

UNICA Rectors Seminar

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Welcome all of you to Rome, in the name of an “ever closer union among the peoples of Europe”! Thank you to our guests for their important contributions. Thanks to the public and thanks also, of course, to the Sapienza University Rector, for giving me the chance to say some evocative words on the sixtieth anniversary of the Treaties of Rome, as well as on those twelve, let me say, “fathers of Europe” who subscribed such innovative, courageous and long-sighted texts, full of historical relevance.

Luckily the current leadership of our Alma Mater dedicates great attention to the education of students to the European dimension, while promoting the full participation of the Sapienza in it. In this regard, I’d like also to remind you of the enlightened activity performed by our former Rector Antonio Ruberti, later Italian minister for Scientific and Technological Research and European commissioner in the same field. In our small way, together with other colleagues from the Sapienza and other universities in Italy, we have promoted an academic network called “University for Europe. Towards political union”, aiming at deepening reflections, debates and proposals concerning what? Of course the finishing lines, the objectives included since the Fifties both in the CSEC treaty and also, even though less neatly formulated, in the ECM and Euratom texts. Let’s hope we’ll be able through our network to enlarge the area of a creative discussion.

Well, it was quite a rainy day when the “fathers” ascended the Capitol Hill, that Monday, March 25. By the way, it sounds a bit curious that also Altiero Spinelli and the other Italian federalists were soaking wet when they founded their clandestine Movement, end of August 1943, in a private house in Milan. As a result, they resembled ancient Roman senators, covered as they were with white bed sheets, while discussing their founding documents. And senators

were in the same way, even though less soaked and more elegantly dressed, the twelve “fathers”, when seated in the room of Orazi and Curiazi with the frescos of Roman history behind them.

Of course, they were not as excited or ready to risk their lives as were Ursula Hirschmann and Spinelli (a former Sapienza student...) when they left Milan soon thereafter to reach the *Confoederatio* (I stress the term) *Helvetica* and the Dutch pastor Willem Visser 't Hooft, then the conference of Paris, with the federalist dream in their eyes. Nevertheless, the twelve were true senators, absolutely conscious of their task: give life to a new epoch of coexistence among peoples and of rule of law. For this reason they had willingly convened to the Capitol (notoriously imitated in Washington) convinced as they were of the symbolic potential of their choice. Where choice, of course, was absolutely more important than symbols, let's be sure.

Anyway, who would dare deny that *der Alte*, Konrad Adenauer, the 81 year old *Kanzler* of the Federal Republic of Germany, had voluntarily reached this town to personally validate the start of a process capable to create in a foreseeable future the elective Parliament of the European citizens? How to forget that Adenauer, together with Robert Schuman and Alcide De Gasperi, had once again spread throughout the continent the values of a common Christian culture, open to democracy and social issues?

All right, let me joke just a moment, maybe, if restored to life, the founder of our Sapienza University, pope Boniface VIII, in the year 1303, would have called for more power to the Holy See upon the same Europe that in England was mocked as Carolingian. But the king or president of France would have probably soon restored a notorious *Palais* in Avignon... Anyway the spiritual inheritance of the *Respublica Christiana*, capable of overcoming the national-ethnic borders of the Six and beyond, resulted an irreplaceable asset in order to establish a sincere dialogue even with the winning power on the other side of the Atlantic sea, taking into account its antagonism against communism and its determination to keep Western Europe united under its control.

Surely, Christian common values, together with democratic and liberal principles, have had a great role in pushing Europe, with the support of American institutions and society, towards a potentially federalist solution. To the point that it would be honest, better, realistic, to insert also a US president, like general Eisenhower, among the founding fathers of the united Europe. Not to say that the white figure beyond the Tiber, not so far from the Capitol, contributed very effectively in promoting the process, notoriously dialoguing both with Euro-Catholic and American politicians. Let alone that a later Polish bishop of Rome would deal quite a great blow to a certain wall...

Coming back to Adenauer, among his merits we can also remember his support for Walter Hallstein, appointed by the Chancellor as State Secretary in the Federal Foreign Office since 1951, present in Rome for the signature of the Treaties and ready to become the excellent president of the EEC Commission that everybody knows. Vice-rector of the Frankfurt University, guest lecturer at Georgetown university, the jurist Hallstein, had been prisoner of war in the USA, where he set up sort of a camp university for his fellow prisoners. This to confirm that universities are always important for our Europe, together with books like Hallstein's "*Der unvollendete Bundesstaat*". "*Unvollendete*", unaccomplished... True.

As to French participation in the 1957 signature, since general Charles De Gaulle was even taller than Adenauer, we can be sure that he would have been very noticeable if he had appeared in the Capitol that day. Thankfully, he needed one year more to reach the *Elisée*. So, also in this case his chair remained empty... Not that bad actually, because the French minister of Foreign Affairs present at the ceremony, Christian Pineau (while the premier Guy Mollet, although pro-European, remained in Paris), revives in our minds the contribution of the French socialist culture to the European unification building. Of course we have always admired also Paul-Henri Spaak, the Belgian "father", socialist as well, for his essential contribution to the birth of ECM (let alone that Catherine Spaak, the actress so loved by Italian public, was his niece). And a grateful memory should be reserved also to the other French "rad-soc" (radical-socialist) subscriber of the Treaties Maurice Faure, beside

Pineau. By the way, in 1930, a “rad-soc” like Aristide Briand had been the author of the famous Memorandum for a European federal union.

We must anyway remember that Pineau had suffered terrible experiences during his Resistance militancy, before being sent to Buchenwald. Nevertheless his sentiments remained the same: *“On ne fait rien tout seul dans la vie : je suis pour les oeuvres collectives et contre la personnalisation.”* And we also can’t do without quoting his fascinating book, *Le Grand pari. L’aventure du Traité de Rome*, published by Fayard, Paris, in the year 1991, when he was still alive.

All this reminds us of the too easily forgotten cultural and militant tradition in favour of peace and «the United States of Europe» that had its apogee, also with relevant American and English contributions, during the decades of various national Risorgimentos, numerous congresses of peace and the First Socialist International experience in the 19th century. This year we will also commemorate, I hope, in the Sapienza and elsewhere the 150th anniversary of the “Congrès de la paix et la liberté” of Geneva, when illustrious Europeans from all countries assembled in the Swiss city to try to give peace, democracy, free market and development to Europe. They hoped and supported the adoption of the institutions already introduced in North America and, in 1848, precisely in Switzerland. Many incredibly fascinating persons and facts could be quoted in this regard. I’ll just mention the book “The United States of Europe”, written by such an admirable intellectual as Charles Lemonnier.

Honestly speaking, personalities and events like these should be rooted in our common European culture, as already are Immanuel Kant, or Jan Amos Komensky, the Czech pacifist honored by the EU programs together with Erasmus and Nicolai Grundtvig, or Salvador de Madariaga, cofounder of the “Collège d’Europe” in Bruges, to whom I’d like also to add William Penn, the British Quaker both founder of Pennsylvania and first promoter of the European unity based on a common Parliament. His dream, he wrote, was England to be the promoter of European unification... And what about David Mitrany, the Romanian theorist of functionalism, so dear to “father” Jean

Monnet, before the latter founded in 1955 the Committee for the United States of Europe?

Going ahead, as to the liberal tradition represented in Capitol Hill that rainy but glorious day, I'll just hint at Gaetano Martino, the Italian Foreign Affairs minister, the five European language-speaking Sicilian, who had promoted and hosted the Messina Conference, also in his villa. On his figure another speaker in this meeting will show a much deeper knowledge than I have. Therefore... I only allow myself, for academic patriotism, to say that Martino, professionally a physiologist, having also been minister of Public Education in the Fifties, became Rector of Sapienza in 1966 until his premature death.

Well, approaching my conclusion, I have the pleasure to remind also of the importance of the so called "small countries", those that had already given birth to the Benelux before Europe started repenting its sins and mistakes. Thanks to their culture and the historical experiences of their motherlands, prominent leaders like the Dutch William Beyen (please remember the Beyen Plan), or Joseph Bech, the long lasting Foreign Affairs minister of Luxembourg, present in Rome (together of course with the great Spaak, atop the same name Committee and Report), resulted essential to laying the foundations of the common market. Moreover they offered to our peoples the seats of European institutions. A great result indeed, for, since Charles V, or according to numerous pacifist proposals, whenever Europe gets united, former Lotharingia looks like the best place to establish our common capitals. On the contrary it turns out to be the battlefield, or bone of contention, when drums start rolling again.

Much better, therefore, let me say, having today Jean-Claude Junker (together with the Polish President of the European Council, Donald Tusk) atop the common building, as was his ancestor Charles of Luxembourg, emperor (*cum Bulla Aurea*) of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. Much better, I repeat, than listening to Victor Hugo explaining in 1871 that it was necessary to conquer Alsace and Lorraine again before creating those United States of

Europe he had longed for since 1848 in his renowned prophecy. “Le jour viendra...”

So, in the end, coming back to Rome - Rome 2017, caution... - what should be the task of our leaders, in order to keep faith to Rome 1957? On our part, together with the colleagues of our *réseau*, the Federation of Italian Writers and other cultural associations, we have sent a passionate appeal to the president of the EU Council of Ministers and to our government asking for a precise, significant step ahead. How can they protect the interests of their people, as well as of European citizens as a whole, if every important decision is still threatened by even a single right of veto? In which way will they be able to create citizens' consensus around the EU if all institutions betray a lack of representativeness and efficiency? The same lack, i.e., that has so clearly been exposed not only in the sentence of the German Court of Karlsruhe on the Lisbon Treaty, but also by the former Lithuanian Commissioner Šemeta and the French member of European Parliament, Sylvie Goulard. Besides, do you really think that entering and quitting the EU through successive referenda, like revolving doors, can be a generous and farsighted behavior? Honestly, none of current emergencies can be faced that way. Also “father” Winston Churchill, the promoter of the European Movement, would make a nod about this.

As Adenauer's successor Angela Merkel pointed out, a leading group of countries must take the initiative, leaving of course open, not revolving doors to the others. Unfortunately the current Big Brother's leadership across the Ocean doesn't look like behaving the same way as the seventh, or thirteenth, “father”, general Eisenhower, did 60 years ago. No American Committee on United Europe seems to be at work today in comparison with the past. So much the better, maybe. Anyway we must be confident that many friends, probably the majority of the peoples belonging to the Hamilton-created state, are still in favour, more or less, of a European Philadelphian process. And we must keep up the dialogue with them. An Occident-wide common market is hopefully to be set up, as outlined in the so called TTIP. No bilateral commercial agreements

are to be accepted, if we want keep faith to the twelve “senator-fathers”, plus the hovering one, sitting in the sala degli Orazi e Curiazi 60 years ago.

Two last, brief points before closing. We Italians are morally duty-bound to reassure the others on our reliability, not only financial, but also with reference to efficiency, innovation, education (I stress), order and so on. Federation hinges on mutual confidence. In addition, some of us (scholars I mean) have urged our political leaders and parties to give, at last, a stable accommodation to our representative and governmental system taking care to render it compatible with the European party landscape, that of the pro-European forces of course, as verifiable in the European Parliament. In his last speech at Strasbourg, president Juncker has asked the European political parties to propose their *Spitzenkandidaten* to the choice of electors, not of governments. Hopefully, of as sage electors as Dutch citizens recently showed up. For sure, cultural-political affinities among citizens from different countries can help a lot to reduce national-ethnic distances.

With reference, finally, to the best institutional solution to discuss and propose in order to pursue the “ever closer union” of 1957, if not the United States of Europe, as promised by the European Coal and Steel Community, let me hint at my personal orientation. Other colleagues, although as “spinellian” as I am, and president Juncker in his last speech too would prefer a European Parliament based constitutional track, while others, like me, lean forward the institutional solution approved in May 1951 by 70 deputies of the Council of Europe. As everybody knows, the promoter was the Austrian-Czech nobleman of Dutch-Greek origin, with a Japanese mother, called Richard Nikolaus Coudenhove-Kalergi. Also the German Court of Karlsruhe has appreciated the project in its above-mentioned sentence. It gives a bicameral role, as echoed also in the Verhofstadt motion recently approved by the EP, to the delegates of national Parliaments within a European Senate, like it had been in USA and Switzerland until into the last century. Of course, also the text elaborated by of the so called “assembly ad hoc” for the European Defense Community, failed in 1954, remains an optimal reference text in the federalist bicameral

perspective. At any rate, what is necessary, what is our duty, is to reflect, to debate, to propose, with reference to these capital choices for our future.

Eh bien, cher Victor – Victor Hugo, bien entendu - « le jour viendra ». Nous aussi l'espérons, de tout coeur. Also our great colleague and *magister*, one of the souls of our democracy, the pride of the Sapienza, Aldo Moro, I mean, would earnestly agree.