International Relations – Diplomacy

*Chair of* **History of Italian Foreign Policy**

# BETWEEN CONTINUITY AND MEMORY: A DIPLOMATIC HISTORY OF THE ROMAN QUESTION (1861-1870).

*Focus on September 20th, 1870: A "Mythical" Epiphenomenon.*


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# INTRODUCTION: OMNI-CASUALITY AND TURNING POINTS

*"Del sangue nostro Caorsini e Guaschi s'apparecchian*
*di bere: o buon principio,*
*a che vil fine convien che tu caschi!*

*Ma l'alta provedenza, che con Scipio*
*difese a Roma la gloria del mondo,*
*soccorrà tosto, sì com'io concipio"*

So wrote the celebrious poet Dante Alighieri in his "Divina Commedia"[1] datable between 1304 and 1307, in Paradiso, Canto XXVII, lines 58–63. For Dante, the godly providence will newly come as to redeem the city of Rome from the papal cravings for power. Dante's thought was not only driven by his personal vicissitudes with the papal regency and in particular with Bonifacio VIII,[2] but, most importantly because of the special over-historical and metaphysical connotation of Rome. The importance of Rome in the more general context of Italian and European politics is retrievable back to very ancient times. Rome is not a location, or a capital of a past empire. It represents the geographical concentration of a system of civic and political values, cultures and judicial institutions, which occupy a special place in the hearts and minds of the peoples, which have inhabited the Old Continent since the dawns of its time. Indeed, just a couple of weeks before the occupation of Rome, the writer Edmondo De Amicis on August 27, 1870, so declared his passionate love for – the liberation of – Rome in an article of "Gazzetta d'Italia":

"*Noi amiamo tanto più Roma perché è l'ultima città che ci aspetta. […] L'amiamo anche perché […] fu bagnata del sangue di migliaia di martiri caduti in nome della nuova legge che sanzionò la libertà e l'eguaglianza sulle rovine della schiavitù e della tirannide; l'amiamo infine perché è una regina scoronata e afflitta, perché sarà una regina possente e gloriosa, perché è nostra e siam suoi, perché è bella, meravigliosa ed eterna*".[3]

[1] **D. Aligheri**, *La Divina Commedia. Commento e parafrasi*. Cinisello Balsamo, Italia: San Paolo Edizioni, 1998. Passage situated in Paradiso, Canto XXVII, lines 58–63.
[2] **E. Pasquini**, *Vita di Dante*. Milano: BUR Rizzoli, 2006. In this work, Pasquini superbly elucidates Dante's attitude and thought with respect to the relationship between the State and the Papacy.
[3] **E. De Amicis**, *Impressioni di Roma*. Firenze: Faverio e comp., 1870.

If the intent of both Dante and De Amicis is to create a fictional bridge between the factual events and their figurative quasi-mythological roles in the history of Rome, the aim of this written contribution is slightly different. To the contrary, this work constructs a peculiar dynamic image of nineteenth century, where to inscribe the Italian peculiarity. The occupation of Rome, in fact, must be understood as an occurrence intertwined with a bigger international political development. As such, the "Breccia di Porta Pia" (hereafter, Breccia), the name used to indicate the culmination of the Italian unification process with the occupation of Rome via the Pia gate, is the consummation of a diligent and methodical diplomatic endeavour pursued by the Italian authorities. Even though it is not precise enough to consider the Breccia as the end point of the Italian unification process, for the interpretative sake of this work it will be referred as the completion of a specific process of nation-building, indispensable for the creation of a modern nation-state as the contemporary one is, comprised of the lands united in 1918.

Is then September 20th, 1870, a turning point? It is first important to determine what turning points are, and the theory behind. Five hundred works in the historical turning-point category were classified by Brian Lowe.[4] They have been distributed in the following way:

(i) 32% military: what if a conflict or conflict had turned out differently;
(ii) 25% political: if the outcome of a close election or a legislative vote had been different;
(iii) 15% individual leadership: if a well-known person had lived longer or died sooner;
(iv) 11% religion: if a religious leader such as Luther had passed away at a different period;
(v) 7% technological: whether or not a specific technology was created;
(vi) 6% migration: if a certain migration had not occurred.
(vii) 4% miscellaneous.

About one-third of the incidents are military turning points, which are the most common type. If the Union forces had lost the battle of Antietam in 1862, Britain and France would have recognized the Confederacy, the southern slaves would not have been freed, and the United States would not have grown into a great power. If the Armada had defeated the British, there would not have been a Protestant stronghold or modern capitalism. The

[4] **B. Lowe**, *Counter-Factual Histories*, paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Eastern Sociological Association, March 2003.

idea that a change in leadership would fundamentally alter institutional arrangements is the basis for another group of turning moments (the political, individual, and religious categories mentioned above), which together account for around 50%. Most people consider that the turning point causality is military-political; it presupposes that the state, which is typically thought to rely on military triumph, has the authority to establish all other institutional structures. The idea that religions rely on certain charismatic leaders is nearly typically linked to the secondary premise that great faiths have a broad causal effect. One theory is that Christianity and the crucifixion would not have occurred if Pontius Pilate had spared Jesus. Only a few of pivotal tales rely on technological determinism. Since it is difficult to envision large economic processes as dependent on a specific event, take note of what is not considered a turning point: economic shifts. Too much seems to be known about the specifics of economic history in this field, and the obvious aware exists of the numerous innovations, rivalry between competing companies, and intricate relationships that comprise an economic system. Furthermore, there are no compelling justifications for cultural or etiquette turning moments. The same is true of bureaucracy and organization.

Two implicit presumptions serve as the foundation for counterfactual historians' claims on turning points. The first is that there are two types of arenas in the social world: the military, political, and religious arenas have fast turning points, while the economic, cultural, and organizational arenas do not; and that the former, whose social ramifications include state power and individual leaders, institutionally dominates the latter. In the mind of the author, the idea that systems (e.g. politics, military, and so on) determine the structures (e.g. culture, or organization) is counter realistic. The second implicit causal hypothesis holds that political patterns are established by singular, dramatic events (such as an election, military triumph, or the appearance of a certain leader), and that these patterns then influence economic and most likely, cultural patterns. In the mind of the author, history is a rooted set of events, whose course cannot be altered by a single event. Even an immediate revolution has certain premises. A line of reasoning that says that everything changes or stays the same after a certain turning point also suggests that cultural patterns like manners are analogues of the turning-point mechanism, despite the fact that turning-point theorists do not appear to have given much thought to what determines larger cultural patterns.

Sometimes arguments for historical turning points are presented as intellectual curiosity and imaginative endeavours, and other times, they are presented as a principled argument against the idea that global history is determined by causal causes. This contribution demonstrates that the reasoning behind the turning-point argument utilized in context does not refute historical causality; rather, it relies on the belief in causality.

Following the above interpretation, then, September 20th must not be viewed as an isolated "invented" traditional event, since both premises of turning-point counter-factual theories have been rejected.[5] To the contrary, it is the result of an omni-casual process of historical determination, which, for the sake of concision and correct contextual representation, will be identified with the period of the *questione Romana* (1861-1870).[6] What might seem to be sporadic intellectual speculation, in reality, allows to better frame the "nature" of the vicissitudes here under analysis.

Clearly enough, it must not be neglected the impact of such event in the history of the relations between the Church and the Italian State. In fact, September 20th, 1870, had enormous consequences on the State-Church relationship. Indeed, the symbolic character of *Porta Pia* represented a decisive step in the battle – that was taking place at the end of the *Ancien Régime* – between nation and religion, since, as René Rémond explains, they transcend the individual existence and constitute the two most important and universal social facts.[7] However, with respect to a broader national, risorgimental, and diplomatic context, September 20th was nothing more than an *epiphenomenon*. If a "turning point" refers to a moment which changes the course of action or, similarly, it alters the directions of pre-established lines of causality among events, then, the "Breccia" was more a turning point for the Holy See, rather than for the Italian Kingdom. Indeed, as this work happens to demonstrate, the occupation of Rome did not really alter neither the Italian foreign policy nor the national context. On the contrary, by the early to mid-20th century, the event had already slipped from collective memory. Although, the misperception of such a fundamental occurrence has had great impact on contemporary Italian foreign and national policies, it became rather an elitist matter of research for historians. In fact, in the mind of the author, thinking of the *Breccia* as an end-point – of unification, risorgimental, or national processes – is rather wrong. It is an important moment in the Italian and European histories. Nonetheless, the continuity of foreign and national policies was barely, if at all, altered.

The argument put forward shall not be misinterpreted though. From a national standpoint, the Breach of Porta Pia undoubtedly contributed to the restoration of a stronger

[5] **E. Hobsbawm** and **T. Ranger**, *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992

[6] Giuseppe Battelli also posed the problem of whether the Breccia could be considered a *terminis a quo*. He so went: "È tuttavia necessario chiedersi se anche questo 'mitico' spartiacque non abbia sopportato gli effetti di quel procedimento secondo il quale scansioni coniate all'interno di una specifica ottica interpretativa – in questo caso lo studio della vicenda risorgimentale italiana, soprattutto nella prospettiva diplomatica e politica – acquistano progressivamente valenze generali, sino a riassumere in sé e nel proprio contenuto fattuale una realtà assai più articolata e complessa, non di rado scandita da altri ritmi e altri scarti.", **G. Battelli**, *Santa Sede e vescovi nello Stato unitario. Dal secondo Ottocento ai primi anni della Repubblica*, G. Chittolini and G. Miccoli (ed.), *Storia d'Italia. Annali. La Chiesa e il potere politico dal Medioevo all'Età contemporanea, Vol.: IX*, Torino: Einaudi, 1986, p. 809.

[7] **R. Rémond**, *La secolarizzazione. Religione e società nell'Europa contemporanea*, Roma-Bari: Editori Laterza, 1999, pp. 149–150.

feeling of national identity and solve the "problema religioso".[8] From a diplomatic viewpoint, it also made possible to restructure ties with the Holy See and map out new foreign policy avenues. In a larger sense, though, it did not mark the establishment of a new state, finish the process of cultural, political, or intellectual unification, or address the internal issues – such as brigandage, the North-South divide, economic stagnation, and widespread illiteracy – that had frequently been attributed to the lack of the Kingdom's "natural" capital. Nor it ended the Similarly, it did not really change the paradigm of Italian foreign policy, which would have been more profoundly impacted by the Left's ascent to power in 1876 and the passing of two major characters in the narrative, Pius IX and Victor Emmanuel II, in 1878. Therefore, whether or not the Breach qualifies as a "turning point" ultimately relies on the perspective that is used in terms of time and context. It may have had little effect from a Risorgimento standpoint in terms of foreign policy reform and national unification.

Whether Italy is or is not an example of an "intermediate body" created out of the post-1815 Metternichian legitimist architecture, from the theory of Paul W. Schroeder, rests an open question.[9] Nonetheless, for sure, the history surrounding Rome is not an intermediate phase of European politics. Rather, it represents a focal point, whereby the interests of the major powers have interacted for to sustain at the same time a stable political order based on the papal rule and maintain it the city as the cultural and political fulcrum of the ancient Romantic aspirations, which have crafted the western way of governing and being governed. Powers like France, the United Kingdom, Russia, Prussia, the Ottoman Empire, and even if in lower instance – due to their reduced level of influence and engagement – also extra-European states, were involved in the political vicissitudes of 1798-99, 1848-49, and 1859 Rome. And this is to remain just a century far away from 1870. Therefore, it is well understandable how the logic of the Breccia, and its impact on European and global politics, is not just an issue linked to the Italian history. In this, the Reign of Italy clearly was the main character and change-driver, yet the magnitude of the impact of September 20th, 1870, went – and still goes – well beyond the Alps.

However, 1870 cannot surely be regarded as a turning point in the Italian history and in the evolutionary developments of all those countries, which have been impacted by the political modernities brought by the Breccia. At the same time and as a matter of fact, because this event dealt with the establishment of both a new political and religious now-

[8] According to Mario Missiroli, the main problem of the entire Italian history (from 1848 to the first decade of the XX century) was the religious question, which the Breccia contributed to settle. **M. Missiroli**, *La Monarchia Socialista*, Firenze: Le Lettere, 2015, p. 21.

[9] **D. Wetzel**, **R. Jervis**, and **J. S. Levy**, *Introduction*, in P. W. Schroeder, *Systems, Stability, and Statecraft: Essays on The International History of Modern Europe*, D. Wetzel, R. Jervis, and J. S. Levy (ed.), New York: Palgrave, 2004, pp. 1–19.

worldwide-accepted paradigms, the consequences of such an event were and are felt wherever phenomena of state-building and Catholicism were present, which meant from Europe to Latin America and from Africa to the Far East: the whole global.

Florence, September 20th, 1870, at 11 pm, the Italian Minister of foreign affairs, Emilio Visconti Venosta, declared to all Italian delegations of Europe: "Aujourd'hui troupes royales sont entrées à Rome après courte resistance des milices étrangères qui ont cessé le feu sur l'ordre du Pape".[10] As already anticipated, the Breccia had taken a polyfunctional appearance: a political, diplomatic, religious or spiritual, and military "addivenimento". Nonetheless, most of the authors have looked at it from the religious, memorial, or political aspect.[11] The most hidden military and diplomatic dimensions have been somehow disregarded, taken from granted, or believed to be of secondary importance or as consequences of other first-order events. To the contrary, this work precisely delves those deeper aspects of the Roman affair. Moreover, it will not be as well neglected the political-cultural interpretation given by prominent Italian intellectuals of the Breccia in light of the very evolution of the Italian (foreign) policy.

This fundamental episode of the history of Europe, indeed, has been merely studied from the religious and political viewpoints. To this end, the occupation of Rome has been most of the times downgraded to the level of a more or less classical State-Church conflict, or as another event in the Italian unification chronicle. As matter of consequence, reclassifying the priority of the diplomatic – more than the military, as of my view – aspect of the Breccia not only meant the misperception of the root causes leading to such an unprecedent happening, but also of the political-diplomatic paradigms, which have characterized the Italian foreign policy ever since. In fact, as this work aims to show, the Breccia represented a major step of the developmental phase of Italian diplomacy with pressing repercussions both internally, in the domestic political competition, and externally, in the preconditions of an Italian modern foreign policy.

There are three parts to this thesis. The political factors that contributed to the Breach of Porta Pia, particularly with regard to foreign policy, are the main topic of the first section. It essentially lays forth the historical underpinnings of the Roman Question, including the key players, tactics, settings, and so on. With the ultimate objective in mind, the first section of Part One looks at the political mission to conquer Rome as well as the development of the Kingdom of Italy's diplomatic attitude and strategy in relation to the larger European backdrop. The year 1870 is the focus of Part One's second portion. By elaborating on the

[10] **Ministero degli Affari Esteri**, **Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato Italiano**, Roma: I Documenti Diplomatici Italiani (DDI, Henceforth), Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 834, p. 577.

[11] Among the others, see **U. Pesci**, *Come siamo entrati a Roma*. Milano: Treves, 1895.

consequences of the Franco-Prussian War, it draws attention to the actual factors that, between July and September, broke the continent's impasse and made it possible to occupy Papal lands. Part One's third and last section offers a comparative historiographical analysis to evaluate the Roman Question experience within more general Risorgimento frameworks. Third-party authorities' responses and policies are also examined in this section

The second half, which is divided into the fourth and fifth sections, provides a detailed examination of the effects and ramifications of September 20th, 1870. An explanation of the reasons, challenges, and outcomes of the Breach of Porta Pia is given in the fourth section of Part Two. A viewpoint is also established that seeks to investigate Rome's dual status as a pagan and religious city, especially in light of the post-Breach era. The fifth portion, instead, covers the topics of the post-Risorgimento or post-1870 era and the idea of mnemo-history. First, by evaluating the Roman Question's socioeconomic, cultural, and political effects on the process of Italian unification as a whole, it advances the study of the subject within a larger Risorgimento framework. This section concludes by outlining the mnemo-history of the Roman Question (as symbolized by the Breach of Porta Pia) in three separate eras, each with unique characteristics: 1871–1900, 1900–1922, and 1922–present.

The last part is devoted to the analysis of the primary actors, including their roles, policies, and traits. The Lanza government is the focus of Chapter 11, while Pope Pius IX and Vittorio Emanuele II are the subjects of Chapter 12.

## I. Archival Collections of Sources: Multi-Volume Documentary Collections.

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## II. Monographs, Edited Volumes, and Journal Articles

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# PART ONE: “CAUSES DIRECTES ET PROFONDES”

# I. *Italy's Foreign Policy Foundations and the "Mission" of Rome*

## Chapter 1. When It All Started: Roma Aeterna

The occupation of Rome was a liberal ideal, which had to be sealed by the work of the statal authorities and by the process of progressive institutionalization and occupation of the city-symbol of the political and cultural basements of the very process of the Risorgimento.[12] Put it differently, the papal lands were not mere impediments in between the territories administered by Garibaldi and the Piedmont-conquered Italian North. Those were perceived to be inherently linked to the history of the Kingdom of Italy by virtue of the intellectual groundwork of the unification process. Indeed, the patriot Massimo D'Azeglio during a public occasion on April 21, 1867, he himself recognized the existence of the Roman "mission".[13] A mission, whose founding phases must be recognized to be grounded on older contexts than the sixties of the nineteenth century.

As correctly posed, historian Vittorio Vidotto stated in his *Roma Contemporanea* that "Roma è sempre stata una città capitale. Capitale della repubblica e poi dell'impero Romano; capitale della cristianità, quindi del cattolicesimo, infine anche di uno stato ecclesiastico. Nella memoria dei posteri – e in qualche misura fino ad oggi – non ha mai perso interamente questo carattere".[14] It might seem useless to point out the long tradition of cultural admiration towards Rome between the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century, especially from the Anglo-Saxon world.[15] Nonetheless, it was with the Risorgimento that international observers began cultivating their interest for the Roman political developments[16], and not anymore

[12] **L. Riall**, *Risorgimento: The History of Italy from Napoleon to Nation State*. London, U.K: Palgrave, 2008.
[13] **A. M. Ghisalberti**, *Il mito di Roma capitale*. p. 11.
[14] **V. Vidotto**, *Roma Contemporanea*. Roma: Laterza, 2001.
[15] Although the British perceptions, foreign policy, and political relations with the Italian vicissitudes will be investigated later on, the reader is invited to have a look at: **E. Livorni**, *American writers in Rome during the Risorgimento*, New York: Forum Italicum, 2013, Vol. 47 and **M. G. Caponi-Doherty**, *Charles Dickens and the Italian Risorgimento*, Baltimore, Maryland, United States: Dickens Quarterly, 1996, Vol. 13.
[16] What is meant here is not that prior to the nineteenth century no power or elite was paying attention to Rome. To the contrary, the events of 1798 and 1799 show the opposite. Rome has been object of the political discourse centuries well before: at least since the sixth century from a territorial-expansionary, e.g. with the territorial donation sequel because of the decadence of the Byzantine empire in favour of the Church in 728, 754, 774 or 824, and at least since the seventeenth century from a political-military viewpoint. On this, **J. Miley**, *The History of The Papal States: From Their Origin to The Present Day*. U.S.: Legare Street Press, 2022.
Nonetheless, here it is meant that the increased popular-cultivated interest must be collocated in a wider context, where and when liberal-constitutional and national narratives started gaining momentum; that is the

only for its artistic popularity.[17] Put it differently, the appreciation of ancient Roman culture was therefore enhanced by the Risorgimento, and the occupation of Rome, which turned it from a cultural and artistic issue into a political and diplomatic affair. Later on, this would change how the Kingdom of Italy was viewed overseas and set a new trajectory toward complete unification. The event of the Breccia has been certified it had profound consequences as well on the history of the Church, in respect of its relations with the world. Paradoxically enough, as many scholars have stressed, the Breccia allowed the catholic effort to focus only on the spiritual domain. This trend, of disregarding the public-political, but concentrate on the public-spiritual sphere permitted the Catholic rhetoric to reach higher levels of moral imposition. A trend started in second half of the nineteenth century confirmed, indeed, later on, e.g. with the Second Vatical Council (1962 – 1965).[18] Hence, a moment initially thought to be a crisis for the existence of the Church turned to be an occasion of religious prosperity and moral governance, at a global scale.

It is quite difficult to envisage the exact temporal framework, when expansionistic aspirations for Rome started to be manifest. This is mainly because the Italian diplomatic archive starts from 1861, long after the beginning of even the Risorgimento, and because most of the scholarly literature focuses its attention on the prodromes of the occupation of Rome basing their research on the period of the Risorgimento itself, therefore missing the end of the eighteenth century, for instance.[19] Nonetheless, already since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the young populations of the peninsula captivated by liberal and patriotic ideals were fairly deluded by the papal regency of the highest symbol of liberty, freedom, democracy, patriotism and classicism: Rome.[20] In 1825, the hero of the Risorgimento, Giuseppe

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international-correspondent approximate period of the Italian Risorgimento. That is why, as it will be newly formulated, for instance the mid-century crisis played a major role.

[17] **P. Balchin**, *Rome: The Shaping of Three Capitals*. New York: Routledge, 2020.

[18] **J. Casanova**, *Catholicism, Gender, Secularism, and Democracy*, in J. Cesari and J. Casanova. Islam, Gender, and Democracy in Comparative Perspective. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

[19] Among the others, it is suggested: **C. Moatti**, *Res publica. Histoire romaine de la chose publique*. Paris: Fayard, 2018 and **M. Ascheri**, *Le città-Stato. Le radici del municipalismo e del repubblicanesimo italiani*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 2006.

[20] It must be clarified that the one of the Kingdom of Italy was not only a mere political, diplomatic or military duty. The occupation of Rome, with the adequate international diplomatic and national political guarantees, could have been successful only with the dissemination of a morally justified doctrine able to confront the moral superiority of the Church. To this end and in order to be able to safeguard the popular support and legitimately pursue its unificatory mission, it was for the Italian elites (cultural, political, military, and so on) to develop a counter-narrative so to obstruct and win the undisputed moral power by definition, that of the Church. Of this opinion was historian Federico Chabod, who in *Storia della politica estera italiana dal 1870 al 1896* wrote: "Roma era dunque la missione, l'idea universale, il proposito cosmopolitico. Roma, missione, primato, terza età del mondo, tutte queste idee s'erano svolte insieme, in un viluppo strettissimo; le grandi ombre del suo passato torreggiavano nuovamente sulla città dei sette colli. / Più tardi, sarebbero state le ombre di Scipione e di Cesare; ma in quegli anni subito dopo il '70 era l'ombra di Pietro a incombere sugli animi, con la sua secolare continua presente gloria e potestà, che gli uni erano eccitati a difendere, e gli altri s'accanivano a voler ridurre, sino a farne una parvenza esangue. Non la Roma pagana e imperiale, bensì la Roma cristiana, segno di fede nel mondo, era ancor viva e ben viva; con essa s'aveva a misurare direttamente, ora, lo Stato italiano. Entrar a Roma, significava trovarsi fronte a

Garibaldi, quoted in his *Memorie* his very – negative – exclamation when he first visited Rome at the age of eighteen affirming that: "Roma!... Oggi, la capitale della più odiosa delle sette […]. No! La Roma ch'io scorgevo nel mio giovanile intendimento, era […] la Roma dell'idea rigeneratrice d'un gran popolo! […] Roma è il simbolo dell'Italia una […]. E l'opera più infernale del papato era quella di tenerla divisa, moralmente e materialmente".[21] With a certain high degree of probability, Garibaldi, as other leading figures of the Italian unification process, was already a worshiper of the ancient Rome and its political legacies. This was perhaps due to the teachings of his preceptors, like the veteran of the Napoleonic wars "Mr. Arena" or father Giaume.[22] Moreover, the attempt of Giuseppe Mazzini, the anti-clerical and republican leader of *Giovine Italia* (1831, of which also Garibaldi will later be a member),[23] of constituting the Roman Republic in 1848 is example of such pro-annexation sentiments. Nonetheless, they all must be confined to the period of the Risorgimento, or for sure way before the official creation of Italian State (March 17, 1861). Be that as it may, it is as well arguable that the quest for republicanism was present in Italy since end of the eighteenth century. By the impulse of the French experience, between 1796 and 1799, Italy witnessed the revival of a series of republics: the "Cisalpina" (composed of Lombardia, Emilia-Romagna and part of Veneto), the "Ligure", the "Romana" (upon the territories of the Pope, at the time in exile) and the "Partenopea".[24] But if the desire of Rome becoming the capital of the unified Kingdom at the end of the 1790s was an ideal aspiration, in the mid 1800s it became a top-item of a diffused political agenda. Essentially, the agitations in the international relations of Europe contributed to the creation of a new situation: that of rendering more possible the insurrection of parts of the populaces as to keep up with the constitutional and liberal evolutions in other countries of the continent.[25] Therefore, if the plain recognition of Rome as the symbol of the republican project was adopted by the most acculturated or intellectually close to the history of ancient Rome, with the evolution of the European context the destiny of Rome was well perceived by the lower layers of the society as well. On top of that, therefore, to

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fronte il Papato, cioè un'idea universale, alla quale cosa contrapporre per non essere moralmente dominati e schiacciati?". On this, **F. Chabod**, *Storia della politica estera italiana dal 1870 al 1896*. Bari: Biblioteca Universale Laterza, 1997.

[21] **G. Garibaldi**, *Memorie, con una appendice di scritti politici*. Milano: Rizzoli, 1998. Intro. of G. Armani, pp.: 49–50.

[22] **A. Scirocco**, *Garibaldi. Battaglie, amori, ideali di un cittadino del mondo*. Roma: Laterza, 2007.

[23] **G. Mazzini**, *La Giovine Italia*. Sophia, France: Culturea, 2023.

[24] For a general overview of the Italian situation in the period 1796-1799, it is recommended **V. E. Giuntella**, *L'Italia dalle Repubbliche giacobine alla crisi del dispotismo napoleonico*, in N. Valeri, Storia d'Italia, vol. III. Torino: Utet, 1965.

[25] For a general overview of the international relations of the Europe to better interpret the dynamics of the Italian case via a bigger outlook, **R. Albrecth-Carrié**, *Storia diplomatica d'Europa 1815-1968*. Bari: Laterza, 1978.

properly understand the causes leading to the Breccia and the occupation of the papal territories, one must clearly insert this exceptional event into a wider and older evolution of the international, and particularly European, diplomatic scenario. Such evolution then led to the stabilization of the political and institutional conditions for republican and liberal movements to settle and operate, with higher levels of popular support, for to free Rome and start a new phase in the history of the Reign of Italy and of the Church, with obvious global repercussions also in the religious sphere.

The events of 1849 in Rome followed along the lines of the above interpretation. With the application of a restoration and anti-republican repressive politics,[26] the European powers were unaware of the complications which would have soon followed. After the defeat in Novara (between the 22nd and 23rd of March, 1849), in Rome it was established a relatively moderate system: a triumvirate, of which also Mazzini was part. The French representative, Ferdinand de Lesseps, concluded with the newly born Roman Republic (February 1849) a pacific treaty to be then refuted. As a consequence, Rome was attacked by the French forces under General Oudinot. Garibaldi, unable to conduct a feasible anti-French resistance, withdrew and departed from Rome. It is clearly visible, therefore, the interconnection between the European setting and the Italian mission of unification.[27] It was the international developments that allowed Italy to follow the course of revolutions, changes and subversions of the old order. As further consequences of the Italian 1848, in Piedmont a liberal Constitution was promulgated whilst the Pope could count on the presence of the French protection. France exerted in Rome a conservative attitude, and not revolutionary, because of the internal French political situation: Louis Napoléon was

[26] A quick overlook of the policy of repressive restoration as a response to the national and liberal mid-century crisis in Europe. As of example, the Swiss liberals managed to reorganize the *Sonderbund* in 1845, composed of seven catholic cantons. Nonetheless, a vote of the Diet to dissolve the *Sonderbund* brought Switzerland into a civil conflict. The capacity of Lord Palmerston to stop Metternich from acting in favor of the Diet allowed the liberals to promulgate a new Constitution in 1848. In essence, the Swiss positive outcome was the result of a non-action. Different was the situation in Budapest, Prague, Rome, Turin, Naples, Florence, and also Wien, where revolutionary impulses were prone to become reality. And to be repressed afterward. Also, Croatia witnessed anti-Hungarian protests led by the Croatian Ban Jelačić, yet unsuccessful due to the incoherence of the Hungarian liberal counterpart unable to interpret the Croatian as a valid cause of independence. In Italy, when King Carlo Alberto of Sardinia declared war to Austria on the 22nd of March, vast segments of national voluntary units took part to the conflict. Nonetheless, General Radetzsky was able to defeat Piedmont's army and take control over Lombardy on July 24th. Again, when in November 1848 insurrections erupted in Rome, Carlo Alberto decided to break the cease-fire with Austria. But in March 1849, Carlo Alberto's forces were newly defeated by Radetzsky in Novara. Meanwhile, the Prince of Windischgrätz bombed Prague and established again control over the revolutionaries. However, while Windischgrätz was entering Budapest, the Hungarian Diet proclaimed the Republic, to whose head was appointed Lajos Kossuth. To the request for help made by Windischgrätz, tzar Nicola of Russia entered Transylvania in June under general Paskevič. Indeed, the Schwarzenberg-Windischgrätz couple was able, by the beginning of November, to control Austria and Hungary as well. Schwarzenberg, narrated as a rude and strong man, took control of the Austrian government once Prince Metternich went to exile with Louis Philippe in England after the opposition of Metternich's government to the use of armed force against students' protests in Wien of March 12th.

[27] **G. Andreotti**, *Foreign Policy in the Italian Democracy*, Oxford: Political Science Quarterly, 1994, Vol. 109.

willing to obtain the support of conservative catholic. Hence, the whole ambiguity surrounding France[28] will remain and dictate the directions of the French foreign policy, therefore of the European political stage for all the age of Louis Napoléon, namely for other twenty years. A period where to look for and detect the prodromes of the Breccia di Porta Pia.

Additionally, the Piedmontese attempt to gain international support, first, to the cause of the unification continued later on as well. In 1855, the Piedmont-Sardinian Reign declared its intention to support the English-French-Turkish coalition against Russia in the 1956 Crimean war. An expedition body composed of twenty thousand men went to the help of the anti-Russian coalition, forging solid relationship with the French military compartment.[29] Intuitively enough, the capacity of the French-Italian couple to reduce the influence of the Austrians in the peninsula, by helping Turin to kick the double monarchy out, would have reduced the Austrian influence in the region. Indeed, in March 1856, together with Great Britain, the emperor supported the "questione italiana" at the Paris Congress.

In spite of the different projects thought to be suit to the Italian unificatory path between Napoleon and Camillo Benso Count of Cavour (hereafter, Cavour or any of the names in full),[30] the former was of the idea that the French occupation of Rome had to be temporary as to protect Rome from an Austrian occupation or a revolution. This position was still formally prone to further negotiations about the future of Rome.[31] And that was the reason of the military involvement in the 1856 war.[32] Notwithstanding the French victory in Solferino and the Italian one in San Martino, and the Austrian retreat in the so-called "quadrilatero",[33] because of the Prussian

[28] On one hand, the French emperor needed the support of the catholic milieu in governing his country, therefore had, by force of circumstances, to protect the pope. On the other, Napoleon wanted to take part to the Italian unification, being he the nephew of Napoleon I, who created the embryo of the future Kingdom of Italy in 1805. On this, **J. White Mario**, *Garibaldi e i suoi tempi*, Palermo: Antonio De Dominicis, 1982.

[29] **C. Manfredi**, *La spedizione sarda in Crimea nel 1855-1856*. Roma : Voghera, 1896.

[30] After the assassination attempt perpetuated by the Italian patriot Felice Orsini against Napoleon III on January 14th, 1858, the process of the settlement of the Italian unification started gauging more strength. On the 21st of July, Camillo Benso and Napoleon III met in Plombières to discuss about how, and under which settings, to organize the new State. Napoleon III was for dividing the peninsula into four different territories, in between the consolidation of previous reigns – as the one of the successors to Gioacchino Murat in Naples –, the maintenance of the papal lands, and the imposition of France-controlled new territories – like the centre under the Prince Napoléon- Jérôme, cousin of the emperor. More than a unification, in fact, it seemed a kind of territorial re-management in favour of the French geostrategic interests in the region.

[31] The temporality of the French occupation as well as the special role of Rome in European history was recognized by Napoleon himself in a letter he wanted to be published in 1859, titled *L'Empereur Napoléon III et l'Italie*, where he mostly aspired to a federative unification with Rome capital and under the supreme leadership of the Pope. The reader will notice that this vision resembles 1843 Vincenzo Gioberti's *Del primato morale e civile degli italiani*.

[32] **Comando del Corpo di Stato Maggiore – Ufficio Storico**. *La guerra del 1859 per l'indipendenza d'Italia*, Vol. II. Roma: Società editrice laziale, 1910 – 1912.

[33] Read: The cities of Peschiera del Garda, Mantova, Legnago e Verona, where the Austrians built a complex of fortresses.

military activities in the Rhein area, the progressive dissatisfaction of the French public opinion, and the malcontent of the catholic sub-populations, Napoleon III signed the peace preliminary treaty in Villafranca on July 11th, 1859. As a consequence, Veneto was still Austrian and Cavour resigned from office. For the moment being, the unification of Italy was confined to the northern part. Napoleon, as gift, was rewarded via the treaty of Turin (March 24th, 1860) with the Duchy of Savoy and the County of Nice.

Things changed with the "Spedizione dei Mille".[34] In few months, Garibaldi was able to conquer Sicily. Disembarked with one thousand eighty-seven men in Marsala on the 11th of May, according to the official press outlet "Gazzetta Ufficiale" of November 12th, 1878, he took control of the island in between May and July. On September 7th, 1860, Garibaldi entered Naples forcing King Francis II of Bourbon to retreat to Volturno, where he was severely defeated another time. Rome was surrounded by territories conquered by fervent republicans, or, at any rate, passionate supporters of the unification cause. Camillo Benso skilfully seized the opportunity and sent an expeditionary force towards Naples in an attempt to stop Garibaldi, and by doing so he invaded Marche and Umbria regions. This move forced the Pope, whose State was in a dire economic condition, to mobilize his army against the Sardinian power. In the Battle of Castelfidardo (September 18th, 1860), the papal army, commanded by General Christophe Louis Juchault, was severely defeated. At the end of the military operations, Lazio was in the situation of being surrounded by the Kingdom of Italy (officially proclaimed on March 17th, 1861), following the plebiscites held on October 21st, 1860 (in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies) and November 4th of the same year (in Umbria and Marche).

As further element to the context, one must as well comprehend the motivations underlying the papal opposition to the occupation. As such, this works identifies at least four different motivations for this anti-unificatory rhetoric underlining the political and diplomatic behaviour operated by the *Sedes Petri.*[35] Firstly, the experience of 1848-9[36] changed his attitude towards the northern unification, from supporting into strenuously opposing the Piedmontese projects. Moreover, because of the centuries-old communal admiration of local realities of the Roman imperial past as a "golden

[34] Read: The "Expedition of the Thousand" (men, which took part to the event). Great texts can be of help to meticulously retrace the occurrence, like **Cuniberti, Felice**. *Storia Militare Della Spedizione Dei Mille*. Berlin: Nabu Press, 2012; **Bianciardi, Luciano**. *Da Quarto a Torino: Breve storia della spedizione dei Mille*. Roma: Minimum Fax, 1960; **Marraro, R. Howard**. *Diplomatic Relations Between the United States and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies*, New York: Vanni, 1952, vol. II.

[35] Read: The Chair of St. Peter.

[36] Recall that Pius IX, because of the insurrections, flew to Gaeta, a coastal town in the province of Latina.

age of prosperity and centrality",[37] and because Popes were seen as the inheritors of the Roman empire through their successors, the opposition to the destruction of the papal regency in Rome was associated to putting an end to this inheritance of the glorious past. Thirdly, the temporal power of the Pope was seen as the prosecution of the universality and spiritual guiding role of the Church in the world.[38] Therefore, giving up the temporal sovereignty of the Catholic monarchs on their God-given States[39] would have signified the end of a power symbolism, on which it was thought the pastoral duty of the Church was built. The last reason of the clerical antagonism was fairly related to the loss of political weight attached to the global, and local, role of the Pope, impoverishing the Church of its capacity of influencing the socio-political life of other societies.[40] This last conclusion is a corollary of the previous motivation, which linked the spiritual power of the Church to its temporal standing.

The next section investigates the foreign policy of the Kingdom from 1861, year of the foundation, up to the franco-Prussian war of 1866. With the capacity of a State, even if to be reformed and structured, the Italian diplomatic machinery, even if engaged with other affairs of international concern, will never abandon the Roman question but implement wait-and-see, gradual and oscillating diplomatic strategies, always remembering the polar star of the Italian foreign policy: Rome as capital.

[37] **N. Terrenato**, *The Romanization of Italy: global acculturation or cultural bricolage?*, in C. Forcey, J. Hawthorne, and R. Witcher, *TRAC 97: Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference*, Nottingham 1997. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1997.

[38] **F. Anghelone**, **P. Piatti**, and **E. Tirone**, *Introduzione. La Breccia di Porta Pia: Raccolta di Studi nel 150° anniversario (1870 - 2020)*. Città del Vaticano: Amministrazione del Patrimonio della Sede Apostolica e Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2022.

[39] **T. F. X. Noble**, *The Republic of St. Peter: The Birth of the Papal State, 68-825*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986.

[40] **P. Hebblethwaite**, *The Popes and Politics: Shifting Patterns in "Catholic Social Doctrine"*, Cambridge, MA, U.S.A.: Daedalus, 1982, Vol. 111.

# Chapter 2. When It All Evolved: Italy and Europe at Confront

## March 1861 – June 1863: Between Plans, Hopes, and Intensive Diplomacy

Recalling the concluding statement of the previous chapter, the authorities of the (almost) unified Italy, following the official declaration of the Parliament,[41] started immediately debating about a series of questions. Among those, the most pressing one was the *questione Romana*. As proof of it, the first volume (January 8th – December 31st, 1861) of the first series (1861 – 1870) of the Italian diplomatic documents specifies in the analytical summary at the end the number of documents dedicated to each of the thematic subject of the correspondence contained in every volume. Basically, it signals which document and how many of them are associated to each issue. After the (i) recognition of the Italian Kingdom, and (ii) the Italian relation with France, because of obvious reasons,[42] the highest magnitude of documents produced by the diplomatic structure is dedicated to (iii) the *questione Romana*.

Deputy Rodolfo Audinot presented an interpellation to the Chamber of Deputies on the subject, organized into three questions, already at the end of March in the chamber chaired by Urbano Rattazzi. On the occasion, it was claimed that "l'Italia ha bisogno di Roma, perché Roma è la capitale naturale d'Italia […]; è l'espressione più

[41] "Il Senato e la Camera dei Deputati hanno approvato; […] noi abbiamo sanzionato e promulghiamo quanto segue: Articolo unico: Il Re Vittorio Emanuele II assume per sé e suoi Successori il titolo di Re d'Italia. Ordiniamo che la presente, munita del Sigillo dello Stato, sia inserita nella raccolta degli atti del Governo, mandando a chiunque spetti di osservarla e di farla osservare come legge dello Stato. Da Torino addì 17 marzo 1861". These are the exact words that appeared in the Kingdom of Sardinia's Law No. 4671, which is thought to be the Kingdom of Italy's official declaration. This comes after the Chamber of Deputies' March 14th, 1861, session, where the Senate-approved draft bill from February 26th, 1861, was placed to a vote. Promulgated March 17th, 1861, Law No. 4671 was published on the 18th of March of the same year in Official Gazette No. 68.

[42] The recognition of Italy was of course a top topic, since it was for the international powers to recognize the birth of Italy as not to intervene and repress an illegal unification. After a period of restorative anti-nationalist policies, it was well feared an intervention of foreign powers to stop what was an illegal, to public international law, unification process. For this reason, and not by any chance, the then President of the Council, Camillo Benso, wrote on March 17th to the Sardinian Ambassador in London, Emanuele Taparelli d'Azeglio, "Le Parlement National vient de voter et le Roi a sanctionné la loi en vertu de laquelle S. M. Vittorio Emanuele II assume, pour lui et pour ses successeurs, le titre de Roi d'Italie. La légalité constitutionelle a consacré ainsi l'ceuvre de justice et de réparation qui a rendu l'Italie à elle-meme". It was therefore essential to render clear the legality of the unification act. Quotation from: **DDI**, Vol.: I, Series: I, Doc.: 21, p. 39.

Secondly, the relation between Italy and France is quintessential in the history of the Italian unification, more in general, and of the occupation of Rome, more in particular. Because Italy could not succeed in unifying the country "alone", it needed to gain external support. As such, Cavour looked for support in Napoleon III, in spite of the critiques of the Mazzinian legacy or of the potential Italian subjugation to the future French interests, bonding the Italian question to French politics. On the previous note, **P. Renouvin**, *Il secolo XIX. 1815 – 1871*, Firenze: Vallecchi, 1960.

alta dell'unità e dell'indipendenza della nazione»; si domandano al Presidente del Consiglio notizie sulle 'trattative tentate alla Corte Romana', su quelle possibili con altri Paesi - stante il principio di 'non intervento degli stranieri nelle cose d'Italia' proclamato da Francia e Inghilterra - e infine si chiede di conoscere i principii direttivi intorno alla soluzione del grande problema presentato dal potere temporale e dallo spirituale d'Italia".[43] The Boncompagni order of the day, voted in the Chamber at the end of March, was underlying the fact that still Rome, "capitale acclamata dall'opinione nazionale", was missing. The order was also recalling the north-eastern territories and, in particular, the Venetian provinces. Nevertheless, it was known to the administration that the annexed lands of 1860 were a limit not to be surpassed, at least for the time being. This was because, after Garibaldi's *Spedizione*, foreign powers were afraid of further revolutionary upheavals.[44]

Apart from speeches, declarations, and parliamentary interpellations, the Office of the President of the Council supported the start of negotiations with the Holy See as to rectify the Roman status as well. On the 21st of February 1861, Count of Cavour sent the instructions to Diomede Pantaleoni[45] and the Jesuit Carlo Passaglia[46] for the configuration of a pacific agreement with Pius IX. The project of the convention was composed of eight articles plus other eight articles of an auxiliary set of *avvertenze*, namely dispositions regarding certain changes in the *corpus juris* of both the Italian Kingdom and the Holy See, that is to say administrative arrangements, and the regulation of diocese structure in Italy. About the accuracy of the instructions, it has

[43] **R. Audinot**, *Seduta del 25 marzo 1861*, Torino: Camera dei deputati del Regno d'Italia, pp. 280–284.

[44] France, Russia, Spain and Bavaria withdrew their diplomatic representatives from Turin. Only Great Britain remained faithful to the Italian project. Indeed, in January 1861 Lord Palmerston was writing to Queen Victoria that a strong Italian Kingdom would have resisted the French coercive strategy in the region. Therefore, contrasting the French presence in the mediterranean as well.

[45] Brief biographical outlook: Political figure and patriot (Macerata 1810–Rome 1885). After receiving his medical degree from the University of Rome, he became well-known for his work during the 1837 cholera epidemic. In 1848, he joined the Papal State's Council of Deputies and sought for a compromise with Pius IX, demonstrating moderate and Neo-Guelph tendencies. He declined to run in the 1849 election because he disliked the idea of a Constituent Assembly. Following his return to Rome, the pope made several journeys throughout Italy and Europe, condemning the Papal States' poor leadership. He became acquainted with Cavour in Piedmont, and after the annexations, he was requested to collaborate with him to resolve the Roman Question. In 1861, he was sent to Rome with Father Carlo Passaglia to lay the groundwork for a peaceful agreement with the Holy See, but the negotiations were unsuccessful. When Cavour died, his second trip to Paris was cut short. Minghetti later sent him to Southern Italy to investigate the region's situation. He worked as a deputy in the VIII Legislature before being elected to the Senate in 1873.

[46] Brief biographical outlook: Theologian and priest Carlo Passaglia (Pieve di San Carlo, 1812–Turin, 1887) was a Jesuit and gained the favour of Pius IX for his philological and theological contributions, especially the development of the Immaculate Conception dogma. He did, however, quit the Jesuits in 1859 to pursue conciliation roles because of his independent nature. He participated in the Roman Question, argued for the independence of philosophy from government dogma, and unsuccessfully attempted to reach a peaceful settlement between the papacy and the Kingdom of Italy. In 1861, he openly backed Italian unity, arguing that the pope should relinquish temporal power. His endeavours sparked disagreements with the ecclesiastical leadership, and he was suspended *a divinis*. Passaglia then turned to philosophy and politics, advocating free thought and Catholics' rights to follow many philosophical systems. In his final years, he sought reconciliation with the Church, which took place soon before his death.

been pointed out by Alessandro Luzio[47] the uncertainty surrounding the actual text of the instructions: whether it was correct the version reported by Nicomede Bianchi[48] or the one of Ernesto Artom.[49] The details provided in this work regarding the given guidelines are the ones welcomed by the diplomatic archive of the Italian Ministry of foreign affairs. However, to re-contextualize John L. Gaddis' notorious phrase: as we now know, the Pantaleoni-Passaglia project of agreement failed miserably because of the intransigency of the Church to renounce to its temporal power.[50] For Pius IX, giving up temporal power would have been nearly heretical. He had stressed the intangible character of Saint Peter's legacy as early as the aftermath of the events of the Roman Republic, in the encyclical *Nostis et Nobiscum* (December 8, 1849), released during his exile in Gaeta. This was a recurring topic throughout his papacy, beginning with the allocution *Ad gravissimum* on June 20, 1859, which eventually served as the basis for Propositions 75 and 76 of the *Sillabo* and Chapter 12 of the original schema *De Ecclesia*, addressed at the First Vatican Council. Following the loss of Romagna, the encyclical *Nullis certis verbis* (January 19, 1860) and the apostolic letter *Cum Catholica Ecclesia* (March 26, 1860) requested the unconditional return (*sic et simpliciter*) of the annexed territories recalling the providential nature of the Papal State, which, despite being "temporal in its very nature, nevertheless assumes a spiritual character", that is to say according to the principle *suapte natura temporalem rem sapiat, spiritualem tamen induit indolem*.[51]

Less than a month later, the delivery of the negotiation guidelines in a personal letter sent by Abbot Passaglia to Cavour, the former summarized the main points of the discussion with Cardinal Giacomo Antonelli, the last Secretary of State under Pius IX. In that conversation, on March 19th, Card. Antonelli extensively refused to negotiate, rebutting with a judged-deplorable "adoperato dal Governo del Re", responding "no, Professore [read: Father Passaglia], non si può trattare".[52]

The Pantaleoni-Passaglia initiative was not the only one proposed. Between the 8th and 9th of April of 1861, Count Ottaviano Vimercati informed Cavour of a proposal of Napoleon III, which charged Jean Gilbert Victor Fialin, duc de Persigny, and

[47] **A. Luzio**, in *La questione Romana negli anni 1860-1861: carteggio del conte di Cavour con D. Pantaleoni, C. Passaglia, O. Vimercati*, ed.: Commissione Reale, Bologna: Zanichelli, 1929.

[48] **N. Bianchi**, *Storia documentata della diplomazia europea in Italia (1814-1861)*. U.S.: Nabu Press, 2012. The wording of the instructions is given at pp. 423–430, 700–704.

[49] **E. Artom**, *L'opera politica del Sen. Isacco Artom nel risorgimento italiano*. Bologna: s.n., 1906. The wording of the instructions is given at pp. 176–187.

[50] **V. M. Rossi**, *Carlo Passaglia and Pius IX: An Ecclesiological Conflict*, Rossi, Cambridge University Press, July 2020, Journal of Ecclesiastical History, Vol. 71.

[51] **Pius IX**, *Cum Catholica Ecclesia*, Rome: Holy See, 1864. Acta Pii IX P.M. pp. 137–147.

[52] **DDI**. Vol.: I, Series: I, Doc.: 25, p. 45.

Édouard de Thouvenel, French Minister of foreign affairs from 1860 to 1862, one without the other's knowledge, to draft a project in order to overcome the *impasse* related to the failed negotiations on Rome. de Thouvenel's plan consisted of four different points:

(i) The King's Government would simply commit to not changing the Holy See's current territory and to assume a proportional share of the papal debt.
(ii) This commitment would be made solely to France.
(iii) Through France, the King would also propose to the Pope that the title of Vicar of the Holy See be added to his title as King of Italy. In the event of acceptance by the Pope (which would mean an indirect renunciation of his previous territories), the King's Government would agree to contributing, in an amount to be determined, to the expenses required for the maintenance of the Holy See.
(iv) This arrangement, to reach in conjunction with King Vittorio Emanuele II, would be delivered as an ultimatum to the Court of Rome,[53] giving it two months to organize a force of 10,000 troops to preserve order in its provinces. Whether the Holy Father would have accepted or rejected the proposal, the French forces would have been evacuated, making the events proceed; "et une fois les français hors de Rome, advienne ce qui pourra; l'Empereur s'en laverait les mains".[54]

Count Vimercati was not convinced of the plan at all because of two different reasons. Firstly, the premise on which the plan was founded, namely the concept that it is preferable to displease Italy by preventing the State from conquering Rome than to displease the French Catholic party, was for Vimercati a biased conclusion. The subsequent refusal of the French troops to protect the Pope, since Napoleon "s'en laverait les mains",[55] would have caused disturbances among the French Catholics as

[53] Read: The Holy See.
[54] **DDI**, Vol.: I, Series: I, Doc.: 50, p. 82–86.
[55] To me, not a random expression. Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea from 26 to 36 AD, makes a gesture described in the Gospel of Matthew (27:11-28), where he took part in Jesus of Nazareth's trial and, in order to avoid "polluting himself" with the blood of an innocent man, let the multitude of Jews decide his destiny. Or at least that was his intention: to stay uninvolved in the impending injustice against Jesus. Pilate's gesture of publicly washing his hands is intended to convey, in a theatrical and demonstrative manner, that he will not accept responsibility for Jesus' execution and will so consider himself innocent. Napoleon III, as Pilate, would have washed his hands as not to be involved in the crimes committed against Pius IX: that was my philological interpretation of that expression used by Vimercati.

well, just later on. Secondly, Vimercati noted that it would have been much easier for Garibaldi to unite certain expeditionary corps against that body of 10,000 peacekeepers than with respect to the Austrians. Vimercati concluded by saying that if the Italian government could have stopped Garibaldi from conducting a guerrilla against those 10,000 people, it would have been practically impossible to stop him from agitating inside-of-Rome anti-papal insurrections and revolutions. It could be argued whether Vimercati's position was more sounding like a threat to instability as to discourage from implementing de Thouvenel's plan.[56] Whatever it might really be, knowing the intensions of the actors of History is a limit that historians are not able to overpass. Nonetheless, if de Thouvenel's project was not implemented, it contained a set of premises, on which later strategies on the verge of autumn of 1870 will be executed. Differently posed, if the 1870-71 France was not able to assert again its protective position in favour of the Pope, because of international and national vicissitudes, those same vicissitudes could have been used as a scapegoat for to continue an international conservative political doctrine already been established since 1848.[57]

The plan proposed by de Persigny is in essence the same of the one proposed by de Theouvenel. However, the methodology to adopt should face few strategic changes. The first of these changes must regard the publicity of the plan. Everybody should become acquiescent of the content and intentions of Italy, also France, and the Holy See. By rejecting it, the Pope would provide additional evidence of his damaging resistance, and only then would de Persigny support de Thouvenel's idea, which the emperor had informed him was created by himself. Following that, the Minister of the interior, of which de Persigny was the head, would stipulate that a portion of the movable and immovable assets be allocated to the expenses of the Sovereign Pontiff and the Cardinals, while omitting Rome, which would be subject to the same conditions as all other Holy Father States.

These projects of accord have been offered for two different reasons. Firstly, they – the plans – tend to testify the intention of France of settling the *questione Romana* by means of the law. By showing a-priori sympathies to Italy, both plans were of the opinion that the first wrong move had to be made by the Pope as to justify, particularly

[56] **A. B. Tira**, *Vimercati, Cavour e la questione Romana*, Crema: Museo Civico di Crema e del Cremasco, 2011, Insula Fulcheria, Vol. 41, pp. 50–76.

[57] By "conservative" it is intended nothing but the willingness to protect the balance of power and the European power equilibrium. In spite of the *de facto* end of the directorial form of consensus-formation, European power politics was still based at that time on the necessity to find at least a majoritarian consensus, as well with the general public. On this, see P**. W. Schroeder**, *The transformation of European politics, 1763-1848*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994; **K. Polanyi**, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. London: Penguin Books, 2024; and **G. H. Soutou**, *Was there a European Order in the Twentieth Century? From the Concert of Europe to the End of the Cold War*, Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2000, Contemporary European History, Vol. 9.

internally as the de Persigny's version predisposes, any anti-clerical manoeuvre against the territorial predisposition of the Papal State. Secondly, it seems pretty manifest the willingness of the French administration to decline any responsibility on such affair, leaving green light to the Italian politics upon the condition as of the first reason.[58]

In this context, after the attempts of de Thouvenel and de Persigny, Napoleon III's cousin, Prince Napoléon-Jérôme Bonaparte,[59] informed President Cavour of the final intensions of the emperor.[60] Basically, according to Napoléon-Jérôme, the idea of Napoleon III followed the logic of the following five steps:

(i) A direct agreement would be reached between France and Italy.
(ii) After having protected the Pope from any invasion or attack, France will remove its troops from Rome.
(iii) Italy agrees not to attack or impede any external attack on the Pope's current territory, even if it means using force.
(iv) The Italian government will not challenge the formation of a papal army, even if it is made up of foreign Catholic volunteers, as long as it does not exceed the magnitude of 10,000 troops.
(v) Italy will express its willingness to enter into an agreement with the papal administration to bear a proportional share of the costs of the former Papal States.

Intuitively enough, this final version endorses elements from both de Theouvenel and de Persigny's plans. This variant suggests the prevalence, in the mind of the emperor at least in April 1861, of two distinct aspects of the Italy-Holy See relationship: the defensive interest and legal mechanism. Points (iii) and (iv) detect the necessity of protecting the Pope from external attacks. Such endeavour is entrusted to a papal defensive unit, or, in ultimate instance, to the Italian kingdom. The methodology put forward by point (v) to conclude the question was the most classic of all: signing a treaty, and bear compensation costs like it was simple expropriation, and not higher-of-value violations of international obligations. The point (i) and (ii) propound the idea

[58] As it will be shown, because of a variety of motivations, France will try to delay as much as possible the evacuation from Rome. Therefore, the French-proposed plans and projects, which have been so many in reality, must be collocated within the imperial intention to reiterate the inevitable up to when the international scenario would have so permitted.

[59] Napoléon-Jérôme Bonaparte (1822–1891) had married Clotilde, the daughter of King Vittorio Emanuele II, on the 30th of January 1859

[60] **DDI**. Vol.: I, Series: I, Doc.: 58, pp. 93–95.

that the French would have passed the parcel to the Italians [i.e., point (i)] and automatically opt out from the vicissitude [i.e., point (ii)]. The public dissemination of the settlement plan advocated by de Persigny is not directly mentioned. Nevertheless, the direct treaty between Italy and France might arouse popular curiosity, therefore assisting to a process of information-spreading. Two days after, when Vimercati will return to Turin and present the project to the King and Cavour, the latter will report, via the chargé d'affaires at the Paris delegation, Gropello, to the French emperor that this plan has encountered "graves difficultés", but ready "à la recherche de moyens de les vaincre".

In fact, Cavour, a few days later, will reply to the proposal of the five points of Prince Napoleon, by totally agreeing and adding the following two aspects:

(vi) That the Kingdom of Italy shall be recognized on the same day that the treaty is signed; to this end, we would furnish the individual responsible with signing the treaty with credentials that they could show to the emperor immediately.

(vii) Without promising to provide direct help, France may undertake to use its good offices to convince the Pope to accede to a definitive agreement with Italy in accordance with the principles presented to Cardinal Antonelli by Father Passaglia.

In essence, this stage of things evolves around the presenting of a variety of plans, which nonetheless are built around the two principles outlined above. Apart from certain legalistic features, like it is elucidated in point (vi). Point (vii), instead, aims at succeeding in the real mission of the Italian diplomacy, that is to say to have the French pressing on the Pope to come up with a final agreed solution.

After a brief interruption of the diplomatic relations between France and Italy in between the end of April and May 1861,[61] Napoleon III decided to reinstate the diplomatic relations with Italy sending a letter to King Vittorio Emanuele II. There, the emperor stated the impossibility of France to recognize the newborn kingdom, due to the irreconcilability between the Holy See and Italy.[62]

[61] Vittorio Emanuele II asked once again to the emperor to leave Rome and grant recognition to the Kingdom. France will recognize Italy only on June 15th. This period is diplomatically intensive as both sides try to ensure a reconciliation, as well as with the Pope, over the *questione Romana*. This period, between March 17th and June 15th, was characterized, hence, by the prominence of intense letters' exchanges, informal communications and the capacity of non-official figures (e.g., Henri Conneau or Ottaviano Vimercati or, in certain circumstances, also de Thouvenel and Rouher) to vehicle messages, requests, consents and disapprovals.

[62] **DDI**, Vol.: I, Series: I, Doc.: 119, p 154.

The unfortunate death of Cavour, on 6th of June, pushed the emperor towards the road of granting recognition. Indeed, on June 10th, it was already vivid the intention of Napoleon III to differentiate between the recognition and the Roman issue: granting the recognition even if the *questione Romana* was not resolved yet.[63] Thanks even to the lobbying activities of de Thouvenel, de Persigny et Rouher, who were pressing for France to begin official relations with Italy as to re-balance the southern European flank also seen the ever-growing friendly relations with Great Britain, Napoleon III granted recognition on June 15th.

However, after the difficult recognition, the situation linked to the presence of the French troops in Rome was still deadlocked. De Thouvenel on the same day of the recognition sent a communication to the French chargé d'affaires in Turin, Rayneval, to communicate the opinion of Napoleon's government on the *questione*. In spite of the positive imperial inclination towards the cause of Rome,[64] "[l]e Cabinet de Turin, d'autre part, se rendra compte des devoirs que notre position nous crée envers le Saint-Siège, et je croirais superflu d'ajouter qu'en nouant des rapports officiels avec le Gouvernement Italien nous n'entendrons nullement affaiblir la valeur des protestations formulées par la Cour de Rome contre l'invasion de plusieurs provinces des Etats Pontificaux".[65] The idea was to safeguard the French position adopted during the Warsaw conference of October 1860, between Tsar Alexander II of Russia, Franz Joseph I of Austria, and clearly Napoleon III (represented by his cousin, Prince Jérôme Napoléon).[66] The message was communicated to Ricasoli on June 20th. The day after,

[63] Of this opinion, when communicated, was also the successor of Cavour, Bettino Ricasoli. Minister of the interior, and for a brief interregnum Head of the foreign affairs, Marco Minghetti communicated to Count Vimercati on June 11th that "Je viens de voir Ricasoli. […] La question romaine serait laissée de côté pour le moment; cela n'empecherait pas de la reprendre en sous-ceuvre plus tard. La reconnaissance serait meme un acheminement à des négociations ultérieures à ce sujet".

[64] De Thouvenel used this wording: "L'Empereur a accueilli cette communication [namely, related to the granted recognition] avec les sentiments de bienveillance qui l'animent envers l'Italie […]".

[65] **DDI**, Vol. I, Series: I, Doc.: 151, pp. 175–176.

[66] The meeting convened to discuss many urgent European matters: (i) The Italian unification process, which was altering the balance of power in Europe and causing tensions, particularly for Austria; (ii) the rising Polish nationalism within the Russian-ruled Congress Poland, and (iii) the need for Austria and Russia to coordinate their policies in light of France's growing influence in Europe under Napoleon III. **Positions held by country on the *questione***: (i) Russia maintained a neutral position regarding the Italian unification project, considering it subordinate to its interests in Eastern Europe. While not directly opposing Italian nationalism, Russia was wary of any disruption to the European balance of power, particularly caused by Napoleon III's support for such movements. Russia sympathized with Austria's difficulties but refrained from offering direct assistance, focusing instead on maintaining stability in Poland and safeguarding its own influence in the Balkans. (ii) Austria vehemently opposed Italian unification, having incurred territorial losses in the Second Italian War of Independence (1859), notably Lombardy. Determined to hold on to Venetia and resist further nationalist advances, Austria saw Italian unification as a direct threat to its multi-ethnic empire. Franz Joseph I sought Russian support to counterbalance Napoleon III's actions, viewing France as the primary driver of instability in the region. (iii) Under Napoleon III, France was a principal advocate of Italian unification to diminish Austria's power and augment French influence in Europe. While championing Italian national aspirations, France sought to keep Italy dependent and divided enough to avoid becoming a rival power. At the Warsaw meeting, France defended its role in the unification process, assuring the other powers that its actions were aimed at promoting progress rather than destabilizing Europe.

the President responded. Even if de Thouvenel's message was centered on a variety of topics pertaining the political relations between Italy and France, Ricasoli focused his attention on the *questione Romana*.[67]

After various other issues were considered in the meantime[68] and almost one week after Ricasoli's answer to de Thouvenel's acquiescence of the immobility of the French position on the protection of the Pope, President – and Minister of foreign affairs *ad interim* – Ricasoli sent specific instructions as to come up with a final say on the *questione* to the Italian Special Ambassador to France, Arese.[69] This position has also to be considered in light of growing opposition and antipathies from the Parliament seen the stalemate in the negotiations. The instructions were composed of twelve points; it had to be conducted a new negotiation as to:

(i) Illustrate to the Emperor the untenability of the Papacy's existing circumstances and that the situation in Rome cannot persist indefinitely without inflicting a severe injury on Italy.

(ii) Detail that two situations are applicable to the present scenario: either the Pope's existence is maintained or a vacancy in the Holy See.[70]

(iii) Oblige the King's Government, while the Pope remains alive, to persist in submitting offers for conciliation. These negotiations, conducted between the Italian Government and the Holy See, will at least have the advantage of increasingly putting the Roman Curia in the wrong.

(iv) Solicit the Emperor to exert his full influence to expedite these negotiations. The withdrawal of French troops would be the most effective means of compelling the Roman Curia to reach agreements.

[67] **DDI**, Vol.: I, Series: I, Doc.: 157, pp. 185–187.

[68] Namely, the demise of the sultan, Abdülmecid I, in June and the ascension of his brother, 'Abd ul- 'Aziz Effendi. Further, rumours about French intentions to gain the territory of Sardina was putting much fear on the success of the unification process. During this period, additionally, many developments were happening in Hungary. The *questione ungherese* was something started in 1848-49, part of a wider European picture, where the Hungarians failingly demanded for independence (please recall the Schwarzenberg-Windischgrätz couple). Under the pressure of continuing protests and insurrections, Franz Joseph will deliver the S.C. October Diploma in 1860, a constitutional kind of act aimed to widen the territorial form of government, drafted by the then Ministry of the interior Agenor Gołuchowski. Because of its pain-killer nature, and overburdened by popular dynamics, the February Patent (February 26th, 1861, then aka the Imperial Constitution of 1861) was issued. Kicking off the constitutional stage of the Austrian history, namely the premises of the 1867 Ausgleich. A further element of concern emerged from the archive was the rotten health situation of Queen Victoria.

[69] **DDI**, Vol.: I, Series: I, Doc.: 171, pp. 197–199.

[70] The pontiff's precarious health elicited apprehensions. Some even believed that he would not make it through the year. Pius IX passed away in Rome on February 7th, 1878.

(v) Facilitate the evacuation of his forces, the King's Government is willing to accept the treaty plan suggested by Prince Napoleon and stated in five points in a letter dated April 13, 1861, and accepted by the emperor.[71]

(vi) If this plan cannot be accomplished, the President of the Council would agree to replace the French forces with an Italian garrison whose sole responsibility would be to preserve order without jeopardizing sovereignty concerns, which would remain under negotiation. The garrison might alternatively be mixed, consisting of Italian and French forces or Italian and Papal troops.

(vii) Apply, in the negotiations between Italy and the Roman Court, the principle of "Libera Chiesa in Libero Stato",[72] which shall remain the foundation. The instructions already given to Father Passaglia will, in theory, be followed.

(viii) Advance, if this is insufficient, and the emperor believes it is essential, the proposition to leave Rome to the Pope.

(ix) Discreetly agree, in the event of the Pope's death, both the Emperor and King on the next steps for the Conclave and the Roman citizenry.

(x) Use, regarding the Conclave, all methods of influence in order to build a powerful and liberal party that will pressure the Cardinals to approve and swear constitutions that are consistent with the ideas of the proposed accords.[73] France and Portugal's figures should also be used, and the framework for electing a liberal Pope prepared.

(xi) Ask, in terms of population, to the emperor to allow a universal suffrage about Rome's annexation to the Kingdom of Italy as soon as the Pope dies, and the Cardinals meet in Conclave.

(xii) Expect, in the event of an election held outside of Rome, particularly on Austrian territory, that the emperor will agree with the King not to accept the election's validity.

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[71] Recall the version of the plan proposed by Prince Napoleon, presented few pages before, on April 13th.

[72] "Free Church in Free State": the notorious apothegm was formulated by Cavour. The power of the formula has been by many intended as the solution to all social problems, which contemplated the intersection of the political (by force of the rule of the State) and spiritual or religious dimension (by force of the moral anti-erethic superiority of the Church). In my eyes, the best words, either critical or in favour, on the historical and political, as well as probably legal, power of this expression have been written by **G. Padelletti**, *Libera chiesa in libero stato. Genesi della formula cavouriana*, Florence: Le Monnier, 1875, Nuova Antologia, pp. 1–45; **T. Mamiani**, *Teorica della religione e dello Stato e sue speciali attinenze con Roma e le nazioni cattoliche*. Florence: Le Monnier, 1868; **G. M. Bertini** and **C. Passaglia**, *Conferenze di Diritto Pubblico*, Turin: Tipografia del Mediatore, 1864; **N. Bianchi**, *Storia Documentata della Diplomazia Europea in Italia, Vol. 8: Dall'Anno 1814 all'Anno 1861; Anni 1859-1861*, London: Forgotten Books, 2018; and **I. Artom** and **A. Blanc**, *Il conte di Cavour in Parlamento*, Florence : Barbera, 1868.

[73] The names of Cardinals Camillo di Pietro and Pietro de Silvestri were put forward, since they were perceived to be the most suitable prelates to lead this campaign.

However, the intensions of the emperor to solve the issue were not very solid. Indeed, he also threatened Italy to respect the rules of the European balance, and not to act alone. Otherwise, the consequences of such act would be to go at war against France, basically. Occupying Rome meant attacking the French troops, after which a full-scale war could have followed. Following the proposal to start again the negotiations based on the 5 points presented by Prince Napoleon, "l'Imperatore rispose ch'egli ebbe recentemente a convincersi della impossibilità di mettere ora in esecuzione quel disegno".[74]

Meanwhile, Fabio Uccelli,[75] a journalist and polymath from Florence, was assigned a personal mission by Ricasoli to dialogue with the de Persigny in July. In his letter to Ricasoli, from Paris, communicated the objectives of his mission, which were essentially two: (i) to engage with the new structures of the French government, since it was in the interest of Italy to maintain anti-Austrian and pro-Italian contacts in each Ministry – especially that of the foreign affairs and of the interior –, and (ii) ensure everybody comprehends the political and religious risks of the present blocked scenario of Rome, therefore pressing for the beginning of the negotiations. The letter was dated July 11th, while the meeting with de Persigny happened on July 15th. Uccelli stated that "[p]er ottenere questo risultato, al quale veramente tendono tutti i nostri sforzi, per ottenere in ultima analisi che la Francia lasci Roma atta a contenere nel suo seno il capo della Nazione e il capo della Chiesa, il Conte Persigny consiglia il Governo italiano a dichiarare solennemente in ogni circostanza ed in qualunque momento che Roma e il suo territorio saranno aggregati alle altre provincie italiane senza invasioni, senza misure e modi rivoluzionari, e senza nulla ch'abbia l'apparenza di conquista e di violenza, ma di pieno accordo colla Francia e col Papato medesimo, si dovessero anche aspettare mesi ed anni per raggiungere questo scopo definitivo".[76] Essentially, for de Persigny it sufficed to declare the pacific and anti-invasion intentions of the Italian government to achieve a solution to the question. Once such move was made, France would have withdrawn its troops from Rome, publicly justified by the Italian pacific declarations. According to de Persigny, the Papal State, unable to manage its own territories, will capitulate and, as a consequence, be forced to negotiate with Vittorio Emanuele.

[74] **DDI**, Vol.: I, Series: I, Doc.: 188, pp. 215–217.
[75] I might suggest the good book of **G. Mazzoni**, *L'Ottocento*. Milano: Casa Editrice Dottor Francesco Vallardi, 1934, where to find more details on Uccelli and his mission.
[76] **DDI**, Vol.: I, Series: I, Doc.: 220, pp. 256–258.

On August 26th, the new French Ambassador, Vincent Benedétti, was departing to Turin. The Italian Ambassador to France, Costantino Nigra, therefore the day before Benedétti's embarkation decided to inform Ricasoli of the policy guidelines given to Benedétti from the emperor.[77] According to Nigra, the emperor, when relating with Benedétti, reported that it was Benedétti's priorities "1. che si continui a negoziare o a fingere di negoziare con Roma, per intrattenere il pubblico e mettere il Papa dal lato del torto; 2. che si agisca sull'opinione pubblica colla stampa e con altri mezzi idonei; 3. che ad ogni costo si quieti Napoli".[78]

However, the moment, especially under the immovable leadership of Pius IX, was not fertile enough in order to adopt a radical solution of the *questione*. Almost two weeks later, Prince Napoleon responded to a letter sent by Ricasoli on October 14th aimed to ask for the personal intercession of the prince towards the emperor, where he clearly stated that "Malgré son vif désir de ne pas contrarier les voeux du peuple italien, il ne quittera Rome que lorsqu'il pourra le faire sans manquer à ses antécedents et à ses promesses. C'est-à-dire que les troupes françaises ne se retireront que lorsque l'Empereur croira pouvoir le faire honorablement vis-à-vis la France et l'Europe. Pour cela il faut ou attendre une occasion nouvelle et un prétexte favorable, ou qu'un compromis clair et net intervienne entre le Roi d'Italie et le Pape".[79] On November 10th, Prince Napoleon secretly reported to the Italian Ambassador a confidential meeting he, together with Achille Fould and Rouher, had with the emperor, where they touched a couple of topics, among which the need to bring some changes in the cabinet and the *questione Romana*. According to the reported meeting, the emperor agreed on the following strategy. Italy shall recognize the *status quo* of the Pope's geographical possessions. The Pope, *inter alia*, would issue a constitution, adopt the Italian flag with papal arms, enact secular laws, give municipal and provincial liberties, support Italy's foreign policy, and acknowledge the Kingdom of Italy. If the Pope approves, the French troops will leave Rome immediately. If he declines, the French occupation will

[77] Gropello informed Ricasoli on July 14th, 1861, that Benedetti, then Director of Political Affairs at the Quai d'Orsay, had expressed himself to him in the following terms: "esser cosa conveniente che i segreti e confidenziali negoziati intavolati al tempo del Conte di Cavour con Roma venissero o continuati o ripresi: esser questo l'unico modo di poter sperare una qualche soluzione alla quistione Romana". During the same conversation, the Italian chargé d'affaires learnt that the Pope had stated that if the French forces were to leave Rome at that time, he would also have leaved the city. Consequently, under such circumstances, Emperor Napoleon was unable to remove his forces from the Papal States.

[78] **DDI**, Vol.: I, Series: I, Doc.: 277, pp. 336–338. For the time being, and for the sake of the argument object of this work, Napoli's developments will be disregarded. Nonetheless, the reader shall realise that also Napoli was used as a means of blocking the negotiations with Turin. Fearing reprisals in Napoli, as in Sicily, was a way to halt the negotiations over Rome. Therefore, there indeed exists a direct link between Napoli and Rome.

[79] **DDI**, Vol.: I, Series: I, Doc.: 372, pp. 453–454.

finish anyway. In the first situation, French forces would be replaced by Italians. In the second circumstance, the Pope would be forced to confront his subjects.[80]

Since the end of November of 1861, the French political domestic situation was quite chaotic,[81] as also Count Vimercati reported to King Vittorio Emanuele with this expression: "Si l'on trouve que les affaires intérieures ne vont pas bien chez-nous, nous pouvons de notre coté trouver avec raison, qu'elles ne vont guère mieux en France, car 'ici le gouvernement est en un véritable désarroi, et l'Empereur a beaucoup perdu depuis quelque temps".[82] Thus, the intense diplomatic dialogue woven throughout 1861 in an effort to find a solution to the Roman Question, summarized in its most essential and fundamental aspects in this sub-chapter, encountered various obstacles, ranging from the emperor of France's unwillingness to offend Catholic factions to the Pope's intransigence in seeking a solution, and from the missed Italian recognition to other concerns of European interests. At the heart of it all was the Italian effort, which, via formal and informal channels, continually strove to collaborate with the French administration to find the best plan for the Italian occupation of Rome.

This could be one of those occasions, where it is possible to classically argue how the end of 1861 correlates with the beginning of 1862. In fact, as it will be shown, this history, namely of the course of actions that led to the Breccia, has no cut-off points: it is a never-ending continuum.[83] It is an history of a cleavage, of one of the most significant for a nation-state,[84] which in my opinion not even 1929 resolved. A cleavage not in the relations of nations, but in the ideals and political cultures. The peoples, particularly the Italian and Roman, are at the heart of a vicissitude, whose afterwards have been handed down from generation to generation since well before 1870, or even 1861. So Bettino Ricasoli closed the year 1861 by requesting Francesco Teccio di Bayo, the Italian Consulate in Rome, to incite public feelings toward the realization, even via mandate and initiative of their own idea, of the union of Rome with the Kingdom of Italy.[85] Generally speaking, the Roman question in 1862, considering that continuum-

[80] **DDI**, Vol.: I, Series: I, Doc.: 392, pp. 476–477.

[81] Another element of context, which gave strength to this domestic disequilibrium, was the report of the French Ministry of finance, at the hands of Mr. Fould, which revealed a series of discrepancies, fragilities, and precariousness of the French economic situation threatening the credibility of the emperor and his government, internally as well as abroad.

[82] **DDI**, Vol.: I, Series: I, Doc.: 433, pp. 510–511.

[83] If possible, I would as well add that the end point of this continuum has not been reached in the history and politics of contemporaneous Italy yet. The diagnosis of the Church-State split, of which the foreign policy – and most crucial – side is for this work to unpack, has determined the relationship between Italy with the Holy See, hence between the national conceptions of temporal and spiritual powers, and, as a consequence, between Italy's self-perception and Italy's international relations. That is the magnitude of September 20th, 1870; and of the path that guided through it. This theme will be addressed afterward.

[84] See, for instance, **V. Del Giudice**, *La "Questione Romana" ed i Rapporti fra Stato e Chiesa fino alla conciliazio*, Roma: Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1947.

[85] **DDI**, Vol.: II, Series: I, Doc.: 1, pp. 1–2.

kind of discourse, evolved around various main sub-topics. One might argue that this was the year when the Roman irredentism started to become internationally relevant, as well as the actions of Garibaldi and Mazzini, or of the ups-and-downs of the French attitude – from the recall of General Goyon to a proactive approach in the form of revitalized proposals of settlement –, or of a set of anti-clerical demonstrations in Rome and Paris, or of the progressive involvement of Great Britain and other European powers into the issue. Therefore, this work will concentrate on the major diplomatic occurrences of the period under investigation.

Noteworthy, in the opinion of the author, is the personal letter Ricasoli sent to Nigra between the 10th and 11th of January delineating a new phase in the Italian approach.[86] The new element was the proposal of mixed garrisons. In reality, this proposal was indirectly put forward the year before. Nonetheless, not so specifically and not mentioned among the main plans of action, such as the ones of Prince Napoleon or of de Thouvenel. According to Ricasoli, France had to displace its troops in Civitavecchia, whilst the Italians in Viterbo, Corneto, Terracina and Alatri. However, the French internal limit constrained this plan from being put to action. The obvious consequence of this was the return of Cavour's plans. Indeed, it could be argued as well that it seemed as if the project of the Roman question was forgotten after Cavour's death.[87] Of course, interlocutions were still maintained. Nonetheless, it seemed as if with the death of Cavour the possibility to annex Rome, therefore ideally complete the unification path, was perceived to be much farther away from being achieved in a foreseeable future.

For the time being, as Nigra reported to Ricasoli on the 9th of January, "se avvi possibilità di far adottare all'Imperatore un progetto pratico, non potrebb'essere che accettando un accomodamento sulla base della cessazione dell'occupazione francese, sostituita all'uopo da un presidio italiano, mediante il riconoscimento per parte del Regno d'Italia degli attuali possessi della Santa Sede e mediante l'impegno che esso si assumerebbe di rispettare e far rispettare questi possessi".[88] Currently, as stated by the emperor and conveyed by the Italian envoy, the sole feasible course of action was the establishment of protection guarantees linked to the acknowledgment of particular territorial holdings of the Holy See. In this context, the Italian diplomatic strategy of waiting, built on the conviction of the necessity to labour towards achieving complete

[86] **DDI**, Vol.: II, Series: I, Doc.: 19, pp. 29–35.
[87] **A. Berselli**, *Documenti sulle trattative per la soluzione della questione Romana nel 1861*, Florence: Casa Editrice Leo S. Olschki s.r.l., 1955, Archivio Storico Italiano, Vol. 113.
[88] **DDI**, Vol.: II, Series: I, Doc.: 14, pp. 21–24

and absolute occupation, would eventually yield results of greater impact, in line with the ideal terms envisioned by the national unification process, in 1870. In other words, time bore its fruits. Had Italy immediately agreed to such demands, Rome likely would not be Italian today. Similarly, Italy and Italians would not be the state and the people this contribution prepares to analyse.

Meanwhile, relations with Austria introduced an additional degree of difficulty. Ricasoli expressed regret for the emperor being unable to receive General Türr, whose visit might have been interpreted as support for revolutionary movements in Hungary, thereby provoking Vienna's irritation. This cautious approach reflected Italy's need to avoid diplomatic conflicts with major European powers while pursuing national unity.

The intensions of the emperor to remove the military from the Holy See seemed to prove solid in 1862 as well. In addition to the various projects elicited beforehand, Count Charles de La Valette, the French Ambassador to the Holy See, tried to lobby, at the Court of Rome, for to start negotiating with the Italian Kingdom. The first La Vallette mission was different from the second, indeed.[89] By the beginning of January, de Thouvenel prepared a note to be sent to La Vallette where the synthesis of the previous projects combined with the intentions of emperor was redacted. Nonetheless, Napoleon III decided not to allow de Thouvenel to send it.[90] By mid-January things changed. With the sending of the note, the first La Valette mission could begin. Basically, such memorandum was crafted as to direct the French Ambassador to alert

[89] Despite close, the two initiatives had different objectives or, at least, different proposed mechanisms of settlement of the *questione*. Both were fairly failures, but they must be collocated within a greater effort to prepare the ground for the major turning point in September 1864.

[90] On the 31st of January, Nigra writes to future President of the Council Marco Minghetti: "In seguito alle nostre continue sollecitazioni, a quelle del Principe e dei Ministri Fould, Thouvenel, Rouher, Persigny, l'Imperatore aveva da molto tempo ordinata questa nota. Ma quando fu preparata non volle più che si spedisse, ed ecco perchè: in quel tempo pareva prossima una rottura fra gli Stati Uniti e l'Inghilterra. Questa eventualità aveva ridestato certe idee bellicose nell'animo dell'Imperatore, il quale era forse lieto che, stando l'Inghilterra occupata altrove, un'occasione gli si porgesse di compiere i suoi progetti, cioè la liberazione della Venezia e il resto. Questi pensieri gli erano anche suggeriti dalla credenza in cui è che il Re non desideri affrettare la soluzione della Questione Romana e che pensi invece di preferenza alla Questione Veneta. In tal caso l'Imperatore non voleva privarsi, col ritiro delle truppe da Roma, d'una eccellente posizione strategica nel cuore della penisola. Ma la resa dei prigionieri del Trent decise l'Imperatore a ripigliare la Questione Romana, e quindi diede ordine che la nota fosse spedita". The previous passage is contained in **L. Lipparini**, *Minghetti*. Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli Editore, 1945. pp. 28–29. Vol. II.

The Trent episode (Autumn 1861) happened during the American civil war (1861 – 1865). Trent was a British vessel that carried two Confederate envoys, being Mason and Slidell. Their goal was to travel to England and request an audience with Lord Palmerston, the Queen Victoria's Prime Minister. The Union Navy pursued the Trent, and in the middle of the Atlantic, one of their brigantines intercepted the ship and seized the two Confederate envoys. The British reaction to the incident was very severe. They accused the Union forces of both insulting the British flag and violating international law. The response prepared by the Foreign Secretary, Lord John Russell, was very firm and could have been interpreted as a sort of ultimatum. Prince Consort Albert, afflicted with typhoid disease, intervened and altered Russell's note, transforming it into an invitation for negotiations. By mid-January, with the end of the hostility, Napoleon III could count on a relaxed atmosphere between Great Britan and the United States. Therefore, he could allow de Thouvenel to send the note to La Valette and forge ahead the Roman issue, since that the Italian outpost was useless.

the Holy See regarding the imperative of negotiating an accord with the King of Italy, thus facilitating the emperor's withdrawal of his forces from Rome.[91] Not surprisingly, "[l]a réponse du Gouvernement Pontifical à la note de Thouvenel est complètement négative. Le Cardinal Antonelli déclare impossible accord entre le Roi et le Saint-Siège" was what Nigra reported to Ricasoli on the 27th of January.[92]

By this time, the diplomatic, as well as public, involvement of Great Britain in the *questione Romana*, together with the *questione veneta* framed within the more general issue of the Italian unification, became more visible.[93] The Italian delegation in London, guided by Marchese Taparelli d'Azeglio, was quite able to drive the Italian interest through the British Cabinet. Lord Palmerston and Lord Russel together tried to mediate the Italian position with the Austrians, the Prussians and Russians.[94] As remuneration of this effort, indeed, the first Anglican Church's construction was given permission in Naples. Further, English capitalists bought several Italian government-backed securities. At the beginning of February, d'Azeglio noticed that the foreign demand of bonds outweighed the Italian offer, suggesting an increased trust in the Italian economic building and unification project.

On the French side, the situation was still hampered by the ambiguous politics of Napoleon III and his ministers as well. For instance, de Persigny, Minister of the interior and fervent participant in the drafting of resolute projects, seemed to have changed his mind with respect of the French military stationing in Rome. Indeed, de Thouvenel reported to Count Vimercati his misappreciation for how de Persigny spoke to a commission in the Senate, of which he is part, quasi-favouring the permanent occupation, by virtue of the French presence, of Rome.[95] What are the real reasons of de Persigny for his changed attitude are not so easy to decrypt. However, a plausible explication could be related to the willingness of attracting a consolidated power on the French bishops. The permanence in Rome could be used, according to this interpretation of de Persigny's speech, as means of exchange for more control and

[91] According to Lord Cowley, Extraordinary Ambassador and Minister Plenipotentiary of England in Paris, and Lord Russell, this note had the mere objective to furnish the "Livre jaune", namely the French version of the "Blue book". On this, **L. M. Case**, *Franco Italian Relations 1860-1865*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1832. p. 152.

The opinion of Nigra was not so distant: "Io non dubito che il Papa risponderà in modo negativo o evasivo. Non penso che questa nota abbia un risultato immediato; ma credo che essa servirà di punto di partenza dei negoziati ulteriori, quando l'Imperatore si deciderà a intavolarli davvero".

[92] **DDI**, Vol.: II, Series: I, Doc.: 54, p. 88.

[93] **P. V. Casana**, *La prima fase dell'unificazione italiana: trattati e trattative diplomatiche*, in G. S. Pene Vidari. *Verso l'Unità italiana. Contributi storico-giuridici*, Turin: G. Giappichelli, 2010.

[94] Clearly, with Prussia and Russia more urgent was the topic of recognition. Whilst, with Austria about Venetia and possible interventions in Latium.

[95] **DDI**, Vol.: II, Series: I, Doc.: 114, p. 156–160.

predominance over the bishops in France, known to be possessors of great social capital. When Vimercati, on the suggestion of Nigra, asked for clarification, de Persigny responded with even more ambiguous statements, but promising to be the "best friend" of Italy and the Italians. Once again, he stated that the only condition for the French troops to leave Rome was a system of warrantees for the Pope, and unpracticable up until the point when the unification process is stabilized. To the contrary, Count Colonna-Walewski, always in opposition of the Italian unification, embarked on a positive re-consideration of the unification process.

February 20th was an important day: any methodical and attentive diplomatic reporter would argue. That was the day when the Senate was commencing a new discussion over Rome. For the occasion, Nigra said "[i]l fuoco sarà cominciato dai clericali, Larochejacquelein, Ségur d'Aguesseau ed altri, compreso, triste a dirsi, il Lagueronnière, il quale già ci muove nella Patrie assidua guerra".[96] But Prince Napoleon decided not to intervene into the discussion because by so doing, given the presence of the government, his position would have ended up as a mediator between the government and the clericals. Basically, his interposition in the quality of Italian supporter would have rendered easier the mission of the government to appear softer in front of the senators. To the contrary, the prince wanted a strong discrepancy to emerge between the governmental and clerical positions in that occasion.[97]

The period between March and May of 1862 has been associated by some as a rising in tensions and by others as a moment of renewed political imagination, with new projects and proposals. What is sure is that the end of February, and the consequential political prospect initiated by Rattazzi's government, was marked by Ricasoli's resignation request on the 28th of February. By the 1st of March the King accepted his resignation. On March 3rd, a new government led by Urbano Rattazzi, and Giacomo Durando as Minister of foreign affairs since the end of March, was formed.[98]

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[96] **DDI**, Vol.: II, Series: I, Doc.: 117, p. 164–166.

[97] I decided to insert this detail because it flags the increasing tendency of putting the question in front of the public. The strategy of the prince was nothing but a tactic to manoeuvre the impression of a parliamentary session aimed at showcasing the controversial position of the clericals, with respect to the government but also of the populace. The session in Parliament was also due to the liberal and constitutional inclinations of the protesting students, and various journals. A recent protest was that of February 22nd, where a significant number of students protested towards the house of Prof. Renan, subject of clerical attacks. In front of the Senate, they screamed: "Vive l'Empereur, Vive le Prince Napoléon. A bas les Calotins". But many others happened since January 1862. Not to mention the various demonstrations in Rome and in the Kingdom. On the journalist side, the editors of *Siècle*, *Assemblée Nationale*, *Patrie*, and other liberal press outlets suggested the prince to push for a petition-signing initiative in their offices, likewise intended for the evacuation of French troops. Further, even if little in number, some deputies were also prepared to sign any likewise petition.

[98] On the resignation case, let me suggest two readings, would the interest in deepening the matter be expressed: **M. Tabarrini** and **A. Gotti**, *Lettere e Documenti del Barone Bettino Ricasoli*, Florence: Le Monnier, 1891, pp. 414–418 and 420–421; and **A. Luzio**, *Aspromonte e Mentana*, Florence: Le Monnier, 1935. p. 132–138.

Following an extensive period of research and preparation regarding the internal and external matters pertaining to Italian politics, the government commenced its focus on the Roman Question in late March.

The conditions, on which Rattazzi pursued the same goals of Ricasoli, changed.[99] More in particular, the perception of the French intentions changed. If Ricasoli was more prone to consider valid the positive politics of Napoleon III in favour of the Italian unification, Rattazzi to the contrary was of the opinion that the emperor had no intention at all to concede the occupation of Rome, at least for the time being.[100]

On a general note, this phase of the question was still dominated by the Italo-French relationship, with some involvement of Austria or Great Britain. Prussia and Russia, for instance, were very much interested in the evolution of the Roman issue, as the Italian diplomatic archive demonstrates. Nonetheless, such interest was formal but without any consequential political involvement. As reported in the *Die auswärtige Politik Preußens*, the Berlin Cabinet opted to maintain a passive stance over Roman matters, delegating the issue to the Catholic powers more directly engaged in the problem. Basically, it was a form of protesting in advance against any arrangement that might impose financial burdens on a power which is essentially Protestant as Prussia is. Such a burden, was logically thought, should fall on whoever restores the Holy See to the exercise of temporal power and is therefore essentially Catholic.[101]

Interestingly enough, on March 28th, de Thouvenel moved ahead subdividing the *questione Romana* into two different other issues.[102] One thing was the occupation of Rome, other thing was the French withdrawal. About the first aspect, the French minister stated clearly that it was quite premature to display any strategy concerning the occupation of the eternal city. It was still needed a "considerable time". Regarding the second dimension, however, de Thouvenel was open to negotiate. At the end of the day, the issue of the French military withdrawal has been addressed, with more or fewer interest, since the first half of 1861. But also the La Vallette's mission was a prove

[99] **G. Manica**, *Da Custoza a Mentana. Ricasoli e Rattazzi alla sfida del completamento unitario*, Florence: Polistampa, 2017.

[100] Rattazzi to d'Azeglio on the 24th of March: "Il punto, sul quale non sono d'accordo con Lord Palmerston, riguarda le intenzioni dell'Imperatore Napoleone. Io sono intimamente persuaso ch'Egli non osteggia ora l'idea dell'unità Italiana. Credo, ch'egli non avesse fede nella medesima al momento della pace di Villafranca [between the 11th and 12th of July of 1859, at the end of the second war of independence, ndr]; ma in seguito il suo giudizio si è modificato in conseguenza dell'attitudine presa dagl'Italiani, ed egli si è rassegnato a questo voto. Tale è almeno la profonda convinzione, che io ho acquistato nel mio viaggio a Parigi."

[101] **W. Baumgart**, *Die auswärtige Politik Preußens 1858–1871*, Berlin: Duncker & Humblot GmbH, 2008. Zweite Abteilung: Vom Amtsantritt Bismarcks bis zum Prager Frieden. Band VII (der Gesamtreihe): April bis August 1866. Vol. II, p. 613.

[102] Recall that already in summer 1861 it was successfully attempted to detach the recognition of the Kingdom from the occupation. Indeed, it is a quite constant strategy: to differentiate between the issues at stake, find a solution to the "easiest" one and proceed along.

of it, in a certain sense.[103] With this interpretation in mind, if the project of a treaty with the Holy See was now impracticable, Napoleon III communicated to Ambassador Nigra at the end of March that a new plan was coming. The details would have come afterward. The day after, namely the 1st of April, the emperor reported his project. The diplomatic archive does not specify the details of the plan. However, from the letters used to respond to the imperial proposal, it is possible to uproot two aspects concerning this plan. First off, the proposal shall entail restoring to the Pope the area extending to the Apennines, but the governance of this region would be entrusted to the King. Therefore, it speaks of territorial concessions, completely unacceptable to both Nigra and Rattazzi. Secondly, Napoleon III's initiative may correspond to that outlined in a *Note de l'Empereur*, dated 1861, though lacking a specific month and day, as examined by G. Dethan.[104] The exact content of the plan will lately arrive on the 24th of April. The intricated imperial proposal, in the version reported by Nigra,[105] was composed of the following points:

(i) The Papal territories would be governed with a municipal form of administration. The Pope would retain all titles and sovereign prerogatives.
(ii) Catholic powers would contribute *pro rata* to the Pope's expenses. France would contribute with 3.5 million francs.
(iii) Public debt would be divided proportionally to the territory. The Kingdom of Italy would assume its corresponding share of the debt.
(iv) Papal provinces would enter into a customs union with the Kingdom of Italy. Italian laws would apply in Papal provinces, subject to approval by a Papal State Council with veto power.
(v) Papal provinces would dispatch representatives to the Italian Parliament. The Pope would appoint a number of senators. Currency would be aligned with Italian currency but bear the Pope's effigy.
(vi) The flag would be the Italian tricolour with the arms of the Holy See instead of the Savoy cross.
(vii) The Pope would have a personal guard.

[103] **DDI**, Vol.: II, Series: I, Doc.: 200, p. 248–251.
[104] **G. Dethan**, *Napoléon III et l'opinion française devant la question romaine (1860-1870)*, Paris: s.n., 1958, Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique, pp. 119–121.
[105] **DDI**, Vol.: II, Series: I, Doc.: 278, p. 316–317.

(viii) Finances and the military would be unified with the Kingdom of Italy, though further details were unspecified.

(ix) The Kingdom of Italy would return part of annexed provinces up to the Apennines. This would increase Papal domains by about 100,000 people (from provinces such as Umbria, Spoleto, and Rieti).[106]

(x) The mechanism of acceptance was: if both Turin and Rome agree, the plan go forward, and French forces depart Rome. If Turin approves but Rome declines, French troops will depart within a year. If Turin rejects, the *status quo* is preserved.

The above plan was very well engineered. Especially from the economic standpoint. However, the territorial concession's clause was deemed to be totally unacceptable by the Italian government. That had to be quite obvious, at the eyes of the emperor as well, seen that the (almost completed) unification was achieved a bit more than a year before. Risorgimento was not at its end, so it was not the fervent popular aspirations for Rome and Venetia.[107] In my opinion, not even the emperor was convinced that Turin could have accepted any territorial concession to the Pope. As such, this plan was a singular proposal aimed at taking more time, showing the French willingness, in case of denial depicting the Pope's intransigency, and prorogating the French strategic outposts. In any of the instances, elucidated in point (ix), the French domestic position in front of the catholic milieu was protected, as well as in front of Turin and Rome. In essence, this was a tentative solution pondered not to deliver valuable result, but to show diplomatic commitment and equilibrium in a bipolar intransigent atmosphere. The project will be exposed to the Council of ministers at the end of May. By the end of May, also General Goyon was substituted with General De Montebello.

As a response, the plan of de Thouvenel, found more favourable to the Italian approach, was discussed at the Council of ministers. De Thouvenel's project, according to Nigra, can be summarized as follows:

[106] This provision is naturally considered inappropriate by the Italian government since it undermines the principle of universal suffrage. French ministers (Thouvenel, Rouher, and Billault) are similarly opposed to the provision and indeed proposed its removal. The preoccupation was that this provision could have favoured a precedent, according to which the popular vote could be derogated by the prevalence of other national interests. In the context of a post-1815, and attempting conservative, international balance, this derogation would have signified a dramatic change in the European equilibria.

Additional note: in late April, minister Durando reported an amount of "a bit less than 400,000 inhabitants", and not of 100,000 as it was given by Nigra.

[107] On this, see **L. Villari**, *Bella e perduta. L'Italia del Risorgimento*, Roma-Bari: Laterza, 2009.

(i) The Italian government commits not to allow any invasion of the Papal territory.
(ii) Acknowledgment, at least *de facto*, of the Pope's present properties.
(iii) Proportional distribution of the Papal public debt.
(iv) Notice to the Pope of the occupation's conclusion at a later date.

This plan brings no innovation *per se*, yet it seems much more in line with the Italian government.

On May 23rd, a ministerial council met to debate the emperor's proposal. It was received with virtually complete criticism, with Walewski the only backer. Rouher was vehemently opposed, citing concerns about its feasibility. Faced with a lack of support, the emperor dropped his idea. On May 25th, de Thouvenel and Rouher returned to the emperor and urged him to make a choice. Napoleon III hesitated and postponed the discussion until the next day. On the 26th, the emperor held a private discussion with de Thouvenel and Rouher that lasted more than two hours. During the meeting, the emperor regarded the proposal as inadequate and voiced reservations about the three-year timetable for the evacuation of French soldiers, implying that unanticipated circumstances may provide a faster solution. Rouher acknowledged the plan's flaws, but underlined the need of determining which alternative was the least faulty. The emperor mentioned a number of possible situations, including the Pope's death, prospective events in Venice, and larger geopolitical forces that may impact the settlement of the matter. De Thouvenel defended the concept, citing its adaptability and capacity to absorb positive developments. After much thought, the emperor grudgingly consented to approve the idea, stating his preference for avoiding fixed timeframes but finally deciding to continue. On the 27th of May, Rouher revealed privately that the emperor had approved the new proposal, which he saw as a big win. This choice, however, remained a well held secret. On the 28th, the idea was submitted to the following ministerial council. De Thouvenel vigorously supported it, while Rouher expounded on its virtues. The idea got additional backing from the Minister of the Navy, but it was strongly opposed by Magne, Walewski, and de Persigny. The latter rejected the idea from an Italian standpoint, claiming that the King of Italy could not agree to respect Papal territory, which was crucial to the proposal. Despite these concerns, the majority of ministers voiced their support. Nonetheless, the proposal was not implemented, therefore the situation remained unaltered for the time being. De Thouvenel seemed dismayed by the defeat, although Rouher was motivated to

continue the fight. The chance of improvement was dependent on increased efforts, particularly given the Prince Napoleon's expected presence. Supporters anticipated that exploiting recent events and highlighting the urgency of resolving the Roman Question would enhance their stance. It was proposed that a private letter explaining Italy's fragile domestic condition, notably the instability produced by Garibaldi and radical factions, may help persuade the emperor to take urgent action. Such a letter would emphasize the importance of finding a solution, even if it is temporary, to guarantee Italy's stability and limit mounting unrest.

The substitution of Goyon with De Montebello was the perfect occasion for La Vallette to embark in a second mission. The guidelines given to La Vallette by de Thouvenel were not so different from the ones of the first mission. Essentially, La Vallette had to prepare the Pope for the removal of French troops and persuade him to enact political changes that would enable him to retain his States without the assistance of foreign armies. Because, before leaving the Papal States, the Emperor would have demanded assurances from the King of Italy that the Pope's States will be respected. But, before turning to the second La Vallette mission, few details of the French cabinet discussion on the Roman question will be provided.

By the beginning of June, Minister Durando proposed his solution. According to him, France and Italy had to sign two independent acts: a formal convention establishing the conditions for withdrawal, and a preliminary agreement between France and the Kingdom to establish the foundation for a prospective settlement between the latter and the Pope. In this way, the Roman Court would be compelled to properly assess its predicament, confronted with the choice of offering the Roman people reasonable concessions to make its reign palatable or accepting direct discussions with Italy. France would not leave Italian mission with an undetermined conclusion; Italy would be obliged by the convention, preserving the *status quo* within the boundaries set by international norms, setting the stage for any future arrangements between the two counterparts, namely Turin and Rome.

The French approach was summarized by Nigra in a letter dated on the 9th of June.[108] According to Nigra, La Vallette went to Rome as to make the Pope understand that the French occupation could not last forever. Further, the written proposal elaborated by the French government was composed of the following five articles:

(1) A direct agreement would be reached between France and Italy.

[108] **DDI**, Vol.: II, Series: I, Doc.: 395, p. 420–421.

(2) After ensuring the Pope's safety from any attacks, France would remove its troops from Rome.

(3) Italy would pledge not to attacking but to prevent any foreign attack on the Pope's present area, even if it required force.

(4) The Italian government would not object to the formation of a papal army, even if it consisted of foreign Catholic volunteers, as long as it did not exceed ten thousand soldiers.

(5) Italy would express its willingness to enter into an arrangement with the Papal Government to take a proportionate part of the former Papal States' costs.

In spite of presenting nothing novel, this project resounded more as an ultimatum for the Holy See. Not an ultimatum intended as the end of its temporal power, which would happen much later, but a message aimed at conveying the imperative necessity for the Pope to start negotiating. De Thouvenel, who received confirmation from La Valette five days later, claimed that La Vallette found a more receptive and conciliatory disposition in Rome. While this does not provide him with hope for acceptance or reconciliation, it will make more plausible to debate and calmly articulate the reasons why the emperor desires to see the Holy Father take efforts to administer his States in such a way that the French occupation may be withdrawn.[109]

In summer 1862, the situation was not so stable in Italy. And the other powers so understood. It will be shown the context as well of the Italian involvement in other circumstances by the end of the year in the Balkans, for instance. However, in the peninsula the agitations provoked by Garibaldi exacerbated civil tensions raising fears of the outbreak of a war following his mission in Sicily. Gathering volunteers in the island of Caprera, Garibaldi disembarked in Palermo with the aim of reaching Rome through a corp of recruited people. As it may be well perceived, Garibaldi was synonym of revolutionary earthquake in Europe.[110] The impression, as a consequence, of the French was of the most adverse one.[111] As a consequence, Napoleon III was of

[109] In addition to the unacceptability of the territorial concession's clause, as well unpracticable seemed to Minister Durando art. 4 of the proposed agreement, namely the catholic recruited militia, up to 10,000 men, of the Pope. According to Durando, such disposition would permit foreign kind-of zouaves probably from Austria or Spain to station in the "major strategic centre of Italy".

[110] On the broader topic of the role of Garibaldi, see **L. Riall**, *Garibaldi: Invention of a Hero*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007; and **A. Scirocco**, *Garibaldi: Citizen of the World*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007.

[111] This – indeed second – occasion will be used by France in order to reiterate the troops' evacuation of Rome, fearing the arrival of Garibaldi. Thereby, menacing the security of the Pope. Of course, the King emanated a decree, where it was stated that any disorder coming from an order which is not property of the King is considered

the idea that until the situation brought about by the actions of Garibaldi was not cooled down nothing could be done to carry on with the *questione Romana*.

For these reasons, Lord Palmerston of Great Britain proposed to Ambassador d'Azeglio, which duly reported to Durando on the 4th of August, to institute a conference "per assestare le cose d'Italia".[112] The main impediment, however, to progress with this initiative was the insecurity behind the position held by each government: whether in favour or not of the Italian position, therefore against the Pope. If not because of religious principles, powers such as Prussia and Russia might have doubted the Italian approach in front of principles of public international law or of political traditions linked to their history or cultivated projects, whose interests were in conflict with the Italian ones.[113]

An interesting conversation between the emperor and the Italian Minister of agriculture and commerce, Giacchino Napoleone Pepoli,[114] held on August 15th revealed an interesting aspect. Basically, Pepoli threatened the emperor with the possibility that Italy will, in a way or in another now or in the next future, proceed alone to resolve the question. Pepoli alluded to the possibility that either any sequent cabinet or popular initiatives would have waged war against France in Rome. This, in turn, would have placed the emperor in a very negative position, in front of other European powers as well as of the French and Italian public opinions. Pepoli was arguing that Napoleon would have never ordered to shoot to the Italians entering Rome to protect a government, in fact enemy of France. The emperor was naturally claiming he would have agreed on attacking the Italians. Hence, at the end of this conversation, the emperor felt the public pressure and agreed that there was "something to do". The following day de Thouvenel was occupied with the preparation of a memorandum designated for the courts of Europe. This declaration stated the French government's plan to withdraw troops from Rome within six months, as well as its willingness to begin discussions with the Powers to ensure the

to be against the law, therefore the convicted will be punished accordingly. Garibaldi will attempt later on to diminish the role of the decree.

In the town of Roccapalumba on the 8th of August, some heard general Garibaldi saying the following: "così non può durare, o Roma o morte. Io vado contro il governo del Re e, contro quello di Francia, appoggiato dall'Inghilterra, a Roma; ovvero io che ho fatto l'Italia la distruggerò". Interesting is the expression "appoggiato dall'Inghilterra". The Italian government will try to "neutralize" Garibaldi's words by making public the English complacency of the Italian governmental response to Garibaldi's expedition. Even if the topic of the British foreign policy will be investigated later on, permit me for the moment to suggest the reading of **E. Bacchin**, *Brothers of Liberty: Garibaldi's British Legion*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 24 July 2015, The Historical Journal, Vol. 58, pp. 827–853, about the position of English Garibaldians in the 1860s.

[112] **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: I, Doc.: 11, p. 6–8.

[113] **D. Turnock**, *Eastern Europe: An Historical Geography 1815-1945*, London-New York: Routledge, 1989.

[114] Gioacchino Napoleone Pepoli was son of Marquis Guido Taddeo Pepoli and Princess Letizia Murat, Joachim Murat's daughter and hence Napoleon Bonaparte's grandchild.

Pope's long-term stability. The emperor, although remaining impartial, had given his Minister permission to deliver the scheme when he returned from the Camp of Châlons. Further, the emperor stated that if any action was to be taken, it should be done before Italy took the initiative, so that France should not appear to be succumbing to external pressure. However, such a line of action would only be possible if Garibaldi was quickly and totally defeated. Meanwhile, the Emperor's advisers believed that once the Garibaldi crisis was handled, France's interests would necessitate an urgent resolution to the Roman matter. On august 21st, Ambassador Nigra reported to Durando that the emperor authorized de Thouvenel to draft a project about the French evacuation from Rome to be then submitted to the European powers.[115] However, also after Garibaldi's defeat in the camapign of the Aspromonte by the force of the royal military headed by general Pallavicini, Napoleon III was still of the opinion that it was too early to start pondering about evacuation. This failure to fulfil the "promise" was producing critical results, in Italy and France. Many started thinking that the emperor's style was that of delaying the withdrawal, after all. The relationship between the two *augusti alleati* was experiencing a critical moment; perhaps, the most critical one since 1861.

By the beginning of October, things were unaltered. As the Secretary-General of the Ministry of foreign affairs, Melegari, reported: "Rien n'est encore décidé".[116] Indeed, on the 16th of August, de Thouvenel was substituted with Drouyn de Lhuys. Moreover, two days later Count Sartiges became the French ambassador in Turin.[117] Another major substitution was that of La Vallette with prince de la Tour d'Auvergne, which was interpreted by the Italian ambassador to Berlin, de Launay, as a way for the emperor to maintain the *status quo* in Rome. With this in mind, Minister Durando decided to opt for maintaining, as basis for further negotiations, a letter sent by Napoleon III to Vittorio Emanuele II on the 12th of July 1861.[118] In that letter, the emperor advocated for the recognition of the Kingdom of Italy, but insisting on

[115] Not everybody was sure of the intentions of the emperor to proceed in this direction, once Garibaldi would have been stopped. One of these was Conneau. Moreover, an article of *Le Moniteur* defended the idea that the French protection of the Pope was essential. Moreover, "[l]e monde doit bien savoir que la France n'abandonne pas dans le danger ceux sur Jesquels s'étend sa protection" was a sentence used, raising doubts on the fulfilment of the French vow to remove soldiers from Rome.

[116] **DDI**, Vol.: I, Series: I, Doc.: 212, p. 243.

[117] Sartiges previously was ambassador in Holland. The Italian ambassador in the Hague, Carutti, sent his personal opinion on Sartiges to Minister Durando, saying the following. "On ne saurait ranger le Comte Sartiges parmi nos ennemis, mais je crois qu'au fond il n'est pats très indisposé que l'unité italienne soit bien utile à la France; il pense qu'il est dangereux de porter atteinte dans ce moment au pouvoir temporel; il a été ministre en Perse et aux Etats Unis d'Amérique, et ambitionnait Constantinople. Il n'est pas excellent pour moi ici. Il n'est pas insensible à une flatterie adroite. Il est poli mais un peu guindé, l'insuccès pourrait peut être le rendre méchant. J'ignore s'il a du crédit à Paris. Sa femme est américaine et protestante". This passage si in **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: I, Doc.: 167, p. 128.

[118] **DDI**, Vol.: I, Series: I, Doc.: 212, p. 243.

maintaining French troops in Rome to safeguard the Pope's independence and territory until reconciliation with the Kingdom is established. This choice was motivated by responsibility, since the Italians were recognized to possess the right to self-determination. Further, it must be pointed out that, simply put, the idea of a "political will of the people"[119] served as the foundation for French nationalism and the French diplomatic claims. Therefore, the political will of a particular population should determine national borders; the right to self-determination served as the foundation for the legitimacy of such claims. The French Emperor Napoleon III was a prime example of this mindset, giving the right to self-determination first priority. Napoleon III's view of both internal and international affairs was characterized by the right to self-determination, at least for Europeans.[120] The situation by the end of 1862 was that of a momentaneous stiffening. The second half of 1862 was surrounded by an uncertain and negative atmosphere regarding the Italian interests in Rome. Nonetheless, the Italian's position towards France was still benevolent. My interpretation of this benevolence or tacit acceptance of the hindrance is that it was due to several factors, among which:

(i) The Italian candidacy in Greece. The proposal of an Italian in the throne of Greece had to be sustained by France as well.
(ii) The French and English consulates agreed to protect the Italian citizens in those places, where Italy was not still granted recognition.
(iii) Support for the Italian request about the independence of Montenegro.
(iv) The need to restart the negotiations of the commercial treaty under favourable conditions for Turin.
(v) Changes in the internal politics, as well as of politicians, which put diplomacy after domestic politics.
(vi) The French commitment not to oppose the passage of weapons towards the ottoman empire and Serbia.

On December 26th of 1862, following the new government led by Luigi Carlo Farini and formed on the 8th of December, the new Minister of foreign affairs, Giuseppe

[119] **S. T. Engel**, *Rousseau and imagined communities*, The Review of Politics 67, no. 3 (2005), pp. 515–537.
[120] Additionally, recent historical investigations have focused on Napoleon's attempts to place the concept of nations in French Algeria, known as the Royaume Arabe. By example, see See **G. Murray-Miller**, *A conflicted sense of nationality: Napoleon III's Arab Kingdom and the paradoxes of French multiculturalism*, French Colonial History 15 (2014), pp. 1–38; and **C. Carroll**, *Imperial ideologies in the Second Empire: the Mexican expedition and the Royaume Arabe*, French Historical Studies 42, no. 1 (2019), pp. 67–100.

Pasolini, asked to the ambassador Nigra to analyse the main foreign policy priorities of France.[121] For Nigra, so he went, four were the main preoccupations of Napoleon III:

(i) To find a solution to the *questione Romana*.
(ii) To end the war in Mexico.[122]
(iii) Expansionistic ambitions in the Rhein and Belgium.[123]
(iv) The economic impact of the American secession war.

In the list, the Rome was placed by Nigra first. However, whether the matter was really the first or second or third preoccupation for Napoleon III is not of great concern. What is important is that Rome was still a foreign policy objective for the emperor. However, as Nigra recognized with the following letter, every foreign policy goals was subjugated to the fluctuations of the French public opinion, of which the emperor had special consideration. Therefore, every aspect that could make the French public opinion, therefore impacting the Napoleon III's foreign policy, believe that the Italian unification was fragile or in danger, has to be considered in light of France's volatile politics towards Turin and Rome. Aspects such as Garibaldians' initiatives, the bad state of Italy's finances, and "the sterility of the Chamber's debates" were of course elements causing the prolongation of the negotiations to find a solution for the Roman matter.

[121] **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: I, Doc.: 285, pp. 245–251.

[122] The Second Franco-Mexican War (1861–1867), or the second French intervention in Mexico (in Spanish: segunda intervención francesa en México), was a military invasion of the Republic of Mexico by Napoleon III's French Empire, allegedly to compel the collection of Mexican debts in cooperation with Great Britain and Spain. After losing a three-year civil war to Benito Juárez's liberal government, conservative Mexicans backed the invasion. After losing on the battlefield, conservatives turned to France for assistance in establishing a monarchy and changing the government in Mexico. This strategy aligned with Napoleon III's intentions to restore the French Empire's influence in the Americas.

Although the French invasion drove Juárez's Republican government from Mexico City and restored the monarchy of Archduke Maximilian, the Second Mexican Empire disintegrated within a few years. Material helps from the United States, whose four-year civil war concluded in 1865, reenergized the Republican campaign against Maximilian's administration, and Napoleon III's decision to withdraw military backing for Maximilian's regime in 1866 hastened the monarchy's demise.

[123] About the Rhine: Napoleon III sought to expand France's frontiers to the Rhine's left bank, which he saw as a natural defensive barrier as well as an economically and strategically important territory. Controlling the Rhine would have improved France's security against Prussia and increased its influence in Central Europe. Nonetheless, Otto von Bismarck and the Prussian administration were staunchly opposed to any French territorial expansion in this region. This competition heightened tensions between the two countries, eventually playing a critical part in the buildup to the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871), which ended in a decisive Prussian victory and the demise of the French Empire.

About Belgium: Napoleon III also wanted to invade Belgium, thinking it would increase France's strength and influence in Western Europe. However, the Treaty of London (1839) secured Belgium's neutrality, with Britain serving as its defender. Any effort to seize control of Belgium would have triggered a military response from Britain, resulting in a massive international crisis. Despite Napoleon III's expansionist ambition, France was unable to carry out its goals without considerable opposition. These unrealized objectives, along with rising tensions with Prussia, rendered France diplomatically isolated and vulnerable in the years preceding her loss in 1870.

During a private conversation held between Nigra and Drouyn de Lhuys on the *questione Romana* in mid-January, the French Minister put formally forward the idea of a wait-and-see approach. Basically, it was stated that if France would have had a better solution it would have been immediately communicated to Italy. The same was expected from the part of Italy. All this process, though, had to remain secret.[124]

On the 2nd of February, the Italian ambassador met with Lord Palmerston in London, who sharply chastised Napoleon III for tolerating plots in Rome under French protection, calling it a "crime". He feared France was exploiting the instability in Naples as a pretext to remain in Rome and maybe engage in Italian politics. The ambassador informed Palmerston that Italy was dealing with domestic matters but emphasized that quiet did not entail abandoning Rome. Lord Russell, however, denied French charges that Britain encouraged the Pope to depart, saying that England had only promised him safe passage if necessary. He interpreted these claims as overblown attempts to strain Anglo-French ties. Both ministers recognized the sensitivity of the Roman Question, with Britain backing Italian aspirations but avoiding open conflict with France.[125]

During an audience of two days later, Nigra reported to the emperor about the government's efforts to maintain stability while staying open to talks in Rome. However, tensions have grown owing to France's recent position, causing instability in Italy. The emperor acknowledged the displeasure but justified his ministerial changes as vital to prevent abandoning the Pope, which he warned would destabilize Italy and the Catholic world. He also voiced worry about Italy's financial condition and recommended implementing his military reserve system.[126]

On the same day, the ambassador advocated before Drouyn de Lhuys prudence in rejecting discussions, but doubted their success, thinking the emperor would not leave Rome without the Pope's permission. Pro-Papal feelings were building in France, and Italy's actions had the potential to affect its trajectory. He emphasized the need to remain cool, be politically informed, and act prudently.[127] On February 10th, de Billaut held a speech before the Chamber, de Billault declared that "l'occupation de Rome n'est que transitoire, et qu'elle n'aura aucune raison d'etre dès qu'une conciliation, qu'il croit possible, entre le pape et l'Italie, aura eu lieu".[128] Still the doors for an Italian-Papal agreement were open, essentially.

[124] **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: I, Doc.: 327, pp. 286–288.
[125] **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: I, Doc.: 344, pp. 300–305
[126] **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: I, Doc.: 347, pp. 307–308
[127] **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: I, Doc.: 348, pp. 308–309
[128] **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: I, Doc.: 358, pp: 313–314

1863 was a year of waiting, indeed. Farina's government was much concerned with other issues of foreign policy, finding place in Greece or Poland. It is a transitionary period in between the fertile ground of 1861-62 and the convention of 1864.

On February 24th, acknowledged the need to wait, Nigra alluded, in case the emperor would be prone to negotiate again, to two bases of the negotiations: either according to the notorious Cavour's plan, or following the emperor's project. Of course, the ideas of Cavour were closer to the interests and plans of Nigra. Nonetheless, also Napoleon III was deemed to be the foundation of plausible negotiations.[129] As previously stated, the Italo-French relationship was not deadlocked or in crisis yet just focused on a variety of objectives. Of this example is the project of alliance proposed by Prince Napoleon to the emperor, which the latter fiercely regarded as a "dream".[130]

The 9th of March, Count Francesco Arese went to Paris. On the occasion, Minster Pasolini picked the Count for an initiative. Rumors about the precarious health state of the Pope were still ongoing. Therefore, the preoccupation of Pasolini was that in the case of the occurrence of the Pope's death, France could seize the opportunity to increment its influence in Rome to the disadvantage of the Roman mission. Count Arese, hence, had the goal of meeting the emperor to reassure the Italian government of this eventual possibility and eventually talk of any alliance.[131] After lengthy consideration, the instructions conveyed to Arese contained a proposal evolved to acknowledge the Pope's temporal power within a limited zone that included the Leonine City,[132] Civitavecchia, and sections of Corneto. At the same time, the rest of Rome would remain free. The deal, designed to be kept secret, required French forces to withdraw from the left bank of the Tiber when the Pope died, allowing the public to vote universally, if they would have wished so. Doubts remained concerning its

[129] **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: I, Doc.: 383, pp: 343–345

[130] **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: I, Doc.: 397, pp: 354–355. The text of the proposal was the following: "Francia contro Prussia e Russia per ristabilimento Polonia. Italia alleata con 70.000 uomini, Svezia con 20.000, Austria amica. Inghilterra passiva benevola. Italiani a Metz. Svedesi in Finlandia aiutati da Francesi. Austria nessun contingente, ma terrebbe in rispetto il Nord-est. Francia avrebbe il Reno. L'Italia la Venezia. La Polonia ricostituita colla Galizia. L'Inghilterra a protezione del Belgio coprirebbe Anversa. Austria compensi in Allemagna o sul Danubio; se in Allemagna, si potrebbe allora costituire un nuovo Regno Serbico. Guarnigione di Roma ridotta ad 8.000 uomini". In the archive it seems there is no real answer to this project either from Pasolini or Farina. However, Pasolini frequently supported the idea of an alliance, but to resolve European matters, like what was happening in Poland.

[131] **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: I, Doc.: 405, pp: 362–363. Here, the reference is to the alliance proposed by Prince Napoleon (i.e., doc.: 397).

[132] The Leonine City (Latin: Civitas Leonina) is a portion of Rome that was surrounded by the Leonine Wall, which was erected by Pope Leo IV in the ninth century. This territory was located on the opposite side of the Tiber from Rome's seven hills and had not been encircled by the old city's Aurelian Walls, which were completed between 271 and 275. After Christianity gained prominence and the Western Roman Empire crumbled, the region needed to be guarded by building a new wall to protect St. Peter's Basilica. Today, the old Leonine City's territory includes the Vatican City State and the Roman rione of Borgo.

adoption. If refused, Arese would notify the Emperor that Italy was inclined to accept Cavour's old-fashioned proposal. If the latter also fails, it will underline the impossibility of an accord, moving responsibility for future events away from Italy.[133]

On March 24th, 1863, Farini threatened the monarch with a blade during a meeting of ministers, resulting in a government crisis. The new government, like the last, was led by Marco Minghetti and Emilio Visconti-Venosta.[134] This government followed the previous strategy of seeking balanced ties with Pius IX, Napoleon III, and attempting to approach Great Britain in order to escape from international political isolation.[135]

Within an atmosphere of ups and downs in the relations between Italy and France, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gladstone, proposed a memorandum to Sir J. Lacaita, of which Minghetti was promptly informed as well, by the hands of Lacaita himself. Mighetti found the idea of Gladstone interesting and whose bases "sarebbero certamente accettabili".[136] The text of the memorandum[137] was critically crafted. The originality of the memorandum requires a careful analysis. Indeed, to Gladstone, the premise for an agreement with the Holy See was that of recreating a legal status, for both the Holy See and the Italian Kingdom, which would resemble the English constitutional setup. Essentially, so the memorandum goes, a fundamental difference had to be by everyone grasped: that between suzerainty intended either as *dignity* or as *form of government*. In the context of the territories under the actual control of the Pontiff, the Pope, according to Gladstone, had to remain suzerain in its dignitary connotation, meaning that absolute immunities from the Italian law only to him were granted. Only to him because any act against the law committed by the Pope would be disregarded, whilst any followers of the Pope, hence missing any sovran title, could be prosecuted. Meanwhile, the Italian Kingdom represented the administrator and controller of the three powers in front of the civic population. A specific constitutional practice could follow: that of the countersignature. Every act of the Pope, if allowed to have any power in those territories, shall be countersigned by the Italian competent Minister. Maintaining this division of sovereignties, the Pope would appear to Italy and the Italian Kingdom as it was before, in essence. His spiritual prerogatives would be preserved but the temporal power exercised in conjunction with the sovran prerogatives of the government. Gladston also proposed a safeguard for the Pope. In

[133] **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: I, Doc.: 411, pp: 369–370
[134] **C. Sforza**, *L'Italia dal 1914 al 1944 quale io la vidi*, Roma: Mondadori, 1945, p. 12.
[135] **DDI**, Vol.: IV, Series: I, Doc.: 198, p. 203.
[136] **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: I, Doc.: 672, pp: 601
[137] **M. Minghetti**, *La Convenzione di settembre*, Bologna, 1899, pp. 15-19, note.

order to protect this constitutional arrangement, the guarantee of the Pope may come from a coalition of powers (he says of the ones who signed the treaty of Vien), which, under the dispositions of an international treaty, would regard as *casus belli* any change of this order without the consent of the Pope.[138] This order of things, Gladston argued, would have produced the same effects that occurred in Great Britain. Namely, that the powers of the Pope, King- or Queen-equivalent, would have been gradually marginalized, making his rule become more a consuetudinary figure than a real power actor.

This memorandum is quite important because it flags the direction of future events. The real issue at stake, which many actors did not very well considered, was not that of making a treaty with the Holy See or with France, but to imagine an ideal solution to accommodate both parties' concerns. If the main players of these story tried to propose better dispositions for an eventual treaty, which at the end were all based on the projects of Cavour adapted with minor changes, the real strain to make was not that of creating an agreement of compromise (how can someone compromise with absolute, universal, and immutable interests, like the ones of the Church were thought to be?) but of foreshadowing a better context, where all the positions could cohabitate. This would have provided the conditions for future developments, and especially for the withdrawal of France. Cohabitation instead of compromise was the message put forward by Gladstone. Even if the solution of September 1864 was not an exact form of coexistence, it set the premises for the evacuation of the French troops, thanks to which, following major international happenings, Italy could take Rome.

After a conversation between Minghetti and Vimercati on the *questione Romana*, when Minghetti presumably spoke to Vimercati of Gladstone's philosophy, on June 19th, Count Vimercati sent a letter to Minghetti advocating for a transitional phase, as the only way unravel the intricated issue with the Holy See. Vimercati would have personally accepted responsibility for surreptitiously sending this proposition to Napoleon III when he was in Vichy, away from "hostile influences". According to Vimercati, this plan had to go beyond Cavour's initial idea and be based on the premise that there must be a transition time between the Rome of the Pope and the Rome of Italy – specifically, a Rome free of French domination. During this transitional period, where Italy guarantees the sovran prerogatives of the Pope, every concession

[138] Doubts might be raised about the Italian acceptance of this international involvement's clause. What if the Pope wanted to alter that constitutional framework? Should the powers act immediately, at the request of the Pontiff? That clause would have become a means of blackmail against Italy. If the drafters had to accept the *bona fide* of both parties involved, specific guarantee clauses for Italy were to be inserted as well. Perhaps there were, but the memorandum does not mention any of those.

must be made to preserve the temporary survival of such an arrangement.[139] Count Vimercati will again rely on this transitional hypothesis on November 21st.

## July 1863 – September 1864: The Re-opening of Negotiations and New Possibilities

Following his speech in the Chamber of Deputies, indirectly addressed to the emperor, Minghetti thought it was perhaps the opportunity to resume negotiations.[140] Indeed, four days later, Ambassador Nigra spoke before the emperor. More or less, no progress was made. On July 4th, Minister Visconti Venosta wrote to Nigra explaining that Italy would have been available to accept the principal condition of Napoleon, which is the promise of Italy not to attack any territory of the Pope.[141] The emperor, in fact, told Nigra a few days later that he was willing to accept the reopening of the negotiations, and for it Napoleon III would have informed Drouyn de Lhuys and Latour d'Auvergne. It must be considered that also other elements favoured this new position of Napoleon III, among which (i) the fall of Walewski, (ii) the seat Billault was given, (iii) the entry of Monsieur Duruy into the Ministry, that was hostile to the temporal power in the last elections, as well as (iv) the false recent appearance of the French priests.[142]

On November 18th, the ambassador in Petersburg, Pepoli, reported a conversation he had with Vittorio Emanuele II. Pepoli posed a series of questions to the King. More particularly, to the question "La Francia è essa disposta a trattare al Congresso la quistione Romana e prende essa l'impegno di evacuare Roma?", Vittorio Emanuele responded that Napoleon III told the British ambassador that he was prepared to discuss the Roman Question before a proposed Congress, which had to specifically deal with the Polish question.[143] However, the Congress will be enlarged

[139] **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: I, Doc.: 683, pp: 617–618
[140] **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: I, Doc.: 684, pp: 618–620
[141] **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: I, Doc.: 696, pp: 635–638
[142] **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: I, Doc.: 700, pp: 640–642
[143] The Polish uprising against Russian control in the Kingdom of Poland, known as the January Uprising (1863–1864), sought to reclaim freedom and put an end to Russian occupation. All socioeconomic classes participated in the longest-running uprising in Poland's partition, which affected international relations. Alexander Wielopolski's decision to enlist Polish activists in the Russian army set off the insurrection, which broke out right away. Due to their lack of organization and outside assistance, the insurgents, who were first headed by Polish-Lithuanian officers and political figures, turned to guerilla warfare. But in response, Russian soldiers carried out severe retaliation, which included mass deportations to Siberia and executions. The uprising ended in 1864, and

to topics pertaining Italy as well. The emperor also declared to be prepared to withdraw from Rome as soon as he is in accord with the other Powers.

There were uncertainties, open doors, and promises at the end of 1863. The British veto appeared to be destroying any chance of a congress, even a partial one, on Italy's most crucial concerns. But as the year came to a close, Napoleon III made several statements indicating his desire to depart from Rome. Under these conditions, the Gladstone-Vimercati plan would potentially lay the stage for the concept to acquire traction between the end of the summer and the fall of the next year. The impulses arose because of a few statesmen's capacity to change the emphasis and concentrate on fresh strategies, and in some cases, even to accommodate the emperor's want for delay, even if the French impasse had hardened the problem. Additionally, this resulted in increased interest in or investment in the British ally by the Italians. Ultimately, a complex internal French situation and Italian adaptability, driven by the need to find a solution, enabled the development of a more successful plan that would provide favourable outcomes.

As already previously stated, in order to break out from international political isolation, this government carried on the previous strategy of seeking out balanced relationships with Pius IX and Napoleone III as well as attempting to become close to Great Britain12. However, in early 1864, it was unexpectedly announced that Pius IX was dying of a terrible illness, and the Sacred College chose the stubborn anti-Italian Cardinal Filippo de Angelis to succeed him. As a consequence, Turin made the decision to resume talks with Paris. There were concerns that Garibaldi may retake Rome and that riots and revolutions would break out. Using this justification, the Italian government suggested that French and Italian contingents be stationed together in Rome to maintain public order while the seat was empty.[144] It was crucial for the Italian diplomats to address the matter by protecting the Pope and pursuing a deeper military and diplomatic relationship with France rather than endorsing the volunteers.[145] On the On January 3rd, Nigra reaffirmed Italy's intentions:[146]

(i) There would be riots after the Pope's death.

Tsar Alexander II further undermined the power of the Polish aristocracy by outlawing serfdom. Poles turned their attention from violent conflict to "organic work" when the uprising failed, focusing on cultural and economic advancement as a way to preserve their country.

[144] **A. Battaglia**, *La capitale contesa. Firenze, Roma e la Convenzione di settembre (1864)*, Roma: Nuova Cultura, 2014, p. 67 and **Archivio Ufficio Storico Stato Maggiore Esercito** (AUSSME, henceforth), G. 13, b. 2, fasc. 96, *Lettera del Generale Villarey all'Autorità Militare Francese in Roma per impedire il passaggio di malfattori dal Pontificio.*

[145] **AUSSME**, G. 13, b. 3, fasc. 122, *Mene del partito d'azione al confine e nel territorio pontificio.*

[146] **DDI**, Vol.: IV, Series: I, Doc.: 779, pp. 741–742.

(ii) It was crucial to offer France the cooperation of Italian troops so that we could enter Rome.
(iii) After the conclave, France would demobilize its Roman contingent, and Italy would be the only one maintaining order in the city.

The response was first delayed by French diplomacy, but Visconti Venosta got the emperor's response a few days later: the French presence in Rome was more than enough to keep the peace and was fully in charge of the situation. It might issue a call for peace if Turin wished to cooperate.[147] Drouyn de Lhuys wrote: "[…] Le Gouvernement Français était décidé à maintenir l'ordre à Rome et à sauvegarder la liberté du Conclave. En même temps le Ministre Impérial des Affaires Etrangères exprimait son espoir que le Gouvernement Italien, dans un intérêt commun avec la France, aurait employé son influence et interposé ses conseils pour prévenir tout désordre […]".[148]

Minghetti and Visconti Venosta chose to send General La Marmora and Nigra to Fontainebleau in order to reach a deal with Napoleon III, even though the French were becoming more rigid. Although the Pope's health improved throughout the course of the night of June 7–8, the Italian mission had to proceed despite the positive medical outlook. Disagreeing, General La Marmora wrote to the Minister of War to request that the trip be cancelled. Gioacchino Pepoli, the Italian ambassador in Petersburg and a personal friend of the French Emperor, took his post because of his mistrust. The first meeting was held at Fontainebleau on June 16th.

France opposed the Italian idea of instantly switching between the two armies, but it acknowledged the necessity of ensuring the conclave's safety in the event of the Pope's death. In actuality, Paris made a counterproposal:[149]

(i) the two contingents would cooperate.
(ii) French troops would not go at the conclusion of the Conclave but rather when public order had been restored.

The Italian pledge to relocate the capital from Turin to another city – aside from, of course, the papal Rome – was another significant proposition made by Napoleone III, for him: *a condicio sine qua non*. The full surrender to Rome as a capital was seen by

[147] **DDI**, Vol.: IV, Series: I, Doc.: 784, p. 749.
[148] **DDI**, Vol.: IV, Series: I, Doc.: 786, p. 750.
[149] **DDI**, Vol.: IV, Series: I, Doc.: 803, p. 773.

the French Emperor as evidence of Italy's good faith.[150] The Pope would be protected by the Italian army in the absence of the French troops.[151] "Tutti credono che il Governo italiano non tiene la sua sede a Torino che fino a quando potrà trasportarla a Roma. Per ingenerare nell'opinione cattolica una convinzione contraria, bisognerebbe che voi offriste una guarentigia pratica, che dimostrasse che il trattato non è una finzione" replied Napoleon III.[152]

The two Italian ambassadors in Fontainebleau expressed their scepticism to Napoleon on the last clause; however, they promised to notify the Government and provide a response in the upcoming weeks. The assessment was not straightforward since relocating the capital could mean giving up on the idea of Rome and severing the connections that tied Italy to its oldest regions. However, to overcome this matter, which had been blocked since July 1849, the Foreign Minister consented to sacrifice Turin. The relocation of the capital would be carried out if it were the necessary condition for the French forces to leave Rome. Although not entirely, some diplomats and Minghetti himself shared Visconti Venosta's viewpoint. Nigra was perplexed, and La Marmora refused to accept the French plan since the Italian army would battle against the volunteers of Garibaldi and Mazzini defending the Pope, the people would protest, and the Action Party would manage fresh attacks. He believed that Italy shouldn't be persuaded to deport the French-based only on this viewpoint. Italy would turn against itself in this way, so he went.[153]

Over time, Nigra decided to support the Prime Minister's and Foreign Minister's cause, and the Monarch, who was still resentful of the capital's movement, approved. The talks could carry on. Napoleon received Pepoli at Saint-Cloud on August 9th. The Italian openness pleased the emperor, who permitted his ambassadors to begin official discussions. Regarding when the papal domains would be evacuated, Napoleon stated that it would take at least two years. The Italian diplomat insisted on cutting the time, but the emperor refused to budge. In any case, Nigra and Pepoli were delighted. The two nations were essentially in accord in the original draft of the Convention, with one exception: the French sought to demobilize soldiers from Rome in two years, while the Italians desired to do so in six months. Visconti Venosta described the condition as "disheartening".[154]

[150] **DDI**, Vol.: IV, Series: I, Doc.: 820, p. 789.
[151] **DDI**, Vol.: IV, Series: I, Docc.: 819–820, pp. 788–789.
[152] **DDI**, Vol.: V, Series: I, Doc.: 57, p. 50.
[153] **DDI**, Vol.: V, Series: I, Doc.: 38, pp. 37–38.
[154] **DDI**, Vol.: V, Series: I, Doc.: 113, pp. 97–98.

The Italian Minister of foreign affairs suggested that the emperor's troops may withdraw within a few weeks. On August 20th, the Italian Council of Ministers debated the Convention. As predicted, the capital problem sparked criticism and scrutiny. But in the end, the provision was adopted. Naples and Florence were considered as possible replacements for Turin. The King Vittorio Emanuele II proposed the following clauses to prevent the capital from being moved:[155]

(i) the treaty would be valid even if the Pope refused it.
(ii) If the Pope invoked Austrian intervention, France would support the Italian mission.
(iii) In the event of a northeastern Austrian attack, French troops would assist in the military defence of Italy.
(iv) The Italian government could move to different cities in Italy for each legislature.[156]

Would Napoleon be severe, the King could accept the transfer and request a further two years.[157] Visconti Venosta, Minghetti, and Nigra disagreed with the king's observations. These stipulations, they believe, may hinder discussions. Nigra wrote to Visconti Venosta, "The biggest difficulty is the King".[158]

On August 23rd, General Menabrea landed in Paris in secret. He met with Nigra in the morning before going to see the emperor. Napoleon III rejected the "migrant parliament" proposal. He could, however, agree to give the new capital two years, and he conceded that the French contingent leave immediately. He would discuss it with his Council. Menabrea chose to stay in Paris while awaiting a response and alerted the authorities of this.[159]

On September 6th, Drouyn de Lhuys informed the Italian General that France approved the idea for the contingent's rapid demobilization but refused the two-year concession. To avoid breaching the agreements, Minghetti and Visconti Venosta persuaded the Monarch to accept the French counteroffer. Hence, Vittorio Emanuele II delegated entire authority to Nigra and Pepoli for the official signing of the accord with French ambassadors. The section related to capital changes was placed in a separate protocol, which was briefly kept secret. On September 15th, 1864, the

[155] **DDI**, Vol.: V, Series: I, Doc.: 127, p. 108.
[156] This could be interpreted as clear intention for not to give up on Rome from being the future capital.
[157] **DDI**, Vol.: V, Series: I, Doc.: 150, pp. 132–133.
[158] **DDI**, Vol.: V, Series: I, Doc.: 188, pp. 170–171.
[159] **DDI**, Vol.: V, Series: I, Doc.: 157, pp. 144–145.

"September Convention" was signed by Nigra and Pepoli representing the Kingdom of Italy and by Drouyn de Lhuys for the Second Empire. The content of the Convention is followingly reported:

"Art. 1

L'Italie s'engage à ne pas attaquer le territoire actuel du Saint Père et à empêcher, même par la force, toute attaque venant de l'extérieur contre le dit territoire ;

Art. 2

La France retirera ses troupes des Etas pontificaux graduellement et à mesure que l'armée du Saint Père sera organisée. L'évacuation devra néanmoins être accomplie dans le délai de deux ans ;

Art. 3

Le Gouvernement italien s'interdit toute réclamation contre l'organisation d'une armée papale, composée même de volontaires catholiques étrangères, suffisante pour maintenir l'autorité du Saint Père et la tranquillité tant à l'intérieur que sur la frontière des Etas pourvu que cette force ne puisse dégénérer en moyen attaque contre le Gouvernement italien;

Art. 4

L'Italie se déclare prête à entrer en arrangement pour prendre à sa charge une part proportionnelle de la dette des anciens Etas de l'Eglise ;

Art. 5

La présente Convention sera ratifiée, et les ratification en seront échangée dans le délai de quinze jours, ou plus tôt, si faire se peut. En foi et témoignage de quoi, les Plénipotentiaires respectifs ont signé la présente Convention et l'ont revêtue du cachet de leurs armes. Fait double à Paris le quinzième jour du mois de septembre de l'an de grâce mil huit cent soixante-quatre.

Nigra-Pepoli-Drouyn de Lhuys.

Protocole faisant suite à la Convention […].

La Convention […] n'aura de valeur exécutoire que lorsque S. M. le Roi d'Italie aura décrété la translation de la capitale du Royaume […]".[160]

The accords consequently called for the commencement of the French demobilization, which would take two years. Italy would not invade the Papal States but would defend its frontiers, allowing the formation of a Catholic volunteer militia to maintain public order in Rome. Italy would agree to assume a portion of the papal debt. The capital protocol was independent of the formal Convention and kept secret, as desired by the King. Regarding military help in the event of an Austrian assault, Napoleon III avoided dealing with the topic.[161]

## Mid-September 1864 – October 1866: Aspirations for Independence in an Evolving International Context

The emperor ordered the withdrawal of troops from Rome but reassured the Catholic party that France was leaving the Pope in the best hands, with the Italians protecting him. Rome would stay autonomous; the accord benefited the French, but Italian officials were pleased to have moved the "foreigners" away from Rome.[162] The Convention was identical to Cavour's initial concept from 1861, with the first, third, and fourth articles remaining unmodified and the second introducing a phased departure by French soldiers. On September 17th at 20:50, a courier left Turin with the Italian confirmation of the accord.

In those days, the Committee for the Selection of the New Capital, led by Prince Eugenio of Savoy and comprised of the generals Durando, Cialdini, Della Rocca, De Sonnaz, and Admiral Persano, started working.[163] Beyond the diplomatic accords, keeping the capital in Turin was not strategically useful. Following the cession of Nice and Savoy, the city faced an Austrian invasion and, more importantly, a French onslaught. The mountain defence system was ineffective, and it was predicted that over 200,000 French forces would be in the city within hours. The Committee identified

[160] Atti del Parlamento Italiano, sessione del 1863–1864, Documenti, vol. V, pp. 3645–3646 and **E. Lantero**, *La Convenzione di settembre nelle carte del Senato del Regno*, in "Memoriaweb", n. 7, September 2014, pp. 1-8.
[161] **DDI**, Vol.: V, Series: I, Doc.: 226, pp. 206–213.
[162] **G. Giordano**, *Cilindri e feluche. La politica estera dell'Italia dopo l'Unità*, Roma: Aracne, 2008, pp. 52–53.
[163] **DDI**, Vol.: V, Series: I, Doc.: 232, pp. 218.

Naples and Florence as appropriate locations for the future capital. The Tyrrhenian Sea sheltered the first city, while the Apennines shielded the latter. The primary dangers would come from the north; thus it was vital to design a defensive system that considered the peninsula's geology. General Cialdini considered that the Alps served as an effective defensive barrier. In the event of an enemy assault, the Po Valley would serve as a major battleground for resistance. The River Po served as another defensive barrier, while the Apennines, stretching from Genoa to Cattolica, formed a formidable curtain.

To control the Apennine, it was necessary to transfer capital, arsenals, factories, warehouses, and repositories, equip the Apennine with barriers, build a fort in Cattolica to control the Adriatic coast, build a rapid crossing of the Po, and open a strategic carriageway Rimini-Ravenna-Comacchio-Isola di Ariano-Chioggia. In the event of a surprise enemy invasion, the Italian army would have two options: strike in the Po Valley or wait for better organization behind the Apennines. Florence was chosen as the ideal location for the new capital due to its proximity to the Apennines and distance from the sea. Naples, on the other hand, would be vulnerable to sea invasions due to its coastal location.[164] Peruzzi, the Interior Minister, issued a memo to prefects, instructing them to make preparations against potential disturbances caused by the change in capital.[165]

On September 20th, the French government announced the Convention. Catholics in France were dismayed by the announcement, viewing the retreat from Rome as an irresponsible gesture.[166] The "Moniteur" reiterated that the arrangement benefited the Empire because the Kingdom of Italy refused to take Rome. Minghetti instructed the Italian newspaper to convey the news from a different perspective: Italy had been able to withdraw French forces from Rome and, having chosen Florence, was on its way to Rome. The news infuriated the residents of Turin.[167] The population, including entrepreneurs, bourgeoisie, nobles, and ministerial employees, were hesitant to accept the loss of their city's status as Italy's capital. Other sources of concern were false reports about the extra allotment of the Piedmont area to France, the eventual split of the monarchy, and a conspiracy against Turin.

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[164] **AUSSME**, G13, b. 5, fasc. 179, *Colonnello Musolino, Deputato. Memoria sulla difesa nazionale*.

[165] **DDI**, Vol.: V, Series: I, Doc.: 169, pp. 156–159 and **P. Pirri**, *Pio IX e Vittorio Emanuele II. Dal loro carteggio privato. La Questione Romana. Dalla Convenzione di Settembre alla caduta del potere temporale 1864-1870*, Roma: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1961, pp. 56–76.

[166] **DDI**, Vol.: V, Series: I, Doc.: 232, p. 218 and Doc.: 247, p. 229

[167] **R. Gremmo**, *La prima strage di Stato: le giornate di sangue di Torino del 21 e 22 settembre 1864*, Biella: Storia ribelle, 1999, p. 44.

On September 21st, 1864, demonstrators assembled in Piazza Castello, in front of the police headquarters. At 19:30, the soldiers used bayonets to disperse the throng. A small youngster was injured in the arm when a throng marched from Via Roma towards the Piazza. The Carabinieri cadets lined up in front of them, blocking the route, heard a gunshot, and opened fire on protestors, resulting in 47 critical injuries and sixteen deaths. The bodies of murdered demonstrators were taken quickly. The next day, the newspapers reported on the dispute, which heightened tensions and prompted the mayor to request the assistance of the National Guard.

On September 22nd, numerous people congregated in Piazza San Carlo, distraught about the previous day's bloodshed. The large number of soldiers in the city, stationed under the arcades of Piazza San Carlo, Piazza Carlo Emanuele II, Via Roma, and Piazza Castello, was unable to maintain order. Some troops began shooting as a result of command communication failures. Other soldiers in different places mistook it for an attack by the mob and fired fire. Protesters were killed in the crossfire. The victims numbered thirty-eight. The riots of September 21 and 22 are known as the "massacre of Turin".

Up to 1864, hence, France was occupying Rome. The withdrawal was gradual. As such, some French bodies were there. As it is known, French troops will newly come to Rome in 1867 in greater presence, after the new Garibalsi's expedition towards Rome. The stalemate of Rome, intuitively enough, will be resolved only on Septermber 20th, 1870. But, why, at the end of the day, did France really wanted to occupy Rome? According to the material so far analysed, this work identifies four different factors, which contributed to the French choice of occupying Rome. They are the following:

(i) The French protection of the Pope was a powerful means of exchange in favour of administrative and political power over the clergy in France. In exchange of protection, France could exercise more power domestically over an influent national sub-group.

(ii) For France, in the eventuality of a war against Great Britain or Austria, Rome was a strategic outpost not to lose.

(iii) The Catholic internal faction was quite powerful, at least, until summer 1863's elections. In order to ensure stability and control over the Parliament and all political forces, Napoleon III did not want to abandon the catholic *milieu*, as for not to give even more strength to the Republicans by splitting the force of the monarchic front.

(iv) The fear of Garibaldi's insurrections, contributing to the crumbling of the Papal temporal justifiability. Therefore, undermining the legitimist principles with obvious repercussions in Napoleon III's France. Rumours of Garibaldi's expeditions involved other areas as well, such as Greece, Dalmatia, and Turkey.

Indeed, the September Convention produced an extremely relevant effect, namely that of nationalizing the Roman question and normalizing the relations with France. Moreover, as Liliana Saiu posed, positioning aside the Roman dilemma for the time being – except for the long polemical aftermath that would follow – attention moved back to the Venetian issue, which was also under increased pressure from democratic groups – the possibility of using leverage to establish Veneto ambitions from a position of power.[168] The fact is that the problem had already been developing for some time. Over the last two years, the Italian representative in Berlin, De Launay, had not stopped reporting on the novelty offered by Bismarck's ascendancy and the anti-Austrian views he appeared to symbolize. The Savoyard observer predicted that Austria would soon have to decide whether to emphasize its interests in Prussia or Italy. Attempting to pursue both at the same time would almost certainly result in loss on one or both fronts. Applying reason to a decision that would have been made using different criteria, De Launay concluded there could be no dispute about whose viewpoint would win. To facilitate the success of this objective various other factors contributed. Of those the consolidation of positive relations with the German states of Bayern, Sachsen, and Württemberg, crystallized with the commercial treaty with the *Zollverein* in December 1865.[169] Another element was the fragility of the Austro-German alliance based on the Schleswig-Holstein vicissitude, on which Chancellor Bismark wanted to impose the German supremacy. As a consequence, Bismark will try to advocate for a military anti-Austrian pact with Florence.

When Minghetti's successor, La Marmora, appeared before the Chamber in November 1864, he presented the matter differently, expressing his hope that Emperor Napoleon III would assist with the Venetian crisis and act as a mediator. However, the initiatives taken in Paris and London to find a peaceful conclusion remained

[168] **L. Saiu**, *La politica estera italiana dall'Unità a oggi*, Bari: Editori Laterza, 1999, p.15 and **H. Heyriès**, I*talia 1866. Storia di una guerra perduta e vinta*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2016.

[169] In 1866, Italy concluded other commercial treaties, on similar bases, with China and Japan. Further, in 1867 with Austria-Hungary. The reader can find more information on the effects of the liberal trade policy of unified Italy in: **A. Fraschetti**, *La politica commerciale italiana e i suoi effetti sull'economia nazionale*, Giornale degli Economisti e Rivista di Statistica, Vol.: 51 (Anno 26), no. 5 (November, 1915), pp. 328–355 (28 pages), and **E. Corbino**, *Politica commerciale e bilancia economica dell'Italia nel 1861-1870*, Annali di Economia Vol.: 5 (1929), pp. 265–307 (43 pages).

unheeded. La Marmora then sent official orders to De Launay's successor (who had been relocated to St. Petersburg), the considerably more unsure De Barral, to foster any potential opening that may lead to a reconciliation with Berlin.

Following the adoption of the Convention, Pius IX expressed vehement opposition to perceived French betrayal, retreating into an ultra-reactionary conservatism as articulated in the Syllabus published on December 8th, 1864. This document provided a comprehensive enumeration of the errors attributed to the modern world, including progress, freedom, equality, and representative sovereignty. Emperor Napoleon III authorized the formation of a legion known as d'Antibes, later termed the "Roman Legion" This unit was commanded by French army officers and comprised individuals from various nations, thereby avoiding the deployment of French troops to the pope while maintaining a naval presence in Rome, as noted by French Foreign Minister Édouard Drouyn de Lhuys in November 1865.[170]

In March, La Marmora was expressing his desired course of action to Ambassador Nigra, which remained based on the assumption that Austria's general state was deteriorating and that it would have no other options: "per amore o per forza, bisogna che ceda la Venezia, per non cedere di più".[171]

At the time of identifying the critical moment represented by the formation of war between Austria and Prussia, there was still a lack of a clear vision or specific conduct regarding the circumstances that needed to be maintained if the latter scenario was to appear. For the time being, Austria and Prussia have reached an agreement. In mid-August, an agreement was reached on the administration of the two duchies, Schleswig to Prussia and Holstein to Austria. However, it was exceedingly unlikely that this interim arrangement would persist long without causing stress and lead to a permanent solution.

In September, Napoleon III said that if there had been a "radical break" in the situation between Prussia and Austria, Italy should have had an active role in the dispute, intending France's neutrality.[172] La Marmora still hoped that Austria, confronted with rising insecurity, may make "the generous sacrifice of its Italian possessions". In October, envoy Alessandro Malaguzzi-Valeri arrived in Vienna in search of an agreement capable of "forever extinguishing all rivalries" between the two states.[173] His goal was to demonstrate the presence of more flexible positions in

[170] **Archivio del Vaticano**, State Secretary, *Il nunzio apostolico a Parigi al cardinale Antonelli a Roma*, Parigi, November 21, 1865, Rubric: 165, File: 16, f. 12–13.
[171] **DDI**, Vol.: V, Series: I, Doc.: 631, p. 650.
[172] **DDI**, Vol.: VI, Series: I, Doc.: 134, pp. 175–177.
[173] **DDI**, Vol.: VI, Series: I, Doc.: 159, p. 205.

the Austrian capital, as well as an awareness of the serious risks the Habsburg Empire was taking by pre-emptively detaching Italy from Prussia. However, it failed to neutralize the most steadfast resistance, which was led by Emperor Franz Joseph himself.

La Marmora did not abandon the possibility of a negotiated solution, which may have prevented the risky use of force. Nigra was expressly tasked at the end of February 1866 with promoting a new idea as a foundation for further talks, namely the idea of the interexchange of Veneto for the Danubian principalities: a previously contemplated and rejected combination that now appeared to acquire traction following the overthrow of the regent Prince Cuza and the need to appoint a replacement. Napoleon III did not oppose the option, but he did want a more concrete implementation of the concept, highlighting the prospect of establishing a more decisive threat from the east to persuade Prussia to join an offensive and defensive alliance pact. At that moment, the option of obtaining Veneto without conflict may have been explored.[174]

With such conditions and a non-equivocal request from the French government, which arrived at the beginning of March, Berlin's request to send an officer capable of negotiating prospective military arrangements with Italy was granted. However, the Italian government's ambivalence prevented a response to such an endeavour. Meanwhile, opinions remained divided on the possibility of establishing a Danubian theory. La Marmora nevertheless believed it was worthwhile to pursue the option, ideally in the form of recompense. The Prussian alliance was still viewed as unclear, while certain potential benefits were acknowledged, most notably the projection of its grandeur and majesty on the nation fighting "una guerra d'indipendenza […] a lato della prima potenza germanica, in nome di un identico principio di nazionalità".[175] Finally, it was only Napoleon III's insistence and direct pressure – engaged in an ambiguous and delicate game on numerous fronts and cultivating the illusion of being able to enjoy the fruits – that persuaded Italian authorities to accept Bismarck's proposal for an alliance treaty. This was to be signed immediately but with a restricted period, which meant that its commitments would expire if the conflict did not break out within the specified timeframe.

The extra demands made at that time, such as restricting the agreement to three months and giving the burden of launching hostilities to Prussia, were agreed upon;

[174] **DDI**, Vol.: VI, Series: I, Doc.: 347, pp. 408–411.
[175] **DDI**, Vol.: VI, Series: I, Doc.: 378, p. 435.

nevertheless, Italian territorial claims on Trentino were rejected. The secret contract that approved the Italo-Prussian alliance was signed on April 8th, 1866. The only thing left to see was if Bismarck could orchestrate circumstances such that the war erupted before the agreed-upon timeframe. If Austria had been able to dissolve the alliance between the two countries, the entire arrangement would have collapsed. Indeed, in early May, Napoleon III resurrected the plan to relinquish Veneto in exchange for neutrality, giving it to France, who would subsequently hand it over to Italy. The French monarch positioned himself to serve as a mediator in Congress to end the disagreement.

To untie the knot, Austria proposed the concession of Veneto, therefore invalidating the proposal – but only a few days later, it pledged to cede the same area to France in exchange for neutrality. It was indeed, as has been remarked, "the bankruptcy" of its diplomacy, for, having rejected the Italian offer, it left itself in a position where it would pay France the same price without obtaining the counter-benefit of directing all its energies against the major adversary.[176]

It was now up to Prussia to create the circumstances that would legitimize the fight. After so many setbacks and forced pauses, the situation appeared to be shifting in favour of Italian national aspirations. Neither moderates nor Democrats, exuberant and optimistic, questioned the result of the now-inevitable clash. Unlike in the past, there was a sense of how close and concrete the final answer was.

In contrast to what happened in 1859, when the importance of military cooperation with the French ally was crucial, Italy now had to act on its own, with a well-organized regular army, navy, and volunteers, managing operations alone, fighting its foe on its front, and bearing full responsibility for its actions. Victory would be viewed as a direct outcome of its value. The Italians took the justice of their cause for granted, assuming victory solely on the moral superiority of the war effort, only to discover later that military achievements were directly proportional to the young kingdom's actual military experience, which was severely limited at the start. Many things did not function in such delicate situations. First and foremost, there was no actual relationship between the Italian and Prussian forces' intentions. The Prussian requests for coordinated operations were ignored, and their tactical proposal was rejected. Bismarck and his chief of staff, Moltke, urged the Italians to take a defensive stance, avoiding being caught behind the Quadrilateral's fortifications and aiming

[176] **R. Blass**, *L'Austria di fronte al problema veneto, in La questione veneta e la crisi italiana del 1866, Atti del XLIII Congresso di Storia del Risorgimento italiano (Venezia, 2–5 ottobre, 1966)*, Roma: Istituto per la Storia del Risorgimento italiano, 1968, p. 76.

directly at the Danube, toward Vienna, to strike at the core of Austria's might and deliver the fatal blow. Simultaneously, another tactical plan was made: provide cover for the Prussian army's advance by staging a landing of volunteer forces headed by Garibaldi on the eastern Adriatic coast, counting on positive reactions from the Slavs and Hungarians.[177] However, this idea was not even considered.

Even before this tactical phase, the Italian leadership was unclear about the same obligations as the supreme command. La Marmora did not desire it for himself and did not allocate it directly. La Marmora handed up the leadership of the Council to Ricasoli (who hesitated before accepting it), but not before hesitating and finally making an offer to Cialdini. In actuality, the Italian army was divided into two independent major corps, one stationed along the Mincio and the other along the Po River, under the leadership of La Marmora and Cialdini, though there was not a lot of agreement between the twos regarding which strategies to deploy. The army headed by La Marmora began operations by crossing the Mincio on June 23rd, a week after the Prussians commenced hostilities, marching under the shadow of the opposing soldiers' movements. On June 24th, they engaged in action near Custoza, which swiftly devolved into a disorganized and disorderly fight, resulting in several deaths and wounded for both sides. The Austrians remained in their posts, while the Italians, hesitant and unable to appraise the situation, fled over the Mincio. The next day, they retreated behind the Oglio River. Meanwhile, Cialdini, who had remained entirely passive in the Po area despite repeated requests to march north toward Modena, failed to seize the chance to launch an assault. A regrettable but reversible military incident became a devastating defeat, doomed to be remembered as one of the darkest and most archetypal episodes in the negative sense of national history. Traumatized by what had occurred, and much more so by the threat of what may happen in the case of another failure, the Italian military leadership, divided on strategic and tactical strategies, failed to put together any successful operational design in the following weeks. The truth remains that, as time passed, the Prussian army seized the lead and defeated Austrian soldiers on July 3rd at Sadowa, Bohemia.

There was no longer any dispute about the acquisition of Veneto: in some ways (and this was one of the most perplexing and ludicrous features of the Austro-Italian diplomatic situation), Austria's conduct had already rendered its submission clear well before military action began. In the case of an Italian-Prussian coalition loss, Austria would have been forced to transfer the Veneto area to France in exchange for

[177] **DDI**, Vol.: VI, Series: I, Doc.: 762, pp. 792–794.

neutrality. But something is to achieve a military objective by virtue of own means, other thing is to be subject to the others' benevolence (read Prussia's aid).

Thus, following the strong impression left by the publication in the *Moniteur* after Sadowa of Napoleon III's telegram informing Vittorio Emanuele of Austria's impending cession of Veneto to France and Franz Joseph's willingness to grant mediation to resolve the conflict. A more compelling justification seems to have been achieved to speed military achievement while also postponing the preamble of any future armistice, changing it by adding a critical component: the cession of Veneto via France. At the same time, Italian territorial claims, which were not explicitly extended to Trentino (where freedom was eventually left for Garibaldi to pursue), centred on the issue of Trieste and Istria.

"Sarebbe fatale per l'Italia, pel suo onore, pel suo avvenire politico tanto all'estero come nell'interno se la Venezia dovesse essere il prezzo della battaglia di Custoza",[178] was what many believed, meanwhile Visconti Venosta reaffirmed it as Minister of Foreign Affairs. In truth, the guilt of that episode could not be eradicated, and it was exacerbated by Lissa's comparable bad impact. The Italian fleet, divided between the detachment from that Sabaudian element and the one from the Bourbon side, from which Admiral Persano came, had been unable to organize itself in the weeks preceding the confrontation, ultimately failing to meet the challenge issued by the Austrian Admiral Tegetthoff at the port of Ancona at the end of June, despite the theoretical superiority of the number of ships available.

In the weeks that followed, the government pressed Persano to take the initiative, but he eventually failed to do so, even threatening resignation. Following more delays and the direct participation of Navy Minister Depretis, a naval operation was ultimately scheduled for July 20th on the island of Lissa, near Pola, where the enemy fleet was stationed. The reasoning behind the move was to instigate a conflict in which it could establish its supremacy. The combat finally went totally in favour of Tegetthoff's squadron, which focused its efforts on a small portion of the opposing formation. It succeeded in breaking through the armour, whose quality – which was thought to be a deciding factor – turned out to be insufficient and incapable of successfully coordinating activities. Despite being severely damaged, the Italian navy maintained a numerical advantage but failed to respond appropriately. Those in authority did not attack, allowing Tegetthoff to escape unharmed to the safety of Pola's harbour on the Dalmatian Island.

[178] **DDI**, Vol.: VII, Series: I, Doc.: 80, p. 48.

Unlike the circumstances at Custoza, Lissa emphasized the significance of a large setback for the dimension of disorder and the inability to translate resources into a positive outcome that may rehabilitate an already tarnished image. Garibaldi triumphed at Bezzecca on July 21st, and General Medici marched through Valsugana, reaching a few kilometres from Trento. Meanwhile, Cialdini advanced, nearly reaching the Isonzo. However, everything came to a halt on July 26th due to preparatory agreements between Austria and Prussia, as well as the obvious difficulty of the Austrian army continuing the battle alone.

When Austria agreed to start armistice talks based on the *uti possidetis* principle – that is, to keep Italian military installations in Trentino – France and Prussia proclaimed that they had no alternative but to desist from opposing it, thereby leaving Garibaldi with no choice but to retreat.

The final resolution was established during the signing of the peace accord in Vienna, following deliberations that had little effect on the content of events, on October 3rd. On October 19th, the ceremony for the formal cession of the city and territory was placed in Venice, led by Napoleon III's agent, General Le Boeuf, who oversaw the following delivery to the city's important residents. These, in turn, delegated power to the Italian commissioner, General Thaon di Revel. A few days later, the crown was delivered to Vittorio Emanuele, signalling the end of an era in which the border between so many monarchs and emperors and the Austrians had been established for centuries by the gates of Milan in 1859. Thus it ended, with a mixture of humour and grandeur, Nigra's venture – "ordita coi migliori auspicii e con tante probabilità d'esito favorevole e glorioso," but closed with "una pace miserabile, miserabilmente ottenuta".[179]

No one could deny the significance of Veneto joining Italy. Nonetheless, too many hopes related to the Venetian question had gone unfulfilled or had resulted in severe regret. The Prussian alliance had resulted not in an imposition, but in an expedient reached without assigning it a long-term scope: the actual conduct of the war and the subsequent peace negotiations had not reinforced it significantly. Participation in the battle proved to be one of the most expensive at all levels, with serious negative consequences. The process of national unity had not yet been completed, but there were already individuals who questioned the linearity of the route that remained to be followed, the attitude with which to face it, and the principles

[179] **DDI**, Vol.: VII, Series: I, Doc.: 389, p. 258.

that would motivate the last efforts.[180] Even the standards of reference for the nascent state's actions on the world stage would never be the same after what happened in that "fatal 1866".

[180] On the political significance of the 1866 crisis, please see **F. Fonzi**, *I partiti politici italiani e la polemica sul '66*, in *Atti del XLIII Congresso di Storia del Risorgimento*, pp. 289.

## *Notes – Section I*

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## Chapter 3. From Mentana to Porta Pia

***1867***. 1867 must be recognized as an important year for the history of the Italian foreign policy, more in general. Indeed, in May 1867 the Italian kingdom was, one could argue for the first time, recognized the status of medium-large power and granted the possibility to have a say on the major European occurring.[181] As Ambassador D'Azeglio reported on the 7th of May, this event represented the entrance of Italy into the "consesso europeo ed a prender rango fra le grandi potenze".[182] This was the case of the London conference convocated after the French try to obtain the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, as act of balancing the territorial acquisitions of Prussia following the 1866 war.[183] At the same time, 1867 was the year of the second Garibaldian expedition.

The most crucial fact on the nearer front, represented by the Roman question, was the French soldier withdrawal, which concluded in December 1866. However, this was resolved with only modest satisfaction, given that the issue of forming a legion of volunteers, the so-called "Legion of Antibes", named after the location of origin for most of them, was nothing more than a disguised replacement of the previous garrison. There were plenty of reasons to be dissatisfied with other parts of the September Convention's implementation. It was another failed effort at a fresh, ambitious settlement between Italy and the Holy See, despite the fact that it was carried out in a spirit markedly different from that which had motivated the Tuscan baron's actions in previous years. [184]

Before December 1866, however, it merits to be mentioned two major reforms, which contributed to further escalating the tensions between the Italian Kingdom and the Holy See. In the summer of 1866, throughout the months of July and August, the Chamber and Senate passed legislation to abolish ecclesiastical organizations and

[181] **L. Saiu**, *La politica estera italiana dall'Unità a oggi*, Roma-Bari: Editori Laterza, 1999, p. 18 and **B. Cialdea**, *L'Italia nel Concerto Europeo: 1861–1867*, Torino: Giappichelli, 1966, pp. 565 et seq.

[182] **DDI**, Vol.: VIII, Series: I, Doc.: 485, p. 606.

[183] On the diplomatic context, in which the 1867 crisis unfolded, see **J. Burbank**, and **F. Cooper**, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011, p. 366.

[184] **R. Mori**, *Il tramonto del potere temporale 1866–1870*, Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1967, pp. 62 et seq.

liquidate church assets. This statute destroyed twenty-five thousand entities, transferring their properties to the public domain and then auctioning them off across Italy, benefiting the new bourgeoisie, who bought them at rates lower than their true value. This decree not only gravely damaged the Italian Church's freedom, but it also had profound social consequences, since citizens lost their former rights on church-owned property, benefiting primarily the new liberal bourgeoisie.[185]

Relations with France progressively deteriorated with Rattazzi in power, as had previously occurred during his last tenure in that capacity. The resurgence of the prime minister's policy of tolerance toward Garibaldi's supporters and his preparation for a new expedition against the Papal State, in which Garibaldi was involved, caused suspicions about his intentions. In June 1867, the Masonic Constituent Assembly convened in Naples reaffirmed Garibaldi as the First Mason of Italy and Honorary Grand Master. The actual Grand Master, for the second time, was Filippo Cordova, [186] who, in the new government led by Urbano Rattazzi, held the position of Minister of Grace, Justice, and Worship. This tactic, which also had an impact on domestic politics and was intended to maintain or, at the very least, soften a portion of the Left, was not without risks.

When La Valette, the Foreign Minister, privately told Nigra that France reserved complete flexibility of action in the event of an "insurrezione provocata in Roma o negli Stati Pontificii", even organizing a fresh expedition, the first issues emerged in mid-September.[187] Rattazzi ordered Garibaldi to be arrested and brought to Caprera under surveillance to thwart the French intervention, demonstrate its good faith, and demonstrate the Italians' commitment to upholding their end of the bargain.

However, the narrative was only getting started. Reaffirming the principle of non-intervention established in the September Convention, it aimed to demonstrate that the state of the Papal provinces was such that the Roman people would not have been able to sacrifice or misunderstand, regardless of the reason the government had remained distant from it.[188] This was done without undermining Italian pride. Rattazzi

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[185] **R. Cirelli**, *La Questione Romana. Il compimento dell'unificazione che ha diviso l'Italia*, Pessano (Milano): Mimep-Docete, 1997, pp. 69–71.

Cesare Cantù, Deputy of the Kingdom part of the extreme historic Right, addressed the new Italian Parliament on April 10th, 1865, in his Speech on the Suppression of Religious Communities and the Seizure of Church Property, protesting against the infringement of the Kingdom's Statute carried out by this statute, declaring: "Distruggere, sempre distruggete! Volgetevi all'onda perigliosa che da alcuni anni solcate, e presi voi stessi di sgomento, guatando di quanti rottami l'avete sparsa. Distruggete i Comuni, distruggete la famiglia, distruggete i codici, distruggete le autonomie, distruggete le barriere d'Italia; or distruggete la Chiesa, distruggete lo Statuto e prima avrete distrutto la libertà".

[186] Filippo Cordova (1811–1868), a deputy in the Sicilian Parliament and Minister of Finance in 1848–1849, served as Minister of Agriculture (1861–62, 1866–67) and Minister of Justice (1862, 1867) for the Kingdom of Italy.

[187] **DDI**, Vol.: IX, Series: I, Doc.: 237, pp. 251–253.

[188] **DDI**, Vol.: IX, Series: I, Doc.: 266, p. 279.

did send Nigra, on behalf of the king, to immediately reach Napoleon III in Biarritz to inform him of the situation – as was his claim – and urgently plead with him to refrain from armed intervention, without hesitation to invoke absolution in advance for the communication errors that might occur in Paris. After threats and objections, the French monarch seemed willing to accept the *fait accompli*, as he had in 1860, and Rattazzi was able to carry out the operation because he was convinced that he had some freedom. The strategy was straightforward: observe the unrest that was anticipated to occur in the Papal territory (also because an attempt was made to coordinate them) and utilize this as a rationale for an Italian intervention to bring security and order back. They may then take advantage of the circumstances to exert pressure on the Pope and support Italy's presence in Rome. But the plan's premise – that there was active dissatisfaction among the populace, which may result in independent demonstrations of some kind run by dependable, monarchy-aligned individuals – turned out to be completely wrong.

Volunteers poured in from the frontiers, engaging in more intense combat with the Papal forces but failing to find the unity they had hoped for. Rattazzi asserted that the situation had grown untenable, and that the only viable solution was to allow Italian forces to prolong the occupation, even if the "revolution" in Rome did not materialize. Knowing what was going to happen, Pius IX did not sit around doing nothing. He replaced Monsignor de Mérode as Pro-Minister of Arms in 1865 with General Ermanno Kanzler.[189] An officer with a stellar military career, Kanzler was well-liked and respected by his troops.[190] A tiny international army of around 13,000 men was quickly rebuilt, and in terms of both weapons and fighting spirit, it was on par with any modern army.[191] The whole army was split up into two brigades, one commanded by General Marquis Zappi and the other by General Raffaello de Courten. Every attempt to persuade Napoleon III to permit the occupation was unsuccessful. Sending a letter to Vittorio Emanuelee was the last resort in an attempt to secure at least a mixed occupation, but it failed once more. The monarch put pressure on Rattazzi to step down because he no longer wanted to follow him down a road that was becoming more and more dangerous from a military standpoint. Now that the

[189] General Ermanno Kanzler (1827–1888), originally from Baden, had already fought at Castelfidardo and Ancona in 1860 before assuming the position of commander of the Papal army. About him, **P. Dalla Torre**, *La difesa di Roma nel 1870. Una contestata resistenza tra il mito e la storia. Con nuovi documenti e memorie inedite*, in Pio IX, Vol.: VII (1978).

[190] **P. Raggi**, *La nona crociata. I volontari di Pio IX in difesa di Roma (1860- 1870)*, Ravenna: Libreria Tonini, 1992, p. 11.

[191] **P. Raggi**, *La nona crociata. I volontari di Pio IX in difesa di Roma (1860- 1870)*, Ravenna: Libreria Tonini, 1992, p. 12.

events were underway, he compelled the administration to resign on October 19th. To further insult the new administration, Garibaldi himself escaped monitoring in Caprera and returned, ultimately identifying himself to see Cialdini in Florence. However, in practice, Rattazzi continued to have indirect government support because he was still in control of regular administration.

The most spectacular incidents took place on October 22nd at the Zouaves' Serristori Barracks in Borgo Santo Spirito. Two terrorists, Gaetano Tognetti and Giuseppe Monti, destroyed a whole wing of the structure, killing 27 Zouaves and four civilians.[192] Two days later, during a bloody battle, papal forces routed a column of around 80 men headed by brothers Giovanni and Enrico Cairoli at Villa Glori, on the outskirts of Rome. Despite the defenders' furious struggle, which was bolstered by the commoner Giuditta Taiani-Arquati, the Aiani House, which had been converted into a fortress, was assaulted on October 25th at Trastevere. With a handgun in her hand, she and her small boy perished.

Another reason why the Roman rebellion may have failed is by many linked to Pius IX's immense popularity is. For the sake of accuracy, there was some sort of admiration towards the Pope as it was indicated by Vittorio Ferrari "Verso sera […] proprio nell'ora in cui il corso di Roma è più animato, lo spettacolo che si offriva al passaggio della berlina papale era quello di un'onda marina procedente e maestosa. Tutta la gente sostava e si sistemava a terra di mano in mano che la carrozza procedeva. E così via fino a Porta del Popolo. Noi ci fissammo in viso l'un l'altro come estatici a quello spettacolo: quando rinvenimmo dallo stupore, ci domandammo: 'Che siamo venuti a fare noi?'".[193] However, this to me was more a manifestation of the popular unwillingness of violent upheavals, more than personal worships to the temporal standing of Pius IX.

The situation had already seriously deteriorated when the general assumed leadership of the volunteers on October 23rd, a day after the Zouaves' incident. Rome finally had an uprising the previous day, although it was started by the Garibaldians and was not supported by the mass of the populace. In those days Garibaldi was taking over the papal states in order to overturn "il più schifoso dei governi",[194] "il governo

[192] After being detained right away, Monti and Tognetti were convicted and given the death penalty on November 24, 1868. Refer to **P. Pirri**, *Pio IX e Vittorio Emanuele II dal loro carteggio privato*, Roma: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1945-1961, Vol.: III, Tome: II, pp. 194–200, for the communication between Pius IX and Vittorio Emanuele II between November and December 1868.

[193] **V. Ferrari Pio**, *Villa Glori. Ricordi e aneddoti dell'autunno 1867*, Roma: Istituto di Studi Romani, 1964, pp. 22–23.

[194] **G. Garibaldi**, *Scritti e discorsi politici e militari*, Bologna: Cappelli, Bologna 1937, II, pp. 433–434.

di Satana".[195] The Papal gendarmes and the Antibes Legion force put a stop to the uprising, prevented outside assistance, and swiftly regained control of the city. While Garibaldi columns took Frosinone, Tivoli, and Velletri, Garibaldi moved from Monterotondo toward Rome only to discover that the uprising had collapsed and that there were no longer any favourable conditions for an attack. The general then attempted to proceed towards Tivoli, where he intended to regroup. During this move, the Garibaldians were engaged by papal forces, who were eventually reinforced by two French battalions that had arrived at Civitavecchia. They dictated the eventual outcome of the conflict with their new *Chassepot* breech-loading rifles. Some of the volunteers were able to cross the border. Garibaldi, who was accompanying them, was caught and exiled to Varignano Fort, where he had been five years before. The dead and injured numbered in the hundreds, as did the casualties of the Roman insurgency, the most wretched and ill-fated of all Garibaldian endeavours.

The episode had two meanings from the standpoint of relations with France: it increased tensions by reaffirming their hostile stances and the degree to which they opposed Napoleon III as a person and as a temporal ruler; it also acted as a bitter counterbalance to the moral advantages Napoleon III enjoyed in his attitude toward Italy, leaving the mark of imperial repression, which was designed to suppress a will that was widely held among Italians, against it for all time. Hence, demonstrating the limited political space reserved to Italy with respect to the acquisition of its objectives, but the linkage with Napoleon III's France. The negative impression was as well felt in France. Henry d'Ideville, a French diplomat who had been charmed by Cavour in Turin, offered a bleak picture of the early results of Italian unification: "L'unità italiana ha generato il garibaldinismo, la guerra contro la religione, il prestito forzoso, l'imposta sul reddito accompagnata dalle più pesanti tasse dirette e indirette: questa unità condannò fatalmente il paese alla bancarotta, all'irreligione e al disordine sotto l'una o l'altra forma".[196] This view was confirmed by the arrival of soldiers in Rome and Civitavecchia, as well as by the still generally held belief that the position should not be abandoned at any cost. Even if the September Convention had yielded no results, its simple recovery became a goal to pursue: the legacy, difficult to dispel, of the "jamais" pronounced in early December before an ecstatic French Legislative Assembly by the president of the French Council, Rouher, who was the least friendly toward Italy among Napoleon III's ministers.

[195] **G. Garibaldi**, *Scritti e discorsi politici e militari*, Bologna: Cappelli, Bologna 1937, II, p. 19.
[196] **H. D'Ideville**, *I piemontesi a Roma (1867–1870)*, Ed. by Guido Artom, Milano: Longanesi, 1982, p. 55.

Although the papal forces were triumphantly welcomed, by the end of Mentana, Pius IX sobbed uncontrollably and was unable to complete the prayers during the sad funerals for the slain that were held at the Sistine Chapel.[197] Giacomo Martina observed that "[b]en diversamente dal 16 novembre 1848 la rivoluzione era fermata: fermata, non vinta".[198] Mentana[199] had the further effect of strengthening the sovereign's position, both generally and specifically about foreign policy – a field in which the king was convinced he possessed superior lucidity, and even more so after the numerous failures caused by others – in a very difficult and burdensome situation, where a fractured political framework was considered, and no homogeneous and secure parliamentary majorities were in sight. Under this picture, calling a man of the sovereign's utmost trust to the government – like Luigi Federico Menabrea, who also assumed the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs – was not a restricted act.

***1868 – 1869***. Beginning in the fall of 1868, there were fresh rumours of a potential Franco-Prussian conflict to catch Vittorio Emanuele's attention. In mid-October, Napoleon III and the Bonapartist circles were notified by the sovereign himself – through Count Ottavio Vimercati, who was posing as a military attaché in Paris but was his direct agent – that the French emperor did not want to commit to mere neutrality in the event of such a conflict. Rather, he stated his intention to move on in the direction of a completely legal partnership, as he felt. Italy asked Austria to commit to annexing the "Italian Tyrol", resolving the Roman question definitively, returning Nice to Italy (which had sparked discussions about the possible dismemberment of Switzerland), and paying for war expenses in exchange for sending a contingent of 200,000 men.

However, the French side promptly ruled out the idea of Nice's reparation and revoked all of their promises about Rome. However, they recognized that claiming the Trentino was legitimate, which would have meant extending the alliance to Austria, which was to Vittorio Emanuele's liking (his animosity toward Bismarck had increased significantly as a result of interactions between the Prussian legation in Florence and elements of the Left and democracy). Even through non-official means,

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[197] **G. Martina**, *Pio IX (1846-1850)*, Roma: Università Gregoriana Editrice, Vol.: III: 1867–1878 (1990), p. 45.
According to **U. Bellocchi**, *Tutte le encicliche e i principali documenti pontifici emanati dal 1740*, vol. IV: Pio IX (1846–1878), Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1995, pp. 292–293, the Pope issued the brief *Ex quo infensissimi* on November 14th, 1867, granting the Papal soldiers a silver symbol to be worn on the left side of the breast, hanging from a white silk ribbon with five blue stripes.

[198] G. Martina, Pio IX (1846-1850), Roma: Università Gregoriana Editrice, Vol.: III: 1867–1878 (1990), p. 43.

[199] On the episode of Mentana, see **P. Dalla Torre**, *L'anno di Mentana. Contributo ad una storia dello Stato Pontificio nel 1867, Milano*: Aldo Martello Editore, 1967; and **R. Mori**, *Il tramonto del potere temporale*, cit., pp. 209–307; **P. Pirri**, *Pio IX e Vittorio Emanuele II dal loro carteggio privato*, Roma: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1945-1961, Vol.: III, Tome: I, pp. 167–207.

the Italian sovereign still made a concerted effort to carefully pursue his objectives. For Vittorio Emanuele, however, it was essential that the French abandon Rome. But despite the insistence made in this regard, Napoleon III remained immovable, even refusing a formal declaration at Nice.

In Italy, the alliance policy was not without controversy. The prime minister was described as a staunch ally of the Danubian monarchy. However, the Austrian Minister in Florence stated that France was more despised in Italy than Austria. The partnership with Prussia, which allowed Italy to reclaim Venice, gained widespread support. "The majority of the population wishes war against Napoleon", authorities stated when the Franco-Prussian War began.[200] A series of mutual courtesies were then exchanged between the Vienna and Florence courts; nevertheless, significant complications arose throughout the discussions, including the delimitation of South Tyrol and the ratification of the treaty by Italian officials prior to the evacuation of Rome. With the exception of the Roman Question, all Italian demands were fully addressed in the French proposals of April 21st; however, Count Vitzthum, Austrian ambassador in Brussels interested in the affairs of Paris though, was forced to report, in the postscript to the very letter in which he had promised Vittorio Emanuele's signature within eight days, that new difficulties had suddenly arisen in Florence.

Following the strong resistance during the May-June 1869 elections and the subsequent change with the Ollivier administration, the French minister Rouher's resignation put another layer of limitation to the operation's development, which in any event did not stop. The last step in that phase was Vittorio Emanuele's letter to Napoleon III in early October, in which he accepted the proposed triple alliance with France and Austria but included a final disclaimer that no official commitment would be made until the September Convention's provisions were clarified.[201] However, Napoleon's power in his country had eroded significantly, and with the electoral results it is sad that the "Liberal Empire" had begun.[202] And he had lost precisely what he had previously identified as the key of the first French Emperor' success: "his pulse beat with that of the people".[203] Basically, "The crisis has arrived".

It was an important time in Italian history. One cannot deny the significance of the benefits that France and Austria were promising her: the Trentino, the Isonzo

[200] Rapporto Ministero dell'Interno 7/21, in **C. M. De Vecchi**, *Le Carte di Giovanni Lanza*, Torino–Casale Monferrato: Tipografia di Miglietta, 1935 ,Vol.: VI, p. 209.

[201] **DDI**, Vol.: XI, Series: I, Doc.: 591, p. 547.

[202] **F. Engel-Janosi**, *The Roman Question in the Diplomatic Negotiations of 1869-70*, in The Review of Politics, 1941, Vol.: III, No. 3 (July 1941), pp. 319–349.

[203] **Napoléon Louis Bonaparte**, *Des idées Napoléoniennes*, Outlook Verlag, 2023, Chapter II.

border, Nice, a presence in Tunis – maybe the Tessin; the acquisition of these regions might shape the nation's future. And, while the Roman Question would most likely have been postponed, adoption of the terms would have been unlikely to resolve it. But the pressure, the fascination, that this problem exerted on the nation and its not-so-stable government was so strong that it was willing to risk all other gains in order that this one question be immediately settled; it was so strong that the House of Savoy had to travel to Rome for fear that Mazzini and the Italian republicans would take the dreaded fatal step.

***1870***. The king was still convinced that every attempt should be made to ensure a loyal relationship even after the prospect of a Franco-Prussian conflict did not materialize in the summer of 1870 due to French opposition to Leopold von Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen's assumption of the Spanish throne. Emilio Visconti Venosta, who had returned to his post as Foreign Minister in December 1869 under the Lanza government, was faced with yet another challenge during those very trying times that were to create an irrevocable division in European history.

The alternative hypothesis – aligning with Bismarck and publicly supporting his views – was not anything Visconti Venosta considered or had ever considered. As demonstrated by his prior acts, on the contrary, he had a strong preference for the French alliance. Furthermore, even if the French alliance's constituents were diverse, it continued to serve as the required point of reference for a large portion of the Right. Visconti Venosta, however, believed that it could not continue to be an end unto itself, without any beneficial consequences. Just before the crisis erupted, the Italian Foreign Minister told Nigra that France's continued unwillingness to withdraw its soldiers from Rome, while examining other September Convention articles binding on Italy, could no longer be permitted without repercussions.[204]

In terms of Napoleon III's actions on the specific subject of cession to the Spanish crown and the unfolding of events leading up to the war, he believed that he wished to purposefully exacerbate the situation while leaving the other powers to play a mediating role. One of his immediate replies was to dispatch de Launay, who had just been sent to Berlin, to contact the British administration and coordinate the procedures to be done for the preservation of peace. At all costs, Italy had to ensure "di aver nulla omesso per risparmiare all'Europa la sventura di cui è minacciata".[205] This was part of an attempt to remove, in part, the pretext that justified so much ambition, including

[204] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 6, pp. 4–6.
[205] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 77, p. 40.

the proposal to revive Prince Hohenzollern's candidacy for the Spanish throne, which, as previously discussed, the Duke of Amedeo of Aosta had also supported.

With the war inevitable, Visconti Venosta aligned himself with the same approach taken during the Luxembourg crisis three years earlier, in agreement with the president of the Lanza Council and Quintino Sella, the most politically prominent figure at the time and a staunch supporter of the French alliance present in the ministry. Italy was to stay neutral as long as the duel was between France and Prussia. However, Visconti Venosta agreed that if Russia intervened on Prussia's side, which would very surely put Austria in motion against Prussia, Italy would most likely have to select its side. Even in this situation, it would be conditioned on not being subject to France's immobilization of Rome, which is regarded as non-negotiable.[206] It was a matter of repairing a schism that was otherwise exceedingly perilous, particularly for public opinion, which at the time was heavily in favour of Prussia or, in any event, widely held that France bore the main responsibility for the conflict.

"Nello stato attuale delle cose, il meglio è di non impegnarci isolatamente con nessuno e di tenerci preparati agli eventi".[207] That was the position Visconti Venosta tried not to deviate from this course, considering the positive outcome of such a course, and the government eventually accepted the commitment to provide for the withdrawal of French troops from Rome by August 15th as falling within the framework of the September Convention, with no further concessions. Despite these fluctuations, particularly due to Sella's resistance, the notion of a double Austro-Italian alliance, as Arton characterized it, "una triplice mascherata", was unable to take root.[208] Meanwhile, Vimercati tried to reinforce government forces, sending a precautionary letter to Napoleon III in Metz to reaffirm his demands and telegraphing his goals to Victor Emanuele.

The news of the imperial army's initial failures put the French alliance supporters in a difficult position, particularly among the moderates. This was also due to Chancellor Beust, the plot's *magna pars*, who sought revenge on Sadowa but, in the process, began to change course. Vittorio Emanuelee, like Napoleon III, was compelled to admit that military intervention was impossible. All of the assistance that could be provided to the emperor was focused on a prospective mediation effort, to preserve France's territorial integrity, which was now in peril, as well as the European balance, which was now in crisis. According to Visconti Venosta, nothing and no one, not even

[206] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 188, p. 114.
[207] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 317, p. 214.
[208] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 340, pp. 233–235.

a likely French victory, would now stop "alla Germania [...] di organizzarsi nei suoi confine com'essa meglio crede". However, it would be obliged to take some satisfaction from this decision, which did not threaten, but rather triumphant, the ideal of French territorial integrity. As communicated from Visconti Venosta to Ambassador de Launay on the 11th of August: "[s]o che in Germania, anche tra uomini di Stato, si parla dell'Alsazia e della Lorena. Sarebbe questo un pasto d'odio fra la Francia e la Germania e il germe di coalizioni europee, perché l'Europa non potrebbe assistere con indifferenza allo smembramento della Francia e si sentirebbe tutta minacciata dallo spirito invadente di una Germania la quale non si saprebbe bene dove comincia e dove finisce. Non sarebbe più la Germania moderna sotto l'egemonia della Prussia, ma una evocazione del Sacro Romano Impero, una santa alleanza a due della Prussia e della Russia".[209]

More than ever, it was "in the interest of Europe" that Prussia did not misuse its victory and that France was not left "too weakened" or even shattered. Visconti Venosta aimed to accomplish this by being accommodating and warning all allies that "un abuso della vittoria" would have not assured a long-lasting peace while simultaneously working toward assurances.[210] With the fall of Sedan on September 2nd, the declaration of the Republic in Paris two days later, and the Prussian advance on the capital, even the tenuous idea of an agreement with Russia and England to help mitigate and promote peace between the two contenders was bound to fail.

The thorough evaluation of the new situation brought about by the French national collapse was postponed, while in Italy, the focus of the days that followed was entirely on the more immediate effects that the significant event had on the Roman question. The issue's parameters were significantly altered once the main barrier to a positive resolution was eliminated. The pressure to break the impasse and take advantage of the circumstances had increased significantly in the last few weeks, not only from the Left, which has historically advocated for a drastic solution to the issue, but also from the Right, where Sella's influence had been relatively extraordinary at first. However, disputes about the time and tactics of occupation continued inside the ministry. The lingering reluctance to negotiate with the emperor was eliminated with the French Republic's proclamation, which essentially made the September Convention obsolete.[211]

[209] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 468, pp. 308–309.
[210] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 492, p. 331.
[211] **E. Decleva**, *Il compimento dell'unità e la politica estera*, in G. Sabbatucci and V. Vidotto, *Storia d'Italia: Il nuovo Stato e la società civile,* Vol. II, Roma-Bari: Gius. Laterza & Figli, 1995, p. 155.

Visconti Venosta persisted in expressing his opposition to military action in unjustified situations (such as an uprising in Rome, even if it were encouraged from without) and without conciliatory measures and initiatives meant to guarantee Europe – and the Pontiff himself – of Italy's calm and collected approach. The goal was to keep the Papal court from moving to a different capital, which may cause minor unrest and instability or harm Italy's standing internationally. It was first thought to give the Pope the so-called Leonine City, which is the area of Rome to the right of the Tiber that includes the Vatican and the Borgo district, as a means of preserving temporal power, albeit over a much more diminutive area. This was in addition to the guarantees already envisioned by Cavour ten years prior. But in the real situation that would shortly arise, this compromise was bound to be unworkable. The possibility of connecting Italian commitments to an agreement with the powers that had Catholic subjects was mentioned in a memorandum prepared at the end of August by Alberto Blanc, the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and sent to Italian representatives abroad to make sure they took the necessary steps with the governments to which they were accredited. Needless to say, this effort ultimately proved to be in vain and completely ignored.

With the fullest assurance that any action would be restricted to "un'azione conservatrice e tutelare dei diritti facilmente conciliabili delle popolazioni Romane coll'inviolabilità del Sommo Pontefice e della sua spirituale autorità, e dell'indipendenza della Santa Sede",[212] Count Ponza di San Martino was sent to Pope Pius IX on September 8th, bearing the letter in which Vittorio Emanuele hinted that he would take "in facia all'Europa ed alla Cattolicità, la responsabilità del mantenimento dell'ordine e della sicurezza della Santa Sede". Nevertheless, every bargaining theory was disproved. Visconti Venosta succeeded in gaining a few days, but regardless of how audacious his pledge was, the ultimatum was not further extended since there were no efforts in Rome to support his arguments. After the last effort failed, General Raffaele Cadorna's Italian soldiers launched the attack at daybreak on September 20th. Within a few hours, the operation concluded, with over two hundred people wounded and around seventy people killed. At that time, the symbolism of Porta Pia, the starting

Indeed, as it will be investigated later on, it was not only the Franco-Prussian war the main international foster, with respect to the realization of the Roman goal. Indeed, also the experience of the Paris Commune contributed, and perhaps playing an even more central role in determining the collapse of the previous, also legal, order and the consequential change in the Italian approach, which was now, not as many argue detached from France but, yes linked but to a new France. In the mind of the author, that is a pivotal element of the evolution of the topic.

[212] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 693, pp. 491–492.

point of a new chapter in each country's history, was shared by the secular and anticlerical Italy and the Catholic one, which were clearly at odds.

That day signified the completion of the providential project, if not of the Italian temporal authority, as expressed in the famous apothegm "[f]iat voluntas tua in coelo et in terra".[213] Surely, the seizure of an illegitimate governmental power, according to the fundamental foundations of Christianity, brought justice to "heaven". On the other hand, the achievement of a historically and ideally predetermined interest, genetically linked to the life of a people who, over centuries, witnessed the world develop around principles and values rooted in the very city usurped by power dynamics, triumphed over authoritarian selfishness. This is not about preserving earth's dominion over heaven, but about honouring a people's painstaking endeavour to meet the fundamental foundations of government and, eventually, about to "[r]ender unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's".[214] In essence, it is a history of justice.

[213] Extract in Latin from the Lord's Prayer, also known by its incipit "Our Father", in the Gospels of Matthew 6:9-13 (longer version) and Luke 11:2-4 (shorter version).

[214] It is a well-known remark ascribed to Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels, specifically in Matthew 22:21, Mark 12:17, and Luke 20:25. This speech is also reported outside of the canonical writings: it appears in the Gospel of Thomas (100:2-3) and, in a modified form, in the Egerton Gospel (3:1-6).

# Chapter 4. Waiting, Observing, Invading: Tactics and Operations of July–September 1870

This chapter aims to unpack the main characteristics of the military and political-diplomatic occurring, which from July to September defined the Italian strategic approach to the Roman question. Indeed, this periodization has not been chosen by chance, rather because it captures the beginning of the French-Prussian hostilities (July 19th, 1870) up to the *de facto* birth of the third French Republic (September 4th) and the start of the military operations in the Pope's territories (September 12th). This is the unexpected period, where every difficult balance was reversed; where any system thought to prevail was overturned by the impetuous dynamism of the possible.

## Mid-July – Mid-August 1870: Waiting

By the beginning of 1870, in Latium only a brigade composed of 6,000 men, commanded by Léon Dumont, was left in Civitavecchia, Viterbo, Tarquinia, and Tolfa.[215] By that time, there was no intention to make foreign troops return back home. As such, on the 27th of January the French Minister of foreign affairs, Agénor de Gramont, communicated to the French ambassador to Italy that the military had to rest in Latium in order to protect the Pope from any further Garibaldian initiative.[216] Many times, indeed, the French diplomatic mission in Italy was used to attribute to either Garibaldi or Mazzini most of the uprisings occurred between March and June, in Pavia, Milan, Genoa, Bologna, Catanzaro, Lucca, and Pisa.[217] The war changed everything.[218]

[215] **Service Historique de la Défense – Département Armée de Terre** (SHD-DAT), *Letter of the Minister of War to General Dumont*, Paris, March 17th, 1869, G 614; and **M. N. Mourabet**, *Le corps expéditionnaire de Rome, 1848-1870*, PhD thesis under the supervision of G. Predroccini and A. Martel, Université de Paris I-Panthéon Sorbonne, 1987, pp. 539–543.

[216] **Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères** (AMAE, henceforth), Correspondance Politique (CP), Italie, *French Minister of foreign affairs to Malaret*, Paris, January 27th, 1870, n. 28, f. 65–69.

[217] **AMAE**, *Malaret to Gramont*, n. 17, 21, 24, 31, 39, 43, 47, CP, Italie, n. 28, f. 171–176, 207, 233, 258–260, 264–268, 295–298, 349–358, 389–390.

[218] On the Franco-Prussian war, it is suggested: **G. Warwo**, *The Franco-Prussian War: The German Conquest of France in 1870-71*, Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2003, and **M. Howard**, *The Franco-Prussian War*, London, U.K.: Routledge 2001.

At least by the 14th of July, the Italian authorities were sure that the war was about to start.[219] The proposal of the Italo-Austrian mediation was hampered by the German preference over the English one, even if France had virtually accepted the role of Italy and Austria.[220] Nonetheless, by July 19th France and Prussia were at war.[221] Intuitively enough, such vicissitude had deep consequences as far as the *questione Romana* was concerned. In fact, on July 16th, Napoleon III wrote a letter to Vittorio Emanuele expressing the need for France to call back all troops stationed in Civitavecchia.[222] Of course, it followed that Napoleon asked Vittorio Emanuele II to respect the inviolability of the Pope.

Together with the concept of inviolability, and sensing what was about to occur, it was necessary for Pius IX to proclaim the temporal primacy of the Church. After exhausting negotiations among the various factions present at the First Vatican Council – during which, however, the outcome was never in doubt – the dogmatic constitution *Pastor Aeternus* was approved the day before the advent of the war, hence on July 18th, amid an violent storm that darkened the skies over Rome, according to contemporary chronicles.[223] It asserted that definitions of faith and morality announced by the Pope while speaking *ex cathedra* were infallible by themselves and not by means of manifest consensus of the Church. [224] Thus, the conciliar declaration split Europe, but it had the impact that the Pope probably wanted and changed Catholicism in a significant way. It ended all remaining connections between the Catholic Church and political powers, elevating its autonomy and making it the first – and, at the time, the only – transnational power. It also confirmed the primacy of the papacy over the universal Church and made its jurisdictional power unquestionable. Finally, it transformed Catholicism into a vast international organization, which his

[219] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 143, p. 80; **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 150, p. 86; **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 151, p. 86; **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 168, p. 97.

[220] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 175, pp. 100–101.

[221] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 203, p. 121.

[222] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 167, p. 96.

[223] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 197, p. 120.

[224] On *Pastor Aeternus*, and the theological argumentative derivatives, see **L. S. J. Choupin**, *Valeur des décisions doctrinales et disciplinaires du Sainte-Siège*, Paris: Beauchesne, 1913.

About the dogma, **U. Betti**, *Dottrina della Costituzione Dommatica Pastor Aeternus*, in AA. VV., *De doctrina Concilii Vaticani primi*, Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1969, p. 346, noticed: "[m]a in che senso l'infallibilità è inerente alla persona del Papa? Diciamo subito che essa non ha niente a che fare con l'immunità da errore in quanto persona privata, in forza della quale egli sarebbe impeccabile di diritto (impeccabilità) o di fatto (santità). E sebbene ripugni al pio sentire dei fedeli, non è un'esigenza della fede escludere che in questa condizione egli possa cadere anche in eresia, perché ciò non sarebbe altro che ritenere il Papa impeccabile in questo genere di colpe". Hence, it is clear that, discarded the private dimensions of the dogma, the religious conceptualization behind aimed at indicating the infallibility of the didactical role of the Pope, which of course also involved the political-temporal aspects of his role. Put differently, the temporal side of the Papal coin was now something dogmatic and related to the catechism of the Church. Something deeper, indeed.

successor Pius X would later finalize from a legal standpoint with the enactment of the *Codex Iuris Canonici*. It was a revolution, to put it briefly.

Napoleon, after having received the confirmation by Vittorio Emanuele (on the 21st and 27th of July) [225] and the government (on the 30th of July)[226] on the protection of the Pope, requested to evacuate Rome as soon as possible.[227] The embarkment of the French troops in Civitavecchia happened between August 3rd and 18th.[228] During these procedures, the French soldiers expressed various anticlerical feelings. At a certain time, General Dumont was obliged to go out in the street undressed to force them into silence, since some *chasseurs* were screaming "A bas le Pape! A bas le gouvernement des pretres! Vive l'Italie".[229]

At the same time, Napoleon III attempted to acquire Italy's military and diplomatic backing in exchange for the evacuation of Rome. However, Italy refused.[230] The Italian government deliberately planned to capitalize on the potential of a revolution, and hence on the need for an early takeover of Latium. After assuring Paris[231] and the Chamber of Deputies that Italy would remain neutral under a policy of "aspettazione e riserva",[232] the Minister of foreign affairs, Visconti Venosta, proposed to the French an alliance in exchange for the occupation of Civitavecchia and Viterbo "nell'ipotesi di un movimento garibaldino considerevole che abbia Roma come obiettivo".[233] Nonetheless, France rejected this hypothesis. Indeed, on July 25th, the French Minister of foreign affairs declared to the Italian counterpart that "la Francia non può difendere il proprio onore sul Reno e sacrificarlo sul Tevere".[234] On the parliamentary session of July 25th, during a debate with On. Nicotera, Minister Venosta declared the following:

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[225] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 219 p. 137; **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 304 p. 199.

[226] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 324, p. 220.

In reality, Minister Visconti Venosta told Nigra to inform Gramont about the Italian governmental intention to respect the clauses of the September Convention via the telegram 1237 of July 29th at 11:45 pm. However, the message was clearly notified the day after, hence on July 30th, as conveyed in **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 333, p. 227.

[227] **AMAE**, *Telegram of Gramont to Malaret*, Paris, July 31st, 1870, CP, Italie, n. 28, f. 543–545.

[228] **AUSSME**, *Rapporto riservato del maggiore Marchesi al ministro della Guerra*, August 28th, 1870, G. 6–11, f. 249.

[229] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 341, p. 235.

[230] **P. Muret**, *La question des alliances en 1869 et 1870: D'après des publications récentes*, in Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine (1899–1914), Vol. 8, No. 2, 1906, pp. 116–131.

[231] **AMAE**, *Malaret to Gramont*, n. 50, Florence, July 9th, 1870; *Gramont to Malaret*, n. 19, Paris, July 12th, 1870; *Malaret to Gramont*, n. 52, July 13th, 1870, CP, Italie, n. 28, f. 417–425, 426–428, 437–440.

[232] **Camera dei deputati**, session of July 11th, 1870, *Rendiconti del Parlamento Italiano – Discussioni della Camera dei Deputati: Sessione del 1869-1870 (seconda della legislatura X) – dal 4 giugno al 12 luglio 1870*, cat. 72, Florence: Tipografia Eredi Botta, 1870, pp. 3218–3219.

[233] **AMAE**, *Telegram of Malaret to Gramont*, Florence, July 22nd and 23rd, 1870, CP, Italie, n. 28, f. 489–490 and 493–495.

[234] Cited in **J. Godechot**, *Storia dell'Italia moderna 1770/1970*, Roma: Newton Compton, 1973, pp. 492–493.

"Risponderò all'onorevole Nicotera che noi osserviamo la neutralità fra i belligeranti, adempiendo scrupolosamente ai doveri tracciati dal diritto internazionale, e al pari di tutte le altre potenze, le quali non possono sistematicamente disinteressarsi nelle grandi questioni europee, conserviamo la nostra libertà d'azione e vegliamo perché gl'interessi dell'Italia non possano essere, in ogni eventualità, compromessi. […]. La seconda [declaration, ndr] è che è mia profonda convinzione che il pessimo dei partiti cui potremmo appigliarci sarebbe quello di prevalerci della situazione in cui si trova ora la Francia per crearle degli imbarazzi, e per minacciare direttamente od indirettamente da parte dell'Italia una politica di violenza nella questione Romana."[235]

The military defeats in Alsace and Lorraine, on the 6th of August, represented the final attempt to try to push the Italians to play some role in the hostilities. The French defeat was more proximate, and the Italian intervention was doubted to provoke no real effects in terms of the balance of force in the battlefield.[236] Only few voices had advocated intervention. On August 3rd, General Enrico Cialdini, figure of the historic Right and a key player in the Risorgimento wars who had been humiliated by the Austrians in 1866, boldly declared in the Senate that it was obsolete duty of Italy to stand by France in case of war.[237] Additionally, Costantino Nigra, the Italian ambassador in Paris, intended to encourage moral action to delate the difficult memories of 1866.[238] On August 8th, 1870, Vittorio Emanuelee II, remembering what the French had done for the Italian cause, was still pressing to enter the war.[239] Further, Count Vimercati, on August 26th, suggested a policy of 100,000 men serving in France headed by Cialdini and 50,000 headed by La Marmora in the Papal states.[240]

More probably, the Italian armed forces' status was not prepared enough to face a war.[241] In addition, the Italian public opinion was not so favorable to the French positions, either in the context of the Prussian war or in that of the Roman occupation. As a consequence, the re-installing of the September Convention caused major debates

[235] **Camera dei deputati**, session of July 25th, 1870, *Rendiconti del Parlamento Italiano – Discussioni della Camera dei Deputati: Sessione del 1869-1870 (seconda della legislatura X) – dal 18 luglio al 25 agosto 1870*, cat. 73, Florence: Tipografia Eredi Botta, 1871, p. 3673.

[236] **AMAE**, *Reserved telegram of Malaret to Gramont*, August 8th, 1870, CP, Italie, n. 29, f. 84–85.

[237] **Senato del Regno**, session of August 3rd, 1870, *Rendiconti del Parlamento Italiano, Discussioni del Senato del Regno, Sessione del 1869-1870, dal 18 novembre 1869 al 3 novembre 1870*, Florence: Cotta e Compagni, 1870, pp. 987, 990–991.

[238] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 384, p. 263.

[239] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 418, p. 286.

[240] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 569, p. 394.

[241] **Senato del Regno**, session of August 4th, 1870, *Rendiconti del Parlamento Italiano, Discussioni del Senato del Regno, Sessione del 1869-1870, dal 18 novembre 1869 al 3 novembre 1870*, Florence: Cotta e Compagni, 1870, p. 1004–1005 and 1018.

within the historic Right: between the liberals and conservatives. For the in-power Right the idea was to avoid any new crisis like the one of 1867. The corollary to this principle, namely the need to show a mature and self-restraining Kingdom, was enshrined in the post-unificatory necessity to acquire more international political weight. To the contrary, the historic democratic Left progressively took anti-French positions accusing the wait-and-see approach of the government,[242] always putting the spotlight on the already-made French violation of the Convention by sending troops in 1867. Not without irony, the daily "Il Diritto" summed up the democrats' stance on August 2nd by pointing out that bringing up a single French brigade from Rome would not be enough to make up for the disparity with the German troops. More gravely, it charged France with attempting to undermine its neutrality by entangling Italy in its demise. The journal therefore said that in order to "risolvere la questione Romana al più presto possibile e in modo conforme alle aspirazioni nazionali", it would have been essential to capitalize on the circumstances.[243]

In such difficult scenario, characterized by growing uncertainties and debates, Vittorio Emanuele declared the Italian neutrality on August 10th.[244] Basically, the strategy of neutrality pursued by the King allowed the government to take on two major derived critical moments: that between the majority in Parliament as well as within the general public, and that of the European instability generated by the war.[245] A neutral stance is per se median position for both risk-taking and -averse parties and public opinions. At the same time, showing maturity and hoping to acquire the benevolence of foreign powers, neutrality would have permitted the government to initiate an observatory military mission, as it will happen on the 15th of August headed by general Cadorna, which could have evolved into a military body at the borders of an enemy state.

## Mid-August – September 11th, 1870: Observing

[242] **C. M. Fiorentino**, *Visconti Venosta e il Venti Settembre*, in Id. *La questione Romana intorno al 1870. Studi e documenti*, Roma: Archivio Izzi, 1997, pp. 14–20.
[243] **Il Diritto**, *La questione Romana*, August 2nd, 1870, p. 1
[244] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 450, p. 301.
[245] **H. Heyriès**, *La Breccia di Porta Pia: 20 settembre 1870*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2020, p. 54.

As already pointed out, since the month of July the government has been trying to assure all European powers that Italy would have pursued a policy of wait-and-see, but, above all, that would have not disattended the obligations imposed upon itself by the September Convention. Already at that time, On July 18th, 1870, the government recalled the soldiers who had been discharged in 1844 and 1845, suspended regular leaves, called up the reservists of the 1842 and 1843 classes (in August), expanded medical, supply, and engineering services, and finally approved the conscription of those born in 1849.[246] Further, general Giuseppe Covone declared in the Senate, on the 4th of August, that Italy possessed an army composed of 300,000 prepared soldiers, who could mobilize the artillery in the same way it did in 1866 with 600 pieces and 8 batteries, and that 420,000 "Carcano" rifles, presented as not inferior to the Prussian kind, were provided to the army between 1868 and 1870.[247] Hence Italy had all the military potential to establish a security and observation perimeter along the Papal states. With nearly 20,000 troops (881 officers, 19,256 soldiers, and 1,981 horses), the corps was divided into three divisions and one brigade. It also had 42 infantry battalions, six Bersaglieri battalions, six light cavalry squadrons, and three artillery brigades, each with six cannons.[248] The corps was deployed on August 17th. In Central Italy, it was assigned to the Lieutenant General Raffaele Cadorna's command and given the designation Observation Army Corps. The 11th Division, led by Lieutenant General Enrico Cosenz; the 12th Division, led by Major General Mazé de la Roche; and the 13th Division, led by General Ferrero, comprised the Corps' manoeuvre units.

As of August 15th, the orders given to Cadorna,[249] as reported by Visconti Venosta, were the following:

(i) to prevent armed groups from attempting to breach the Papal States' undefended border.
(ii) To uphold law and order and quell any potential insurgency in the provinces that the observation corps' units occupy.
(iii) To stop insurrectionary movements from crossing the border if they started in the Papal States.

[246] *Giornale militare*, year 1870, Florence: Voghera tipografo, 1871, pp. 122, 343, 420, 436, 469, 594, 649, 658, 747.

[247] **Senato del Regno**, session of August 4th, 1870, *Rendiconti del Parlamento Italiano, Discussioni del Senato del Regno, Sessione del 1869-1870, dal 18 novembre 1869 al 3 novembre 1870*, Florence: Cotta e Compagni, 1870, pp. 1009, 1013, and 1018.

[248] **Archivio Centrale dello Stato** (ACS, henceforth), Ministry of the War, Cabinet of the General Secretary, *Corpo di osservazione nell'Italia centrale, tabella di dislocazione del 10 agosto e 10 settembre 1870*, b. 7, fasc. 4, s. fasc. 1.

[249] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 507, p. 341.

Clearly, the idea, by mid-August, was still that of observing and preserving the order. If the intention to occupy was still vivid in the public opinion, as well as in Parliament, the opportunity was not yet favourable to proceed along.

On August 20th, the President of the Chamber put forward in the debate the order of the day proposed by deputy Luigi Miceli stating the following "[l]a Camera, considerando che sia questo il momento opportuno di esercitare il diritto nazionale con la immediata occupazione di Roma, passa all'ordine del giorno".[250] Even if Miceli's debated proposal was rejected, another smoother order of the day undersigned by deputies Massa, Arrivabene, De-Blasis, Torrigiani, Garelli, Fossa, Mongini, Como, Marazio, Bersezio, Samminiatielli, Bernardi, Alippi, Morini, Calandra, Finocchi, Sanguinetti, Mazziotti, L. Griffini, Zuradelli, Guttierez, Deodato, Massari Stefano, Grattoni, Nervo, and Valussi was approved. The latter followingly read: "[l]a Camera, confortando il Governo del Re a proseguire, d'accordo colle altre potenze neutre, la sua azione per ricondurre la pace fra due nazioni cotanto benemerite della civiltà, […] È persuasa che si adopererà efficacemente per risolvere la questione Romana *secondo le aspirazioni nazionali*. […]".[251] Also, Giovanni Lanza declared that the government was prone to "profittare delle circostanze per giungere a risolvere la questione Romana".[252]

Nonetheless, the Italian diplomatic traditional approach was not altered. In fact, on August 29th, Minister Visconti Venosta stated to all Italian representatives abroad that the only viable solution to the Roman question was an agreement, maybe extended to other catholic powers.[253] The minister reserved the right to provide a draft of articles based on the 1860–61 proposals, which, if carried out, would, in the minister's opinion, address the problem. This shows that the Italian strategy remained to wait, seek cooperation with other nations, and avoid disproportionate military activities even as the end of August drew near and as a terrible military picture for France developed.[254] Consequentely, as John Merriman put it, "[t]he ongoing French

[250] **Camera dei deputati**, session of August 20th, 1870, *Rendiconti del Parlamento Italiano – Discussioni della Camera dei Deputati: Sessione del 1869-1870 (seconda della legislatura X) – dal 18 luglio al 25 agosto 1870*, cat. 73, Florence: Tipografia Eredi Botta, 1871, p. 4064.

[251] **Camera dei deputati**, session of August 20th, 1870, *Rendiconti del Parlamento Italiano – Discussioni della Camera dei Deputati: Sessione del 1869-1870 (seconda della legislatura X) – dal 18 luglio al 25 agosto 1870*, cat. 73, Florence: Tipografia Eredi Botta, 1871, p. 4082. Emphasis added.

[252] Cited in **J. Godechot**, *Storia dell'Italia moderna*, p. 493.

[253] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 580, pp. 409–418.

[254] Early in August, Prussian soldiers had already achieved valiant triumphs, such as the 4th of August at Wissembourg. On August 18th, the 188,000-strong Prussian army, advanced against French forces led by Bazaine, who were two-thirds their size. Just west of Metz, the Prussians caused 20,000 casualties in the Battle of Gravelotte, while the Germans suffered 12,000 losses. Following such losses, the French forces experienced acrimony and demoralization. MacMahon's army, which was attempting to relieve Bazaine, was routed when Bazaine's army

military catastrophe accentuated political tensions that had increased in the late 1860s between Bonapartist loyalists and republicans".[255]

Two days after, on the occasion of Sedan's defeat of September 1st, that conviction was stronger than ever. However, the Italian intention not to overpass the limits imposed by the September Convention was still there. As Visconti Venosta communicated to Ambassador Nigra the day after Sedan, "[n]ous n'avons aucune intention de créer des prétextes pour intervenir sur le territoire pontifical; nous réprimerons énergiquement toute agitation extérieure; mais il faut que vous soyez prévenu et que vous fassiez comprendre à l'occasion qu'une agitation intérieure peut se produire et devenir grave".[256] Following the same line, Vesconti Venosta, after the capitulation of MacMahon's army and the imprisonment of Napoleon III on September 3rd, was of the idea that "Je crains de ne pas me trouver d'accord avec mes collègues qui voudraient faire occuper Rome", but it was, in Venosta's eyes, need to "attendre les événements de Paris".[257] Of the same opinion was Nigra, who further stated that "È evidente ·che nello stato attuale la Francia non consentirà a lasciarci andare, per quanto dipende da essa, nè a Roma nè ad un punto qualunque del territorio pontificio. Ma queste disposizioni possono mutarsi in due casi: l° se l'Italia si troverà condotta dagli eventi a rendere un servigio importante alla Francia sia colle armi sia coi negoziati; 2° se arriveranno eventi tali in Roma che la Francia stessa abbia interesse a non opporsi ad un'occupazione italiana. V'è ancora un altro caso. Ed è che la guerra attuale muti talmente le cose in Europa che ci sia possibile di portar la questione in seno ad un congresso o dinanzi ai varii Gabinetti di Europa e si proponga di risolverla col consenso della maggioranza delle Potenze europee, non dissenziente la Francia stessa".[258] Therefore, according to Nigra, only three options could allow Italy to go along the line of military occupation, to put it briefly. The military intervention of Italy in favor of France was not feasible since it was too late and would have probably deprived the government of the necessary military and moral force to occupy Rome. The second case, namely political mutations in the Papal territory, were not foreseeable as no real change, either in the political directions or in the health status of

withdrew to Metz and the Prussian army besieged the city. A Prussian siege of Paris was imminent, making the situation there much worse. Napoleon III rejected General Louis Trochu's suggestion that the Bizaine's army be sent to the outskirts of Paris. A group of young students known as the "Blanquists" were prepared for a revolution on August 14th, although it was currently thought to be unsuccessful.

[255] **J. Merriman**, *Massacre: The Life and Death of the Paris Commune of 1871*, New Haven–London: Yale University Press, 2014, p. 23

[256] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 607, p. 444.

[257] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 618, p. 451.

[258] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 624, pp. 452–454.

Pius IX, was occurring. Hence, the third option (a significant shift in the European situation) was the only option, which would have proved right Nigra's ideas.

Adolphe Thiers, who had been prime minister from 1830 until 1840 during the Orléanist July Monarchy, was granted interim authority by Empress Eugénie, who had assumed the role of Napoleon III on July 28th. Thiers declined, claiming that there was nothing more that could be done for the empire.[259] Shouts demanding the declaration of a republic could be heard outside the Palais Bourbon late on September 3rd, while representatives of the imperial Legislative Body (Corps Législatif) were convening there. Long after midnight, moderate republican Jules Favre declared the end of the empire amid widespread chaos. Trochu remained governor-general of Paris, and 26 MPs appointed a "government commission" with unspecified members.[260]

Troops and the public watched each other suspiciously at the Palais Bourbon. With their bayonets shining in the sunlight, conservative national guardsmen from the surrounding neighborhoods were also present. Then someone unlocked the gates as late-arriving deputies showed up. The Palais Bourbon was overrun by Parisians. The argument continued there: Favre's early-morning declaration of the end of the empire rivaled administration and Thiers's suggestions, which called for the appointment of a "commission of the government and national defence". A republic was declared by radical anti-imperial campaigner Leon Gambetta. The Hôtel de Ville, the "superb Louvre of revolutions" that had come to represent revolutionary Paris, was the next destination for crowds crossing the Seine. The ancient *quarante-huitards* (forty-eighters, veterans of the 1848 Revolution) were among the notable extreme Jacobin republicans and socialists already there.[261] Inspired by the French Revolution and Paris's involvement in it, the Jacobins were a vague group of nationalist republicans who advocated direct democracy and thought that the welfare of the people should be the responsibility of the centralized state. The crowds below welcomed Gambetta's second proclamation of the Republic on September 4th. Henri Rochefort, a vocal but inconsistent opponent of the imperial rule, had been pushed out of jail by the mob. The Republican audience gave him a victorious salute. Favre assumed the position of minister of foreign affairs, while Gambetta declared himself minister of the interior. Rochefort became the sole leftist on the list. Napoleon III's Second Empire fell two days after his loss at Sedan, and the Third Republic was born.

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[259] **S. Rials**, *Nouvelle histoire de Paris de Trochu à Thiers 1870–1873*, Joker Production, 1985, p. 55.
[260] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 633, p. 457.
[261] **S. Rials**, *Nouvelle histoire*, pp. 56–69.

Regarding the potential change in Italy's favor that Ambassador Nigra brought up, it was only after such radical change in the political-constitutional order of France, with obvious impacts on the rest of Europe, that the first considerations on the practicability of invading Rome started to emerge.[262]

Over 25,000 men (1,020 officers, 24,860 soldiers, and 2,611 horses) were deployed to the observation corps between September 1st and September 5th. Reservists born in 1839, 1840, and 1841 were also recalled, increasing the total number of mobilized classes to ten (from the 1839 class to that of 1848).[263] An engineering team, three artillery park sections, and a brigade of artillery, comprising twelve batteries with six full pieces each, had also arrived. They had given the troops provisions "in case of a march" and boosted the number of cavalry squadrons to 110 horses apiece. Marching instructions had been given to the unit commanders. Orders to boost artillery ammunition were sent on September 4th, while one million cartridges of rifle ammunition had been transferred to the Perugia depot. The Minister of War instructed General Cadorna in two telegrams that same day so that "si potesse marciare su Roma al primo ordine" in order to make sure the divisions were at tbe border "pronte a passare".[264] On September 5th and 6th, two new divisions were established with the intention of operating independently and in isolation: (i) Nino Bixio commanded the 2nd Division in the north; and (ii) the southern 9th Division, commanded by General Diego Angioletti. Intuitively enough, as soon as the circumstances were appropriate, the government decided to invade Lazio.

Hence, in the timeframe of a few weeks between the mid of July and the early September, the *questione Romana*, which was substantially halted since 1849 and endangered the Franco-Italian relations, was finally unblocked. That strategy of "aspettazione e riserva", of a wait-and-see approach, delivered valuable results in achieving a centuries-old objective.

## September 12th – September 20th, 1870: Invading

[262] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 635, p. 459.

[263] *Giornale militare*, year 1870, Florence: Voghera tipografo, 1871, pp. 122, 343, 420, 436, 469, 594, 649, 658, 747.

[264] **AUSSME**, G 6-11, f. 46-49 retro, September 4th, 1870, DS IV CE,

On September 8th, King Vittorio Emanuele sent Pius IX a letter through the hands Count Ponza di San Martino, who was missioning in Rome from the 9th to the 11th of September, saying that

"Io veggo la indeclinabile necessità, per la sicurezza dell'Italia e della Santa Sede, che le mie truppe, già poste a guardia dei confini, si inoltrino ad occupare quelle posizioni che saranno indispensabili per la sicurezza della Vostra Santità e pel mantenimento dell'ordine.

La Santità Vostra non vorrà vedere in questo provvedimento di precauzione un atto ostile. Il mio Governo e le mie forze si restringeranno assolutamente ad un'azione conservatrice e tutelare dei diritti facilmente conciliabili delle popolazioni Romane coll'inviolabilità del Sommo Pontefice e della sua spirituale autorità, e coll'indipendenza della Santa Sede.

Se Vostra Santità, come non dubito, e come il suo sacro carattere e la benignità dell'animo suo mi dà diritto a sperare, è inspirato da un desiderio, eguale al mio, di evitare ogni conflitto e sfuggire al pericolo di una violenza, potrà prendere col Conte Ponza di San Martino, che le recherà questa lettera e che è munito delle istruzioni opportune dal mio Governo, quei concerti che meglio si giudichino conducenti all'intento desiderato.

Mi permetta la Santità Vostra di sperare ancora che il momento attuale, così solenne per l'Italia come per la Chiesa e per il Papato, aggiunga efficacia a quegli spiriti di benevolenza, che non si poterono mai estinguere nell'animo Vostro verso questa terra, che è pur Vostra patria e a quei sentimenti di conciliazione che mi studiai sempre con instancabile perseveranza tradurre in atto, perchè soddisfacendo alle aspirazioni nazionali, il capo della cattolicità, circondato dalla devozione delle popolazioni italiane, conservasse sulle sponde del Tevere una sede gloriosa e indipendente da ogni umana sovranità".[265]

Of course, being unable and unwilling to renounce to any temporal power concession, Pius IX responded on the 10th of September in the following way: "[i]l Conte Ponza di San Martino mi ha consegnato una lettera, che a V. M. piacque dirigermi; ma essa non è degna di un figlio affettuoso che si vanta di professare la fede cattolica, e si gloria di regia lealtà. […].[I]o non posso ammettere le domande espresse

[265] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 693, pp. 491–492.

nella sua lettera, nè aderire ai principii ch'essa contiene. Faccio di nuovo ricorso a Dio, e pongo nelle mani di Lui la mia causa, che è interamente la Sua."[266]

Indeed, additionally to the ones previously reported, the military effort of Italy had been quite substantial. Attilio Vigevano reconstructed the organization of the Italian navy, which had built a squad composed of 12 warships, of which 10 armored, with 105 cannons and 4,295 soldiers under the command of vice-admiral Evaristo Del Carretto.[267] The army, *par contre*, mobilized 5 divisions, each of which comprised between 40,000 and 50,000 men subdivided in 20 regiments, 11 Bersaglieri's battalions, 16 squads of light cavallery,16 artillery batteries, and 2 engineer companies.

Divisional generals were ordered on September 4th to concentrate their forces along the left bank of the Tiber River, on the eastern side of Lazio, in the area of Terni and Rieti. However, troop movements were slowed down by bad road conditions, the railway transit system malfunctioned, and train carriages were absent.[268] On September 7th, the Minister of War made the decision to revoke the marching orders and direct the troops to gather at Orvieto, which is located in western Umbria on the left bank of the Tiber. The well-thought-out assault plan had to be abruptly altered by General Cadorna. He suggested instead that Civita Castellana be threatened by crossing the Tiber via Ponte Felice, which is close to Magliano, one of the two main highways that go to Rome. Or to threaten Monterotondo through Corese. Viterbo was also a danger from Orte, close to Narni. Cadorna would have prevented the papal forces from knowing the selected path by acting in this way.[269] Given that everything was prepared for an invasion of Lazio by September 9th, the administration was persuaded by the general's proposal.

Comparably different was the situation for the Pope. With only one division led by General Hermann Kanzler and divided into two brigades, the Papal troops were far less powerful than the Royal Army.[270] General Giovanni Zappi led the second brigade, while General Raffaele Giuseppe de Courten commanded the first. In total, as of August 20th, 1870, there were only 13,385 men, of whom 10,700 were actually fighting (228 were assigned to logistical tasks and 2,400 were in charge of keeping the

[266] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 741, p. 523.
[267] **A. Vigevano**, *La fine dell'esercito pontificio*, Roma: Stabilimento tipografico per l'amministrazione della guerra, 1920, p. 302.
[268] **AUSSME**, September 7th, 1870, DS IV CE, G 6–11, f. 54.
[269] **AUSSME**, R. Cadorna: *Operazioni militari del 4° corpo d'esercito nelle provincie già pontificie dal 10 al 20 settembre 1870, relazione a S. E. il ministro della Guerra*, Firenze: Tipografia Voghera, 1870, p. 4, G 6–34.
[270] **A. Vigevano**, *La fine dell'esercito pontificio*, Roma: Stabilimento tipografico per l'amministrazione della guerra, 1920, pp. 31–49.

peace, serving in a gendarmerie legion and a squadron corps composed of social outcasts who had been hardened by fighting against brigandage).

With a military capacity five times inferior, the Chief of Staff of the Papal Army, Fortunato Rivalta, had decided it was appropriate to send in covering units to conduct rearguard operations in order to delay the enemy forces "per il principio politico di far constatare la violenza dell'occupante et per il principio militare di indurre il nemico a dividersi".[271] To put it succinctly, the goal was to cause as much trouble as possible for His Majesty's government, which would then incite demonstrations and foreign intervention in support of the Pope. As a consequence, if other cities of lower importance were left with residual forces, all military power was concentrated in Rome. Essentially, the two parties were preparing for the war, but different in *force d'âme* and effective military vigor.

All prominent figures, which were leading the occupation, were linked to the Risorgimento wars. People like Evaristo Del Carretto, Raffaele Cadorna, Domenico Piemontaro, Diego Angioletti, Enrico Cosenz, Nino Bixio, and Achille De Feo were all veterans of the wars fought in between 1848 and 1866, incorporating a spirit of liberation, *revanche*, and national patriotism. Because of the national recruiting system that was implemented in 1861,[272] even troops were mixed altogether. By portraying the Italian army as a melting pot of a unified national sentiment, the government aimed to disseminate moral and patriotic propaganda and level regional particularisms into a single force.

Furthermore, if deemed fit for duty, no one could avoid military commitments under the 1857 recruiting regulations. On the day of recruitment, the lottery draw separated the conscripts into two groups: people who drew a low number were placed in the first group and had to serve four years in the reserves and five years in active duty. The remaining recruits – dubbed as "i numeri buoni" – were assigned to the second group and would be recalled for five years in the event of conflict. Because a replacement could be obtained through money and numerous exemptions were given for medical and mental health grounds, as well as for seminarians, students, government workers, heads of families, and conscripts' brothers, the system was essentially unfair.

[271] **A. Vigevano**, *La fine dell'esercito pontificio*, Roma: Stabilimento tipografico per l'amministrazione della guerra, 1920, p. 150.

[272] **V. Ilari**, *Storia del servizio militare in Italia. I: Dall'"ordinanza fiorentina" di Macchiavelli alla costruzione dell'esercito italiano*, Roma: Centro militare degli studi strategici, Rivista militare, 1989, pp. 367–369.

Cadorna, on the other hand, had received training in both categories I and II, which were combined into different units from regional courses around Italy. As a result, this little army represented the country's march toward unification through the conquest of Rome: It was about carrying out a task, as though the capture of Rome was inevitable. Vittorio Emanuele II was so certain of this that he wrote "io per dovere, per elezione, per necessità devo compiere la mia missione, più modesta certamente, che è quella di assicurare l'unione e la concordia di tutte le parti d'Italia e di dare salde fondamenta alla ricostruzione nazionale"[273] in the initial draft of the letter that was supposed to be handed to the Pope on September 10th. He was nevertheless portrayed as the guarantor and custodian in the final version of the text, which had been amended and modified after being deemed too contentious.

In the Papal States and Italy, several patriots had planned protests. On September 11th, anti-papal and pro-national movements erupted in Viterbo: The Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated "Le popolazioni insorgono al grido di viva l'Italia! I giovani in grado di portare armi formano distaccamenti per preoccupare gli zuavi trincerati a Viterbo, Montefiascone e Valentano. I gendarmi sono disarmati dalla popolazione e lasciati liberi. Commissioni locali mantengono l'ordine in nome di re Vittorio Emanuele".[274] On the same day, "dimostrazioni repubblicane" had upended the formerly tranquil existence of the Subiaco area.[275] In Rome "si preparano bandiere tricolore in molte case. [...] I massoni hanno acceso grandi fuochi a Monte Mario. [...] Anche il partito repubblicano si sta agitando. Durante la notte, nelle strade di Roma, è stato diffuso in migliaia di copie un proclama firmato dal Comitato repubblicano", Count Kulczycki observed.[276]

Much hope was registered, and on September 12th, Alberto Blanc, the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, wrote to Marco Minghetti, who was then ambassador in Vienna, the following: "On espère la défection des troupes indigènes à Rome. Le mouvement dans toutes les provinces Romaines est aujourd'hui très lancé et très sérieux et le sera davantage de jour en jour. On a lieu de supposer qu'il éclatera à Rome aussi quand la présence de nos troupes en vue aura levé tous les doutes et nos amis agissent dans ce sens".[277] In fact, after returning from the mission, Senator Ponza di San Martino was rather stern with the king stating that "[l]es romains demanderont

[273] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Note 1 to Doc.: 693, pp. 492–493.
[274] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 742, pp. 523–524.
[275] **A. Vigevano**, *La fine dell'esercito pontificio*, Roma: Stabilimento tipografico per l'amministrazione della guerra, 1920, p. 262.
[276] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Docc.: 739 and 752, pp. 521 and 528.
[277] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 756, pp. 530–532.

plutòt la république que d'accepter d'etre une ville de province italienne. Le pays veut aller à Rome en prendre possession sans retard y établir le Gouvernement et créer enfin un fait stable et définitif. Rome non Capitale laisse la question ouverte; Rome Capitale la clòt. Le Piémont entier se lèvera, moi à sa tète […] si le Gouvernement hésite. Il s'agit du salut de la Couronne. Ceux qui étant au pouvoir mettraient des batons dans les roues, auraient de grands comptes à render".[278]

In the meantime, the preoccupation of not giving the impression of an aggressive and anti-Papal occupation to the international community was vivid in the Italian administration. It was, therefore, necessary to internationally demonstrate a mature political-military standing, which was ultimately in favour of the personal supremacy and moral authority of the Pope, whose main objective was not that of opposing the Italian military, seen the unbalance in power, but to show a victory in the collective imaginary. In fact, the pivotal issue in the mind of the Papal army was to resist as much as possible. An influential prelate once declared that "[s]e resistiamo un mese saremo soccorsi".[279] In other words, this approach meant sacrifice, as general Kanzler declared to the French ambassador in Rome, Gaston Morin de Banneville, at the time of the French soldiers' departure by the end of July: "Saremo schiacchiati ma faremo il nostro dovere".[280]

Ultimately, Vittorio Emanuele II had undoubtedly demonstrated openness, conciliation, and humility. However, the Pope, their command, and the foreign papal troops – particularly the Zouaves – had locked themselves into a mindset of sacrificial fanaticism, willing to do whatever it took to buy time and turn the inevitable military defeat into a clamorous political victory. They were aware of the unequal power balance between their forces and the enemy's. The invasion of Lazio would occur under these circumstances, but not without raising certain questions.

The 12th of September at 4:30 am, the royal troops advanced overcrossing the Papal frontier almost without obstacles, making the whole campaign guided by the spirit of conquering everything immediately. No spectacular or extraordinary manifestations were waiting for the Italian soldiers. That was the consequence of a harsh repression operated by the Papal authorities towards suspected sympathizers of

[278] *Ibid*, p. 531
[279] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 752, p. 528.
[280] Cit. in **J. Guenel**, *La dernière guerre du pape: Les Zouaves pontificaux au secours du Saint-Siège (1860-1870)*, Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 1998, p. 130

the Italian cause. As a consequence, the royal army walked through the territory welcomed by what were termed as "silent and respectful" crowds.[281]

The main obstacle to the objective of conquering everything immediately, and not being too deadly, was perhaps represented by Viterbo. The taking of Viterbo could have put the royal army into the situation of a brutal occupation. The army was in front of Viterbo at 5 pm of the 12th of September. Unexpectedly enough, the day after Viterbo, Civita Castellana, Monterotondo and Frosinone were under the occupation of the Italian army, which encountered almost no or little resistance. As a consequence, all those divisions could concentrate all their power toward the occupation of Rome. Meanwhile, between the 14th and 16th of September also Civitavecchia was conquered.

Simultaneously, the international community's reaction needed to be considered. For this reason, on September 14th, Costantino Nigra strongly pushed speedier action: "Bisogna che l'Europa si trovi in presenza di un fatto compiuto irrevocabile".[282] And Marco Minghetti from Vienna had the same stance: "L'opinione pubblica stessa non ci permetterebbe indefinitamente siffatta sosta e ci spingerebbe ad agire". However, he advised against bombing the city, preserving the Leonine cities (Borgo neighbourhood and the Vatican), avoiding bloodshed, planning a vote when the city was captured, and, most importantly, implementing Cavour's program: a free Church in a free State. He was particularly inclined to downplay the military significance of the operation: not a mission about military glory, but rather a "colpo di mano politico". [283]

The political coup was on the verge of success. Conditions appeared to be more favorable than ever. Republican France, Belgium, Baden, Württemberg, Bavaria, Spain, the United Kingdom, and Russia did not change their stance, and their ambassadors and foreign ministers expressed their support for Italy, assured by the circular that Emilio Visconti Venosta had sent on September 15th, 1870, to clarify Florence's intentions to guarantee the pope's spiritual self-determination, protect the region's political order, prevent any revolutionary action, and provide the protection of the monarchy.[284] However, various misgivings or worries had to be addressed, mainly from Austria-Hungary and Prussia.

According to Marco Minghetti, the Austrians, although not wishing to resist the Florence administration, were concerned about the Holy See's independence and alarmed by the imperial forces invading Papal territory. They aimed for a peaceful

[281] **A. Vigevano**, *La fine dell'esercito pontificio*, Roma: Stabilimento tipografico per l'amministrazione della guerra, 1920, p. 280.
[282] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Docc.: 757, 775, and 784, pp. 532, 541 and 546.
[283] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 793, pp. 553–554.
[284] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Docc.: 798, and 795, pp. 557–558, and 555.

takeover of Rome's territory and city, with respect for the pope's right to remain in his See.[285] Thus, they were encouraged by the government's caution and calm and conciliatory offerings (the king's letter, the Ponza di San Martino mission, and the circulars ensuring the pope's protection, freedom, and independence). Cardinal Antonelli's statement that the pope would never negotiate with the King of Italy[286] had been neither accepted nor forgiven by Franz Joseph. As a result, on September 12th, at the cardinal's insistence, the Austrian imperial government declared that it would not do anything that would be in opposition to Italy but offering its good offices to assist the pope in negotiating with Vittorio Emanuele. The conquest was going smoothly for the time being.

On September 10th, Bismarck, for his part, had emphasized the gravity of the new stage that the Roman question was entering.[287] He had likely been irritated by Italy's involvement in the Franco-Prussian war[288] and continued to hold the view that there was no need to aid his nation's Catholics, whom he had repeatedly stated that they never required aid to win the war against France, unless they were willing to lose. However, Berlin's envoy to Rome, Count Harry von Arnim, took the initiative to step in and get the best concessions for the pope that same day. Von Arnim brought back to life an ancient idea created in 1865 by Édouard Antoine de Thouvenel, the Second Empire's French Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time.[289] Rome was to become a "free city", similar to Hamburg and Bremen, with a municipal administration and an Italian military established, all under the nominal dominion of the pope.[290] The Prussian envoy also counseled Visconti Venosta on September 13th to wait for the holding of a major international assembly aimed at resolving the Roman question and to refrain from occupying Rome before to the conclusion of the Franco-Prussian war.[291]

Italian politics and diplomacy, which aimed to nationalize the subject, contrasted with this internationalization of the struggle. Emilio Visconti Venosta was so worried about this that he requested that Berlin return its nationals from the Papal army so that the Italians wouldn't have a chance to kill or injure them.[292] Visconti Venosta believed that these Prussian attempts in Rome might only arouse delusions and incite the pope to oppose. In the event that the military campaign devolved into a carnage, Berlin's

[285] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 737, pp. 519–520.
[286] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Docc.: 758, 766, and 785, pp. 532, 537, and 547.
[287] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 736, p. 518.
[288] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 781, p. 545.
[289] Refer to Chapter 2 in order to reconstruct the working and logic of de Thouvenel's projects.
[290] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Docc.: 750 and 781, pp. 526 and 544. This more or less corresponded to what was the approach of Sir Gladstone (see Chapter 2).
[291] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 778, p. 543.
[292] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Docc.: 778 and 779, p. 543.

antagonistic posture and Vienna's circumstances therefore ran the possibility of inciting the international community to renounce its friendly stance toward Italy. However, as General Cadorna had made plain on the eve of the arrival into Papal territory, the port city of Civitavecchia had to be taken before Rome because of its strategic importance in relation to the rear of the royal army. While a quiet conquest that did not include a single rifle fire would have favored the monarch, a bloody invasion might have swayed international opinion in favor of the pope. As a result, the strategy for taking the city had become crucial.

On the 15th of September, Cadorna firstly tried to overcome the Roman occupation by solving the problem via means of diplomacy. As a consequence, Cadorna sent the colonel of the General Staff Gaetano Caccialupi to Kanzler with the mission of delivering a letter, which read the following: "A nome di S. M. il Re d'Italia, il sottoscritto domanda l'ingresso della truppa italiana in Roma, onde occupare militarmente la città. La missione delle RR. truppe è puramente conservatrice, e diretta a tutelare l'ordine".[293] Followingly, Kanzler firmly responded: "Ho ricevuto l'invito di lasciar entrare le truppe sotto il comando dell'E.V. Sua Santità desidera di veder Roma occupata dalle proprie sue truppe, e non da quelle di altri Sovrani. Pertanto ho l'onore di rispondere, che sono risoluto di fare resistenza coi mezzi che stanno a mia disposizione, come m'impone l'onore e il dovere".[294]

After the refusal, Cadorna was compelled to put as emissary a new higher-in-rank official, with the same mission of Caccialupi, namely that of avoiding a war, which could have provoked a staunch international opposition to the disadvantage of the Italian mission. "È desiderio del Re che la S.V. faccia ancora un tentativo per indurre Governo Pontificio a non opporre resistenza alla occupazione militare di Roma. Senza ritardare punto le operazioni militari da lei ideate, mandi oggi stesso un generale come parlamentario al comando delle armi, per fargli sapere la resa di Civitavecchia, facendo valere tutti quegli altri argomenti che ella stimerà opportuno, per persuaderlo a risparmiare un inutile spargimento di sangue" was what the Minister of War, Cesare Magnani Ricotti, wrote to Cadorna on the 16th of September.[295] As a consequence, Cadorna asked to general Orlando Carchidio to give to Kanzler a more detailed letter. The latter was in the following way composed:

[293] **R. Cadorna**, *La liberazione di Roma nell'anno 1870 ed il plebiscito. Narrazione politico-militare*, Torino: Roux e C., 1889, cit. p. 154.
[294] *Ivi*, p. 155.
[295] *Ivi*, p. 158

*"Eccellenza, Ho l'onore d'annunziare all'E.V. che la piazza di Civitavecchia si è resa stamane alle regie truppe. Dopo questo fatto, vieppiù compreso come sono dell'inutilità di ulteriore spargimento di sangue, specialmente considerando le imponenti forze dell'attacco rispetto a quelle della difesa, compreso dai sensi di umanità a cui l'E.V. è tanto meno estranea, vicina qual è alla Santità del Sommo Pontefice, non stimo inutile rinnovarle la domanda, di non voler opporre resistenza alla occupazione militare di Roma. Questi sentimenti, che sono quelli di S.M. il Re, del Governo, degli italiani tutti, comprese le Provincie già occupate dalle regie truppe, che al primo loro apparire esultano al pensiero di fondersi nella patria comune, questi sentimenti, che credo generali in Europa, non voglio dubitare che non trovino un'eco nell'animo dell'E.V., e che faranno tacere quello di esagerata fierezza militare, che mentre ammiro ed apprezzo, mi pare nondimeno inopportuna, in contingenze tanto palesi ed evidenti come le attuali. Spero che l'E.V., convinta come la mia proposta non può muovere da ragioni militari, vorrà riflettere a tutta la responsabilità che accompagnerebbe un rifiuto alla medesima, sebbene io la rivolga in nome dell'umanità e della ragione*".[296]

Carchidio, however, obtained an even more strong, fierce, and oppositional response from Kanzler, who basically declared that the taking of Civitavecchia did not alter the situation and the need to oppose the Italian entry into Rome.[297] After receiving Kanzler's refusal, Cadorna ordered to cross the Tiber river and start the operations in order to conquer Rome. Between the 17th and 18th of September, all divisions, either in Casal de' Pazzi close to Nomentana road or in Southern Rome, were positioned and ready to attack. On the 17th, Cadorna welcomed Count von Arnim, which asked to postpone the attack of 24 hours for him to be able to "persuader le Commandant militaire de la ville à ne pas fatire de resistance".[298] On September 18th, Cadorna informed the government that von Arnim's effort had failed, and Ricotti then gave him the order to attack with the following words: "Essendo esauriti i mezzi conciliativi, Governo del Re ha deciso, che le truppe operanti sotto i di lei ordini debbano impadronirsi di forza della città di Roma, salva sempre la Città Leonina, lasciando a V.S. scelta del tempo e dei mezzi. Nel comunicarle questo ordine del Consiglio dei ministri, mi limito a rammentarle, che le condizioni politiche richiedono più che mai prudenza, moderazione e prontezza".[299] Dispositions on how to attack were prepared,

[296] *Ivi*, pp. 159-160.
[297] *Ivi*, pp. 160-161.
[298] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 812, p. 564.
[299] **R. Cadorna**, *La liberazione di Roma*, cit. p. 176.

reviewed, and given on the 19th, whilst the day after, in few hours, Rome would have irremediably become Italian.

The Bersaglieri and the infantry of the 11th and 12th divisions, positioned among vineyards, gardens, villas, cultivated fields, and terrain broken up by hedges and boundary walls, launched the major attack between Porta Salara and Porta Pia. The Italian army, led by Luigi Pelloux, started focusing heavy fire on the bastions between Porta Pia and Porta Salara in the early hours of the morning with the goal of creating a breach of around 30 meters. By 8:45 AM, the breach was almost finished after more than three hours of nonstop bombardment. Around ten in the morning, after a brief period of armed conflict, the Pope issued an order for the withdrawal and the raising of the white flag over St. Peter's dome. By 3:30 PM, Cadorna was writing to Minister Ricotti that "Occupazione della Città di Roma fatta con tutte le disposizioni preventive pel buon ordine e sicurezza".[300]

Firstly, it was computed that there were 150 injured and 38 dead on the Italian side as of September 26th. Ten further deaths were later reported on September 20th, 1895, as a result of wounds received during the military actions. In contrast, there were 16 fatalities and 58 injuries among the Kanzler's army. If the majority of the dead and injured on the Italian side were Bersaglieri, the foreign combatants in the ranks of the Papal army, especially the Zouaves, suffered the most casualties. A resounding contraposition also in the future.

[300] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 840, p. 579.

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# III. *Between Foreign Interventionism and Risorgimento Parameters: Approaching various Layers of the Question*

## Chapter 5. Italy, Other Powers, and the Occupation of Rome

This Chapter aims at confronting the foreign policy perspectives and attitudes of the major extra-European powers involved in the Italian occupation of Rome. More specifically, in so doing, it will be shown that Great Britain has in fact played a major role in establishing a fertile-enough international setting for the Italian diplomatic effort to achieve its objectives, as well as in providing a necessary intellectual-cultural impulse toward the end solutions to the question.[301] Despite having served a minor role in the development of the *questione* if compared to France, for which it has been reserved most of the above academic space, other powers – namely Great Britain, Russia, the Ottoman empire, as well as Latin America in minor terms – contributed to the deployment of a perfect scenario, in political, intellectual, and cultural terms, where the Italian Kingdom could pursue its unification programs and settlement projects.[302] As a consequence, this part is devolved to the study of such important political and diplomatic contributions. Although, the below sub-chapters focus solely on the British and Ottoman political and diplomatic approaches, some words have to be spent in favour of the albeit-detached positions of tzarist Russia.

Unfortunately, not a lot of – either primary or secondary – sources are available in order to study the Holy See-Italy-Russia triangle in light of the Roman affair. When available, they are used to be in Russian language, which is unknown to the writer. Nonetheless, various general contextualization and more particular sources, which have been explored, can definitely help in finding out the main characteristics surrounding the Russian outlook on the topic under scrutiny.

Within the framework of Russian-Holy See relations, it is vital to remember that the Papal State's interests in Russia were tied to the protection of Catholic minorities,

[301] It suffices, for example, to mention the already-analysed Gladstone's project of settlement, which has served as basis for the Italian contribution to the September Convention and future development on the organization of Papal Rome. From a more general viewpoint, see **O. J. Wright**, *Great Britain and the Unifying of Italy: A Special Relationship?*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019.

[302] **I. Scott**, *The Roman Question and the Powers, 1848–1865*, Berlin: Springer, 1969, p. 240.

which was a pivotal point indeed with respect to the territorial administration of tsarist Russia.[303] In fact, it is in the mind of the author that, from the Russian perspective, the *questione Romana* was something in between the possibility of re-arranging the relations with the Holy See with the objective of controlling and subjugating the portions of Catholic sub-populations and a fascinating phenomenon to be studied and commented, yet far away from proper interests of geopolitical order.[304] As a result, depending on the historical situation, the relationship between the Holy See and the Russian Empire took on two forms: diplomacy or mediation (as during Nicholas I's approach towards the Holy See),[305] and resistance (as during the crises of 1863-64 Poland or 1866).[306] Indeed, the Russian Empire's diplomacy acknowledged only the diplomatic component of the Holy See, and not the spiritual-clerical function with the connected immunities, therefore defending Catholics was viewed as interfering with internal Russian issues. To put it differently, interventions of the Holy See in the defence of Catholic worship practices in Russia was compared to the intervention of a foreign government, via its emissaries such as priests or religious associations, in the affairs of a sovereign imperial Russia.

Two key components of Russia's approach on the Roman question must be addressed. Firstly, replies from diverse sources reflect Russian ideological and geopolitical goals. The official reaction to Rome's conquest was cautious, with a focus on observation. This stance stemmed from the fact that Russian supreme authorities alternated between defending the legitimacy of the Pope's power and criticizing the new state (based on the principle of nationality), on the one hand, and, on the other, from the Holy See's limited geopolitical interest in comparison to the Kingdom of Italy. Pius IX tried to constitute a conservative religious alliance with Russia trying to overcome the power of ideologies, which were attacking the authority of the Church especially in Prussia and Italy.[307] However, with the latter, a friendship appeared to be more advantageous, especially when thought in light of the Balkan expansion of an eventual post-Rome's occupation Italian foreign policy, doubted to be more assertive and nationalist. Secondly, it is worth noting that this discussion did not address the

[303] **R. Geraci**, *Russia: Minorities and Empire*, in *A Companion to Russian History*, ed. by A. Gleason, The Atrium, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009, pp. 243–261.

[304] **O. Dubrovina**, *Le Reazioni Russe alla Fine del Regno Pontificio*, in *La Breccia di Porta Pia: Raccolta di Studi nel 150° anniversario (1870–2020)*, ed. by F. Anghelone, P. Piatti, and E. Tirone, 2022, Città del Vaticano: Amministrazione del Patrimonio della Santa Sede Apostolica e Libreria Editrice Vaticana, pp. 131–146.

[305] **B. Morinov**, *A Social History of Imperial Russia, 1700-1917, Vol.: II*, St. Petersburg: Westview Press, 1999, p. 148.

[306] **E. Winter**, *Russland und das Papsttum, Vol.: 2, Von der Aufklärung bis zur Grossen Sozialistischen Oktoberrevolution*, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, pp. 324–326.

[307] **D. J. Dunn**, *The Catholic Church and Russia: Popes, Patriarchs, Tsars and Commissars*, London: Routledge, 2017, p. 58

question of the separation of imperial power and the Orthodox Church within the Russian context, although advocating for the termination of the Pope's temporal power in Rome.[308] In fact, the debate over the separation of powers in Italy did not prompt Russian political scientists of the time to reflect on their own situation,[309] where, even in the second half of the nineteenth century, the state system continued to rely on Sergey Uvarov's official Nationality Triad: Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality.[310]

## The Religious, Political, and Strategic Dimensions of the Involvement of Gladstone's Great Britain in the Roman Affair(s)

Giuseppe Garibaldi, the nationalist revolutionary who had done the most to bring about the union of Northern and Southern Italy, became a recognized popular hero in 1860, a time that has been dubbed the "Garibaldi moment" in Britain.[311] This event caused enormous public joy. In response to public opinion and the diplomatic circumstances, Lord John Russell, the Foreign Secretary of the Palmerston government, gave a resounding diplomatic endorsement of the new Kingdom of Italy. He even implied that the Italian people had imitated the Glorious Revolution of 1688 by rejecting foreign dominion and oppressive rule.[312]

Italy's newfound standing as one of the few constitutional governments in Europe following the declaration of a unified monarchy in 1861 served as the foundation for a close alliance with Victorian Britain. Russell stayed in the Foreign Office throughout the early 1860s, when the British government was rather forthright in its belief that Venetia and Rome, as Italianate regions situated within Italy's geographical and cultural borders, should be part of the new Kingdom. They thought

[308] **T. Weeks**, *Religion, nationality, or politics: Catholicism in the Russian empire, 1863–1905*, in Journal of Eurasian Studies, 2011, Vol.: 2, No.: 1, pp. 52–59.

[309] Honestly, a few statesmen and intellectuals were reported in the act of pondering on the net benefits of the separations of spiritual from temporal powers. One of those was the *Ober-prokuror* (Chief procurator) of the 1863 Holy Synod, who recognized that the government would have accrued more benefits than harm out of such division. Nonetheless, the need for control overshadowed any attempt of liberalizing worship practices in the Empire.

[310] **D. Badalian**, *Alexei Khomiakov and Sergey Uvarov: "Official Nationality" or Nationality?*, in *Alexei Khomiakov: The Mystery of Sobornost*, ed. by A. Mrowczynski-Van Allen, T. Obolevitch, and P. Rojek, 2019, Eugene, Oregon, US: Wipf and Stock, pp. 141–159.

[311] **L. Riall**, *Garibaldi: Invention of a Hero*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007, p. 272.

[312] **Russell to Hudson**, 27th October 1860, *Selections from Speeches of Earl Russell 1817 to 1841 and from Dispatches 1859 to 1865*, London: Adamant Media Corporation, 1870, Vol.: II, pp. 328–332.

that Italy's internal stability and exterior security would be enhanced by the peaceful settlement of the Venetian and Roman issues in its favor. The British response to the Italian capture of Rome may have been more overt and exuberant than it was since the country had finally united under a more liberal administration and had met the popular national desire for the city to serve as the capital.

The majority of studies on British ties with Italy in the nineteenth century have concentrated on the years before 1861, and specifically on British participation in the unification movement.[313] While previous studies have looked at British support for the Italian nationalist movement, a lot of emphasis has been dedicated to the British cultural infatuation with the country.[314] It has been noted that many eager British onlookers even saw the unification of Italy as a chance to reshape the nation in a way that was more British.[315] Both the Conservative and Liberal administrations' strategies during and after Italy's unification have been found to be motivated by anti-Catholicism and animosity toward the papal temporal power; the views and deeds of both governments are well recorded.[316] In contrast, throughout the critical first ten years following its union, little attention has been paid to British relations with Italy.[317]

Moreover, it was believed that the primary cause of the decline of a nation highly esteemed for its Roman and Renaissance history was the pope's influence over Italian politics and society. A sizable portion of British public opinion supported the end of the temporary rule because of these sentiments as well as widespread sympathy for the Italian national cause. Pope Pius IX had maintained throughout the 1860s that his temporal authority was necessary to ensure his autonomy as the head of the church.[318] Thus, pious Catholics in Britain and Ireland resisted its demolition.

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[313] See, for instance, **D. Beales**, *England and Italy*, London and Edinburgh: Nelson, 1961; and **N. Carter**, *Hudson, Malmesbury and Cavour: British Diplomacy and the Italian Question, February 1858 to June 1859*, in The Historical Journal, 1997, Vol.: 40, No.: 2, pp. 389–413.

[314] See, for instance, **R. Cavaliero**, *Italia Romantica: English Romantics and Italian Freedom*, London: Tauris Parke Paperbacks, 2005; **E. Chaney**, *The Evolution of the Grand Tour: Anglo-Italian Cultural Relations since the Renaissance*, London: Routledge, 2000; and **J. Pemble**, *The Mediterranean Passion: Victorians and Edwardians in the South*, Oxford: Faber and Faber, 2009.

[315] See **M. O'Connor**, *The Romance of Italy and the English Imagination*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998.

[316] See, for instance, **C.T. Mclntire**, *England against the Papacy 1858-1861: Tories, Liberals, and the Overthrow of Papal Temporal Power during the Italian Risorgimento*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009; **M. Tedeschi**, *Francia e Inghilterra di fronte alia Questione Romana 1859-60*, Milan: Giuffrè, 1978; **M. De Leonardis**, *L'Inghilterra e la Questione Romana 1859-70*, Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 1980; and **D. Raponi**, *British Protestants, the Roman Question and the formation of the Italian National Identity, 1861-1875*, Ph.D. dissertation, Cambridge, 2009.

[317] For a relatively recent rare example, see **O. J. Wright**, *British representatives and the surveillance of Italian affairs, 1860–70*, in The Historical Journal, 2008, Vol.: 51, No.: 3, pp. 669–687.

[318] For Pius IX and his pontificate, see **E.E.Y. Hales**, *Pio Nono: A Study in Politics and Religion*, Cluny Media, 2023.

On August 3rd, 1870, Lord Lyons, the British Ambassador in Paris, informed the Foreign Office of the French plan to leave Rome.[319] Harry Jervoise, the interim British envoy in Rome, had already addressed the potential repercussions with papal ministers due to the British government's intense concerns about more revolutionary action in the Italian peninsula before this official statement.[320] The British administration moved quickly once the French force was eventually removed on August 20th. In order to account for the potential for disruptions "which might endanger the safety of British lives and property, and which might even induce the Pope to desire an asylum out of Italy", the Foreign Secretary sent directives to the Admiralty. As a consequence, after being sent to Civitavecchia, the biggest port in the papal state, the battleship HMS *Defence* was told to stay there until further notice. Lord Granville, Gladstone's Foreign Secretary, made it plain that the Pope should not be persuaded to leave Rome. Nevertheless, the Foreign Secretary stated that "His Holiness should be received on board Her Majesty's ship and entertained with all possible respect" if he requested shelter.[321] Despite the official line of its policy emphasizing its concern for British interests in Rome, the British government was clearly worried about the Pope's well-being and the possible effects that any danger to his safety may have on the global situation, as well as on the internal political equilibria.

On August 23rd, 1870, HMS *Defence* landed in Civitavecchia with the directive to stay there forever. Commander Salmon, who had declared his intention "to proceed to Naples in a day or two, the weather at this time of year rendering this a most undesirable and even unsafe anchorage",[322] insisted that the *Defense* stay until November 9th before leaving. Ultimately, on October 27th, the warship departed Civitavecchia and stayed in Naples until February 16th, 1871.

Granville's reaction encapsulated the attitude of British authorities when the Italian ambassador to Britain told the Foreign Secretary all the news regarding early-mid stages of the occupation.[323] In private, he said that while he was pleased that the task was completed, he did not feel compelled to voice his view on the precise way it was carried out. The British ambassador special to Italy, Sir Augustus Paget, gave a

[319] **Lord Lyons to Earl Granville**, August 3rd, 1870, *Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Rome, 1870-71. Presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty*, No.: 1, 1871, Cambridge, U.S.: Harvard Law School Library, p. 1.

[320] **Mr. Jervoise to Earl Granville**, July 29th, 1870, *Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Rome*, 1871, pp. 1–2.

[321] **Earl Granville to the Lords Commissioner of the Admiralty**, August 20th, 1870, *Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Rome*, 1871, p. 4.

[322] **The Secretary to the Admiralry to Mr. Hammond**, November 3rd, 1870, *Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Rome*, 1871, p. 85.

[323] See "September 12th – September 20th, 1870: Invading" of Chapter 4.

colourful account of the ecstatic greeting the Italian Army had received in Rome as well as the wave of street festivities, bell-ringing, and flag-waving that swept over Italy in his official letter on the occasion. He said with joy that Italy was no longer only a "geographical expression"[324] and that the last act of national unity had occurred following eleven years of "emancipation and unification". He noted that one of the biggest barriers to the nation's social, economic, and political advancement had been removed with the conquest of Rome, and that the kingdom could now join the rest of Europe "unfettered by entangling engagements".[325] Similar opinions were expressed in public; the *Times* applauded the "happily removed" threat to Italy's independence and the stability of Europe.[326] But Paget's tone was different in private. He went so far as to call the coexistence of the Pope, the King, and the Italian government in the city "the most absurd notion that ever was".[327]

Gladstone admitted to feeling "grieved" when Italian forces later forced their way into the Quirinal, the papal house that the King had commandeered. He recommended that Granville let the Italian government know that if Italy were to "confiscate his property" or limit the Pope's freedom "to rave at his pleasure", its British equivalent would be in a difficult position.[328] On December 11th, the Foreign Office directed Paget to notify the Italian government that the Pope should not be "subject to indignity, or deprived of that independence which they consider essential for the […] discharge of his functions", since this greatly frightened Catholics in Britain and Ireland.[329] Gladstone finally acknowledged that he questioned whether his government had erred in not pushing the Pope to leave Rome, where it seemed "to be his object to provoke violence & revolutionary disturbance", and to board the *Defense* and reestablish the Holy See elsewhere.[330]

Three distinct settings should be used to analyse the Gladstone government's 1870 stance toward the *questione Romana*: the religious, the political – which quite often intersects the personal sphere –, and the strategic.

Form to the religious standpoint, the fervently Protestant British Prime Minister and the Protestant majority of pro-Italian supporters in Britain had little compassion

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[324] Famous quote attributed to Prince Klemens von Metternich, cit. in **D. M. Smith**, *The Making of Italy 1796-1866*, London: Palgrave MacMillan, 1988, p. 123.

[325] Cited in **O. Wright**, *British Foreign Policy and the Italian Occupation of Rome, 1870*, in The International History Review, 2012, Vol.: 34, No.: 1, p. 161–176, cit. p. 165.

[326] The *Times*, September 20th, 1870.

[327] Cited in **O. Wright**, *British Foreign Policy*, 2012, p. 165.

[328] **A. Ramm**, Gladstone to Granville, December 7th, 1870, in *The Gladstone–Granville Correspondence*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, Vol.: I, p. 17.

[329] Cited in **O. Wright**, *British Foreign Policy*, 2012, p. 166.

[330] **A. Ramm**, Gladstone to Granville, January 1st, 1871, in *The Gladstone–Granville Correspondence*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, Vol.: I, p. 199

for the Pope and supported the removal of his temporal authority, which has previously been the focus of much research. It is also evident, though, that the British government's stance was complicated by the fact that the majority of people in Ireland were Catholic and that about 20% of people in the United Kingdom were Roman Catholic. The Victorians' negative stereotypes of the Irish, such as laziness, backwardness, violence, and criminality, were also applied to the Italians. They were seen as victims of Catholicism, fear of change, hostility to progress, and economic stagnation.[331] For instance, the surge of Irish migrants seeking jobs and fleeing the potato famine led Protestant England to feel invaded by Catholic ideology and superstition. Pius IX's re-establishment of the Catholic episcopal hierarchy in England in 1850, as well as high-profile conversions to Catholicism, such as Gladstone's sister Helen and close friend Henry Manning, reinforced this view. Count Cavour advocated for "a free church in a free state", which was seen as progressive and mainly Protestant in Britain.[332] Pius IX issued the *Sillabo* (1864) in response to the demand for Italy's unification, condemning freedom of conscience and expression, opposing the separation of church and state, and defending temporal power as necessary for papal authority.[333] As the pontiff's prerogative was threatened, the Vatican Council declared papal infallibility in 1870 as a symbol of reverence and devotion.[334] No Victorian Prime Minister could afford to disregard Catholic sentiment. Henry Manning, Archbishop of Westminster and future cardinal, was a staunch supporter of temporal power, describing it as "the moral and actual cohesive of Europe", "the basis for the Christian order of the world", and "the only essential preserve of order against revolution". In 1861, Manning told Gladstone that the future of temporal power was crucial to the future of Christianity in Europe.[335] Gladstone, on the contrary, strongly opposed the papal government and the temporal power. During Italy's unification, he thought that the termination of the church would lead to the "Protestantisation" of the old republics, preventing Italians from falling into secularism. Despite this, he recognized that the Pope should maintain spiritual independence and not be subservient to governmental authority.[336] In 1862, English supporters of Garibaldi battled with Catholic Irishmen in London's Hyde Park, demonstrating the potential for Italian

[331] **R. Romani**, *British Views on Irish National Character, 1800-1846: An Intellectual History*, in History of European Ideas, 1997, Vol.: 23, pp. 193–219.

[332] **D. Beales**, *England and Italy*, 1961, p. 25.

[333] For a full translation of the Sillabo, see **A. Fremantle**, *The Papal Encyclicals in their Historical Context*, New York: Mentor, 1963.

[334] For the motivations of the infallibility dogma put forward by the Pope see Chapter 4. 41

[335] **E. R. Norman**, *Cardinal Manning and the Temporal Power*, in D. Beales and G. Best (eds), *History, Society and the Churches: Essays in Honour of Owen Chadwick*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, p. 244.

[336] *Ivi*, pp. 249–250.

issues to generate domestic conflict in Britain.[337] Garibaldi's visit to London in 1864, when he got the most enthusiastic greeting of any foreign visitor in the nineteenth century, served as a reminder of Italy's powerful presence in Britain.[338] In 1870, the Italian conquest of Rome caused fury among Catholics and was attacked by the Irish nationalist press. The Gladstone administration faced a challenge due to their dedication to pacifying Ireland via reforms.

Within the political-personal context, despite having a number of close Catholic friends, Gladstone found it difficult to believe that a patriotic Englishman could be Catholic.[339] During periods of difficulty in Rome, he came under pressure from some of these. First, his liberal Catholic friend Lord Acton urged him to try to halt the Vatican Council's proceedings and reject its declaration of papal infallibility.[340] Later, as the Italian government focused on acquiring the city, Archbishop Manning made multiple concerns to Gladstone about the Pope's safety and appears to have influenced the Prime Minister to send the Defence to Civitavecchia. Gladstone privately agreed to his Foreign Secretary that while acting on unofficial representations from a Catholic archbishop was unusual, it was "probably correct" given the circumstances.[341] However, it is vital to analyse the personal background of the event for the man who raised the profile of the Italian national movement in Britain throughout the 1850s and later became the British Prime Minister in 1870. Gladstone grew up with a passion for Italian history and culture and held strong anti-papal convictions.[342] In 1850, while traveling Southern Italy with his family, he became interested in the trial of Carlo Poerio, a Bourbon government official, and the temporary incarceration of Giacomo Lacaita, the legal advisor to the British legation. This led him to visit the jails in Naples. His experience had a significant influence on British politics.[343] Gladstone publicly criticized the Bourbon rule in Naples, describing it as "the negation of God erected into a system of government".[344] The British middle and upper classes sympathized with

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[337] **S. Gilley**, *The Garibaldi Riots of 1862*, in The Historical Journal, 1973, Vol.: 16, No.: 4, pp. 697–732.

[338] **D. Beales**, *Garibaldi in England: The Politics of Italian Enthusiasm*, in J.A. Davis and P. Ginsborg (eds), *Society and Politics in the Age of the Risorgimento: Essays in Honour of Denis Mack Smith*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 184–216; and **L. E. Funaro**, *Il viaggio di Garibaldi in Inghilterra e la crisi della democrazia italiana dopo l'unità*, in Studi Storici, 1966, Year: 7, No.: 1, pp. 129–157.

[339] **V. A. McClelland**, *Gladstone and Manning: A Question of Authority*, in *Gladstone, Politics and Religion*, ed. P.J. Jagger, London and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1985, pp. 148–170.

[340] See **O. Chadwick**, *Acton and Gladstone*, London: Athlone Press, 1976.

[341] **A. Ramm**, Gladstone to Granville, August 20th, 1870, in *The Gladstone–Granville Correspondence*, p. 122.

[342] **O. Chadwick**, *Young Gladstone and Italy*, in *Gladstone, Politics and Religion: A Collection of Founder's Day Lectures delivered at St Denio's Library, Hawarden, 1967–83*, ed. P.J. Jagger, London and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1985, pp. 68–87.

[343] **D. M. Schreuder**, *Gladstone and Italian Unification: The Making of a Liberal?*, in English Historical Review, 1970, Vol.: 85, No.: 336, pp. 475–501.

[344] **W. E. Gladstone**, *Two Letters to the Earl of Aberdeen, on the State Prosecutions of the Neapolitan Government*, New York: Leopold Classic Library, 1851.

his claims that the Catholic Church supported reactionary repression and fostered republicanism.[345] Gladstone joined Lords Palmerston and Russell's government in 1859 with the goal of achieving a "happy settlement" on the Italian question. He served as Chancellor of the Exchequer in the cabinet that officially recognized the Kingdom of Italy in 1861.[346] Gladstone first viewed Italy's union as Piedmontese imperialism. However, he became confident that by following Piedmont's lead, the Italians would acquire "constitutional and moral maturity". Palmerston believed that a free Italy would follow English political patterns, and the country's unification as a constitutional monarchy with Free Trade and a failed attempt at competent financial management was deemed a success by his government.[347] Since Italian unification, however, British onlookers have been watching with dismay as the country has faced several domestic crises; indeed one after the other. The administration lacked legitimacy and faced opposition from hostile reactionaries and militant republicans, making it difficult to maintain control, the English thought.[348] The French government first refused to recognize the kingdom and discuss a settlement on the Roman question until they established authority over their newly acquired territories and preclude any possibility of further revolutionary Garibaldian-backed upheavals.[349] As a result, the Italian administration used brutal measures to assert their authority over Southern Italy and Sicily. Consequently, liberal Italian parliamentarians were willing to disregard civil liberties to consolidate their authority in the region.[350] During the 1860s, the new Italy mocked the Victorian ideal of parliamentary governance. In 1862 and 1867, the Italian King intervened in legislative politics to force his preferred Prime Minister over legal options. Urbano Rattazzi, the King's appointment, helped Garibaldi organize covert volunteer missions to seize Rome, essentially putting Europe's peace at risk. In the late 1860s, Lord Clarendon, Gladstone's first Foreign Secretary, mocked the Italians for their failure to use the parliamentary system effectively.[351] Gladstone made significant political contributions to the Italian national movement. As Prime Minister, he had a strong desire to deepen Italian unity by

[345] **R. Shannon**, *Gladstone I 1809-1865*, Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1984, pp. 228–232, and 238–422.

[346] *Ivi*, p. 388.

[347] **J. Parry**, *The Politics of Patriotism: English Liberalism, National Identity and Europe, 1830-1886*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp. 221–233.

[348] As examples, see **D. M. Smith**, *Modern Italy: A Political History*, Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.: University of Michgan Press, 1997, pp. 59–92; **N. Doumanis**, *Inventing the Nation: Italy*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2001, pp. 86–91; **F. Molfese**, *Storia del brigantaggio dopo l'Unità*, Milan: Feltrinelli, 1966; and **L. Riall**, *Sicily and the Unification of Italy: Liberal Policy and Local Power 1859–1866*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998.

[349] **J. Whittam**, *The Politics of the Italian Army 1861–1918*, London: Routledge, 1977, p. 75.

[350] **J.A. Davis**, *Conflict and Control: Law and Order in Nineteenth-Century Italy*, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1988, pp. 168–186.

[351] **O. Wright**, *British Foreign Policy*, p. 169.

resolving the Roman crisis, which had often threatened to divide the new nation. As an Italophile and Prime Minister of the world's leading naval force, Gladstone could not stand by and let the Italians accomplish their national union, risking prompting greater nations to defend the Pope. As such, a mix of national and European-wide variables were forcing Gladstone to an entrenched Italian politics, where national strategic interests, European balance, and domestic political competition all were key aspects.

Thirdly, the geostrategic background of the Italian capture of Rome is crucial for Britain, which had a significant stake in the survival of an independent Italy. The British interference in international affairs, particularly in Italy, was consistent with a long-standing trend. During the nineteenth century, British foreign policy prioritized defending weaker states like Belgium, Portugal, and Denmark. British governments' attitudes towards Piedmont and the Kingdom of Italy aligned with this approach. Since 1848, the British have maintained a close connection with Piedmont, promoting its growth as a prosperous, stable, constitutional, and powerful strategic buffer between France and Austria.[352] The Palmerston government's failure to influence the outcome of the Polish and Danish crises in 1863 and 1864 reduced Britain's influence in European affairs. However, both Conservative and Liberal governments continued to intervene in European affairs when national interests were at stake.[353] In 1867, the Conservative Derby administration successfully influenced the settlement of the Luxembourg problem. In 1869, the Liberal Gladstone government interfered in the Belgian railroads debate and the Cretan matter.[354] The events in Italy in 1859-60 reinforced the belief, especially of Radical-Liberal MPs John Cobden and John Bright, that commerce and public opinion would become more influential in guiding Europe's growth.[355] In 1865, a British gunboat was dispatched to Naples to rescue two British travellers abducted by bandits. In 1870, another gunboat was deployed to safeguard a Sardinian Vice-Consul from a local vengeance.[356] Gladstone's government's dispatch

[352] **J. Clarke**, *British Diplomacy and Foreign Policy 1782-1865: The National Interest*, London: Unwin Hyman, 1988, p. 222

[353] **J. Clarke**, *British Diplomacy*, 1988, pp. 311–312; **P. Kennedy**, *The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*, London: Humanity Books, 2001, p. 181; and **J. Charmley**, *Palmerston: "Artful Old Dodger" or "Babe of Grace"?*, in T.G. Otte (ed) *The Makers of British Foreign Policy: From Pitt to Thatcher*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, pp. 92–94.

[354] **G. A. Craig**, *Great Britain and the Belgian Railways Dispute of 1869*, in The American Historical Review, 1945, Vol.: 34, No.: 1, pp. 738–761; and **M. M. Robson**, *Lord Clarendon and the Cretan Question, 1868-9*, in The Historical Journal, 1960, Vol.: 3, No.: 1, pp. 38–55.

[355] **J. Parry**, *The Politics of Patriotism: English Liberalism, National Identity and Europe, 1830-1886*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 237.

[356] **M. Blinkhorn**, *Liability, Responsibility and Blame: British Ransom Victims in the Mediterranean Periphery, 1860-81*, in Australian Journal of Politics and History, 2000, Vol.: 46, No.: 3, pp. 336–356; and **O.J. Wright**, *Sea and Sardinia: Pax Britannica versus Vendetta in the New Italy (1870)*, in European History Quarterly, 2007, Vol.: 37, No.: 3, pp. 398–416.

of the *Defence* to Civitavecchia demonstrates active British involvement in Italian affairs. The choice of an ironclad frigate over wooden-hulled gunboats to protect British subjects from bandit gangs or angry locals may indicate the administration's preoccupation with events in Rome. In 1870, the administration maintained a British naval presence in the Tagus to oppose the Portuguese candidate for the vacant Spanish throne. When a German prince was chosen, France and Prussia threatened war, so his representative in Italy sought an Italian alternative.[357] During the Franco-Prussian war, his idealism drove him to authorize diplomatic action to protect Belgium's security and prevent Prussia from annexing Alsace and Lorraine. Gladstone, a nationalist and religious idealist, shared Palmerston's belief in preserving and advancing British interests and ideals but openly criticizing his belligerence and jingoism. In his first ministry, he appointed Lords Clarendon and Granville as Foreign Secretaries, departing from the Palmerstonian foreign policy model. He wanted to avoid arrogance and hostility yet not encourage other countries to replicate British institutions. According to others, the Italian crisis in 1851-2 and 1859-60 heightened Gladstone's awareness of England's worldwide obligation to combat unconstitutional and cruel state ideas.[358] By 1870, many Liberal Party members advocated for British domestic and foreign policy to emphasize responsibility for national and international growth.[359] The Gladstone government's response to the Roman crisis in 1870 aimed to resolve the Roman question and consolidate Italian unification, while also protecting the fragile Italian state from war with powerful Catholic enemies. Britain had a strong strategic stake in maintaining an autonomous and stable Italy, making this explanation more likely. In 1860, the Palmerston government hailed Italy's unification as a means of stabilizing both domestic affairs and foreign relations.[360] By 1870, the Kingdom of Italy was a close ally of Britain. Its economic and infrastructure growth provided possibilities for British merchants, financiers, and engineers. British governments attempted to find peaceful solutions to the issues of Rome and Venetia, including persuading Vienna to sell Venetia to Italy and suggesting that most of Rome could become Italian if the Pope was allowed to retain the Leonine city or granted residence on Elba, Sardinia or Malta.[361] It was believed that a strong Italian state would offer a

[357] **C. J. Bartlett**, *After Palmerston: Britain and the Iberian Peninsula, 1865-76*, in English Historical Review, 1994, Vol.: 109, No.: 430, pp. 74–88; **C. J. Bartlett**, *Clarendon, the Foreign Office and the Hohenzollern Candidature, 1868-1870*, in English Historical Review, 1960, Vol.: 75, No.: 295, pp. 276–84.

[358] **J. Parry**, *The Politics of Patriotism*, 2006, p. 255–256.

[359] *Ivi*, p. 275.

[360] **O. Barié**, *Dal sistema europeo alla comunità mondiale. Vol.: 1 Storia delle relazioni internazionali dal Congresso di Vienna alla fine della guerra fredda*, Milan: Celuc Libri, 1999, pp. 309–311.

[361] See, for example, **I. Scott**, *The Roman Question and the Powers 1848–1865*, The Hague: Springer, 1969.

counterweight to France, Britain's main opponent in the Mediterranean. In fact, it can be argued that during Italy's unification, the Palmerston government followed an anti-French stance rather than a pro-Italian one.[362] British worries about French incursion in Italy were comparable, if not stronger. The Napoleonic invasion of 1796 was in recent memories. Following the cession of Nice and Savoy to France in 1860, British suspicions of French ambitions led to London's refusal to prevent Garibaldi from crossing into mainland Italy in May and enthusiastic diplomatic support for Italian unification in October.[363] In 1861, the British secured pledges from the Italian government that no more territory would be surrendered to France due to concerns about French plans for Genoa and Sardinia.[364] After France and Italy narrowly avoided war over the Roman crisis in 1867, Lord Derby's Conservative ministry voiced worry that the French Emperor planned to dismantle the Kingdom of Italy and replace it with a Giobertian confederation led the Pope. During the Gladstone administration in 1870, the Prime Minister expressed concern over French ambitions in Italy, stating that even after the Second Empire's demise, France could not avoid intruding.[365] British rulers strove to influence Italy's growth and international affairs, although having no territorial claims. Prior to Italian unification, British foreign secretaries and diplomats provided feedback on parliamentary administration in Piedmont.[366] Lord Malmesbury, a Conservative, threatened naval action against the bourbon administration over their treatment of British engineers imprisoned without trial in Naples during the S.C. *Cagliari* affair (1857–81).[367] After Italy's unification in 1860, British leaders remained committed to its success and continued to lecture Italian politicians on domestic and international issues. Gladstone and Russell were among those who contributed to Italian unification, earning professional repute. Italy's precarious internal condition and hostile foreign powers threatened the fledgling kingdom's fragmentation or annihilation. The British Liberal and Conservative governments of the 1860s were concerned that a united Italy would lead to increased French influence on the peninsula. Many Britons had embraced the idea of a united Italy and were eager to see it survive. In addition to being Europe's newest

[362] **D. Beales**, *England and Italy*, 1961, p. 169.

[363] *Ivi*, p. 151; and **G. Formigoni**, *Storia della Politica Internazionale nell'Età Contemporanea*, 3rd edn, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2021, p. 116.

[364] See **O.J. Wright**, *The Information Service: British Diplomats and Consuls in Italy (1861-70)*, Ph.D. dissertation, Lancaster, pp. 174-77

[365] **A. Ramm**, Gladstone to Granville, September 16th, 1870, in *The Gladstone–Granville Correspondence*, p. 128.

[366] **O. R. Marshall**, *Massimo D'Azeglio an Artist in Politics 1798–1866*, London: Oxford University Press, 1966, p. 199.

[367] **O. J. Wright**, *Police 'Outrages' against British Residents and Travellers in Liberal Italy, 1867–1877*, in Crime, Histoire & Sociétés/Crime, History & Societies, 2010, Vol.: 14, No.: 1, pp. 51–71.

constitutional monarchy, the country negotiated a commercial pact with Britain in 1863 and implemented free trade. An abortive British attempt to insert a clause safeguarding Protestant missionary in Italy has been seen as part of a larger plot for the "anglicised globalization" of Southern Europe through the simultaneous spread of Free Trade and Protestantism.[368] During the 1860s, the British government closely monitored Italian affairs. After the country's union, the Foreign Office prioritized the consulate service's role in obtaining intelligence on Italian affairs.[369] Sir Augustus Paget, the British envoy to Italy, was less of an Italophile than his predecessors. However, he was concerned about the papal state's impact on Italian unification. In addition to serving as a physical barrier between the northern and southern half of the peninsula, he said that its governance was fundamentally antagonistic to modern civilization and represented a security threat to the Italian state. Paget saw the papal state as a hindrance to Italy's modernity and a threat to its independence.[370] In conclusion, the deployment of the *Defence* was a secret British promise to ensure the Pope's safety, prompted by worries about Catholic sentiment in Britain and Ireland. The removal of the principal reason for foreign Catholic intervention suggests a goal of completing national unity in Italy and ending papal temporal sovereignty. Gladstone had to strike a balance; he had to be seen to be ready to assist the Pope, if need be, but not as trying to interfere in papal or Italian affairs. The British Prime Minister and administration had personal and strategic interests in destroying the papal temporal power and consolidating the Kingdom of Italy, which has not been previously explored. During Italy's unification in 1859-60, British "non-intervention" was intended to prevent other Catholic nations from assisting the papacy while permitting the Piedmontese to take papal holdings in Central Italy.[371] In 1870, the British government maintained a non-intervention policy, deploying the *Defence* to Civitavecchia to safeguard British interests while also providing the Pope with the option of a guaranteed, albeit temporary, sanctuary. This act likely aimed to promote Italian unity by opposing foreign meddling. The British government acted cautiously but decisively, aligning with its pro-Italian emotions and strategic interests in the Mediterranean.

[368] See **D. Beales** and **E. F. Biagini**, *The Risorgimento and the Unification of Italy*, 2nd edn, Harlow: Routledge, 2002, pp. 165–166; and **D. Raponi**, *An 'anti-Catholicism of free trade?' Religion and the Anglo-Italian negotiations of 1863*, in European History Quarterly, 2009, Vol.: 39, No.: 4, pp. 633–652.

[369] **O. J. Wright**, *British representatives*, 2009, pp. 669–687.

[370] **Sir A. Paget to Earl Granville**, August 3rd, 1870, *Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Rome*, pp. 2–3.

[371] **C.T. Mclntire**, *England against the Papacy 1858-1861*, 2009, pp. 225–226.

## "Sans trop de bruit": Unification and Occupation from the Viewpoint of the (Islamic) Ottoman Empire

From the outlook of the most important Islamic power in the Continent, albeit in decline, namely the Ottoman Empire, things were slightly different. If Tsarist Russia was more concerned with the domestic consequences of the religious variable, the Ottoman empire seemed much more worried about the political and strategic implications of a conquered Rome, which could have prompted a more nationalist and assertive Italian foreign policy, for instance in the area today dubbed as Western Balkans. Hence, with direct impact on the interests of the *Sublime Porte*. In fact, as argued by Suraiya Faroqhi, in her "The Ottoman Empire and the World Around it", there was no iron wall between the Ottoman and other civilizations, but rather a long-established network of diplomatic, trade, and financial relations, as well as cultural and religious links. These stretched beyond regional relations to Asian empires and Europe's burgeoning modern powers, including England, France, the Netherlands, and Venice. Of course, military confrontation was a constant in these ties, but the overarching reality was of one globe and communication between learned and pragmatic elites, including gentlemen travelling for pleasure, as well as pilgrimage and intimate artistic touch with the European Renaissance.[372] This line of interpretation is a constant in the impressions, which have ultimately shaped the Ottoman diplomacy when dealing with Florence or the Holy See, either regarding the unification or the occupation phases of the Italian history.

Despite its geographical distance and lack of direct influence on the Italian peninsula, the Ottoman Empire closely monitored the progress of the Italian unification effort. It is worth noticing right away that the dominant emotions in Constantinople/Istanbul were worry and terror. The Italian national movement was viewed as a phenomenon of such magnitude that it threatened to upend the European and Mediterranean *status quo* while also weakening the standing of the Ottoman Empire, which was already known as "the sick man of Europe".[373] In particular, its success could jeopardize the results of the Crimean War of 1853-1856

[372] **S. Faroqhi**, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Around it*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2005.

[373] According to Fuad Pasha, "The Ottoman Empire may be the sick man of Europe but the cure for his sickness is money" cited in **E. Z. Karal**, *Osmanli Tarihi, Vol.: VII*, Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu Yayinlari, 1956, p. 129.

and the subsequent Paris Congress, in which the Ottoman Empire was able to temporarily curb Tsarist Russia's expansionist ambitions and gain admission – albeit in a subordinate position – to the European concert. In this environment, the *Sublime Porte* became convinced of the significance of sending observers to the Italian peninsula, establishing the first diplomatic missions in the Kingdoms of Sardinia and the Two Sicilies, as well as a consulate general in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany.[374]

Along with concerns about the overall international context, there were those about the Risorgimento movement's inherent characteristics, particularly its ideological foundation on the principle of nationality, which was diametrically opposed to the Ottoman Empire's multiethnic and multireligious reality.[375] This intellectual divide was highlighted by the predisposition of many Italian patriots to place the notion of nationality at the heart of international order and push for its widespread implementation, notably in Ottoman realms in the Balkans and Eastern Mediterranean.[376] Furthermore, these theoretical views had the potential for excessively concrete implementations. For the most part throughout the nineteenth century, first among *Carboneria* followers and subsequently among radical leftists, there was active support for the Balkan communities' insurgencies, and in many cases, they had actively participated. The more moderate factions had been more cautious, but they were not immune to broad anti-Ottoman sentiment. It is no surprise that among moderate circles, a plan was devised to resolve the national crisis by orienting toward Austria, that is, persuading Vienna to give up her Italian lands in return for Balkan development at the cost of the Ottoman Empire. These many proposals reached and affected Count Cavour's pragmatic mentality. While the Kingdom of Sardinia had joined with the Ottoman Empire during the Crimean War, the Piedmontese politician had no qualms about shifting his allegiance between the Balkan peoples and Austria, depending on what would best advance the Italian cause.[377]

Nonetheless, even with these assumptions, it cannot be argued that the *Sublime Porte* had a completely unfavorable attitude toward the unification effort. Elementary caution, awareness of its own limitations, and a wish to remain tied to the European coalition, or at least to England, the great power most likely to defend Ottoman

[374] **S. Kuneralp**, *Introduction. L'Empire Ottoman et l'unification Italienne, "Documents Diplomatiques Ottomans sur l'Unification Italienne"* (DDO, henceforth), 2 Volumes, Istanbul: Aygaz, 2009, p. 7-11.

[375] **M. Šedivý**, *Crisis among the Great Powers: The Concert of Europe and the Eastern Question*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2017, pp. 174–240; and **M. Šedivý**, *The Decline of the Congress System: Metternich, Italy and European Diplomacy*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2018, pp. 107–123.

[376] **E. R. Terzuolo**, *The Garibaldini in the Balkans, 1875–1876*, in The International History Review, 1982, Vol.: 4, No.: 1, pp. 111–126.

[377] **F. Caccamo**, *The Ottoman Empire and the Eastern Question*, in *The Lybian War (1911–1912)*, ed. by L. Micheletta and A. Ungari, New Castle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013, pp. 175–191.

interests, all influenced its viewpoint. Consider how representatives of the *Tanzimat* or the Ottoman "restructuring" in Istanbul, for long of the nineteenth century, did not seek to counter European modernizing trends, which included Risorgimento. Rather, the goal was to replicate or adapt them to Ottoman reality under the guise of moderate reformism or enlightened conservatism, especially with regard to new entrepreneurship logics in favor of development and economic growth.[378] Within this perspective, there was no desire to thwart the process of Italian unification; at most, prudence was used to prevent its most destructive expressions. Another factor influencing the Roman Question was the confluence of reformist inclinations within the *Tanzimat* movement with a secular attitude and a profound anti-clericalism, which occasionally aligned with Masonic affinities.[379] These considerations were seen in characters such as Ali Pasha and Fuad Pasha, as well as other high-ranking officials who rotated between the positions of Grand Vizier and Foreign Minister in the 1850s and 1860s. The same might be said of Rüstem Bey, a Levantine of Italian heritage who served as the Empire's primary envoy on the Italian Peninsula for over fifteen years, first as chargé d'affaires in the Kingdom of Sardinia and subsequently as plenipotentiary minister to Italy.[380]

The intricacy and, in many respects, conflicting character of Ottoman judgments of the peninsula became apparent during the critical period of 1859–1860. The acceleration of Risorgimento events, including the commencement of the Second War of Independence, the conducting of plebiscites, and the fulfillment of the Expedition of the Thousand, plainly surprised and heightened anxieties.[381] Not only was its policy of cautious neutrality dramatically disrupted, but there was also a sense of irritation over the commencement of hostilities and the possibility of them spreading to other regions of Europe, particularly the Balkans.[382] From the same perspective, following the Kingdom of Italy's proclamation in March 1861, the *Sublime Porte* took a long time to recognize it.[383] Since the geopolitical platform served the Kingdom to the purposes

[378] **D. Quataert**, *Manufacturing and Technology Transfer in the Ottoman Empire, 1800–1914*, Piscataway, New Jersey, US: Gorgias Press, 2010, p. 56.
[379] **Y. Köksal**, *The Ottoman Empire in the Tanzimat Era: Provincial Perspectives from Ankara to Edirne*, London: Routledge, 2019, p. 42.
[380] *Ivi*, pp. 176–180. Among the various contributions on the topic of the *Tanzimat* and the Ottoman restructuring movement, it is suggested **R. H. Davison**, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856–1876*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016.
[381] **U. Özesmer**, *Ottoman View on the Unification of Italy, 1796-1861*, in Journal of History and Future, 2022, Vol.: 8, No.: 4, pp. 1222–1250.
[382] **DDO**, Vol.: I, Docc.: 74, 98–102, 107, 141.
[383] **DDO**, Vol.: II, Docc.: 409, 414, 415, and 419.

of unification and national political priorities, such pan-Italian feelings might have endangered even more the "sick man".[384]

As a consequence, and under these conditions, Ottoman diplomats formed a very negative opinion of the Papal State, criticizing its archaic character, lack of public support, and incapacity to respond to outbursts of dissatisfaction without outside aid, as well as Pius IX's refusal to implement changes that would break the link between temporal and spiritual authority, as well as foreign military help. Consider, for example, the strong terms used by an Ottoman official in Brussels to stigmatize "the regime no less tenacious than habitual of priests and cardinals".[385] Or the harsh assessment delivered by the Ottoman chargé d'affaires in Paris: "But how can one believe him, when one sees that instead of surrendering to the necessities of the times and circumstances, instead of heeding the good advice that has been repeatedly provided to him, he obstinately resists any reform?".[386] Meanwhile, Rüstem Bey, on a visit to the Romagna to monitor the situation following the plebiscites, reported that "the movement was entirely spontaneous and unanimous" and had engaged all social groups, including some clerics. "Under a government as deplorable as the Pontifical one", so he went, "the people highly value the state of liberty and tranquility with which they have been endowed by the Sardinian constitutional regime".[387] Ultimately, Rüstem was confident that Italy's arguments on the Roman Question were destined to triumph. He wrote with a hint of resignation, "the Italians will continue to move forward, and, one day, Europe will have no choice but to sanction a fait accompli".[388]

An instance involving Cavour confirmed the complexity of the Ottoman Empire's feelings. In his famous March 1861 address, the Piedmontese politician proclaimed to the newborn Parliament in Turin the attainment of Rome as the capital through the slogan of "a free Church in a free State" formula. This speech also had a paragraph in which the Ottoman backwardness was used to demonstrate the anachronism of the combination of temporal and spiritual authority. His exact words were the following: "Wherever this union took place, civilization always ceased to progress and even regressed; the vilest despotism took hold: and this, gentlemen, whether it was a priestly caste usurping temporal power, or a caliph or a sultan

[384] **D. M. Smith**, *Victor Emanuel, Cavour, and the Risorgimento*, London: Oxford University Press, 1971, p. 3; **N. Rodolico**, *Carlo Alberto negli anni di regno 1843–1849*, Firenze: Le Monnier, 1943, p. 48; and **C. Vidal**, *Charles-Albert et le Risorgimento Italien (1831–1848)*, Paris: E. de Boccard, 1927, pp. 135–136.
[385] **DDO**, Vol.: I, Doc.: 46.
[386] **DDO**, Vol.: I, Doc.: 271.
[387] **DDO**, Vol.: I, Doc.: 332.
[388] **DDO**, Vol.: I, Doc.: 269.

gathering in his hands the spiritual power".[389] Such remarks were plainly inappropriate to the Ottomans. Rüstem Bey agreed with Cavour's secular and liberal approach to settle the Roman affair. However, he wanted to emphasize that the Ottoman Empire's problems were not caused by the way relations between the political and religious spheres were handled internally, but rather by the constraints imposed by the capitulation regime, particularly foreign intrigues and interference.[390] Ali Pasha, then Ottoman Foreign Minister and one of the *Tanzimat* period's prominent characters, interfered in the situation. According to his words, "the distinguished Italian statesman [read: Cavour] is mistaken to believe that we are confused about the distinction of temporal and spiritual authority. Those who judge Turkey without prejudices can attest the development accomplished over the previous two decades. If left alone, she [read: the Empire] will not fail to accomplish the great mission her regeneration".[391]

Cavour's speech in March 1861, as well as the Ottoman reaction to it, plainly demonstrated the presence of profound variations in sensitivities and interests, even if these distinctions were rather minor from a purely pragmatic standpoint. However, for the *Sublime Porte*, the most significant developments in the coming months were left maneuvering and the appearance of preparations for a Garibaldian expedition. Rumors circulated at the time stated that what was plainly termed "the revolutionary" or "exalted" party intended to circumvent international opposition to union with Rome, notably France's opposition, by launching a coup-style operation against the Holy City. Several evidence suggested however that such an operation, consisting of a landing on the Ottoman shores of the Adriatic or Ionian Seas to incite uprisings among Balkan people, was being planned as a secondary tactic, maybe as a distraction. Even the administration commanded by Urbano Rattazzi looked to be involved, maybe with the goal of diverting Garibaldi's Redshirts away from Rome and into Southeastern Europe in the event of diplomatic issues. The Ottoman authorities' worry became obvious in the summer of 1862, when volunteers arrived in Sicily and Garibaldi landed on the island.[392] Rüstem Bey condemned the risk of adventurers arriving on Ottoman coastlines and attacked the Rattazzi government's political stance as "so little frank, so little loyal".[393] The Ottoman Consul Blacque Bey warned in Naples that Rome was only a pretense. He so went: "The revolution made Italy, and Italy must

[389] **C. B. Cavour**, *Discorsi Parlamentari*, ed. by A. Saitta, Vol.: XV, Firenze: La nuova Italia, 1973, p. 479 et seq.
[390] **DDO**, Vol.: II, Docc.: 403 and 405.
[391] **DDO**, Vol.: II, Doc.: 406.
[392] **DDI**, Vol.: II, Series: I, Docc.: 36 and 43, pp. 57 and 71–72.
[393] **DDO**, Vol.: II, Doc.: 453.

live or die with it".[394] Ali Pasha, for his part, mourned sadly: "Our situation is becoming very critical in light of all this infernal madness".[395] In these conditions, the sending of Italian soldiers to the South and the defeat of Garibaldi's forces at Aspromonte at the end of August were clearly welcomed. Similar feelings were voiced at the end of the year when Rattazzi resigned, as allegations of his involvement in Garibaldian ambitions circulated.[396]

The negative experiences of the early 1860s convinced the *Sublime Porte* that the Roman Question should be resolved in a gradual and non-traumatic manner – a course capable of involving, in addition to Italy, the major interested powers and possibly even the Holy See itself, thus preserving the European balance, avoiding violent clashes, and, above all, preventing counterreactions within the Sultan's own dominions. From that point on, Ottoman diplomacy began to sympathize with, or at least comprehend, the measures pushed by moderate parts of the Italian ruling class, beginning with the agreement signed with France in September 1864.[397] However, misgivings about the left persisted, as indicated by prohibitions on organizing another Garibaldian expedition against the Papal State and delight with the Redshirts' loss at Mentana in November 1867.[398]

With the commencement of the Franco-Prussian War in the summer of 1870, Ottoman diplomacy recognized that the Roman Question was coming to an end. At the end of August, Rüstem Bey claimed that the Italian political forces had achieved an agreement on the importance of profiting from the chance to seize Rome, notwithstanding the moderates' preference for peaceful and democratic tactics, whether through an uprising or an armed intervention.[399] During a meeting, Foreign Minister Emilio Visconti Venosta stated that "the Roman Question cannot be eliminated, as it is an issue on which all political parties agree and on which the tranquility of Italy and the stability of the current state of affairs depend". For the time being, Visconti Venosta believed that a military solution was undesirable and instead hoped for an accord with the Pope, "to whom Italy would be ready to guarantee the fullest independence in spiritual matters and offer him a position he could not find elsewhere". Although such an option sounded improbable, the Foreign Minister did

[394] **DDO**, Vol.: II, Doc.: 480.
[395] **DDO**, Vol.: II, Doc.: 462
[396] **DDO**, Vol.: II, Doc.: 492.
[397] **DDO**, Vol.: II, Docc.: 546 and 548.
[398] **DDO**, Vol.: II, Docc.: 661–662, and 675.
[399] **DDO**, Vol.: II, Docc.: 701–702.

not deny the existence of an alternative, which would eventually arise from political concerns within Rome and would need Italy to act in defense of the threatened pope.[400]

Meanwhile, the situation in the Papal States was becoming increasingly dire. According to Rüstem Bey, the underlying problems were worsened by the divides caused by the First Vatican Council and the issues surrounding the imposition of the papal infallibility dogma. "The spectacle offered by the council and the proclamation of the dogma of infallibility", he wrote, made the Catholic world much less inclined than in the past to mobilize in defense of the Roman Question. On the contrary, if the spiritual power were guaranteed to the Pope by the Italian side, the Catholic world would resign itself to "the occupation of the Papal States without excessive concern".[401]

The Battle of Sedan, Napoleon III's arrest, and the establishment of the Republic in France deprived Pius IX of his greatest defender, removing the last remaining hurdles. Rüstem Bey reported in early September that the Italian rulers had chosen to continue occupying the Papal States and had dispatched troops to its frontiers.[402] Visconti Venosta, as Foreign Minister, indicated that recent developments had prompted him to reconsider his previous objectives and approve a military intervention. His rationale was this: "The proclamation of the Republic in France compels the [Italian, ndr] Government to act preemptively" and this is to prevent the radical left from taking the initiative. To avert turmoil and anarchy, the Roman Question had to be resolved immediately.[403]

In truth, Rüstem Bey's knowledge of Italy – or, more specifically, of Visconti Venosta's policy – was not widely shared within Ottoman diplomacy. Aristarchi Bey, a colleague in Berlin, criticized the cabinet in Florence for choosing a bold initiative over the threat posed by the Partito d'Azione, citing the Sedan disaster as a motivator. Aristarchi was skeptical of the Papal State's case, stating that the Holy Father was unlikely to reach an agreement with Florence. If he continues to oppose seizing the Vatican, he thought, His Holiness would be compelled to succumb with calm resignation to the impending events, notwithstanding the likely opposition of the pontifical army. The Ottoman Empire's minister in Berlin expressed concern about the impact of Italian unification on the European *status quo*, resulting in a sense of powerlessness. Further complaining: "And to the sound of cannon fire, a council solemnly proclaimed the dogma of infallibility, in defiance of all common sense; this

[400] **DDO**, Vol.: II, Doc.: 703.
[401] **DDO**, Vol.: II, Doc.: 702.
[402] **DDO**, Vol.: II, Doc.: 704.
[403] **DDO**, Vol.: II, Doc.: 705.

is a blatant violation of the September Convention that Italy will occupy Rome. One may almost be excused in believing that intelligence, good judgment, and religion are no longer sufficient to moderate the excesses of power".[404]

Unfortunately, when it comes to the key moment of Italian soldiers invading Rome, Ottoman testimony is exceedingly rare. On the eve of the Porta Pia breach, Rüstem Bey resigned from his position as plenipotentiary minister, which he had held for over fifteen years between Turin and later in Florence, to the Tsar's court. Chukri Effendi, the chargé d'affaires, temporarily took up his duties as he waited for his successor to arrive. These factors undoubtedly influenced the quality and amount of information given by the Ottoman legation in Florence. On September 20th, Chukri Effendi wrote: "Rome has been taken by assault. The news was welcomed with great delight and thanks. Florence has been lighted".[405]

The former chargé d'affaires in Athens, Photiades Bey, a well-known Greek family representative, was selected to replace Rüstem Bey. As a result, he did not see the latter phases of the Roman Question, or at least the settlement of the situation caused by the arrival of Italian forces in the *Città Aeterna*. Visconti Venosta provided the typical quantity of information throughout his audience's credentials presentation. The Italian government was fully conscious of the necessity to resolve the Pope's status following the cessation of temporal authority, and it pledged to ensuring him full and complete spiritual independence, as well as geographical immunity. Despite these promises, it was clear that Pius IX would have declined to reach any deal, since "the Government of the King would have imposed the concessions on the Holy See and seen them ratified by law". Given this foundation, Visconti Venosta had a clear view of the next stages. According to his estimates, Parliament would have accepted the transfer of the capital from Florence to Rome by the end of the year, after which the city's new position could be reinforced with the arrival of Vittorio Emanuele II.[406]

As Photiades Bey recounted in the months that followed, implementing Visconti Venosta's scheme proved more arduous and delayed. The capital transfer legislation was adopted by Parliament in February 1871, and the guaranteed statute was ratified in May; nevertheless, Vittorio Emanuele II did not officially enter Rome until the beginning of July. Photiades opted to travel to Rome during the king's visit, along with the opinion of the vast majority of the diplomatic corps, particularly the British envoy. His original goal was to request a meeting with Vittorio Emanuele to officially transmit

[404] **DDO**, Vol.: II, Doc.: 709.
[405] **DDO**, Vol.: II, Doc.: 712.
[406] **DDO**, Vol.: II, Docc.: 715–719.

Ottoman greetings on the capital's opening. However, even Ali Pasha, the Grand Vizier and Foreign Minister at the time, thought the proposed remedy was excessive. According to the advice of this prominent *Tanzimat* figure, it was best to proceed "sans trop de bruit" (without making too much noise). Photiades had little option but to comply, presenting his congratulations at a banquet held by Vittorio Emanuele in front of the diplomatic corps.[407]

This final episode seemed to imply that the uncertainty caused by Italian unification in the *Sublime Porte* had subsided, but not completely. Photiades' visit confirmed general approval of the Roman Question settlement and demonstrated broad support for the transfer of the Italian capital: "I am not exaggerating in the slightest when I say that the enthusiasm shown by the population of Rome during the inauguration of the capital has exceeded all expectations".[408] Pius IX's "jeremiads" concerning the new order of affairs proved unfounded: "The Pope, far from being a prisoner, enjoys unlimited freedom", so he uttered.[409]

[407] **DDO**, Vol.: II, Docc.: 726–729.
[408] **DDO**, Vol.: II, Doc.: 730.
[409] *Ivi*. In order to deepen the grown attention shown by the Holy See with respect to the Ottoman Empire after the end of the Vatican's temporal power, it suggested to see **G. Del Zanna**, *Roma e l'Oriente. Leone XIII e l'Impero Ottomano (1878–1903)*, Milano: Guerini e Associati, 2005.

# Chapter 6. In the Limbo between and Idealized Past and an Imperfect Present: Rethinking Italian Successes, Failures, and Policies

This subchapter aims at confronting the Italian history of Risorgimento in its most fundamental aspect, namely the *questione Romana*, with observations, considerations, and reflections on contemporary Italian foreign policy and political-diplomatic standing. In fact, this brief interpretational work is based on two hypotheses: (i) that the Risorgimento can be considered to have terminated with the conquest of the pontifical territories, particularly of Rome, and (ii) that the roots of the present are in the past: that the political roots of contemporary Italy's modern political order, despite the unambiguous and diametrically opposite political-institutional change, is based on the cultural and political bedrocks developed during the Risorgimento. Indeed, the reasons beyond dubbing Italy as a "never-satisfied Republic" or a still-disunited State[410] must be found at the beginning, during, and at the end, if can be identified an endpoint, of the cultural and political project behind the Unification: the Risorgimento. As such, the *Breccia*, identified as the culmination of a process of national "resurgence", is directly linked to the Risorgimento, and, in turn, considerations on the impact of the Risorgimento on the Italian foreign policy are directly linked to its endpoint, namely the *Breccia* itself. Re-considering the impact of the Risorgimento on the subsequent Italian foreign policy means, in other words, measuring the impact of the *questione Romana*. Has the ultimate goal of the Risorgimento, that is, unification, been achieved? If it has to be found a period of termination, when and with which consequences? What have been and currently are the implications of a never-ended Risorgimento for Italy's international posture? Is Risorgimento a nationalist movement, a unificatory attempt, or a "rivoluzione mancata"? These are just some of the questions this section wants to, if possibly and successfully, find an answer. As such, this part aims to provide insights into the many interpretations of the Risorgimento and Italian unification. The approach is conceptual, rather than narrative

[410] **N. Machiavelli**, *The Prince and The Discourses*, translated by L. Ricci and Christian Detmold, New York: Modern Library, 1950, pp. 151–52.

The Risorgimento has been central to both Italian history and politics. The Risorgimento, like the French Revolution or German unification, is seen as a watershed point in Italian history, marking the country's transition to a "nation" and into the modern world. During the Risorgimento, the modern Italian state gained its founding fathers (Cavour, Mazzini, Garibaldi) and political principles (liberalism, nationalism, republicanism). The Risorgimento is an important concept in Italian historiography. It involves various historical transformations, including the fall of the *ancien régime*, the rise of modern urban life, the transition from feudalism to capitalism, and the replacement of regional identities with a single national culture. These events have shaped modern understanding of historical change. These "modernizing" processes are used to explain, analyze, and evaluate the political, social, economic, and cultural experiences of Italians from 1815 to 1945 (and maybe, if not surely, beyond).

The Risorgimento is a highly debated period in modern Italian history due to its significant impact on politics and historiography. Historians of the Risorgimento have debated the factors driving change and modernization, similar to how politicians have debated the political legacy of the movement since 1861. These discussions revolve upon rhetorical tactics used by Risorgimento liberals to criticize Restoration Italy's regimes. The term "Risorgimento", which translates to "resurgence", alludes to both an idealized past and an imperfect present. The Risorgimento, to the opinion of the author, corresponds to the highest manifestation of an "invented tradition"[411] able of having brought entire populaces to unify. However, as Hobsbawm and Ranger highlight, these "responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old situations"[412] must be intellectually cultivated and fully legitimized by the act of fulfilling the objective underlying the invention of this new tradition, namely the Risorgimento. Mazzinian democrats successfully presented heroic alternatives to the everyday reality of Restoration Italy. They portrayed Italians as victims of home and foreign subjugation who might be emancipated and empowered by a revolutionary war of "national revival". After 1860, these pictures created a widespread sense of failure in Italy, leading to a severe political confrontation. After 1860, many political debates reflected nostalgia for the perceived triumphs of the Risorgimento.[413] Historical analysis focused on Italy's failure to "resurge" and the unique aspects of its historical growth.

[411] **E. Hobsbawm** and **T. Ranger**, *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
[412] *Ivi*, p. 2.
[413] See **R. Drake**, *Byzantium for Rome: The Politics of Nostalgia in Umbertian Italy*, Chapel Hill, US: The University of North Carolina Press, 1981.

The interpretations surrounding Risorgimento's history have been influenced by fascism and world wars, resulting in polarization among historians. Two accounts of Italian unification emerged in response to the collapse of liberal Italy: one by idealist philosopher Benedetto Croce in 1928 and another by imprisoned Marxist activist Antonio Gramsci in 1949.[414] Both conflicting historical analyses focus on Liberal Italy's perceived failure to meet the Risorgimento's goals. The intent of the writer is to replicate this attentive intellectual investigation into the contemporary roots of Italian foreign policy, or, put it differently, to investigate how an internal missed unity might have impacted Italy's diplomacy.

According to Federico Chabod, Croce wrote his history of Italy to preserve Italian liberalism's successes.[415] Croce described the leaders of the Historic Right (or *Destra Storica*), who paved the way for Italian unification in 1860, as heroic and selfless individuals who embodied a spiritual nobility of upright and devoted gentlemen.[416] Croce ascribed Liberal Italy's inadequacies to decisions taken by the successors of *Destra Storica*, as well as the immense issues encountered by all Italian leaders. Despite political, financial, and diplomatic problems, Italy's leaders remained committed to the liberal parliamentary system until the First World War. Croce argued that only the war ruined the political structure and enabled the advent of fascism. He rejected a relationship between Italian liberalism and fascism. Fascism was a historical "parenthesis" caused by the conflict. Fascism's devotion to a one-party state, Croce so considered, was considered the "antithesis" of liberalism.

Despite being influenced by Croce's idealist philosophy, Gramsci strongly criticized his political and historical interpretations. Gramsci identified similarities between fascism and liberalism, linking them to class struggles during the Risorgimento. He portrayed the Risorgimento as a "passive revolution" in which conservative ("moderate") liberals outmaneuvered revolutionary liberals (republican democrats) and reached a deal with the existing "feudal" system.[417] However, this compromise resulted in a persistent rupture between the Italian state and civil society, leading to political instability and social unrest. Gramsci maintained that fascism was a direct result of this scenario. The feeble Bourgeoisie attempted to reshape a

[414] **B. Croce**, *A History of Italy, 1871-1915*, translated by Cecilia M. Ady, New York: Oxford University Press & Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929; and **A. Gramsci**, *Il risorgimento*, Turin: Einaudi, 1949. *Selections from Antonio Gramsci's Prison Notebooks*, edited and translated by **Q. Hoare** and **G. Nowell Smith**, London, New York: International Publishers, 1971, includes excerpts from his Risorgimento works.

[415] **F. Chabod**, *Croce storico*, in Rivista Storica Italiana, 1952, Vol.: 64, pp. 473–530.

[416] **B. Croce**, *History of Italy*, 1929, p. 5.

[417] **A. Gramsci**, *Selections from Prison Notebooks*, 1971, pp. 118.

disintegrating political order, combat class discontent, and defeat the socialist revolution.

Gramsci's interaction with Croce established historical oppositions that shaped Risorgimento historiography after 1945. The oppositions stemmed from a political debate between idealism and historical materialism. The Crocean (liberal) view of political concord was challenged by the Gramscian (Marxist) perspective of class antagonism. Gramsci argued that Croce's chronology (1871-1915) skewed the picture of nineteenth-century Italy by excluding conflicting events and portraying it as tranquil and progressive.[418] One perspective analyzed national growth, while another analyzed structural backwardness. One narrative emphasized heroic action, while another focused on internal conflicts and political persecution.

The political framework of post-war, cold-war Italy sparked significant historical discussion and scholarship on these oppositions. Political histories of the Risorgimento clearly demonstrate the dynamics of this dispute. The Marxist approach focuses on finding evidence for a democratic alternative to moderate liberals' "passive revolution". Marxist historians highlight the possibility for revolutionary transformation during the Risorgimento and the distinctions between moderates and democrats. Franco della Peruta criticizes both moderate and democratic leaderships, focusing on the democrats' failure to develop a foundation for mass movement among peasants.[419]

Liberal historians highlight considerable hurdles to political and economic growth in Risorgimento Italy. Those authors argue that despite Italy's dependency on foreign powers, internal fragmentation, conservative regimes, and economic backwardness, the liberal achievement was spectacular. According to Rosario Romeo, Cavour's "audacious" change without revolution was unique in Europe.[420] The moderate liberals' economic dynamism and intellectual vigour contrasts with the insurrectionary and utopian ideals of Mazzinian democratic leaders.

The economic and social dimensions of the Risorgimento are debated based on comparable oppositions. In the 1950s, Gino Luzzato challenged the Marxist association of the Risorgimento with the bourgeoisie. He argued that the absence of industrial development prior to 1860 hindered the growth of this class.[421] Romeo concurred that

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[418] *Ivi*, pp. 118–19.

[419] **F. della Peruta**, *I democratici e la rivoluzione italiana*, Milan: Feltrinelli, 1958, and *Mazzini e i rivoluzionari italiani*, Milan: Feltrinelli, 1974. For further information on these topics, see **P. Ginsborg**, *Gramsci and the era of bourgeois revolution in Italy*, in J. A. Davis (ed.), *Gramsci and Italy's Passive Revolution*, London: Barnes & Noble, 1979.

[420] **R. Romeo**, *Dal Piemonte sabaudo al Italia liberale*, Turin: Einaudi 1963, p. 128.

[421] **G. Luzzato**, *La vigilia e l'indomani dell'unità italiana*, in AA. VV, *Orientamenti per la storia d'Italia nel risorgimento*, Bari: Amici della cultura, 1952.

discussing an agrarian revolution in Southern Italy led by the bourgeoisie during the Risorgimento was unrealistic. He suggested that Marxists were more concerned with the possibility of revolution in their own time. If such a revolution had occurred during the Risorgimento, it would have slowed the commercialization of agriculture and industrialization in Northern Italy.[422]

What is certain is that both Marxist and liberal historians pointed out the effectiveness of the Risorgimento and national unity, creating a dialectical relationship between them. Luzzato's restricted definition of the bourgeoisie and description of "industrialization" as the fast rise and concentration of mechanized manufacturing industries aligns with Marxist economic categorizations. Romeo's argument that a peasant revolution would harm Italian industry aligns with the Marxist view of the Risorgimento as a teleological process that leads to industrialization or "backwardness" in the South.

Both Marxist and liberal perspectives on the Risorgimento emphasize the necessity to contextualize the moderate liberal success in 1860 with the later failures of liberal Italy. Both perspectives presume and explain contemporary Italy's "deviation" from bourgeois-democratic norms in Europe. The national/liberal framework prioritizes some political and social realities above others. Most Italian historians dismissed the Restoration regimes from 1815 to 1860 as insignificant due to their reactionary nature.[423] Few historians have examined the practices of Papal rulers, Austrian administrators, and Bourbon kings in depth. Social class relations were viewed as a conflict between "progressive" and "reactionary" forces, with the progressive representing a liberal worldview or urban, commercial bourgeoisie. Contemporary Italy's "deviation" may be traced back to the persistence of feudal "remnants" in the contemporary world, as well as a failure to overcome political and social struggle in favour of progress and modernization.

British and American historians' contributions to Risorgimento history since 1945 have been less contentious than their Italian counterparts but nonetheless reflect the conceptual distinction between progress and reaction. They often reflect shifting Anglo-Saxon sentiments towards Italy. Denis Mack Smith, a well-known British Italianist, sparked controversy in Italy in the 1950s by criticizing key Risorgimento

[422] **R. Romeo**, *Risorgimento e capitalismo*, Bari: Laterza, 1959.

[423] The negative connotations of the term "reactionary" and its contrast with the term "progressive" are discussed in **A. O. Hischmann**, *The Rhetoric of Reaction. Perversity, Futility, Jeopardy*, Cambridge, US: Belknap Press: An Imprint of Harvard University Press, 1991, pp. 8–10.

individuals and dismissing Liberal Italy's successes.[424] Mack Smith's first book, a reconstruction of the events of 1860 (for him "the *annus mirabilis* of the Risorgimento"),[425] presented Cavour as a crafty and inconsistent politician, and unification as a succession of blunders and expediencies. According to Mack Smith's account, only Garibaldi, a realistic yet dedicated popular leader, was able to maintain his honour. Despite not being influenced by Gramsci, Mack Smith identified with the Risorgimento movement as a failure.[426]

The majority of British and American historians supported this perspective on the Risorgimento. The collection of articles "Italy from Risorgimento to Fascism" published in 1970 demonstrates a propensity to analyse Italian unity through the lens of subsequent events. Although not explicitly stated in "An Inquiry into the Origins of the Totalitarian State", it is present in other works on the subject.[427] This view stems from frustration with Italian administrations' inability to represent Risorgimento principles and fulfil people's hopes. Mack Smith and others' attempts to clarify Risorgimento history must be viewed in light of the evolving state of Italian liberalism. British support for Italian unity, as exemplified by George Macaulay Trevelyan's "Garibaldi" trilogy, began to wane during World War I.[428] By 1945, the impact of fascism and World War II on Italy's international image led to disillusionment and disdain.

The Risorgimento was interpreted through historical criteria that identified economic "backwardness", a "distorted" social transformation, and political corruption/timidity as grounds of liberal failure. During the 1980s, however, these criteria began to shift. According to Paolo Macry, many of the protagonists in post-war debates retired in the 1980s, contributing to a generational shift.[429] Younger historians, born after 1945, began to challenge Risorgimento historiography's fundamental assumptions. In recent years, it appears that the nineteenth-century belief in economic growth and individual liberty is no longer relevant to contemporary political issues.

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[424] Refer especially to **D. M. Smith**, *Cavour and Garibaldi, 1860: A Study in Political Conflict*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2nd edn, 1985; and *Italy. A Modern History*, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1959

[425] **D. M. Smith**, *Cavour and Garibaldi*, 1985, p. 1.

[426] In the foreword to the 1985 version of *Cavour and Garibaldi*, Mack Smith discusses how his book was received in Italy.

[427] **A.W. Salomone** (ed.), *Italy from the Risorgimento to Fascism. An Inquiry into the Origins of the Totalitarian State*, New York: David & Charles, 1970. Have also a look at **H. Stuart Hughes**, *The aftermath of the Risorgimento in four successive interpretations*, in The American Historical Review, 1955, Vol.: 61, No.: 1, pp. 70–76.

[428] **G. M. Trevelyan**, *Garibaldi's Defence of the Roman Republic*, New York: Cosimo Inc, 2008; *Garibaldi and the Thousand: May 1860*, London: Cassell, 1989; and *Garibaldi and the Making of Italy: June - November, 1860*, Quezon City: Phoenix, 2002.

[429] **P. Macry**, *Ottocento. Famiglia, elites e patrimoni a Napoli*, Turin: Einaudi, 1988, p. x.

According to Paolo Macry, the intimate linkages of empathy and recollection that connected prior generations to the "century of their fathers" have vanished.[430]

"Revisionist" historians have criticized the teleology of both Marxist and liberal views to the Risorgimento. The Marxist notion of "dual" revolution (political and economic) and the idealist concept of progress both include the idea of modernization, although it is today viewed with mistrust. The Risorgimento's diminishing "hegemony" over Italian politics and intellectual life is reflected in the growing use of other historical models and approaches.[431] Franco Rizzi, a historian, has criticized the Risorgimento for monopolizing the nineteenth century and hindering other areas of study.[432]

These developments have shifted the attention to other eras of Italy's modernization, particularly rapid industrialization in the late 19th century. History of nineteenth-century Italy currently emphasizes social, familial, and gender history, as well as cultural development, rather than Risorgimento politics. The impact of other disciplines, particularly (social, political) anthropology, is evident.[433] In contrast to the liberal/Marxist argument on Italy's road to modernity, "revisionist" history takes a comparative approach, emphasizing areas and localities above nations. In Italy, historical scholarship has shifted from focusing solely on the nation-state to recognizing the significance of the Risorgimento. National unification is viewed as a partial solution to specific difficulties, rather than a complete break with the feudal past, notwithstanding its flaws in practice.

The shift in direction has called into doubt the causal relationships central to nineteenth-century history. Innovative local studies have linked family structure to economic development and political participation. Alberto Banti's research of the agricultural middle class in the Po Valley suggests that the medieval reliance on land ownership and family structure conceals the dynamic movement of a rational, self-interested bourgeoisie.[434] This work has broad ramifications. Overall, they challenge the idea that the bourgeoisie is synonymous with urbanization, industrialization, and liberal politics. These findings support evaluations of Italy's economic development that highlight the country's capacity for growth and adaptability. The conventional

[430] *Ivi*, p. ix.

[431] **M. Meriggi**, *Fiscalità e cultura materiale nel Lombardo-Veneto*, in Quaderni Storici, 1990, Vol.: 74, No.: 2, p. 473–486.

[432] **F. Rizzi**, *La coccarda e le campane: comunità rurali e Repubblica Romana nel Lazio, 1848–1849*, Milan: F. Angeli, 1989, p. 230.

[433] **R. Forlenza** and **B. Thomassen**, *Resurrections and rebirths: how the Risorgimento shaped modern Italian politics*, in Journal of Modern Italian Studies, 2017, Vol.: 22, No.: 3, pp. 291–313.

[434] **A. M. Banti**, *Terra e denaro. Una borghesia padana dell'Ottocento*, Venice: Marsilio, 1989.

interpretations of Italy's "Southern Question" have been questioned. Some historians, including Piero Bevilacqua, are challenging long-held beliefs about the South's economic stagnation, political corruption, and lack of progress. The author argues that these pictures, which convey a sense of "otherness", make unjustified comparisons with Northern Italy and Europe in general.[435]

Revisionist historiography in nineteenth-century Italy challenges traditional periodization, techniques, and interpretations. Revisionist history opposes concepts like "class" and "nation". As such, it can contribute to analogous historical disputes in France, Germany, and the Anglo-Saxon globe. Marxist studies of German liberalism have been criticized for using artificially built models of political and economic growth based on English and French experiences.[436] Recent study suggests that Italy's and Germany's perceived "success" in politics and economics may not hold up under closer examination or alternative perspectives.[437]

The reconstruction of French revolutionary and British liberal history suggests there is no one road to liberal bourgeois democracy. Arno Mayer argues that historians' focus on revolutionary upheavals in the nineteenth century has obscured their understanding of underlying continuities and how the *ancien régime* persisted into the twentieth century. Pre-industrial elites' ability to successfully adjust to capitalism appears to be a common trait of European cultures throughout this time period.[438] Historians may have created Italy's "deviation" based on deterministic conceptions of political and economic growth, as well as experiences with fascism and war.

What are the implications for historians of Risorgimento politics when these long-established categories break down? Consider focusing on the governments of Restoration Italy. In response to nationalist history, there has been a shift towards emphasizing the good parts of Restoration governance and highlighting local variations. The Austrian administration of Lombardy and Venetia, an emblem of reactionary and harsh misgovernment throughout the Risorgimento, benefited most from this historical tendency. New research, coordinated by Marco Meriggi, highlights the center's responsiveness to local requests and the government's involvement in

[435] **P. Bevilacqua**, *Breve storia dell'Italia meridionale. Dall'Ottocento a oggi*, Rome: Donzelli, 1993, p. viii.

[436] **D. Blackbourn** and **G. Eley**, *The Peculiarities of German History*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, U.S.A., 1984.

[437] **G. Eley**, *Liberalism, Europe and the bourgeoisie 1860–1914*, in D. Blackbourn and R. J. Evans (eds), *The German Bourgeoisie*, London: Routledge, 1991. For a transposition of his views to Italy, see **L. Riall**, *Elite resistance to state formation: the case of Italy*, in M. Fulbrook (ed.), *National Histories and European History*, London: UCL Press, 1993.

[438] **A. J. Mayer**, *The Persistence of the Old Regime. Europe to the Great War*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1981.

facilitating rapid economic growth in the region.[439] According to Narcisso Nada, King Carlo Alberto of Piedmont (1831-1849) played a key role in implementing political and economic reforms, leading to the liberal transformation in the 1850s.[440]

This research attempted to situate the Risorgimento periodization, and in particular the *questione Romana*, and Italy's unification within a larger European framework. Italian unification is viewed as the product of many, sometimes contradictory processes, rather than a national liberal "resurgence" or the birth of a new class. These processes include the establishment of modern governments, the development of a national culture centred on language and literacy, and the rise of a capitalist economy.[441] These traditions have grown throughout time in Italy and give continuity between the eighteenth century, the Risorgimento, and later periods. State creation is driven by internal political and bureaucratic elites, rather than changes in social and economic structures. This view of state development as a self-contained process, influenced by Weber rather than Marx, calls into question the previously held link between industrial capitalism and parliamentary democracy.

In contrast to Germany, the literature on state formation in Italy lacks a thorough critique of Marxist historiography.[442] According to John Davis, the lack of a criticism has resulted in misunderstanding between Weberian and Marxist/idealist concepts.[443] Furthermore, this new approach to state formation prioritizes specific state-society ties, particularly those between central government and local leaders. Despite a focus on the rural and urban poor, the importance of class conflict is diminished, and popular activity in Italian unification is overshadowed by elites. The Church's position on state creation and Italian nationalism is mostly neglected.

The absence of the Church in revisionist stories is rather telling. The Church's resistance to nationalism and unity during the Risorgimento contributed to the movement's flaws. Revisionists, who disregard the Church, are part of a secular heritage in Italian culture that extends back to the Risorgimento. Probably back to the inevitable rupture between certain intellectual laic *milieux* and the Church, cultivated during the 1861–1870 period influenced by the *questione Romana*. They are associated

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[439] **M. Meriggi**, *Amministrazione e classi sociali nel Lombardo-Veneto 1814–1848*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1983; and *Il regno Lombardo-Veneto*, Turin: UTET, 1987.

[440] **N. Nada**, *Dallo stato assoluto allo stato costituzionale. Storia del regno di Carlo Alberto dal 1831 al 1848*, Turin: Istituto per la storia del Risorgimento italiano, 1980.

[441] For a fruitful consideration of this analytical perspective, regarding Germany, see **J. Breuilly**, *The national idea in modern German history*, in J. Breuilly (ed.), *The State of Germany. The National Idea in the Making, Unmaking and Remaking of a Modern Nation-State*, London: LONGMAN, 1992.

[442] See, however, **P. Ginsborg**, *Gramsci and the era of bourgeois revolution*, 1979

[443] **J. Davis**, *Remapping Italy's path to the twentieth century*, in The Journal of Modern History, 1994, Vol.: 64, No.: 2, pp. 291–320.

with both liberal and Marxist historians. Revisionist historiography is heavily influenced by Marxist historians, as seen by its emphasis on structural explanation. The revisionist approach to state, economics, and culture neglects the significance of ideology in national unification. The literature on Risorgimento politics has remained mostly unchanged from a decade before, with little focus on political debate or conflict.

Some revisionist work supports previous liberal assessments of Risorgimento politics, which may surprise some. Raffaele Romanelli, for example, emphasizes the liberal objective of the Historic Right and the challenges they encountered.[444] This perspective and studies that emphasize Restoration rulers' "good sense" imply that a revolutionary choice is impractical.

The Risorgimento may be an antiquated historical idea. Despite this, Italian liberals were driven by the idea of a "resurgent" Italy, which was utilized to undermine Restoration monarchs. Over the past decade, there has been a renewed focus on nineteenth-century Italian art, which was formerly eclipsed by the early-modern period. In this subject, the importance of the Risorgimento is often emphasized rather than minimized.[445] In nineteenth-century Italy, structural transformation was influenced by nationalist ambitions and the battle amongst liberals to advance them. Gramsci's account highlights the tensions between class, ideology, leadership, and social structure, prompting historians to consider national unification as part of a larger struggle for power.

Although the new historiography challenges traditional categories like class and nation, it does not provide a new way to understand political activity. David Lavan argues that many Risorgimento historians overemphasize crisis and conflict, overshadowing peaceful periods and dismissing Restoration government experiences as mere precursors to insurgency.[446] Gramsci cautioned against making the same error in the opposite direction. Revisionist historiography often ignores the reality of struggle and turmoil in 19th century Italy. Nationalism is disregarded rather than explained. While current interpretations reject the concept of "dual revolution", they do not address the basic question of why national unity occurred.

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[444] **R. Romanelli**, *Il comando impossibile: la natura del progetto liberale di governo*, in R. Romanelli (ed.), *Il comando impossibile. Stato e società nell'Italia liberale*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1995.

[445] **R. J. M. Olson**, *In the dawn of Italy*, in R. J. M. Olson (ed.), *Ottocento: Romanticism and Revolution in 19th Century Italian Painting*, translated by S. S. Cesaritti, Florence: Centro di Documentazione Internazionale sulle arti – International Centre for Documentation on the Arts, 1992; and **A. Finocchi**, *Arte e storia*, in AA. VV., *Risorgimento. Mito e realtà*, Milan: Electa, 1992.

[446] See **D. Laven**, *Venice and Venetia Under the Habsburgs, 1815-1835*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

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# PART TWO: (B)REACHING A NEW ERA?

## IV. *Breaching a New Era?*

# Chapter 7. September 20th, 1870: An Interpretation of the Causes, Obstacles, and Consequences

It is now important to turn to the causes and consequences of the Breccia, and both for the Italian internal and European orders. The previous chapters and sub-sections served to the purpose of delineating the main characteristics of diplomatic scenario, which ultimately led to the *Breccia di Porta Pia*. As such, this written contribution did situate all history of the *questione Romana* in a much broader context, namely that of the international and European relations. In fact, as already pointed out many times, the causes, as well as the consequences, of the occupation of Rome can be found in the permission given by a fertile international politics, which by the time of 2 months resolved issues unsettled since 1848/9. This Part II aims to firstly outline a summary of the causes of the *Breccia Pia*. Secondly, the main general impacts will be put forth, even if detailed with more attention later on. In other words, this very brief chapter 7 serves as a bridge in order to theoretically situate what has been supported beforehand with what will be enunciated afterward. The reason of this insertion must be found in the need to normatively follow a precise historical logic, which happened to resolve around very complex dynamics, in the most clearer terms.

In reality, chapter 4 of this work showed how the main contributing factor – in diplomatic and political terms – to the occupation of Rome was not the Franco-Prussian war but the proclamation of the Republic with the advent of a clergy-unfriendly political leadership in France.

Indeed, notwithstanding the critical military and political collapse of the French nation in summer 1870[447] and hence the incapability of conducting any military reprisal against Italy in case of the unlawful occupation of Rome, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was still of the opinion that it was impracticable to occupy Rome. As such and conforming to this line, on the 31st of July, 1870, Minister Emilio Visconti Venosta was giving the adequate guarantees to Napoleon III: "Il Governo Italiano non aveva altro

[447] **A. Horne**, *The Fall of Paris: The Siege and the Commune 1870-71*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965, p. 67–70; and **R. Tombs**, *The War Against Paris, 1871*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, pp. 15 –21.

a che prendere atto di questa dichiarazione [namely, that France had withdrawn its troops from Rome to go to war against Prussia on condition that Italy would have abided by the Convention], poichè la Convenzione di settembre non fu mai denunciata da parte nostra […] e dichiarare che, poichè la Francia intendeva rientrare nell'esecuzione di quest'atto internazionale, noi avremmo continuato ad eseguirne lealmente le clausole, contando su di una giusta reciprocità della Francia nell'adempimento dei propri impegni". Venosta, on the same occasion, further added to the question of Hon. La Porta that "no, non andiamo a Roma". [448]

Of the same idea was Deputy Antonio Billia, democratic leftist, declared on the 20th of July that: "Voi credete […] che la Francia vi darà Roma. Vi sbagliate! Se la Francia è vittoriosa non vi darà niente. Se è vinta, credete che un govern oche si appoggia all'interno sull'elemento clericale vorrà abbandonare Roma? Per niente al mondo".[449] Further, Deputy Romualdo Bonfadini so wrote to Visconti Venosta on the 28th of August, meanwhile the French defeat was already evident (Marshall Francois Achille Bazaine was blocked with all his army in Metz since August 18th, whilst the road to Paris was open, and the country was almost fully invaded): "[Nigra] dice che [the French general] Trochu rifarebbe una terza volta la spedizione di Roma e più, per restituire al Papa l'Umbria e le Marche. Queste sono esagerazioni, ma è certo che nello stato attuale delle nostre relazioni colla Francia, l'occupazione inconsiderata del territorio Romano potrebb'essere il principio di una reazione contro l'unità. Lo spirito pubblico qui, non parlo degli uomini politici, ma delle masse, è già abbastanza froissé della nostra condotta neutrale, se volessimo poi approfittare del giorno della sventura per sciogliere a nostra esclusiva soddisfazione la questione di Roma, certo sarebbe un'offesa che la Francia non dimenticherebbe più; e, vinta o vincitrice che oggi esca da questa lotta, diverrà ancora una grande potenza prima che noi ci troviamo nel caso di non aver più a temere da nessuno in Europa".[450]

In essence, the impossibility of disapplying the Convention was the result of two considerations. Firstly, Italy was concerned of an eventual French response in case of an illicit occupation of Rome while taking the advantage of a – temporary – defeated France. If the previous concern was future-oriented, the contemporary-to-the-time fear of not respecting an international obligation was far from acceptable for a State that just nine years before had seized a unitary project, by many doubted to be illegal from

[448] **Camera dei deputati**, session of July 31st, 1870, *Rendiconti del Parlamento Italiano – Discussioni della Camera dei Deputati: Sessione del 1869-1870 (seconda della legislatura X) – dal 18 luglio al 25 agosto 1870*, cat. 73, Florence: Tipografia Eredi Botta, 1871, p. 3925.

[449] Cited in **H. Heyriès**, *La Breccia di Porta Pia: 20 settembre 1870*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2020, p. 52.

[450] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 579, pp. 408–409.

the juridical point of view. Moreover, various proposals to regain the *terre irredente* were based on projects of legal value and bases. In a nutshell, it was not an Italian interest to present itself as an objector actor to international law vis-à-vis the international community.

As such, various obstacles were there, not only with respect to legal or French-related fears. At least three additional obstacles to the occupation project are identifiable: (i) the fear of Garibaldian movements, (ii) war Minister Giuseppe Govone's opposition to the use of force, and (iii) the need to convince the international community.

In mid-September, the numerous impediments began to collapse one after another. Among these was the terror of Garibaldi and his comrades; even the smallest story was carefully recorded – such as the one dated August 28th, 1870, saying that Menotti Garibaldi was transferring to Rome in an abortive attempt to prepare a "republican uprising". Diplomatic letters also indicated the presence of Garibaldian elements purportedly working on the island of Corfu. The island of Caprera, where Garibaldi lived, was under observation. On September 7th, 1870, Prime Minister Giovanni Lanza wrote to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in a highly confidential and urgent letter that: "Quanto al Generale Garibaldi sussiste che avrebbe chiesto al Comandante del R. Legno Nicastro di essere ,trasportato in Francia per offrire i suoi servizi a quel Governo".[451] Indeed, on the same day, the "Hero of the Two Worlds" delivered a plea to his devoted followers: "Ieri vi dicevo: guerra a oltranza a Bonaparte. Vi dico oggi: sorreggere la Repubblica francese con tutti i mezzi".[452] This declaration came shortly after he offered to serve in the French Republic's temporary administration.[453] Garibaldi's followers were free to leave Rome after that, but the Italian government remained concerned that such activities might still lead to a conflict with Prussia. The prefect of La Maddalena, who was responsible for closely monitoring Caprera, was convinced of this, as evidenced by his report to the Minister of the Interior: "L'intenzione del generale Garibaldi e del suo partito è di esporre il nostro Stato a una dichiarazione di Guerra per parte della Prussia e a tutte le conseguenze".[454] Hence, the Government had taken the necessary measures as to prevent any volountary departure toward France, maintaining a position of neutrality even when the actions of Garibaldians was not focused on Rome.

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[451] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 690, p. 488.

[452] *Agli Amici* in **E. Moscati**, *Epistolario di Giuseppe Garibaldi. Vol.: XIV: 1 gennaio 1870 – 14 febbraio 1871*, Roma: Istituto per la storia del Risorgimento italiano, 2009, n. 6172, p. 135.

[453] *Al Governo provvisorio francese, Caprera, 6 settembre, 1870, Ivi*, n. 6169, p. 133.

[454] Cited in **H. Heyriès**, *La Breccia di Porta Pia: 20 settembre 1870*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2020, p. 60.

On another level, on September 14th, the Minister of War, Giuseppe Govone, announced strong opposition to resolving the Roman matter with force, essentially stalling any military invasion of Lazio. However, this challenge was rapidly solved. Not well regarded by other generals – Alfonso La Marmora allegedly referred to him as a "rompiscatole o un professorino"[455] – Govone was exhausted by depression, mental fatigue, and psychological fragility (a witness recalled seeing him dancing and jumping around his office, leaving the army without orders or command[456]). On September 7th, he resigned due to health concerns. He was succeeded by General Cesare Ricotti Magnani, who was noted for his competence, willpower, organizational abilities, and, most importantly, his calm demeanour – qualities that were especially crucial when a storm was on the horizon.

The final challenge was to persuade the world community of the legitimacy of Italy's claim to Rome. On this front, Vittorio Emanuele II's calm approach had served to comfort the major powers, who were growing increasingly apprehensive about Prussia's overwhelming triumph in Europe and the following geopolitical upheaval of strategic importance. The Roman matter was no longer a priority, and between September 5th and 8th, 1870, the European countries agreed to Italian military action on the condition that the pope's safety was assured. Among all the actors, Orthodox Russia had expressed particular satisfaction with Florence's policy: on August 6th, the Tsar personally expressed his "pleasure" to the Italian ambassador in Saint Petersburg, Camillo Caracciolo di Bella, about the Florence government's political course in ensuring the pope's safety.[457] The United Kingdom, a Protestant and anti-papal nation concerned about an Irish Catholic revival and the rise of a powerful Prussia on the continent, did not oppose a resolution to the Roman question as long as it reduced papal influence (even if it meant continuing to protect the pope), taking a pacifist, moralist, and non-interventionist stance.[458] Austria-Hungary looked willing to give up the papacy's independence for Italy in order to secure support for peace talks between Paris and Berlin and restrict Prussia's growing strength in Central Europe.

Prussia, on the other hand, took a more unclear position. On August 20th, 1870, an observer stationed in Terni, within the Papal States, Count Ladislav Kulczycki, reported to Alberto Blanc, Secretary General of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

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[455] Cited in **H. Heyriès**, *Italia 1866. Storia di una guerra perduta*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2016, p. 100.

[456] **E. Della Rocca**, *Autobiografia di un veterano*, Bologna: Zanichelli, 1897, p. 332; and cited in **M. Scardigli**, *Lo scrittoio del generale. La Romanzesca epopea risorgimentale del generale Govone*, Milano: UTET, 2006, pp. 559–562.

[457] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 390, p. 266.

[458] **M. De Leonardis**, *L'Inghilterra e la Questione Romana (1859–1870)*, Milano: Vita e Pensiero, 1980, pp. 164–185.

that: "Le Saint-Père est moralement convaineu que les Italiens ne peuvent pas franchir la fromtière et à plus forte raison entrer à Rome. […] Cette conviction se base avant tout: l) Sur les promesses formelles et les assurances intimes du roi de Prusse et du comte de Bismark".[459] In reality, the Prussian chancellor sought to unite the Confederation by absorbing the Catholic populations of Bavaria, Baden, and Württemberg into a larger Reich, and he did not want to alienate them by handing over the pope to the Italians. At the same time, Prussia, as the Protestant state that led the North German Confederation, had no desire to look as Pius IX's defender. Furthermore, it was critical to prevent the Italians from providing military help to Paris. If required, pro-German operatives might stir disturbance in Italian cities to convince the government to remove military stationed there, preventing troops from crossing the Alps (according to French diplomatic estimates). Bismarck also thought that by pushing Florence toward the annexation of Rome, he could complicate matters for Paris and Italy.[460] Ultimately, for all of these reasons, Berlin accepted the Italian involvement in Lazio – albeit with reluctance.

There was still no green light from France, but with the fall of the imperial regime and the installation of an expressly anti-clerical republican administration, things would change quickly. On September 8th, Jules Favre, the new French Minister of Foreign Affairs, telegraphed the Baron de Malaret, declaring that temporal authority has been a plague for the globe and, having gone, would not be raised again. He would have gladly welcomed the King's government to Rome, as long as it did so with dignity. The order and quiet of Italy are well worth the price.[461] Two days later, at 1:25 p.m. on September 10th, the Italian ambassador in Paris, Costantino Nigra, reported to Foreign Minister Emilio Visconti Venosta that: "Jules Favre m'a répété que dans question romaine le Gouvernement français préférait nous laisser faire et meme qu'il nous laissait faire avec sympathie et on ne doit pas lui demander autre chose pour le moment". [462] France was therefore giving its permission, and the final barrier was falling. The Italian government has been waiting for nothing else before acting. The next day, September 11th, the observation corps stationed in central Italy was renamed the Fourth Army Corps and assigned the job of conquering Rome.

Essentially, in a few short weeks – from mid-July to early September 1870 – the Roman question, which had poisoned Franco-Italian ties since 1849, was finally

[459] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 540, pp. 376–377.
[460] **C. M. Fiorentino**, *Dalle stanze del Vaticano: il venti settembre e la protesta della S. Sede (1870-1871)*, in *Archivum Historiae Pontificia*e, Vol.: 28, 1990, p. 47.
[461] **H. Heyriès**, *La Breccia di Porta Pia: 20 settembre 1870*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2020, p. 63.
[462] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII, Series: I, Doc.: 732, p. 516

resolved. The Second Empire had departed the Eternal City, and the way forward was now clear.

The main objective of this chapter is that of showing the importance of the main causes and obstacles in the context of the Roman occupation. The act of appropriately placing and contextualising causes, obstacles, and interpretations is of utmost importance in order to duly comprehend the international and domestic scenarios, upon and thanks which Italy could pursue its Risorgimento. As such, the Roman question, with the subsequent occupation of Rome, must be collocated within broader national and international atmospheres: those of Risorgimento and European power relations. Indeed, the next chapters will show how, in reality, Risorgimento, to the opinion of the author, has not been fulfilled *in toto*: if the institutional-administrative goal of unification was succeeded, the cultural-political side of the unification process is something, still now in the 21st century, to be terminated.

# Chapter 8. The Transversality of the "Wider Tiber"

Certain ideas can occasionally develop into passionate topics that spark fascinating debates and investigation. This was true for a few decades of the twentieth century as well as for the events in Rome during the Risorgimento. It is different now. It is proper to commemorate the anniversary of the breach of Porta Pia, although it is typically done in a somewhat uninspired manner, as of the author's opinion. It has been recorded a certain repetition in the numerous remembrances, as though they are about a far-off incident that has been consigned to the realm of curiosities. Because the two promotional entities may be linked to the two primary players in the event – the Holy See and the Italian army, which was supported by the Florence government – a conference that would inspire noteworthy contributions and research was also required. Both archive sources and memories are different.

The Lateran Pacts turned the page by resolving the conflicting positions of the two main characters. Although this ended the Roman Question, they hid a genuine struggle between the Church and fascism that sought to establish its stamp on Rome. In opposition to the Church of Pius XI, which refused to be reduced to the domain of the cult and asserted the city's sacred nature as acknowledged by Article 1 of the Concordat, the dictatorship sought to establish the Urbs as the seat of the new Italian and Roman empire.[463] "Noi sogniamo l'Italia Romana…", when Mussolini celebrated his first Natale di Roma (Birthday of Rome) as prime minister in 1922 from the Capitoline Hill, he declared, "Molto di quel che fu lo spirito immortale di Roma risorge nel fascismo…". The commemoration of September 20th would be eliminated in 1930 as it was deemed out of date in the context of the Conciliation.[464] However, a distinct perspective on Rome's history developed in the 1960s and 1970s in an Italy run by Christian Democrat (DC)-centred governments, mostly because of a shift in the Holy See's worldview. John XXIII established a climate of understanding between the two Romes, which was exemplified by Cardinal Montini's 1962 address on Capitoline Hill, when he recognized the providential importance of the 1870 event for the Church.[465]

[463] **A. Riccardi**, *Roma "città sacra"? Dalla Conciliazione all'operazione Sturzo*, Milano: Vita e Pensiero, 1979.
[464] **A. Giardina** and **A. Vauchez**, *Il mito di Roma. Da Carlo Magno a Mussolini*, Roma-Bari: Editori Laterza, 2000, p. 219.
[465] **G. B. Montini**, *Roma e il Concilio*, in Discorsi e scritti milanesi (1954-1963), Vol.: III, Brescia-Roma: Istituto Paolo VI, 1997, pp. 5348–5361 and 5352.

The homily by Cardinal Vicar Angelo Dell'Acqua at Porta Pia and the speech by layman and socialist President Giuseppe Saragat in Parliament, who spoke of "armonia" between Church and State, were the main events of the celebrations of the first anniversary of the capture of Porta Pia, which was presided over by Pope Paul VI. The latter understood that the Church could carry out its purpose more effectively after being "sollevata del potere temporale". The flooding of the Tiber in December 1870 was seen as a portent of "divina vendetta" by his predecessor, Cardinal Patrizi, a century earlier. Cardinal Patrizi was one of the prelates who was most certain that divine intervention would prevent the Italians from ever entering Rome. Everything changed drastically in a century: Rome's status as the capital was already acknowledged by the Italian religious aristocracy that controlled the Vatican.

The start of significant procedures and adjustments was September 20th. Not only was it a significant political event, but it also marked the beginning of new advances for the Church, the Kingdom, which found its mythical and actual capital, and Rome, which developed into a new metropolis entwined with the liberal and papal realms.

It appeared to be the end of the world to Pius IX and the Church. The apocalyptic tone of many of the pope's talks makes this clear. That is how many Catholics saw it. A millennial dictatorship that had appeared inseparable from the Roman papacy was undoubtedly the end of the world. The trauma that many people experience should not be undervalued. Speaking with ambassadors in the Apostolic Palace who protected him as the Italians broke through the walls following Segre's infamous cannon shot, Pius IX recalled a childhood incident in which he was arrested in the Balearic Islands in 1823 while on a mission to Chile as a priest: "È stato allora che ho compreso la necessità dell'indipendenza del papa".[466] Additionally, independence entails claiming sovereignty, a stance that was modified by his successors but repeatedly reaffirmed by popes up until the Lateran Pacts.

Because it would have been nearly heretical, Pius IX and Cardinal Antonelli were prisoners of a religious-political situation from which they saw no way out.[467] There was no impact from the diverse world of liberal Catholicism, which had sought an alternative. In 1872, Alessandro Manzoni was granted honorary Roman citizenship after voting in favour of moving the capital to Florence in order to prepare for Rome. Rome is the epicentre of "due potestà, due canizie", and "due esperienze consummate", yet he failed to notice the drama. However, at that time, the Neo-

[466] **S. Tomassini**, *La guerra di Roma. Storia di inganni, scandali e battaglie dal 1862 al 1870*, Milano: Il Saggiatore, 2018, p. 689.

[467] **G. Andreotti**, *La fuga di Pio IX e l'ospitalità dei Borbone*, Roma: Benincasa, 2003, p. 85.

Guelph dream had diminished, and the only important positions left were those held by individuals like Manzoni.[468]

For theological considerations, Pius IX and his supporters were unable to imagine an accord with Italy. Additionally, as seen by the *Sillabo* and the Encyclical *Quanta Cura*, they have a total mistrust of contemporary political systems. A liberal rule, which was a manifestation of the modernity that the Church refused to reconcile with, could not be reconciled.[469] Cardinal Antonelli cautioned against putting your faith in a state that had frequent changes of administration. The Secretary of State informed La Marmora that the Holy See "non intende accettare concessioni" in this regard.[470]

Ironically, the too-often-overlooked incident of the Borgo territory, including Castel Sant'Angelo, being given to the pope and placed "sotto la sua piena sovranità e giurisdizione" is included in this context, according to Visconti Venosta. Even Bixio stopped at Borgo, but the Italians did not enter. Would the pope have ruled over a part of Rome by exercising his dominion there? Cadorna carefully observed the space, but it was Cardinal Antonelli – through Kanzler – who asked Italian soldiers to go all the way to the Vatican instead. The necessity to safeguard the pope and local disturbance were cited as the causes.[471] However, it begs the question of whether the outcry against the theft of papal privileges was diminished by the seizure of sovereignty over a portion of Rome. If the Holy See had agreed, it would have needed to reorganize its diminished sovereign area. At the time, "tanto peggio, tanto meglio" was the dominant way of thinking in the Vatican.

Although it seemed the end of the world, it was really just the end of a world after the shock. In fact, the Church progressively gained a fresh perspective. In his research, Philippe Chenaux has drawn attention to the laity's mobilization in Europe. Additionally, it has been reported the emergence of Italian Catholicism, which the pope came to have more authority over. An unprecedented occurrence in the peninsula's two-thousand-year history, the pope also gained the authority to choose Italian bishops despite the challenges posed by the dissolution of the pre-unification republics and the break with the House of Savoy. The Law of Guarantees abolished the need for bishops to pledge loyalty to the sovereign and the State's authority to

[468] **A. Manzoni**, *I promessi sposi*, Milano: Rizzoli, 2011, p. 370.
[469] **F. Gregorovius**, *Diari Romani*, Roma: Avanzini e Torraca Editori, 1967, Vol.: II, pp. 566–567.
[470] **V. Vidotto**, *20 settembre 1870*, Roma-Bari: Editori Laterza, 2020, p. 99.
[471] **S. Marotta**, *L'occupazione di Roma e della città leonina: rapporti tra Santa Sede e autorità italiane dal 20 settembre alla vigilia del plebiscito del 2 ottobre 1870*, in Cristianesimo nella storia, Vol.: 1, No.: 31, 2010; and **G. Andreotti**, *La sciarada di papa Mastai*, Milano: Rizzoli, 1967, pp. 109–127.

suggest or nominate people for ecclesiastical benefices. Beginning with the bishops, Italian Catholicism evolved into papal authority, which is where the Italian Church had its start.[472]

Italian Catholics banded together to support the pope, forming the *Società della Gioventù Cattolica* in 1868 and the *Opera dei Congressi* in 1873. *Azione Cattolica* and more Catholicism-related structures emerged in 1905. We may talk about the emergence of an Italian episcopate that is reliant on the pope and national Catholic institutions, which is something new. Rooted in the suffering endured by the popes during the Revolution and under Napoleon, devotion to the pope developed around Pius IX, the implacable prisoner pope who spoke so passionately to his people that he became the catalyst for the Catholic movement.[473]

Rome found itself in a predicament that was unlike any other metropolis in Europe. A sovereign who did not accept the city's political system resided in an enclave. However, the Church of Rome's bishop was this sovereign. Additionally, the dreaded phenomenon of dwindling religious activity that many had anticipated did not materialize following the Breach. Even with the influx of "buzzurri" immigrants, the secularization that the papal supporters anticipated did not occur in the city after 1870, according to a study done by the Gregorian University for the centennial of Rome as capital under the direction of Father Droulers. Despite conflicts, Rome, Italy, was still a Catholic city.

However, Protestant churches started to emerge as a result of religious freedom; in fact, the first person to arrive was a man named Luigi Ciari, who came on September 20th with a dog-drawn cart full of Bibles. The military action and the Bible cart were seen by evangelicals as a sign that the country could be released from the pope's spiritual control, according to Valdo Vinay. "[T]enebre del papato, rigenerandolo alle acque pure del Vangelo" according to Henry Piggot, a Methodist preacher who ministered in Rome.[474]

Rome's intricate interactions made it a distinctive capital city in Europe. The Vatican renter has the right to criticize the government if it chooses to disregard them. There are recognized and difficult times. However, starting on September 20th and defining the mood of the days that follow, a transversal network of informal ties

[472] On this, see: **P. Brezzi**, *Stato e Chiesa nell'Ottocento*, Torino: Rai Libri, 1964; **A. C. Jemolo**, *Chiesa e Stato in Italia dall'unificazione ai giorni nostri*, Torino: Einaudi, 1977; and **R. De Cesare**, *Roma e lo Stato del papa*, Roma: Newton Compton editori, 1975.

[473] **R. Aubert**, *Il pontificato di Pio IX*, Voll.: I-II, Torino: S.A.I.E., 1970.

[474] **V. Vinay**, *Storia dei Valdesi. Dal movimento evangelico italiano al movimento ecumenico 1848-1978*, Torino: Editrice Claudiana, 1980, pp. 121–122.

emerges. Living together means not going beyond certain boundaries. Italy did not want to come seen as disrespectful to the pope when it seized church property. There were practical demands for the Holy See as well.

During the reign of John XXIII, Giovanni Spadolini first used this expression in his book *Il Tevere più largo, da Porta Pia ad oggi*.[475] However, bridges or footbridges have always connected the two sides of the "tevere più largo". Negotiations and correspondence between Italian politicians and Vatican circles started on September 20th–21st (the Borgo issue, for instance example). It is important not to lose sight of the fact that they were all Italian, which encouraged communication. Mons. Callori di Vignale, whose brother worked at the royal palace, accompanied Pius XII on his first visit to the Quirinale (the previous papal residence) in 1939. Beginning in 1870, Rome, a theocratic city that rejected all forms of pluralism, saw the emergence of a transversal web of unofficial contacts. With the exception of the Jews, who had been the city's longtime friends but were forced into the ghetto by conflicting regulations enforced by Pius IX, "the other" did not exist in that setting. Later, Jews played an important role in the capital's political life.

As evidenced by the latter's diary, Benedict XV and Baron Carlo Monti, the director of Religious Affairs for the Italian government, maintained a cordial and direct relationship into the twentieth century. From 1914 to 1922, in-person meetings discussed the issues between Church and State, even going so far as to refer to a "conciliazione ufficiosa".[476] It was more than simply church politics. All one has to do is consider how important Roman families associated with the pope contributed to the building of the new capital. Also, with Vatican approval, certain aristocratic papal families participated in the purchase of seized church property that was put up for sale.

Years ago, Alberto Caracciolo saw with skill that the interests of the Holy See as well as the dark noble families were at stake in the Roman scene.[477]

The *Primaria Società Artistico-Operaia*, established in 1871 and subsequently integrated into the *Banco di Roma*, was another focal point of Catholic interest. Ernesto Pacelli quickly rose to prominence in this issue. Pius XII's father, Filippo Pacelli, was a member of the town council, another organization where radical and liberal

[475] **G. Spadolini**, *Il Tevere più largo. Da Porta Pia ad oggi*, Milano: Longanesi & C., 1970; and **G. Spadolini**, *Le due Rome. Chiesa e Stato fra '800 e '900*, Firenze: Le Monnier, 1975.

[476] **A. Scottà**, *La conciliazione ufficiosa. Diario del barone Carlo Monti incaricato d'affari del governo italiano presso la Santa Sede*, Voll.: I-II, Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997; and **M. Porena**, *Roma capitale nel decennio della sua adolescenza (1880-1890)*, Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1957.

[477] **A. Caracciolo**, *Roma capitale. Dal Risorgimento allo stato liberale*, Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1974.

politicians were seated alongside people loyal to the pope. Moderates, including aristocrats like Borghese, Campello, Chigi, and Marquis Baviera, director of the press outlet *Osservatore Romano*, were gathered together for municipal elections by the *Unione Romana*.

The relationship between the two worlds – the political-economic one of the city and the one associated with the Holy See – is transversal, and this should be emphasized. This did not, however, alter the Porta Pia action's unfavourable verdict, which was nonetheless viewed as a breach of papal rights – a position that Pius IX repeatedly reaffirmed.

Rome is unique in that it is both the capital of a secular state and a city with a recognized sovereign and religious head. It is home to a sizable Catholic populace that hails a bishop with the words "viva il papa re" and serves as the capital of the Church.

The life of the Urbs is characterized by this transversality; it is a legacy that reaches into other spheres, influences the relationship between the Church and the State, and permeates political life. Rome is still a bridge city. It is a location of synthesis, as seen by the rising proportion of "non Romani" in its population. As a result, Rome gradually loses its own local identity and becomes into a "città italiana", which is distinct from other cities on the peninsula.

The myth of Rome, which influenced the Risorgimento but was also popular throughout Europe and the world, is very different from Rome, the "metropoli paesana", as Silvio Negro refers to it.[478] Federico Chabod skilfully illustrates the myth of the Urbs' powerful pull on all Risorgimento elements in his History of Italian Foreign Policy from 1870 to 1896, which is devoted to the concept of Rome.[479] Pages that also show how, in the discourse around the city following the Breach, the myth somewhat diminished. In *Il mito di Roma*, Vauchez and Giardina describe how the Italians arrived in Rome at a time when "le due principali enunciazioni del primato e della missione degli italiani erano entrambe tramontate…", namely the Mazzinian notion of the Third Rome as a light of unification for peoples and the Neo-Guelph, Giobertian one.[480] But in general, the myth was fostered by the several elements of the Risorgimento movement, each of which had its own emphasis and shared the conviction that one had to travel to Rome.

It is important to remember Cavour's remarks on Rome as a capital: "Noi dobbiamo andare a Roma senza che l'autorità civile estenda il suo potere all'ordine

[478] **S. Negro**, *Seconda Roma 1850-1870*, Venezia: Neri Pozza Editore, 2015.
[479] **F. Chabod**, *Storia della politica estera italiana dal 1870 al 1896*, Bari: Laterza, 1971.
[480] **A. Giardina** and **A. Vauchez**, *Il mito di Roma*, 2000, p. 190.

spirituale".[481] However, the issue of the concept of Rome arises since the Breach, as the Italian political elite has finally reached the city. Theodor Mommsen is famous for asking Quintino Sella direct questions one evening in 1871, such as, "Ma che cosa intendete fare a Roma? Questo ci inquieta tutti: a Roma non si sta, senza avere propositi cosmopolitici". In 1870, Gregorovius remarked, despite his support for the national movement: "Roma perderà l'aria di repubblica mondiale, che ho respirato 18 anni. Essa discende al grado di capitale degli italiani, i quali sono troppo deboli… Roma ha perduto il suo incanto".[482] As they saw the sunset of that "metropoli paesana", which in its anachronism had a fascination soaked in the historic taste of the Middle Ages, Christian universalism, and the old Latin recollections, many European intellectuals had these thoughts and worries.

In its sanctity, the papal metropolis was a fiction in and of itself. *Le Parfum de Rome* was penned by Louis Veuillot, who contrasted it with Les odeurs de Paris.[483] Giacomo Margotti enjoyed in drawing a comparison between London, "il paese dell'errore" and Rome, the homeland of unity and truth.[484] Compared to other European cities, the holy and papal metropolis was unique. Pilgrims perceive papal Rome as retreating into places of prayer or shrinking to the Vatican or St. Peter's after the Breach. The pope, who could be found inside the Vatican and who talked widely, became the main centre of the papacy, which no longer left an urban or holy mark on the city. In this way, a sacred city no longer represented the Catholic myth of Rome.

However, the notion of Rome as a city of science or something else is unable to make its presence known despite several attempts (while Cavour's vision of Rome as a location of alliance between liberty and Catholicism faded away). Despite the Catholic or Risorgimento emphasis, the new Rome's beginnings involved a process of diminishing the city's mystique or ambiguity over the concept of the Urbs. In contrast to the Church's resistance, fascism successfully revived *Romanità* and the Empire by relaunching the myth-making process, which is one of the most emotive aspects of its minimalist ideology. However, the illusion was unquestionably destroyed when the Germans captured or attacked Rome at San Lorenzo. Pius XII, who was referred to as *defensor civitatis* for the Church's replacement of governmental power during the

[481] **V. Vidotto**, *20 settembre 1870*, 2020, p. 106
[482] **F. Gregorovius**, *Diari Romani*, 1967, p. 528.
[483] **L. Veuillot**, *Le parfum de Rome*, Paris: Gaume Freres et J. Duprey, 1862; **L. Veuillot**, *Les odeurs de Paris*, Paris: Palmé, 1867.
[484] **G. Margotti**, *Le vittorie della Chiesa nel primo decennio del pontificato di Pio Nono del sacerdote Giacomo Margotti dottore in teologia*, Milano: De Agostini, 1857.

occupation, was standing here. He made an unsuccessful attempt to resurrect the concept of a Catholic and hallowed Rome.

In 1870, the concept of the Urbs convinced the Piedmontese that full national union was imperative. This approach was opposed in the name of Catholic Urbs. However, the city's ambitions and ideas broke apart and did not come back to life in the new Rome.

Contemporaries saw the fall of Rome as the end of the world. In addition to the international significance of the Roman Question in a Europe moving through new arrangements, aside from the Catholics organizing in different nations, it became a significant national problem. This resulted from the Holy See's marginalization in regard to the big political schemes of Europe: it was both a moral and religious authority of worldwide stature and a little, backward Italian state, as reported by French bishops attending Vatican I. While he was losing ground internationally, Pius IX himself had recognized the lack of political will to protect his position, despite the advice of all powers not to use violence against the pope. He committed himself to a position of truth, claiming not only the Holy See's legitimate rights but also something more profound: the Church's resistance to the contemporary world, as embodied by the nation-state and liberal rule, as well as those liberties that equated truth and error. Thus, opposition to Rome as the capital turned into a phase of resistance to the modern world.

Pius IX's 1871 declaration that "i popoli sono buoni e i governi cattivi" illustrates a belief that was prevalent in the Vatican and was predicated on the allegiance of large segments of the European Catholic population to the pope and the perceived piety of Roman Catholics. It was believed that, in contrast to the legal nation of the State, which was viewed as a minority and elitist, the true country stood with the Church. Catholic stubbornness therefore unified and rallied the faithful in Italy and throughout Europe, even before the Roman dilemma, not just around the Roman problem but also against modernity as described by the *Sillabo*. Émile Poulat noted that the core of stubbornness was the Church's will to resist having its goals influenced by the contemporary environment, nonreligious organizations, or the *zeitgeist*.[485] Therefore, the pope would never have approved of a solution to the Roman dilemma that was determined by the Kingdom alone, as the Law of Guarantees. He would not have engaged in negotiations

[485] **È. Poulat**, *Eglise contre bourgeoisie. Introduction au devenir du catholicisme actuel*, Paris: BERG, 2006; and **A. Riccardi**, *Intransigenza e modernità. La Chiesa cattolica verso il terzo millennio*, Roma-Bari: Editori Laterza, 1996.

with the Italian administration either. As a result, the political problem evolved into a worldwide and religious position.

It was not her in actuality. Even though Pius IX continued to inaugurate public works in the city until the eve of the Capture of Rome, which was well received by the Romans, the remaining Papal State, reduced to Latium, faced dire financial difficulties and uncertain relations with the rest of the peninsula. It should be noted that the pope's territories have been somewhat incorporated into the Kingdom. Rome, with its new train station, was added to the national railway network, and the pontifical lira was valued at the same level as the Italian lira. According to De Cesare, Cardinal Antonelli called it "una testa senza corpo".[486] In many ways, it was a ripe fruit that was ready to be plucked. The Lanza government's decision to travel to Rome was largely determined by internal political dynamics due to the escalation of the Franco-Prussian conflict and pressure from Parliament.

Like his successors, Pius IX disapproved of the May 13th, 1871, Law of Guarantees. Otherwise, it would not have been possible. Ultimately, the Holy See required sovereignty, even over a "mezzo Stato", as Tardini referred to it. However, authority over Rome and Latium had inherently come to an end. Along with several other administrational flaws, the papal armed forces' diversity and vulnerability quickly exposed one of the State's vulnerabilities. Another indication of this weakness was the support of the Roman populace, who cheered Pius IX and quickly embraced the new authority.

By using the pope's protection as a rationale for the occupation, the Italian government was providing an excuse. However, the pope would eventually find such state to be unstable. Cavour was correct when he told the pope, ""Santo Padre, il potere temporale non è più garanzia per voi".

[486] **R. De Cesare**, *Roma e lo stato del Papa. Dal ritorno di Pio IX al XX settembre (1850-1870)*, Roma: Newton Compton editori, 1975; and **R. De Cesare**, *La fine di un Regno*, Voll.: I-II, Brindisi: Edizioni Trabant, 2nd edn, 2016.

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# V. *Reaching a New Era?*

## Chapter 9. "Post-Risorgimento" or Post-1870: Historiographical Debates on the Whole of Italy and Europe They Shall Be

### Historiography of "Post-Risorgimento": Connecting the Dots

Many found Liberal Italy's "post-Risorgimento" experiences to be disappointing. According to Charles Delzell, "the poetry of the Risorgimento gave way to the prose of the post-Risorgimento".[487] The inability to integrate Venetia and Rome in the unitary state reflected national weakness. Rome was a powerful symbol of Italian unity and might, and its absence in Liberal Italy was felt deeply. Rome became part of Italy in 1870 after Napoleon III's withdrawal of the French military from the city due to defeat in the Franco-Prussian war. The price was a permanent separation between Church and State. Pope Pius IX, a self-proclaimed "prisoner" at the Vatican, issued an encyclical threatening Catholics with excommunication if they interfered in Italian politics. Venetia was reclaimed from the Austrians in 1866, but only after a devastating loss by the Austrian fleet highlighted Italy's lack of independence and force. Other Italian districts, such as Trentino (South Tyrol), remained "unredeemed" until after WWI.

During the early years of national government, Liberal Italy faced additional challenges. Popular discontent did not end with the collapse of the Restoration states. The 1860s saw serious public-order problems due to rural banditry in the South and urban riots in Turin and Milan. During the war against Austria in 1866, anti-government rebels invaded Palermo and held it for a week, challenging government authority. In the 1870s, Central and Southern Italy had significant anarchist activity.

These issues are compounded by the ongoing financial crisis and weak economic development. In 1866, the rising budget deficit caused a currency crisis, prompting the reinstatement of the hated macaroni (grist) tax associated with the *ancien régime* in 1868. The predicted benefits of free trade were slow to materialize, delivering

[487] **C. F. Delzell** (ed.), *The Unification of Italy, 1859–61. Cavour, Mazzini or Garibaldi?*, New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1965, p. 1.

prosperity to commercial agriculture but often devastating the industrial economy, especially in the South.

Political life in Liberal Italy was likewise unsatisfactory. Cavour and his successors' decision to centralize administrative institutions and impose a centralized political framework on the rest of Italy was controversial in most former republics. It emphasized regional rivalries and local opposition, rather than diminishing them. Centralization was followed by a parliamentary system based on a restricted suffrage (2% of the population) and a punitive strategy towards public disturbance, which appeared to be similar to the practices of the *ancien régime*.

The long-term inability of the new state to symbolize national unity, develop political agreement, and reconcile the prosperous urban North with the destitute rural South was the root cause of these issues.[488] The Left opposition in Italy's parliament, including former Mazzinians, radicals, and federalists, highlighted these issues and cited failed "resurgence" efforts. These thoughts were reiterated in subsequent historical disputes. Marxist analysis attributed liberal Italy's inadequacies to failures in national unity and the Risorgimento movement. The "passive" nature of Italy's revolution resulted in weak bourgeois hegemony and dependence on force over public agreement for administration.[489] Liberal Italy's economic "backwardness" was attributed to a passive revolution that failed to eliminate feudalism and promote commercial industry in the rural.

One of the most appealing aspects of this technique was its level of explanation. The study suggested a consistent pattern for Italy's economic and political growth over the nineteenth century. Liberal Italy's failure to grow into a true parliamentary democracy and eventual collapse into fascism may be linked back to national unity and the Risorgimento's conflicts. Italy's unique experience in the nineteenth century, with no other "country" having a "risorgimento", contributed to its distinctive growth in the twentieth century.

Recently, historians have criticized the assumptions behind this method. Revisionist historians challenge Marxist definitions of economic class and its significance in political transformation. Most revisionist study on social transformation in nineteenth-century Italy opposes the association of the Risorgimento with a failed bourgeois revolution. Revisionist historians challenge the notion that Restoration governments in Italy were doomed and instead focus on their

[488] **L. Cafagna**, *Dualismo e sviluppo nella storia d'Italia*, Venetia: Marsilio, 1989, pp. 187–220.

[489] *Selections from Antonio Gramsci's Prison Notebooks*, edited and translated by **Q. Hoare** and **G. Nowell Smith**, London, New York: International Publishers, 1971, p. 53.

modernization efforts. The authors criticize the teleological focus of prior narratives on political and economic transformation in nineteenth-century Italy. They want to avoid categorizing modernization solely by class or nation. Revisionists have challenged the Marxist account of a failed Risorgimento, as well as the idea of "peculiarities" in Italian growth.

Revisionists highlight the similarities between Restoration and Liberal Italy, shedding light on the unique aspects of political transformation in the 19th century. They also position this transformation in a larger context. The political instability in nineteenth-century Italy may be explained by emphasizing the modernizing process of state construction, rather than focusing just on the conclusion (national unity, industrialization, fascism). The revisionist view of state formation in nineteenth-century Italy focuses on relationships such as state-society, centre-periphery, and church-state. They argue that changes in political power, rather than economic change, caused significant upheaval. Political developments generated a crisis that led to national unity.

The Italian experience of state formation differs from that of Britain, France, and Germany at least in three aspects: the lack of internal reform prior to 1860 (with the exception of Piedmont), the political crisis in 1859-60, and the failure to overcome regional barriers to "nation-building". These reasons contributed to the Restoration states' collapse in 1859-60, as well as Liberal Italy's political instability.

Italy's "peculiarities" can be attributed to the Restoration nations' increased sensitivity to foreign pressure. Between 1815 and 1860, statesmen in Vienna, Paris, and London made significant decisions on Italy's political future. Following Austria's protection in 1815, the fortunes of Italy's Restoration states fluctuated in tandem with Austria. Until Austria's fall in 1859, Restoration powers were able to disregard domestic political pressures. With Austria's loss, the pressure became unbearable. After 1860, the determination to consolidate Italy's administrative institutions and suppress popular and political dissatisfaction was driven by foreign policy concerns and the need to demonstrate the new state's viability to European powers.[490]

Italy has had greater challenges in retaining territorial integrity than other countries. According to Karl Wegert, state building throughout the nineteenth century was easier and more peaceful in smaller, more compact states like South-West

[490] See **F. Chabod**, *Storia della politica estera italiana dal 1870 al 1896. Vol.: I, Le premesse*, Bari: Editori Laterza, 1951.

Germany.[491] Local elites in Italy fought against administrative modernization, threatening the geographical integrity of many states. Resistance to internal reform, particularly in the Two Sicilies and Papal States, hampered progress. The Restoration administration faced a dilemma due to the possibility of internal fragmentation. Following the events of 1859-60, it's not unexpected that maintaining territorial authority remained a challenge after 1860. After 1860, local and regional resistance to the new central power stifled bureaucratic modernization and hampered efforts to establish a national identity.[492]

The Church's opposition to a unified Italy undermined the state's legitimacy and interventionary authority. The Church's attitude and the Pope's personal presence in Italy may be the most unique aspect of the Italian experience. Only in Italy was the Church's temporal power threatened, unlike in France and Germany where the fight between Church and state was prevalent during nation-state formation. After 1848, Italian nationalism clashed with the Catholic Church, unlike political nationalism in Ireland and Eastern Europe, which were heavily influenced by the Italian experience. National unity led to a clash between the Church's "national" power and the secular "Italian" state.

Pope Pius IX's decision to force Italians to choose between devotion to the Church and support for the new state undermined the credibility of liberal Italy. Pius IX, unlike the fledgling state, had both moral and institutional authority to implement his orders. In the 1840s, Gioberti observed that the Catholic Church's ideas, traditions, and language brought Italians together in ways that secular nationalism did not. The Church's monopoly over education and charity gave priests power over local politics, which the liberal state could not match despite its claim to be a new bureaucratic authority.

The revisionist perspective to nineteenth-century Italy focuses on state development, allowing for a comparative examination rather than a national-specific one. This work marks a significant shift from traditional Italian historiography and reflects a new perspective on the role of the state in European modernization. Previous approaches to the "Risorgimento" process have connected it to national unification and fascism, which this paper challenges.

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[491] **K. Wegert**, *Contention with civility: the state and social control in the German Southwest*, 1760–1850, in Historical Journal, Vol.: 34, No.: 2, 1991, p. 361.

[492] **L. Riall**, *Elite resistance to state formation: the case of Italy*, in M. Fulbrook (ed.), *National Histories and European History*, London: UCL Press, 1993, pp. 59–63.

This challenge to teleology, reflecting broader trends in nineteenth-century history, is highly debated. According to John Breuilly (referring to trends in German historiography, not Italian historiography), teleology (understanding events in relation to what comes next) is crucial for historical explanation. Knowing what comes next gives historians an advantage over historical actors. The author suggests that a historicist perspective is the only viable alternative to a teleological one, as each historical situation should be understood on its own terms. Breuilly views the historicist approach as unworkable and illogical, as it abandons attempts to comprehend broader processes of change across time.[493]

Breuilly's rejection of a middle ground between historicism and teleology, while shared by many historians, appears incorrect. Historians' attempts to comprehend generic processes throughout time can be deceptive. A more open-ended study helps elucidate individual experiences of change and modernization. The revisionist criticism of teleology in contemporary Italian history is not as severe as Breuilly asserts. Italian historians have used the term "state formation" instead of "Risorgimento" to avoid historicism issues. State formation is viewed as a process with several results, with just one being nation-state creation. The revisionist challenge to teleology aims to address the unequal geographical and temporal features of modernization, as well as its various experiences.

The revisionist agenda aims to discard the concept of a "Risorgimento", which is today viewed as a nineteenth-century fantasy about a shared Italian past.[494] The Risorgimento, an ideological manifestation of a cultural and political minority, is separated from the process of national unity. In nineteenth-century Italy, political transformation was driven by state creation rather than Italian nationalist goals and misunderstandings.

The revisionist critique of the teleology of the "Risorgimento" has resulted in a fresh and fascinating perspective on nineteenth-century Italy. Recent research has made it difficult for historians to explain why national unity occurred in Italy. The development of states may explain the "modernizing" process and the political instability in early nineteenth-century Italy. It cannot explain national unity. National unity was not the apparent answer to the predicament of Restoration Italy in 1859-60.

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[493] **J. Breuilly**, *Conclusion: national peculiarities?*, in J. Breuilly (ed.), *Labour and Liberalism in Nineteenth Century Europe*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992, pp. 276–279.

[494] **S. Soldani**, *Risorgimento*, in F. Levi, U. Levra, N. Tranfaglia (eds), *Storia d'Italia, vol. III*, Florence: Firenze, La, 1978, p. 1132.

The fear of territorial fragmentation contributed to the crisis, thus the disadvantages of building a larger, more unwieldy state should have been evident to everybody.

The appeal of a narrative of "resurgence" via national unification cannot be denied. In 1859-60, national unity was viewed as a solution due to a perceived historical inevitability. Contemporaries' mistakes provide greater insight than historians' hindsight. Historical interest in the Risorgimento highlights the rising acceptance of nationalism, or what Raymond Grew calls the "great battle to mobilise public opinion",[495] as a response to political crises. Historical argument is shaped by the conflict between what was and what may have been, which mirrors political struggles prior to unification. During this period, liberal discourse and political opposition were characterized by optimism about Italy's future and unhappiness with its current situation. Historical narratives emphasize dramatic events, flashy individuals, and recognizable villains, reflecting nationalist expectations. Marxist assessments highlight the negative repercussions of failed revolutions, reflecting the democratic movement's dissatisfaction after 1848.

The relationship between the Risorgimento and national unity may be difficult to dissolve. No other European "country" had a "Risorgimento" and characterized its experiences in such vivid and Romantic terms. The revisionist approach to state creation ignores the connection between political change and Risorgimento principles, focusing instead on recognizable structural changes. According to Raymond Grew, clichés, myths, and stereotypes serve as historical evidence.[496] Understanding the significance and impact of national myths is necessary before deconstructing them. To understand why Italy's state construction led to national unity, it's important to consider nationalism's emotional and political appeal. The "poetry of the Risorgimento", a potent national myth, may have blinded nationalists to the divides within Italian society. However, the desire for national unity and independence profoundly influenced state development. The "poetry of the Risorgimento" may not fully explain the "prose of the post-Risorgimento" or the process of transformation in nineteenth-century Italy. It can offer valuable insights into how the shift was conveyed, perceived, and acted upon.

[495] **R. Grew**, *Catholicism and the Risorgimento*, in F. Coppa (ed.), *Studies in Modern Italian History. From the Risorgimento to the Republic*, New York: Peter Lang Group AG, 1986, p. 47.
[496] **R. Grew**, *Catholicism and the Risorgimento*, p. 50.

The memory – received in different ways – of the experiences gathered over the preceding time was not erased by the entrance into Rome and the move of the capital. Lessons learnt in those earlier periods would continue to be reflected in the criteria used in the contemporary situation. Furthermore, the key players in charge of Italy's foreign policy would virtually stay the same. Visconti Venosta, who had been in office since December 1869, would go on to hold the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Minghetti's cabinet, which was established in July 1873 and lasted until March 1876, or the remainder of the Right's rule. Among the Left, the opposition, continuity components are also discernible. Unquestionably, however, 1870 marked a sea change and a pivotal year for Italy and its standing in Europe.

Prioritizing unity, addressing the Venetian problem, and improving the Roman question had taken precedence over all other considerations until that point. The first knot had, luckily, been broken by the war in 1866. The recent end of the Franco-Prussian war allowed for a novel approach to the second problem. With the end of the revolutionary era, Italy had to decide on a foreign policy, which included redefining its own interests, deciding on a role, and acting appropriately in the global arena. It was also freed from the condition of relying on the Napoleonic system, which was beneficial in some ways but extremely restrictive in others. However, it was not "[I]l protetto a rompere le catene […]; era stato il protettore a dover abbandonare la presa. […] La Francia imperiale non esisteva più; una politica estera italiana autonoma non esisteva ancora", as has been succinctly said in reference to the forced cessation of French dependency.[497]

It was no accident that the most incisive displays of discomfort came from the moderate faction, which was accountable to the government. The collapse of Napoleon II – in that time and under those circumstances – caused dismay among at least a portion of the Right, who remembered what he had done for the Italian cause and now felt more affected than ever by the circumstances. The fall of Napoleon III was desired and evoked by the Democrats. When he passed away in January 1873, a subscription was started to build a monument in his honour in Milan. However, it was eventually restricted to the Senate's inner courtyard for many years because of a number of

[497] **E. Di Nolfo**, *Italia*, participation to the roundtable on *Il problema di Roma nella politica europea*, in *La fine del potere temporale e il ricongiungimento di Roma all'Italia. Atti del XLV Congresso di Storia del Risorgimento italiano (Roma, 21-25 settembre 1970)*, Roma: Istituto per la Storia del Risorgimento italiano, 1972, p. 332.

concerns to its public placement. However, this went beyond simple recall. The feelings that surfaced among moderate liberals during those months also betrayed a deeper worry, chief among them being fear of losing the French emperor's protection. Although undoubtedly conditional and not without hidden agendas, this protection had caused several issues but also turned out to be valuable and comforting. It had provided a kind of check and a substitute for otherwise unmanageable events on a domestic level. According to Ruggero Bonghi, the act of gathering "gagliardamente tutti gli umori cattivi" in France also "scemato il veleno e l'acredine di quelli che serpeggiavano presso di noi". It also kept the political unrest from turning into a "vera rivoluzione", allowing the "parte moderata" to continue to hold sway.[498] On a global scale, Napoleonic sponsorship had helped close the divide between the ranks of established powers and the emerging Kingdom of Italy. It had protected Italy's first moves, shielded it from Austria's hostile responses, and cleared the path for further benefits, such the alliance with France and the reunification with Venetia. Some thought that France's generosity in this area had been returned, and that the country's eventual collapse – which left Italy defenceless – was a terrible result of these developments.

Many believed that a new and dangerous imbalance had entered European politics as a result of the victor's show and the conditions placed on the defeated. The prevailing opinion was one of concern, even though the unification of Germany might have been greeted with sympathy in theory. For instance, "La Perseveranza" then wrote: "Quando saremo sicuri che la Germania non mira a invadere i paesi, che la accerchiano, e a scomporre l'equilibrio delle nazioni d'Europa, applaudiremo alla sua unificazione come a un trionfo della civilità. Ma non prima".[499] "Attualmente avvi da un lato un oppresso e dall'altro un oppressore, da una parte un Popolo minacciato di conquista, dall'altro un conquistatore", so went Deputy Riccardo Sineo, acknowledging that a sort of equidistance was being built between the two sides. [500] Even if the Germans had misused their triumph, France would bounce back and seek retribution. The achieved peace was only a ceasefire, with uncertain longevity, dependent only on the balance of power, and detrimental to the other European governments. Rearming themselves "da capo a piedi" and investing all of their resources in it, these were compelled to rely on weapons rather than treaties because

[498] **B. R. Bonghi**, *Rassegna Politica*, in Nuova Antologia, Florence, August 1870, p. 879.
[499] **L'unità germanica**, in *La Perseveranza*, November 4th, 1870.
[500] **Camera dei deputati**, session of January 21st, 1871, *Rendiconti del Parlamento Italiano - Discussioni della Camera dei Deputati: Sessione del 1870-1871 (prima della legislatura XI) - dal 5 dicembre 1870 al 21 marzo 1871*, cat. 74, Florence: Tipografia Eredi Botta, 1870, p. 258.

"il secolo è nuovamente diventato di ferro, ed il diritto, oscuratosi nelle menti per la troppa ricerca che è stata fatta delle sue fonti e ragioni, non ha nessuna luce propria e potente di cui brilli".[501]

It was hard to overlook the Franco-Prussian war, particularly the bombing of Paris in January 1871.[502] Reactions were divided, even among those who had previously condemned Bonapartist France and preferred Prussia as a model of civilization. Unease was brought on by feelings of disillusionment and the severity of the new Germany's conduct. Between caution and compassion, Italy's stance shifted more and more in favour of a policy of careful neutrality.

After surreptitiously landing in Marseille, Garibaldi once again took up arms in what would be his last, and not ignominious, military expedition, this time for France – the Republican France, of course, not the one that had stopped him at Mentana.

These developments did not exclude the possibility of a German alliance, or at the very least, of an alliance that recognized the legitimacy of the new German rule. The popularity of a work by then-Major Nicola Marselli, a history teacher at the War College, that focused on the positive aspects of the shift that had occurred and was devoted to the events of 1870–1871 is rather significant in this respect. The idea that "la società europea, abbandonato l'ideale francese di un progresso vorticoso, di una democrazia plebea – dispotismo di una piazza che non vuol palagi – intenda a lavorare di conseguenza colla Germania al trionfo della Democrazia armonica e del Progresso regolato" was reiterated by Marselli himself months later when he revisited the subject in light of additional developments like the Commune's experience. He even went so far as to wish that, along this path, and if ever a counterbalance were needed to the "calmo e paziente liberalism dei Tedeschi", Italy might participate as a privileged and friendly partner.[503] On the opposing side of the argument, however, there were always counterarguments in support of friendship with France in opposition to such claims. Many people still view France as the embodiment of a "grande tradizione liberale nel diritto pubblico, nella politica interna, e nella politica internazionale" in spite of its shortcomings.[504] But without deeper and more compromising connotations, the idea that one should not let oneself be carried away by pointless laments for the neighbouring country's failure might also take shape in the name of well-meaning

[501] **B. R. Bonghi**, *Rassegna Politica*, in Nuova Antologia, Florence, September 1870, p. 198.

[502] In order to analyse the orientation of the Italian public opinion in this period, see **F. Chabod**, *Storia della politica estera italiana dal 1870 al 1896*, Bari: Biblioteca Universale Laterza, 1997.

[503] **N. Marselli**, *Gli avvenimenti del 1870-71. Libro secondo*, Torino: Loescher, 1871, pp. 208-210.

[504] This was the opinion of Hon. C. Bon Compagni written in *Francia e Italia. IX*, in L'Opinione, December 1871.

reality. For someone like Minghetti, who bemoaned "le sventure della Francia" in October 1870, this was the case. However, he also said that Italy had more freedom of movement now. Keeping "in buoni termini col vincitore" was therefore worthwhile, even if one considered it to be "il modo Migliore per giovare al vinto".[505]

Even in light of the recent developments surrounding the Roman Question, Visconti Venosta remained adamantly persuaded of the importance of neutrality in directing Italy's foreign behaviour, buoyed by the successful conclusion of the diplomatic posture chosen in the summer of 1870. With the admission into the papal city, that problem had not vanished; rather, it had evolved, gained strategic importance, and now emerged as a true "quistione di esistenza nazionale", one that could no longer be postponed.[506] The objective of a future reconciliation with the Papacy was too significant on a national and international level to be dropped just because Rome had been occupied against everything. Furthermore, the new capital needed to be protected so that the Pope's statements would not be backed up by other sources. Therefore, any course of action that may simultaneously jeopardize the future and place Italy under a false line in front of Europe had to be avoided. Everyone concerned had to agree that the Pope was independent and that the Holy See had the right to freely use its spiritual power. These guarantees could be guaranteed unilaterally by Italy through a commitment that would reassure Europe of Italy's good faith and the soundness of its political posture, even if they could not be obtained through a bilateral agreement – an option rendered void by the other party's unwillingness.

These tenets gave rise to the "legge delle guarentigie", which Lanza introduced to Parliament in December 1870. After a protracted and successful intervention by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the bill was finally adopted by the Senate in April as well, despite opposition from the Left due to the "sovranità eccezionale" it granted the Pope. The idea of continuity with Cavour's political inspiration was a major component of his argument. But Visconti Venosta argued that even the Law of Guarantees was only a beginning. He believed that a change that was "sanzionato che dal tempo, dall'opinione e dalla consuetudini" was the only way to justify such mutation "nelle condizioni politiche della suprema istituzione del cattolicesimo".[507] According to this viewpoint, the primary objective was to stop the most fervent and unyielding group –

[505] **DDI**, Vol.: I, Series: II, Doc.: 336, p. 286
[506] **DDI**, Vol.: II, Series: II, Doc.: 230, p. 246
[507] **Senato del Regno**, session of April 22nd, 1871, *Rendiconti del Parlamento Italiano, Discussioni del Senato del Regno, Sessione del 1870-1871,* Florence: Cotta e Compagni, 1871, p. 482.

which ruled the region outside the Tiber – from looking for allies and backing for its cause outside. In the event that the opposite party, which is made up of cardinals and prelates who are more focused on spiritual than political issues, gains the upper hand – possibly as a result of a pope change – that side, conscious of its failure, is obliged to stay in the background. Thus, the much-cherished objective may have been accomplished.

These plans and presumptions were connected to longer-term strategic goals and more general defence objectives. According to this perspective, Italy's new connections with the main powers were largely shaped by the Roman Question, which has since been reframed. According to Artom, who has served as the Foreign Ministry's Secretary General since November 1870, "la questione delle alleanze è decisa per noi dalla questione Romana. Chi non ci vuole a Roma è ormai il peggior nemico della nostra unità".[508] At this stage, the political alliances that had developed – alignments that were becoming more and more associated with France – posed the biggest threat. Some resented the fact that men who had previously had alternative tendencies now obviously tended toward such a position, whether as a result of political formation or cultural influences. However, this could not excuse ignoring reality. Legitimists, Orleanists, and Bonapartists, who made up the majority in the newly formed National Assembly in February 1871, had long stood out for their animosity against Italy and resistance to the Papacy's loss of temporal authority. Italy left a path of justifiable animosity that was difficult to mend after failing to step in and help France at its moment of need. There was no assurance that Thiers's republic would not eventually succumb to a return of monarchy, which may pose a more immediate and grave threat. Indeed, things would change in a different way in a few of years. But for the time being, the harsh reality was still in place: France, which was still very much monarchist in spirit, had not thought twice about keeping a warship, the *Orénoque*, at the port of Civitavecchia, ready for the Pope to use in the event that he decided to give up the remaining parts of his States.

In a way, the Roman Question represented Italy's shortcomings and challenges. However, it also turned into a tool for bolstering and reaffirming Italy's standing abroad in comparison to other diplomatic players.[509] The delicate and essential role of Italy from a European standpoint, as well as the sincerity of the stance it had taken – that of a power "pacifica e conservatrice", a "nuovo e considerevole elemento in favore

[508] **DDI**, Vol.: II, Series: II, Doc.: 203, pp. 216–217.
[509] **B. Vigezzi**, *L'Italia dopo l'Unità: liberalismo e politica estera*, in R. J. B. Bosworth and S. Romano (ed.), *La politica estera italiana (1860-1985)*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1991, p. 241.

dell'equilibrio e della tranquillità del continente" – had to be shown more broadly.[510] Further, representing "principi d'ordine e di conservazione sociale".[511] Visconti Venosta envisioned the establishment of a "sistema di amicizie efficaci", eschewing any kind of exclusive and legally binding connection, in order to mitigate any danger.[512] He thought that these kinds of alliances should only be used as a last resort – should things in Europe substantially worsen once more. According to Venosta, Italy's position would be limited in the case of a new Franco-Prussian confrontation, given the balance of strength and France's unavoidably hostile stance. However, it was hoped that such a conflict might be delayed as long as possible, giving Italy time to reap the rewards of peace, including restructuring, financial stability, internal unity, and the acquisition of more capable military hardware. Furthermore, it could not be ruled out that Italy may eventually be able to reap the benefits of a "attitudine amichevole e piena di riguardi" persistently maintained toward France, even in its relationship with that country, after it was shown in practice that the Pope's independence remained completely intact.[513] However, no chances could be taken. A France that might be resentful and tempted to test itself "contro un nemico più debole" before retaliating against Prussia; an Austria that, under its new chancellor, the Hungarian Andrassy, remained interested and benevolent but on which no long-term reliance could be placed (given the possibility of a clerical and reactionary resurgence); a Britain that is only occasionally aware of continental affairs; and the hope of a fervently pro-Italian Russia that prioritizes its relations with Prussia.

Although Italy's neutrality strategy during the Franco-Prussian war may have infuriated the French, it eventually let them down and left a legacy of hostility even among the Germans. The Italian king's encouragement of anti-Prussian sentiment and indications of hesitancy were not ignored by Bismarck in particular. This position was motivated by the necessity to consider the feelings of the Catholic populace in the newly unified Germany in addition to diplomatic prudence. However, Italy's actions were far from antagonistic; both before and after the events of September 20th, it had generally supported Prussia's stance on the Roman Question. However, Italy needed to rethink its strategy, particularly in matters pertaining to the church. The start of the *Kulturkampf*, a German government campaign against the Catholic Church and the Centre Party, marked a dramatic change in the circumstances. A significant portion of

[510] **DDI**, Vol.: II, Series: II, Doc.: 315, p. 334.
[511] **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: II, Doc.: 14, p. 12.
[512] **DDI**, Vol.: II, Series: II, Doc.: 237, p. 259.
[513] **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: II, Doc.: 59, p. 64.

the Italian Right was unavoidably confused and uneasy about this development. Convenient on the one hand, it eliminated another source of risk for the Pope by depriving him of a possible ally. Yet, it was hard to overlook the gap between the *Kulturkampf* and Italian policy, which Italy had no intention of straying from. The notion of preserving "intimi rapporti colla Germania" was not challenged. However, this intimacy had to be construed "come un pegno di sicurezza e di pace", and not as the "base d'una politica senza moderazione verso i nostril vicini o verso il Papato".[514]

Managing such a complicated diplomatic strategy that combined narrow Italian objectives with more general European ones was not simple, but it was also not impossible. It needed a kind of confidence that was based on caution, balance, and a belief in the "benefici del tempo", rather than being blind. Visconti Venosta articulated an opinion that is commonly held by Right-wingers when he drew a line between Italy's desired complete alliance and Prussia's essential help. Prime Minister Lanza would encapsulate this position in April 1873 as follows:

*"Io ritengo che per ora l'Italia debba mantenersi libera ne' suoi movimenti e non lasciarsi attrarre troppo nè di qua nè di là. Riservarsi insomma la scelta delle sue alleanze secondo gli avvenimenti. Intanto mostrarsi benevola sì ma indipendente verso tutti e da tutti; e impiegare attivamente il suo tempo a ordinare le sue finanze, il suo esercito e la difesa dello stato, senza precipitazione ma senza ritardo".*[515]

La Marmora released his memoirs, which are full of documented allusions to the events of 1866, at the same time, but not simply to protect his honor, which had been "da vari pubblicisti oltraggiato". They undoubtedly did not remember the partnership with Bismarck in a positive light; rather, it was taken as a clear warning not to repeat the experiment and not to sacrifice the precious good of "indipendenza".[516]

All of this also made sense in the larger scheme of enhancing Italy's reputation abroad. The determination to fortify links with other sovereigns and ruling dynasties was also a manifestation of the moderate government's greater capacity to secure Italy's complete recognition among Europe's great nations. Crown Prince Umberto and his wife Margherita were dispatched to Germany for an official tour in June 1872. Italy overcame opposition and diplomatic obstacles the next year, notably those of Emperor Franz Joseph and his court, to send King Vittorio Emanuele II to Vienna, the

[514] **DDI**, Vol.: III, Series: II, Doc.: 502, pp. 511–513.
[515] **DDI**, Vol.: IV, Series: II, Doc.: 443, p. 445.
[516] **A. La Marmora**, *Un po' più di luce sugli eventi politici e militari dell'anno 1866*, Florence: Barbera, 1873.

site of the International Exposition, and then to Berlin. A diplomatic change was further highlighted by the meeting with the Austrian emperor, who would repay the visit by traveling to Venice in April 1875. This action served to reinforce a line of policy that was already emerging: the renunciation of any claims to ethnically Italian areas that were still under the Habsburg Dual Monarchy's boundaries. Regarding the double monarchy, Italy's cordial ties with it were meticulously preserved, especially by Visconti Venosta and Count Carlo Nicolis di Robilant, a brave military leader with strong and established ties to the European nobility. Given Austria's status as a "potenza cattolica e conservatrice" and its continued close ties to the Roman Question, he was sent to the Italian diplomatic mission in Vienna in June 1871. From a national perspective, this matter remained linked to the destiny of the inhabitants of Trento and Trieste. If there had not been a chance for such a diplomatic placement and if the coordination with Vienna had been badly handled, it may have resulted in diplomatic tension or even mistrust, which would have been obviously detrimental to the primary foreign policy goal. Only lately had Austria's liberal leanings been apparent. Prussia was now the focus of attention more than ever before. Visconti Venosta's plan for the king's trip to meet Wilhelm I was essentially conceived as a "guarentigia morale", one that could help improve relations with the German Empire and be consistent with the larger goal of the "ulteriore sviluppo a norma delle eventualità e dei bisogni". The guiding idea that the Italian minister repeatedly reaffirmed remained the same in every instance: "Coltivare le relazioni colla Germania non al di là dei bisogni della situazione, ma a seconda dello svolgersi della situazione, in modo che all'occorrenza, il frutto sia maturo, ecco quale parmi debba essere il nostro intento".[517]

However, the threat of revanche, or perhaps a more recent and irreversible war between Prussia and France, remained. There were even concerns that the feared time had actually come by the spring of 1875. France had successfully liberated its land, and more generally, had shown that it could bounce back from defeat far more quickly than Bismarck had predicted, despite the size of the indemnity requested. After a statute allowing for an increase in soldier numbers in the case of a conflict was approved by the French Parliament, there was a crisis known as the "guerra in vista" (from the headline of a newspaper story at the time). The vicious publicity campaign that ensued outside of the Rhine suggested that Bismarck was in fact planning to start a preventative war. The French Foreign Minister Decazes' diplomatic outreach to

[517] **DDI**, Vol.: V, Series: II, Doc.: 61, pp. 60–61.

Russia and Britain, whose answers appeared to suggest that France was not as isolated as Prussia believed, added to the worry.

When Italy became involved, its diplomacy refrained from adopting a stance, indicating that it did not agree with the German call to weapons. In his letters to Robilant, probably the diplomat he most identified with, Visconti Venosta publicly criticized the German chancellor's actions in that case, stating that they were incompatible with his own conception of international life and its guiding ideals. Future circumstances, such as a rematch between France and Prussia and a potential even more devastating German triumph, made this reluctance all the more reasonable. "Ne verrebbe fuori probabilmente un'Europa di cui l'occidente apparterrebbe alla Germania e l'oriente alla Russia", Visconti Venosta still believed that maintaining peace was essential. At the very least, he insisted that there was an "assoluto interesse" in delaying any conflict for as long as possible, until Italy could act "agire come una grande potenza e non apparire dominata da quella specie di fatalità che è la legge dei più deboli" in the event of a new European crisis. As had already been shown, the importance of relations with Prussia was unavoidable, but it had to be interpreted carefully in order to protect Italy's "libertà d'azione" and preserve "la condotta e il linguaggio di un paese che desidera la tranquillità dell'Europa, e i cui voti e i cui interessi sono per il mantenimento della pace".[518]

[518] **DDI**, Vol.: VI, Series: II, Doc.: 260, pp. 304–307.

# Chapter 10. Memory, Collective Intellectual Imagination, and Representation of the "Breccia"

## 1871 – 1900: Creating Heroes

Though it never quite achieved the intensity of commemorations of other great moments of the Risorgimento, the capture of Rome, Porta Pia, and its "breach" have been one of the pillars upon which the Italian national narrative has been built from 1870 to the present. Instead, it has slowly faded into oblivion. However, the event was crucial since it helped to resolve the Roman issue and gave the Kingdom of Italy its historical and natural capital by allowing it to unite (while waiting for the conquest of the other unredeemed provinces). So how can we account for this memory fluctuation that gradually changed from light to shadow?

The whole Italian political elite undoubtedly rejoiced at the conquest of Rome, but more than anything else, it was glorified by the emergence of new heroes i.e., the actual fighters.[519] They were portrayed as the primary memory transmitters. "Molti dei soldati [...] nei loro villaggi e nelle loro campagne, dall'ultimo abituro delle Alpi all'ultimo della Sicilia, insegneranno ai loro fanciulli il nome di Roma come vennero insegnati a loro i colori della bandiera e il nome del Re. E Roma sarà pei loro figli il primo degli affetti, dopo quello della Patria e della libertà", Edmondo De Amicis, who was presumably the most proficient, said.[520] According to the memoirs of Achille De Feo, who recalled that in Rome "sent[i] il cuore sussultare di orgoglio e di soddisfazione", some veterans thought of themselves as the builders of undivided Italy, declaring to himself: "L'Italia è fatta! Il mio compito verso la Patria era finito".[521]

The Italian soldier, who represented a vision of freedom and advancement, exemplified the unity of the now-completed country and the Italian people' care for the rediscovered Roman brethren in the patriotic national speech of liberal Italy. In this way, even the simplest event that offered the military an opportunity to aid the local populace might acquire a symbolic meaning—often an overly strong one. When soldiers from the 21st and 34th infantry, who were stationed in Viterbo, stepped in to

[519] **L. Riall**, *Eroi maschili, virilità e forme della guerra* and **A. M. Banti**, *La memoria degli eroi*, in A. M. Banti and P. Ginsborg (ed.), *Storia d'Italia. Annali. 22: Il Risorgimento*, 2007, Turin: Einaudi, pp. 253–288, and 637–664.
[520] Cited in **E. De Amicis**, *Impressioni di Roma*. Florence: Faverio e comp., 1870, p. 183
[521] Cited in **A. C. De Feo**, *Da Milazzo a Porta Pia*, Genua: E. Spiotti, 1907, p. 71

put out a fire at the civil hospital on September 30th, 1870, saving a two-year-old child from the flames, the provincial commander gave them a heartfelt tribute, replete with patriotic eloquence: "Il vostro filantropico e opportuno concorso in questa occasione ha commosso l'intera città. [...] In questa occasione avete sempre più dimostrato che il soldato italiano non solo sa combattere per la difesa della Patria e del suo Re, ma anche in ogni evento è pronto a qualunque sacrificio".[522] On a deeper level, the artillerymen's serene poise, which was also the focus of symbolic exaltation, contrasted with the bersaglieri's and infantrymen's triumphal fervour, as Edmondo De Amicis puts it: "Il contegno di quegli artiglieri era ammirevole. Non si può immaginare con che tranquillità, con che disinvolta e inalterabile indifferenza facevano le loro manovre, a così breve distanza dal nemico".[523] Quartermaster Sergeant Achille Solofra of the 9th Artillery Regiment was the sole promotion given for war honours within the military branch, being promoted to second lieutenant.

The press's extensive coverage of the daily orders also helped to Romanticize the military operation and its main characters. "[A]nche in questa congiuntura l'Esercito ha pienamente corrisposto alla mia fiducia e a quella della nazione",[524] King Vittorio Emanuelee said with patriotic passion. "Vi ringrazio tutti per l'opera così animosamente prestata a sciogliere una questione che pareva insolubile" said General Angioletti, who depicted the army as a tool of pacification between Church and State.[525] As a tribute to "nostri compagni d'arme gloriosamente caduti, [e ai] nostri feriti [che] han ben meritato del Re e della Patria", General Mazé de la Roche, commander of the 12th Division, was even more poetic.[526] Even further, on September 27th, 1870, General Enrico Cialdini wrote to General Enrico Cosenz: "Prima di tutto la felicito di gran cuore della parte brillante ch'Ella ha sostenuto nella brillantissima presa di Roma. Tutto ciò che rialza il prestigio dell'Esercito e torna a sua gloria mi riempie l'animo di gioia e perciò le stringo la mano di tutto cuore".[527] The receiver likely grinned at the letter since, as he would write to a friend on April 11th, 1887, he instead saw the military operation as lacklustre. In fact, Enrico Cosenz, who had suffered injuries after falling from a horse on September 11th, 1870, described a campaign that was "modesta per la non grande resistenza fatta dai pontifici".[528]

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[522] *Ordine del Giorno del comandante della provincia di Viterbo*, October 3rd, 1870, AUSSME, G 6-2, f. 525.
[523] Cited in **E. De Amicis**, *Impressioni*, 1870, p. 41
[524] *Order of the day no. 26*, Rome, September 23rd, 1870, AUSSME, Register of the orders of the day, G 6-11, f. 294.
[525] *Order no. 31*, September 20th, 1870, AUSSME, G 6-17, f. 142.
[526] *DS 12th division*, September 21st, 1870, AUSSME, G 6-26, f. 313.
[527] Cited in **H. Heyriès**, *La Breccia di Porta Pia: 20 settembre 1870*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2020, p. 151
[528] Letter to Carlo Ademollo, April 11th, 1887, Roma cited by **G. Monsagrati**, *Consenz, Enrico*, in Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani, Vol.: XXX, 1984, treccani.it.

This desire to elevate individuals who had elevated Rome to the status of heroes led to numerous, perhaps unsuitable, awards proposals. As a result, 2nd Division captains Antonio Gandolfi and Aristide Gibelli were nominated to receive the silver medal for military valour "pel modo ammirevole come si recarono nei vari punti d'attacco della Porta San Pancrazio e sotto il fuoco nemico di mitraglia e fucileria […] per ben 4 ore e ½, la mattina del 20 settembre".[529] Instead, artillery sergeant Antonio Mazzoni was awarded the silver medal "per coraggio non comune e sangue freddo dimostrato nel comando del suo pezzo e per aver animato i suoi difendenti anche dopo aver riportato una grave ferita".[530] This recognition would not have been given to these "heroes" if they had not bravely faced enemy fire right away. This also applies to the eight bersaglieri of the 35th battalion who either took Villa Patrizi or fought on in spite of their injuries.[531]

The 2nd Division had requested 80 awards, which were subsequently lowered to 30 (of which only 20 were awarded), so many nominations for awards (656 in all) that they had to be later whittled down.[532] Ultimately, a total of 278 honours were given to the military personnel: 251 medals (one gold medal for military valour, 111 silver medals for military valour, and 139 honourable mentions) and 27 decorations (nine from the Crown of Italy, ten from the Military Order of Savoy, and eight from the Order of Saints Maurice and Lazarus).[533] Naturally, the battalions that had spearheaded the attack on Porta Pia and the breach were the most decorated: the 12th and 11th divisions, which accounted for 62% of the total, got 108 and 66 awards, respectively. Not only did the officers get all the decorations of the military order, but they also received more medals than the enlisted soldiers and non-commissioned officers (112, 52, and 78, respectively). The artillery (20 and 54), the bersaglieri (38 and 23), and the line infantry (39 silver medals and 41 mentions) were especially honoured in the distribution per military branch. Engineers, cavalry, the medical service, and logistics had to make do with what was left. Despite being the most severely wounded, the bersaglieri did not earn most of the awards; nevertheless, they did receive the single gold medal for military courage, which went to Major Giacomo Pagliari of the 34th battalion, whose death was considered heroic. The major, who was born in the Cremona region in 1822 as an Austrian subject, went on to become a real Italian veteran of the wars of 1848-1849, 1855-1856, and 1859-1866. In fact, he became a martyr,

[529] *List of the proposals of rewards of the 2nd division*, AUSSME, G 6-13, f. 254.
[530] *General Command of the 9th division, list of the proposals of rewards*, AUSSME, G 6-13, f. 259.
[531] **U. Pesci**, *Come siamo entrati a Roma*. Milano: Treves, 1895, p. 318.
[532] *Numerical summary of the proposals of rewards*, s.d., AUSSME, G 6-13, f. f. 242.
[533] **U. Pesci**, *Come siamo entrati*, 1895, p. 310–321.

personifying the victorious military Risorgimento. "[P]er aver con intelligenza e ammirevole slancio condotto il suo proprio battaglione all'assalto della breccia rimanendo mortalmente ferito", read the posthumous gold medal that was given to him.[534] Adolfo Pantaresi later sculpted his bust, which was placed on the Janiculum Hill in 1895 among Garibaldian patriots and the heroes of the *guerre patrie*. The Bersaglieri became a genuine cult around him after that.

However, employing literary and iconographic techniques was also necessary to create heroes. The bersaglieri were made heroes by Edmondo De Amicis, who became the voice of national and patriotic pedagogy with his well-known book *Cuore*, published in 1886. In the description of a military parade, he said, "I bersaglieri, l'antico dodicesimo battaglione, i primi che entrarono in Roma per la breccia di Porta Pia, bruni, lesti, vivi, coi pennacchi sventolanti, passarono come un'ondata d'un torrente nero, facendo echeggiare la piazza di squilli acuti di tromba che sembravan grida d'allegrezza".[535] Though occasionally of low quality, patriotic poetry, plays, memorial addresses, and educational booklets helped turn the winners into heroes who had given their lives for the country's cause between 1870 and 1914.[536] One simply has to read the lines written by an unidentified author and published in 1873 to attest to this: "Presso la Porta Pia più che in altrove / Lavorava il Cannon senza intervalli / [...] I Zuavi nel far l'ultime prove / Erano in volto diventati gialli / Che delì lor Cannoni a dire il vero / Ogni colpo facea zero via zero".[537] Veterans published their own memoirs[538] and, among those, a patriotic interpretation of the capture of Rome was given by Raffaele Cadorna, published in 1889,[539] but even the papal Zouaves were being praised in hagiographic martyrologies at the same time.[540]

Even at the expense of creating an event from scratch, the image's effects and literary reinterpretation allowed for the fixing of the invasion of Rome in the collective consciousness, says Hubert Heyriès, "even at the cost of fabricating an occurrence *ex novo*".[541]

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[534] *General Command of the 11th division, list of proposals*, AUSSME, G 6-13, f. 265 retro.

[535] *L'Esercito, 11 [giugno], domenica. Festa nazionale*, in **E. De Amicis**, *Cuore*, Milano: Newton Compton, 1994, p. 283.

[536] See, among others, the poetry of **G. Crescimanno**, *Il venti settembre o Roma capitale d'Italia, memorie*, Siracusa: Miuccio, 1880; **P. Ciampini**, *La breccia di Porta Pia, azione drammatica in tre atti*, Roma: Stab. Tip. Mambilla e Bernabei, 1871; **T. Bousquet**, *Roma caput mundi*, Napoli: Chiurazzi, 1895.

[537] *La Presa di Roma dall'armi italiane nel 1870* - a poem in ottava rima by A. M., dedicated to lovers of poetry, Roma: Tip. Ferretti, 1873.

[538] For instance, **U. Pesci**, *Come siamo entrati*, 1895; and **A. C. De Feo**, *Da Milazzo*, 1907.

[539] **R. Cadorna**, *La liberazione di Roma nell'anno 1870 ed il plebiscito*, Turin: L. Roux e C., 1889.

[540] For instance, see **R. Bittard des Portes**, *Histoire des zouaves pontificaux*, Paris: Libraire Bloud & Barral, 1894.

[541] **H. Heyriès**, *La Breccia di Porta Pia*, 2020, p. 154.

On September 21st, the day following the capture of the capital, photographer Gioacchino Altobelli had received permission from General Cadorna to set up bersaglieri in shooting position in front of Porta Pia against an enemy that could not be seen. But the stiff stance of the Italian soldiers, the lack of emotion, clamour, and rage, made it impossible to depict an event that was seen as fundamental to Italy. However, Risorgimento painting came to accept this unduly static picture, which was unable to adequately celebrate the heroism of Rome's conquerors.[542] Popular polychrome and anonymous lithographs showed the bersaglieri submerged in the smoke from the papal Zouaves' explosions, their shadows outlined in the opening. The attack of the Bersaglieri at Porta Pia was also depicted in 1871 by the Neapolitan painter Michele Cammarano, who charged forward with bayonets set and a ferocious, determined look. Thus, this dramatic depiction of the incident symbolized the national ambition to unite the nation through sheer willpower.[543] Using a combination of reddish brushstrokes and grey-blue contrasts, the patriotic painter Carlo Ademollo painted the assault on the breach at Porta Pia around 1880. This painting foreshadowed the twilight of a dying papal Rome and the dawn of a united Italy.[544] Additionally, it was vital to make Major Giacomo Pagliari a hero. Thus in 1882, Archimede Tranzi portrayed him in the foreground, murdered by papal forces that were plainly seen massed on the breach.[545] Additionally, the magnificent Risorgimento painting created in 1880 at the San Martino della Battaglia museum, where the Piedmontese had won a decisive victory against the Austrians in 1859, featured a depiction of his execution. The capture of Rome was therefore inserted into the continuity of the major conflicts of the Risorgimento, confirming a commemorative syncretism.[546]

Cinema swiftly seized upon the occasion when, on September 20th, 1905, Filoteo Alberini's silent short film, *La presa di Roma*, which had previously been seen in Livorno, was made and screened outside in front of Porta Pia. The conquest of Rome was divided into seven scenes that highlighted the bravery of the bersaglieri and infantry who were attacking, as well as General Carchidio, who was received by

[542] **F. Mazzocca**, *La rappresentazione della guerra nella pittura risorgimentale*, in A. M. Banti and P. Ginsborg (ed.), *Storia d'Italia. Annali. 22: Il Risorgimento*, 2007, Turin: Einaudi, pp. 721–743.

[543] **M. Cammarano**, *Bersaglieri alla presa di Porta Pia*, oil on canvas, 1871, museo di Capodimonte, Naples.

[544] **C. Ademollo**, *La breccia di Porta Pia*, oil on canvas, 1870, museo del Risorgimento, Milano.

[545] **A. Tranzi**, *La breccia di Porta Pia con la morte del maggiore dei bersaglieri Giacomo Pagliari*, oil on canvas, 1882, museo di Roma, Rome.

[546] As it has already been shown, and as for the historiographical interpretative groundwork, art also put the "Breccia" – and the *questione Romana*, more generally – into the broader context of Risorgimento. In the mind of the author, in fact, one cannot fully comprehend the dynamics and causes of the Roman occupation without analysing the Risorgimento in its entirety, both in the cultural and political aspects.

General Kanzler, and Luigi Pelloux, who ordered the breach to be opened. Pelloux was a political right-wing figure at the time, a general, senator, and former prime minister from 1898 to 1900, as well as a former minister of the interior and minister of war. The movie ended with a patriotic and Risorgimento-themed dedication and an apotheosis.[547]

Nevertheless, the creation of heroic Risorgimento personalities was insufficient; a "federative" site of remembrance had to be established.

## 1900 – 1922: Creating Mausolea

As the emblem of a unified Italian country and the cornerstone of a secular and patriotic civic religion, Porta Pia and its breach had in fact helped to foster the national narrative of a liberal monarchical Italy. At first objects of interest or Sunday walks, they soon became the focus of celebration because of a stone plaque remembrance. A marble slab featuring the words "l'esercito italiano [che] entrava vittorioso […] compiendo i lunghi voti dei Romani e assicurando all'Italia il possesso della sua capitale" was put on the wall of the rebuilt breach by the Rome municipality on June 4th, 1871. Municipalities in various cities, especially in the Custoza area, a site of mournful recollection, sponsored plaques honouring the incident. Municipalities in various cities, especially in the Custoza area, a site of mournful recollection, sponsored plaques honouring the incident. Thus, two city councils unanimously decided on September 20th to place a marble plaque on a public building with the threatening and determined inscription "ci siamo e ci resteremo", consecrating the definitive conquest of the eternal city. This was done in Verona for the tenth anniversary of the capture of Rome and in Villafranca for the twenty-fifth anniversary (presumably to erase the grim memory of the 1859 armistice signed by Napoleon III and Franz Joseph).[548]

But this stone-carved remembrance was insufficient to forge a national unity. In a time when ossuaries dotted the Risorgimento's battlefields (eight had been built between 1870 and 1880, six between 1881 and 1890, seven between 1891 and 1900, and four between 1901 and 1910), the worship of the fallen was honoured.[549] Because they were connected to the dead of 1849, the victims of Porta Pia and the breach were thus

[547] *La presa di Roma (20 settembre 1870)*, short film of **Filoteo Alberini**, 1905, ca. 9 mins; and **M. Canosa** (ed.), *1905, La presa di Roma: alle origini del cinema italiano*, Bologna-Recco: Cineteca di Bologna-Le Mani, 2006.

[548] **D. Beverari** and **M. Vecchiato** (ed.), *Monumenti celebrativi dell'età risorgimentale nella provincia di Verona*, Verona: La Grafica, 2008, pp. 324–325, and 373.

[549] **C. Saletti**, *L'ossario di Custoza*, Città di Castello: Ombre corte, 2013, pp. 180–189.

commemorated, although in a special way.[550] Even though they had not participated in the capture of Rome, the Garibaldians, who considered themselves the custodians of this national memory, made it their mission to honour these heroes with funerals, thereby enshrining the memory of the capture in their myth. On October 12th, 1879, the bones of the Roman martyrs were moved to the Janiculum Hill under the auspices of the Mutual Aid Society for Veterans of the National Battles, which Garibaldi himself established in 1871 before his oldest son Menotti took charge. A funerary urn containing the bones of fourteen Italian soldiers who perished during the conquest of the capital and had been exhumed from the burial site at the Mausoleum of Santa Costanza, on Via Nomentana, within the monumental complex of Sant'Agnese, was placed in a sixth wagon that day, along with the remains of the heroes of the glorious defence of 1849 (a stele erected in 1879 commemorates this transfer). There, the dead were laid to rest in a large communal grave sealed with a tombstone that bore a Latin inscription recalling the battles of 1849 against the French and September 20th, 1870, against foreign mercenaries.[551] A lengthy popular procession, comprising ministers, generals, and the mayor of the city, left Termini for the Janiculum. Thus, the dynastic memory attested by the regular army men of 1870 and the popular memory expressed by Garibaldi's 1849 companions combined to form a single syncretism that served as a vehicle of national identity. Thus, it was no accident that Achille De Feo, a veteran of the Garibaldian conflicts in Sicily and the regular army's invasion of Rome, wrote his memoirs in 1902 under the syncretic title *Da Milazzo a Porta Pia*.[552] By that time, though, few people were interested in the mausoleum on the Janiculum; instead, they wanted to see the statue of Garibaldi riding a horse that had been built nearby in 1895.

During the commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the conquest of Rome on September 20th, 1895, a spectacular celebration was planned, which drew fierce criticism from Church officials. Law No. 401, which was passed by Parliament that year and enacted on July 19th, declared September 20th to be a national holiday. He was supported by Francesco Crispi, a former Garibaldian nationalist and anticlerical who had been in power since 1893. Crispi thought that "le celebrazioni sarebbero state un momento forte di rappresentazione del consenso di tutte le sue componenti sociali, nell'identificazione con la Monarchia, simbolo e garante della solidità e dello sviluppo

[550] **A. Cartocci**, *Il Mausoleo Ossario Gianicolense e la Società di Mutuo Soccorso "Giuseppe Garibaldi"*, in Quaderni storiografici dell'Istituto Internazionale di Studi "Giuseppe Garibaldi", Rome: Istituto Internazionale di Studi "Giuseppe Garibaldi", Vol.: 40, 2015, p. 3.

[551] *Ivi*, p. 4.

[552] **A. C. De Feo**, *Da Milazzo*, 1907.

dello Stato nazionale".[553] Thus, the conquest of Rome had been used for political purposes well beyond the mere conjuring of a mediocre military campaign (with the help of the contemporaneous celebration of Garibaldi, Cavour, and Minghetti). In addition to severe tension with France (the French protectorate over Tunisia in 1881, the country's accession to the Triple Alliance in 1882, the trade war, and the pogroms against immigrants in Aigues-Mortes, southern France, in August 1893), Italy was going through a severe socioeconomic crisis (such as the Sicilian Fasci movement between 1891 and 1894). The January 26th, 1887, slaughter of the "500" Italian troops by Ethiopians at Dogali, Eritrea, had also made its way into the national consciousness, causing some people to feel deeply humiliated and others to want retribution. Furthermore, the Quirinal and the Church were at odds openly. The country had to project unity in an environment characterized by such intense internal and international conflicts. Masonic lodges, republican associations, radical circles, Garibaldian veterans of national battles, anticlerical groups, Rome's mayor, Emanuele Ruspoli of the historical right, Menotti Garibaldi, who presided over the executive committee for the commemorations, and King Umberto I all attempted to dedicate the new secular religion of the Italian State and honour Rome as the capital with a commemorative medal, a "Wagnerian" hymn, and, most importantly, two significant events on September 20th, 1895: the unveiling of a statue of Garibaldi on Janiculum Hill in the morning, followed by a sizable national and popular parade at the breach of Porta Pia in the afternoon.

Giuseppe Guastalla and Adolfo Apolloni, two sculptors, had built a column there and placed a magnificent Victory figure depicting Italy spreading her wings. They had also engraved words at the base that praised "la coscienza libera dell'umanità nuova", establishing Italy as the beacon of liberty and civilization. Finally, Crispi's government had another marble slab installed on the rebuilt wall of the *Breccia*, next to the plaque that had been erected on June 4th, 1871. It was obviously anti-Catholic and secular in content, recalling the vote of the Roman Republic of 1849 and the plebiscite of October 2nd, 1870 – events whose meanings had changed over time to become more civic and patriotic than dynastic.[554] Thus, the breach of Porta Pia came to represent the triumph of civilization over obscurantism and the Quirinal over the Vatican, while an

[553] Cited in **L. Francescangeli**, *Il "Comitato generale per solennizzare il XXV anniversario della liberazione di Roma" ed il suo archivio*, in MEFRIM, Vol.: CIX, no. 1, 1997, p. 187; **I. Porciani**, *Stato, statue, simboli. I monumenti nazionali a Garibaldi e a Minghetti del 1895*, in Annali ISAP, Vol.: 1, pp. 211–243; and **C. Brice**, *Monarchie et Identité nationale en Italie (1861–1900)*, 2010, Paris: Editions de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, p. 149.

[554] **C. Brice**, *Monarchie et identité nationale*, 2010, pp. 152–153.

enormous monument of Garibaldi on horseback stood provocatively in front of the papal throne on the Janiculum.

However, even if it remained minor and continued to cause fresh problems, the military aspect of the conquest of Rome was not forgotten. In an unsuccessful attempt to link it to the memories of 1862 and 1867, the Garibaldians had objected. Some 1870 veterans felt the remembrance was insufficient, to the extent that Raffaele Cadorna, who was a devout Catholic and annoyed by the event's anti-Catholic tone, declined to take part. However, the city of Rome paid a magnificent homage to the military heroes of the breach, and the names of the slain were inscribed in marble so that future tourists would never forget them. Naturally, throughout the week of September 20th, 1895, leftist organizations had staged counterdemonstrations to show their animosity for the right, which they said had taken over a national celebration. In any event, Francesco Crispi's objective was accomplished: the *Breccia* had developed into a popular, patriotic, and national pilgrimage site within the context of a new civic religion that united former Garibaldi soldiers and regular army veterans. It was no accident that on the thirtieth anniversary of the capture of Rome in 1900, Angelo Gerardi dedicated a lengthy lyrical and elegiac poem to the latter, called "pellegrinanti in Roma".[555] On September 20th, 1913, students from Roman schools marched in procession before the *Breccia*, while patriotic speeches were delivered by representatives of the veterans of the wars for the fatherland.[556] To put it simply, "le feste del 20 settembre ebbero la particolarità di essere celebrazioni sdoppiate, con una parte ufficiale patriottica, militare e monarchica assieme a un'altra parte laica, democratica e parzialmente anticlericale".[557]

However, the papal Zouaves also celebrated Porta Pia, so it escaped the monopoly of secular and monarchist Italy. In fact, they had wanted to glorify what they considered to be their own Jerusalem, and on July 18th, 1885, approximately a thousand of them gathered in the park of Basse-Motte, on the estate of Athanase de Charette, in Brittany, near Saint-Brieuc, to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the beginning of the Ninth Crusade. Arriving from France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, and Canada, they used the occasion to erect plaques in a chapel that listed the names of those who had died in the battles of September 1870. The celebration went on to include a Mass that remembered the pope's defence at Porta Pia, followed

[555] **A. Gerardi**, *Ai veterani e garibaldini pellegrinati in Roma nel trentennio della Breccia di Porta Pia*, Roma: Failli, 1900.

[556] *Alla breccia di Porta Pia*, in La Stampa, September 21st, 1913, p. 1.

[557] Cited in **C. Brice**, *Monarchie et identité nationale*, 2010, p. 144.

by a lavish feast.[558] A political hagiography praising the breach of Porta Pia, where "les «Remingtons» *faisaient merveille*, comme il avait été dit de nos chassepots, au beau jour de Mentana", was written by the conservative René Bittard des Portes a few years later, in 1894.[559]

But this golden age of memorial and remembrance ended with the Great War and its immediate aftermath.

In order to prove "che il Soldato Italiano […] nei giorni nefasti mai al nemico mostrò le spalle",[560] photography pioneer Cesare Schiaparelli documented the military events of the Risorgimento from the Battle of Goito in 1848 to the capture of Porta Pia in 1870 in December 1915, when Italy and the Allies had already been at war with Austria-Hungary since May 24th of that year. He therefore made the capture of Rome a significant turning point in the Risorgimento memorial pantheon, which encompassed the Great War. Later, *generalissimo* Luigi Cadorna and his father, Raffaele, were compared as both defenders of Rome's glory. "A te, Luigi Cadorna, duce supremo delle nostre armi, da questa breccia e in questa data che ricordano col nome di tuo padre, la promessa di una libertà nuova destinata ad affermare la grandezza di Roma" was the patriotic oath that interventionist chemist and publicist Giulio Provenzal gave in front of the *Breccia* on September 20th, 1917, just a few weeks before the Caporetto disaster.[561]

The fiftieth anniversary of the conquest of Rome was celebrated on September 20th, 1920, amid intense tensions following the war. Everyone was devastated by an unparalleled economic, social, political, and moral crisis, leaving scars from what had been humanity's greatest tragedy. Under assault from far-right D'Annunzian and fascist elements, as well as revolutionary maximalist socialists, the liberal monarchy's foundations shook. Confidentially held, the Porta Pia celebration commemorated the triumph of the monarchy, the popular, national, and unitary reconciliation, and the success of liberal Italy. In that same year, Colonel Attilio Vigevano wrote a scientifically significant book on the capture of Rome that was based on first-hand accounts but approached the matter from the perspective of the pope, namely the other camp.[562] To highlight continuity with the prewar era, the city of Rome positioned a marble plaque at the breach above the one from 1871. But the main purpose of the

[558] **R. Bittard des Portes**, *Histoire des zouaves*, 1894, pp. 394–395.
[559] *Ivi*, p. 228. Emphasis not added: present in the original text.
[560] **C. Schiapparelli**, *Da Goito a Porta Pia, 1848–1870, quello che hanno fatto i nostri soldati*, Turin: Tip. S. Giuseppe degli artigianelli, 1915, p. 3.
[561] **G. Provenzal**, *Giuramento a Cadorna*, Roma: L'Agave, 1917, p. 1.
[562] See **A. Vigevano**, *La fine*, 1920.

events on Capitoline Hill on September 20th was to commemorate Vittorio Emanuele III. The mayor of the city paid a heartfelt homage "al Re soldato", recalling the capture of the Eternal City as the cornerstone of the country's identity: "Nel cinquantesimo anniversario della sua redenzione, Roma rievoca l'opera del vostro grande avo che […] fondò l'unità nazionale".[563] The golden period of Porta Pia's memories came to an end with the emergence of fascism, which marked the start of an unstoppable collapse.

## 1922 – Today: Between Fascism and Anti-Fascism, Militarism and Anti-Militarism: The Vortex of Oblivion

The memory of the conquest of Rome gradually faded into obscurity between the two wars. The papal zouave had lost all meaning in the collective memory, according to right-wing monarchist Count Edgard de Barral of France in 1932: "In alcuni manieri della Vandea o della Bretagna, in alcuni immobili del sobborgo di Saint-Germain, […la sua fotografia] è relegata in uno di quei ripostigli che chiamiamo camere per gli ospiti".[564] Less obviously, the same thing was occurring with the heroes of the breach in Italy.

The seizure of Rome became an unavoidable episode in the commemoration historicization of the nation-building process since fascism viewed the Risorgimento in a purely nationalist way.[565] The Duce wished to undermine the liberal monarchy without going to war with the king, but the breach of Porta Pia nevertheless brought to mind its victory. In addition, there was a chance that relations with the Church, which Mussolini looked on for assistance, may deteriorate. Fascism regained the memories of Porta Pia after it came into power, albeit in a very specific way. In this respect, the September 20th, 1923, ceremony was exemplary: at Porta Pia, the procession included members of the national fascist party (PNF), the voluntary militia for national security (established on January 14th of that year), and the Risorgimento, former Great War soldiers, as well as the agents of the new regime. The audience cried out, "Viva il Re! Viva Savoia" when the monarch also took part in the remembrance by reading a telegram at the *Breccia*. On that day, the dictatorship deftly crafted a

[563] Cited in *Il dispaccio del Re al Sindaco il 20 settembre a Roma*, in La Stampa, September 21st, 1920, p. 2.
[564] Cited in **E. de Barral**, *Les zouaves pontificaux 1860–1870*, 1932, Paris: Librairie du Dauphin, pp. 9–11.
[565] **M. Baioni**, *Fascismo e Risorgimento, L'Istituto per la storia del risorgimento italiano*, in Passato e Presente, Vol.: 41, 1997, pp. 45–75; **M. Baioni**, *Risorgimento in camicia nera: studi, istituzioni, musei nell'Italia fascista*, Roma: Carocci, 2006; and **G. Ciampi**, *Il Risorgimento e la scuola fascista*, in Il Risorgimento, n.s. *Il mito del Risorgimento nell'Italia unita*, Vol.: 47, no. 1–2, 1995, pp. 369–383.

"nuovo rinascimento" that connected two "prese" of Rome: the one by the royal army on September 20th, 1870, and the one by the fascist militias on October 28th, 1922. According to Il Popolo d'Italia, "Nel 1870 si chiudeva un ciclo storico, nel 1922 un altro se ne iniziava. [...] Come il settembre 1870 non negò al papato il supremo seggio di spirituale sovranità [...], così l'ottobre 1922 intende riconoscere ed esaltare l'altissimo valore morale del sentimento religioso, conferendo il massimo prestigio alla Chiesa Cattolica".[566] This was essentially a prelude to the Lateran Pacts, which were signed on February 11th, 1929, bringing an end to the dispute between the Vatican and the Quirinal and creating a concordat between Church and State. Later, on December 27th, 1930, 35 years after the issuance, King Vittorio Emanuele III issued Law No. 1726, which eliminated the national holiday of September 20th in order to appease Pope Pius XI and undo the achievements of liberal Italy.

However, antagonism with the Church became more intense and tensions with the monarchy escalated in the 1930s. While the commemorations of the *Breccia* and September 20th were more covert, literary and historical works addressed the subject by emphasizing the diplomatic and theological dimensions. However, Porta Pia continued to be used as a propaganda weapon for the dictatorship, which advocated for an alliance with the military rather than the King and the Pope.[567] A monument honouring the Bersaglieri was unveiled in front of the gate on September 18th, 1932, bringing back a painful memory for the Holy See and fitting in with the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of Garibaldi's death, which had been commemorated by fascism on June 2nd at the Janiculum, where Anita's ashes had been interred.[568] Publio Morbiducci, a sculptor, created the four-meter-tall memorial, although it adhered to 19th-century standards rather than the regime's. In keeping with the popular image the dictatorship aimed to convey, a bronze bersagliere was shown during the attack. But by combining the capture of Rome with the Italian wars, fascism was able to imprint its own vision. As a result, bas-reliefs were placed at the base of the monument to commemorate the great acts of the Bersaglieri in the Risorgimento battles (the Goito bridge on April 8th, 1848, Luciano Manara's death on June 30th, 1849, while defending the Roman Republic, and Porta Pia on September 20th, 1870), the war in Libya against the Turks (1911-1912), and the Great War (honouring two Bersaglieri heroes: Alberto

[566] *L'Italia celebra nel XX settembre la sua unità spirituale di Grande Potenza. Esercito, Milizia e Popolo alla Breccia di Porta Pia. Un nuovo Rinascimento*, in Il Popolo d'Italia, September 21st, 1923, p. 1.

[567] **G. Rochat**, *Le guerre italiane 1935–1943. Dall'impero d'Etiopia alla disfatta*, Turin: Einaudi, 2005, p. 147, no. 5.

[568] **U. Alfassio Grimaldi**, *L'utilizzazione del mito garibaldino ad opera del fascismo*, in A. A. Mola (ed.), *Garibaldi generale della libertà*, Roma: AUSSME, 1984, pp. 605–613.

Riva Villa Santa, killed on November 4th, 1918, and Enrico Toti, who died on August 6th, 1916, in Monfalcone).[569]

In keeping with it, the Bersaglieri Historical Museum was established on June 18th, 1904, and moved to Porta Pia in 1932 from the "La Marmora" barracks (dubbed for the corps' founder, Alessandro Ferrero della Marmora) in Trastevere. Items from every Italian war were now kept in this site of memory, mainly from the Risorgimento (which led to the conquest of Rome in 1870), colonial conflicts (Eritrea and Ethiopia, 1887-1896; Libya, 1911-1912), World War I, the fascist campaign (Ethiopia, 1935-1936), and World War II (from 1940-43).[570] Porta Pia therefore became part of the military, not the political, memorial pantheon of history. As seen in 1937, when the deputy governor of Rome laid a laurel wreath at the base of the commemorative plaque commemorating the *Breccia* with the inscription, "[i]l Governatore di Roma ai soldati italiani caduti a Porta Pia", ceremonies gave way to the single recollection of the dead warriors.[571]

To put it succinctly, the government used the memory of those who had given their lives to build the country in line with the fascist exaltation of Latin renewal via war; in other words, the fallen of 1870 were intended to obliterate the memory of liberal, monarchical Italy. In order to achieve these goals, Mussolini had linked their legacy to that of the guardians of the Roman Republic in 1849, the Garibaldian martyrs of Aspromonte in 1862 and Mentana's in 1867, as well as the Garibaldians in general, of whom he claimed to be the heir and successor. In 1939, he revived the proposal of one of the hero's grandsons, Ezio Garibaldi, and dedicated a joint tomb to them in the same location where the ashes of Rome's heroes had been collected in a mass grave in 1879.[572] The monument was officially opened by the Duce on November 3rd, 1941, following two years of labour.[573] Giovanni Jacobucci, the architect of the dictatorship, had built a sombre travertine *quadriportico* that was topped by a stairway that led to a block of pink granite adorned with ancient Roman symbols, which fascism associated with. The *quadriportico* was opened by three arches on each side. The names of the major conflicts were inscribed on travertine pedestals in each corner. The liberation of Rome, the republican conflicts of 1849 (including those at Porta San Pancrazio), the Garibaldian expeditions of 1862 (Aspromonte) and 1867 (Monterotondo, Mentana), and the eventual conquest of Porta Pia were all examples of those conflicts. The bones

[569] *Il monumento al bersagliere a Porta Pia*, in La Stampa, September 26th, 1932, p. 2.
[570] Historic museum of the bersaglieri, per link: https://www.assobersaglieri.it/museo-storico-dei-bersaglieri/
[571] *Il XX settembre a Roma*, in Il Popolo d'Italia, September 21st, 1937, p. 6.
[572] *Il Duce assegna novecentomila lire per il Mausoleo-Ossario gianicolense*, in La Tribuna, August 8th, 1939, p. 2.
[573] **A. Cartocci**, *Il Mausoleo Ossario Gianicolense*, 2015, p. 21.

of the 200 slain were interred at a shrine next to the sarcophagus of Goffredo Mameli, who died in 1849 from wounds he received in battle on the Janiculum. Thus, under a monument that adhered to the regime's aesthetic, the memory of the 1870 victims blended with that of the Risorgimento heroes in a history of struggles for national independence that had been fascistized.

Following the defeat of fascism, the anti-fascist left celebrated September 20th as the day when a secular, progressive, democratic, and anti-clerical Italy emerged.[574] Despite the unbroken string of governments ruled by Christian Democracy, which had solidified its hold on power in the context of the escalating Cold War, the Republic continued to strive to recover the legacy of Porta Pia after the war. In the sake of revolutionary struggle for some and secular resistance for others, socialists, communists, anarchists, republicans, and liberals came together at this site of remembering on September 17, 1949.[575] Umberto Terracini, a communist senator who served as the Constituent Assembly's president from 1947 to 1948, gave a stirring address there on September 20th, 1953.[576] The military aspect of the invasion of Rome was almost hidden in this act of reclamation. Even Piero Pieri, the founder of Italian military history, whose biggest study, released in 1962, was dedicated particularly to the Risorgimento, did not include the 1870 campaign in the papers that were published at the time on the subject.[577]

But between 1960 and 1980, Italy went through a phase of national reconciliation that would later become a staunch pathfinder for the process of European integration (with the Treaty of Rome, 1957).[578] For the first time since 1947, socialists were able to regain power in 1963 when an "organic" centre-left administration was established (communists and post-communists would stay in opposition until 1993), with a new political role for the proletariat.[579] John XXIII and Paul VI, the popes of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), had allowed the Church to adapt to the changes of the contemporary world.[580] The country's descent into the "anni di piombo" and an unparalleled economic, moral, and political catastrophe put the consensus around a

[574] **C. Pavone**, *Le idee della Resistenza. Antifascisti e fascisti di fronte alla tradizione del Risorgimento (1959)*, in C. Pavone (ed.) *Alle origini della Repubblica. Scritti sul fascismo, antifascismo e continuità dello Stato*, Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 1995, pp. 3–69.

[575] *A Porta Pia, i partiti dalla politica, XX settembre*, in La Stampa, September 18th, 1949, p. 1.

[576] **U. Terracini**, *Orazione pronunciata a Porta Pia dal senatore Umberto Terracini per la celebrazione del 20 settembre, indetta dal Comitato permanente per la celebrazione del 20 settembre*, Comitato provinciale di Roma dell'Associazione nazionale partigiani d'Italia (ed.), Roma: Tip. G. Bardi, 1953.

[577] **P. Pieri**, *Storia militare del Risorgimento. Guerre e insurrezioni*, 1969, Turin: Einaudi, pp. 785 and 820.

[578] **M. Gilbert**, *Storia politica dell'integrazione europea*, Bari-Roma: Editori Laterza, 2005, pp. 58–61.

[579] **F. Cassano**, *Il teorema democristiano*, Bari: De Donato, 1980, p. 95.

[580] **J. Casanova**, *Globalizing Catholicism and the Return to a 'Universal' Church*, in P. Beyer (ed.), *Religion in the Process of Globalization*, 2001, Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, pp. 201–225.

common political-religious memory that had developed over the 1960s and 1970s to the ultimate test. Their impacts were exacerbated by black terrorism (such as the 1969 bombing of Milan's National Bank of Agriculture and the 1980 bombing of the Bologna train station) and red terrorism (such as the 1978 Red Brigades killing of Aldo Moro), which further destabilized an already fragile country.[581] Furthermore, the military was the focus of intense anti-militarism (in the wake of failed coups, including Junio Valerio Borghese's on December 7-8th, 1970; growing anti-NATO sentiment; and growing opposition to mandatory military service). Internal peace was a challenge for the old ruling parties, which included the Republican Party, the Socialist Party, the Social Democratic Party, Christian Democracy, and the Liberal Party.[582] The Italian Communist Party and Christian Democracy eventually came to a political agreement to defend the Republic during a period when tensions appeared to be at their highest, a "compromesso storico", in order to handle the terrorist threat and socioeconomic divisions (1976-1978).

The commemorations of the conquest of Rome vacillated between protest, support, and desacralization in such a setting of political-religious reconciliation, endangered democracy, and disdain for the military.

The anticlerical and libertarian left, for instance, tried to usurp the centennial on September 20th, 1970, to condemn the Catholic right's archaism and the threat to democracy. A wreath with an inscription against "i nemici della libertà [e] le sopraffazioni clericali" was set by Marco Pannella, the head of the Radicals.[583] However, the incident was still isolated. Journalist Carlo Casalegno of La Stampa commented on the issue: "Si può onorare insieme la memoria dei bersaglieri e degli zuavi caduti sui due fronti quel giorno del 1870. [...] Sarebbe altrettanto grottesco e non meno dannoso celebrare questo centenario nel segno dell'anticlericalismo. Non siamo più nel 1895".[584] The Vicar of Rome, Cardinal Angelo Dell'Acqua, celebrated Mass in front of the breach while Christian Democrat Emilio Colombo, the prime minister at the time and head of a coalition government consisting of Socialists, Social Democrats, and Republicans, stood next to him. However, he did so to the acclaim of some people ("[b]asta, basta con le litanie, questa è una festa laica") and the disapproval of others

[581] To deepen the Italian scenario during the 1970s, see AA.VV., *L'Italia repubblicana nella crisi degli anni Settanta, Vol.: 1–4*, Soveria Mannelli: Rubettino, 2003.

[582] **S. Pons**, *Cold War Republic: The 'External Constraint' in Italy during the 1970s*, in A. Varsori and B. Zaccaria (ed.), *Italy in the International System from Détente to the End of the Cold War: The Underrated Ally*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, pp. 35–67.

[583] *Come Roma in festa ha celebrato il Centenario*, in La Stampa, September 21st, 1970, p. 2.

[584] *I fantasmi di Porta Pia*, in La Stampa, September 17th, 1970, p. 3.

("[n]on disturbate, rispettate la messa", one could hear).[585] Thus, the centennial of the conquest of Rome became a time to commemorate the reconciliation between the Vatican and the Quirinal, which was confirmed by Pope Paul VI, who proclaimed "il dissidio fra Chiesa e Stato chiuso" and by President of the Republic Giuseppe Saragat, a Social Democrat.[586] Basically, they all agreed to support Article 8 of the Republic's Constitution, which protected religious freedom, and Article 7, which reiterated the independence and sovereignty of the Church and the State, citing the Lateran Pacts.

Although they unwittingly contributed to Porta Pia's desacralization, the military also made an effort to restore their position in 1970. On September 20th, "le Forze Armate [...] rinnovano l'impegno di servire con lealtà e dedizione la Patria, a garanzia delle sue libere e democratiche istituzioni, fondate su quegli ideali di libertà e di giustizia", according to a commemorative publication that was highly patronized by the Chiefs of Staff of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Defence. But in a special edition of the publication of the National Bersaglieri Association, *Fiamma cremisi*, it was exploited the occasion to advertise souvenirs, including a handkerchief emblazoned with a Bersagliere and Porta Pia, that could be given "alla mamma, alla sposa, al figliolo, alla sorella, alla fidanzata".[587] The 1870 campaign was described in the single sentence, "[l]a preparazione del piccolo corpo di spedizione che prese Roma creò notevoli difficoltà", because the military history of the Risorgimento had been marginalized in academic studies in favour of institutional, structural, political, and social aspects.[588]

However, the emotional and symbolic significance associated with the historicization of Porta Pia was not eliminated as a result of the desacralization of the conquest of Rome. It became well-known because to popular comedies that were harsh and tragicomic. Antonio Racioppi made fun of the Bersaglieri's invasion and loss of papal Rome in the 1971 film *Mio padre monsignore*, which starred Lino Capolicchio and Giancarlo Giannini. In the same year, Alfredo Giannetti produced *Correvano l'anno di grazia 1870*, a tragicomic film starring Anna Magnani and Marcello Mastroianni. In *Arrivano i bersaglieri*, published nine years later in 1980, Luigi Magni depicted the fall of the papal realm amid artillery fire, trumpet blows, and rifle rounds at the breach of Porta Pia with macabre comedy and sarcasm. The breach was then made fun of in the

[585] *Come Roma in festa ha celebrato il Centenario, e il discorso di Saragat per Roma capitale*, in La Stampa, September 21st, 1970, p. 2.

[586] *Un messaggio del papa e la risposta di Saragat* , in La Stampa, September 20th, 1970, p. 1.

[587] *Roma 70. 21° raduno nazionale. Porta Pia 19-20 settembre 1970*, in Fiamma cremisi, XX, Settembre 1970, n. 178, special publication.

[588] **G. Rochat** and **G. Massobrio**, *Breve storia dell'esercito Italiano dal 1861 al 1943*, Turin: Einaudi, 1978, p. 85.

1986 release of the movie *Superfantozzi* (directed by Neri Parenti), which included an episode from the exploits of the clerk Ugo Fantozzi (played by Paolo Villaggio). The poor hero, a papal *travet*, thought he had made a good deal when he saw his newly purchased home destroyed by "Piedmontese" cannonballs.

In keeping with the revised national and patriotic narrative, the capture of Rome started to garner renewed political attention in the 1990s and 2000s, following the apocalypse caused in 1992 by the anti-corruption operation *Mani Pulite* and the mafia assassinations of judges Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino. In fact, Italy was going through a time of significant military obligations abroad and internal political reorganization, becoming a "Second Republic"[589] with centre-left and centre-right coalitions switching places. But the very foundations of national unity were being called into question:[590] the idea of national unity symbolized by Porta Pia and the breach was contested by the federalist and pro-differentiated-autonomy Lega Nord, the neo-Bourbon regionalists in the South, and revisionists who supported a counter-revolutionary and reactionary view of the Risorgimento (who condemned a centralizing and secular State, which they claimed had been imposed on a majority of Italians who would have preferred to stay within the reassurance of pre-unification Catholicism).[591]

It became fundamental that the Italians make peace with their history in order to protect the foundations of a vulnerable country. Thus, on September 20th, Porta Pia and the breach became "luoghi della memoria", the focus of historical study, and the conquest of Rome started to be viewed from a political-military perspective.[592] Contributing to the left-leaning publication La Repubblica, Antonio Di Pierro chronicled the events of September 20th in 2007 as though it were journalistic reportage of a current event.[593] But the conquest of Rome also served as a pretext for light-hearted celebrations. While a speaker recounted the attack and, most importantly, Major Pagliari's valiant death at the front of his troops, Bersaglieri in period costume charged

[589] It is important to notice that this term is merely journalistic in its nature. Indeed, there was no change in the Italian constitution at the time. However, seen the centrality in the Italian political life of parties and of specific figures subject to the 1992 judicial investigations, press outlets dubbed such change as a radical republican transformation; from the "first" to the "second Republic".

[590] **G. E. Rusconi**, *Se cessiamo di essere una nazione*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1993.

[591] **A. Pellicciari**, *Risorgimento da scrivere. Liberali e massoni contro la Chiesa*, Milan: Ares, 1998.

[592] Cited **G. Verucci**, *Il XX settembre*, in M. Isnenghi (ed.), *I luoghi della memoria. Personaggi e date dell'Italia unita*, Roma-Bari: Editori Laterza, 1997, pp. 87-100; **G. Luzzatto Voghera**, *La Presa di Roma*, in M. Isnenghi ed E. Cecchinato (ed.), *Fare l'Italia: unità e disunità nel Risorgimento*, Turin: UTET, 2008, pp. 770–778; and **O. Bovio**, *Storia dell'esercito Italiano (1861–1990)*, Roma: AUSSME, 1996, pp. 89–90.

[593] **A. Di Pierro**, *L'ultimo giorno del Papa Re. 20 settembre 1870: la breccia di Porta Pia*, Milan: Mondadori, 2007, p. 326.

through a hole in a false wall at a charge speed during Army Day in 2004.[594] For their part, the papal Zouaves also saw a resurgence of interest, as shown in Québec, Canada; Brittany in 1996; and even today, on the third Sunday of May in Belgium, in Thuin, where reenactors host events centred around this topic, drawing ever-larger audiences.

However, the political strategy has already won over; in fact, a movement on the left has arisen to celebrate Italian unification and the secular republic on September 20th. A few lawmakers from the Margherita party and the Democrats of the Left suggested in 2002 that it be a Risorgimento celebration. A measure to declare the anniversary of the Porta Pia breach "una solennità civile" (i.e., including the flagging of public buildings, without becoming a public holiday) was then unsuccessfully introduced by Leftist MP Paolo Cento on September 18th, 2002[595] and May 3rd, 2006.[596] Others, notably several MPs from the Democratic Party (PD) who were backed by radicals, resurrected the idea on September 27th, 2016. "[R]ipristinare la festa nazionale della Repubblica del 20 settembre [...] confermerebbe il valore unico e indispensabile della laicità dello Stato italiano e delle sue leggi e, annullando una decisione assunta da Mussolini [...], darebbe nuovo vigore a un principio fondativo della Costituzione italiana, quello dell'antifascismo", these supporters thought, recalling the significance of the capture of Rome in the collective unconscious.[597]

As of 2025, and according to the Office of State Ceremonial, September 20th is still not a national holiday.[598]

In essence, not many people are interested in the event anymore. A papal zouave and three bersaglieri storming the breach of Porta Pia stood out in the exhibition of toy soldiers from 1861 to 2011 held by the antiquarian bookstore Lucia Panini in Modena.[599] The event's evocation served as a pretext to turn the heroes of the day into lead figurines in 2011, the 150th anniversary of the Italian army's founding. The seizure of Rome was further marginalized by television: in 2003, Luigi Magni's *La notte di Pasquino* aired on Canale 5 on January 11th; in 2013, Luca Manfredi's miniseries *L'ultimo*

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[594] Youtube video, *Rievocazione storica della Breccia di Porta Pia* (2004, 52 sec.), per link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k5FCmvNO868

[595] Law proposal no. 3162: "*Riconoscimento della data del 20 settembre, anniversario della 'breccia di Porta Pia', quale solennità civile*", presented on September 18th, 2002, XIV Legislature.

[596] Law proposal no. 328: "*Riconoscimento della data del 20 settembre, anniversario della 'breccia di Porta Pia', quale solennità civile*", presented on May 3rd, 2006, XV Legislature.

[597] Law proposal no. 4056: "*Riconoscimento della data del 20 settembre, anniversario della 'breccia di Porta Pia' e dell'unità d'Italia, quale solennità civile*", presented on September 27th, 2016, XVII Legislature.

[598] Ufficio del Cerimoniale di Stato e le onorificenze, per link: https://presidenza.governo.it/ufficio_cerimoniale/cerimoniale/giornate.html

[599] *I soldati che fecero l'Italia. Soldatini, toys e diorami dal 1861 ad oggi*, exhibition July 1st-9th, 2011, Modena: Libreria antiquaria Lucia Panini.

*papa re* aired on Rai 1 on April 8th and 9th, with the breach serving as merely a supporting plot point. "Cos'è la breccia di Porta Pia?" was the bold question posed by Giacomo Galeazzi, the Vatican correspondent for the daily La Stampa, on September 21st, 2010.[600] The remembrance celebration had, in reality, been reduced to a folkloric procession of bersaglieri together with reenactors donning the uniforms of French zouaves, presented as papal zouaves, with no respect for historical truth. Despite being renovated in 1989, the Mausoleum-Ossuary of the Janiculum has essentially vanished: budget shortages forced the removal of the guard station in 2015, the gardens are no longer kept up, and the monument is only open for two hours each week.[601] The 148th anniversary was celebrated on September 23rd, 2018, with an event that concentrated on the Quirinal, where the Bersaglieri are still constantly remembered.[602] Despite the press announcing its planned reopening in June 2019, the Bersaglieri Museum at Porta Pia was closed and only open by appointment. It had been shuttered for so long that "che passando per le Mura Aureliane da via Nomentana non ci si faceva più neanche caso".[603] In actuality, the celebration of Rome's conquest has evolved into a mostly cultural, joyous, and musical occasion. The military bands of the Guardia di Finanza, Carabinieri, Bersaglieri, and municipal Rome police alternated hosting nightly concerts during a week, from September 17th to 22nd, 2019. On September 17th, the Bersaglieri corps put on a sound and light presentation based on the history of Porta Pia,[604] while writer and historian Paolo Volpato presented a talk commemorating the political climate of 1870. These are a long cry from the rituals that had transformed Porta Pia and the breach into a haven and extolled the new heroes of a secular and united Italy.

It is worth mentioning that Italy probably overcame the problem of making September 20th a national holiday. Indeed, Law no. 6 of January 13th, 2025, under the proposal of Forza Italia's MP and Vice president of the Senate, Giorgio Mulè, established the "[g]iornata degli internati italiani nei campi di concentramento tedeschi durante la seconda Guerra Mondiale" to be celebrated on September 20th.[605] However, according to art. 3 of law no. 6, this newly formed celebration "non è considerata solennità civile". It could be asserted that this law represents the occasion of a renewed interest in making the *Breccia* always more of a national holiday: start by

[600] **G. Galeazzi**, *Cos'è la breccia di Porta Pia?*, in La Stampa, September 21st, 2010, modified on July 13th, 2019.
[601] **A. Cartocci**, *Il Mausoleo Ossario Gioanicolense*, 2015, pp. 34–35.
[602] Per link: https://www.assobersaglieri.it/2018/09/22/148-anniversario-porta-pia/
[603] *La fanfare è pronta: riapre martedì il museo storico dei bersaglieri a Porta Pia*, in Il Messaggero, June 16th, 2019.
[604] Per link: https://www.romatoday.it/eventi/luci-della-storia-porta-pia-17-22-settembre-2019.html
[605] Official Gazette, law no. 6 of January 13th, 2025.

making this day linked to the Italian military to then attach an older past. At the same time, however, it could also be regarded as an attempt to occupy the space of September 20th with something different, and, thereby, diverting public attention from the *Breccia*.

This paragraph aimed to emphasize how the event was silenced due to a number of factors, including the militaristic approach of fascism, the dominance of Garibaldian memory over the entire Risorgimento process that led to the breach, the needs to prioritize good relations with the Church and to focus on more urgent socio-economic issues in unstable national and international contexts. As a result, the event's remembrance was reduced to isolated figures – not symbolic, but synecdochic – meant to celebrate the establishment of Rome as the capital, but not the full realization of the Risorgimento's ultimate aim: an intellectually and culturally unified nation.

## *Notes – Section V*

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# PART THREE: “THE MATHEMATICS OF GODS AND THE ALGORITHMS OF MEN”

# VI. The Mathematics of Gods and the Algorithms of Men

## Chapter 11. Lanza's Government: "*Sono questi, o signori, i mezzi coi quali noi siamo andati a Roma, e non già colla breccia di porta Pia*"

Prior to exploring how the Lanza government handled the Roman Question, two presumptions need to be made. In the first place, it is impossible to comprehend the Lanza government's holistic approach to the Roman Question without paying close attention to the decisions and acts of the Council's alter ego, Minister of Finance Quintino Sella. He is what an actual alter ego since the administration that came to power in December 1869 was effectively led by two prime ministers. Lanza himself stated this in his inaugural address to the Chamber on December 15th:

*"Signori, ho l'onore di annunziare alla Camera dei deputati che Sua Maestà il Re, dopo aver accettate le dimissioni offerte dal Ministro Menabrea, ha dato l'incarico al deputato Quintino Sella, ed al deputato Lanza, presidente della Camera dei deputati, di comporre una nuova amministrazione. Sua Maestà ha nominati: Presidente del Consiglio e ministro per l'interno il deputato Giovanni Lanza; ministro per le finanze il Deputato Quintino Sella; E sulla proposta di entrambi ha eletto [...] etc".*[606]

Lanza affirmed it two times. He claimed that both of them received the mandate and that the King chose the ministerial team on the basis of their proposal. In the history of legislative administrations, this is a unique and unrepeatable situation. Because of the uninterrupted internal succession to the premiership in March 1863, the Prime Minister never presented the Farini government – which was created in December 1862 and was regarded as *coram populo* the Farini-Minghetti government – as a diarchy. By the way, Minghetti was Minister of Finance in the Farini ministry, just as Sella was in the Lanza government.[607]

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[606] **Camera dei deputati**, session of December 15th, 1869, *Rendiconti del Parlamento Italiano - Discussioni della Camera dei Deputati: Sessione del 1869-1870 (seconda della legislatura X) - dal 18 novembre 1869 al 22 aprile 1870*, cat. 70, Florence: Tipografia Eredi Botta, 1870, p. 289.

[607] **Camera dei deputati**, session of December 11th, 1862, *Atti del Parlamento Italiano - Discussioni della Camera dei Deputati: Sessione del 1861-62 (VIII legislatura) - 4° periodo (dall'11 dicembre al 22 dicembre 1862) ; 5° periodo (dal 28 gennaio al 28 febbraio 1863)*, second edition reviewed by Galletti Giuseppe e Trompeo Paolo, cat. 40, Rome: Tipografia Eredi Botta, 1883, p. 4691.

It is true that Lanza's inauguration address, which was obviously influenced by Sella and may have been prepared by both of them or by Sella himself, was only concerned with financial and economic matters. The restoration of the public budget, which was deemed an urgent and vital matter, therefore served as justification for the diarchy. The administration was first cautious when it came to the Roman Question. The Roman Question was purposefully ignored, as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Visconti Venosta would clearly explain. But Sella would play a pivotal role in the crucial moments that preceded the start of the Franco-Prussian War, particularly as a link to the constitutional left. The diarchy, in a sense, also applied to handling the Roman Question. After the lengthy and exhausting parliamentary debate on the issue of Rome and its surroundings on August 19th and 20th, 1870, Visconti Venosta and Lanza himself requested and obtained, against the opposition of the left, a blank mandate. Nevertheless, Sella supported and became the guarantor of the ministry's line on Rome during the internal game of roles within the government between August and September 1870.

A second premise then contributes to the explanation of the strong relationship between the finance minister and the President of the Council. The two had not had a cordial relationship under the La Marmora administration in the middle of the 1860s, with Sella remaining in Finance and Lanza in the Interior. Actually, they broke up when Gaspare Finali, a member of the Tuscan-Romagna *Consorteria*, was appointed as the Secretary General of Finance.[608] Lanza's door had been smashed in August 1865. The occasion was delicate. The capital had recently been relocated to Florence, and the remnants of the September 1864 persecution in Turin remained, including the Piedmontese uprising against Peruzzi's *Consorteria* and the establishment of the Piedmontese *Permanente*, which Lanza chose not to join.[609] However, the separation was political rather than personal; it was, in a sense, issue-based. It would take two years for the two to fully reconcile. With the support of Sella-affiliated MPs, Lanza defeated Rattazzi to become President of the Chamber in December 1867, establishing an irrevocable rift with the latter. Lanza made an effort to win over the left in his inauguration address on December 9th by highlighting the Roman issue as a common national policy objective:

[608] **S. Montaldo**, *Giovanni Lanza*, in Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani, Vol.: LXIII, 2004, treccani.it.

[609] **R. P. Coppini**, *Marco Minghetti e la consorteria toscana*, in S. Rogari (ed.), *La Convenzione di settembre. 15 settembre 1864. Alle origini di Firenze capitale*, Florence: Polistampa, 2015, pp. 181 et sgg.

*"Ci conforti infine il pensiero, ed esso valga a renderci più conciliévoli, che se esiste fra noi dissenso di opportunità e di mezzi, tutti però siamo unanimi a volere il compimento della unità nazionale, e Roma tardi o tosto per la necessità delle cose e per la ragione dei tempi dovrà essere la capitale d'Italia. (Bravo! Benissimo!)".*[610]

With a motion that he had successfully gotten signed by left-wing leaders like Depretis and Nicotera, Sella took over to finish the reconciliation process. It stated: "La Camera, ferma nel proposito di serbare inviolato il programma nazionale con Roma capitale d'Italia, passa alla discussione delle interpellanze".[611] In order to decide whether to vote on this motion first or discuss the Miceli interpellation, which basically addressed the far-left's recurring theme – namely, the denunciation of the September Convention in the wake of France's violation with the reoccupation of troops in Rome – newly elected President Lanza put the matter to a vote. With 201 votes against 176 and two abstentions, the motion's priority vote was defeated.[612] As a result, the Lanza-Sella team's attempt to back the Menabrea government was unsuccessful. But both their partnership and Sella's function as a conduit to the "dialogante" left had become more established. Upon the conclusion of a tiring discussion on December 22nd, Menabrea declared his endorsement of the Bonfadini motion, which stated:

*"La Camera, prendendo atto delle dichiarazioni del Ministero, di voler serbare illeso il programma nazionale, che acclamò Roma capitale d'Italia, deplora che questo programma siasi voluto attuare con mezzi contrari alle leggi dello Stato e ai voti del Parlamento; E, convinta che nel severo rispetto della legge e nell'assetto delle pubbliche amministrazioni sta la guarentigia della libertà e della unità, approva la condotta del Ministero, e passa all'ordine del Giorno".*[613]

Because of two votes, 201 to 199, the proposal was rejected. Disappointed by the government's defeat, the left withdrew all of their motions at that moment and was compelled to quit. They had solidified the Lanza-Sella axis. When the Bolognese deputy saved the government in March 1870 during a financial ploy to achieve a balanced budget, the return of Minghetti's majority became crucial.[614]

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[610] **Camera dei deputati**, session of December 9th, 1867, *Rendiconti del Parlamento Italiano - Discussioni della Camera dei Deputati: Sessione del 1867 (prima della legislatura X) - dal 16 luglio (2. tornata) al 23 dicembre 1867*, cat. 62, Florence: Tipografia Eredi Botta, 1868, p. 2999.
[611] *Ivi*, p. 3000.
[612] *Ivi*, p. 3007.
[613] *Ivi*, p. 3371.
[614] **A. Berselli**, *Il governo della Destra. Italia legale e Italia reale dopo l'Unità*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1997, p. 50.

As a result, the Roman Question was momentarily put on hold when the Lanza-Sella administration was established. The causes were several. It was really about reducing the tensions around the subject, which had gotten to the point where opinions could not be reconciled, particularly with the unyielding left. Emilio Visconti Venosta, the government's foreign minister, and the latter's approach were diametrically opposed. The left had grounds to criticize the Treaty and its effects because of the September Convention's *vulnus*, which was the restoration of French troops to the Papal States to oppose Garibaldi's campaign and their ongoing stay. The next phase would have been the seizure of Rome *manu militari* (by military force), which was sometimes explicitly stated and other times not. It was a nebulous and impractical proposal, and it was very risky since it was uncertain how France and other Europeans who agreed with the emperor's logic would have responded. Furthermore, there would have been a widespread Catholic backlash against Italy as a result of the Pope's criticisms, which would have been easily manipulated by other forces.

On the contrary, the Lanza administration aimed to enforce the Convention in order to fulfil its provisions, including the French forces' withdrawal. To put it briefly, Visconti Venosta believed that rather than criticizing the *status quo ante*, the Convention should be utilized to restore it. Otherwise, there wouldn't have been the legal means to make the withdrawal request. There was no possibility of a military conflict with France. Visconti Venosta's strategy to address the issues brought on by Garibaldian agitation was a sensible and politically astute one. On August 19th, 1870, he made this apparent in the Chamber in response to Mentana veteran and deputy Fabrizi's extolling of the campaign's virtues:

*"Del resto io assicuro l'onorevole Fabrizi che non ho certo potuto dimenticare la gloriosa difesa di Roma, che io non ho potuto essere ingiusto verso quell'invitta falange di prodi a cui egli appartiene e di cui rispetto altamente il passato. Ho potuto dire che gli effetti politici di Mentana furono funesti per l'Italia; questo ho potuto dirlo, e lo ripeto, ma non ho contestato il coraggio di quelli che presero parte a quella spedizione".*[615]

At the time the Lanza government was established in December 1869, there were additional reasons to be silent and cautious. First and foremost, the First Vatican Council's opening brought Rome to the attention of the entire Catholic world. Next,

[615] **Camera dei deputati**, session of August 19th, 1870 *Rendiconti del Parlamento Italiano - Discussioni della Camera dei Deputati: Sessione del 1869-1870 (seconda della legislatura X) - dal 18 luglio al 25 agosto 1870*, cat. 73, Florence: Tipografia Eredi Botta, 1871, p. 4030.

beginning in January 1870, the new Prime Minister Émile Ollivier began the liberal reform of the Empire, which hinted at a secularization of the Empire itself that might benefit Italian interests in Rome.[616]

When the Franco-Prussian War broke out in the second part of July 1870, everything drastically altered. Two factors – one overt and one concealed from the public and Parliament – made the Roman Question a focal feature of the government's agenda once more at this time. The covert explanation was the powerful revival of the king's personal diplomacy, which, through Ottaviano Vimercati, his unofficial plenipotentiary, sought to bring Italy into line with the French front, either as part of a tripartite alliance with Austria or, if the former proved impossible, through a bilateral alliance.[617] This pressure had to be resisted by Visconti Venosta, who personally opposed the king's actions in accordance with the government's neutral position and was told of them by Costantino Nigra. He took this action due to the unpredictability of the war's conclusion as well as France's unwillingness to trade its military participation for Italian autonomy in Rome. Vimercati really requested adherence to the Convention after bringing the French plan to Florence. In light of these circumstances, Visconti Venosta wrote to the Italian ambassador in Paris, Nigra, stating that "se non abbiamo un interesse nazionale, immediato, senza uscire per questo dal sistema delle alleanze naturali della Francia, l'Italia dovrà determinare la propria condotta in vista soltanto degli interessi generali della propria politica come potenza europea".[618] In other words, Italy did not choose a side, but friendship with France was preserved.

This passage is significant because Italy was spared catastrophe by Visconti Venosta's toughness and caution, which made Italy a source of peace and equilibrium in Europe.[619] Additionally, in order to promote Italy's neutrality, he activated Marco Minghetti's unauthorized parallel missions in Vienna and London.[620] Even though the Foreign Minister was unable to disclose the king's plans to the public, this attempt to thwart them nonetheless serves as a crucial interpretive tool for comprehending Visconti's attitude toward France at the time the Parisian communication regarding the French troops' withdrawal from Rome arrived. The Italian government had just acknowledged the French declaration, the Foreign Minister told the Chamber on July

[616] **G. Gandeloro**, *Storia dell'Italia moderna. Vol.: V: La costruzione dello stato unitario, 1860-1871*, Milan: Universale Economica Feltrinelli, 1978, p. 371.
[617] *Ivi*, p. 374.
[618] **DDI**, Vol.: XIII. Series: I, Docc.: 370 and 539, pp. 253 and 375.
[619] **G. Candeloro**, *Storia dell'Italia moderna*, 1978, p. 382; and **F. Chabod**, *Storia della politica estera italiana dal 1870 al 1896*, Vol.: I, Bari-Rome: Laterza, 1965, p. 376.
[620] **G. Candeloro**, *Storia dell'Italia moderna*, 1978, p. 375.

31st ("poiché la Convenzione di settembre non fu mai denunciata da parte nostra").[621] Then two dispatches came. The French government sought a guarantee in the first, dated August 2nd, that Italy would protect the integrity of the Papal State after troops left Rome; the Italian government replied in the second, dated August 4th, that it would "esattamente alle obbligazioni che risultano esser poste dalle stipulazioni del 1864".[622]

Both because the administration had lost a chance to move forward with the takeover of Rome and because the minister had not requested previous permission from Parliament, this reaction became the subject of bitter allegations from the left. Essentially, Visconti Venosta, who had resisted the emperor and king's pressure for an alliance, and who would also have to withstand Prince Napoleon's demands during his unexpected visit to Florence on August 20th,[623] could not exploit France's vulnerability by breaking the agreements at this time.

Following the introduction of a measure to allot 40 million lire for the establishment of a military corps to ensure the security of the State, the lengthy and exhaustive parliamentary debate on the government's strategy regarding Rome came to an end on that same August 20th. Minghetti made the request on July 25th after making it apparent to the Chamber that he was worried that Mentana would happen again.[624] The government took action to address the matter, but the haste only made the left more sensitive since they perceived it as another instance of the minister's too cautious approach and obstruction of the country's interest in the quick capture of Rome. After the top three leaders of the government stepped in to defend the financial request, the discussion naturally turned to Rome's future and the desire of the country in acquiring it. "[P]rocacciare sempre più all'Italia, con una leale e ferma politica, una situazione morale in Europa che ci concilii le simpatie e la fiducia di tutte le altre nazioni (Benissimo! *a destra – Rumori a sinistra*)" was the only viable solution to the Roman Question, the Foreign Minister affirmed on August 19th.[625]

Visconti's fixation with this – that is, the approval of the European chancelleries – is well known, as is the extent to which the left rejected this argument in favour of the nation's intrinsic rights. However, the Foreign Minister reiterated Cavour's arguments, stating that Italy's reputation depended only on its adherence to accords,

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[621] **Camera dei deputati**, session of July 31st, 1870, *Rendiconti del Parlamento Italiano – Discussioni della Camera dei Deputati: Sessione del 1869-1870 (seconda della legislatura X) – dal 18 luglio al 25 agosto 1870*, cat. 73, Florence: Tipografia Eredi Botta, 1871, p. 3925.

[622] *Ivi*, p. 4014.

[623] **G. Candeloro**, *Storia dell'Italia moderna*, 1978, p. 375.

[624] **A. Berselli**, *Il governo della Destra*, 1997, p. 56.

[625] **Camera dei deputati**, session of August 19th, 1870, *Rendiconti del Parlamento Italiano – Discussioni della Camera dei Deputati: Sessione del 1869-1870 (seconda della legislatura X) – dal 18 luglio al 25 agosto 1870*, cat. 73, Florence: Tipografia Eredi Botta, 1871, p. 4027.

particularly the September Convention. Although it was a cool-headed and reasonable reaction, it had the power to profoundly enrage those who fought for the sake of the country at any costs. In order to reduce tensions, the Prime Minister responded on August 20th with a more robust and specific expression of commitment on the Roman Question:

*"Di una cosa – Lanza declared – il Ministero desidera che la Camera sia ben persuasa prima di accordare o no questo voto di fiducia, ed è che il Ministero è penetrato quanto possano esserlo i rappresentanti della nazione della necessità di spingere avanti questa questione e di approfittarsi di tutte le opportunità e di tutte le contingenze politiche per poter arrivare ad uno scioglimento".*[626]

Consequently, the Prime Minister endorsed the Foreign Minister's stance but went one step further by pledging to take advantage of every beneficial chance to settle the Roman Question, including, if possible, those that would entail confrontation. Subsequently, Sella emerged in his informal role as prime minister "vicario", urging Parliament to "reclamare pienissima fiducia dal Parlamento" in the assurance "che il Ministero s'adopererà per la soluzione della questione Romana secondo le aspirazioni nazionali".[627] Thus, the third cabinet member went beyond the first two, adopting a left-leaning stance and pledging to closely link the Roman Question with national goals. This supported the idea that the "shadow" prime minister serves as a link to the left. The investigating committee's proposal on the financing request was passed at the conclusion of the debate with 214 votes in favour, 152 against, and 12 abstentions. It said:

*"La Camera, approvando l'indirizzo politico del Ministero, confida che esso si adopererà a risolvere la questione Romana secondo le aspirazioni nazionali, e passa alla discussione degli articoli".*[628]

The ministry's win and its dedication to answering the question seemed to have settled the matter. However, that was untrue. Concerns about an international conference on European stability, which would once again permanently delay the resolution of the Roman Question, were also sparked by the more tragic reports of

[626] *Ivi*, p. 4088.
[627] *Ivi*, p. 4090.
[628] *Ivi*, p. 4094.

French defeats, even though they were not a precursor to a Sedan. An extraordinary political crisis was created on August 22nd when the left wing, led by Crispi and Nicotera, convened to deliberate on the immediate resignation of the whole parliamentary delegation. This strong-arm action and its potentially disastrous outcomes were only prevented by Sella's intervention at the meeting, which served as a guarantee that the administration was dedicated to finding a solution.[629] In reality, the left held the government hostage, and the "second-in-command" prime minister promised to comply with their demands.

The government had a dramatic start to the week. The likelihood of an unchecked internal mobilization increased as the military situation on the French front deteriorated even worse. The Foreign Minister made the decision on August 29th to dispatch Italian ambassadors overseas, requesting that they notify their respective foreign ministries of Italy's intention to move forward with the occupation of Rome and the Papal States on the basis of security and stability, while preserving the pope's independence.[630] Visconti Venosta persisted in his plan to enter Rome with the approval of the authorities, albeit in a quiet form. It was proper to ensure the pope a residual temporal authority, namely over the Leonine City, in order to do this. On this point, Visconti was assaulted once more. He came under fire for arguing for dual sovereignty and upholding the pope's temporal authority, which went against the idea of national sovereignty over Rome. However, in his role as head of diplomacy, he adopted Cavour's strategy and reasoned not from principle but rather from pragmatism and the need for agreement to settle the matter amicably. In any event, the Italian government supported the operation, or at least the distinction, and the new French republican government, which announced on September 10th that it would no longer acknowledge the temporal power of the pope, followed suit.[631]

When Lanza presented three bills to the pope on December 21st, 1870, pertaining to the Guarantees Law (Legge delle Guarentigie), the ratification of the October 2nd plebiscite, and the relocation of the capital to Rome, Visconti Venosta specifically defended this offer as a practical effort to settle the dispute amicably:

*"Si potrà dire, o signori, che questo progetto della città Leonina, di cui l'Europa non fu chiamata a prendere atto, ma che noi abbiamo invece proposto al Pontefice, si potrà dire che questo progetto non è logico dal punto di vista dell'abolizione del potere temporale? Ma se con*

[629] **A. Berselli**, *Il governo della Destra*, 1997, p. 60.
[630] *Ivi*, p. 63.
[631] **R. Cadorna**, *La liberazione di Roma nell'anno 1870*, Torino: Boux Frassati et C° Editori, 1898, pp. 33 et sgg.

*esso si fosse ottenuta la conciliazione e l'accordo, io credo che il paese non ci avrebbe condannato, ché esso ci avrebbe approvato se, in cambio di queste concessioni, noi ci fossimo presentati ad esso con la questione Romana risolta; era risoluto così il più arduo, il più terribile problema della nostra esistenza nazionale, e sgombrato l'avvenire d'ogni sua incertezza, d'ogni sua difficoltà".*[632]

Only on September 5th, however, with the fall of French military might at Sedan, the arrest of the emperor, and the declaration of the Republic, did the Council of Ministers make the practical decision to subjugate the Papal State and Rome. However, before carrying out the directive, the administration sent Ponza di San Martino to Rome in an effort to reach a final negotiated settlement. The idea was to give the Pope the Leonine City as a residual temporal jurisdiction.[633] Cardinal Secretary of State Antonelli, who felt he was defending papal interests by intensifying the battle and refusing to make concessions, was partly to blame for the mission's failure.

As even Sella acknowledged, this made Visconti Venosta more hesitant and worried about a conflict with the papal forces. It was only via Minghetti's influence that he was persuaded to authorize the operation[634]. On September 17th, Cadorna was given the command to capture Rome while keeping the Leonine City intact. Following Porta Pia, Antonelli requested that Italian troops enter Leonine City but not the Vatican in order to quell anti-pope agitation and maintain the line in the unwinnable dispute with the Italian government. Furthermore, the outcome of the referendum held on October 2nd showed that any attempt to divide the fate of the Leonine City from the rest of Rome went against the desire of the populace, since all of the Borgo inhabitants voted unanimously in favour of union with the Kingdom of Italy.

The Council of Ministers agreed to dissolve the Chamber and hold elections on October 16th after the plebiscite issue was settled. The move, which increased the total number of Chamber seats to 508, was motivated by the necessity to provide representation to the fifteen electoral districts into which the freed areas had been split. However, the mission's accomplishment and the requirement to move fresh parliamentary representation to Rome were also influenced by the desire for popular support. The historical question of why the electoral campaign for the November 20th elections, with a runoff on the 27th, was so unimpressive and why the voter turnout

[632] **Camera dei deputati**, session of December 21st, 1870, *Rendiconti del Parlamento Italiano - Discussioni della Camera dei Deputati : Sessione del 1870-1871 (prima della legislatura XI) - dal 5 dicembre 1870 al 21 marzo 1871*, cat. 74, Florence: Tipografia Eredi Botta, 1871, p. 143.
[633] **A. Berselli**, *Il governo della Destra*, 1997, p. 64.
[634] **G. Candeloro**, *Storia dell'Italia moderna*, 1978, p. 379.

was so low – well below 50% of the electorate – remains unanswered, particularly in the North and Centre districts where the Right won. Due in part to the withdrawal of important candidates like Carlo Alfieri di Sostegno (who opposed the relocation of the capital to Rome), Guido Borromeo, and others, parliamentary representation was renewed by less than 35%, forcing even the prime minister to run in a runoff.[635]

There were probably a number of contributing elements. The king's move to Rome was a contentious topic that influenced the election campaign and caused division within the administration. Sella persisted, even threatening to quit if the monarch did not travel to Rome right once, despite La Marmora, the government's lieutenant in Rome, advising against it – at least until the elections were done. In actuality, the delay was a reflection of the Foreign Ministry's hesitancy and prudence, since they were concerned that the pope may excommunicate the king *ad nominem*,[636] which would be even more terrible institutionally than the universal excommunication of the Italian ruling elite. After the Law of Guarantees was approved, Vittorio Emanuele II's relocation to Rome was delayed.[637] This later contributed to the opposition's false portrayal of a reluctant administration that was either driven to Rome by the left or maybe by circumstance.

Ricasoli's assessment, which he sent to Celestino Bianchi, effectively reflected this idea when he stated that the administration had travelled to Rome "senza luce propria".[638] However, it was an unjust ruling that ignored how well the administration handled the whole matter. In fact, the Lanza-Sella cabinet had successfully resisted even the king's pressure and covert diplomacy, avoiding the danger of Italian engagement on the French front when the Franco-Prussian War broke out, owing to Visconti Venosta's caution and resolve. Later, because of Lanza's proven abilities as a statesman,[639] the government overcame hesitancy and procrastination to make prompt decisions at the appropriate times while continuously displaying to European chancelleries a clear and devoted stance toward France, with whom the September 1864 agreements had been signed. The combination of Lanza and Visconti Venosta had successfully and harmoniously combined composure and judgment. Because of Sella's efforts, who spoke to Rome "al cuore e alla mente",[640] the administration had

[635] **A. Berselli**, *Il governo della Destra*, 1997, pp. 88-89.
[636] *Ivi*, p. 74.
[637] **G. Candeloro**, *Storia dell'Italia moderna*, 1978, p. 385.
[638] *Ivi*, p. 380.
[639] **F. Chabod**, *Storia della politica estera italiana*, Vol.: II, 1965, p. 703.
[640] **F. Chabod**, *Storia della politica estera italiana*, Vol.: I, 1965, p. 230.

maintained a comforting relationship with the left and had learned to respond to its cues without going too far or acting rashly.

As a result, the agreements were sound and the entire process that led to Rome was coherent. Of course, the administration had waited for things to happen, but this was a wise political move. Even after then, the tenets of caution and good judgment persisted, always motivated by Visconti Venosta's principle, namely that the problem was not to geto to Rome, but to remain there.[641] And being wise meant minimizing friction with the pope and demonstrating to the world that the Italian government was upholding the pope's spiritual authority over Christianity rather than retaliating or gaining power. In fact, before relocating the capital to Rome, the government wanted these commitments to be codified. Thus, without using any overt judicial tools, the Law of Guarantees was passed. This law was originally inspired by Cavour. A few infrequently used soft measures (such as *placet* and *exequatur*) were included to the final draft in order to appease the monarchist elements of the southern left.

It's possible that the conservative voters saw this wise management as a capitulation to the left. This sentiment was aptly expressed by Toscanelli, a *Consorteria* member who is connected to Catholic circles, during the discussion of the Law of Guarantees:

*"Sapete, secondo me, – so Toscanelli went – come sono procedute le cose in undici anni di tempo? La sinistra ha detto: voglio la tal cosa; la destra, ed il centro, ed il Ministero hanno detto: no, no! E dopo tre mesi hanno detto: sì ma lo vogliamo far noi. Onde la cosa sta in questi termini: star sempre al potere, e fare tutto quello che dice la sinistra".*[642]

In response, Visconti Venosta reacted with remarkable clarity, describing how the Right had moved to Rome and separated itself from the ideology and objectives of the Left:

*"L'onorevole deputato Toscanelli vede dunque che noi non siamo andati a Roma col programma radicale. Noi non siamo andati a Roma, né colla rivoluzione, né al seguito suo, ma prevenendola. Noi vi vogliamo rimanere, non colla rivoluzione, ma con uno spirito di libertà e di moderazione larga e tollerante, che intende di guarentire nell'indipendenza del pontificato il*

[641] **A. Berselli**, *Il governo della Destra*, 1997, pp. 62-63.
[642] **Camera dei deputati**, session of December 21st, 1870, *Rendiconti del Parlamento Italiano - Discussioni della Camera dei Deputati : Sessione del 1870-1871 (prima della legislatura XI) - dal 5 dicembre 1870 al 21 marzo 1871*, cat. 74, Florence: Tipografia Eredi Botta, 1871, p. 135.

*diritto e la libertà delle coscienze, e di assicurare al Pontefice il rispetto in condizioni tali che alcun altro paese non gliene possa offrire né di più sicure, né di più degne. Noi non siamo andati a Roma senza tenere alcun conto delle opinioni e delle condizioni dell'Europa, ma anzi in circostanze tali in cui l'Europa poté comprendere la necessità che ci imponeva di sciogliere la questione Romana. Noi siamo andati a Roma senza la opposizione della Francia colla quale avevamo e degli impegni morali e degli obblighi internazionali. Sono questi, o signori, i mezzi coi quali noi siamo andati a Roma, e non già colla breccia di porta Pia".*[643]

The electorate might not have comprehended. Or maybe there was a feeling of desolation once the task was over. Indeed, Cavour would have been amazed: his followers had gone behind his instructions and accomplished the objective.

[643] *Ivi*, p. 142.

# Chapter 12. 1850-1870: Vittorio Emanuele II, Pius IX and the Roman Affair

The Count's character and the development of the plots that would lead to what Domenico Fisichella referred to as the "miracolo del Risorgimento"[644] were the defining features of the years after Cavour's ascent to power. Reconstructing the internal and international events that led to Unification is obviously not the place for this; it is enough to say that, even in the rapidly shifting European context, the work of Cavour, one of the few internationally renowned statesmen the peninsula had, was essential and pivotal. Without him, the national Risorgimento might have gone in different directions or might not have happened at all. His belief in liberal institutions and liberty was crucial in the young Kingdom of Italy's decision to follow the path of political liberalism, which it would do at least until 1925. During his tenure in office, Cavour put forth great effort to keep Italian politics within the liberal tradition. He did this by fending off outside pressure and attempting to maintain control over the country's internal political landscape, which was frequently made up of forces that combined positions that were very different from liberal government practices with irrational plans for popular uprising. He had to deal with a king who was not only hostile toward him but also had no intention of ceding the "palcoscenico del Risorgimento" to anyone, thus this was by no means a simple or straightforward assignment. The underpinnings of Unification and the political and constitutional norms that would influence the entire Kingdom of Italy may be seen in this interaction, which eventually became triangular with the ascent of Giuseppe Garibaldi. The king's and Rosa Vercellana's contentious and little-known relationship was the primary source of the personal problems between Cavour and the monarch, which should not be undervalued. The statesman and Vittorio Emanuele II were essentially at odds about how to wield power and define their separate areas of expertise. The latter, amiable but irascible, was not readily influenced and, more importantly, understood his position as king and was keen to reiterate it in all contexts, including diplomatic negotiations, military operations, and internal political control. The former, a civil servant with a remarkable work ethic and European culture, was realistic and cynical

[644] **D. Fisichella**, *Il miracolo del Risorgimento. La formazione dell'Italia unita*, Roma: Carocci, 2010. On Cavour, see the recent contribution of **A. Viarengo**, *Cavour*, Roma: Salerno Editrice, 2015.

but also greatly impacted by Calvinist theological principles that improved his sense of himself and his faith in the position he had given himself. Both had strong wills and a strong sense that they had been sent on a mission that was both political and practical for the politician and dynastic and long-term for the sovereign. Thus, their confrontation was unavoidable. They were resisted during the Calabiana crisis of 1855, which unquestionably rekindled the dormant State-Church confrontation that had started with the Siccardi statutes. This is the first of many, and the one of most interest to the present analysis because there is not enough for more general concerns here.

In anticipation of the Mediterranean return of the Indian route, Romeo observed that "fra il 1850 e il 1853 il gruppo dirigente piemontese, sotto la guida di Cavour, effettuò uno sforzo vasto ed energico al fine di tradurre in realtà il programma moderato mirante a fare della penisola l'asse principale del commercio europeo con l'oriente, in vista del ritorno al Mediterraneo della via delle Indie".[645] This vision came to an end in the summer-autumn of 1853 when a poor grain harvest caused a deep crisis that was made worse by liberal economic measures introduced in the Sardinian States, up to the point that "fra l'estate e l'autunno del 1853 la reazione popolare alla crisi delle sussistenze si tradusse in una sorta di resistenza di massa al liberismo, che in parecchie regioni coinvolse larghi strati della popolazione del regno".[646] Crowds even stormed Cavour's castle as chaos erupted in the Aosta Valley, with clerical participation. The insurgency attempts in Milan on February 6th, 1853, which both exposed the folly of Mazzini's political ideas and rekindled tensions with the Habsburg Empire, worsening relations between Turin and Vienna, further complicated this delicate internal situation, which Cavour attempted to resolve by improving conditions for the lower classes. Cavour attempted to broaden his ministerial base to the left in order to counter this threat to the stability of the administration, turning "la lotta su due fronti sostenuta nei primi anni" into "una lotta a senso unico contro la destra conservatrice".[647] The measure to abolish religious convents was the result of this policy and was enacted for financial reasons.[648] This marked the last split between the Piedmontese Right and Cavour's majority.

These were, in fact, Cavour's main worries, not only because the moderate right faction of Revel was politically close to liberal moderates enough to worry about deputies defecting, but also because they had continued to have relations with the

[645] **R. Romeo**, *Vita di Cavour,* Roma-Bari: Editori Laterza, 1995, p. 239.
[646] *Ivi*, p. 245.
[647] *Ivi*, p. 263.
[648] For an attentive reconstruction of such occurrences, see **P. Gentile**, *L'ombra del Re. Vittorio Emanuele II e le politiche di corte*, Roma: Carocci, 2011, pp. 119–130.

reactionary Right, which was led by Clemente Solaro della Margarita, a former minister of Carlo Alberto who had strong support at court (supported by the king's mother and consort), among the aristocracy, and in the army. This Right, which viewed Catholicism as the foundation for political activity and hoped for a return to the pre-1848 era, if not to Carlo Felice's time, had never ceased to voice its anti-liberal and anti-constitutional views. Furthermore, because this Right was firmly pro-Habsburg, it opposed any national vision in which the Kingdom of Sardinia would fight Vienna's claim to hegemony in a still-speculative unification effort.

The king's actions raised more issues. In an effort to regain control over political dynamics, he seemed inclined toward a conservative shift, as demonstrated by the religious marriage crisis, even though he had assured the ministry of his support. This would have blocked the parliamentary practices that Cavour had instituted and returned to a more literal interpretation of the Statute. Beyond his own interests, he sought to make a deal with Rome in order to maintain social harmony in the Kingdom,[649] which had already been rocked by the 1853 economic crisis. He also sought to avoid "fratture interne quali quelle che una tensione col Pontefice poteva causare, con le inevitabili ripercussioni che, attraverso la rete parrocchiale, esse potevano avere sul mondo contadino, il quale costituiva pur sempre il nerbo di quell'imprescindibile strumento che era l'esercito, senza contare che potevano rendere impraticabile la via per dare vita a quel governo conservatore che già aveva tentato, al momento delle dimissioni d'Azeglio, con Revel e poi con Balbo".[650] It was obvious that a cunning politician like Cavour could not have failed to see the schemes the sovereign was hatching behind his back. These schemes could overthrow the government at any time and install a moderate-right leader in its place, which would result in at least a major setback in the liberal and parliamentary path that had been followed up to this point, if not complete failure. By the end of 1854, Cavour's administration appeared to be at a breaking point, as Romeo pointed out, in part because Vittorio Emanuele II had at last discovered:

"*Quel che gli era mancato finora, un ministero, cioè, che seguisse all'interno una politica di conservazione e allentasse le tensioni che dividevano il paese, e che nel tempo stesso fosse*

[649] As Gentile himself recalled, "l'allocuzione pontificia del 22 gennaio inasprì ulteriormente gli animi e gettò un nuovo seme di discordia tra il sovrano e il governo. Nella risposta di Vittorio Emanuele all'ennesima condanna papale comincia a trapelare un nuovo cedimento: in un 'taccolino' destinato a essere bruciato, il sovrano si sentiva in grado di assicurare il pontefice che nel caso probabile di una nuova crisi di governo lui si sarebbe adoperato per nominare una compagine di destra mettendo per condizione sine qua non il 'totale aggiustamento con Roma'", *Ivi*, p. 123.

[650] **A. Viarengo**, *Cavour*, 2015, p. 158

*disposto a secondare la volontà d'iniziativa del sovrano in politica estera. Chiamato a palazzo il 1° gennaio 1855, in compagnia di monsignor Charvaz, il conte di Revel si era infatti impegnato a sostenere l'intervento in Crimea; e da quel momento le voci di crisi ministeriale imminente assunsero sempre maggiore concretezza. Le ambizioni della dinastia e la politica liberale, finora strettamente unite, stavano per divergere: e con ciò venivano rimesse in discussione le basi di tutta la politica piemontese degli ultimi anni."*[651]

Apart from the demand of the king's longtime and reliable ally, d'Azeglio,[652] the abrupt increase in international tension in the East was what kept such a retreat from happening. The Franco-British proposal for Piedmont to join the coalition assembling to oppose Russian aggression against the Ottoman Empire, complete with its own expeditionary corps, was the culmination of these tensions that had been building for years. Thus, the prospective involvement of the Sardinian Army in the Crimean War – a possibility the monarch firmly supported from the beginning – became inextricably linked to the measure on the suppression of convents and the Calabiana crisis that followed. Both the royal and Cavourian parties agreed that taking part in the Crimean War, with all the dangers involved, particularly if the Habsburg Empire decided to break with neutrality and join the anti-Russian coalition,[653] was a decisive step in removing the Kingdom of Sardinia from the complex web of Italian states and reestablishing the Kingdom as the dominant state on the peninsula in the eyes of the European Concert. It also helped to resolve the Calabiana crisis in a way that favoured the Count. By sacrificing the foreign minister, Giuseppe Dabormida, who opposed intervention, and defeating the vote in the Chamber against participation in the war cast by di Revel (the king's and reactionaries' preferred candidate), Cavour's diplomatic skills convinced the government to renounce the conditions set in Paris and London in order to secure Turin's participation. In the end, this convinced the king to forgo the alternative course and recall Cavour to government.

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[651] **R. Romeo**, *Vita di Cavour*, 1995, p. 266.

[652] "Maestà, creda a un suo vecchio e fedele servitore che nel servirla non ha mai pensato che al suo bene, alla sua fama e all'utile del Paese; glielo chiedo con le lacrime agli occhi e inginocchiato ai suoi piedi: non vada più avanti nella strada che ha presa. È ancora in tempo. Riprenda quella di prima. Un intrigo di frati è riuscito in un giorno a distruggere l'opera del suo regno, ad agitare il Paese, scuotere lo Statuto, oscurare il suo nome leale. Non v'è un momento da perdere… S'è detto che la Corona voleva cercare nuovi lumi. La Corona dica che questi lumi le hanno mostrato inaccettabili le condizioni proposte. Siano considerate come non avvenute, e le cose riprendano il loro corso naturale e costituzionale di prima. Il Piemonte soffre tutto, ma l'essere messo di nuovo sotto il giogo pretino, no, perdio", **S. Bertoldi**, *il Re che fece l'Italia. Vita di Vittorio Emanuele II di Savoia*, Milano: Rizzoli, 2002, p. 115.

[653] For an analysis, which considers the international setting, see **F. Valsecchi**, *L'Unificazione italiana e la politica europea (1848-1859), Nuove questioni di storia del Risorgimento e dell'Unità d'Italia, Vol.: I*, Milano: Marzorati, 1961, pp. 721–764.

An important turning point in the liberal state's history was the Calabiana crisis. Primarily, it signified the confirmation of a parliamentary interpretation of the *Statuto* (Constitution), which Cavour had been advocating for a long time but had only made evident in 1855.[654] This does not imply that the king stopped meddling in political matters, such as choosing governments and prime ministers, as became clear shortly after Cavour's passing, or that parliamentary practice became permanently entrenched. However, a fundamental tenet of monarchical Italy emerged at that time: "doppia fiducia", which required the prime minister to have the backing of both the king and the parliament. Crown-Government interactions would be governed by this idea; however it might alter based on political situations and individual personalities. The generally held historical opinion that the Italian political system established during the Risorgimento was characterized by a strong constitutional hybridism, in which Parliament was never fully independent from royal power,[655] is found precisely in this affirmation of principle – and the recognition of the Crown's crucial role in the fiduciary relationship between Parliament and government.

Although this element was undoubtedly vital for the future of legislative life in the Kingdom of Italy, the crisis' contribution to strengthening and furthering the national agenda that the Crown and Cavour's leadership shared while maintaining its liberal framework was just as significant. The fact that "solo i liberali, infatti, potevano garantire al re quella risoluta volontà di riprendere la lotta contro l'Austria alla quale si legavano, come sappiamo, le sue ambizioni di espansione nella valle del Po"[656] is something that a politically intelligent man like the king could not have overlooked. The new conscription law, which was finally approved after three years of parliamentary process, is proof that Cavour's government not only strongly defended military spending despite financial difficulties but also made a significant commitment to the monarchy to lead the national effort. Therefore, it was evident that Vittorio Emanuele II's dynastic and national aspirations, as well as the king's more or less ingrained commitment to liberal ideals, were what solidified the partnership between the sovereign and the liberal movement.

Nevertheless, it is crucial to emphasize that the royal ruling, despite its agony and contradiction, inflicted a severe blow:

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[654] A valuable exception seems to be **F. Cognasso**, *Vittorio Emanuele II*, Torino: UTET, 1942, pp. 98 et segg.

[655] **P. Colombo**, *Il re d'Italia. Prerogative costituzionali e potere politico della corona (1848-1922)*, Milano: Franco Angeli, 1999; **P. Colombo**, *Storia costituzionale della monarchia italiana*, Roma-Bari: Editori Laterza, 2001; **L. Tedoldi**, *Storia dello Stato italiano. Dall'Unità al XXI secolo*, Roma-Bari: Editori Laterza, 2018, and **C. Brice**, *Monarchie et identité nationale en Italie (1861-1900)*, Paris: Editions de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 2010.

[656] **R. Romeo**, *Vita di Cavour*, 1995, p. 264.

"*Al vecchio Piemonte chiesastico cresciuto negli anni della Restaurazione e di Carlo Alberto […] la laicizzazione della società negli Stati sardi faceva un cospicuo passo avanti, per il presente e per l'avvenire […] e i riflessi furono considerevoli anche sul piano psicologico, prima ancora che su quello politico. Quel tanto di fiducia che i clericali avevano finora avuto nel re, ora apertamente accusato poco meno che di viltà per il suo cedimento ai liberali, venne incrinato in modo definitivo: con ovvie ritorsioni psicologiche e pratiche da parte di Vittorio Emanuele, forse non del tutto sicuro che le accuse fossero ingiustificate, ma proprio per questo indotto a un rancoroso irrigidimento verso gli amici e quasi complici di un tempo. La potenziale solidarietà fra conservazione clericale e monarchia che aveva campeggiato sullo sfondo di quegli anni venne dissolvendosi*."[657]

Accordingly, "la monarchia separava nettamente le sue sorti da quelle delle forze conservatrici e antirisorgimentali, per legarsi invece più strettamente al moto liberale. Giungeva così a maturità quella graduale conquista della dinastia alla causa liberale e nazionale che, come si è visto, fin dagli anni della Restaurazione era stata il problema politico centrale del Risorgimento piemontese", in keeping with Romeo's thesis.[658] This moment was absolutely decisive and occurred – at least for the monarch – during an especially difficult personal and human period. It is known that during the approval process for the law suppressing religious convents, the king lost several close family members: in rapid succession, within just a few months, his mother Maria Teresa, his wife Maria Adelaide, his brother Ferdinand, Duke of Genoa, and his youngest son, Vittorio Emanuele Leopoldo, Count of Geneva, who had been born only a few months earlier, all died. This situation seemed not only to confirm the prophecies of Don Giovanni Bosco, who had foretold misfortunes for the royal family,[659] but also to echo the warnings of Pope Pius IX, who had condemned the measures then in place as being absolutely opposed to the Catholic faith and therefore harbingers of misfortune for those who had supported and approved them.

The relationship between the Vatican and the Kingdom of Sardinia was permanently impacted by the Calabiana dispute. Vittorio Emanuele II and Pius IX's personal friendship persisted, albeit with ups and downs,[660] but the division between

[657] **R. Romeo**, *Cavour e il suo tempo, Vol.: III*, Roma-Bari: Editori Laterza, 1984, pp. 138-139.
[658] **R. Romeo**, *Dal Piemonte sabaudo all'Italia liberale*, Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1974, p. 150.
[659] **S. Bertoldi**, *il Re che fece l'Italia*, 2002, pp. 116-120.
[660] See **P. Pirri**, *Pio IX e Vittorio Emanuele dal loro carteggio privato, Vol.: II, La questione Romana (1856-1864)*, Roma: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1951 and *Vol.: III, La questione Romana dalla Convenzione di settembre alla caduta del potere temporale, 1864-1870*, Roma: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1961.

Turin and Rome was now irreversible. Given that the Pope's temporal authority had been significantly diminished by the loss of the Legations, tensions between the two monarchs could only worsen with the continuance of the Risorgimento and the full establishment of the Kingdom of Italy. The two governments engaged in a bitter struggle from that time until the liberation of Rome, which was marked by sporadic attempts at conciliation but mostly by laws, doctrinal proclamations, and calculated acts intended to undermine the fledgling kingdom and result in the excommunication of its most important figures. Therefore, Cavour's death marked the beginning of this escalation. Historians concur that Cavour had a strong belief in "libera Chiesa in libero Stato", which he had the chance to reaffirm before the newly formed Italian Parliament in March and April of 1861. Since he felt that Rome had to be the new capital of the Kingdom, Cavour's faith in this political path was reinforced by the pressing necessity to settle the Roman question. There were other reasons than retaking Rome for the sake of the country. Calvinist influences from his early years influenced Cavour's liberal views, which he combined with liberal Catholic concepts that had their roots in Piedmont and the Savoy heritage. Because of the necessity of establishing liberal and parliamentary institutions as well as the overall goal of uniting the peninsula, Cavour frequently avoided overtly implementing this idea throughout his years in office in favour of measures that were more secularist than secular. Following his passing, the ruling class adopted a far more inflexible posture, even in spite of Bettino Ricasoli, his successor, trying to improve ties with the Church. This stance, which historians frequently criticize, was caused by the Vatican's overt animosity against the newly formed Italian state as well as secularist demands from liberal politicians. Rome "diventò la capitale del patriottismo borbonico e del sogno della revanche, cioè di restaurare il proprio Stato e negare la sconfitta", as Carmine Pinto has eloquently demonstrated.[661] Pius IX helped Bourbon diplomats postpone international recognition of the Kingdom of Italy (as of 1865, only Rome and Vienna had done so), in addition to continuously opposing the unification movement because he thought he could rely on French and Habsburg assistance. Most significantly, Pius IX publicly endorsed the brigandage issue, which occasionally threatened to destabilize the southern countryside, as well as the early Bourbon uprisings, which were sponsored

[661] **C. Pinto**, *La guerra per il Mezzogiorno. Italiani, borbonici e briganti 1860-1870*, Roma-Bari: Editori Laterza, 2019, p. 82.

by Francesco II's court. In doing so, he identified with a socially regressive and obviously anti-Italian order.[662]

In addition to his overt backing of Bourbon efforts to undermine Italian unity, the Pope launched a similarly aggressive theological assault. He reiterated that the maintenance of temporal authority was essential to papal independence in the June 9th, 1862, allocution *Maxima quidem laetitia*. He did, however, publicly denounce the political philosophies that were then gaining traction – socialism, communism, and particularly liberalism – in the *Syllabus of Errors* and the encyclical *Quanta cura*, which was released on December 8th, 1864. This critique of political modernity was meant to reflect internal Church motivations as well as to reinforce the Church's place in society. As Candeloro noted, "Pio IX condannava, in un modo assai più ampio e minuzioso di quel che aveva fatto Gregorio XVI con l'enciclica *Mirari*, la dottrina e la pratica del liberalismo e in genere del moderno Stato laico, e riaffermava in modo nettissimo la concezione medioevale della Chiesa come *societas perfecta*, dotata cioè di poteri propri, normativi e coercitivi, autonomi da quelli dello stato. Egli dava così un colpo grave alle illusioni conciliatoriste e soprattutto respingeva energicamente il cattolicesimo liberale".[663] Pius IX vigorously battled this internal conflict inside the Church, which resulted in the First Vatican Council's declaration of papal infallibility on July 14th, 1870.[664] This action demonstrated the Pope's complete rejection of the political processes that would result in the breach of Porta Pia, and it also upset the Viennese court and indicated a schism with it.[665] It was the final straw "sia dalle superstiti tendenze autonomistiche delle chiese nazionali, sia delle velleità riformistiche dei cattolici liberali, sia delle illusioni di quest'ultimi di ottenere dal Concilio un'attenuazione della condanna del Sillabo contro il liberalismo".[666] This conflict undoubtedly signalled a final rupture with the liberal state, even if it also had obvious internal ramifications for the Church.

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[662] According to Pinto, Francesco II and Pius IX served as emblematic figures for southern bandits: "alcune idee elementari e riferimenti politici composero un paradigma concettuale che consentì loro di progettare azioni criminali e sentirsi dei combattenti. Ristabilire l'ordine tradizionale e la vecchia patria, attraverso la restaurazione del re legittimo e del ruolo della religione, è l'unico programma che compare nei materiali disponibili, in un intreccio indissolubile che affiancò sempre Francesco II e Pio IX ad una confusa ostilità verso i nemici locali, che in qualche caso diventò rabbia sociale contro i 'galantuomini'. L'universo dei briganti ruotava intorno a pochi concetti chiave semplici e comprensibili – il re e la Chiesa, in forme più confuse la patria e il popolo –, contro le idee straniere o di rivoluzionari e notabili traditori e oppressori", **C. Pinto**, *La guerra per il Mezzogiorno*, 2010, p. 257.

[663] **G. Canderolo**, *Il movimento cattolico in Italia*, Roma: Edizioni Rinascita, 1953, p. 105.

[664] "Niente, tuttavia, addolorava Pio IX come il plauso che da ogni regione d'Italia si levava verso quella parte del clero favorevole alla soluzione della 'questione Romana' con la rinuncia spontanea del Vaticano al potere temporale […] Pio IX non tollera opposizione alcuna, dall'interno, alla sua linea politica, impostata sulla strenua difesa del temporale. La sua reazione è drastica e immediata", **G. Spadolini**, *Autunno del Risorgimento. Miti e contraddizioni dell'unità*, Firenze: Edizioni della Cassa di risparmio, 1986, p. 212.

[665] **A. Viarengo**, *Cavour*, 2015, p. 374; and **A. C. Jemolo**, *Chiesa e Stato in Italia. Dalla Unificazione a Giovanni XXIII*, Torino: Piccola Biblioteca Einaudi, 1965, pp. 30–31.

[666] **G. Canderolo**, *Il movimento cattolico*, 1953, p. 129.

Given this, it is necessary to take a different look at Italian liberals' sometimes more secularist than secularist policy toward the Roman Church in order to at least comprehend the hardening positions that resulted in the breakdown of the negotiations that had started with Cavour and lasted for years until shortly before Rome was taken. The overlapping duties of royal and official diplomacy were a recurring theme in these discussions, which Bettino Ricasoli first resumed. This was in line with Vittorio Emanuele II's intention to temper the anti-clerical zeal of his political class, even if it also represented the complicated crown-government interactions outlined in the *Statuto*. Indeed, following Cavour's passing, the king once again had a crucial role in choosing administrations and, most importantly, directing foreign policy. He obviously served as a check on the secularist ambition of the Historic Right within this context. The motives were obvious: the monarch wanted to keep his personal relationship with the pope intact and prevent a religious war at home that may have disastrous consequences for the fledgling state. His disinterest in Rome as the capital was further compounded by his dynastic and personal ties to Turin and Piedmont, as well as by obvious international political concerns that a king as aware of power relations as he was could not overlook. Following unity, it soon became evident that the Pope could count on the backing of Paris and Vienna, the exact two nations whose antagonism Cavour and the monarch had used to bring about union. One was overtly opposed to the new unitary state, while the other (France) attempted, for domestic political reasons, to mediate a deal between Rome and Turin, but this effort was quickly unsuccessful.[667] As a result, there was no longer any international support that could have supported or at least prevented a military attack against the Holy See. This explains not only the king's increasing interest in trying to settle the Veneto issue, which would have given him the opportunity to play a part in European diplomacy by leveraging power struggles and incorporating the jewel of Venice into his territories, but also his position toward Rome, which the king likely thought would be resolved on its own as internal and international tensions decreased. The national movement, particularly the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary Left, utilized Rome as a political weapon against the Right and, to some extent, the monarchy itself,

[667] "Napoleone III desiderava conciliare l'inconciliabile, il papa, l'opinione pubblica francese, l'Italia, assicurare il mantenimento della sovranità pontificia e rispettare il principio del non-intervento. Nel 1862 annuncia un suo progetto di accordo: l'attuale Stato pontificio verrebbe lievemente ingrandito, ma sarebbe governato con forme municipali, manderebbe deputati alla Camera italiana, mentre il papa nominerebbe un certo numero di senatori: finanza, esercito, linea doganale, sarebbero in comune con il regno. I ministri francesi persuadono l'imperatore che questa non è base per serie trattative", **A. C. Jemolo**, *Chiesa e Stato in Italia*, 1965, p. 28.

but it also became a major source of conflict within the liberal ruling class.[668] This explains the king's ambivalent position, which is bolstered by his devoted Rattazzi, at both Aspromonte and Mentana, where it is quite evident that the royal family and administration were participating in Garibaldi's plan. It was a political risk to replicate the 1860 Garibaldian campaign, presenting a *fait accompli* to the European powers and avoiding the use of the Royal Army unless absolutely required to put an end to turmoil in Rome, which never happened. Due to Cavour's diplomatic prowess and advantageous international circumstances, it had succeeded in 1859-1860. However, by that time, the situation had grown more complicated, was being managed by a prime minister who could not compete with Cavour, in a different European environment, and under a king who, despite being politically active, was not as skilled at handling delicate diplomatic situations. Without the change in the global scene, namely France's defeat by Prussia, as demonstrated by the events of 1862 and 1867, the conquest of Rome would have probably happened much later. Internal political factors also played a role, as this work tries to point out, especially among the Historic Right's supporters who felt that Rome should not be the new capital in order to avoid direct conflict with the Holy See and undue southern influence. The Right was less convinced of the necessity of capturing Rome, ending the Vatican's legal and financial privileges, and starting a new, politically and diplomatically challenging chapter, even though they were prepared to oppose papal and Bourbon schemes and defend Italian unification. After the State's final victory over southern brigandage, the signing of the September 1864 Convention with France, the transfer of the capital from Turin to Florence, the third phase of the independence war with the acquisition of Veneto in 1866, and the increasingly threatening prospect of the Franco-Prussian conflict, which would shape European history from then on at least until 1945, these considerations evolved during the post-unification decade. There were many attempts at mediation between the Kingdom of Italy and the Vatican during this time, most of which were

[668] On this, see **F. Cammarano**, *Storia politica dell'Italia liberale: l'età del liberalismo classico, 1861-1901*, Roma-Bari: Editori Laterza, 2004, pp. 73–76.

started by the king.[669] However, aside from a few partial outcomes,[670] they were unable to heal the rift between the two states and, more importantly, to address the core problem that the ruling class and the king in particular cared about most: persuading the Pope to willingly cede temporal power in order to prevent an invasion of papal territory, which the king himself was hesitant to undertake. The rigidity of Pius IX, who, like Carlo Alberto and Vittorio Emanuele II, was constrained by the oath signed upon his election, which required upholding the temporal power of the Popes,[671] made this solution impossible.

Once more, like in the early years of the Risorgimento, the Italian government was able to fully unify due to a change in the international environment. Napoleon III was compelled to evacuate the garrison in the Papal States due to the start of the Franco-Prussian War and French military defeats. Despite his initial inclination to back his erstwhile friend against Prussia, the monarch was convinced by his ministers to change his mind and use the chance to settle the Roman Question.[672] Vittorio Emanuele II made a final (extreme) effort to negotiate with the Pope through a delegation headed by Gustavo Ponza di San Martino[673] after the Italian government informed the other powers of its plan to cede Rome to Italy. Getting the Pope to voluntarily renounce Rome remained the aim. Cardinal Giacomo Antonelli and subsequently Pius IX himself strongly opposed this effort. It was now impossible to avoid the encounter with history. When the Bersaglieri, led by General Raffaele Cadorna, broke through the walls of the Papal State at Porta Pia on September 20th, 1870, the Papacy's more than 1,000-year-old temporal sovereignty ended, and Rome once again emerged as the focal point of national life.

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[669] As already analysed, the missions of 1861 and 1865 stand out among the numerous attempts to come to a consensus. Following a letter exchange between the king and the Pope, Cavour took the initiative to start the first, which was headed by Jesuit Father Carlo Passaglia and Professor Diomede Pantaleoni in January 1861. The proposal called for the Pope to abdicate all temporal authority, provide inviolability to the Pope, cardinals, and Curia, and be acknowledged as sovereign without really controlling any territory. The idea of "a free Church in a free State" would regulate relations between the Church and the State. The idea was authorized by the French emperor, and other cardinals appeared to support it, but following a fresh development – the coming of the former King Francesco of Naples to Rome – negotiations broke down. This increased Pius IX's animosity, which was already heightened by anti-clerical actions in Naples. The Pope turned down the proposal on March 18th. Bensa, the king's secretary, tried again with Cardinal Antonelli, but despite French pressure, it failed. Before it deadlocked over whether bishops should pledge allegiance to the king for all of Italy or only Sardinia, a second expedition headed by lawyer Francesco Saverio Vegezzi attempted to address the problem of unfilled bishoprics. The Holy See and the government both took unyielding stances, and the mission was unsuccessful.

[670] With Ricasoli's help and the king's explicit approval, the jurist Michelangelo Tonello's trip to the Vatican started in December 1866 and ended in March 1867. Many of the previously removed bishops returned to their sees, new bishops were appointed to vacant positions, and the Italian State took on a portion of the public debt of the annexed former papal provinces, even though it did not accomplish all of its objectives, particularly a peaceful resolution to the Roman Question.

[671] **G. Sale**, *L'Unità d'Italia e la Santa Sede*, Milano, 2010, pp. 77 et segg.

[672] Filippo Mazzonis argued that Lanza and Sella suggested the King to avoid a pro-Napoleon intervention, in **F. Mazzonis**, *La Monarchia e il Risorgimento*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2002, p. 124.

[673] **G. Sale**, *L'Unità d'Italia*, 2010, pp. 92 et segg.; and **G. Ardau**, *Vittorio Emanuele II e i suoi tempi, Vol.: II*, Milano: Ceschina, 1939, p. 163

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# CONCLUSIONS

The Roman Question became the most sensitive and emblematic issue confronting the newly Kingdom of Italy between 1861 and 1870. It was a conflict between two opposing conceptions of power – the spiritual, supranational authority of the Papacy and the secular, national sovereignty of the modern state – rather than just a geographical one. During this pivotal decade, Italian foreign policy had to negotiate the perilous terrain of global diplomacy, domestic political disarray, and the impending ideological gap between the Church and the monarchy.

Italian foreign policy on the Roman Question between 1861 and 1870 was marked by a contradictory fusion of cautious pragmatism and militant nationalism, as this diplomatic history happened to show. On the one hand, Rome's symbolic importance to Italian national identity made the city's "liberation" an unassailable goal for succeeding administrations. On the other hand, unilateral action was clearly constrained by the Papacy's exceptional status, which was supported by Catholic feeling across the world and shielded by other countries, particularly France. As a result, Italian leaders had to strike a compromise between their national goals and the reality of European power politics.

Rome was formally designated as the capital by the Turin (and later Florence) administration in 1861 when the Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed. However, the ongoing presence of French forces guarding Pope Pius IX made the conquest of the city impossible. Although he personally supported Italian unity in theory, Napoleon III was nonetheless answerable to his Catholic followers and the larger geopolitical goal of preserving power on the Italian peninsula. This foreign military assurance essentially put a stop to any definitive resolution of the Roman Question and forced Italy to adopt a more circumspect, diplomatic stance for the majority of the decade.

The September Convention of 1864, among other diplomatic initiatives, brought Italy's mobility to a head. In exchange for a gradual French military withdrawal from Rome, Italy agreed in the Convention to recognize the Pope's independence and move its capital from Turin to Florence. The pact caused broad public dissatisfaction, particularly among Italian nationalists who viewed it as a humiliating capitulation, even while some praised it as a practical compromise. Although the relocation to Florence represented a step closer to Rome, it also highlighted the state's uneasy liminality – Italy was unified in name but unfinished in reality.

A basic strategic conundrum at the centre of Italy's foreign policy at this time was how to balance the requirement for Rome to maintain national unity with the need to prevent war or international isolation. The Italian leadership understood that a direct conflict with the Papacy, without the proper international setting, might have fatal consequences. This was especially true of individuals like Cavour (until his death in 1861), Bettino Ricasoli, and Urbano Rattazzi. In order to wait for a time when international conditions would permit a *fait accompli* without calling for outside intervention, this resulted in a string of well-planned delays and diplomatic moves.

In 1870, that time finally came – not because of Italian diplomatic prowess, but because of a shift in the balance of power in Europe. The final French forces were driven from Rome by the start of the Franco-Prussian War, which also destroyed Napoleon III's ability to defend the Papal States. In September 1870, Italian soldiers took advantage of the situation and broke through the Aurelian Walls at Porta Pia to invade the city. Soon after, Rome was annexed, and in October, the city's inclusion in the Kingdom of Italy was overwhelmingly reaffirmed by a vote.

This abrupt end to a ten-year impasse was representative of Italy's larger approach, which included prudent diplomacy, patient waiting, and a willingness to take bold action when the time was right. It was more the product of historical circumstance and ongoing pressure than it was a brilliant foreign policy move. Nonetheless, it showed how the Italian government could handle a particularly challenging diplomatic environment where conflicts between big powers, religious authority, and symbolic politics converged.

However, tensions persisted after Rome was taken in 1870. Pope Pius IX declared himself a "prisoner in the Vatican" and refused to acknowledge the validity of the Italian state, ushering in a new era of the Roman Question. However, such post-1870 battle was outside the purview of our research. It is evident that over the years 1861–1870, the Italian state's strategy toward the Roman Question changed from direct conflict to strategic compromise, always keeping union as its ultimate objective.

In conclusion, the intricacies of a fledgling nation-state claiming its identity in a hostile international setting are reflected in Italian foreign policy with the Roman Question between 1861 and 1870. *Realpolitik*, national yearning, and intellectual commitment all influenced it. Delays, diversions, and diplomatic restrictions were all part of the path to Rome, which was neither clear nor assured. But in the end, it brought about the realization of a goal that had existed for a century: a united Italy with Rome as its capital. Anchoring the Italian nation in its old, immortal city, this

event signified not just a geopolitical accomplishment but also the symbolic realization of the Risorgimento.

This research has yielded a number of significant findings. It is possible to make the following scientific conclusions:

(i) The origins of the Roman Question extend much beyond the Republic of 1848.

(ii) Like the Roman Question overall, the Breach of Porta Pia is closely linked to the larger European backdrop and the current political events, particularly in France. More than to the national context.

(iii) Certain well-known political leaders, like Gladstone, de Thouvenel or Cavour, put forth the most effective constitutional and political alternatives that were ultimately implemented.

(iv) The July–September 1870 period might be considered the real "turning point" that broke the international impasse and allowed Italy to capture Rome.

(v) It was the declaration of the anti-clerical French Third Republic, not the French loss in the Franco-Prussian War, that made it possible for Italy to distance itself from French domestic affairs and, hence, occupy Rome.

(vi) The United Kingdom was a key player among third-party states, with the exception of France, since a number of notable figures made some of the best suggestions on intricate questions of constitutional importance, such as the papal loss of sovereignty.

(vii) In the end, the Italian campaign benefited by the passivity of other nations, namely Prussia and the Habsburg Empire.

(viii) Although they were worried about possible revolutionary movements of a similar kind within their own borders, other situations, like the Ottoman Empire, attentively monitored the events but did not play significant roles.

(ix) Even though the Breach had obvious repercussions for the Church's role in world religion and Church-State relations in Italy, it did not mark a significant turning point in the development of Italian politics and, as a result, did not finish the process of national unification in terms of socioeconomic, cultural, or identity aspects.

(x) The following seems to be the phases of the Breach's mnemo-history:

a. 1871-1900: the development of national heroes and figures that symbolized the valiant endeavour;
b. 1900-1922: the construction of "mausoleums" that preserved the fighters' memory; and
c. 1922–present: the memory of the Breach was progressively absorbed by larger political dynamics – Fascism, anti-Fascism, and anti-militarism – leading to the event's decline into obscurity. However, there has been a resurgence of interest in commemorating it in recent years.

(xi) The national government and unofficial individuals, mostly aristocrats, who functioned in lobbying roles while not being affiliated with the government, like Count Vimercati or in certain circumstances Henri Conneau and Rouher, undoubtedly played a major role.

(xii) The government's diplomatic approach finally prevailed, despite Vittorio Emanuele II's desire to maintain his relationship with the Pope and pursue a distinct foreign policy.

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