

Thoughts and Sayings

Renzo Novatore

1917

Man owes his arm to the Republic, his intelligence to the gods, his person to the family; but the feelings of his heart are free. So wrote Plato. But I don't agree with any of this except what relates to the feeling of the heart; the rest, aside from being very questionable, could also be detestable.

Troilus wrote: *I don't want to be myself, or have knowledge of what I feel.* And I note with bitter sadness that there are so many who have carried out this terrifying curse of his, and, what is worse, who want to impose it as the gospel of life on their children.

The one who has found himself again hears songs of freedom and victory echoing in the depths of his spirit.

If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him, Voltaire affirmed; fortunately, Bakunin answered: *If god existed, it would be necessary to kill him.*

The soul restored to itself, alone in possession of all its being and all its power, naturally catches a glimpse of and feels this something inaccessible to reason. So wrote Louis Thomassin. But which of you doesn't know that he was a theologian?

There is no greater sign of being not much of a philosopher and not much of a wise man than wanting all of life to be wise and philosophical. So Leopardi concluded, and in saying this he spoke a great truth. But today the collective madness has passed the sign by far, and the sad, melancholy poet of Sorrow cannot have any moral responsibility in this sinister event.

Tacitus was mercilessly relentless against all those responsible for the atrocious wars that devastated all humanity in his times. But Tacitus lived in one of those unhappy (?) times when wars were called “barbarism” even by great historians like he himself. Meanwhile in our and Benedetto Croce’s century, instead war is called “civilization”! When one speaks of the times!

Lucretius, who lived in a time saturated with the horrors of war, sang his solemn lyrical compositions to Venus, goddess of Love, begging her to placate the fierce wrath of Mars. Gabriele D’Annunzio, acting as the new Homer (?), plucks his lyre making his hosanna pour out to the bestial god of war so that he can become still more bestial and cruel. This may also be a question of the times, but I believe that it is rather a question of vanity and of... cash!

Horace, addressing himself—as one would say in modern language—to the “civilizers” of his time, exclaimed: *Are you swept away in a blind rage?—Answer me! They are silent*—He goes on: *A ghastly pallor colors their faces; it is the crime of fratricide going back to the time when the blood of Remus fell on the earth abhorrent to grandchildren.* But Horace has been dead a long time and the “ghastly pallor” no longer colors the face of our warriors.

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