

BARGAS MATÍAS

PRE-FINAL ABRIL 2010

Although to be rooted is indeed important for a human being, I personally do not agree with Simone Weil's opinion that it is the most important need of a human soul. For me, the most important need of a human soul is love. To be rooted means nothing if where you were rooted you did not receive love, be it from parents, friends or society. But this is a different matter and one I shall not pursue further here.

Having deep roots is important in the sense that it will always remind people where they come from and who there were and still are so that they never forget, but it does not, as someone may be inclined to think, tell where someone belongs.

Now, those who are rootless, say those who have not, perhaps willingly, settled down definitively somewhere, have an important advantage in that they are not physically or psychologically chained to any particular place or society and they can go on looking for their own place.

Turning now to the idea that to be rooted is connected with participating actively in the life of the community, I feel inclined to say that it is not at all so, though active social participation may contribute to the possibility that a person can establish so profound social relations that they feel their lives would be meaningless without them.

In my opinion, having roots has two different meanings. A general meaning that indicates that the roots of a black man are in Africa, the roots of a white man in Europe, etc. and a more particular meaning in which someone's roots are where their heart is. By "heart" I do not mean that constantly beating, blood-pumping muscle behind the chest bone, but the feelings someone has in connection with a particular place or group of people. A place where every time the person goes he/she feels comfortable and like at home. A group of people someone keeps in their heart and who make them feel they are one of them every time they get together.

To round off the idea, an example from my personal experience will serve to illustrate these points. I have Italian ancestors but Italy is not in my heart in the least. Not as Argentina was when I was living abroad. So the more general meaning of having roots does not apply to my case. Now the more particular meaning does not apply either. I left home in my late teens and I have not lived in place for more than five or six years and that is the reason why I still remain rootless. But I keep the advantage of being able and willing to go on looking for the place where I can put down roots.