

The Ursuline School in Lecco, in Liceo Classico Manzoni

22.10.-26.10.2013

A scenic view of a large, multi-tiered stone wall, likely a fortification or castle wall, constructed from light-colored stone blocks. The wall runs across the upper half of the image. Behind the wall, a dense line of tall, dark green evergreen trees is visible. In the foreground, a lush green lawn slopes downwards from left to right. Several trees are scattered across the lawn; some have green foliage, while others show signs of autumn with yellow and orange leaves. A small, dark, rectangular object, possibly a bench or a small structure, is visible on the lawn to the left. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and scenic.

THE FIRST DAY

In the morning we came to school for the first meeting. We were welcomed hospitably by the headmaster, the teachers and the students. The students prepared a powerpoint presentation about the Liceo Classico Alessandro Manzoni. During the show we found out a lot about the Italian system of education, Liceo Classico and we compared it with the one in Poland.

The next point of the programme was a break with some tea and delicious cakes made by a teacher.



After the gathering at school we left Lecco for **Sotto il Monte** – Pope John XXIII's birthplace. This person is very important during the consideration about human rights, which is the topic of our exchange, because with his life certificate and words that he told us we can learn how to respect the human rights, especially the right to freedom, confess religion and receive education.

First we came to the Pilgrim's House- a modern museum about Pope John XXIII, where we watched a very interesting film about him.

Then we visited S. John Baptist's Church , which was consecrated by Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli (John XXII). The bronze portal of the church represents the two popes, John Paul II and John XXIII and it is called „walking toward the hope”.



From the church we went down towards the Crypt called „Obedience and Peace” with John XXIII parents' tombs, the cross that he wanted to see when he was dying, a priestly stole and the moulds of his face and hand. It is a great place for reflection upon existence.

Afterwards we met in a place called „Garden of Peace” where we listened to John Paul II reflections from Message for the 2003 Peace Day.

The next point of the programme was visiting the church S. Mary in Brusicco. On the altar he celebrated his first Mass and on the right wall there is the slab of the tomb where his body was deposited after his death.

The last place in Sotto il Monte we saw was Pope John XXIII's house. We were shocked because of a huge poverty inside. A good example to explain how poor his family was is a description of his parent's bedroom. There wasn't even a bed, they used to sleep on sacks full of corn leaves and instead of blankets they used old clothes. But it is important to remember that even if they were so poor, they did what they could to encourage his vocation to study. Nowadays there are numerous similar situations in the world, when children rights to receive an education are not respected because of the poverty.



After visiting Sotto il Monte we set out to **Bergamo**, where we had a tour of the old city.

Bergamo is a very beautiful town. Mrs. Laura Polo, an Italian art teacher, showed us wonderful places and told us their story. We saw remarkable frescoes, constructions in Gothic and Romanesque style. We had an opportunity to visit many amazing churches and other monuments.

We liked especially Piazzia Vecchia which is the heart of Bergamo", Cathedral and Baptistery, Bishop Palace, Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore , Porta Sant` Agostino- the gateway to Bergamo





It was a very exciting and tiring trip. Images of these beautiful places will remain in us forever.

At the end of the day all students and their guests met in a pizzeria and had a great time together 😊



THE SECOND DAY



A VISIT TO MILAN

Our Italian friends showed us round one of the most ancient churches in Milan- Basilica of Sant'Ambrogio. It was built by St. Ambrose in 379-386, in an area where numerous martyrs of the Roman persecutions had been buried. The first name of the church was in fact *Basilica Martyrum*.



We could have a close look at the 10th century golden altar depicting the life of Jesus on one side and Saint Ambrogio on the other. It is decorated with precious stones, jewels and diamonds.





Just imagine we entered La Scala, which is a world-renowned opera house in Milan!! The theatre was inaugurated on 3 August 1778 and was originally known as the New Royal-Ducal Theatre alla Scala.

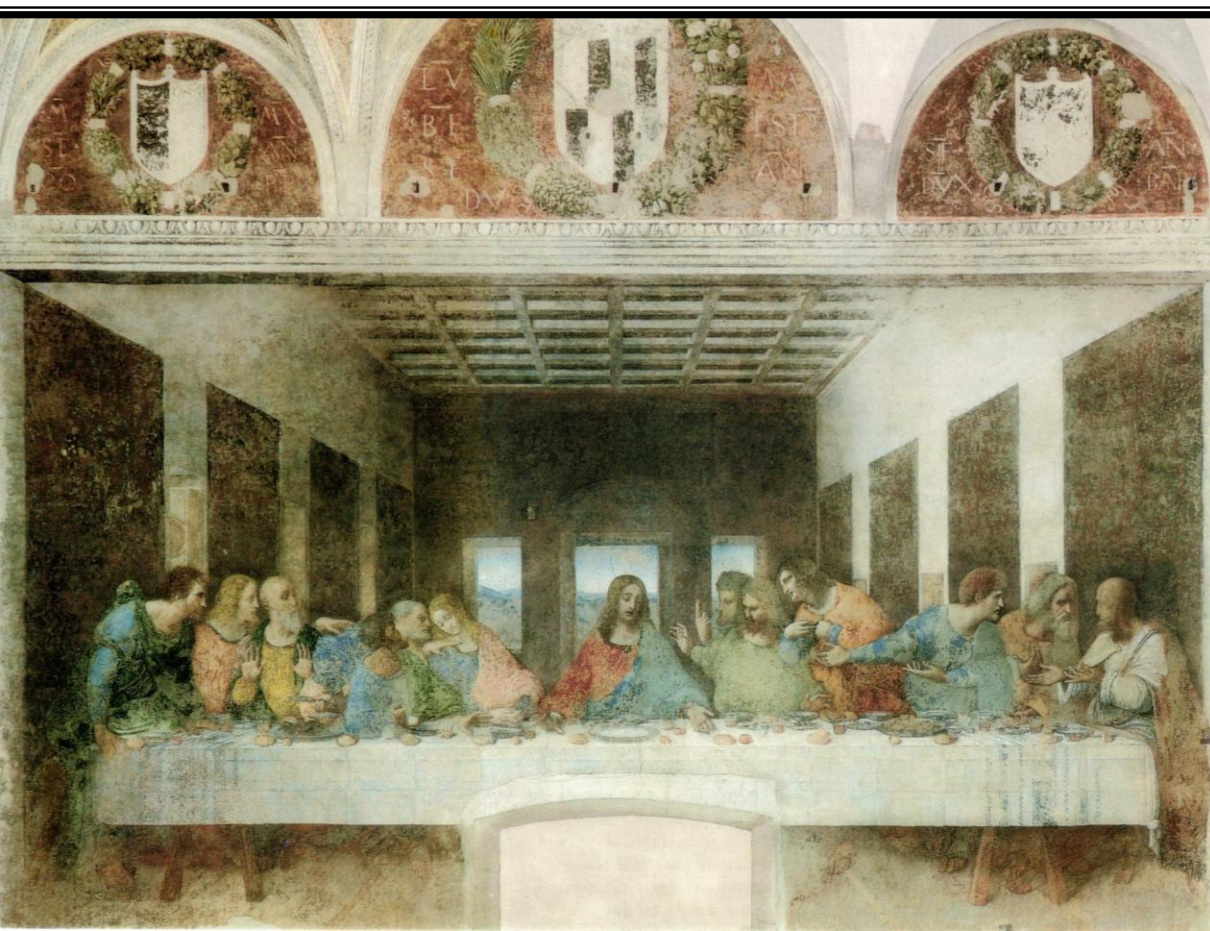
It used to be the meeting place for noble and wealthy Milanese people. Thanks to the special offer for schools- Liceo Manzoni took us there. Again the Human Right to use the cultural heritage helped us experience something special ! Schools have a discount price for the dress rehearsals so we were lucky to take advantage of it.

We had an opportunity to listen to Johannes Brahms 3rd Symphony conducted by Andre Previn. We were enchanted by the dignified atmosphere, remarkable performance and the fabulous interior.

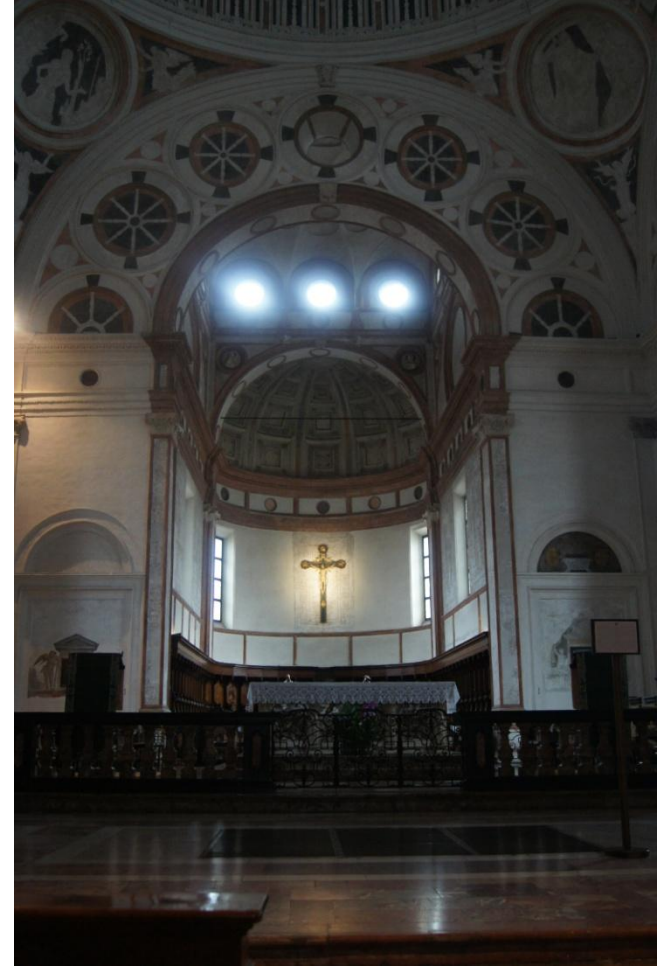


'Last Supper' is a fresco painted by Leonardo da Vinci. It is situated in Cenacolo Vinciano, near the Church of Santa Maria delle Grazie. Leonardo painted it on the wall of Santa Maria delle Grazie's monastery's refectory between 1495 and 1498. That's all about the facts, i think. Almost everybody from the group waited the whole day to see this masterpiece. Some of us expected it'll be totally destroyed and those people got surprised how well it is preserved. Thank to our fantastic and well-informed tour guide we got to know a lot of things about this fresco and Leonardo in general, that we are unable to find in books available in Poland.

Last Supper



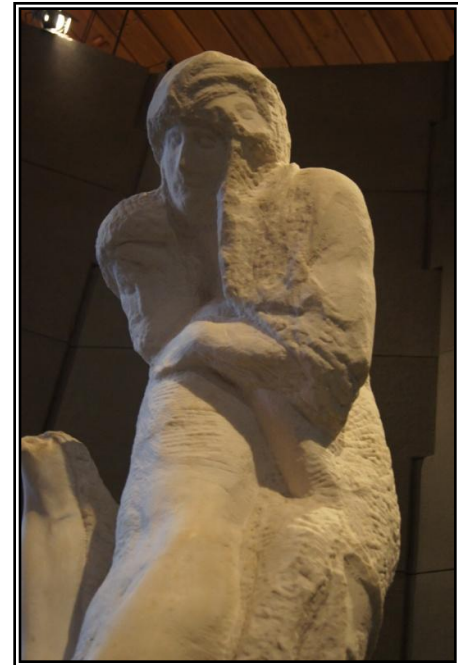
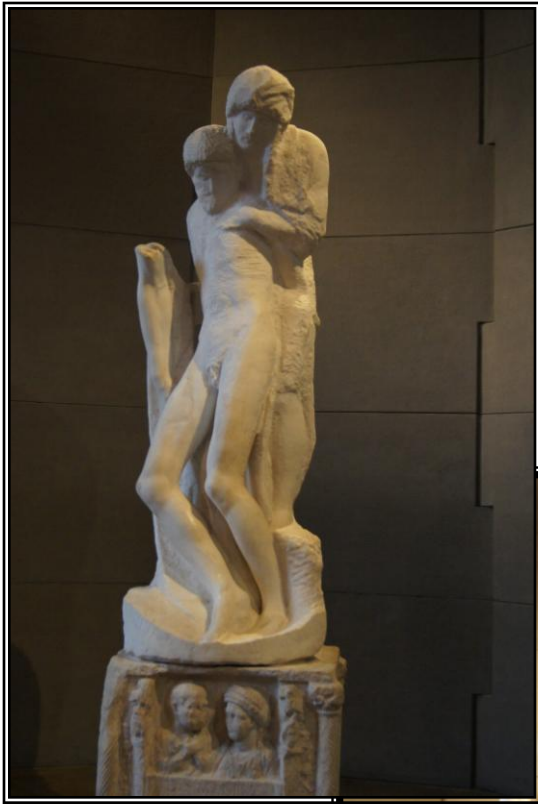
Church of Santa Maria delle Grazie



The church was designed by Guiniforte Solari in 15th century. It has a basilical shape with three naves. Donato Bramante, a very famous architect used all his favourite motives, for example both chancel and transept are ended by semicircle. We were all impressed by paintings on the walls that show a very wide range of symbols.

Pieta Rondanini

A masterpiece by Michelangelo shows Holy Mary standing and shoring the body of dead Jesus up. The sculptor sculpted the Pieta in his old age and for some people it isn't finished. On the other hand, at the beginning he didn't make a decision of faces' places so both Mary and Jesus seem to have two faces. This was the main fact that made us shocked. We had a chance to have a close look at it in a beautiful Sforza's Castle.



We could also visit the magnificent Gothic Cathedral in Milan, which is one of the world's largest churches. Its dazzling white front facade, the world's most beautiful, dominates the cathedral square. It was built since 14th to 19th century



THE THIRD DAY



Silk museum

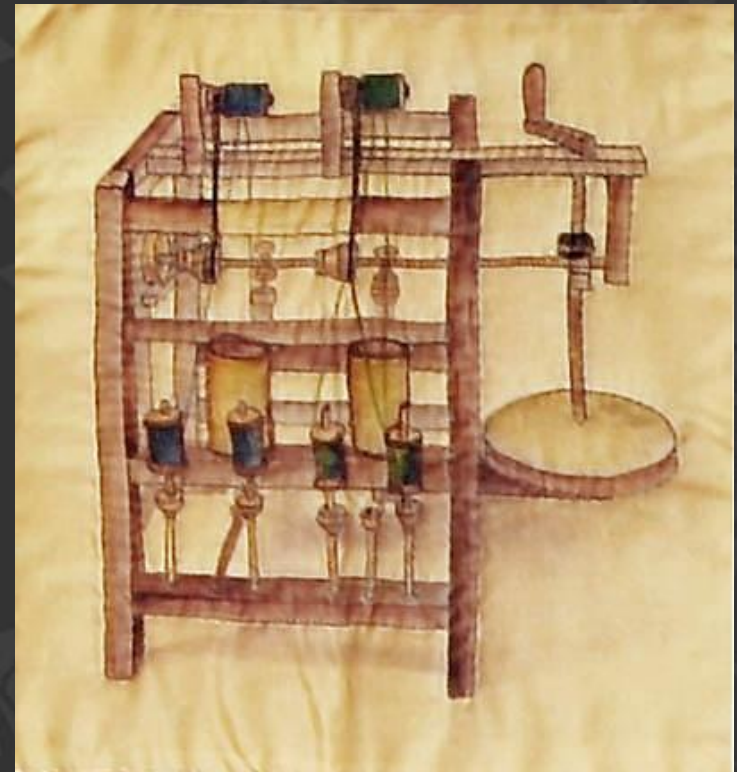


History

In 1818 Pietro Monti, came to Abbazia Lariana From Milan. He transformed the old building for felting wool into a place for the production of silk.

The circular spinning machine of 1818 can still work. In 1998 the “Museo Setificio Monti” was finally opened.

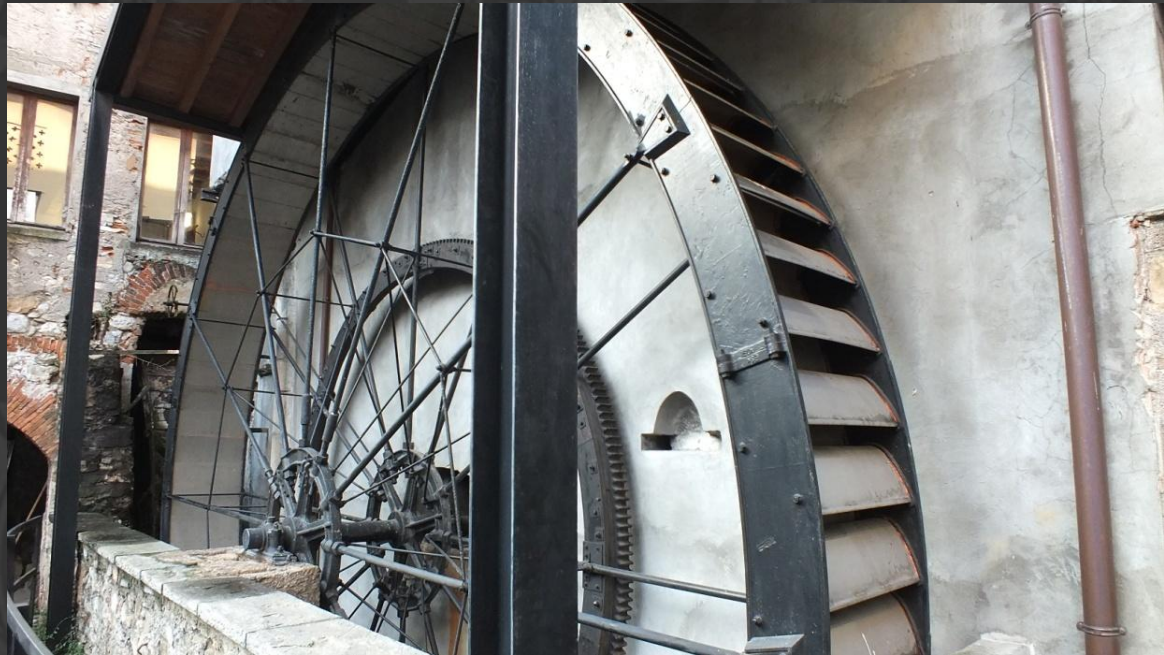
We had an occasion to visit this place.
We were very curious about the history of this place.



We learned how silk was produced.



We could watch how a huge machine worked to produce kilograms of silk.
It was really an interesting experience.



St. Giorgio's church in Mandello



We were also in a beautiful church in Mandello.
It is not known but it's really worth visiting.





In this church there were beautiful paintings. Almost all of them were fabulous medieaval frescoes which are being renovated now.

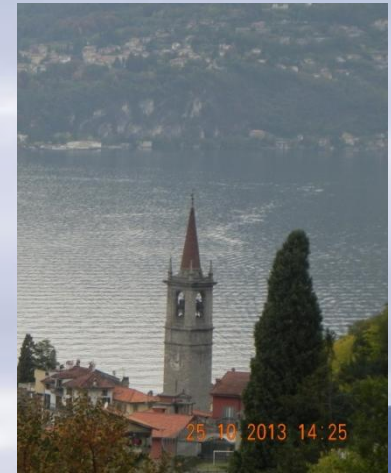




Umberto explained the meaning and message of the paintings connected with the Last Judgement. He was such a convincing tour guide that we not only admired the frescoes but also felt as if we had taken part in the Last Judgement ourselves!



While following the path and observing indescribably amazing views, we were walking down to Varenna.



There we visited the villa 'Monastero' Near the lake 'Como...'

... and a stunning garden with amazing flowers.



Then we went by ferry to Bellagio.



While sailing....



The feery was swaying softly on the waves and we were surrouned by high hills of the mountains and colorful villages.



After the cruise we spent our free time in Bellagio walking through the narrow paths, eating ice cream and relaxing by the lake. It was a wonderful moment to get to know each other better.





Party –

All`s Well That Ends Well

The party was held on Friday evening. Our friends prepared lots of typical Italian dishes and cakes. We all were dancing. The best attraction was karaoke. Lots of people tried their hand at it - not only students but teachers as well. The last song we sung together. It was 'We are the world'. We will never forget it.



We are the world, we are the children
We are the ones who make a brighter day
so let's start giving
There's a choice we're making
We're saving our own lives
It's true we'll make a better day
Just you and me

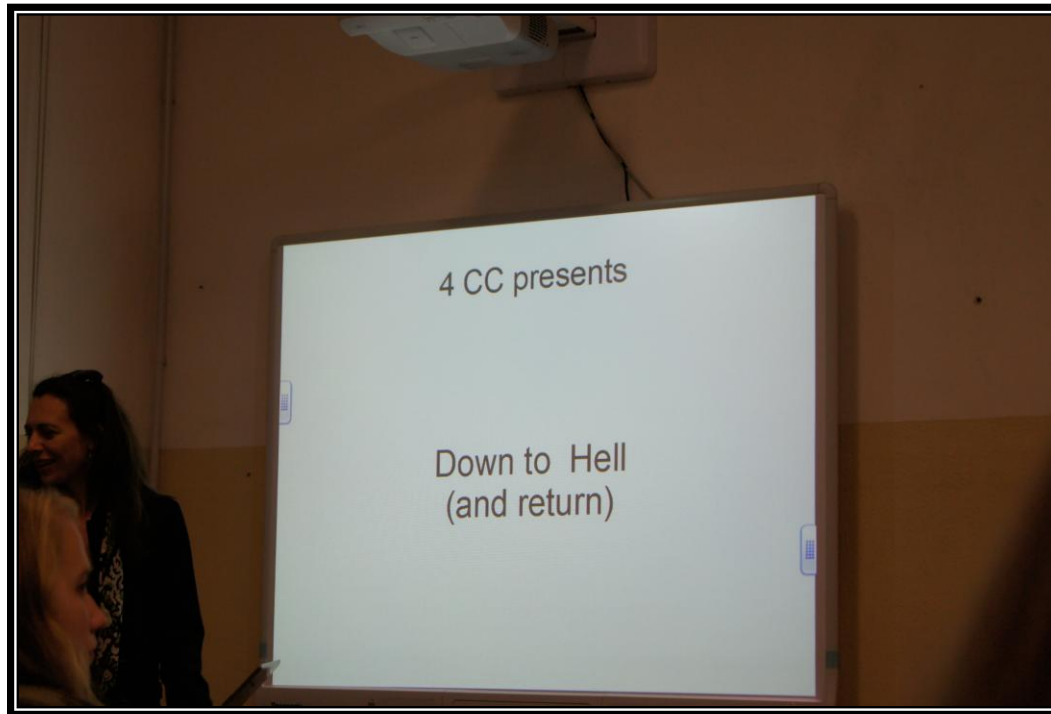


THE FOURTH DAY

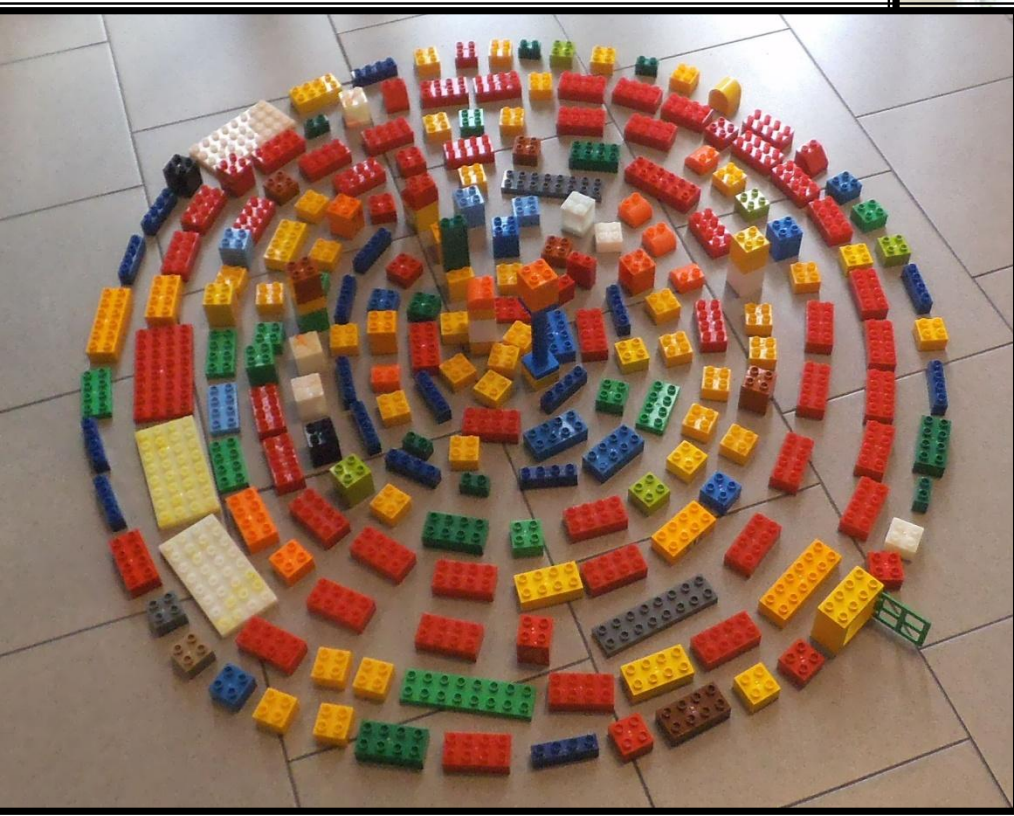


Dante's hell

Reflection about human rights



Dante (Gioele) in „Divine Comedy” was travelling inside the hell, purgatory and heaven. On Friday during the workshops we concentrated on the hell, then the Italian group gave a performance about it. We analysed following hell's circles.



In front of the hell's gate, Charon (Marco) refused Dante and Virgil (Filippo) to take them to the other side of the Acheront River. When Dante had fallen asleep, Charon at last took them there. Then Dante could start his journey around the hell.



In the 2nd circle of the hell, Dante met lovers Francesca (Rebecca) and Paolo (Umberto), who sinned with covetousness.



During the journey, in the 6th hell's circle Dante met his friend Farinat degli Uberti (Alessandro), who was miscreant imprisoned in a flaring tomb.



In the 7th hell's circle Dante met suicides who were changed into trees. He was unaware of this fact and he picked a twig from one of them. After that he heard a story about this soul (Noemi).



In the 8th circle Dante met Ulisses (Michele)
who was punished for the strategem of the
Trojan horse.



In the same place,
Dante met also
Bertrand de Born
(Filippo G.) – king's
adviser who divided
father and son and
because of that his
head and body are
divided.



After the performance we sacrificed a while for collective reflection about human rights.

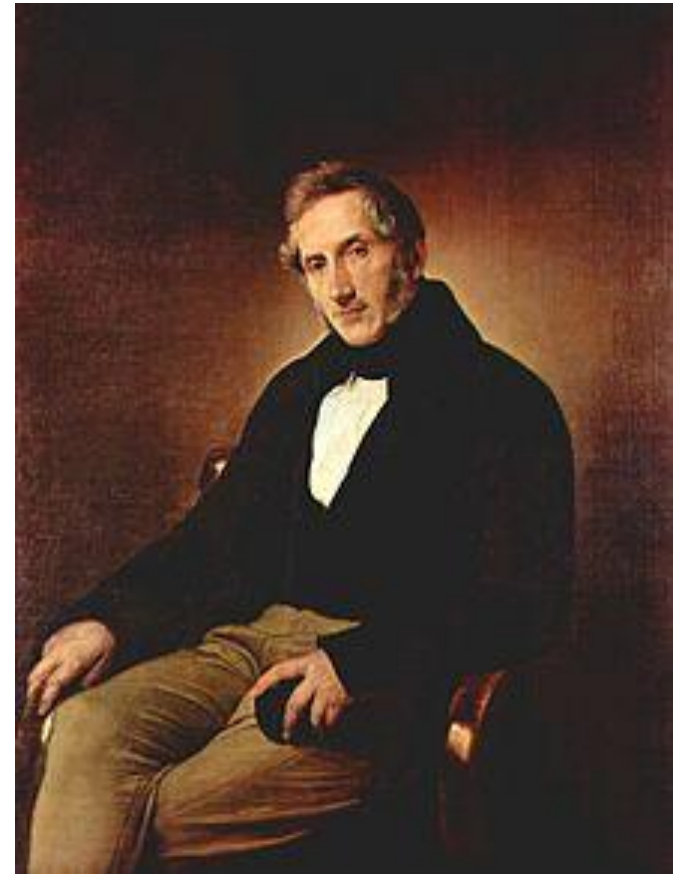


We reached the conclusions that:

- breaking human rights always ends with punishment,
- when sb. wants to have more freedom than the others he/she takes away freedom of someone else (what we can see f.eg. in Auschwitz)
- Dante's hell is an admonition for people who proceed badly and break human rights.
- Human being has a right to be listened to by other people, but it's often broken.

After the workshop, we watched a presentation about Alessandro Manzoni.

He was one of the most important Italian novelists, who lived in 18 and 19th century, in the period of Romanticism, the author of a very popular novel „*The Betrothed*“. A. Manzoni is the patron of our host school



Last day our Italian friends showed us their gorgeous city – Lecco. After walking through the XVIII centuries streets we saw two churches, inter alia Basilic of Saint Nicholas.



Our trip around the city finished near the lake. Later we had free time. Some of us came back to houses, some stayed in Lecco.



We met at school at 18:30. It was time to say „Goodbye”. After the long farewell, we went to the airport . We came back home tired but full of unforgettable memories.

