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The Spiritual Supermarket

Religious Pluralism and Globalisation in the 21st Century: the Expanding European Union and Beyond

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Mental Health of Modern Societies.

Survival of Traditional Spiritual Values in a World of Mercantilistic
Thought Patterns.

Guido Broich, University of Ferrara, Italy

While major mental disorders appear to be quite stable in history, today we see a tremendous rise in minor or subliminal mental problems. Emergency rooms of modern urban hospitals are filled for at least one third by people whose symptoms are based not on physical medical problems, but generated by anxiety and neurotic social maladjustment. In all levels of society tranquillants and psychopharmaca are the top sellers in the economically developed world, and tremendous organisational problems and costs are generated for the Health Services. Mental problems are becoming as characteristic for our societies as aeroplanes and computers. Today only materialistic values are officially perceived as the base for peer acceptance and social well-being. To be accepted in the group, people must demonstrate acceptance of the mercantilistic thought patterns as basic, real and the only ones of value. Spiritual values are considered outdated and spoken about in an apologetic, self-justifying way.

Liberty and free thought, noble values born to combat political repressiveness and autocratic power, have been abused to generate a general feeling of relativity and rejection of all kind of rules. It is sold to the masses as a social rule of weakness and abdication, useful for those who dwell in the darkness of social decomposition. In the meanwhile general people perceives this lack of believable, fixed and sacred values as an unsustainable void, having them looking around for new (old) traditional spiritual values. But the mental tools available to modern world people are those of a mercantilistic, quantitative approach and that's why this quest easily grows similar to a shopping spree, showing, as is correctly stated in the Topic of the Meeting, aspects of a Supermarket visit. In fact the problem is not the lack of yearning for spiritual values by the people, but in the lack of ability to meet their spiritual needs. Talking to the people in a way compatible to their thought patterns is necessary to penetrate the wall of misunderstanding. If the way of proposing true values does not change, false values will be more successful in the peoples hearts than traditional ones, as they present themselves with a better marketing scheme. But one must also refrain from simply copying that scheme. Modern world needs the courage of speaking out the traditional, spiritual values as real, self-sufficient, with no need to justify itself through materialistic gain. This is an act of force, not of weakness. Today many thinkers frown on constitutional weakness, "peace" is a word used as an all-round excuse for a wrongly understood absolute liberty.

It is important to realise that the traditional values cannot be presented in a quantitative market way of dealing - but must give strong and fixed additional values. To help people to stay out of the emergency rooms seeking medical help where spiritual sustain is needed, one must reinstall the sacred in its centrality, with an act of mental decision. Since people look for spiritual values while being lost in the relativity of modern life, force must be in thought and action in order to gain credibility. The force of thought must be the weapon to cut through the veil of incommunicability and to give back mankind what it really needs, avoiding to substitute medical care for lack of spiritual care.