
Mattarella and Pahor: time for mutually “donated” memory

“History cannot be erased and the painful experiences of the people of these lands cannot be forgotten. For this same reason our present and future times appeal to our sense of responsibility, to choose between turning those painful experiences into the sole focus of our thoughts, cultivating resentment and bitterness, or, on the contrary, transforming them into a common heritage, in memory and respect, fostering co-operation, friendship and creating the common ground for the future. On both sides of the border - whose inherent sense of separation is fortunately outdated as a result of the common choice of integration into the European Union - Slovenians and Italians are resolutely looking to the future, in the name of today's shared values: freedom, democracy, peace". The speech delivered yesterday in Trieste by the President of the Italian Republic, Sergio Mattarella, at the meeting with the President of Slovenia, Borut Pahor, has an even greater and special value. It is something that cannot be taken for granted, especially in this part of Europe, in places where ideologies still too frequently exploit the suffering endured by thousands of men and women for reasons of personal interest.

Memory can yield fruit only when it is not used as a cage.

President Mattarella and President Pahor advancing, holding hands, into historical memory (at the Foiba of Basovizza and at the monument to the fallen Slovenian soldiers) is a symbolic and eloquent expression of the journey made in the last 70 years by the people of these lands. There was a time of resentment, fear and mistrust. But gradually, step by step, it was discovered that moving forward together restored the bond that human madness had interrupted only momentarily. *Most importantly, this gesture has developed into a due deed, an obligation for institutions, in the awareness that it represents a fundamental factor in the creation of a different and better future for the younger generations.* For a long time to come (maybe forever) the shared memory of the events that afflicted Italy's eastern border at the end of World War II will remain a utopian dream. Maybe the time has finally come for a mutually “donated” memory.

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