



## TOPIC 2: Intercultural Dialogue

### Collection of materials

#### Tf 230/1 Fundamentalist schools in Italy

From: „Corriere della Sera“<sup>30<sup>th</sup></sup>. August 2005 (Author: Magdi Allam)

*These schools „are attended by tens of thousands of immigrants, who are trained in fundamentalist and extremist forms of Islam“.*

*The most significant and complicated case is that of the Islamic school in Via Quaranta in Milan, which has been under suspicion and investigation for taking in people well-known in Islamic terrorism.*

*This is an all-day primary and middle school, which today has about 500 pupils and has been operating for more than ten years without any legal foundation and without any licence from either Italy or Egypt.*

*The case of this Islamic school was made public when the parents of dozens of pupils (.....)made a request for their children to be enrolled in the state grammar school “Agnesi”, on condition, however, that they should be taught there in separate classes, with no crucifix on the wall, and with Muslim teachers for Arabic and religious instruction.*

*Fortunately this project was turned down by the Minister of Education, Letizia Moratti, as it would have legitimized the double system of schooling for Muslims in the name of a fabricated peculiarity of Islam.*

#### Tf 230/2 The school in Via Quaranta in Milan is declared illegal

From: "Corriere della Sera", 8th. September 2005 (Author: Maurizio Giannattasio)

*The letter was despatched yesterday. The school in Via Quaranta is not suitable for the reception of children. Just a few days before the beginning of the school year the education authorities – as a result of an inspection in May-June – decided that no permission for work with children could be granted in the Islamic school building, because this was a building for industrial purposes.*

*The school year begins on Monday. “What will the 1000 children who attended the Fajr do?”, wonders Antoniazzi; “You can’t close down a school from one day to the next (.....)” “As far as I’m concerned,” replies Simini, “they’ll have to go to a state school. There are plenty of them and they work well. I hope they follow my advice.”*

#### Tf 230/3 The families’ reaction: Islamic school, lessons on the pavement

From: „la Repubblica“, 20th. September 2005 (Author: Teresa Monestiroli)

*„ They refuse to enroll at the state school. They demand the reopening of their own school. And since yesterday they have been teaching lessons to the children on the pavement in Via Quaranta, 54, in front of locked doors. The parents of the Arabic school have determined on confrontation. And they have decided , until things change, to move the school desks on to the street. (.....) They are demanding a building in which their children can continue their lessons, in line with the Italian and Egyptian schools curricula, from kindergarten through to middle school.*

*It is 8.30 a.m. when fifty parents arrive in Via Quaranta to protest. About thirty children are sitting on the pavement: they are being taught Arabic (the boys) and religious instruction (the girls).*

*The parents are prepared to continue their protest. Only about 15 have asked for information on state schools; only 5 have enrolled there.*

*But the protest has fuelled the controversy. (.....) the regional director of studies, Dutto, is worried: „This is a deplorable situation; schoolchildren have never been seen having lessons on the street in Milan.” Criticism also comes from the Islamic community: “They are causing bitterness. You cannot put yourself above the law,” says Abdel Hamid Shaari, President of the Centre for Islam in Viale Jenner, “The proper way now is to go to the state school or to be taught by the parents, but still according to Italian law.”*