialism, racism, fascism and nazism, is derived.

The Italian language has undergone considerable changes due to the constant reproaches from the supporters of the cancel culture. Those who did not want to adapt to the new dictates were subjected to public mockery and digital pillory and were accused of being racist or homophobic. The numerous expressions in the Italian language that use the word *nero* (black) or *nera* (black) have been judged as racist. Here are some examples: *giornata nera* (black day) which means a day when everything goes wrong; *bestia nera* (black beast) which implies a feared person; *vedere nero* (to see black) which means to be pessimistic; *fare nero qualcuno* (to make someone black) which means to win big against someone; *lavoro nero* (black work) which means working illegally; *non distinguere il nero dal bianco* (to not distinguish black from white) which means not being able to distinguish two things or two

different concepts; *umore nero* (black mood) which means to have a very bad mood; *pecora nera* (black sheep); *lista nera* (black list). The word *razza* (race) must be replaced with *etnia* (ethnicity), because there are those who argue that races do not exist ("Perche' le razze non esistono scientificamente", 2017). Woe betide anyone who calls a person of colour "a black" or "a negro". The politically correct term is "a person of African descent". In order not to offend the LGBTQ people, words such as *frocio*, *frocione*, *frocione*, *checca*, *finocchio*, all meaning gay man, are banned. The words "mom" and "dad" must be replaced with "parent one" and "parent two". For the term "gay marriage", the new neo-language requires the term "egalitarian marriage"; "biological sex" becomes "sex assigned at birth"; "sex change" becomes "gender transition". This newly coined terms, endorsed by the European Parliament, is a resounding triumph for the rampant cancel culture. In addition, there is also the issue of banning the use of masculine and feminine. The plural masculine suffix should be replaced with a foreign letter called the "schwa". Hence, we would have *buongiorno a tuttə* (good morning to all), *carə concittadini* (dear fellow citizens), *migranti* (migrants) becoming *migrantə* (migrant), *richiedenti asilo* (asylum seekers) becoming *richiendetə asilo*. This new phonetic sign "ə", halfway between the "a" and the "e", was introduced because it claims to be respectful and inclusive for LGBTQ people (Lorenzo, 2021).

Italian politics was also influenced by the cancel culture. Political parties, in favour of mass immigrations and without rules, have recently complained that there is a meagre number of people of colour in the political sphere (whilst instead LGBTQ people have already held many important and prestigious positions in the public life of the country). Thus, it has been proposed to establish "black quotas" in order for a certain number of positions for candidates in political elections to be allocated to people of colour. As such, it would "stabilise" institutions and parties of the "white race". "It is necessary that immigrants could actively participate in the city-state, in the public dimension, in politics", said Livia Turco, an influential spokesperson of the Democratic Party (one of those financed by the tycoon George Soros) (Benignetti, 2021).

A black person, as the cancel culture argues, must be treated more leniently if accused of a crime; is the principle that the law treats everyone the same not applicable anymore? Yes, but up to a certain point. People of colour have suffered more than the whites in the past which suggests that, now, even the rule of the law should be more tolerable towards them. There have been cases that have caused much discussion. On June 27, 2018, a 31-year-old citizen of Gambia, illegal in Italy, after being caught – for the second time in four days – selling ecstasy, was released due to the fact that the young man "is a drug dealer because, having no income deriving from work, the sale of drugs appears to be the only way to support himself" (Roma, 2021).

Children's games must aim for the full inclusion of LGBTQ and black people. Blue colour for boys and pink for girls must be put to a halt. In compliance with the dictates of the cancel culture and political correctness, a great number of companies have decided to choose a neutral colour, which can be suitable for both boys and girls. This is the case of the Turin-based company, Quercetti, which specialises in creative and educational games for children, claiming its "unisex" nature of its products. The classic stereotype "game for males only/game for females only" must be retracted, in line with the gender identity as put forth by the champions of the causes of LGBTQ people (Freda, 2021). Even the classic "Barbie" doll (of blond hair and blue eyes, a girl's favourite toy for decades) has recently been remodelled in a "unisex" and "uni-gender" version, capable of having masculine and / or feminine features,

white or black or mulatto (Fazio, 2019). The children's games sector has also been influenced by the cancel culture.

A great number of companies, under the pressure of the cancel culture and in order to avoid being branded as racist, have proceeded to modify several of their historical brands. The apple pie would be the product of "war capitalism", which "enslaved and committed acts of genocide", therefore racist. The offending dessert would be "an expression of the triumph of colonialism and slavery" and that the origins of the dish are deeply "steeped in blood". The necessary ingredients (sugar and apples) to prepare an apple pie would also be a product of centuries of "theft" of land and wealth committed by white colonizers (Freda, 2021).

Finally the satire, which has always been part of Italian culture since ancient Rome, (cf. Horace, Persio, Juvenal) has always been well accepted in Italy. Prime Ministers, deputies, senators, entrepreneurs, footballers, singers, actors, religions and their representatives have always been the object of satire and no one has ever resented. One example is the great performance by the comedian Maurizio Crozza in his song "Gay in the Church" on 10 October 2015 where he derided (this is the task for the satire) the singer Elton John and Pope Bergoglio (La7 Intrattenimento, 2015). Today, however, following the frenzy of the cancel culture and political correctness, certain unappreciated satires have been subjected to censorship and violent attacks (e.g. the case of the two comedians, Pio and Amedeo, who were recently threatened, insulted and accused of racism and hatred against LGBTQ people (Vivaldelli, 2021).

Conclusion

The cancel culture movement and the political forces that support it (including the European Parliament) aim to combat racism and all forms of discrimination. For sure these are noble intentions but they should not be achieved with violent and oppressive means. Destroying the culture of the past (which was necessarily based on different values of the present) is nonsense - an absurd form that only creates social tensions and barbarism. In fact, in this way, racism is bound to grow even more. The cancel culture wanted to create a database (the website is called "Cancelled People") where individuals and companies from all over the world are included. Those who have expressed opinions judged racist and homophobic by the cancel culture movement, and those against the policy of illegal mass immigration, are therefore not in line with the progressive thinking that supports the cancel culture philosophy. Anyone can be brought in for expressing a reasonable opinion that is considered "blasphemous" by the mainstream. Racism can be fought with the culture, the same culture that wants to be erased; the mutual respect and not with brutal attacks by one party against another; with a migration policy that takes into account the numbers of people that can be accepted and the financial capacities of the host country that must be able to maintain the immigrants after their arrival at the beginning and insert them in the labour market later on. There is no point in letting millions of immigrants come in and then abandoning them under the bridges as homeless. The cancel culture always mentions the "white supremacy", the "systemic racism" inherent with Western societies, and the whites who are intrinsically racist and, for this reason, should feel guilty about the privileges they enjoyed throughout history. A white person should feel guilty (white guilt) regardless of anything else because he has skin of that colour and is therefore "privileged". For these reasons the ideological battles of the Crusaders of the politically correct against the symbols of the past are right: history was written by the whites and, therefore, it reflects racism. Because of this, the cancel culture lauded the initiative of the multinational Coca Cola which "invited" its workers to be "less

white” in order to combat racial discrimination. According to this beverage company “white people in the western nations feel superior because they belong to that specific ethnic group” (Betz, 2021).

Many scholars and academicians believe that in this way the racism of blacks against whites and the identity wars between ethnic groups can only produce chaos and sectarian hatred, barriers that prevent mutual understanding and a “constructive dialogue based on respect”. With arrogance, they pretend to rewrite the vocabulary and grammar, to filter the news as they wish, to impose codes of conduct on the basis of a hypocritical fight against racism and homophobia, to rewrite the history, to cradle the sense of guilt to all those who oppose the illegal immigration, and to call anyone who dares to oppose these ideas a fascist.

The fight against discrimination and racism is sacrosanct, dutiful and of course something worthy to be supported. But, expressions such as “war on white thought”, supported by the cancel culture, do not help to fight racism and do not create integration. On the contrary, they breed hatred and create fractures and divisions that cannot be overcome on an ethnic and cultural basis (Vivaldelli, 2021). The arrogance and violence of the cancel culture and those political powers that support that movement, will not produce any positive results at all. Racism will increase and inclusion and respect for minorities in general will be a failure. Due to the cancel culture, two social blocks will arise that will fight each other and this will be a threat to peace and harmony in the nation. Offensive and meaningless statements by the cancel culture exponents, such as the white-skinned Italian players at the last European football championship against the better, multi-ethnic teams, with many black players (Gervasoni, 2021), only create ugly fractures in social relations within the nation. The following rhetorical question arises: is a coach free to call up talented football players for the European Cups and the World Cup or should he choose them by looking at their skin colour? Nobody knows when this ideology will end. One thing is certain: the cancel culture is becoming increasingly extremist and radical, resulting in the coinage of the term, “woke supremacy” (Palmer, 2021). According to the cancel culture, black people are superior to all other races and should therefore dominate any society. This has produced and caused enormous social damage to western nations, not just the Italian in particular, especially in terms of social cohesion. Finally, something important should be recalled. The cancel culture, born in the United States, has proselytized in Italy and Europe among liberal-progressives but has not influenced Asian countries because people in Asia love and carefully preserve the traditions, history, culture and religion of their own country. China, Japan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, South Korea, Laos, Vietnam are great examples (Giuliani, 2021).

Acknowledgement

We would like to thank the Academy of Language Studies Shah Alam for supporting us and also the ICMAL 2021 committee for letting us participate.

References

- Adragna, P. R. (2021). *Cancel culture, che cos'è davvero la “cultura della cancellazione”*. Repubblica.
https://www.repubblica.it/cronaca/2021/06/11/news/cancel_culture_le_parole_per_dirlo-304598775/
- Alldred, P. (2003). *Exile and Asylum: Women Seeking Refuge in ‘Fortress Europe’*. Sage Publications.

- Benignetti, A. (2021). *“Istituzioni di razza bianca”. Ora la sinistra vuole le “quote nere”*. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/politica/sinistra-ora-vuole-quote-nere-e-dice-basta-politica-razza-1949690.html>,
- Betz, B. (2021). *Coca Cola staff told in online training seminar “try to be less white”*. *Foxbusiness*. <https://www.foxbusiness.com/lifestyle/coca-cola-staff-online-training-seminar-be-less-white>
- Greenspan, R. E. (2020). *How 'cancel culture' quickly became one of the buzziest and most controversial ideas on the internet*. Insider. <https://www.insider.com/cancel-culture-meaning-history-origin-phrase-used-negatively-2020-7>
- Deneen, P. J. (2018). *Why Liberalism Failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Dershowitz, A. (2020). *Cancel Culture: The Latest Attack on Free Speech and Due Process*. New York: Hot Books.
- Fazio, G. (2019). *La Barbie unisex lanciata dalla Mattel*. Agenzia Italia. https://www.agi.it/estero/bambola_barbie_unisex_mattel-6305842/news/2019-10-06/
- Figini, L. (2021). *Ddl Zan: Cosa dice il disegno di legge e perchè impatterà su social e web*. Igizmo. <https://igizmo.it/ddl-zan-cosa-dice-il-disegno-di-legge-e-perche-impattera-su-social-e-web/>
- Freda, G. (2021). *“Germi di razzismo”. Atenei Usa contro latino e greco*. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/mondo/atenei-usa-contro-latino-e-greco-accusati-razzismo-1954614.html>
- Freda, G. (2021). *“Torta di mele razzista”. Ultima crociata della cancel culture*. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/mondo/torta-mele-1954630.html>
- Freda, G. (2021). *Identità di genere pure sui choidini “Perchè usiamo il giallo”*. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/cronache/identity-gender-choice-quercetti-games-children-unisex-1950880.html>
- Gervasoni, M. (2021). *Dai travaglisti ai progressisti, come rosicano gli anti-italiani*. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/politica/dai-travaglisti-ai-progressisti-rosicano-anti-italiani-1961738.html>
- Giardini, G. (2020). *Il trionfo dell'iconoclastia antirazzista*. *Ilsole24ore*. <https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/il-trionfo-dell-iconoclastia-antirazzista-ADJrI3X>
- Giordano, P. (2021). *Il “Politically Correct” che spegne la musica*. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/politically-correct-che-spegne-musica-1948778.html>
- Giuliani, F. (2021). *Un Rinascimento irreversibile*. *Insideover*. https://it.insideover.com/politica/lavvertimento-di-xi-per-i-100-anni-del-pcc-nessuno-puo-intimidirci.html?utm_source=ilGiornale&utm_medium=article&utm_campaign=article_redirect
- Greenspan, R. E. (2020). *How 'cancel culture' quickly became one of the buzziest and most controversial ideas on the internet*. Insider. <https://www.insider.com/cancel-culture-meaning-history-origin-phrase-used-negatively-2020-7>
- La7 Intrattenimento. (2015). *Papa Francesco e Elton John in 'I GAY IN THE CHURCH'*[Video]. Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHAT5O8gZBY>
- Lanzone, M. (2020). *Il politicamente cornetto si abbatte sui film e cartoon. E' scattata l'ora della censura*. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/spettacoli/film-e-censura-tutti-i-casi-col-vento-1873872.html>, June 30, 2020)

- Law, K. (2019). The war on words: how cancel culture is taking over the literary world. Evening Standard. <https://www.standard.co.uk/culture/books/cancel-culture-authors-books-jk-rowling-b900277.html>
- Lewis, H. (2020). *How capitalism drives cancel culture*. The Atlantic. <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2020/07/cancel-culture-and-problem-woke-capitalism/614086/>
- Lorenzo, G. D. (2021). *Ora l'Ong prende a schiaffi pure la lingua italiana: ecco perchè*. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/politica/ora-long-prende-schiaffi-pure-lingua-italiana-ecco-perch-1955162.html>
- Mag, R. (2021). *Cenerentola ai tempi del politically correct: la fatina diventa omosessuale e di colore*. Rabelmag. <https://www.rebelmag.it/2021/05/21/cenerentola-ai-tempi-del-politically-correct-la-fatina-diventa-omosessuale-e-di-colore/>
- Meotti, G. (2019). *Per evitare l'accusa di razzismo gli scrittori riscrivono i propri romanzi*. Ilfoglio. <https://www.ilfoglio.it/cultura/2019/02/12/news/per-evitare-laccusa-di-razzismo-gli-scrittori-riscrivono-i-propri-novzi-237532>
- Migranti: fingersi gay è la scappatoia consigliata loro per avere il permesso di soggiorno (2019). *Tgcom24*. Retrieved from https://www.tgcom24.mediaset.it/cronaca/migranti-fingersi-gay-la-scappatoia-consigliata-loro-per-avere-il-permesso-di-soggiorno_10282210-201902a.shtml
- Nolan, H. (2020). *The coddling of the elites*. IN THESETIMES. <https://inthesetimes.com/article/free-speech-labor-journalism-harpers-coddling-elites>
- Noli, V. (2018). Dante e gli omosessuali nella Commedia, intervista a Aldo Onorati. A naso. <http://www.anaso.it/2018/06/25/intervista-a-aldo-onorati-dante-e-gli-omosessuali-nella-commedia/>
- Palmer, E. (2021). *'Woke Supremacy' Definition as Sen. Tim Scott uses phrases to rail against cancel culture*. Newsweek. <https://www.newsweek.com/woke-supremacy-definition-tim-scott-phrase-cancel-culture-1575448>,
- Perché le razze non esistono scientificamente (2017). *Il Post*. https://www.ilpost.it/2017/07/16/perche-le-razze-non-esistono-scientificamente/#steps_1
- Pesaresi, F. (2019). *Gli stranieri nelle carceri*. Wellforumit. <https://welforum.it/gli-stranieri-nelle-carceri/>
- Provenzani, F. (2018). *Perché George Soros finanzia l'arrivo degli immigrati in Italia*. Moneyit. <https://www.money.it/George-Soros-finanzia-arrivo-immigrati-Italia>
- Rampolla, V. (2021). *Cancel culture, la cultura dell'oblio*. Nelfuturo. <https://www.nelfuturo.com/Cancel-culture-la-cultura-dell-oblio>
- Redazione (2020). *Il buio oltre la censura*. Il Foglio. <https://www.ilfoglio.it/cultura/2020/06/10/news/il-buio-oltre-la-censura-320827/>
- Roma, (2021). *Polizia arresta pusher, ma viene liberato perché "spacciare è la sua sola fonte di guadagno": Decreto sicurezza cambi il codice*. Il Giornale. <https://www.equilibriosicurezza.it/polizia-arresta-ma-liberato/>
- Sacchi, M. (2020). *Persino Giulio Cesare il "democratico" vittima di chi devasta la storia e le statue*. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/politica/persino-giulio-cesare-democratico-vittima-chi-devasta-storia-1870617.html>
- Smith, K. (2021). The publishing industry has turned into modern-day book burners. New York Post. <https://nypost.com/2021/05/01/the-publishing-industry-has-turned-into-modern-day-book-burners/>

- Stacey, S. (2019). *Dismissed research fellow Noah Carl raises over \$100,000 to fund legal action against Eddies's*. Varsity. <https://www.varsity.co.uk/news/17849>
- Veneziani, M. (2021). *Da dove nasce la cancel culture?* Marcello Veneziani. <http://www.marcelloveneziani.com/articoli/da-dove-nasce-la-cancel-culture/>
- Virgilio, M. (2020). *Vincenzo Trione: "Abbatere le statue è un errore, le opere razziste vanno sfidate"*. Fanpage. <https://www.fanpage.it/cultura/vincenzo-trione-abbattere-le-statue-e-un-errore-le-opere-razziste-vanno-sfidate/>
- Vitali, C. (2018). *Come ti rieduco quel razzista di Mozart*. MUSICA. <https://www.rivistamusica.com/come-ti-rieduco-quel-razzista-di-mozart/>
- Vivaldelli, R. (2021). *Così i Simpson cedono alle pressioni di Black Lives Matter*. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/cultura-e-spettacoli/cos-i-simpson-cedono-pressioni-black-lives-matter-1926190.html>
- Vivaldelli, R. (2021). *L'ultima follia contro il "pensiero bianco"*. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/sport/lilian-thuram-e-guerra-pensiero-bianco-1946807.html>
- Vivaldelli, R. (2021). *In Italia non si può più dire nulla. Il branco contro #PioAmedeo*. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/cronache/italia-non-si-pu-pi-dire-nulla-censura-contro-pio-e-amedeo-1943499.html>