

Useless Europe is taking away from us even the Crucifix

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Religions are not like coins. The European Union was subtly planned, beginning with the economy and the coinage: this is why until now it has been possible to keep at a lower level the clash against what really *makes* a People and *is made* by Peoples: their feelings, religions, their spirit, their past, history, traditions, values and the meaning that Peoples give to their "being themselves".

In practice, religions contain all this, and reflect it in the very same moment in which they shape it. In ideological terms we can try to explain the difference between the Orthodox and the Catholic churches, or between the Orthodox and the Reformed churches. But it is self evident that those Churches were not *created* by Theology. The Orthodox ritual is so solemn in its gestures, with the warmth of its chants, with the intense and calm passion of its icons: it stems out of the Russian soul, from the Russian people. No English or Swedish man could produce something similar.

The politicians who planned the European union proclaimed that they are unifying us because we are all equal; but it is not possible to be equal in religion, since religions are different one from the other - as languages - mirroring the differences between Peoples. Now the most difficult time has come for the European Union: to live the Union without becoming sterile, without dying.

First of all, this means to preserve the visible signs of religious belonging. In Italy, architectures, paintings, the Crucifix, the innumerable Madonnas are part of the History of Art; are part of the traditions of a country that for so many centuries nurtured itself with the beauty of the Gospel. It is impossible to imagine Saint Francis without the gentle landscape of Umbria, Saint Benedict without the ordered severity of the roman work, Raphael without the loving contemplation of the Virgin Mary.

Today they want to take the Crucifix away from public schools, pretending to do this to protect the freedom of the students. But what about the thousands of small chapels consecrated to the Virgin Mary, protecting travelers at crossroads? They are "public", and someone, on his own right, will soon ask to eliminate them. So let us look at our very next future: if in the EU, in order to be free, we have to cancel all the public signs showing that we belong to a certain culture, this means that *no People will be a People anymore*. Unless they believe that, putting the portraits of Barroso in schools and at crossroads, they will make us feel like a People. The private world does not create a People, and this is what it will happen: all differences will be forced to live or to survive only in the private world. Europe will become very weak, because little by little - also in our memory - all distinctive traits, which connect together the Peoples that inhabit it, will be cancelled.

To touch religious habits means to touch people's souls. This is extremely dangerous, even in Europe, where it seems that Faith has vanished and participation to precepts is dropping. This is something that the governors - including the religious ones - did not take into consideration, when they agreed to become part of the European unification. But the scarcely visible obedience to the commands of the Church, especially in the western world, does not mean that they have been abandoned. It is the opposite: it means that, together with the growing development of critical thinking, there also is a strong need for religion, which is critic, deep and very difficult to express. It is a very demanding and truthful need, but until now the Catholic Church was not able to fulfill it.

Today Christians have a much better knowledge of the meaning of a religion; this is why their rebellion will be stronger against the pretense of taking away the Crucifix from the schools, than against a doctrinal imposition of equality. Everybody in Europe knows this, all our great thinkers - from Plato to Descartes to Leopardi - taught us that "to be" means "to be different".

For the sake of Italy and also of Europe, Italian governors should immediately move. Brussels must become very used to innumerable exceptions...