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Title of the extended essay: THE SOCIAL IDENTITY OF THE  
ITALIAN RISORGIMENTO

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Criteria	Achievement level				
	Examiner 1	maximum	Examiner 2	maximum	Examiner 3
A research question	<input type="text" value="2"/>	2	<input type="text"/>	2	<input type="text"/>
B introduction	<input type="text" value="1"/>	2	<input type="text"/>	2	<input type="text"/>
C investigation	<input type="text" value="3"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
D knowledge and understanding	<input type="text" value="2"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
E reasoned argument	<input type="text" value="2"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
F analysis and evaluation	<input type="text" value="2"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
G use of subject language	<input type="text" value="2"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
H conclusion	<input type="text" value="2"/>	2	<input type="text"/>	2	<input type="text"/>
I formal presentation	<input type="text" value="2"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
J abstract	<input type="text" value="0"/>	2	<input type="text"/>	2	<input type="text"/>
K holistic judgment	<input type="text" value="2"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
Total out of 36	<input type="text" value="20"/>		<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>

Candidate Number:

Supervisor:

**History Extended Essay**

**The Social Identity of the Italian  
Risorgimento**

**What Role did Italian Society have in  
the Risorgimento?**

Word Count: 3,916

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## ABSTRACT

The Risorgimento is commonly defined as the process of “upheaval” which resulted in the political Unification of Italy. Scholars agree that the movement began in 1815 with the Congress of Vienna and ended in 1870 with the Capture of Rome. Although we will touch upon the Napoleonic invasion and the French Revolution, the analysis will be centered between 1820 and 1861. Therefore, putting into focus a period where the interaction of society was in full vigor. The Risorgimento was neither inevitable nor an accidental upshot in diplomacy but a struggle for national revival among the peninsula’s population. The strata of Italian society were involved to different extents, for this reason the following investigation will assess what role did Italian society play in the Risorgimento?

The scope of this essay is to assign each stratum of Italian society a specific purpose in the Risorgimento. These strata are very similar to the Three Estates of the Kingdom of France. The *lower class* encompasses the populous agrarian masses and workers, more generally the illiterate. The *middle class* refers to the educated bourgeoisie which either owned land or small businesses, while the *upper class* indicates intellectuals and individuals at the head of the establishment.

To achieve this scope a scale of degrees of involvement will be constructed. Thus, the following investigation is an analysis of cultural history with slight political highlights. It will approach the topic via a revisionist perspective, as the actions of the various strata will be put into question. However, the essay will also be nuanced with a liberal analysis of history as the investigation relies strongly on the work of Derek Beales. Newspapers of the era will furnish the analysis with key journalistic opinions, helping us to characterize the social identity of the Risorgimento.

The contribution of the lower class, in the Risorgimento, was limited and held no impact on the outcome of events. The role of the middle class was to establish the foundations and begin the upheaval. Whereas the upper class fostered this upheaval and direct it towards the Unification of Italy. Therefore, we should install the lower class at the lowest degree of contribution while middle and upper classes hold similar positions. It would not be laudable to assign the latter separate rankings since the contribution of one class would not exist without the other.

## INTRODUCTION

In his history of modern Italy, Giorgio Candeloro explains, "*In common usage the word Risorgimento refers to the movement which led to the formation of the Italian national unitary state*"<sup>1</sup>. Via a basic definition Candeloro clearly portrays the significance of the topic by indicating that this movement was what led Italy towards its Unification. Arguably, it is what enabled the country to become a European power, one with unrivalled richness in history and culture. However, Candeloro overlooks an essential question, how were Italians involved in the Risorgimento? Although the movement has attained the status of national myth, its legitimacy remains controversial. For this reason, the investigation will analyze what role did Italian society have in the Risorgimento?

The Unification of Italy happened quite rapidly, it owed much to good fortune and was *largely an affair of war and diplomacy*<sup>2</sup>. Dynasties had been shuffled and boundaries adjusted but the country had not been politically united since the sixth century. Through the Risorgimento all of Italy was brought under one ruler, King Victor Emanuel of Sardinia. Such topic is particularly worthy of investigation for it carries suitcases of cultural heritage and helps one understand the sentiment of national identity. By analyzing the roles of society in the Risorgimento one can process how much of a struggle the movement really was. In fact, the contribution of the lower class was basically inexistent, middle and upper classes began and fostered the "upheaval" but for their own interests.

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<sup>1</sup> Derek Beales and Eugenio F. Biagini, *The Risorgimento and the Unification of Italy*, (London: Pearson Educated Limited, 2002), p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 1.

## MAPS



Figure 1. Map of the Italian peninsula before the Risorgimento, from Beales and Biagini, p. xi.





Figure 2. Map of the Italian peninsula during the Napoleonic occupation, from Beales and Biagini, p. xiii.

## A. INVOLVEMENT OF THE LOWER CLASS

### i) Obstacles of Mass National Consciousness

The role of the lower class in the Risorgimento was most limited. This is due to their lack of national consciousness caused by, geographical, political and social divisions of secular identity that exacerbated the cultural isolation of the uneducated. Numerous internal geographical features of the peninsula functioned as obstacles, separating and impeding the unity of masses. The Apennine range, for example, made transport and communication throughout the country difficult and slow.<sup>3</sup> However, although a mountainous range certainly impedes the jointure of peoples one must also take into consideration the lack of the transportation itself. A British article of the time states that, *'Italy' is a 'geographical expression' of circumscribed significance indeed, for it excludes that without which Italy ceases to be in European, and, most assuredly, in Italian eyes.*<sup>4</sup> Such primary evidence epitomizes the inexistence of a unitary sentiment among Italians by highlighting that they did not envision the peninsula as a national expression.

The politically fragmented identity of the peninsula fostered strong attachment to localities rather than a national entity. The lower class, missing the resources for travel, remained grounded to their birth place. They saw no necessity for the Risorgimento. However, due to their peasant nature the lower classes felt a greater affection for their territory. This may not have fostered national unity but certainly pride in one's cultural identity.<sup>5</sup> Comprised of eleven independent city states<sup>6</sup> the peninsula was a patchwork of diverse ruling bodies. These administered according to personal interests, following policies that contrasted interrelation. As late as 1840 the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies sent about 64 per cent of its exports to Britain, France the Netherlands and Austria, 26 per cent to the Kingdom of Sardinia, less than 8 per cent to the Papal States and little more than 2 per cent to Tuscany.<sup>7</sup> Although the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies was a colony, and therefore obliged

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> 'Is Italy to be Free? Is Italy to be One?', *Birmingham Daily Post*, 5 July 1861.

<sup>5</sup> Massimo L. Salvadori, *L'Età Contemporanea*, (Turin: Loescher, 1985), p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> As demonstrated by Figure 1 in the maps section.

<sup>7</sup> Beales and Biagini, p. 8.

to maintain certain trade partners, the data still depicts how city states were both economically and politically detached.

Among masses social diversities and adversities also inhibited unitary sentiments. The greatest fault line was between the wealthy, industrialized North and the poor, rural, backward South<sup>8</sup>. As the writer Luigi Settembrini wrote of the Kingdom of Naples in 1847, *"No state in Europe is in a worse condition than ours...In the country that is said to be the garden of Europe, the people die of hunger and are in a state worse than beasts."*<sup>9</sup> Settembrini's quote supports that grave societal divides remained as the Risorgimento ploughed on. Adversities suffocated any desire to homogenize. For example, Sicilians felt the bitterest antagonism against Neapolitans.<sup>10</sup> As Mack Smith argues, this was due to the burdensome taxes the Neapolitan authorities imposed on Sicily.<sup>11</sup> Hence, the rooted geographical, political and social divisions of the peninsula made it impossible for the Risorgimento to be a movement of popular interest. As an uneducated majority, the lower class was bound to the narrowness of their own locality. So how could they possibly contribute to the Risorgimento where nationalism was indispensable?

## ii) Interests of Masses and *Individualismo*

More concerned with daily survival and land reform, overbearing issues of the Italian lower class, peasants and workers preserved little interest in political unity. Moreover, the long-term cultural notion of *individualismo* further distanced them from the Risorgimento, providing diffidence in the movement's political maneuvers. Martin Clark asserts that throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, masses were not concerned with *"constitutional liberty, nor independence, nor unification, but land"*. Being the main form of investment land was the real political issue at hand.<sup>12</sup> Even in 1860 Garibaldi's invasion of Sicily was preceded by a peasant uprising which demanded land. The agrarian revolts of the Risorgimento were merely social insurrections with no apparent tie to the politics of the time.<sup>13</sup> However, we can challenge this viewpoint since the majority of those who controlled political change

<sup>8</sup> Roberto Martucci, *L'Invenzione dell'Italia Unita 1855-1864*, (Padova: Sansoni, 2011), p. 220-226.

<sup>9</sup> Jordan Lancaster, *In the Shadows of Vesuvius: A Cultural History of Naples*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), p. 194.

<sup>10</sup> Beales and Biagini, p. 16.

<sup>11</sup> Denis Mack Smith, *Il Risorgimento Italiano*, (Bari: Editori Laterza, 2010), p. 102-109.

<sup>12</sup> Martin Clark, *The Italian Risorgimento*, (New York: Longman, 1998), p. 28.

<sup>13</sup> Mack Smith, p. 46.

avoided a social one. There was an opposing force to the involvement of the masses. Cavour recognized that, *"In Italy a democratic revolution has little chance of success. The party [those wishing for change] meets with little sympathy among the masses..."*<sup>14</sup> Thus, even leaders of the Risorgimento saw faults in the support system. Yet, what is the meaning of 'democratic revolution' or 'those wishing for change'? The speaker may be referring to political maneuvers within Piedmont. Nevertheless, as Gramsci identifies, to the lower class the Risorgimento was merely *"an agrarian revolution manqué"*<sup>15</sup>.

The passivity of the masses in the Risorgimento was reinforced by the notion of *individualismo*. The word refers to an individual's loss of collaboration with society and faith in the authorities.<sup>16</sup> Plagued by localism, masses held no trust in authorities that demanded change. Why should they? Those in-charge had never even posed the question of alleviating the misery most lived in. The diversity of culture, the lack of communication and education, induced the lower class to resist political change. However, it must be emphasized that there were different levels of *individualismo*. Gramsci argues that these depended on the territory and types of civility.<sup>17</sup> Generally, the policy was non-intervention in state affairs. This is epitomized by the phrase *"Come France, come Spain, as long as there's food on the table."*<sup>18</sup> Niccolo Rodolico is in symbiosis with this perspective, as he remarked, *"...In the greatest affliction we have witnessed in passed circumstances that the seats of the squares of Naples have remained in complete indifference regarding the destiny of the State..."*<sup>19</sup> Even a British newspaper article included: *"The Neapolitans will never make their own destinies; they will accept them at the hand of any man quick enough or strong enough to impose them..."*<sup>20</sup> However, the bias of *Italy North and South* must be thoroughly considered. The newspaper's monarchical alignment may well disregard from principle the involvement of masses in government affairs. In summary national unconsciousness and lack of interest

<sup>14</sup> Martin Collier, *Italian Unification 1820-71*, (Harlow: Heinemann, 2003), p. 132.

<sup>15</sup> Beales and Biagini, p. 4.

<sup>16</sup> S Coletti, 'Individualismo: Def 1' in *Corriere Della Sera*, 30 July 2012, <[http://dizionari.corriere.it/\\_italiano//.shtml](http://dizionari.corriere.it/_italiano//.shtml)>.

<sup>17</sup> Antonio Gramsci, *Il Risorgimento e l'Unità d'Italia*, (Rome: Donzelli Editore, 2010), p. 59-63.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 59.

<sup>19</sup> N Rodolico, 'Il Popolo Agli Inizi del Risorgimento nell'Italia Meridionale 1798-1801', *Fondazione Istituto Gramsci: Biblioteca Digitale*, viewed on 30 July 2012, <[http://www.bibliotecadigitalefondazionegramsci.org/.php?option=com\\_flippingbook&view=book&id=28:opuscolo-119806](http://www.bibliotecadigitalefondazionegramsci.org/.php?option=com_flippingbook&view=book&id=28:opuscolo-119806)>.

<sup>20</sup> 'Italy, North and South - Cavour and Garibaldi', *The Glasgow Herald*, 12 July 1860.

in the cause induced the Italian lower class to be passive in the Risorgimento. They remained diffident of the movement's political objectives due to *individualismo* which fostered a policy of non-involvement. For the lower class the issue was not the political aspect of their country.

## B. INVOLVEMENT OF THE MIDDLE CLASS

### i) Foreign Impact

The French Revolution and Napoleonic Invasion comprise our fourth long term social factor. The French revolution ignited in the peninsula democratic ideals while the Napoleonic Invasion brought new liberal systems of government. The literate middle class, open-minded and educated could exploit such concepts as change-advocating weapons. This can be supported by *The Constitution of the Ligurian People*, established in 1797. The document solicits great emphasis on civil rights. It states that, "*The end of society is common happiness.*" and that "*Government is instituted in order to ensure to man the enjoyment of his rights.*"<sup>21</sup> However, the document suggests that such ideas circulated but leaves the historian unaware of the extent to which they were implemented. Montanelli discusses that the impact which the French exerted on the peninsula was purely ideological and only perceivable to a minimal number of intellectuals.<sup>22</sup> Yet, although only intellectuals may have been capable of determining the importance of these ideals it does not mean they were incomprehensible to other educated individuals.

The French installed among those who understood its political implications the idea that there should be a strong, secular, centralized state. Paving the way for a united Italy. When French dominance ended, the middle class rejected the restored rulers. "*Who must establish Government? No one has the right to rule, because all men have the same needs...*"<sup>23</sup> they challenged, illustrating that those who were politically aware did not desire

<sup>21</sup> J Luther, 'Italy, Ligurian Republic: Constitution 1797', *Modern-Constitutions.de*, viewed 3 August 2012, <[http://www.modern-constitutions.de/nbu.php?page\\_id=02a1b5a86ff139471c0b1c57f23ac196&show\\_doc=IT-LI-1797-12-02-it&viewmode=thumbview](http://www.modern-constitutions.de/nbu.php?page_id=02a1b5a86ff139471c0b1c57f23ac196&show_doc=IT-LI-1797-12-02-it&viewmode=thumbview)>.

<sup>22</sup> Indro Montanelli, *Dal Tornado Napoleonico al Primo Risorgimento*, (Milan: Rizzoli, 1979), p. 124-125.

<sup>23</sup> B Hayes, 'The Statuto or Constitution of the Kingdom of Sardinia (March 1848)', *Age-of-the-sage*, viewed 3 August 2012, <[http://www.age-of-the-sage.org/history/1848/statuto\\_constitution.html](http://www.age-of-the-sage.org/history/1848/statuto_constitution.html)>.

unity just a better government<sup>24</sup>. Nevertheless, ideals which inspired the middle class and changes they endorsed called for the administration of parts of Italy under a unified, liberal and clearly defined system of rules<sup>25</sup>, founding the Risorgimento.

The middle class's role in the Risorgimento was also greatly conditioned by the Austrian dominance of the peninsula. Austrian occupation caused resentment among the middle class, giving birth to a common feeling of anger. This medium term factor, in symbiosis with the newly established liberal sentiments, fostered ideas of rebellion which activated the Risorgimento and hastened the expansion of nationalism. Between 1815 and 1848 "*The detestation for the alien Austrian*"<sup>26</sup> induced individuals to band together under a collective feeling of resentment. The principle obstacle patriotism faced was Italians' reluctance in accepting or even understanding concepts such as national unity.<sup>27</sup> Austrian dominance helped reawaken a passion for national freedom in the middle class since they were economically most affected by the foreign grip.

Withal, Montanelli discusses that it was solely external powers that brought about the Risorgimento<sup>28</sup>. Cavour himself realized that, "*The Italian Question was a problem in the international relations, not in the domestic politics...Italy could not make herself; she could only be made by exploiting the differences between the Great Power.*"<sup>29</sup> As architect of the Risorgimento, Cavour's is a crucial perspective. Nonetheless, it could be subject to great bias as Cavour himself collaborated with the French and Austrians. He may want to present his scheme as the only valuable method for fuelling the Risorgimento. Therefore, it would be more correct to argue that the series of events, the change in the balance of European power and the anger, experienced primarily by the middle class, are all elements that operated in favor of those who wished to see Italy unified. The middle class could cultivate common sentiments that unified them, helping to pave the way for the Risorgimento.

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<sup>24</sup> Mack Smith, p. 206-216.

<sup>25</sup> See maps Figure 2. This was also thanks to the partial geographical unification achieved by the French.

<sup>26</sup> 'Is Italy to be Free? Is Italy to be One?', *Birmingham Daily Post*, 5 July 1861.

<sup>27</sup> Mack Smith, p. 60.

<sup>28</sup> Montanelli, p. 124-125.

<sup>29</sup> Collier, p. 122.

## ii) Revolutions and Secret Societies

In the struggle towards the expulsion of foreigners the middle class spread nationalistic fervor. They literally began the "upheaval" with this medium term socio-political factor. The 1820s and 1830s saw numerous uprisings of the middle class which demanded liberties and the expulsion of foreign powers, aiding the growth of a nationalistic sentiment. In a description of the events, *"The people of Bologna and Ferrara demand freedom. The men of Reggio have acted and proclaimed it. The Lombards are beginning to feel its effects."*<sup>30</sup> This helps us to better understand the romanticism behind these uprisings. In Piedmont the actions of rebels support a desire for unity. They declared that a "King of Italy" should be proclaimed, they made demands in the name of the "Italian Federation" and were nationally minded in the sense that they desired a peninsula free from foreigners<sup>31</sup>.

Revolutions were led by *Secret Societies*, born out of the ideals of the French Revolution they kept political reform alive<sup>32</sup>. The revolutionaries belonged exclusively to the middle class and lacked popular support. Even their objective remained rather exclusive: *"the secret society must remain very remote from the status quo and necessarily run counter to the opinion of the majority of my contemporaries; it can, then, be confided only to a small number of men."*<sup>33</sup> Spoken by Buonarroti, leader of numerous secret societies, the observation gives insight into societies' mentality and line of action. However, its bias is clear, as a middle class member, Buonarroti was educated to be diffident of the lowly peasants and workers. Agatha Ramm has argued that *"the rebels of these revolutions were not the kind of men to aim at a revolutionary shift of social power"*. Most of the revolutionaries had a limited objective of constitutional reform based on the principle of personal benefits.<sup>34</sup> Yet, even though aims remained narrow minded, the reactionary sentiment which the middle class established bore the fruits of unity and nationalism: enzymes of the Risorgimento. Recapitulating, the role of the middle class was to foster liberal sentiments brought by French influence. Reacting against the occupation of

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<sup>30</sup> Beales and Biagini, p. 200.

<sup>31</sup> Collier, p. 17-18.

<sup>32</sup> Indro Montanelli, *L'Unità d'Italia*, (Milan: Rizzoli, 1979), p. 94-103.

<sup>33</sup> Beales and Biagini, p. 223.

<sup>34</sup> Agatha Ramm, *The Risorgimento*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), p. 14.

foreigners in the form of revolutions and Secret Societies they spread nationalistic fervor that ignited the Risorgimento.

## C. INVOLVEMENT OF THE UPPER CLASS

### i) Cavour, Garibaldi and Mazzini

The Risorgimento was not merely a product of middle class revolutions but a delicate balance between the latter and actions of elitist powers. Cavour, Garibaldi and Mazzini were individuals at the head of High Politics<sup>35</sup> which channeled the upheaval of the middle class into a unitary cause. Their roles were most decisive in the resolution of the Risorgimento, so should be considered as short-term, political factors.

Cavour's creation of a modern political state, Piedmont, furnished a mould along which Italy was to be built via the Risorgimento. Mack Smith labels Cavour as the architect and arch-diplomat of the movement.<sup>36</sup> This can be supported by how this agent of High Politics planned and was fully responsible for specific events. Ramm stresses that, *"It was due to Cavour that any of the aims of the Risorgimento were achieved..."*<sup>37</sup> Assisted by the British government and Bonaparte's France, Cavour was able to forge plebiscite results, making the annexation of central Italy legitimate due to its popularity. Moreover, Cavour controlled much of Garibaldi's adventures, stopping the revolutionary when his campaigns came into conflict with foreign interests. As Cavour describes, *"In Sicily, Garibaldi has let himself become intoxicated with his success. Instead of carrying annexation, or allowing it to be carried, he dreams of conquering Naples and delivering Italy."*<sup>38</sup> Yet, the quote is extracted from a document in which Cavour appeals for aid from the British in restraining Garibaldi. Therefore, it could well underestimate the diplomat's grip on Garibaldi's campaigns making his call for aid seem more urgent.

Less of a diplomatic figure, Garibaldi was still an individual that led from an elite position campaigns of the Risorgimento. His major contribution was to turn the unification of the northern regions of Italy into unification of the whole peninsula. He also used his

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<sup>35</sup> Meaning the establishment or government.

<sup>36</sup> Christopher Hibbert, *Garibaldi: Hero of Italian Unification*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. xiii-xv.

<sup>37</sup> Ramm, p. 17.

<sup>38</sup> Cavour, Circourt, and Azeglio, *Cavour e l'Inghilterra* (Bologna: N. Zanichelli, 1933) p. 93-4.



influence to fashion the Risorgimento. He held a popular leadership position as, “...presiding over an International Peace Congress at Geneva, [Garibaldi] declared his intention of at once making war on the Pope.”<sup>39</sup> However, the extract fails to communicate whether Garibaldi ever accomplished his intention and omits the control that Cavour had on the revolutionary’s campaigns. One must precise that Garibaldi’s role of an elitist in the Risorgimento was only brought to the foreground in the years following the Unification of Italy when, in the process of romanticizing history, his patriotism gained him the role of hero. A.J.P Taylor wrote that Giuseppe Garibaldi was “the only wholly admirable figure in modern history”<sup>40</sup> exaggerating the individual’s contribution to the Risorgimento.

Mazzini was also an accepted elitist of the Italian movement. He was proclaimed Triumvir of the Roman Republic in 1848<sup>41</sup>. His ideal for Italian rebirth was crucial in promoting national consciousness. Through, “O my brothers, love your Country! Your country is our Home, the house that God has given us, placing therein a numerous family that loves us, and whom we love...”<sup>42</sup> Mazzini epitomized the notion of patriotism. In his speech to workers, Mazzini was aiming to inspire and hence certainly over romanticized his perspective. The document may portray a slightly distorted reality of Mazzini’s true ideals. The source also fails to portray the impact that these ideals had on the auditors. Many of Mazzini’s theories were incomprehensible to the uneducated. His views were shared by very few, most of whom belonged to the upper and middle classes.<sup>43</sup> Mazzini’s idealism was comprised of a philosophy imparted from above, accentuating his elitism. Mazzini’s role in the Risorgimento was that of a personality or symbol and less dominant than that of Cavour or Garibaldi. So, it was the intermingling of High Politics and specifically the maneuvers of these three elite politicians that harnessed the upheaval of the middle class into the Risorgimento.

## ii) Patriotism in Music and Literary Works

What aided the elite in leading the Risorgimento and rally supporters was the work of the intelligentsia which harnessed the national identity through their master pieces. This

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<sup>39</sup> ‘Death of Garibaldi’, Birmingham *Daily Post*, 5 June 1882.

<sup>40</sup> Hibbert, p. xiii-xv.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, p. 7.

<sup>42</sup> Collier, p. 103.

<sup>43</sup> Beales and Biagini, p. 55-60.

last short term, cultural factor spread within the circles of the educated a tangible and common cultural heredity. The revolutions of the middle class inspired in the intelligentsia the ideal of a *Risorgimento* and an *Italy*. It was they who first used these phrases and supported High Politics in creating a unified state by preaching messages of unity. Their audience was most often comprised of the upper class, so their effect was narrow. An excellent example of this is the work of Giuseppe Verdi. His masterpieces were so nationalistic that at times of tension performances caused outbursts of violence between Italian patriots and Austrian army officials. His opera *Nabucco*, first performed in Milan in 1842, included the famous "Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves" which drew parallels between the enslavement of the Israelites and the repression of Italians under foreign rule. "*The warm, soft fragrances of your native land....Oh my fatherland so beautiful and lost!*"<sup>44</sup> was but one of the repeating phrases. However, Verdi's interpretation was not typical, it should be remembered that the peasantry had tried to slow down the advance of the Piedmontese army.<sup>45</sup>

Beales puts more emphasis on the effect of literary works, arguing that it was they who first developed the theme of "nation".<sup>46</sup> Certainly, the works of Balbo, Gioberti and d'Azeglio, all members of the upper class, helped define the national identity and provoke debate about the future of the country. Gioberti argued in *Primato Morale e Civile degli Italiani* that "*Italy has within herself all the conditions of her national and political Risorgimento, without recurring to internal upheavals or to foreign imitations and invasions...The principle of Italian union is the Pope, who can unify the peninsula by means of a confederation of its princes*".<sup>47</sup> As a fervent catholic Gioberti's views certainly oscillate in favor of the Catholic Church. However, we cannot consider his work to be biased since it just exposes personal opinion and not facts. So intellectuals defined the political change. Yet the unitary relationship remained grounded to the conversations of the intelligentsia which could see beyond regional borders and were well connected with European intellectuals

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<sup>44</sup> P Halsall, 'Modern History Sourcebook: Music and Nationalism', Fordham University, Fordham, July 1998, viewed 3 August 2012, <<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/NATMUSIC.asp>>.

<sup>45</sup> Martucci, p. 341-344.

<sup>46</sup> Beales and Biagini, p. 69-74.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, p. 230.

coming from centers of more vivacious culture.<sup>48</sup> Hence, the upper class: those individuals connected to High Politics and cultural intelligentsia, led the Risorgimento and helped spread a common Italian identity which however could only reach the educated.

## CONCLUSION

In summary, the lower class brought no significant contribution to the Risorgimento. Firstly, grave divisions, emphasized by historians such as Beales, reinforced localism. Secondly, this class plainly lacked interest in the cause as they were enwrapped with other fervent issues and, as the Marxist intellectual Antonio Gramsci argues, the notion of *individualismo*<sup>49</sup>. Therefore, in symbiosis these elements gained the lower class a role of non-intervention.

The role of the middle class in the Risorgimento was similar to that of an enzyme: they catalyzed the movement. By understanding ideals of liberty propagated by French influence and reacting to the foreign dominance, the middle class spread nationalistic fervor. Certain schools of thought argue that such ideals were only comprehensible to the elite<sup>50</sup> while other historians assume the middle class still embodied such sentiments.

The upper class defined and resolved the movement. This was done through cultural masterpieces and individuals at the head of the establishment. Therefore, the role of the upper class was to superintend and steer the Risorgimento. Historians such as A.J.P Taylor and Agatha Ramm tend to idolatry leaders such as Garibaldi and Cavour for they greatly inspired the Risorgimento however, these must not shadow the roles of intellectuals such as Gioberti which helped demarcate the movement, as Beales discusses.

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<sup>48</sup> M Galasso, 'Intellettuali Meridionali Esuli in Piemonte', in *La Capinata: Bollettino d'informazione della Biblioteca Provinciale di Foggia*, Biblioteca Provinciale di Foggia, Foggia, June 1983.

<sup>49</sup> Gramsci, p. 59-63.

<sup>50</sup> Montanelli, p. 124-125.

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